

To tell—or not to tell—the truth. *Marie Claire* talks to twelve women who had to decide whether to cover up or come clean. What would you do in their shoes?

BY SHERRY AMATENSTEIN



NANCY, PERSONAL ADS EDITOR

I handle the personals in a popular magazine. It's rare that I scan the names of the people who place the ads, but one day I noticed a familiar name: A dear friend's long-term boyfriend had placed an ad. But as sick as it made me, it's my job to respect the confidentiality of the advertiser. Since I'm such an opinionated person, not saying anything was torture. But I reminded myself I'm not the judge and jury for other people. This was three years ago. They're married now.

I know
my
best
friend's
lover is
cheating....

other moral dilemmas



LAURA, JOURNALIST

A while ago, I was dating a guy, Don*, whose brother, Rick*, was estranged from his parents. Rick told me that one of the reasons was that his parents had come to him years earlier and said, "We need to borrow \$10,000 for Don's college education, but don't tell him, because we don't want him to feel bad." Rick gave his parents the money, and they never paid it back. Don had mentioned to me several times that his parents never gave him a dime for college. I wrestled with this delicate information for a long time, and decided to keep my mouth shut. I figured telling Don or Rick the truth would just cause more pain for everybody.



JULIE, SOCIAL WORKER

My husband Murray and I were both struggling New York actors. We'd been married about two years when I got an offer to spend the summer teaching and playing the lead in a show out west. At the time, Murray and I were fighting a lot—I really wanted to start a family, he didn't. While I was away (Murray didn't visit me at all), I met another actor, Mark. The two of us really hit it off and we spent almost all our time together. He was newly divorced, very handsome and sensitive, and I was feeling vulnerable. I really tussled with the temptation to have an affair, but I didn't cheat on Murray. Marriage and fidelity just seemed too important. However, one night, Mark and I did share a brief but very sweet kiss. My second dilemma came when I returned home and debated whether or not to confess my kiss. I decided against it. Why hurt Murray needlessly? A few years later, when faced with a similar situation, Murray ended up cheating on me. When I found out, the marriage was over. But I'm still glad I didn't sleep with Mark that summer.



SUE, FLORIST

A few years ago, I introduced one of my closest friends to an acquaintance who ran a charitable children's organization. She desperately wanted him to give her a job, and talked him into interviewing her. My dilemma: I knew that although she was a very dear, sweet person, she wasn't a reliable one, and wouldn't be a good worker. I didn't want to ruin things for her, but when this man asked me my opinion of her as a potential employee, I couldn't lie. He didn't hire her. I felt guilty, but I'd make the same decision again.

LINDA, ATTORNEY

One day, my husband's friend from work, a nurse, mentioned that she'd gone out on a date with one of her coworkers, a medical resident, and discovered that the guy was married. When my husband told me about this, I was furious! That medical resident was married to a friend of mine. We bumped into my friend soon after that at a



hospital dinner. I asked why I hadn't seen her at the gym for a few weeks and she said that she and her husband were having problems—she thought he was cheating on her. Well, I decided

at once to confirm her suspicions. I flat-out told her what I had heard, right there in the middle of the party. I felt she was entitled to know, to not be a victim. She didn't make a scene—she looked as if I had given her confirmation or justification—but they did leave instantly. My husband was really pissed at me for telling, because he had to work side-by-side with the cheater on a daily basis. But, still, I would do it all over again.



DORRI, GRAPHIC DESIGNER

A good friend of mine was dating

a guy I'll call Bill for three years, and seemed on the way to getting engaged. One night, Bill and I ended up in the back seat of a car together and we had—a moment. It was weird. I had some sort of crush on him, I guess. I didn't want a relationship with him, but I was just in my early 20s and there we were in the car and suddenly we kissed. I'd never done anything like that before, and haven't since. I thought to myself: If they get engaged, I have to tell her. Otherwise, I didn't see the point of hurting her. I was relieved when they broke up over something else, because I definitely would have told her before letting her walk down the aisle with a guy who would kiss her good friend.

*Names have been changed.