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Venus & Mars

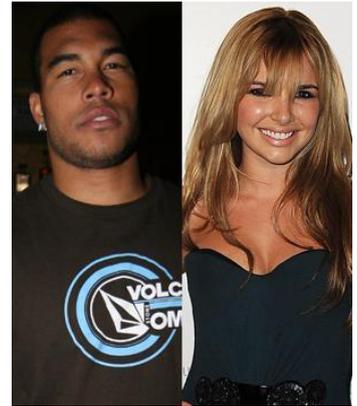
Every week Cosmopolitan's very own Venus & Mars give their take on the most talked about love, sex and relationships stories. See where the his 'n' hers views clash, collide and occasionally complement each other.



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Is chivalry for wusses?

Girls Aloud Nadine's American footballer boyfriend Jason Bell was pictured lifting her over a puddle. So is he a true gentleman or trying too hard?



Mars

It's my daily work dilemma . By some miracle I'm first in, reception's empty and the lift is on its way. I've got my coffee, unplugged my mp3 and I'm good to go. But as I wait for the lift to arrive I'm joined by a number of female staff colleagues. Here we go again.

The thing is I am closest to the lift. When the lift doors open it makes perfect sense for me to go in first. I've been waiting there the longest, I'm at the front of the queue. But there's this voice inside my head - a voice from somewhere in my dim and distant childhood - saying 'Ladies first.' So that's what I do.

Like a trainee traffic cop, I gesture for the two girls to my right to hop in. Then I realise there's someone else behind me so I step aside and let her through. But now just as I'm about to duck in after them, I see another female workmate coming through the revolving doors. So I wait for her as well. It takes a fair few seconds for her to reach us but no, I'll wait. In the end it gets so I'm checking half way back down the street to see if there's any other members of the female population getting off a bus that need ushering in before I can finally get on board.

And my etiquette nightmare isn't over yet. We've still got to deal with the getting out bit.

I'm in the lift, squeezed sardine-like against six women, but now I'm at the front again. How the hell am I going to let them out first without making it look like I'm the biggest wuss in the world?

I know. I'll check my mobile. Yes, that's it. Study my texts very intently. Look, I'm far too preoccupied to get out first . I'll just tuck myself back against the side of the lift here, tap a couple of random buttons and then everyone else will be out. No, no, after you.

Finally I get out at my floor, let three more women come back out before I go in, give way to the girl carrying the teas, wait for another to hang up her coat and that's it, I'm done. Phew!

Venus

I must confess Mars gets a bit of a rough deal on this one. Take the dating game, for instance...

Mars: "Shall I get there early? Girls don't like waiting in pubs on their own, do they? I'll get there 15 minutes early."

Venus: "Hmm, second thoughts this tops too booby, back to the red top. I'll miss the train but he won't mind it's a girl's prerogative to be late, right? Anyway, it's only 15 minutes late."

Mars: "Will she expect me to pay? The place she's picked is pretty pricey. It's going to wipe me out. She seems pretty independent. I think they like to go dutch don't they? I don't want her to think I'm sexist."

Venus: "He could have at least offered to pay. Obviously I would have insisted on going dutch but that's not the point. So it's confirmed: chivalry is dead."

Mars: "Oh god, isn't it supposed to be the manly thing to take control and order the wine. But I don't know anything about wine. Ooh, I think she's going to the bathroom. I'll get the waiter to help me choose something to impress her."

Venus: "I can't believe he's ordered the wine without asking me. I don't even like Chardonnay. Typical man. He's obviously a controlling retrosexual. He'll be telling me my dress is too short next."

Mars: "She seems to be getting a bit flirty. I think she likes me. It would be a shame to cut the night short. I'll ask her if she wants to go on for a night-cap."

Venus: "He's trying to get me drunk. It's so obvious. He only wants one thing. Well, he can think again."

Mars: "We'll never get a cab around here. I'll lend her my coat and walk her home. She'll like that."

Venus: "The coat trick. That old chestnut. You're not getting your way with me tonight pal. I really thought he liked me but no he's just like the rest. I've had enough."

Mars: "I really like this girl. I'm going to ignore those stirrings down there. It's a peck on the cheek then I'm off. Then I'll ask her out again in three days. Do it properly. I don't want to lose this one."

Venus: "I can't believe he turned down my offer of a coffee. The humiliation. He doesn't fancy me. I hate men. They're so selfish. What a prick!"
