

Love Triangle: Her boyfriend's married sister is into her roommate. Now what?



Dear C and Dr. B;

I'm caught in the middle of someone else's love triangle and don't know what to do.

Kendra and I have shared an apartment 5 years. Neither of us have a steady relationship, but we both date. She's a real hottie, but she is respectfully hands off when it comes to the guys I bring home, so there have never been any conflicts or misunderstandings - until this recent shit hit the fan.

Last month, I started dating this guy, Paul, who is really nice. We have a lot in common - we'd rather play pool than video games, we like foreign films, and we are both psych majors - I want to be a therapist and he wants to teach.

Two weeks ago, his sister Moira came for a visit and he asked if she could come over for dinner - she was going to be staying with him for a while and didn't know anybody here. So I said sure, and asked Kendra to stay for dinner too so Paul's sister wouldn't feel like a third wheel. Moira and Kendra got along great and made plans to go out clubbing the next night. They started hanging a lot, which was great because I could spend more time alone with Paul.

All well and good until Paul called me yesterday and was freaking. Apparently, Kendra and his MARRIED sister have become more than friends - he walked in and caught them!. Turns out it wasn't respect that has kept Kendra off my dates - she's gay. Now, I'm OK with her being gay, and to be fair, Moira didn't tell her that she was married. But Paul is really upset because he was best friends with Moira's husband, and now the guy won't speak to him. When the parents heard, they hit the roof. And Paul has cooled considerably toward me.

What am I supposed to do? I understand why Paul is upset - his close friendship was blown apart, his parents are blaming him, and I'm the one who had the bright idea to get Kendra and Moira together. It's too early in our relationship for us to have a solid understanding to work from. Things were going great until this happened. Is there any way to salvage things?

Romy the Roomie

Dr. B says: Everyone involved in this drama is an adult and made their own decisions. You are not trapped in it - this is in no way your fault and you shouldn't own it. Tell as such to Paul: "I am sorry there's this crazy drama, but it isn't my fault. You need to get over this blame thing and we need some time apart until you do." This puts the responsibility back where it belongs. If he wants to be with you then let him act in such a way that he deserves it. This is good role modeling - it is exactly what he needs to do with his friend and family too.

In a relationship you are either a team or not. It sucks when you have to walk away, but it's a good skill to have if you want to eventually find the right team member. Never own someone else's shit.

C says: Since Dr. B has already given you the sensible advice, I have to ask the unasked questions - how did Moira's husband find out? And how on earth did Paul's parents find out? Did Paul tell them? Did Moira decide to throw her marriage out after a few days with your secretly gay roommate? And why did she fail to mention her marriage to Kendra? Is she some kind of dishonest philandering bitch? I don't know if your relationship with Paul will survive this, but one thing is for sure - if it does, you are in for a lot of family drama. Do you really want it?

Here's my advice, Roomie. Make that speech to Paul, and then forget about him and sit down with Kendra for a long overdue talk. Paul has been dating you a few weeks, Kendra's been with you five years. You shouldn't be keeping secrets like this from each other, or more shit can happen - quite by accident. Honesty is the best form of shit prevention. If someone is a part of your life, something as all-encompassing as their sexual/gender identity shouldn't be a secret. Tell Kendra: "I'm totally cool with you being gay, but I don't like secrecy. Let's put our cards on the table and see where we stand."

And that's pretty much the ONLY thing you need to do with this whole mess.

You can visit Dr. B's blog at drbrilliantcliche.wordpress.com