

Is a casino buffet her holiday destiny? - Washington Post

Written by Administrator

Friday, 10 December 2010 01:17 -

Long story short, I've never met his mom and she has no desire to meet me. From what I understand, it's because I'm a divorced, single mom. I mentioned to my boyfriend my depressing holiday situation and he didn't say anything. He didn't offer to talk to his mom about inviting me and my son. He didn't respond on the situation at all.

We've discussed marriage, but

how do I reconcile his refusal to invite me to a family function when he proclaims a desire to spend a lifetime with me?

Anonymous

Better question: Why did you skip straight from dropping hints to reconciling his "refusal" as if it were absolute?

If I read your account correctly, then you didn't say to him that you wanted to be with him for the holidays, that you wanted to meet his mom, that you wanted him to stand by you if you weren't welcome at his mom's. You didn't say you wanted anything different from a casino buffet with your son and dad.

Meanwhile, if you think a casino buffet is depressing, then why is/was it even an option? Your dinner partners are real people offering real companionship and representing three generations. Surely you could have collaborated on a meal at home, gotten silly, tried a bizarre new recipe; invited friends over who would otherwise have been alone; gone on a day trip to a place you've always wondered about. Surely you could have made reservations at a restaurant that you didn't equate with defeat? Or gone to the casino with quarters in your pocket and a what-the-hell in your heart?

Dysfunction in your extended family might be something you have to accept, but you don't have to keep deferring to it in your own home. When you don't have something you want, it's your job, and no one else's, either to get it or spin your straw into gold.

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In other words, make your own celebrations on your own terms, and invite your boyfriend to join you. If he says no and cites his mom's gatherings as the reason - and doesn't invite you and yours - then bring the question directly to him of reconciling your exclusion with his talk of marriage. You can't complain about his non-response if you non-ask him to respond.

And if he responds in a way you don't respect, then tell him so - and get spinning. Pining to be at his mother's table focuses your mind and heart on what you don't have. If instead you think creatively, explore all of the options you control, and choose the most appealing one, then you'll be investing yourself in enjoying what you do have. There's nothing more worthy of celebration than that. When gatherings have a joyous host, grown sons are more likely to blow off their judgmental moms to attend.

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