

Can This Marriage Be Saved? A Quiz

1. Which best describes your reasons for marrying him?

- a. You have no idea. You were only twenty, too young to know what you were doing.
- b. You have no idea. You were twenty, old enough to know better.
- c. This is what you're trying to figure out. You weren't in love with him. You weren't even attracted to him, even though he was a perfectly nice person, clean and wiry, his prematurely receding hairline and thick brows and goofy humor reminding you of a Muppet, sweet and cartoonish. You felt toward him a fraternal affection.
- d. You were trying to somehow fill the emptiness that came over you at dusk the months after your first love disappeared.
- e. Marriage seemed like a healthier refuge than drugs or drinking. You imagined escaping into it, like going to sleep and waking up a new person.
- f. Your husband-to-be cried the day he confessed to sleeping with an old girlfriend. You were in bed with the flu, and you thought, Oh, good. He'd brought you milkshakes and roses; he'd played endless rounds of gin rummy. But now he was saying, "I'm so sorry." You tried to shrug off the blankets, turn the pillow for a cool spot, but the bedclothes were weighed down by something: his head, burrowing into tousled sheets. That's when you realized he was crying,

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pinning covers against your feverish skin. “It’s okay,” you said, patting his head.

- g. You were saddened by his anguish, seeing in it your own anguish over your first love, seeing in it all the world’s unfulfilled longings.
- h. He begged you to marry him, and you knew you would never get what you wanted, so why compound the grief by denying him what he wanted too?
- i. One evening you fell asleep while he was fondling your breasts, and you woke to find him wearing your bra tied to his head like a bonnet. And you thought, I could do worse than wake up every morning to someone who makes me laugh.
- j. You came from a chaotic home with junk mail piled all over the kitchen counter, tilted lampshades and crooked pictures, dead bugs speckling light covers, a necklace of Christmas bulbs along the roofline year-round. His parents’ home was always cool, with deep, soft chairs, fans of *Architectural Digests* and *Home and Gardens* on the coffee table, thick carpets, polished floors, gin and tonics in small heavy glasses. You thought, I could do worse than be part of a family so much more refined than mine.
- k. You were always reading the women’s magazines your mother subscribed to, *McCall’s*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Ladies’ Home Journal*, which gave a nod to the idea that women now had careers and lives of their own, but still assumed that all women aspired to marriage and motherhood, valuing domestic life above all. That a home should be a safe haven, a tranquil respite from an impersonal world. You yearned for that. He might not be quite what you had envisioned as a life partner, but if you could have that refuge and peace, did it matter?

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- l. You thought, Won't I regret it if my heartlessness drives him away and there's never anyone else?
- m. You knew that some part of you would always be out of his reach, a part that could never be touched or hurt, a part you could preserve just for yourself, and that seemed like a good thing after the devastating loss of your first love.
- n. Your first love failed to reappear and execute a dramatic rescue at the altar, the kind in books and movies where right when you draw back a breath to say, "I do," he comes running up the aisle, or leaping from the balcony, or shouting at the window, and you pinch up the sides of your wedding gown and run to meet him.
- o. You told yourself that after the wedding, by force of will, you would be attracted to your husband-to-be, that his touch would melt you and give you shivers at the same time, the way your first love's did.
- p. All of the above.
- q. None of the above.
- r. You're too confused by the tangled mess you got yourself into. You have no idea.