

Features

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The Kozouz sisters answer your relationship questions every Tuesday in *The Detroit News*. Send your questions to Lowdown@detnews.com or write to *Motown Lowdown* c/o The Detroit News, 615 W. Lafayette Blvd., Detroit, MI 48226.

Should she meet e-mail pal — and under what terms?

I am 33 years old and haven't had a serious boyfriend in two years. My aunt set me up with this guy she knows who lives in California. I haven't met him yet, but we've been e-mailing each other for three months and exchanged photos. He wants me to come out, visit him and stay with him. It seems a bit extreme to spend a weekend together for a first meeting, but I am dying to meet him. Should I stay or go?

— Guessing in Grosse Pointe

Dear Guessing:

You're 33. Time's a wasting, girl! Pack your bags and get ready to have some fun. Make sure, however, to book your own hotel in case he's psycho or just not what you expected. This way you have an escape. You don't want to end up in a miserable or uncomfortable situation all weekend.

— Reham

No way! That is way too scary. If you really have to meet him, have him come visit you. That way, you are in a familiar place and have family and friends around in case something were to happen. Spending the weekend together upon your first meeting is a little extreme, don't you think? Insist that he get a hotel room and meet in a public place. You can never be too careful.

— Leena

If your aunt set you up, then what's the harm? Just don't go with any intentions of getting married. Go with the intention of meeting a new friend and going on vacation in California. You have a free place to stay, the mountains and the beach. And from what it sounds like, you have a nice host. Check your luggage and earn some frequent flyer miles.

— Rana

Give it some time before you make a commitment to meet. You may also feel more comfortable meeting him in person if you spent more time speaking to one another on the phone. There is something about e-mail, although convenient, that is just too impersonal. You may develop new feelings, good or bad, once you get more personal on the phone.

— Ruba

I have a friend who I have known for about five years off and on. We never dated because

she was married at the time. She has been divorced for three years. We have met for drinks probably twice since then. Recently, she broke up with her boyfriend of two years. We went to a concert and she said she had a good time. I have called her once on the phone, and we occasionally e-mail each other. I have asked her to do things but she had to decline due to her having plans already. She has never asked me to do anything. Sisters, what would be your advice? How would I tell her that I would like to spend more time together and maybe date versus just hanging out once in a while?

— Suffering in Sterling Heights

Dear Suffering:

For all you men out there, if you like a woman, then ask her out on a formal date. There is nothing more attractive than a confident gentleman. Just pick up the phone and ask her if you can take her to dinner on Friday or Saturday night. Then you drive to her house and pick her up. You open her doors, you delight her with witty conversation. Share a bottle of wine over a five-course meal, flirt and compliment her. Finish the evening with walking her to the door. Call in a few days to tell her you had a fantastic time and that you'd like to do it again. I'm sure if you follow my directions exactly, she will accept your next offer.

— Rana

She just broke up with her boyfriend of two years. Give her a bit more time to get used to being single again. Be a good friend and be there for her. Be supportive and maybe you won't have to say anything, maybe things will just happen naturally.

— Ruba

Unfortunately, my advice is to direct your energy toward a new pursuit. You've asked her to do things, and she's politely declined. If she hasn't reciprocated the invitation, I'm sure she's not interested.

— Reham

Just let it out already! You need to sit her down and tell her how you feel without any hesitation, but before you do, just be prepared for what you might hear. The situation may be awkward if the feelings aren't mutual.

— Leena