



Hearing Double: The Boyfriend Bracket

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Hello, and welcome to a special Valentine’s Day edition of Hearing Double, where I compare and contrast two unrelated songs of the same title and decide which title does the most justice!

For Valentine’s Day, we are holding an official battle of “Boyfriend” by Dove Cameron, Ariana Grande, Justin Bieber and Big Time Rush. There can only be one winner.

Round #1

Our first matchup is Dove Cameron versus Justin Bieber. These two songs are both trying to convince us that they should be a woman’s boyfriend. They even use similar phrases, with Bieber saying he “can be a gentleman, anything you want” and Cameron saying she “could be such a gentleman.”

One notable difference between the songs is that while Bieber is auditioning himself to be a boyfriend, Cameron is explicitly attempting to replace the boyfriend her love interest already has, saying she is going to “steal you from him.” She includes personal attacks on the current boyfriend, pointing out the ways he abandoned his girlfriend.

An even more notable difference is Cameron’s sapphic twist on the song, allowing her to subvert the classic im-

age of a boyfriend and joke about how “all [her] clothes would fit” if the girlfriend wanted to borrow them.

Bieber’s song paints a very upbeat, aspirational picture of him as a boyfriend, saying he’d “never let you go” and hyping up the hypothetical relationship. Although it’s undeniably a fun song with a great beat and catchy tune, its weakness lies in how general it is. As is typical of this era and genre of pop, the song is designed for mass appeal, while Cameron’s song manages to feel more intimate and seductive, as if she’s making a personal plea.

Dove Cameron will move on to the finals.

Round #2

Our next matchup pits Big Time Rush against Ariana Grande (along with Social House, who feature on Grande’s track).

Big Time Rush’s “Boyfriend” is their top song on Spotify and has captured many a nostalgic heart at parties and girls’ nights. There’s no argument that the song is catchy and downright fun, especially when you can sing it in a group and dance along. Unsurprisingly, this song also attempts to pitch the narrator as a potential boyfriend, with particular emphasis on his commitment to pursuing his love interest.

Big Time Rush does suffer from the same disadvantage as Bieber: it’s hard to make

a song with a lot of feeling when it’s designed to make millions of girls imagine it could be about them. Luckily for this “Boyfriend,” the song comes off as more wholesome than intimate, focusing on the cheerful music rather than the basic lyrics or surface-level emotion. Though it may not be a masterpiece for the ages, this “Boyfriend” does exactly what it’s trying to do: simply make the listener feel good.

Ariana Grande’s “boyfriend” is a melancholy dialogue between two self-declared “train wrecks” who are not dating but are jealous for each other and don’t want the other “to see nobody else” or “touch nobody else.”

The interplay between two people who are obviously going through the same struggle in this song is entertaining and open to interpretation. Although the couple is undoubtedly in love, they are working through their own issues while they pine for their other half. While it could be seen as an unhealthy obsession with someone you’re not dating, it can also be seen as a private commitment to someone you love while you’re still getting to a place where you can be in a relationship.

These are two very different songs with very different tones. Big Time Rush’s “Boyfriend” is a nostalgic classic, but the interplay between the

two characters in Grande’s “boyfriend” is ultimately more compelling.

Round #3: The ultimate “Boyfriend”

Now it’s time for the finals: Dove Cameron vs. Ariana Grande. The songs have similar vibes, but the lyrics tell diverging stories.

The pulsing music in Cameron’s “Boyfriend” reflects the intense personality Cameron is projecting through the sultry lyrics and intimate tone. The entire song comes together beautifully to play with the audience’s image of a boyfriend. Cameron’s mastery of tone almost makes you feel like she’s in the club flirting with you personally and doing a good job of it too.

Grande and Social House paint a relatable and realistic picture of what it means to love someone you can’t be

in a relationship with. The harmonies elevate the music to another level, a constant strength of Grande. The debate between whether the narrators are toxic or yearning adds a fun layer to the listening experience, which can be intensive or relaxed depending on the listener’s mood going into the song. However, Grande’s “boyfriend” doesn’t quite have the same power and intentionality behind it as Cameron’s.

It’s a close battle (between all four songs, not just our finalists), but Dove Cameron’s “Boyfriend” manages to earn the title.

Winner: Dove Cameron

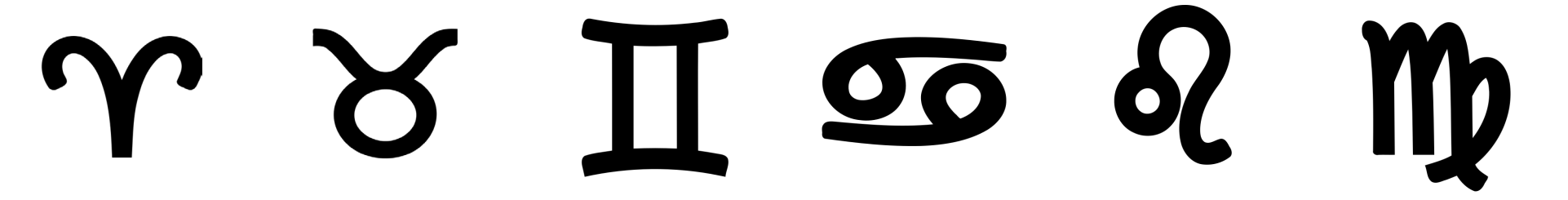


Dove Cameron posing for photos the day of the Grammys. PHOTO COURTESY OF @DOVECAMERON ON INSTAGRAM

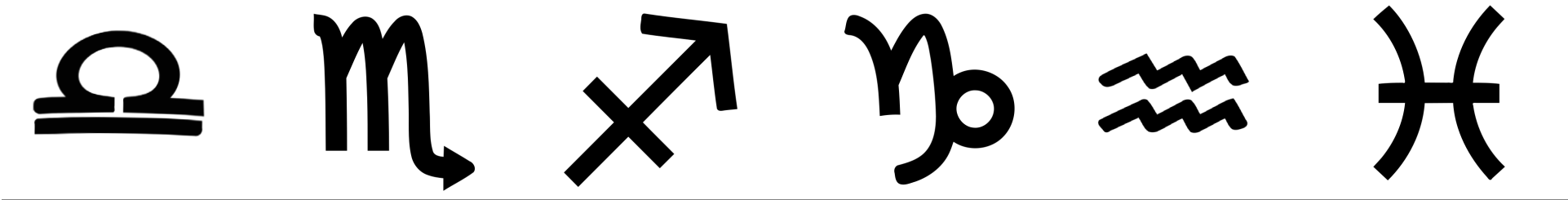
Horoscope: Is love written in your stars this Valentine’s Day?

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Hello everybody, and welcome to the brand-new horoscope section of the paper! Today’s predictions will reveal what the astrological signs can expect in their romantic lives this Valentine’s Day. This horoscope is based on predictions made by AstroDienst, www.astro.com.



Aries March 21 – April 19 Recently, you may have been too focused on yourself, leading you to overlook someone who matters. Some form of trust has been broken, and it is up to you to determine and communicate who (if not both parties) broke that bond and how to repair it before moving forward.	Taurus April 20 – May 20 A possible reconciliation is coming your way. Peace and honesty are key to leaving nothing unanswered. While self-work and anti-competitiveness may be two things you are working on right now, deciphering the intent behind this reconciliation is equally important.	Gemini May 21 – June 20 A choice has been made, either by you or your partner. A relationship or bond has broken by surprise and will likely stay that way. Acceptance is necessary during this time. Continue to speak up for what you believe in.	Cancer June 21 – July 22 Pieces of a larger puzzle are coming together for you as you learn new things every day that will impact your romantic life soon. Trust your gut. When you have an inkling that something is wrong, believe it.	Leo July 23 – Aug. 22 A reevaluation of your expectations in certain situations may need to be done. There may be a certain person who has dominated your mind, and they may feel the same toward you. Keep a balance of freedom in your mind as you move forward.	Virgo Aug. 23 – Sept. 22 Seek out people that match your compassion as you enter a long-term period in your romantic life. An important decision needs to be made or navigated during this time that may throw you off slightly.
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Libra Sept. 23 – Oct. 23 Tap into your dreams and your artistry to remain grounded. You are aware of your romantic situation and an end is near, as well as a new beginning.	Scorpio Oct. 24 – Nov. 21 Although a common cliché, listen to your heart. Your emotions will guide you to a powerful compromise with someone, requiring you or them to cede a portion of dominance to the other.	Sagittarius Nov. 22 – Dec. 21 Change is coming your way. A relationship that began recently will bloom, but will have its challenges. Be ready to face opposition that can be solved.	Capricorn Dec. 22 – Jan. 19 Accept forgiveness from someone who has offered. You are beginning a new journey of self-love and inner peace, healing from a past relationship.	Aquarius Jan. 20 – Feb. 18 Be bold and take that risk! Action will reward you in your romantic life this week. No more sitting around and waiting for things to fall into place.	Pisces Feb. 19 – March 20 You are going to feel like a magnet, attracting all the things you desire. Take advantage of this responsibly and act on your pull with intent.
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