

Double-Blind Date

By

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Two intelligence agents meet up for a date, each one  
thinks they're trying to trick the other out of  
information.

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**INT. PUB - NIGHT**

MATT REEVES, late 20s, confident, wearing a suit, strides into small, uncrowded pub. He gets out his phone and brings up a DATING APP with a picture of LAURA HALL, 20s, American, subtle and smart.

He looks to the back of the pub to see Laura sat by herself with a glass of wine. Matt breathes in and readies himself.

MATT  
(psyching self up)  
I'm going in.

Matt strides up to Laura.

MATT  
Hi. Laura?

LAURA  
Matt. Hi.

They shake hands.

MATT  
Wow, normally that sort of outfit  
doesn't work for someone with  
your figure, but you really pull  
it off.

LAURA  
(off-put, but covering it)  
Oh, thanks, you look real nice  
too.

MATT  
Thank you, it's tailored.

Laura nods with an 'Oh God, one of these guys' look. Matt sits.

MATT  
You're having wine?

LAURA  
I just got a glass while I was  
waiting, do you--

MATT  
-- I'll get us a bottle, I know  
wine.

Matt practically takes the wine list out of Laura's hand.

LATER:

A bottle of wine sits on the table, half empty.

LAURA  
So you work in finance?

MATT  
Mostly stocks.

Matt adjusts his posture, making sure he shows off an expensive watch.

MATT  
In fact, I just made 2 million for the brokerage last quarter.

LAURA  
(knowing what he wants to hear)  
Wow, that's impressive.

Matt sips his wine, as if coming to terms with something.

MATT  
It's not though, is it?

LAURA  
What?

Matt's whole demeanor changes.

MATT  
I mean, it's just money. It shouldn't be the marker for a person's worth.... And that was arrogant of me saying I made 2 million.

Laura sits forward, surprised.

MATT  
I was just really nervous about tonight, and the guys in the office said 'oh, be a man, do the negging, order her drinks, show her the watch, it's a power thing.' But that's the problem with my office, it's all one big power play... but, sorry, that was probably a little upfront.

LAURA  
No, I totally get it. And it was honest, I like honest.

MATT  
Maybe a little too honest, did you put something in my wine?

LAURA  
I guess we'll have to find out.

LATER:

The wine bottle is one third full.

MATT  
What about you? What do you do?

LAURA  
Oh God, here's my turn to sound arrogant. I work for this big company, but I can't really say who it is.

MATT  
You can't say?

LAURA  
I know it sounds silly.

MATT  
Well can you write it?

Laura considers as Matt gets out a pen and pushes a napkin towards her. Laura sips wine and draws a pentagon on the napkin.

MATT  
What is that? It's like a tiny, one-room house? You're either a London estate agent, or the monopoly man.

Laura scoffs.

MATT  
Okay, so, house, five sides, pentagon... holy shit... you're C-I-A?

Laura nods.

MATT  
Wow. Not every day I get my hands on government secrets.

Laura laughs as Matt jokingly puts the napkin in his pocket, revealing that there is a FLASHING VOICE RECORDER in there.

MATT  
So, working for the C-I-A, you must have some interesting stories? JFK? Crack in the 80s? The Kardashians?

LAURA

You hear C-I-A and you think it's gonna be all this cool spy stuff, but all I do all day is fill in diaries and take phonecalls. And my boss is such an asshole, like, he cheats on his wife and he makes me book the affairs in his diary.

MATT

(American pronunciation)

What a twat.

Laura eyes Matt for her second, her phone buzzes: a text says "ease off".

LAURA

And he has literally no confidence in me. Like, honestly, let's just call him 'The Prick'. So, The Prick has got this meeting with some important Italians, and I keep telling him to change the location to somewhere more private, but he insists on having it in his favourite restaurant, just cause he likes the fucking steak, you know?

MATT

So the restaurant's like one of those steak houses?

Laura's phone rings, she looks at it and stands.

LAURA

Oh God, hold on, it's my friend, this'll be a quick drama injection.

MATT

Are you gonna gossip about me?

LAURA

Would that be a power play?

Matt laughs.

**INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Laura ducks into an empty hallway.

LAURA

He's buying it. I saw his eyes  
light up as soon as I mentioned  
the Italians and the steakhouse.

Laura checks a microphone attached to her bra.

LAURA

Are you getting everything?

CLARENCE (V.O.)

(through phone)

Loud and clear Agent Hall.

LAURA

Did we actually put something in  
his wine? Cause it's unusual for  
him to set up a powerful  
financial background and then  
undermine it with humility.  
Unless he's Russian right?  
They're known for false flags.

CLARENCE (V.O.)

We let it leak that you have a  
preference for powerful men with  
an inferiority complex.

LAURA

Bet you wish it was the opposite  
Clarence?

CLARENCE (V.O.)

How many drinks have you had  
agent?

LAURA

Just what was specified in the  
handbook.

CLARENCE (V.O.)

Keep a clear head, these foreign  
agents have a way of getting  
under your skin. Let him keep  
trying to extract from you but  
don't lose control. Stick to the  
protocol.

LAURA

I can handle him.

CLARENCE (V.O.)

Priority one is to ensure he has  
the disinformation about the  
Italians and the steakhouse. Then  
focus on his background, get him  
to admit who he really works for,

(MORE)

CLARENCE (V.O.) (cont'd)  
and stop calling me a "prick".  
Understood?

LAURA  
(annoyed)  
Both 'under' and 'stood'.

CLARENCE (V.O.)  
And open a button.

LAURA  
How far is this going to go?

CLARENCE (V.O.)  
How far does freedom go?

**INT. PUB - NIGHT**

The wine bottle is empty as Laura and Matt start on another.

MATT  
So we were talking about  
steakhouses and pricks?

LAURA  
Yeah, I...

Laura pauses and reconsiders.

LAURA  
Pass me your phone. I want to  
show you a trick.

Matt gingerly gets out his phone and hands it to Laura, it is the exact same make as hers.

She puts it on her lap and tries to unlock it, but there is a code. She starts guessing numbers.

LAURA  
Remind me again what your profile  
said? 'Loves dogs, music and  
traveling'?

MATT  
(sarcastic)  
Oh, those definitely weren't just  
ploys.

LAURA  
(in Russian)  
I know who you are.

Laura looks for recognition in Matt's eyes, he betrays nothing.

MATT

Sorry?

LAURA

I thought one of your pictures  
was from Russia?

MATT

No. If I wanted to see the  
effects of oppression and  
tyranny, I'd just shop at  
Waitrose.

LAURA

Hey, I want to show you  
something... just, look under the  
table, just for a moment.

Matt scoffs and gingerly bends down and looks under the  
table, Laura opens her legs quickly and then closes them.

Matt comes back up, face in shock.

MATT

Is that--

LAURA

-- Yep. Turn you on a little?

MATT

But the agency doesn't give  
secretaries guns.

LAURA

And who told you that?

MATT

(playing it off as a joke)  
Another secretary.

LAURA

Well she was right.

Laura brings her hand above the table, she holds both  
phones in a way that form the shape of a gun.

LAURA

Little psychological trick...  
funny how people are conditioned  
to spot certain objects.

Laura hands back a phone.

MATT

Well that was one hell of a power  
play.



LAURA

Do you have any tricks in your job?

MATT

My job's just numbers really... math.

LAURA

Math?

The phone in Matt's hand vibrates.

MATT

What's 'background'?

LAURA

What?

Matt shows Laura the phone, it has a text from an unknown number saying 'MORE BACKGROUND'. Laura takes back her phone.

LAURA

Oops. Switched them. That's just an inside joke with my friend.

MATT

A friend with an unknown number?

LAURA

It's part of the joke.

MATT

Is this a work friend?

LAURA

Yeah actually?

MATT

Do you... enjoy what you do? I mean, if your boss is such a prick, you could... quit?

Laura eyes up an opportunity and pours the last of the wine into Matt's glass.

LAURA

Do you like your job?

MATT

It pays the bills.

LAURA

But I bet it's hard, I bet you have to screw over a lot of people. Nice people?

This hurts Matt.

MATT

Sometimes...

LAURA

And the corruption that goes on behind the scenes. Even if you had ideals when you started, they're long gone.

Laura's phone vibrates, she ignores it.

LAURA

You want to make a difference, but all these big companies are stuck in their ways, run by rich men whose biggest fear is change.

Matt looks down, nervously.

LAURA

And so you end up working against every fibre of your being in the name of some abstract cause: money, power, security, freedom.

Matt looks really worried now, he can't take his eyes off Laura.

LAURA

And it doesn't matter who you hurt cause you're doing 'the right thing'.

MATT

Stop. I'm sorry... I can't do this anymore. I can't do this.

Matt stands.

LAURA

Woah. Do what?

Matt pulls the RECORDER out of his pocket and places it on the table.

MATT

(now in an American accent)  
I work for the C-I-A. Internal affairs. We suspected someone was leaking information maliciously, but you're not malicious, you're just a nice girl in the wrong world.

LAURA

Wait. you work for the C-I-A?

MATT

They knew you liked to gossip.  
They sent me in to see if you  
were doing it on purpose, get you  
talking about your boss, what  
he's doing, where he's going -  
the steakhouse, the Italians.

LAURA

Wait, this doesn't make any... is  
this a trick?

MATT

Laura, they will ruin your life  
so you need to just leave the  
job, just leave and they never  
need to hear this tape.

LAURA

What the fuck is going on?

CLICK - the music CUTS, the LIGHTS in the room FLARE  
BRIGHTER.

A door opens and CLARENCE walks in.

MATT

Mr. Carson? Oh shit.

CLARENCE

Oh shit indeed Agent Reeves.

MATT

This is... this was a test?

CLARENCE

And you have failed.

LAURA

You were testing him and me?

CLARENCE

We do like efficiency.

LAURA

So there's no foreign agent?

CLARENCE

No, just an job vacancy with your  
name at the top of the list Agent  
Hall.

MATT

Come on sir! Give me another chance. She didn't even know what she was doing!

CLARENCE

She acted on initiative, thought outside the box and broke you down without a sweat.

LAURA

And probably put you off dating apps for life.

CLARENCE

And she has a sense of humour.

MATT

Let me try again, it was working at the start--

CLARENCE

-- has negging worked since 2015?

Matt sighs, defeated.

MATT

Can I at least take the wine?

CLARENCE

I'm afraid that's CIA property. Agent Hall, care to join me for a glass?

LAURA

I'd love to sir, but I'm afraid that's against protocol.

CLARENCE

Smart answer.

Laura stands up to leave and reaches out her hand to Matt.

LAURA

Better luck on your next date.

Matt shakes it, Laura strides off, confident.