

First love

Each month, we send two former lovers on a date to see what happens

“We didn’t realise what we had”

Jenny, 28, an architectural assistant from Solihull

Ed was constantly trying to get my attention when we met in November 2018 and I found him a bit annoying. I was with friends at a bar in Brixton, and Ed came over trying to dance with us. I thought he was fit, but full of himself. However, I quickly fell for his charm.

The following weekend, I invited him to my house-warming party. From there, our relationship developed. We’d eat out or he’d invite me over for dinner, and we met each other’s siblings early on, which I don’t normally do.

I fell in love with Ed because of his calm aura; I felt so at peace around him. I realised I really liked him when he cooked me breakfast after a night out – he spent an hour making poached eggs, grilled tomatoes and avocado.

Ed was the first partner I’d had since my twin brother passed away four years previously. He encouraged me to talk about it, and on my brother’s and my birthday, he bought me a rare bottle of wine he remembered I liked. Gestures like that cemented our bond. We were together for six months and never argued, but because we’d both been single for a long time and were fiercely independent, we struggled to open up and find time for each other.

It was a mutual break-up, but I was still sad. We decided the timing wasn’t right, and that something was missing. In hindsight, maybe we had an over-romanticised view of a relationship, as we’d both seen our parents be so in love.

I enjoyed seeing Ed again on the date. It was flirty and there’s definitely still something there. We didn’t realise what we had until we lost it. Now that we’ve had some time to reflect, I think we could make it work.



WOULD YOU SEE HIM AGAIN?

I’d like to see Ed again, if he wants to take me out on a date. We could never be just friends, though. I don’t think it’s over yet.



WOULD YOU SEE HER AGAIN?

I wouldn’t shut the door on seeing Jenny again. The timing would have to be right. I think I’ll know when I’m ready to let someone in.



“I wasn’t ready to commit”

Ed, 31, an imports manager from Kent

When I first spotted Jenny across the bar, I found her dance moves hilarious. She does her own thing, which is what I immediately liked about her. We exchanged numbers, but she didn’t reply to my texts for a few days. I think she was playing hard to get.

I loved Jenny’s independence and her strong personality. She’s been through a lot and just keeps fighting. We’re both very family-oriented, which is important to me. It was a big moment for Jenny when I met her older brother, and she’d talk to me about her twin brother passing away.

My favourite memory is the New Year’s Eve we spent together. We had dinner at mine, went to the river to watch the fireworks, then had a party with all of our friends.

I opened up more than she did, which I found hard as I wanted to get closer to her. But then at Christmas she got me some sweet gifts, which was so thoughtful as we hadn’t been seeing each other long.

Eventually, the relationship ended because I wasn’t ready to commit. I wanted to focus on my family business and felt the timing wasn’t right. I hoped the decision was mutual, but it was more me, if I’m honest.

It was fun seeing each other again. We caught up and went over the reasons why our relationship didn’t work, but I’m not sure I want to take it further romantically.

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AS TOLD TO EMILY GULLA. PHOTOGRAPHS ANTONIO PETRONZIO. HAIR AND MAKE-UP CAMILLA AKEHURST AT LHA, USING MAC COSMETICS AND AVEDA. JENNY AND ED DINED AT SIX STOREYS SOHO (SIXSTOREYS.COM)