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### How to Read Between the Lines

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## How to Read Between the Lines

- Don't read between the lines.<sup>1</sup>
- Listen carefully while he talks to you during your coffee date, taking note of the names and dates he dismisses as unimportant. They are important, and will impress him if you can reference them later on during one of the many verbal boxing matches you two call a fight.<sup>2</sup>
- Ask questions. This shows that you're listening and invested in what he's saying. If you show him you're paying attention, he will talk more and give you more material to decipher at a later time.<sup>3</sup>
- Watch his body language as he speaks, how his wrist twists when he ruffles his hair or how he moves like waves in the ocean as he talks, constantly shifting his weight from one foot to the other.<sup>4</sup>
- Fill the silence in the conversation with more silence. This gives you more opportunities to observe.<sup>5</sup>
- Devote your time and attention to him whenever possible.<sup>6</sup>
- Memorize his surroundings: his car, his desk, his home. Don't snoop, but note the number of pop cans in the backseat and the dusty outlines of missing objects.<sup>7</sup>

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1. This is a test. Always read between the lines. How else will you be able to find the truth hidden behind the lies?
  2. But don't literally take notes. Writing down everything he says with a chewed ballpoint pen is creepy and will scare him away. You're on a date, not in a history lecture.
  3. This would be a good time to pull out those obscure names and dates you wrote down earlier, like his mom's birthday or the day his Golden Retriever, Steve, died. Ask him about that.
  4. Beware lip biting and hand twitching. He always bites his lip as he lies and his fingers tremble at his side when he's nervous. The bigger the lie, the more you will witness the absent-minded chewing and shuddering.
  5. Don't obsess over where he is and what he's doing when you aren't around. Don't ask him about it either. He'll just tell you you're being paranoid and avoid the question.
  6. Be sure to completely lose yourself in him over the next year and a half. When you break up, this will be a biting remark you can throw in his face before he slams the front door.
  7. Upon finding jewelry or undergarments that are unfamiliar to you, assume they are his mother's, or his sister's, or a gift for you, and put them back into the dark corner underneath the bed.

- Do not confront him of a suspected lie. This breaks the trust.<sup>8</sup>
- Curl into yourself when he rages. If you sit still long enough he may forget about your presence and shout his secrets to the empty room, giving you some nugget of information that makes it easier to understand why he's angry.<sup>9</sup>
- Do not distract yourself by breaking the silence of the empty house.<sup>10</sup>
- Do not read between the lines.<sup>11</sup>

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8. Cry instead. When he asks what's wrong, tell him – and be honest.
  9. When he threatens to leave, do not ask him why. Simply watch him from the couch through your tears and note the fresh blood on his lip.
  10. Pack your things and leave quietly. Catch a bus and stay with your mother. Do not stop thinking about all the things you could have done to prevent this from happening. This is your fault.
  11. You are not good at it. It changes you into someone angry, obsessive, and mistrustful. Do not play games. Do not commit yourself to someone who is only half real and half a figment of your imagination. Stick to the truth and the facts and the obvious. Do not read between the lines.