

23rd December, 2008

IS THE OFFICE CHRISTMAS PARTY COMPULSORY?

DEAR DIARY, if you don't go, everyone thinks you're a stuck up b*tch with a pole up your jacksy and if you do go, it's quite likely you're gonna get smashed and wish you were never born.



I was leaning towards not going. There are always people in attendance that you can't stomach and you might have to sit next to them for a whole boring hour chewing on Brussel sprouts and dry turkey with lumpy gravy.

You might even end up having to endure people snogging each other's faces off. God forbid it's yours!

The music's always rubbish and people can't dance; and of course, they play Eddie Grant and Boney M and everyone looks at me as if I'm the authority on black music!

In the end, I agreed to go because my manager's handing out redundancies like cupcakes and I'll do anything right now (except sexual favours) to make sure I don't give him a reason to question my dedication. I draw the line at sexual favours though. If he looked like Jamie Foxx it's quite likely I'd be prepared to swing with him from the chandeliers but he bears no resemblance to Mr Foxx so I won't be going down the Jezebel route.

Turns out all my angst was for nothing. I was sat with people I actually like. The food was really nice. I didn't get drunk but I had the enjoyment of watching other people get bladdered. I'm too proud to end up in a heap on the floor in the photocopying room. If I'm going to fall asleep (due to intoxication) in my suit and a purple paper party hat, I'd rather do it in the comfort of my own home.

One bizarre thing happened to me. Someone confessed that they like me more than a colleague ought to and wanted to know if I would consider going on a date. Anthony* doesn't normally say more than eight words a week to me so his confession wasn't expected.

I had a gut feeling that there was "something" about him which I couldn't put my finger on. I guess if some small thing occurs for a second too long on more than one occasion, it stirs

The AUGUST MAYFIELD Diaries

your gut a little. Well I think this is what has happened with Anthony. For months now, he's been "lingering" for a second longer than one can deem necessary!

While we were at the party, he quietly asked me if I would go out with him for a drink to celebrate the coming New Year. Unfortunately, he wasn't drunk! I would have been happier if he was because I could the blow him off the next time I saw him by saying it was the drink talking and act like the conversation was all a misunderstanding but he was as sober as a judge.

I didn't give him a definitive answer either. In fact, in my mind, I've made every excuse in the book in preparation for our next conversation when I tell him the 12 or so reasons why I can't go out on a date with him.

Firstly these are the reasons why I would which he's never going to know if I've got anything to do with it.

1. He's charming
2. Handsome
3. Tall
4. Funny
5. Clever
6. I know how much he earns
7. He's never been married
8. We're the same age
9. He's a Sagittarian so his star sign's "compatible"
10. He laughs at my jokes
11. He's the only boy from a family with three sisters – YES – he understands women
12. Soft hands
13. Kind eyes
14. I think I'll stop now

These are all the reasons I'll tell him I can't date him

1. He's too tall – I'm 5ft 2

The AUGUST MAYFIELD Diaries

2. He lives in North London
3. We work in the same department even if he's on another floor
4. He makes me laugh and that will encourage permanent laughter lines and crows claws and my face can't take that kind of disfigurement
5. I'm a relationship cynic – they always end in tears... my tears
6. Erm... OK. I'm running out of excuses
7. Did I say he lived in North London??
8. Oh I remember... he's got a two-seater car. That means he must be selfish. How do you give more than one person a lift in a two seater? They're the devil's cart!

So there we have it.

I was doing such a fabulous job of running in the other direction when I see an interested man on the loose. I've managed to hide behind closed doors, behind books and oblivious to male sounds outside the confines of my headphones. I've just become accustomed to my own company. I've just got my head around "happy to be single" instead of poor me, I'm a washed up old spinster and now this Anthony business!

I hope he gets shipped off to one of our Latin American offices in the New Year! He can make trouble on the senorita's and leave me alone so I can continue to hide behind closed doors and pretend that my headphones are on even when they're not and I'm secretly listening.

August Mayfield

**Anthony is soooooo not his real name.*