

SCAREDY CAT, SCAREDY CAT

If you haven't figured it out yet, I'm a big fat scaredy cat. I am deathly afraid of falling in love. I'm afraid of needing someone and depending on someone to the point of being paralyzed. I'm just scared. I think a lot of people are when it comes to relationships, but some people don't let it get in the way. I really am trying, but I don't think I'm doing so well. The minute I need someone, I run. The minute I have to rely on someone, I freak.

I think there are more of us running from relationships because of fear than not. We probably just disguise it in other ways and don't admit the real root of the problem, going from one short-term relationship to another. I know I have trust issues. I know that I have an irrational fear of all things relationship related. I am working on it, but every time I meet someone I like, I think, "Is this my horrible bad taste at work again?" "Is this another commitment phobic man in disguise?" I second-guess every feeling, every action, and every ounce of hope that it might work out, that I might be happy with someone someday.

What if I were to fall in love? I don't think I've ever really been IN love, I've loved before but there's a difference. I digress...so, what if I fall in love,

trust someone, get to need and rely on someone and then they turn into my worst nightmare? Or I turn into my worst nightmare...a fat, unattractive, old nag type who just bitches non-stop at her husband or boyfriend? I think I've been there before and don't want to go back. The second-guessing is unproductive and negative, but it's all a part of my arsenal in my defense mechanism. It's worked pretty well so far. My walls are thick. My walls are high. It will be a challenge for any man who hopes to really get through them. Good luck to anyone who tries with someone like me because you'll really need it. A pound of luck and a lot of fucking patience.

I am worse than any guy I've ever dated and that's really hard for me to admit. If someone great comes along whom I'm actually attracted to and appears to actually care about me and wants to be with me, I can think of a thousand reasons to either sabotage it before I get too close or just run for the hills. I tell them I don't want a relationship, even if deep down I think it will work out. In those instances, I go out of my way to let them know I'm not looking for Mr. Right, never admitting to them that I actually believe we could be the happy couple who lives happily ever after in my head. Instead, I tell them I'm OK with just sex or nothing with them, avoiding any chance of an actual relationship.

The voice inside my head tells me, in reality shouts at me, to "RUN! RUN FOR THE HILLS! GET OUT WHILE YOU STILL CAN!" That voice is deafening. I go out of my way to tell men what's going on in my head. My secret desire is for them to see through the façade and know that it means, "I really like you and I'm afraid." The last guy I told about the voice told me I couldn't run away from him. He wouldn't let me. But maybe that's because he was waiting for the guys with the straight jackets to come and take me away from him.

That's, in all probability, how to get me into a real relationship: persistence and not listening. But possibly, it's not. The last "boyfriend" I had convinced me to be in a relationship with him...telling me how much he loved me and wouldn't hurt me. Three months in he told me he wasn't ready for a relationship. It's the destroy, conquer, and leave-the-rubble-behind technique. I have used it at times, but try not to use my powers on the innocent bystander, just for the losers I attract.

I sometimes think I'm totally full of crap in general, in the sense that the

romantic in me would love to meet a great guy, fall in love, have him propose with a huge rock from Tiffany's or Harry Winston's, in the most romantic way ever, get married, eloping of course, and then live happily ever after. But the realist in me knows better and really, what are the odds of that ever happening to me? So, I guess I'll have to continue to hope that some of the crappy relationships or guys I get involved with might actually work out someday.

I've always wondered if there is a "Happily Ever After"...the fairy tales and movies have built up such a relationship paradise that I don't think any one couple could ever live up to it. I'm sure society will continue to try over and over again until we get it right or we just get tired and give up. I just might be *happy* with "Contentment Ever After." How's that for a new modern day fairy tale ending? Realistic and hopeful, yet attainable. I think I'll copyright that and try to sell it to Hallmark, make a million, and live *happily ever after*.