



then he threw away my key  
and left me open to all  
many came  
all went  
finally I took the key  
and locked me back up  
not allowing anyone to enter,  
and threw away the key  
one kind person ventured  
under the trash that had piled  
high over my key  
he was considerate enough  
to find my key  
which no one had time to find  
he started to open me  
but didn't get very far  
then he left  
like every one else in  
this human world of  
imperfection  
I will not allow anyone  
in my heart  
for a long time

This is your heart.  
This is your heart broken.  
Any questions?

Do you ever wonder why dating—the way most of us do it—doesn't work very well? Why the shortest distance between a blissful crush and wishing you never met someone is going out with him or her?

Dating can be a messy business (this is just a general observation—skip this part if you think you're the exception to the rule). Here's how most dating breaks down.

#### **PHASE ONE—GUESS WHO**

The mess begins when someone—let's call her Sophie—tries to figure out what sort of person the sort of person she wants to go out with wants to go out with. Are you following this?

Generally, Sophie has someone in mind—Joaquin or Billy Joe or Shaquille or Haing, could be anyone—because he's cute or looks like he needs rescuing or whatever.

#### **PHASE TWO—MASQUERADE**

Sophie figures out what Haing wants and says, "I can be that." Then she fakes her way to romance. Sooner or later, directly or indirectly, Sophie tells a lie to maintain the masquerade. It's doomed from the start—anyone can see that. The only thing missing is the voice of that lady from the "Nick at Nite" laugh track saying, "Uh-oh!"

#### **PHASE THREE—GETTING SERIOUS**

Getting serious is easy to spot—just look for two high school juniors acting like married people, except they live with their parents. Neither can make plans without consulting the other. They cross the borders of married sexual behavior. They can't talk about where they'd like to be in five years without somebody getting their feelings hurt. They buy stuff together. Sophie finds it's easier to have sex (which makes her feel close, temporarily at least, to Haing) than talk seriously with him.

#### **PHASE FOUR—THE CINDERELLA SYNDROME**

Eventually, the clock strikes 12 and Sophie turns into the poor stepsister. It's humiliating and sad, and she feels she's lost something she can't replace. She's distracted (or intensely focused), she can't sleep (or can't wake up), she gains some weight (or loses weight rapidly). For a while, Sophie wonders if she'll make it. But, after a few weeks,