

# Sex AND THE NOT SO SINGLE GIRL

## If you don't know me by now...

*Jo Usmar's boyfriend isn't the man she thought he was*



PHOTOGRAPH ANTONIO PETRONZIO. HAIR AND MAKEUP VICTORIA BARNES. USING AVON. STYLING JARED GREEN. \*NAMES HAVE BEEN CHANGED

**W**hen I moved into Ben's flat last May, I'd totally forgotten that it has a cellar. I hate cellars – they're dark, dingy, damp places where people go to get murdered. While I grudgingly admit it's useful for storing my boxes of old crap – swimming certificates, troll dolls, tear-stained love letters to Michael Jackson – I still don't want to go down there, especially on my own and especially at night. There's one of those massive industrial freezers at the back, chained shut. *Chained*. With a padlock. We don't have the key and neither do the estate agents. *'Dead body in here'* might as well be illuminated over it in flashing lights.

I had to go down there the other night to get some more tomato juice (I'm addicted to Bloody Marys) and was rooting through a box when I realised something was stuck under my foot. After screaming for a little bit in the dark, I gingerly bent down and picked it up. It was a yamaka – one of those skull caps that Jewish men wear. But Ben's not Jewish. Has a Jewish man been in our cellar? Is he still down there? **IS HE IN THE FREEZER?**

I legged it upstairs, downed two Bloody Marys and waited for Ben to come home. 'There's a Jewish man in our cellar,' I shouted as soon as he opened the door, waving the yamaka at him. 'Wow, I forgot I had this!' Ben took the cap and blew some dust off it. 'It's yours?' I asked. 'But, er, you're not Jewish.'

'Well, I am a bit. My dad is, but it's supposed to pass down through your mum and she's not,' he

announced. 'I got this when I ran away to Israel at 15 to find my Jewish roots.'

'When you ran away to Israel?' How drunk *was* I? 'Yeah, I was there for a month.' And with that, Ben wandered off, smiling fondly at his yamaka.

I've been with Ben for more than six years and never knew he was 'kind of' Jewish or that he'd once run away to Israel. What kind of girlfriend does that make me? But more to the point, what other stuff don't I know about him? And why do I suddenly feel like he's much more interesting than I am? You wouldn't have caught me bugging off to Israel on my own at 15. I didn't even go to the school toilets on my own. Four of us girls all went together. Every time.

I angrily stomped off to the pub to meet my friends and moan about my unadventurous past and mysterious 'new' boyfriend. 'I feel like I don't know him *at all* anymore,' I whinged. 'At Christmas, Markus told me he'd been in the army and knows how to use a machine gun,' my friend Sarah announced.

'And I just found out that Paul\*' was in jail for over a year when he was 18,' another friend, Amy\*, added.

Oh. Perhaps finding out weird and wonderful things about your boyfriend is totally normal, no matter how long you've been together... So now I'm wondering whether he's found anything out about me that surprised *him*? Maybe I'll casually leave those Michael Jackson letters out where he'll see them. **”** Actually, maybe not.

• Read Jo's Sex And The Not So Single Girl blog at [Cosmopolitan.co.uk/blogs](http://Cosmopolitan.co.uk/blogs)

*I've been with Ben six years – what else didn't I know about him?\**