

## Date With a Zombie?

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# Date With a Zombie?

I \_\_\_\_\_ in a deep \_\_\_\_\_ Noun and hesitantly walk into the bar.

This probably isn't a good \_\_\_\_\_ Noun, but it's been months since I've been on a proper date, and when Cora-- my over-involved, happily married younger sister--insisted I join this new dating app called People With \_\_\_\_\_ Noun Plural, I gave in. I can be a bit of a dork, so it seemed more up my alley than the Tinders of the world, and I'd hoped signing up would get her off my back about my \_\_\_\_\_ Adjective, desert-dry love life.

I wasn't expecting a guy to \_\_\_\_\_ Verb Base Form me so quickly. Or suggest a date before we even had much of a chance to chat on the app. Or for that date to be on--of all days--Halloween. But like I said, it's been a while, and Kyle seemed as \_\_\_\_\_ Adjective a guy as any.

Of course, a Halloween date at a semi-crowded bar creates an entirely \_\_\_\_\_ Adjective issue of what to wear. Costume or no costume? In the end, I went with my usual--all black. And at the very last second, I added a cat-ears headband, a reasonable compromise, I hope.

The bar itself is far more dressed up for the occasion, decked out in fake \_\_\_\_\_ Noun Plural, jack-o-lanterns, stuffed bats, and comically \_\_\_\_\_ Adjective witches. It's a hodgepodge mix of creepy and cartoonish, not unlike the current clientele. It's more \_\_\_\_\_ Adjective than usual, , and though I've been here several times before, it's impossible to tell whether I \_\_\_\_\_ Verb Base Form anyone with their faces covered by \_\_\_\_\_ Noun and costume makeup.

I take a seat at the only available bistro table, which is conveniently positioned in the \_\_\_\_\_ Adjective corner of the venue opposite the hall leading to the restrooms.

My

nerves flutter beneath my \_\_\_\_\_ Noun really been that long--as a waiter dressed as a \_\_\_\_\_ Noun asks for my order. I glance at the small laminated menu of the day's drink specials.

"A zombietini," I order, figuring I might as well get into the spirit of the holiday, and a bright green, \_\_\_\_\_ Adjective martini is \_\_\_\_\_ Adverb delivered.

I peek at my watch, noting my date is already several \_\_\_\_\_ Noun Plural late. Fantastic.

I down the zombietini faster than I normally would, willing it to calm my jitters. I don't even \_\_\_\_\_ Verb Base \_\_\_\_\_ Form this guy, let alone like him, and I have no rational reason to be this \_\_\_\_\_ Adjective. Except I'm \_\_\_\_\_ Adjective at dating, and I'm starting to wonder if I even remember how.

But as the minutes tick by, and I order and not-so-slowly \_\_\_\_\_ Verb Base Form yet another zombietini, I wonder if my "date" will show at all.

The costumes in the bar are borderline \_\_\_\_\_ Adjective. The women are dressed as the usual \_\_\_\_\_ Adjective witches and such. The men's costumes have more variety. There's a guy dressed as Big \_\_\_\_\_ Noun, and another wearing \_\_\_\_\_ Noun Plural and covered in glitter, and I smirk as I get the \_\_\_\_\_ Noun satire.

I let out another \_\_\_\_\_ Noun as I raise my hand to order my third drink--the last I'll have before I give up on Kyle and leave--when my eyes catch on an \_\_\_\_\_ Adverb convincing zombie at the far end of the bar. He stands there alone, staring straight ahead, and I \_\_\_\_\_ Verb Base Form, wondering if the features beneath the layers of zombie makeup resemble those of Kyle's profile picture. I wave \_\_\_\_\_ Adverb in his direction, unsure if it's even him, but even more so, put off by the \_\_\_\_\_ Adjective, dead look in his \_\_\_\_\_ Noun Plural.

And then those eyes notice me, and without even the slightest hint of recognition, he begins to make his way to my

table, slowly \_\_\_\_\_ a strange, thick, deep red \_\_\_\_\_ in his hand.

He says nothing as he approaches and sits down across from me. He barely even \_\_\_\_\_ his greeting, so I take the cue. "Hi," I say.

He grunts a \_\_\_\_\_ that resembles a hi back, so I take it. "Did you have any trouble finding the \_\_\_\_\_?" I ask, trying to give him an excuse for his \_\_\_\_\_, but he doesn't take it.

Kyle shakes his head and half shrugs at the same time, \_\_\_\_\_ and noncommittal.

I catch the waiter's eye and point to my drink. I'm already more than a little \_\_\_\_\_, but something tells me it's not going to be enough to get me through the evening.

Kyle takes a long sip of his strange crimson drink and I use the moment to take in his makeup. He's really committed to his \_\_\_\_\_, apparently, because his \_\_\_\_\_ is professional grade and incredibly \_\_\_\_\_. I wonder if his job gives him access to a movie set or something like that, but recall his profile saying he worked in the \_\_\_\_\_ field.

"So, what do you do again?" I ask nervously.

Kyle looks at me, though his exceptionally \_\_\_\_\_ makeup, and it's \_\_\_\_\_ me out. "Work in the medical field," he murmurs cautiously, doing nothing to quell my nerves.

The sad thing is, beneath the makeup, he's extremely \_\_\_\_\_. His profile picture, I shamefully admit, is part of what made me agree to this \_\_\_\_\_. But now, whether it's the \_\_\_\_\_ or his weird \_\_\_\_\_, I can't help but wonder how long ago that photo was actually taken. Like before he died and came back as a \_\_\_\_\_? I push away the \_\_\_\_\_ thought.

"Doing what?" I breathe, my trembling voice doing nothing to \_\_\_\_\_ Verb Base Form my nerves.

"Coroner's office."

My heart speeds up exponentially. What does he do in the coroner's office? \_\_\_\_\_ Verb Base Form the freaking brains of corpse's?

I don't dare ask. Instead my \_\_\_\_\_ Noun Plural follow the lines of his skin, the patches of missing flesh. It's just so utterly \_\_\_\_\_ Adjective.

"So you're really into Halloween," I muse.

He just \_\_\_\_\_ Verb Present ends in S. I'd suggested alternative nights to get drinks, but he was always busy, always \_\_\_\_\_ Adjective, except for this one night.

"Halloween?" I'd asked, skeptical. "Is it?" he'd replied, as if he'd neither realized nor cared. But then why does he look like he spent \_\_\_\_\_ Noun Plural in hair and makeup \_\_\_\_\_ Verb Present ends in ING the effect of a brain-munching \_\_\_\_\_ Noun Plural?

I wait for him to ask about me, but I get nothing, and when I try to make conversation, Kyle seems more \_\_\_\_\_ Adjective communicating in one-word answers and grunts. He \_\_\_\_\_ Verb Present ends in S down the last of his drink, and when I ask if he wants to order another, he hastily stops me from waving over the waiter, says he'll be right back, and disappears around the corner of the bar.

I'm \_\_\_\_\_ Verb Present ends in ING for almost ten minutes, and I nearly get up and leave, when Kyle suddenly emerges from the back hallway that leads to the restrooms, with another \_\_\_\_\_ Adjective, dark red drink in his pale, made up hands. He sits back down, but makes no effort to explain where he'd been, where he'd gotten his drink,



or to make conversation at all, for that matter.

Maybe I've had one zombietini too many, but I'm starting to wonder if this guy actually is a zombie.

My eyes fall to his tattered, sullied Adjective t-shirt. Had it had that much fake blood on it before he'd left and returned?

My Noun races even faster and nausea rises in my gut. I know it's a ridiculous notion--utterly preposterous. But...at the same time, I'm starting to wish I'd spent less time reading Noun and more time watching The Walking Dead with Cora.

I shake my head, ridding it of these Adjective thoughts.

"Dance?" Kyle grunts at me.

I shrug. Dancing with him can't be much worse than sitting here trying to force Noun through his grunts .

We dance, slowly for about two songs, but he's too Adjective. I'm about to make an excuse to cut the date short when I feel his breath on my Noun, like he's positioning to take a bite.

I panic.

Whether it's too many zombietinis, or his makeup, his personality (or lack thereof) I'm not taking any Noun Plural. Nope, screw that, my brains are staying promptly where they are inside my Noun.

"I'm sorry," I say, backing away from Kyle. "I'm not feeling well."

I Verb Base Form out of the bar thinking myself pathetic. Cora will have something to say about this. She'll go on and on about how I find something Adjective with every guy I meet.

My

first date in months, and, of all things, I manage to convince myself he's a freaking Noun?

Maybe I'm starting to lose it.

Still, when I'm safe in my apartment, I delete the Noun Plural With Brains app from my phone. Because if

there are zombies on this earth, that is the Noun they're using to find Noun Plural...and victims.

It isn't until I'm Verb Present ends in ING my black shirt over my head that I realize there's a Adjective

spot on the front of it, where it came into contact with Kyle's shirt as we Verb Past Tense. I touch my

Noun Plural to it, my heart stopping when they come away a deep Adjective, still wet...still warm.