



# DATING UNDERCOVER

## The Downsides of Secret Relationships

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No, I am not referring to keeping your love life a secret from your parents - we all do that. This is about those sneaky classroom romances that are much better off unannounced or unhindered with.

Dating is, at times, like playing a game of "Jenga": one wrong move and it all falls apart. Adding to that, dating within your friend circle is seldom taken positively, mostly because it ruins the dynamics of the group. Understandably, it sometimes feels like a more prudent option to keep things a secret until things become serious. Whatever your reason for keeping your relationship a secret might be, there are some things we have all experienced in these secret romances.

### INTERACTING WITH YOUR PARTNER IN A GROUP

Whether it's in the classroom or at a hang-out, any attempt of interaction with your boo feels like the game of "Killer, Killer", only that you are the said killer and everyone else, except your partner, is a detective. Every stolen glance and exchanged smile is, most likely, followed by a thorough scrutiny of the people around you to make sure that no one noticed your flirty exchange.

And, God forbid when you have to pair up to ride a rickshaw or to share something. You probably end up doing a complex statistical analysis of how frequently you two have paired up together in the past before deciding whether or not it is safe to pair up with that person this time.

### MAKING DATING PLANS

Making plans for dates in these situation feels like a real life version of "How to get away with Murder". Now, not only would you have to lie to your parents about going out to meet a friend, but you also have to make sure that the said friend, who has no idea of your relationship, does not find

out. And, it does not end there. You must also formulate a thorough analysis of the venue, mapping every corner of it to make sure no one you know lives or hangs out there in its vicinity. Also, did I mention that you need to have the details of the routine and most frequently visited areas of every person you have known since the beginning of time, in order not to run into them while on your said date?

### BURNING THE EVIDENCE

When you are in a very private relationship, you cannot just leave any trail of evidence behind! Did you take cute pictures with your partner? You might as well



lock them up in the vault of AppLock or throw them in the dungeon of your exclusively made Google Drive account lest someone somehow opens the lock of your phone and finds them lying in your gallery. I remember locking ALL of my social media apps with a different passcode so that no one could access them even if they knew the key to my mobile phone.

Also, speaking of social media, it becomes equally distressing when, instead of PDA-ing on Facebook, you have to make sure that you do not "love react" to

all of the posts and pictures of that person; who knows, the suspecting detectives might be tracing your every move and running mathematical investigations using your social media interactions? So, one wrong move and you two will be exposed!

The paranoia also creeps in when you have to post a seemingly innocent picture together, maybe for a birthday post, and you end up doing an hour-long gesture analysis of your poses to make sure NOTHING gives you away.

### THE EXTENSIVE LIES YOU TELL ONCE YOU ARE CAUGHT

Even after taking such thorough precau-

are ever seen in public together at a time when you were supposed to be in two different places and you have to make a comprehensive story about how you guys ran into each other coincidentally and thought you could both go home together to save the cost of the rickshaw fare.

"But you guys live on two different streets!"

"Did I say home? No, I meant I was going to a relative's place, which is near his house."

Before you know it, you are sucked into this spiral of lies, with no way of return.

### THE MISTAKES WE ALL TEND TO MAKE

- Becoming too "friendly" with your partner all of a sudden, and going as far as calling him/her your best friend. No. It NEVER works out and you inevitably end up digging a hole for yourself.
- Mindlessly blurting out facts about him/her in front of your friends, which no one else knows about, making it seem that you two spend suspiciously long time together.
- Being together in most of the group photos or having an almost permanent sitting arrangement beside one another.

Secret relationships are tough and tiresome, but, at the end of the day, when you realise that there are a very few people who could meddle with your Monica-and-Chandler type love story, you also realise that would not have it any other way. So what if no one told you life was gonna be this way? Just embrace it!

*Based on the true experiences of Janice-erShotin, who spends most of her time talking to her boyfriend and procrastinating instead of actually studying for her upcoming finals. It is hard to find her because she lies about her whereabouts most of the time, but you might be able to contact her at [janiceershotin@gmail.com](mailto:janiceershotin@gmail.com).*

tions, there still remains a chance of you getting caught. Everybody makes mistakes, but when the mistake is sending the wrong text to the wrong person or, better yet, the wrong group chat, it feels as if your whole world has fallen apart. During these times, when the danger alert in your brain goes crazy, you spend distressing hours forging evidences (mostly in the form of screenshots) and negotiating with that one friend who knows about everything to ward off the suspicion.

Adding to that, God forbid if you guys