

## [LIFE★★★] WHAT I LEARNED FROM THE WORST GUY I EVER DATED

You know you've had one. So what did he teach you?

(P1) "Attempting to **drink myself into coma** at an airport hotel. The &%\$!-head didn't show." My friend Hannah\* was texting me from Australia, where she'd flown (22 hours!) to reunite with her long-distance boyfriend. It was 3:00 A.M. in Sydney. This wasn't good.

(P2) "Put down the **Shiraz** and sleep!" I texted back. "The &%\$!-head isn't worth it. Tmrw new beginning!" Hannah, 27, was a bit of a wounded soul who had a **tendency** to attract **players**. She had **confided** enough **worrisome** details about the Australian banker that I'd long **suspected** **heartbreak** was coming: He had "complicated feelings" for his runway-model ex and often referred to Hannah as his Friend With Benefits. Worst of all, she admitted, he made her cry "sometimes...OK, a lot." But there was something about him—an action-hero, try-anything-twice **dauntlessness**—that she couldn't resist. Hey, I was no fan of the guy, but even I could see it.

(P3) Hannah woke up the next afternoon with a **hangover**—and a **determination** to have an Australian adventure all by herself. "As much as I hated him," she told me recently, "I can see now that if it weren't for all the crazy stuff he challenged me to do, like skydiving and traveling to places with no **plumbing**, I would've gone right back to work, **crushed**. I still cried for three weeks, but I did it while driving solo around New South Wales with the windows down. I have to thank him for that."

(P4) It's true. The Hannah I know today is confident and adventurous, not the **delicate** flower she was before what we now call "the Aussie affair." And she's with a guy who shows up for her—not just at the airport but emotionally too.

(P5) A **disastrous** relationship, whether it **flamed out** years ago or is still in progress, can hold invaluable lessons. Here, five women share what they learned from the worst guy ever:

(P6) I LEARNED THAT... A good partner wants you to succeed. "I had always dreamed of being a comedian, and I was **flattered** when Paul, the manager of a comedy club where I was interning, asked to hear my material. Pretty soon we were writing jokes together, then dating. But the more I succeeded, the more he criticized me—and the more he **flirted with** other girls. I even wondered, If I focus less on my career, more on Paul, would things be right again? One morning I called my mother and **sobbed** about how bad my relationship was. She said, 'Natalie, you said you weren't happy. That's all you need to know.' I broke up with him that day. As terrible a boyfriend as he was, Paul taught me that any guy who **cuts me down** for dreaming big is not the one for me." —Natalie, 26

(P7) I LEARNED THAT... How a man treats his mom matters. "I dated a lawyer who had a **temperamental** relationship with his mother. He told me that when he got accepted to law school, she gave him a treasured copy of Black's Law Dictionary, handed down to her from her father, who got it from his father. But then, after he and his mom had a huge argument, he **tore up** the pages in front of her. He told me this like he was proud of it, like he had **stood up to her**. I wrote it off as family dramatics, but the more we dated, the more he **revealed** his **irrational, tantrum-y** side to me. One evening, as we were making dinner, I made a little suggestion and he threw a bag of cranberries on the floor—**splattering** red everywhere—then **walked out** and left me to clean up the mess. I finally realized that how a guy treats his family is a pretty good **indication** of how he'll treat you." —Anna, 31

(P8) I LEARNED THAT... We seek the love we think we deserve. "I met Bob when I was 22, and **fell hard**. He was a **macho**, messed-up guy: He ate **raw** eggs. He shot himself

in the thigh with **steroids**. He drank Bud Light while **lifting weights** and wore his hat backward. But when two broken people get together, it's not a **resurrection** of **Jerry Maguire**—no one completes anyone. You both just **tear each other apart** in new and awful ways. He slept with a coworker. I accepted his marriage proposal and then rejected it. One night while we were driving, I finally called us quits. Bob pulled over, took out a gun from under his seat, and said if I broke up with him, he would kill himself. Long story short, I called 911, the cops came, and Bob is still alive; our relationship, thankfully, is not. If I could offer my 22-year-old self some advice, I'd tell her: (1) Go for nice, not passion. Drama works only in the movies. Nice lasts. (2) Threats and **intimidation** should never be part of a relationship. Really, it's violence. (3) Do not date anyone who eats raw eggs, shoots himself in the thigh with steroids, or drinks Bud Light while lifting weights." —Lizzie, 35

(P9) I LEARNED THAT... A man will always tell you who he is. All you have to do is listen. "On our first date I asked Alan, 'What would your exes say about you?' He **twisted** his face and said, 'That I'm mean.' I should have **ditched** him then and there. But my thinking was, I'm different—this sexy, **chivalrous** guy wouldn't be mean to me. Then, several months into our relationship, I got a scarily heavy period and **rushed to** the **ER** to find out that I was having a **miscarriage**. When I called Alan, he didn't pick up, didn't return my panicked voice mails, and I went through a terrible night in the ER without a shoulder to cry on. Five days later he showed up with a dozen roses and a string of dog-ate-my-homework excuses: His phone died. He overslept...I threw the roses in the trash and told him to leave and never come back. The truth is that Alan told me who he was on day one; I was just too **wrapped up** in my fantasy of who he was to listen." —Jennifer, 34

(P10) I LEARNED THAT... Your love life shouldn't be a project. "My first boyfriend out of college was going through a divorce and working long hours as a **corrections officer**. Every night after his **shift** ended, I would listen to him **vent about** work; in return he gave me... nothing. He never asked me about my day or how I was feeling. I told myself that he wasn't a bad person, just a bad boyfriend; I was sure he'd change if I stuck around long enough. Then one day at 6:00 A.M., he called me, crying, because he'd gotten a **DUI**. When I picked him up, I realized how **pathetic** I was. I had a master's degree and was dating a **balding man-child** who drove drunk and didn't make time for me. I broke up with him that week. I'm happy to say that I'm now with a guy who **looks out for** me as much as I do for him. He isn't a project; he's a partner." —Kate, 25

(P11) AND NOW FOR THE GOOD GUYS  
Real women say, "I knew **he was a keeper** when..."

"...I was homesick and he showed up at my apartment with a framed picture of my hometown, Detroit." —Chelsea Appleby, 28

"...he drove an hour from his house to pick me up at 6:00 A.M. after my night shift as a nurse, just so I wouldn't have to take the train home." —Jill Jankovich, 33

"...he called my mom to wish her a happy Mother's Day. It was the first year we were together. She'd just texted him, so it was totally natural, but I hadn't even called her yet!" —Abbie McCoy, 26

"...he teared up at his gran's birthday. He sees his mum and gran as strong and accomplished; I feel so fortunate that he thinks I'm worthy of that **esteem** too." —Kelly Pirie, 31

**Words:** 1,358

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

If you found the passage difficult to read or had problems understanding specific words or idiomatic expressions, please discuss them with your tutor. The following discussion questions should be answered in your own words and with your own arguments.

1. Briefly summarize the content of the article in your own words.
2. How did the Australian player change Hannah (P2-5)? How was she before and how is she now?
3. The author points out a several things to look out for when you judge whether a guy is a keeper or not. Which one do you empathize with the most (P6-10)?
4. What are your own standards judging whether the guy is a keeper?
5. For guys: do the same principles hold true when you date a girl? How is it different? Why do you think the difference exists?

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## WHO/WHAT/WHERE ARE THEY?

### **Jerry Maguire**

(Movie) Jerry Maguire is a 1996 American romantic comedy-drama sports film starring Tom Cruise, Cuba Gooding, Jr., and Renée Zellweger. It was written, co-produced, and directed by Cameron Crowe.

## VOCABULARY

Drink myself into coma	(expression) 필름이 끊길 때까지 마시다
Shiraz	(n) 쉬라즈; 포도의 한 종류
Tendency	(n) 성향, 기질; 경향
Player	(n) 바람둥이
Confide	(v) (비밀을) 털어놓다
Worrisome	(adj) 걱정스럽게 만드는, 걱정스러운
Suspect	(v) (확실하지는 않지만 특히 좋지 않은 일이 있다고·있을 것으로) 의심하다
Heartbreak	(n) 이별로 인한 아픔
Dauntlessness	(n) 두려움이 없는
Hangover	(n) 숙취
Determination	(n) 투지
Plumbing	(n) (건물의) 배관
Crushed	(adj) 으깨진
Delicate	(adj) 연약한, 여린, 다치기 쉬운
Disastrous	(adj) 처참한, 형편없는
Flame out	(expression) 좌절, (정력·재능 등의) 소멸; 파멸; 좌절한 사람, 실망으로 끝난 일
Flatter	(v) 아첨하다, 알랑거리다
Flirt with	(v) (이성과) 시시덕거리다
Sob	(v) (흑흑) 흐느끼다, 흐느껴 울다
Cut someone down	(expression) ~를 깎아내리다
Temperamental	(adj) 신경질적인, 괴팍한
Tore up	(expression) (종이따위를) 찢다
Stand up to someone	(expression) to take a stand against someone or something; to hold one's ground or principles in the face of a challenge by someone or something. He is a tough customer, and you have to learn to stand up to him. Can the witness stand up to questioning by the prosecution?
Reveal	(v) (비밀 등을) 드러내다
Irrational	(adj) 비이성적인
Tantrum	(n) (특히 아이가 발끈) 성질을 부림
Splatter	(v) 후두둑 떨어지다
Walk out	(expression) (관계를 맺어 오던) (~를) 떠나다[버리다]
Indication	(n) (사정·생각·감정을 보여주는) 말
Fall hard	(expression) ~에게 빠지다
Macho	(n/adj) (거칠게) 남자다움을 과시하는
Raw	(adj) 익히지 않은, 날것의
Steroid	(n) 스테로이드
Lift weight	(expression) 아령을 들다

Resurrection	(n) (사상·관례 등의) 부활
Tear someone apart	(expression) to rip someone apart savagely. (See also tear something apart.) Max threatened to tear Tom apart. The bear tore apart the hiker.
Intimidation	(n) 협박, 위협
Twisted	(adj) (형체가) 뒤틀린, 일그러진; 접질린, 뺨
Ditch	(v) (더 이상 원치 않거나 불필요한 것을) 버리다; (교제하던 사람을) 차 버리다
Chivalrous	(adj) (특히 여자에게) 예의 바른
Rush to	(v) ~으로 달려가다
ER	(n) emergency room 응급실
Miscarriage	(n) 유산
Wrap up	(expression) (합의·회의 등을) 마무리짓다
Corrections officer	(n) 교도관
Shift	(n/v) (장소를) 옮기다, 이동하다; 자세를 바꾸다
Vent about	(expression) (감정·불만을) 터뜨리다
Pathetic	(adj) 딱한; 불쌍한, 애처로운
Balding	(adj) 머리가 벗겨지기 시작하는
Man-child	(expression) 애같은 어른
Look out for	(expression) (나쁜 일이 생기거나 나쁜 일을 하지 않도록) ~을 조심하다[~에 주의하다]
Someone is a keeper	(expression) 좋은 사람 (keep해야하는 사람); Someone who would make better marriage material than baby momma material.
Esteem	(n) 자부심