

About You

By HARRIETT MUHAMMAD

DEAR HARRIETT: I'm nineteen and have a sister that's a year younger. Our parents are on the conservative side, and have always planned most of the things that we have done in life. Now we both have fiances and my mother, especially, is trying to plan our weddings and delay our wedding date in order to do as much for us as she possibly can. We want to marry soon, but she wants us to wait a year.

She has been a wonderful mother, even though she is overly protective and a bit domineering and we had planned to wait a while longer so as to please her. My fiance and I are making our plans and are saving up a nice sum of money.

The other day my sister confided in me and what she told me really knocked me for a loop. I almost wish she hadn't told me anything because of the pressure she put me in. I found out that my sister has been slipping out with her fiance late at night when we thought she was in her room.

She said she loves him and wants to be with him. She was slipping out because my mother won't allow us to see our fiances every single night—like she is doing. I'm afraid as to what consequences may come of this sneaking business and am rather confused as to whether or not I should interfere in any way. What do you advise?

L. N. R.

NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

DEAR L. N. R.

Your sister is sneaking out at nights in order not to upset her mother's plans, but if your mother were to find out what is going on wouldn't she be even more upset? It would be best for your sister to marry now if she is sure she is ready for marriage, rather than to expose

herself to possible shame and unhappiness.

Marriage is an important decision for a mature couple and your sister and her fiance are acting like delinquents. They should be grown enough to realize their human weaknesses and mature enough to be able to set their own wedding date and stick to it. This would be the ideal thing to expect.

But if they are not strong enough to do this, there is another alternative that is better than this present course. If your sister thinks that her early marriage would really upset your mother and be damaging it would even be better to marry now secretly even if it means re-marrying for a show later.

This is possible and has been done before, even though its slightly less than ideal. You, big sister, should tell your sister about the seriousness of the situation and get her to take some kind of action. Her present course can only lead to a painful discovery, an undesirable pregnancy or a sense of guilt that could be very damaging.

Something on your mind? Write and tell me about it.

Harriett Muhammad

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