

DAILY Actor

ARE YOU READY? by David Auburn

WOMAN: I'm the food critic for the *Times*, and I've been anxious for some time now to get my claws into the throat of that *pompous evil weasel* of a restaurateur and rip him to absolute shreds for the benefit of my rather unusually loyal readership. I'm sorry. I'm not a vindictive person. I think I'm basically a decent person but I'd been watching people humiliating themselves for a table at that place for months, and the restaurant *sucks*, honestly: their foie gras is dry, their lapin en croute a l'Aubergine tastes like something my cat coughed up when it had the flu last winter, their wine list is emaciated, their syphilitic pastry chef couldn't frost a cupcake if you held a gun to his mother's head... I'd been *dying* to get a crack at it but they wouldn't let me in, not even with a fake name. But tonight I was just walking by and I saw this nice-looking guy, just normal-looking, not a big celeb or anything- he was waiting a table, so I thought, Why not me? Then I was offered a table and I *leaped* at it and now that supercilious creep is going to have a nasty surprise when he opens the paper tomorrow morning, I promise you. That does sound vindictive, doesn't it? I don't mean it to. I'm not a mean person. I'm just like anyone else. I like a decent meal. I like to rent a couple of videos and relax on a Sunday night. I like to drive up north for a weekend in the fall when the leaves start to turn. That sounds like a horrible personal ad, doesn't it? "Single Female, thirties, enjoys food film, and foliage, seeks single male twenties-thirties for a profound lifelong commitment"- Not that I'd ever *ever* write an ad like that- I'm not *desperate*, believe me, I'm *fine*. But all right, yes, I'd like to meet someone, I'd- I mean I *meet* plenty of people, At parties, or- Plenty of successful, brilliant, witty people- all right not plenty but some- and you try to be- but you know people get the paper, they read your stuff and you develop a reputation and even though you're just doing your job- like last month when I wrote that the new *unbelievably* expensive and pretentions sushi place

DAILY Actor

downtown was enough to make an American feel a little less guilty about dropping the atomic bomb on Nagasaki- you can develop a reputation for, I don't know, harshness. And you start to wish you could make a clean break. You imagine what it would be like to meet someone totally *new*- like, I don't know, *anyone*- this guy here- just an attractive, well-dressed- I mean I'm not crazy about the tie, frankly, I would have gone with something a little less late-mid-eighties, but who cares? Doesn't matter. You have to be *flexible*. And you have to be ready: you couldn't plan it or hope for it. You would simply have to be prepared to recognize your chance when it came. When that person came along. I sometimes imagine something like that happening. Then I come to my senses and remind myself how unlikely that would be.