

On The House

By

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January 15, 2024

CAST

MYRA Mid-60s. Widow for the past five years who has just begun using a dating app for older adults.

HARRY Early-70s. Owner of a modest cafe serving breakfast and lunch menu. Widower for the past eight years. Harry has never used dating apps.

Time: The present.

Place: 1970's style cafe in Georgetown, south of downtown Seattle.

ON THE HOUSE

The interior of the cafe where MYRA sits fully engrossed in her online dating app. HARRY, owner of the cafe, is watching the Mariner's game on a screen with the sound off as he works behind the counter.

(MYRA is swiping back and forth, receiving bells indicating notifications, then reads to herself the messages from prospective dates.)

MYRA

"Book Worm Seeking to Craft the Next Chapter" Oh, that sounds sweet... (keeps swiping through posts) "Looking for female..." What the...? "...WITH MATURE FIGURE"? How rude!

(MYRA slams her phone down in frustration; she goes to the counter for a coffee refill.)

MYRA

May I have a refill?

(HARRY fills MYRA's cup, then MYRA grabs a package of crackers from the counter assuming they are complimentary.)

HARRY

You're welcome.

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MYRA

I thought refills were complimentary?

HARRY

They are, but they're limited to one refill. This is your third.

MYRA

I didn't know your refill policy. Sorry.

HARRY

The crackers aren't included unless you order soup.

MYRA

But they're in a basket next to the cream and sugar.

HARRY

That doesn't mean they're complimentary!

MYRA

Oh yes it does! Especially when they're placed next to the pot of coffee.

HARRY

I'm not going to sweat over a cracker, but you've been sitting in my cafe for over an hour without ordering.

MYRA

What do you mean? I ordered this \$3 cup of coffee-

HARRY

Good for ONE refill - no crackers unless you order soup.

MYRA

I'm waiting for someone and I don't like to order until they show up.

HARRY

But it's been an hour. When did you tell him to meet you?

MYRA

How do you know it's been an hour?

HARRY

You've been sitting there swiping then mumbling those dating posts for over an hour-

MYRA

You're snooping, aren't you!

HARRY

Nah, (frustration)... it's just you're reading loud enough for the whole place to hear.

MYRA

But there's only you in here right now.

HARRY

Don't I count as someone who likes their peace & quiet? You don't see me blasting the ballgame!

MYRA

(sarcastically) I'll try to swipe more silently.

HARRY

Why don't you order something? I make a killer pulled pork.

MYRA

I don't eat pork.

HARRY

Well, what do you eat?

MYRA

I'm not hungry.

HARRY

But you seem to be working up quite an appetite?

MYRA

What do you mean?

HARRY

An hour on that dating app with only coffee breaks!

MYRA

It's none of your business!

HARRY

It is when you sit without ordering. Are dates all you think about? What about your stomach?

MYRA

I told you I'm waiting for someone so I don't order till they get here! That's the protocol.

HARRY

Well how long are you gonna give this guy?

MYRA

I'm waiting for a response from him.

HARRY
When did he last post something?

MYRA
About thirty minutes ago.

HARRY
Really? And you're still waiting on this guy?

MYRA
I think he could be the one!

HARRY
What makes you so sure?

MYRA
He likes things I like.

HARRY
(pauses) Like?

(MYRA hesitates to respond.)

MYRA
Well, playing pinochle, (pauses) watching Antique Roadshow...

HARRY
Really?...Sounds like an exciting adventure. (sarcastically)

MYRA
Don't knock him before you meet him. I have a good feeling about this guy. My instincts are usually right.

(HARRY wipes down the counter, watches the game in silence, looks over at MYRA swiping, typing, waiting, looking out the window. MYRA grows more frustrated, looking at her watch, at the clock in the restaurant. MYRA get a notification bell, reads the post.)

MYRA
"Can't make this afternoon. How about next Saturday?"
What? What a jerk!

(MYRA gets up and helps herself to another cup of coffee from the pot.)

HARRY
That's refill number four!

MYRA

Here's your buck fifty for your watered down, tepid Nescafe!

HARRY

Hey, it's not my fault he stood you up so don't go insulting my coffee. No one has ever complained until you got pissed off.

MYRA

I've been messaging this guy for over two weeks trying to set up a time. This morning, he messaged me right away after I checked in with him.

HARRY

How many times did he message you?

MYRA

Three times.

HARRY

Three total? How many times did you message him?

MYRA

Five, maybe six times.

HARRY

Today? or Total?

MYRA

(pauses) Today...about twelve times total.

HARRY

Boy, your twelve to his three...the odds don't look so good.

(MYRA sits down, angry, frustrated; she looks at her phone and continues to swipe through different dating posts getting more frustrated.)

HARRY

Maybe you need to be introduced to a guy by someone...who knows you and...knows what you like.

MYRA

You mean a matchmaker? I'm too old for that. Plus there's more selection online, more fish in the sea (pauses)... usually. Plus, it's easy to insult the matchmaker if they make a bad choice for you.

HARRY

(hesitates)...You know... I went on a few dates after my wife died.

(MYRA ignores HARRY and focuses on her cell phone.)

HARRY

Both of them were blind dates set up by my good friend, Joe. We worked construction together in our younger years.

MYRA

So...how did Joe's matchmaking work out?

HARRY

Well, I had an ok time with the first lady but I think she was looking for someone younger than me.

MYRA

Why do you say that?

HARRY

She asked me what my resting heart rate was.

MYRA

Maybe she didn't want to outlive her next husband. Some women look for a slightly younger man to care for them in their later years.

HARRY

Is that who you're lookin' for? Someone younger than you?

MYRA

I don't know. Older men seem to want a much younger woman. It seems I'm too old for men my age.

HARRY

Really? You appear healthy except you don't eat much.

(HARRY looks at MYRA still absorbed on her dating app.)

HARRY

Well, the second lady turned out to be a money grabber. She wanted to see where I live after we had dinner at Ivers. She came into my apartment, looked around... then said she needed to get home to her cat. Didn't even stay for coffee.

(MYRA gets more frustrated swiping and reading posts. She drinks her coffee and gets up for another refill. HARRY watches her help herself but says nothing about it.)

MYRA
Wait! What's this??? "You can't see this reply unless you upgrade"?? What? Why?

HARRY
Wait...how much is the upgrade?

MYRA
Forty dollars...but it could be from him!

HARRY
Do you even know his name?

MYRA
Yes, he goes by Lucid.

HARRY
What?

MYRA
It's a play off of Cupid...you know...

HARRY
How do you know it's a person? Doesn't lucid mean easy to understand or something like that?

MYRA
He posted a nice picture, in a suit and all. I'm going to pay the upgrade-

HARRY
I wouldn't if I...were...

(MYRA gets out her credit card and inputs her number. HARRY continues to watch the game, then looks at MYRA waiting for the response on her phone.)

HARRY
You know, blind dates aren't so bad 'cause you can read their faces and body language. You only got a cell phone message to go on...some guy in Slovakia could be writing you!

MYRA
What the...? "Transfer \$500 to this account so I can book a flight to Seattle"!?! (cries out) I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!

HARRY
For \$500, he probably lives closer than Slovakia. Lucid is clearly a real fake!

(MORE)

HARRY (cont'd)

(MYRA is distraught, throws her phone, pulls her hat off, etc.)

MYRA

Where are the decent guys these days!

HARRY

...For your age, probably not on dating apps...

(MYRA tries to call the Dating Service. Gets no answer.)

MYRA

They're not answering! I can't even report this guy!

HARRY

My friend Joe told me dating apps are full of predators with dubious "cupid" sites lookin' to rob lonely suckers.

MYRA

Oh God. Is that what I am? A lonely sucker?

HARRY

No, no. I mean these guys make up a Cupid for Widows, Jews, Muslims, Gays, you name it. They market you based on your profile.

(MYRA begins to pack up her things.)

HARRY

Their goal is to take advantage of folks, who are looking for a certain "type" - you know what I mean?

MYRA

Unfortunately, I do know what you mean.

HARRY

You do?

(MYRA puts her phone away. She takes out some cash and offers it to HARRY.)

HARRY

No, no, I can't take any cash from you. After what just happened? I'm not that cheap.

(MYRA leaves a few dollars on the table and starts to leave.)

HARRY

Wait a minute! How 'bout I fix you a nice pastrami on rye?
I make a great sauerkraut - home made! Ya gotta be hungry
after all that swiping.

(MYRA walks to the door,
downtrodden.)

HARRY

Hungry? It's on the house!!

(MYRA takes a beat, walks over to
the counter and sits down.)

MYRA

I'm famished!

(HARRY starts to make MYRA a
pastrami sandwich, while MYRA's
phone notifications keep going off.
MYRA takes her phone out of her
purse, turns off her phone
replacing it in her purse, then
pours herself another cup of
coffee. HARRY watches her slyly,
shrugs his shoulders, and both
laugh to themselves.)

CURTAIN.