

Rules of engagement

Some guys need a little help when it comes to proposing...



Are you serious?

Jes Kennedy, 22, Randwick, NSW.

slipped it onto my finger. It was beautiful.

But though I had that fuzzy feeling of happiness, it was mingled with disappointment.

What had he been thinking? I wondered.

It was more silly than special. I felt like I'd got a bum deal.

Over the next few days, the congratulatory messages and calls from our friends and family came pouring in.

"How did he do it?" my mates asked.

"It was really intimate," I'd say, trying my best to hide the embarrassing truth.

I felt guilty for being so ungrateful, but I couldn't help wishing Kirby had done something more romantic.

I'd been robbed of my special moment.

Then one day I was flicking through a magazine when an ad caught my eye.

It was for a proposal planning service called Buy the Cow. They did all the hard work of planning an extra-special engagement for you.

"I'm going to give them a call," I said, showing it to Kirby.

The poor boy felt awful about disappointing me, but I knew his heart was in the right place.

Maybe Buy the Cow could help him re-propose in a way I'd be happy to share...

What was wrong with a nice restaurant or a walk along the beach? I thought.

Silence engulfed us for what felt like a lifetime.

"Well, what do you say?" Kirby asked, looking less than confident.

I felt a massive pang of sympathy for him.

Grabbing a towel, I patted on a smile. I had to try to see this for what it was - my lovely boyfriend asking me to marry him.

"Of course," I said, hugging him.

Once I'd dried off, Kirby gave me the ring and

about my presents. He'd even ask my opinion sometimes.

But I loved that about him. It showed he cared about getting it right.

After six years together, I knew he wanted a proposal to remember, something we'd both look back on and cherish for the rest of our lives.

So, looking at Kirby now, I couldn't believe this was it.

I was standing stark naked in the shower after a long day at work. It was a normal everyday moment - not a time to declare his love for me.

"Are you serious?" I stuttered, shampoo dripping into my eyes.

I'd been looking forward to this moment for as long as I could remember.

My boyfriend Kirby had just uttered those special words, "Will you marry me?" A few months earlier, he'd taken me to pick a beautiful sapphire engagement ring and told me to expect something special.

"It'll be a moment you'll never forget," he'd said.

Some girls might have been disappointed knowing it was coming, but Kirby had never been very good at surprises.

Each birthday and Christmas he'd always crack and tell me

Me with Graham, Layla and Hamish



I can help!

Claire Whelpton, 38, Daceyville, NSW.

At the end of my phone was a woman in need.

"Can you help my boyfriend?" she said. "He messed up. Badly."

Her name was Jes and soon she was telling me all about her boyfriend Kirby's bungled attempt at proposing to her in the shower.

I knew exactly how she felt. When it had happened to me, I'd been with Graham for 10 years and had two gorgeous kids, Hamish and Layla.

For years I'd dreamt of the day he'd finally get down on one knee. So imagine my shock when after getting the kids to bed one evening while on holiday in Queensland, Graham casually handed me a yellow envelope.

I was astounded to find a stunning diamond ring inside.

"Is this what I think it is?" I said, confused.

When he nodded, I burst into tears. I'm not sure if they were from happiness or disappointment. Of course I said yes, but I'd wanted a romantic story to tell.

After our disastrous proposal, I realised I wasn't alone. Guys were making catastrophic blunders with their proposals the world over. It wasn't because they didn't love their girlfriends. They just didn't know how to pull off such a grand gesture.

That's when I decided to become a proposal planner. Buy the Cow was born and, luckily, Graham wasn't offended.

Jes passed the phone over so I could speak to Kirby and together we began making plans for a romantic do-over.

We picked a spot by Coogee Beach, NSW, and this time I made him keep it a secret.

"Leave it with me," I told him.

I made up a day bed, feathery pillows and soft blankets. Then I wrote "Marry me Jes" across the spread and dangled pretty love hearts in a nearby tree.

Spotting them walking over, I slipped away and watched from afar. Seeing the smile on Jes's face as Kirby dropped to one knee was amazing.

I knew she'd never forget it. It makes me happy to know I've helped create a story to last a lifetime.

Guys want to create a special memory as much as their girls. Sometimes they just need a nudge in the right direction.

For more information, visit buythecow.com.au

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READER RANT

I can't stand...

PLASTIC CLOGS

Lucia Shepherd
Kewarra Beach, Qld.

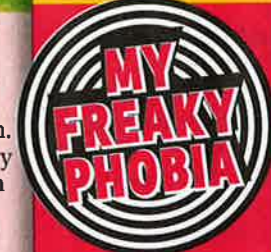
I can't stand grown-up people who wear those brightly coloured plastic clog-like shoes to shopping centres and outings. I even saw one couple recently who both wore them to a garden wedding!

They're great to wear around the house and in the garden, but not out! You see people neatly dressed and the whole image is destroyed by those ghastly shoes.

Little kiddies look cute in them, but grown-ups? Please - just leave them at home.

Do you have a rant you need to get off your chest? Tell us and receive up to \$50

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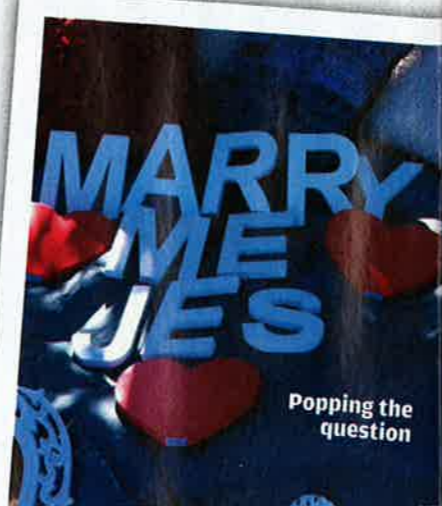
Water wary

Dolores Green, 82, Marrickville, NSW.

I nearly drowned as a small child and have been petrified of water ever since - I was too scared to learn to swim after that. Every time I see pools of water, I feel ill and nauseous. I don't even like taking baths! My young grandson is learning to swim at the moment and somehow his mum persuaded me to get into the waist-deep water. Despite being armed with both floaties and a paddleboard, I ended up changing my mind. Dry land is the only way to go for me!

Do you have an unusual phobia? Tell us and receive up to \$50

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Popping the question

AS TOLD TO REBEKAH SCANLAN