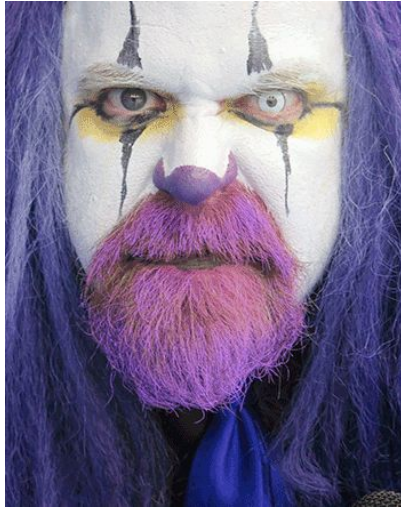


**What do I Know? I'm just a Clown : September / October 2014**  
**"Ask the Clown" : an advice column by Martin "the Clown" Barry**



Dear Clown,

I am a professional photographer and I have a bit of a problem. Clients, friends and other subjects that I photograph feel as though they can crop out the watermark on my work when they share the image. Is there anything I can do?

Sincerely,

Overexposed

Dear Overexposed,

This bit of etiquette has not been communicated as widely as it should.

Photographers use watermarks to establish copyright, protect, and brand their works. Once access to an electronic version of any work is granted, it is the responsibility of the recipient to maintain the work as is and provide proper credit. Cropping out watermarks implies that the work belongs to the party posting the work online or in print.

In an ideal world, everyone granted access to photographic work would credit appropriately and never crop out a watermark. My recommendation is use of a more obtrusive mark on the works you wish to restrict. These can be removed, but exposing the culprit is a bit easier.

Signed, the Clown

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Dear Clown,

My girlfriend and I have been together three years. She is a great person, but my feelings for her have faded over time. Our interaction is very routine lately. We work, we come home, have dinner, go to bed and start the cycle over the next day. I want more out of life than just what we do daily.

Recently, I have been talking to a female co-worker that seems to be adventurous and more outgoing than my girlfriend. The things she does in her free time are much more interesting than what I have been doing with mine. I would like to do something with her, but I know it would be hurtful to my girlfriend. What is your advice?

Sincerely,

Torn

Dear Torn,

Seriously? You are looking for the bigger, better deal. I am sure you are the shiny prize in this arrangement, so you feel the need to treat your girlfriend as a commodity to be traded up later. Frankly, you deserve whatever happens to you and your current girlfriend deserves better.

Your message implies that your girlfriend lives with you. So she gets blindsided while you roam about with the new interest. Nice. I am sure she really wanted to stir her life up at this time and find a new place to live. Have you considered that she made arrangements and sacrifices to make your living situation what it is right now? You could have put on a nice slow song and danced with her in your kitchen instead of writing this letter. I will come do that for her after you leave.

I did not see any real problems identified in your message. You complained of boredom. You can bring things into the relationship to make it less mundane. It is not her sole responsibility to entertain you and make sure that your weekly activities are engaging enough to maintain your attention. This is a two-way street. Make an effort. She may find YOU more interesting.

Signed, the Clown

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**Do you have a question for The Clown? Write him at [martin.barry@yahoo.com](mailto:martin.barry@yahoo.com)**