

Screenplay

AWKWARD DINING.

FADE IN

INTERIOR: RESTAURANT. EVENING

PAUL and DAWN, a couple in their 50s, sit opposite each other around a small candle-lit dining table. The swanky restaurant is full of Christmas decorations and strategically placed fairy lights. There is an open fire in the corner of the room, the atmosphere is warm and cheerful. Frank Sinatra is heard gently singing favorite Christmas hits.

DAWN

Oh it's lovely!

PAUL

It's proper posh isn't it!

DAWN

I haven't been somewhere like this since Mary's divorce party a few years back.

PAUL

I feel a bit out of place! All these blokes are in their Ralph Lauren's...my M&S doesn't quite cut the mustard!

DAWN

Don't be silly love! That shirt is timeless...and by timeless I mean there will never be a time where it's actually in fashion.

PAUL

Oh come off it! You picked it!

DAWN

Incorrect.

PAUL

You did!

DAWN

I picked a much nicer shade of blue, you insisted that you could pull off salmon.

(CONTINUED)

PAUL
Alright, alright. You look lovely
anyway, that's all that matters.

DAWN
I'm joking with you, you look
great.

PAUL
Thanks love.

DAWN
I mean the shoes are utterly
hideous but lets be thankful they
are located the furthest away from
everyone's eyes.

PAUL
Stop! Come on we haven't been out
together in ages, let's have a nice
time.

DAWN giggles again and places her hand out to touch PAUL's.

DAWN
I'm sorry I'm sorry! Christ my
sarcasm just rolls off my tongue
these days, I can't even tell when
I'm joking or not anymore.

DAWN looks around the room and over to the door. Her face
suddenly changes and she slumps down in her chair.

Oh my Christ. Its Pam. Don't look,
don't look. She's just walked
in. Jesus, shit, buggery.

PAUL looks around the room with a confused look on his face.

PAUL
What? Where?

DAWN
Paul for the love of god I told you
not to look! She's right over
there! By the door.

Camera pans over to the door.

A woman in her early 40s stands by the door, waiting to be
seated with her husband. She is dressed in a fur coat and
red heels. Her make-up is done to perfection, her hair
neatly pinned up and her jewellery reflects the glow from
the fire.

PAUL (O.S)
Oh yea I see her now, she looks
great! Should I wave over and-

DAWN (O.S)
No you bloody will not!

CUT TO: PAUL AND DAWN

DAWN is slumped further in her chair, she covers her face
with a menu.

PAUL
Dawn would you stop hiding under
your menu? You look ridiculous! Am
I missing something here? You used
to be so close!

CUT TO: FLASHBACK, 20 YEARS AGO.

A young DAWN and PAM dressed suitably in 80s work clothes,
sit at computers in an office environment.

PAM
He said it would be this morning
didn't he? What's keeping him! I'm
so excited for you Dawn you've got
this in the bag!

DAWN
Don't jinx it! I don't think
anythings certain...

PAM
Come off it! Who else is going to
get it?!

A man dressed smartly and carrying documents walks in, he
approaches the women. DAWN and PAM look nervous and stop
working.

MANAGER
Hello ladies. Well I better just
get on with this, we all know why
I'm here.

PAUSE

I'm extremely happy to announce
that after careful consideration,
our new department manager is going
to be you, Pam.

PAM and DAWN both look utterly shocked. PAM begins to cry
as the manager hugs her. DAWN is visibly heartbroken.

(CONTINUED)

CUT TO: PRESENT DAY

DAWN

Paul let's just leave. The window in the ladies isn't that small, I'm pretty sure I could climb out. You could just walk out the front door after she has sat down.

PAUL

Have you completely lost the plot?? What is wrong with you? Sit up and put your menu down!

CUT TO: FLASHBACK, 15 YEARS AGO

INTERIOR: Office. DAWN is working at the same office. Her telephone rings, it is PAM.

DAWN

Hello?

PAM (TELEPHONE V.O)

I'M ENGAGED! HE'S POPPED THE QUESTION! HENRY'S POPPED THE QUESTION!

DAWN'S smile drops immediately.

DAWN

That's...that's brilliant news Pam.

DAWN (V.O INTERIOR)

I have two fucking kids and Paul still hasn't popped the fucking question.

CUT TO: PRESENT DAY

PAUL pulls the menu from DAWN who sits up abruptly.

DAWN (GETTING INCREASINGLY ANGRY)

Paul! Look you don't understand. That woman over there, all leggy 6ft of her, is a bloody cow. And I hate her. She will waltz in with her perfect hair and perfect face and perfect legs and ask me lots of questions about my life that really she doesn't care one bit about.

(CONTINUED)

PAUL

But-

DAWN

And then she'll pretend to be really enthralled before she pulls the rug from under my feet and tells me how *amazing* things are for her, and how Henry's just bought another plot of land for the horses and that Ruben has just started learning the violin and is already an accomplished musician and that Florence has now read the entire works of Shakespeare even though she's only 5. So no, I do not want to bloody speak to that bloody, leggy, stuck up her own ass witch!

PAUL looks stunned, he glances around again to look at PAM who has now spotted the pair of them. She gives a delicate wave and smiles delightfully.

PAUL

Too late.

DAWN

Mother of god has she spotted us?!
Oh fuck!

PAUL

Dawn!

DAWN

I'm going to have a panic attack
Paul I can't look. Where is she,
is she coming over? Is she? Tell me
whats going on!

CUT TO: 1 YEAR AGO

INTERIOR: Supermarket. DAWN and PAM bump into each other shopping. The exchange is awkward.

PAM

Dawny! How on earth are you? It's
been so long!

DAWN

Pam...Im ok thanks...yes it has
been.

PAUSE

(CONTINUED)

PAM

Well I'm sure you're looking forward to Christmas, and the New Year! Any big plans?

DAWN

I'm looking forward to the New Year yes, I want to forget the last one. Hasn't been a great year to be honest. What with Mum passing away.

PAM

Oh of course how could I forget! I suppose Christmas is going to be hard.

DAWN

But you did forget, Pam.

PAM

Dawny come on now, I've apologized...

DAWN

No phone call...no card....nothing.

PAUSE

I'm in a bit of a rush, I'll see you another time Pam.

DAWN walks off, annoyed. PAM remains, she shakes her head and continues to shop.

CUT TO: PRESENT DAY, PAM AT THE ENTRANCE

PAUL (O.S)

She's chatting to the waiter....hold on....OK she's headed straight for us. Pull yourself together Dawn.

Camera follows PAM as she begins to make her way across the restaurant to PAUL and DAWN. She walks elegantly, smiling until she reaches the table.

PAM

Paul! Dawn! Its utterly fabulous to see you both!

She goes to kiss them both on the cheek.

(CONTINUED)

DAWN (SARCASTICALLY)

Pam. What a surprise. It's
delightful to see you too...

They exchange a kiss on both cheeks, mimicking the sound as they do so.

PAUL

Pam, its a pleasure. I haven't
seen you in ages- how are things?

PAM

Oh Paul, don't worry about silly
old me! What about you pair? Dawn
how's work? Still at Jacobs?

DAWN

Yes, still there. I'm practically
part of the furniture. They
wouldn't survive without me.

PAM

Ha! Oh Dawny, you should have moved
years ago! You're too good for that
place. How are the kids? I heard
Peter has repeated a year?

PAUL

Well yea, he-

DAWN

He decided the course wasn't for
him anymore Pam to be
honest. Brave decision.

PAM

Right, right. Of course if its not
for him, then he's quite right to
change! Rita from Waitrose seemed
to think it was because he was
partying a little too hard, I told
her not to believe such nonsense!

DAWN

Oh no don't believe that Pam. You
know what Rita's like...such a
gossip!

PAUL

No no, he just decided that the
course-

(CONTINUED)

PAM

Rita is a gossip I agree with you there Dawny! How are the others? Charlie ok? And what about little Emily? Still giving you problems? You know there's a name for those sorts of things now with medication and everything! More common than you'd think, a little boy in Florence's class has the same thing. Dreadfully badly behaved.

DAWN

Well thanks for your deep concern Pam but Emily is just fine thanks.

PAM

I didn't mean any offense Dawny!

DAWN

None taken Pammy, I know your concern for others is completely heartfelt.

DAWN smiles unconvincingly up at PAM, a sarcastic look on her face.

PAUL

So eh Pam, who are you here with?

PAM

Here with Henry, darling! We've come out to celebrate actually, Ruben has just been selected for the national squad! We're delighted!

PAUL

Wow, that's brilliant!

DAWN

Delightful. Swimming I take it? Or has he excelled in some other sport since I've seen you last?

PAM

Swimming yes, he's a little fish our Ruben!

DAWN

Is he here to celebrate too?

(CONTINUED)

PAM

No, no. Just Henry and I, we thought it was too late to bring the children, you know how it is Dawny!

DAWN

But its 7 o'clock Pam...

PAM

Well done Dawn it is.

AWKWARD PAUSE

I like to have the kids tucked up early, its helps them in school.

DAWN

It's also a Friday...

PAM

Well someone's on form tonight haha! Correct Dawn, it is a Friday...

PAUL

I...I think what she meant Pam is that she thought the whole family would be out to celebrate Ruben's success! Anyway, how is Henry? Where is he?

All three look over towards the door.

PAM

He's waiting to be seated by the door, I'll go and bring him over shall I? He'd love to see you Paul! Back in a jiffy!

PAUL

Oh ok yea!

PAM leaves the table, slight pause until dialogue commences again. DAWN is extremely agitated, her actions are loud and exaggerated.

DAWN

Jesus, Mary and Joseph! Oh my Christ Paul hold me back I'm going to swing for her!

(CONTINUED)

PAUL

Calm down! She's not that bad!

DAWN

Did you not just hear her stupid, patronizing remarks about our children?! That woman is a nosy, good for nothing, piece of SHIT! Excuse my French Paul but I'm so angry!

PAUL

Dawn, calm down!

DAWN

No Paul. She's had this coming for years.

PAUL

What? Had what coming?

DAWN.

This.

DAWN picks up her full wine glass angrily and walks towards the door.

PAUL

No! Dawn! Stop!

Camera follows behind DAWN as she approaches the door. PAM and HENRY greet her with a smile which quickly fades as they realize something is wrong.

PAM spots the wine in her hand.

PAM

Dawn what are you doing?

DAWN

Well... I was going to throw this glass of merlot right in your face and say 'fuck you' rather loudly before storming out in dramatic fashion. But then I thought I'm not wasting four pounds twenty on you. Because you're not worth half of that. Not even a quarter.

PAM

Dawn I-

(CONTINUED)

DAWN.

So I'm going to go back to my husband who yes may be fatter and balder and poorer than yours...but at least he's not shagging half the country.

PAM looks stunned. She goes to speak but stops. HENRY's jaw drops.

DAWN

Oh! You thought no one knew?

PAM

What on earth-

DAWN

Turns out you haven't managed to escape Rita's gossip either! Enjoy your meal.

DAWN gives a sarcastic smile as she turns and walks off. She gives a silent 'yes!' gesture as she strides across the restaurant.

PAM and HENRY remain standing at the door, they start to bicker.

DAWN returns to her table where Paul stands open mouthed.

DAWN

Right then! I'm bloody starving, and that 12oz sirloin has my name on it!

FADE TO BLACK.