Chapter One: he's just not that into you if he's not asking you out

Because if he likes you, trust me, he will ask you out

Many women have said to me, "Greg, men run the world." Wow. That makes us sound pretty capable. So tell me, why would you think we could be incapable of something as simple as picking up the phone and asking you out? You seem to think at times that we're "too shy" or we "just got out of something." Let me remind you: Men find it very satisfying to get what they want. (Particularly after a difficult day of running the world.) If we want you, we will find you. If you don't think you gave him enough time to notice you, take the time it took you to notice him and divide it by half.

Now you begin the life-changing experience of reading our book. We have put the stories we have heard and questions we've been asked in a simple question-and-answer format. If you're lucky, you'll read the following questions and know what they are: Excuses that women have made for their unsatisfying situations. If you're not so lucky, we've also included handy titles to clue you in.

The "Maybe He Doesn't Want to Ruin the Friendship" Excuse

Dear Greg,
I'm so disappointed. I have this friend that I've known platonically for about ten years. He lives in a different city and recently he was in town for work, so we met for dinner. All of a sudden it felt like we were on a date. He was completely flirting with me. He even said to me, as he was checking me out, "So, what, you're working the whole 'model thing' now?" (That's flirting, right?) We both agreed that we should get together again soon. Well, Greg, I'm disappointed because it's been two weeks and he hasn't called me. Can I call him? He might be nervous about turning the friendship into romance. Can't I give him a nudge now? Isn't that what friends are for?

Jodi

Dear Friendly Girl,
Two weeks is two weeks, except when it's ten years and two weeks. That's how long ago he decided whether or not he could date a model or a girl who looks like one. Can you be a pal and give him a nudge? Nudge away, friendster -- but watch how fast that nudge doesn't get a return phone call. And if your dinner/date did feel different to him, it's been two weeks and he's had time to think about it and decide he's just not that into you. Here's the truth: Guys don't mind messing up a friendship if it could lead to sex, whether it be a "fuck buddy" situation or a meaningful romance. Go find someone that lives in your zip code who will be rocked to the core by your deep conversation and model looks.

I hate to tell you, but that whole "I don't want to ruin the friendship" excuse is a racket. It works so well because it seems so wise. Sex could mess up a friendship. Unfortunately, in the entire history of mankind, that excuse has never ever been used by someone who actually means it. If we're really excited about someone, we can't stop ourselves -- we want more. If we're friends with someone and attracted to them, we're going to want to take it further. And please, don't tell me he's just "scared." The only thing he's scared of -- and I say this with a lot of love -- is how not attracted to you he is.

The "Maybe He's Intimidated by Me" Excuse

Dear Greg,
I have a crush on my gardener. He's been potting the plants on my patio. It was hot, I saw him without his shirt on, he was hot, and now I'm hot for him. I brought out some beers and we talked. I think he wants to ask me out but is afraid, because he is my hired man. In this situation, can't I ask him out?
Dear My Secret Garden,
He's capable of asking you out. Haven't you ever seen a porno? Hope he gets there before the pizza guy. But seriously, if he didn't pick up the vibe after the beer garden, it has nothing to do with you being his big boss lady. Time to stop and smell the bad news: He's just not that into you.

Let me say it again, sexual harassment rules and workplace memos notwithstanding, a guy will ask out a woman of higher status if he's into her. He might need a little more encouragement than normal, I'll give you that. You might have to lead Johnny the Office Boy or Phillipe the Exterminator to water, but you better not help him ask you out. Once again, ladies, a wink and a smile will do it.

By the way, why are you dating the exterminator?
Just kidding, he's a good guy.

The "Maybe He Wants to Take It Slow" Excuse

Dear Greg,
There's this guy who calls me all the time. He's recently divorced, and in AA. We got back in touch recently, had lots of phone calls, and then hung out twice in one week and it was real cool. No flirting or making out or anything, but fun. Since then, he calls me all the time but doesn't ever suggest we see each other in person again. It's like he got scared or something. I would understand if because of the divorce/alcoholic/starting-a-whole-new-life stuff he wanted to take things slow. But he still calls me all the time to have long heart-to-heart talks. What the hell should I do with this guy?

Jen

Dear Pillow Talk,
Sadly, not wanting to see you in person is massive as far as dating obstacles go. And as far as the recently divorced/newly sober/starting-a-new-life parts, blah blah blah, I'm getting sleepy, it's hot, I'm going down for a nap. When I wake up from that nap I'll probably thrill to the news that your friend is taking control of his life. You, however, will still not be going on a date, because despite all your excuses for him, he's still not asking you out. Now, if you're a person who enjoys a slightly satisfying phone relationship, talk on! But at this point it seems like he's just not that into you. Be his friend if you're at all interested on that level, but move your romantic inclinations onto a more suitable future husband.

If a guy truly likes you, but for personal reasons he needs to take things slow, he will let you know that immediately. He won't keep you guessing, because he'll want to make sure you don't get frustrated and go away.

The "But He Gave Me His Number" Excuse

Dear Greg,
I met a really cute guy at a bar this week. He gave me his number and told me to give him a call sometime. I thought that was kind of cool, that he gave me control of the situation like that. I can call him, right?

Lauren

Dear Control Freak,
Did he give you control, or did he just get you to do the heavy lifting? What he just did was a magic trick: It seems like he gave you control, but really he now gets to decide if he wants to go out with you -- or even return your call. Why don't you take Copperfield's
number, roll it in a newspaper, pour milk in it, and make it disappear.

"Give me a call." "E-mail me." "Tell Joey we should all hang out sometime." *Don't let him trick you into asking him out.* When men want you, they do the work. I know it sounds old school, but when men like women, they ask them out.

**The "Maybe He Forgot to Remember Me" Excuse**

Dear Greg,

Okay, Greg. Listen to this one: I was at a conference for work and met a guy from another branch of my company. We hit it off immediately. He was just about to ask for my number, I swear, when the Big Blackout of 2003 happened. In the mayhem, I didn't get to give him my number. I think the Big Blackout of 2003 is a good enough excuse to call him, don't you think? It's only common courtesy for me to check up on him, right? If I don't call, he's probably going to be all sad thinking that *I'm* just not that into him.

Judy

**Dear Judy Blackout,**

The city blacked out. He didn't. You said you work for different branches of the same company. Certainly he wouldn't have to break a sweat to scroll through the company staff roster or interoffice e-mail listing to find you. And should he not be as resourceful as you are...I imagine that he has a mother, sister, or female friend that could show him how, if he was really interested.

P.S.: Shame on you for using an eastern seaboard disaster as an excuse to call a guy up.

Have faith. You made an impression. Leave it at that. If he likes you, he'll still remember you after the tsunami, flood, or Red Sox loss. If he doesn't, he's not worth your time. Know why? You are great. (Now, don't get cocky.)

**The "Maybe I Don't Want to Play Games" Excuse**

Dear Greg,

This is dumb. I know you're not supposed to call guys, but I call guys all the time because I don't care! I don't want to play games. I do whatever I want! I've called guys tons of times. You're such a square, Greg. Why do you think we can't call guys and ask them out?

Nikki

**Dear Nikki,**

Because we don't like it. Okay, some guys might like it, but they're just lazy. And who wants to go out with Lazy Guy? It's that simple. I didn't make the rules and I might not even agree with them. Please don't be mad at me, Nikki. I'm not advocating that women go back to the Stone Age. I just think you might want to be realistic in how capable you are of changing the primordial impulses that drive all of human nature.

Or maybe you're the chosen one.

Men, for the most part, like to pursue women. We like not knowing if we can catch you. We feel rewarded when we do. Especially when the chase is a long one. We know there was a sexual revolution. (We loved it.) We know women are capable of running governments, heading multinational corporations, and raising loving children -- sometimes all at the same time. That, however, doesn't make *men* different.

**IT'S SO SIMPLE**
Imagine right now that I'm leaping up and down and shaking my fist at the sky. I'm on my knees pleading with you. I'm saying this in a loud voice: "Please, if you can trust one thing I say in this book, let it be this: *When it comes to men, deal with us as we are, not how you'd like us to be.*" I know it's an infuriating concept -- that men like to chase and you have to let us chase you. I know. It's insulting. It's frustrating. It's unfortunately the truth. My belief is that if you have to be the aggressor, if you have to pursue, if you have to do the asking out, nine times out of ten, he's just not that into you. (And we want you to believe you're one of the nine, ladies!) I can't say it loud enough: You, the superfox reading this book, are worth asking out.

**HERE'S WHY THIS ONE IS HARD, by Liz**

Well, it's obvious. Are you telling us that we have to just sit around and wait? I don't know about you, but I find that infuriating. I was brought up to believe that hard work and good planning are the keys to making your dreams come true. I spent my life making things happen for myself. I worked hard for my career, and was quite aggressive about it. I called people, made appointments, asked for favors. I took action. But now Greg is telling us that in this situation, we are supposed to do absolutely nothing. The guys get to pick. We're just supposed to put on our little dresses and do our hair and bat our eyes and hope they choose us. Why don't you just tie my corset too tight so I can faint in front of some man who'll scoop me out of the way just before the horse-drawn carriage runs over me? That'll get his attention.

Really, in this day and age, the hardest thing to do for many women, particularly me, is nothing. We like to scheme, make phone calls, have a plan. And I'm talking about more than just making sure our hair doesn't frizz. Most women who date, I would guess, don't have men throwing themselves at them every night of the week. Sometimes there's a long stretch during which nobody's asking us out. So when we see a guy that we feel might be a romantic possibility, it's even harder for us to take a backseat. That opportunity might not come back again for a long time.

But guess what: My way? Has sucked. Hasn't worked at all. I've never had a successful relationship with a guy that I've pursued. I'm sure there are many stories out there to the contrary. But for me, those guys end up getting back together with their ex-girlfriend, needing to take some time for themselves, or going out of town for business. Usually it doesn't even get that far. They usually just don't ever return my phone call. And let me tell you, that didn't make me feel very in control of anything.

Since I've been implementing Greg's handy-dandy "he's just not that into you" philosophy, I've been feeling surprisingly more powerful. Because if the men are asking you out, if the men have to get your attention, then you, in fact, are the one in control. There's no scheming and plotting. And there is something great about knowing that my only job is to be as happy as I can be about my life, and feel as good as I can about myself, and to lead as full and eventful a life as I can, so that it doesn't ever feel like I'm just waiting around for some guy to ask me out. And most importantly, it's good for us all to remember that we don't need to scheme and plot and beg to get someone to ask us out. We're fantastic.

**THIS IS WHAT IT SHOULD LOOK LIKE, by Greg**

One night I was drinking in a bar and flirting with the bartender. I asked for her number. She said, "I don't give out my phone number because guys rarely call me when they say they're going to. My name is Lindsey Adams, and if you want to call me, find my phone number." Which I did -- the very next day. Do you know how many Lindsey Adams there are in the phone book of a major city? Let's just say I talked to about eight or nine before I found mine.

An actor we work with met a girl while he was making a public appearance on an aircraft carrier. He lost track of her in about ten minutes. And yet, because he was so smitten, he somehow managed to track her down in the army, and they are now married.
GREG, I GET IT! By Leslie, age 29
Greg! I get it. I went to this party and I met this guy. We started talking immediately by ourselves, off in a corner. He asked if I was single and seemed pleased when I said I was. Whenever we split up to talk to other people, or to get drinks or whatever, he always kept his eye on me. It was really cool. I was all excited and fluttery with that "Oh my God, I think I just met someone!" feeling. He didn't ask for my number, but we know lots of people in common, so I thought he was just playing it cool. He never called me! And you know what? Normally I would call our mutual friends and start fishing and trying to figure out what happened and maybe try to find another way to see him again. But instead, I'm just going to move on! Who cares what his deal is. He's not asking me out, so why should I start obsessing over him? I'm just going to go out tonight and try to meet someone else.

IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE GREG
We did an incredibly unscientific poll where we polled twenty of our male friends (ranging from ages twenty-six to forty-five), who are in serious long-term relationships. Not one of their relationships started with the woman asking them out first. One guy even said that if she had, "It would have spoiled all the fun."

What You Should Have Learned in This Chapter
• An excuse is a polite rejection. Men are not afraid of "ruining the friendship."
• Don't get tricked into asking him out. If he likes you, he'll do the asking.
• If you can find him, then he can find you. If he wants to find you, he will.
• Just because you like to lead doesn't mean he wants to dance. Some traditions are born of nature and last through time for a reason.
• "Hey, let's meet at so-and-so's party/any bar/friend's house" is not a date. Even if you live in New York.
• Men don't forget how much they like you. So put down the phone.
• You are good enough to be asked out.

Our Super-Good Really Helpful Workbook
Hey, what's a self-help tome without a workbook? Our chapters will all be so brave and wise that we want to make sure you retain as much of the brilliance as you can. So for all of you who feel the need to get out of your problems and into your crayon box, have at it.

Love,

Greg and Liz

Remember in grade school how they told you not to write in your textbooks? Screw that! Grab a pen and list five reasons why you think you have every right or good reason to call him.

1.
2.
3.
4.
Put the book aside and wait an hour. Or at least ten minutes. Then ask yourself: Do I seem pathetic? Do I sound like someone who doesn’t trust my own innate hotness? Yes, you do! Now put your dialing finger away, get out of the house, and go find some fun.

P.S.: You just did a workbook exercise about a guy who hasn’t even extended to you the energy of a phone call. Why would you want to chase that down?

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