

DEAL BREAKER

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Logline:

*A woman risks sabotaging the perfect date
when she confesses a terrible secret.*

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FADE IN:

INT. TABLE FOR TWO - DAY

It's that quiet time between lunch and dinner.

The staff buses tables around a chatty couple, LOUIS and ALICE. There's a MIRROR behind Alice, like in every French cafe on film. Their WAITER presents them with the check.

WAITER

So, who gets the bad news?

ALICE

He does.

LOUIS

I do.

WAITER

Alright. I'll come back for that when you're ready, there's no rush.

The Waiter leaves. Alice picks up a CARAFE of wine. She fills both glass flutes. They toast...

LOUIS

To fresh starts.

ALICE

And clean slates.

Down the hatch. There's something on Alice's mind.

LOUIS

This is without a doubt the best first date I've ever had.

ALICE

And now you've totally jinxed it.

LOUIS

I don't believe in jinxes.

Alice looks at herself in the mirror behind Louis: *Alice wears a PRISON JUMPSUIT, zero makeup to cover all the cuts and bruises.*

ALICE

What if I could tell you something about me that would make you get up and walk out the door?

LOUIS
It would have to be super bad.

ALICE
Define super bad.

Louis finishes his wine. He pitches forward in his chair.

LOUIS
OK. Are you a murderer?

ALICE
No.

LOUIS
Have you ever stolen anything?

ALICE
I stole a Princess Leia action figure from a boy I had a crush on in the third grade.

LOUIS
Cute. Do you see dead people?

ALICE
Not that I recall. Good enough?

LOUIS
I'll accept that answer. Have you ever started up your own cult?

ALICE
I don't like Kool Aid.

LOUIS
Interview over. You're perfectly normal. When can I see you again?

ALICE
Well, you see, I kind of have to tell you this thing.

LOUIS
Hey, you're not obligated to tell me anything you don't want to.

ALICE
Actually, I am required by law to tell you this fact about me. And once I do, I know there will be lots of questions. Lots.

LOUIS
Not me, no questions or judgement
here. You have my word.

ALICE
That's what they all say.

LOUIS
Come on, I'm not that guy.

ALICE
They all say that too.

LOUIS
Well, I'm not like them. I swear.
Come on, just use small words and
look me straight in the eye.

Alice gathers up her courage, spills the beans.

ALICE
OK, I'm required by the state of
California to tell you, that I'm
a... registered sex offender.

Come again? Louis ponders the words, then laughs. That's
the best one he's heard in months.

LOUIS
What guy in his right mind wouldn--

ALICE
You said no questions.

LOUIS
A lot's happened since then.

ALICE
You gave me your word.

LOUIS
You're right, I most certainly did.

Louis refills both flutes. They drink, ignore the elephant
in the room.

Alice and Louis exchange smiles. He retreats into the dull
glow of his smartphone.

ALICE
Are you Googling me right now?

LOUIS
I would never Google at the table.

He's so lying. And she so knows it.

ALICE

Allow me.

Alice comes prepared. She pulls out her iPad. It's already open to a very unflattering MUG SHOT.

ALICE

It was a one night stand and he lied about his age. And that's all I'm gonna say about it, Louis.

LOUIS

OK. You looked so different then.

ALICE

I did. Are you feeling alright?

LOUIS

Never better. I'll be right back.

Louis pushes away from the table. Alice knows how this date's probably gonna end.

ALICE

They all say that too.

INSERT: Same cafe. Alice endures rejection after rejection. Most guys leave her at the table. Some laugh, others yell and make a scene. One prick throws water in her face.

Louis contemplates a nearby EMERGENCY EXIT.

LOUIS

Maybe I should go pay the bill at the register.

ALICE

Sure. By the way, the fire exit's next to the men's room. It's why I chose this place.

LOUIS

Excuse me?

ALICE

You heard me.

LOUIS

I don't care for the implication.

ALICE

And I don't care for being a felon,
but they charged me anyway.

LOUIS

I'm not dumping you, Alice.

ALICE

You can't dump a first date. You
can walk out on them, stand them
up. But I'm pretty sure you need
to know someone at least a little
before you can dump them, Louis.

LOUIS

It's nice to have met you, Alice.

Louis stands, pulls out a CREDIT CARD. Alice really doesn't
want to lose this guy. A long silence, until...

ALICE

Please, don't go. Stay and ask me
three questions instead.

LOUIS

Why just three? Are you a Genie?

ALICE

Cuz I said so. And no. You have
one question left.

The Waiter comes back for the check. Louis sits.

WAITER

Everything all set, sir?

LOUIS

What do you think of women? Be
honest, your tip depends on it.

WAITER

Well, there's a part of my anatomy
that fits nicely into a part of
their anatomy, and when done right
it feels great. So, I like women.

LOUIS

Now that's an honest answer.

ALICE

Too honest.

WAITER

Don't forget the tip.

ALICE & LOUIS

We won't.

WAITER

You ready to cash out, sir?

That's a really good question.

Louis looks in the MIRROR behind Alice: *Prison Jumpsuit Alice stares back at him.* Louis blinks. She's gone.

LOUIS

I need another minute.

WAITER

You bet.

The Waiter departs.

LOUIS

Everyone has secrets, Alice.

ALICE

Are you a registered sex offender?

LOUIS

What if I was?

ALICE

Then I could look you up on the federal database of shame.

LOUIS

Why are you required to tell me that thing about yourself--

ALICE

No avoiding the subject, please say the actual words.

LOUIS

That's not necessary.

ALICE

Yes it is. Just say it.

LOUIS

OK. Tell me more about how you became a registered sex offender?

Louis waits for his answer that never comes.

LOUIS

Well?

ALICE
Well what?

LOUIS
Aren't you going answer me?

ALICE
No.

LOUIS
Why not? Aren't you required to by
some law?

ALICE
Nope. I just wanted to hear you
say the words. Goodbye, Louis.

Alice moves to depart, but Prince Charming isn't ready to
leave the Ball just yet...

LOUIS
Alice, wait. I still have one more
question I can ask you. Right?

ALICE
You just asked your last question.

LOUIS
No, you asked me to ask you that.

ALICE
I don't want to play games anymore.

LOUIS
You chose this place because you
expect to fail. If you ask me,
you're the one that's playing
games, Alice. Not me.

ALICE
I'm not asking you. You're asking
me and that's your last question.

LOUIS
I said "if". Play fair, Alice.

Alice holds her idle iPad. She gazes into the BLACK MIRROR,
searching for answers to silent questions.

ALICE
Fine. Ask your last question, and
then we're done.

Louis downs his wine, sits back. He considers his next words very carefully...

LOUIS

Do you think there's one thing I could say to you that would make you change your mind about me?

ALICE

Highly doubtful. It would have to be really good.

LOUIS

How good are we talking here?

ALICE

Have you won any major awards?

LOUIS

State finals, college debate team.

ALICE

What was the winning topic?

LOUIS

Prison reform.

ALICE

Too ironic to be true. Have you cured any rare diseases?

LOUIS

Nope.

ALICE

Ever saved someone's life?

LOUIS

If this place were on fire, I'd rescue you. Does that count?

ALICE

I'm not a damsel in distress.

LOUIS

Are you sure about that?

ALICE

Enough witty banter, I'm attracted to you, OK? But if you told me you were a sex offender, I would walk out on you and never look back.

LOUIS
Well then there's something you
should know about me: I'm a
registered sex offender too.

An unseen pile of PLATES crashes on a hard floor.

ALICE
You're lying, Louis. I don't
believe one word of it.

LOUIS
Do you want me to announce it to
everyone in the restaurant?

ALICE
Yes.

LOUIS
I will not.

ALICE
Then I guess you're not a sex
offender and this date is over.

Louis stands up, clears his throat. Alice enjoys the game.

LOUIS
May I have your attention please.
I want you all to know, that in the
state of California, I'm a...
registered a sex offender. Enjoy
the rest of your meal. Thank you.

Patrons glare at Louis. He sits down.

LOUIS
There. Happy now?

ALICE
No.

LOUIS
Why not?

ALICE
Because I just found out my date is
a registered sex offender.

Alice fiddles with something in her big PURSE.

LOUIS
Are you Googling me?

ALICE
Hell yes!

LOUIS
You still don't believe me.

ALICE
Of course I don't. You're the
liar, just like the rest of them.

LOUIS
You're right, I'm a liar. But
those other guys lied to you to end
the date. I lied to keep it going.

ALICE
I've got ten years left on my
probation, Louis. Ten years.

LOUIS
How do you like your bourbon?

ALICE
That's four questions, Louis,
you're breaking the rules.

Even now Alice tries to deny herself happiness. She ponders
the offer, glances at the mirror behind Louis:

No more beaten down Prison Jumpsuit Alice...

Just a reflection of her hopeful face.

Alice puts away the tablet. Louis smiles. The iPad sticks
out of Alice's purse. It's open to a Google search engine:

Next to the word: *LOUIS*... A thin CURSOR blinks and blinks,
until the power saver mode:

CUTS TO BLACK.

THE END