

Can't Stand Bagpipes

Bad day at the office. Have decided to try internet dating again after a lengthy lay-off. Looking for love, dates, sex, interesting women, funny profiles and catchy phrases.

Write profile. Want to attract someone a bit different. My headline is a quote from a Dylan song "Desolation Row" which fits my current mood perfectly. I bet no one out there will know it and I'll come across as a pretentious wanker. Upload photos but these take 1-2 days to appear so for a while I'm a faceless whacko trying to get laid. Nonetheless, I get some interest – 3 kisses come in almost straightaway.

Eagerly scan the faces to see if I recognize anyone from before. Some familiar faces but none that I dated last time. Maybe they're all happily ensconced in their new relationship but I suspect they're suffering from what I call "RSVP blues" – a chronic condition leaving the sufferer depressed and bewildered. Send off a few "kisses" to initiate contact. The return rate of a kiss is usually poor (at least it has been for me) so I'm not expecting anything. I respond immediately to all received kisses whether positive or negative. Surprisingly, those I respond favourably to ("interested and looking forward to receiving your email") often don't follow up because:

- a) You actually have to pay to be the first one to email. Do women think the guy should spend the money? It's strange...I figure in for a penny in for a pound.
- b) They get cold feet.
- c) They've found someone else more interesting since they contacted you. 5 minutes is a long time in cyberspace.

Some catchy profiles, gorgeous lookers with lines like "I have the body of an 18 year old...I keep it in the fridge" or "Born free but now really expensive".

Spend rest of the day checking out the opposition. Top 100 guys in the 38-50 age bracket. Depresses me even further as these guys are my competition and they all sound the same – equally boring, Shawshank-Redemption-loving, knowing how to treat their lady types. How come they get more attention than me?

Keep making small changes to profile (like anyone will ever notice) and change my headline daily (you know, to maintain interest!). I select a line from a different Dylan song every day. I change my top 5 movies, books and songs. Kisses come and go – some from China. They all seem to have one 19 year old son (or maybe it's the same person). A few Russians sound interested in me – most of them have had 3 children by the age of 20 and clearly find my knowledge of obscure Dylan songs intoxicating.

First date this time around. Meet her in the street near a restaurant I've chosen. We've been emailing for a few days and have spoken several times on the phone. Her picture is nice but I'm nervous about the going straight to dinner approach she has suggested. I prefer drinks first "with a view to dinner" if it goes ok. She looks nothing like her photo and is not nearly as pretty as I was expecting. She tells me straightaway she's lied about

her age but won't tell me how old she is! I figure she's around 48, like me. I sense she's a little over-awed by my choice of restaurant – a very middle of the road moderately priced “modern Australian” establishment in the suburbs. I quiz her about previous dates she's been on and learn that the guys she's been out with usually choose Chinese, Thai or Mexican restaurants for the first date. Cheaper I suppose than my choice but to me it was quite normal. I tell her not to worry about the prices as I'm paying, seeing I was the one who chose it. She says she's left her wallet on the fridge anyway. Fortunately, she doesn't eat much and drinks even less. She tells me more stories of strange men she's met online – a guy who wouldn't kiss her (after the 3rd date she discovered he was gay), another who thought her underwear looked better on him than her and one guy who suddenly leapt out of the taxi they were sharing to go to her place and was never spotted again. She reckons they were at least 30kms from where he lived and it was 12.30am. Now that's what I call a change of heart!

Of course, I have my stories patiently waiting to be told but she's not interested in those. Dessert comes – we've decided to share – so I eat most of it in 5 minutes, get the bill and we go our separate ways. The next day she sends me a text saying that although it was lovely to have met me she thinks it best if we just stay friends. She hopes I won't be too upset. I'm thrilled, having already lined up my next 3 dates for the week ahead.

© David Wurth 2006