

THE OPINION



OK or not OK

DATING THE

WANTED

We are a qu
firm seekin
CPA for man
communica



Is hooking up with the help a recipe for love or disaster?

She could probably have any man she wanted – from the richest business tycoon through to the hunkiest model, but while most of us spend our time lusting after the likes of Ryan Gosling and Robert Pattinson, for bona-fide A-lister Jennifer Lopez, nothing seems to appeal more than a member of her own staff!

First off, she married her back-up dancer Cris Judd in 2001. Then, after a marriage to and divorce from Marc Anthony, JLo, 43, rushed headfirst into a romance with her 25-year-old dancer, Casper Smart!

Despite the 18-year age gap, and the problems dating someone on the payroll could present, Jen's hinted that this could be it for her. 'I like [marriage]. I like the idea of it. As a girl, you never really give up on that fairytale,' she says. '[With Casper] it's a sweet relationship – it's kind; it's healthy.'

And there's no reason why it shouldn't work. After all, she's not the first celeb to have a relationship with the hired help after having tried, and failed, to make it work with a fellow star. Just look at Madonna, 54, who's been going strong with her dancer, Brahim Zaibat, 25, since 2010, following the collapse of her marriage to director Guy Richie. Or Heidi Klum, who's been dating bodyguard Martin Kristen since her 2012 split from Seal.

'THE CELEBRITY FEELS AT EASE WITH THEIR STAFF'

But why is there such an obsession with dating the staff in Tinseltown? Australian psychologist Jo Lamble believes it's about taking the safe option. 'These people are already trusted, which must be very important to anyone who wants to keep their private life private,' she tells *OK!*. 'Their help would have seen them at their worst and so the celebrity feels at ease with their staff.'

That's certainly a theory Heidi, 39, would subscribe to. 'He's been helping me for four years now. I trust him,' the model mum says of her bodyguard beau. 'He's a great man. We just got to know each other from a different side.'

Another plus... there's no competing egos! 'Martin is not looking for the spotlight. He prefers to stay in the background,' Heidi says.

It comes as no surprise then that after Madonna's marriage to Guy broke down amid rumours of a power struggle, the Material Girl moved on with an unknown – ensuring



★★★★★
HELP WANTED
*Heidi Klum looking for:
 Bodyguard who's good
 with kids and not
 afraid of seals!*

OK?

ESTAFF

The OPINION

she'd be the star once more. 'Women are here to smash man's ego, plain and simple. Accept this and life will be better,' she once said. Scary stuff!

And it's not just dating a staffer that seems to be so enticing, there are also the affairs with the help that some celebs get caught up in. The nanny seems to be the most favoured mistress.

Just look at Ethan Hawke who, after divorcing Uma Thurman, married their kids' nanny, Ryan Shawhughes. Robin Williams also married nanny Marsha Garces, after splitting from his wife. And, of course, Jude Law famously cheated on Sienna Miller with his kids' carer, Daisy Wright.

So what's the appeal? Australian clinical psychologist Dr Janet Hall says it all comes down to power. 'The celeb wants a secure attachment with minimal drama and maximum connection. They get that because they have the power over the help,' she tells *OK!*. 'The help is bathing in the star-glitter, "I'm the chosen one - look at me!" but because of the powerplay, the relationship is often corrupt.'

And there are even more hurdles to overcome for those in celeb/employee relationships, even when it's not based on an affair. While dating a regular Joe might seem appealing, experts say it can be a tough task for a civilian to cope with the spotlight, let alone deal with their partner's long hours, globetrotting and on-set romances! 'The one not in the spotlight might eventually feel lesser than their famous partner,' Dr Hall explains. 'The star always has the money; this in turn means that emotional boundaries can become blurred. In psychology, we call it "enmeshment", which means they are depending on each other too much.'

This was the case for Kim Kardashian, 32, and her former bodyguard Shengo Deane, who split in 2010 because Shengo says, 'I didn't want to ask for \$50 to go to the movies.'

The same fate awaited Mel B, 38, and her dancer ex-hubby, Jimmy Gulzar, who says he got sick of running her errands. 'I'd cook every single day. I'd run around and make sure Melanie had what she wanted,' he says. 'Later in our marriage, I asked her, "Every time you go, 'Goldcard,

'Goldcard' and complain that this isn't right, let me ask you: when was the last time you made me a cup of tea?"

And she couldn't answer me.'

It was the opposite for Britney Spears, 31, who hooked up with her agent Jason Trawick and made him her co-conservator. Sources say that having control of Brit's affairs made him feel like a 'babysitter' and killed the passion, so they called off their engagement.

Perhaps this is why for some celebs, dating people in the industry isn't preferable. Matt Damon met barmaid Luciana Barroso, 36, in 2003 and, two years

later, they tied the knot. They now

have three kids and recently renewed their vows. So what's the key to their success? Matt says Luciana's non-celeb status gives them the privacy they need. 'My wife's a civilian and that takes a lot of pressure off,' says Matt, 42, who is also stepdad to Luciana's eldest daughter.

As with dating a staffer, Dr Hall says this dynamic can be a good option because it allows the star to shine. 'The civilians are independently successful in their own careers and don't want to compete in the glittery world of stardom, which creates a nice balance,' she tells *OK!* ●



BACKSEAT STRATEGY

Despite the absence of a 'civilian' in Jennifer Garner and Ben Affleck's relationship, Jen opted to take a step back from her career to better their marriage. 'I work less because Ben is so busy... we have three kids, that's just part of the deal,' she says

A-LIST OVERLOAD

Two big egos - and two big careers - in one relationship is often too much to handle!

No matter how perfect a match they seem to be, the passion between two stars tends to fade when one person's career soars as the other's struggles. When Reese Witherspoon met Ryan Phillippe in 1997, they were equals. But as Reese's star grew, Ryan hated being her sidekick, and their marriage crumbled. 'I was married to the highest-paid actress in the world,' Ryan says. 'It's not how I want to be defined.'



KATY PERRY & RUSSELL BRAND

RYAN PHILLIPPE & REESE WITHERSPOON

JOHNNY DEPP & KATE MOSS

BRUCE WILLIS & DEMI MOORE

LOVE WHO YOU LOVE...

IT'S OK!



Samaniha Jayne, Founder of Blue Label Life and dating expert, says the dynamic works

Forget the fame, and celebrities are just like you and me - they have feelings, want to be accepted and fall in love. I've worked with many celebrities over the years and sometimes they are even more nervous about dating than the rest of us. Normality is very attractive when you don't have it! Without the career competition, celebrities who date employees instead have a sounding board - someone who accepts them for who they are, understands their world but still serves as an escape from it. The star has a positive anchor to someone who is down to earth. An anchor is a positive association with someone or something, like the feelings associated with the smell of chocolate or a home-cooked roast or seeing a long-lost friend - it brings back beautiful memories. So dating the help is the perfect way to ensure egos don't clash, and to gain the normality so many stars seek.

IT WILL END BADLY!

NOT OK!



Marie Rowland, director of Talking-Matters, believes celeb/staff relationships are a no-go!

We all know when we work with people, that over time, intimacy can develop as we share more of ourselves. This happens across the board for mere mortals as well as glamorous celebrities. However, when people are taken out of this working context, often relationships lose their meaning and common values diminish over time, making it more difficult to sustain a relationship. In the case of celebrities, the other major factor is the power imbalance. A back-up dancer may have all the moves on a dance floor but, behind closed doors, inevitably the diva calls the shots. The change of context impacts on the power dynamic and that sense of two people being equal players. Close proximity can lead to a strong sexual connection but what else do they share? Heidi Klum, now in a relationship with her bodyguard, may be looking for that strong man to protect her, but she is the one who pays his way, making him vulnerable to her whims and demands. She actually has a strong-hold on him. Good relationships work when the power dynamic is even... where there are commonalities and shared values. Dating your back-up dancer is about circumstantial convenience, but he becomes redundant once the song is over.

TEXT BY FANCES KINDON