Supporting Information

Positive story

Hi, my name is Larry. So last night I had an amazing date with this guy/girl I met online. This was my tenth stab at finding love through a personal ad—I guess I’m just your typical picky Pisces. So here’s what happened.

Picture this: we got a table on the patio of “Pearl”, a new restaurant in town. I immediately found my date Glen/Glenda, a chiropractor, more than tolerable. He/She’s kinda tubby and a bit of a talker, but there was something about him/her that really made me tingle, let’s just put it that way. The evening was cordial at first, but soon I was fully enthralled by this taunting man/woman, as he/she sat pensively over a pink cocktail, his/her perfect face lit up by the candlelight. His/Her kissable lips and toffee eyes were a total turn-on. I had never met anyone who was able to captivate me like that.

Whenever our eyes made contact, there was instant chemistry. He/She would look at me teasingly, temptingly, as if coaxing me away from my corpulent, pimpled exes. Around our second course—he/she had the cod and cauliflower and I had a piece of pork that grew gradually more tasteless as I fell head-over-heels—I grew terribly aware of the pointlessness of all my former dating experiences. In spite of his/her coolness, I had a single purpose: letting this guy/girl know how I felt. There was just a teensy issue: how would I express my affections tearlessly and without pain? I decided being candid was the most tactful route. So with a terror-stricken expression on my pale face, I simply said, “Glen/Glenda, I love you.”

Then I grabbed a pair of peppermints and aimed for the new object of my affection, timidly but with as much confidence as I had, my pulse racing. It’s a good thing I was already a little tipsy, which helped me stay calm. I leaned in, two inches away, panic-stricken, on the cusp of giving his/her a compliment with a peck on the cheek, when I managed to glance at Glen/Glenda’s face. My formerly poker-faced date suddenly had a tigerish look in his/her eye, with a concrete look of desire.

So that was the beginning of our sweet courtship, and after that we headed back to my pigsty of a house. Hope I’m not being a killjoy by giving a cop-out ending, but that’s as much as you need to know!

Negative story

Hi, my name is Larry. So I had the worst date last night with this guy/girl I met online. This was my tenth stab at finding love through a personal ad—I guess I’m just your typical picky Pisces. So here’s what happened.

Picture this: we got a table on the patio of “Pearl”, a new restaurant in town. My date Glen/Glenda, a chiropractor, was tolerable enough but a bit of a talker, and frankly kinda corpulent. He/she didn’t exactly make me tingle, let’s put it that way. Around our second course—he/she had the cod and cauliflower and I had a tasteless piece of pork - I grew terribly aware of the pointlessness of this dinner date. I was just on the verge of making up some excuse that would get me out of this overly cordial dinner, when I saw him/her.

This taunting man/woman was sitting pensively over a pink cocktail, his/her perfect face light up by the candlelight. His/her kissable lips and toffee eyes were a total turn-on. I had never met anyone who was able to captivate me like that.

When our eyes made contact there was instant chemistry. He/she looked at me teasingly, temptingly, as if coaxing me away from my pimpled friend. I had a single purpose: getting this guy’s/girl’s phone number. There was just a teensy issue: how do I get rid of my date tearlessly. I decided being candid was the most tactful route. So I simply said, ‘thank you, but I don’t think it would work out’, and got up, leaving tubby Glen/Glenda behind with a terror-stricken expression on his/her pale face.
I grabbed a pair of peppermints and aimed for the new object of my affection timidly but with as much confidence and coolness as I had, my pulse racing. It’s a good thing I was already a little tipsy, which helped me stay calm.

There I stood two feet away, panic-stricken, visibly in pain, on the cusp of opening my mouth to mumble some cop-out compliment, when there and then his/her poker-faced date got back from the bathroom and gave my tigerish mystery man/woman a peck on the cheek. Well that certainly threw a wrench in my not-so-concrete strategy. Man what a killjoy!

So that was the end of our short but sweet courtship and all there was left for me then was getting back to my pigsty of a house and hitting the sack—alone.