

COMMUNITY

DEAR JAMIE

Sharing and Caring

Dear Jamie,

I met a really cool girl on Tinder a few weeks ago and we ended up spending a night together. I asked to meet up again but she blocked me.

Just today, I met my friend's girlfriend and it was the same girl I met on Tinder.

Do I tell him? I'm worried that it will both ruin his relationship with his girlfriend and kill our friendship.

What's the best way to handle this? Is mum the word?

-Confused in Shenzhen

Dear Confused,

Cue the dramatic organs, because we have a good ol' fashioned Tinder plot twist – similar to a *Planet of the Apes* plot twist in that it results in loss of faith in humanity.

First: get your dates straight. How long has your friend and his new lass been exclusive – does your belly bumping fall outside their timeline?

If, on the other hand, you learn she betrayed your friend and you were a tool of the trade – well, you owe your friend the truth.

You see, relationships are fickle things: blooming, burning out, fading like embers in the wind... what I'm trying to say is: the end is nigh.

Sit down with your buddy and explain what happened. How he reacts is up to him, but don't be surprised if he leaves the conversation shy a girlfriend and you on shaky ground for a while.

Look at the bright side, the 'really cool' girl might unblock you now.

-Jamie

In a pickle? Relish it. Email me: jamieinchina@outlook.com.

AROUND TOWN



SOCIAL SKILLS

Toastmasters

Rather than lords of bread and butter, Toastmasters is a worldwide group that focuses on improving members' ability to speak publicly – or toast, say at weddings, or other events.

Formally founded by a dapper-looking Ralph C. Smedley in 1924 in California, Toastmasters has spread across the world, including to Shenzhen, where the official website lists more than 40 groups that meet regularly.

Online, many gatherings are designated English, Chinese or bilingual, and list Shenzhen locations ranging from the CBD, Shekou to the factory outskirts.

"You have to do presentations, you have to prepare and deliver a speech," says Veronica Chen, a Shenzhen-based art teacher and eight-year member of the group. "You inspire people and that's why I like it."

Each group has slightly different rules about joining, according to Chen, and contact information is available online. Member fees go to renting the space where events are held in.

Chen says the cordial atmosphere results in cross-industry networking, as members work in fields ranging from education to high-powered finance.

The focus is on developing leadership and communication, but Shenzhen's status as a city of singletons has actually lent the local branches an unofficial motto.

"Toastmasters has a slogan: where leaders are made," says Chen. "But in Shenzhen, we have another slogan: where couples are made."

For more information about groups in Shenzhen visit toastmasters.com. Meetings are held daily across the city.