

Tinder Timeline

January

This is it!

I've taken the plunge, after years of disastrous relationships, Sophie at work has persuaded me to try internet dating. I can't believe I've actually downloaded Tinder. After blow-drying my hair and putting on make-up, I finally take a 'selfie'. All I have to do now is post a profile. Swipe right if you like them, left if you don't. If their swipe matches yours, you can start messaging one another. Sophie told me not to use my real name, so we came up with 'The Singing Angel', on account of me having joined the Community Choir last year, hoping to meet a nice man for a change. I love the singing, but sadly, not the men in the group.

I press 'upload' and the suggested matches start appearing. I read every description, study every photo. Most get swiped left, but a few go to the right. I didn't realise this was an app suitable for the over 40s, Sophie laughed and said I should give it a try, I thought it was only teenagers and twenty-somethings. It seems there are plenty of men my age. I switch the kettle on, ready to sit with a coffee and get ignored by my Tinder temptations. Then my phone pings, Jeremy likes me, ping, Richard likes me. Ping, ping, talk about an ego boost.

March

I've been speaking to Andrew for a few weeks. He sounds lovely, we started with messages via Tinder, but have now moved on to phone calls. He's a couple of years older than me, divorced, and a physio. We planned to finally meet on Friday at a wine bar in Soho. But the date didn't happen, I didn't cancel it, nor did he, Boris did. Yes I seem to have been on the brink of meeting someone at the outbreak of a pandemic, how's your luck been lately?

April

We continue to talk on the phone. Andrew is funny, charming and just a nice, ordinary guy. He's been transferred from physio to ventilate patients in ICU.

May

We have moved on to video calls.

I worry about him, it's bizarre, I haven't met the man and yet I care about him so much. I can see the tiredness in his eyes, the red face from wearing a mask for 10 hour shifts, I start telling him that I wish I could be there for him, pour him a beer, and cook him a meal. I am working from home, not seeing anyone. Our calls become more frequent, we are clinging on to each other for company and friendship. He suggests we meet for a socially distanced walk in the park.

June

On a hot summer's day we meet at Primrose Hill.

"I want to ask you something. Two people from separate single households can visit each other and stay overnight. Would you like to form a bubble with me?" Andrew asks.

We've never kissed, we've never even held hands, I don't hesitate, "Yes please."