

# Josie and the three cheese lasagne

by Erin Riley

Before COVID-19 Josie was dating someone who wasn't very nice. Josie wasn't actually dating this person. They were technically 'in a relationship' but to Josie it felt like dating. She felt like she had been dating the person who wasn't very nice for two years and three months. For some people the idea that a relationship that is only a fresh two years and three months old and still has the glow of early dates might sound lovely, because it stirs up the image of the heady blissful early days of romance. The times when you project all of the nice things you want from a relationship on to the hot person you have recently met, fuck all the time, barely fight, have difficulty faulting them and talk of all the cute things you might do into the future like move in together or foster a small dog.

No, get that image out of your mind. For Josie, being in a relationship that felt like dating carried all of the early unknowns of dating which are fun initially but get old pretty quick. Like not being sure whether to text an hour after you last saw the person or the next morning so as to not seem to suffocatingly keen or wondering if the other person is even interested in you. When you wonder whether you could send a nude with your cunt showing or if that's 'too much.' Josie's relationship carried all the destabilising parts of dating where you never quite know where you stand and you dare not dream too big in case they are dating a few of your other queer single friends.

Being 'in a relationship' with this person who was not very nice involved Josie organising snack packs for the beach, buying the nicest cheeses, spending less time with friends, doing a lot of driving and enduring hours of uninterrupted monologues from the person she was in a relationship with but felt like she was dating. It involved very little sex and Josie had cut her feet several times walking on eggshells. Josie would often say to her flatmate that she just wanted to get fucked by someone hot and that she was sick of buying cheese she didn't even like.

For Josie, it was as if she had been 'socially distancing' for the entirety of the relationship. Just a few weeks earlier, when Josie texted the not very nice person and asked when she might come over all she got back was a text that read: 'no can do this w/e.' By the time COVID19 had reached Sydney, Josie had had a gutful of the relationship.

The Government's public health message for people to self-isolate and not visit other people was all Josie needed to stop allowing this not very nice person who has been masquerading as a girlfriend for far too long into her apartment. Josie stopped visiting her immediately too and, eventually stopped

answering the phone. She found that when you are dating someone there is less need for robust explanations around your decision-making. Josie went on the internet, did some research and decided she would try ghosting. She replied to a few of the not very nice person's texts. Initially she used words. Then she stopped asking any questions and eventually gave up on punctuation altogether. Then she just used emojis.

A few weeks later, Josie went on Tinder. She put up a hot photo of herself at a party. While it was the middle of a pandemic, Josie was hopeful to get some babes lined up. Josie had six matches within the first week of being on Tinder. She didn't go to bed until 3am for a whole week because she was just swiping madly. Josie matched with an academic who promised that once the restrictions eased she would come over and do some Shibari on Josie. Josie had also neglected her bisexual side and so opened up her search and connected with a guy called Brent who, as it turned out, was the hot guy from unit one who she thought looked a bit gay. Josie took a more liberal reading of term 'household' – extending it to the unit block and had Brent come and fuck her without so much as a word. She made him take all the leftover cheese. He used it to make her a 3-cheese lasagne, which he left on the doorstep the next day with a note: Again?