

A Date in Eight

Full Title: Isn't A Date in Eight A Great Idea, Or What?

by

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DESCRIPTION

“Speed-dating” is a speed-lifetime.

CHARACTERS

- Adam
- Eve

SETTING

- Table, two chairs, timer (actual and/or sound effect)
- A sign on an easel: “A Date in Eight? Don’t Hesitate!”

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Lights up on ADAM and EVE sitting at the table. They look, smile, hesitate, clearly ill-at-ease but trying to make the best of it. Let the hemming and hawing go on until it is almost irritating the audience, then sound the timer. Begin.

ADAM

Well—isn’t this a great idea, or what?

EVE

It can help.

ADAM

Quick, clean, know if you want in or out—if out, then—bam! on to the next one.

EVE

(imitating his gesture)

On to the next one. I guess it’s a good idea.

ADAM

You're not convinced.

EVE

(hesitating)

A little cold, don't you think?

ADAM

My theory? Eight minutes? I think—I know you can size up a body's spirit in a flash.

EVE

Really?

ADAM

In a flash—in one quick hot synch. Eight minutes is way too mucho tiempo, in some cases. Sometimes in a minute—less than, even—I got it.

EVE

(trying for lightness)

You're one for the quickie, hey?

ADAM

(not hearing her, confidential)

This—all this—it's not about dating.

EVE

It's not?

ADAM

It's not about repairing the loneliness—

EVE

(surprised by the wording)

Repairing the loneliness—

ADAM

—by pairing each other up. Two by two up into the ark. Nah-uh.

EVE

I thought—

ADAM

This—this what we are doing—is about maneuvering.

EVE

Really?

ADAM

Enfilade, defilade, outflank, storm the beach.

EVE

Storm the beach.

ADAM

You, me, and this—

(tapping his hands on the table top)

—the DMZ.

EVE

A demilitarized—

ADAM

Zone—

EVE

That's what you think—

ADAM

This is? I do. Eight minute maneuvers, they should call it. Eight minutes of plucking the crow.

EVE

Plucking the crow.

ADAM

Because that's just the way things are.

EVE looks at ADAM steadily; ADAM looks back just as steadily. EVE shifts her weight, sits up straighter.

EVE

Maybe you're right—

ADAM

Not maybe.

EVE

And maybe you're not.

EVE throws her arm up onto the table in preparation to arm wrestle.

EVE

Let's fact-check this logic of yours.

ADAM looks at her angled arm.

ADAM

You against me?

EVE drops her arm from the table.

EVE

Has the legendary hot synch already been synched, then?

ADAM

No.

EVE

Didn't get me in a flash, hey? Didn't predict I would—

ADAM

I was being metaphoric—

EVE

Which translated means—

ADAM

I don't want—

EVE

You're all gas, no sass.

ADAM

Not that I'm a—

EVE

All squawk and no walk.

ADAM

Just that—you're a—

EVE

Stop that! Either you mean what you say or you don't—screw your metaphor. Who gives two turds about "you're a". You're a what? Woman? For that one you shine, Einstein.

EVE throws her arm up on the table again.

EVE

(dismissive)

Metaphor—rat's ass. Now didn't I hear that it was either in or out with you?

ADAM hesitates.

EVE

Our little toy Mars hesitates, our god of war waffles. Or should I just call you Mars-ipan [marzipan]? Mars-ipansy?

ADAM throws his own arm onto the table.

ADAM

En garde, then.

They clasp hands in the certified way arm wrestlers position themselves, and they begin. For perhaps 10 seconds they strain, neither moving far, and as they continue to strain, they begin exchanging insults. This surprises them at first, that such language erupts, but then it becomes both insults and erotic inducements.

EVE

Bastard.

ADAM

Bitch.

EVE

Prick.

ADAM

Cunt.

EVE

Shithead.

ADAM

Asswipe.

EVE

Buttfucker.

ADAM

Cum guzzler.

EVE

You're just like cement—

ADAM

What?

EVE

You're just like cement—it takes you two days to get hard.

ADAM

Oh, yeah?

EVE

Yeah?

ADAM

Well, you're so ugly—you couldn't get laid if you were a brick.

EVE

Hah! If you spoke your mind—

ADAM

And you're like a doorknob—

EVE

If you spoke your mind—you'd be speechless.

ADAM

Just like a doorknob—

EVE

Yeah?

ADAM

Everyone gets to take a turn.

EVE

And you'd come off in everyone's hand.

Getting breathless, they strain for advantage until, by some mutual agreement, they decide that neither should win, though it becomes clear that EVE is no real match for ADAM They stand down, silent for the moment.

EVE

(without rancor)

Hey!

ADAM

Yeah?

EVE

I heard you were getting sex all the time until your wrist got arthritis.

ADAM

(equally without rancor)

I can see that your tits are so small, you'd have to tattoo "front" on your chest.

EVE

Not that small!

ADAM

No, they are not. They are not, most certainly.

EVE

I know.

ADAM

What?

EVE

You could have beaten me.

ADAM

(shaking out his arm)

I don't know—

EVE

Don't sugar me.

ADAM

You've got some goddess-like strength in those fins of yours—

EVE

Enough. You didn't—why?

ADAM

Let's talk about something else.

EVE

Stop shaking out your arm. We're coming down to the end here.

ADAM

Then let's talk about something else.

EVE

Why are you here?

ADAM

Something else.

EVE

I'm pressing you. You with the hot synch. You with the great male—

(snaps fingers)

"I got it." Hot Synch—what can you tell about me that kept you at the table and didn't—

ADAM takes a moment to lean back and look at EVE. Then he smiles a not altogether pleasant smile.

ADAM

You—

EVE

People like me—

ADAM

Ah—let me finish! Not people like you—but you. Hot Synch! Let's see—music, right? Things that heal.

(looks straight into her face)

I can see I'm pegging you. Already had you pegged—wouldn't mind pegging you—

EVE

Shut up.

ADAM

And?

EVE

Keep talking.

ADAM

Intuition—from the gut. Mending the great pain of the world. The elements that move you. Shape you—are they not? The giving, the making, the thrust of life, yes?

EVE

And not for you?

ADAM looks straight at her and smiles.

ADAM

I could have, you know—snap! But—intuition—I wanted to make weakness look attractive to you.

EVE look at him directly, then gets up.

ADAM

You leaving?

EVE

Change places with me. Change!

They exchange places. EVE throws her left arm up on the table.

EVE

Let's try our weaker sides, then. In a few minutes, when that timer blows, we are going to have to want something different from what we want now, or this will all be a waste. So c'mon. C'mon—take your eyes off my tatas and get your weak-ass arm up here!

ADAM matches her arm for arm, and they again take the certified beginning stance of arm wrestlers. At an agreed-upon signal, they begin, and this time the fight is to the finish—whatever that happens to be. The director can stage this any way possible as long as the action stays close and mostly—but not always—on the table. But, for instance, it is not out-of-bounds for EVE to get on the table and use her whole body weight to get his arm to go down. Desperation, excitement, pain—all these elements should come to the fore. After all, this is a battle, and it should look like one. The only restriction is that neither can use their dominant arms—they must be held behind their backs or to their sides. And they can't break their grip at all—during the battle, they must always remain connected by the hand-grip.

After a brief fight it is clear that there is no clear measure for winning. Instead of winning—that is, instead of creating an artificial separation—winner/loser—they have become linked, like it or not. They come face-to-face when it is clear that they are no longer clear about what they are doing.

EVE

What are you doing?

ADAM

What are you doing?

EVE

What do you want?

Hesitating.

ADAM

I don't know.

EVE

Are you winning?

ADAM

I don't know!

EVE

You can't win.

ADAM tries—they are locked.

EVE

Even if you could flatten me right now, you couldn't win.

ADAM

You can't win either.

EVE

I can't do what I don't believe in. Call it a character fault.

ADAM

What do you want?

EVE

I have what I want.

EVE takes a drop of sweat off ADAM, tastes it.

EVE

Do you know what that tastes like?

ADAM

No.

EVE

It tastes like this: What will make love come?

They disengage.

EVE

And what will make love stay?

ADAM

Come here.

ADAM takes a drop of sweat off EVE, tastes it.

ADAM

I have a different taste.

Timer rings.

EVE

What might that be?

ADAM

We have to go—

EVE

Tell me.

ADAM

—they're very strict about the rotation.

EVE

You aren't going to tell me, are you?

ADAM

This much: say I'm iron—you're gold. In their pure states—

EVE

Gold is so soft—

ADAM

And iron, though considered less precious—

EVE

Will always be able to cut—

ADAM

Yes.

EVE

Then I prefer loneliness.

ADAM

And isn't that what we came in with? So we haven't lost a thing.

(moves closer to her)

You can't expect a common metal like me—

EVE

Go.

ADAM

—to turn into a golden one like you. Easier for you—

EVE

Go!

ADAM

—to become common common common like me. And way more interesting for the lonely goddess.

ADAM smacks his lips.

ADAM

That was what I tasted off of you.

ADAM smacks his lips again.

ADAM

Sweat of our brows—who wouldn't want to dare to make love out of that!

EVE scoops another drop off ADAM's forehead and tastes it. Tastes her own sweat. They lock eyes for several seconds, then abruptly get up, eyes still locked.

Timer timer timer timer. Eyes still locked. Lights bump to black.

