

by Bette-Jane Raphael

## How good is he at twisting you around his little finger? Take this quiz and find out.

Can your lover push you around, get you to do whatever he wants? Is he a super manipulator? Find out here.

- 1. He wants you to cook for him more often, so he
- a. compliments you lavishly on even your most meager efforts, saying things like, "I love what you do with bologna!"
- b. says okay, he'll cook the dinner, and then turns out something that might have been washed down to Malibu in a mud slide.
- c. reminisces about his last girlfriend's wizardry in the kitchen, while wondering aloud if she still lives at the same address.
- 2. He wishes you'd be neater around the house, so he
- a. explains that for a man who likes order, it's distressing to walk into an apartment that looks as if it's just been burglarized.
  - b. goes around picking up after you and

asking dumb questions like, "What's this?" while holding up a perfectly self-evident three-month-old dust ball.

- c. takes pictures of the bathroom after you've left it, to send to your mother.
  - 3. He wants you to stick to a diet, so he
- a. promises to take you to your favorite restaurant once you reach your weight goal.
- b. unearths a photograph taken on the beach your first weekend together five years ago and looks at it longingly, saying something cryptic like, "Who would have guessed . . .?"
- c. picks up the phone whenever it rings so he can have the chance to yell, "Hey tubby, it's for you."
- 4. He wants you to become more economical, so he
- a. spends an afternoon showing you with graphs and charts how your joint incomes do not equal your single expenditures.
- b. confiscates your credit cards and checkbook for something he cynically calls 'your own good.'
- c. takes to wearing frayed shirts, turning the thermostat down to forty, and suggesting macaroni for dinner.

- 5. He wishes you'd be nicer to his parents, so he
- a. promises he'll never again greet your visiting mother with the words, "You here again?
- b. tells you that his mother mentioned she thinks you're much less mousey than his last girlfriend.
- c. wonders aloud why you don't care for his mother, since the two of you are so much alike.
- 6. He'd like you to be more interested in sports events, so he
- a. tries to fire your enthusiasm by telling you some fascinating and little-known facts about the evolution of the hockey puck.
- b. turns a deaf ear to your hints about pearl earrings and, for your birthday, buys you a twenty-pound book entitled Thrilling Moments on the Gridiron.
- c. turns in your airline tickets to Italy for bus tickets to Cooperstown, New York, home of the Baseball Hall of Fame.
  - 7. He wants more freedom, so he
- a. explains that he thinks it would be better for your relationship if you spent one or two nights a week apart. (This is something men actually believe!)
- b. starts referring to you as "the old ball and chain.'
- c. starts referring to you as "The Warden."
- 8. He wishes you'd be less critical of him, so he
- a. makes a deal with you: You don't tell him what's wrong with him and he won't tell you what's wrong with you (although nothing, of course, is).
- b. ungallantly points out that a woman who's overdrawn at the bank and can't fit into any of last year's clothes is hardly in a position to run somebody else's life.
- c. buys you a punching bag and says, "Here, now maybe you'll leave me alone."
- 9. He wants you to drop the subject of marriage, so he
- a. feigns delight at the prospect and then immediately mentions taking over your bank accounts.
- b. tells you, when you bring up the subject, that he's not yet ready to be, as he quaintly puts it, "buried alive.
- c. gets a wild-eyed look and steps out onto the window ledge whenever you mention the word "commitment."

Scoring: Give your partner 1 point for every (a) answer, 2 points for every (b) answer, and 3 points for every (c) answer. Then add up the points.

If he scored between 9 and 14 points, watch out. You have a master manipulator on your hands. If you're not careful, he'll have you cooking Chinese banquets for twenty with one hand and ironing his underpants with the other.

If he scored between 15 and 21, he's probably no better at pushing you around than you are at pushing him around. He might get you to do all his Christmas shopping or pack his suitcase, but the chances that he can get you to entertain his cloddish friend Murray (the one who insists on greeting you with the words "Hiya, Chiquita Banana!") are remote.

If he scored over 22 points, relax. This

guy couldn't get ice to melt.