

TINDER, 1819

A Regency Love Story in One Act
By P.S. Drake

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Characters:

AUDREY: Female-presenting, 18-30's, color blind
Mistress of the house who uses "Tinder"
to find a suitor

KATHERINE: Female-presenting, age/color blind
Audrey's lady's maid

GEORGE: Male-presenting, 18-30's, color blind
A suitor that "matches" with Audrey

WILL: Male-presenting, age/color blind
George's valet

Synopsis:

The year is 1819, Audrey's third season since making her debut, and she has yet to find a husband. Looking to land a marriage proposal and avoid an unfortunate fate, she turns to the new dating service known as "Tinder."

Place:

England

Audrey's bedroom/George's quarters

Time:

1819, during the tail-end of the Regency period

Notes:

All characters should speak with a light, British accent
"Portraits" mentioned can be pictures printed out on computer paper
Setting can be established via screen projection and limited props

*AUDREY is sleeping in her bedroom.
Her lady's maid, KATHERINE enters.*

KATHERINE

Mistress Audrey? (*No response*) Mistress Audrey? AUDREY.

AUDREY

Hm, what? I'm awake. I am alive. Katherine, good morning.

KATHERINE

Good *afternoon*. You slept through your lesson on the harpsichord.

AUDREY

Don't tell mother.

KATHERINE

Why shouldn't I?

AUDREY

Because I'll give you the painting I've been working on. It's the meadow! I was up all night getting the greens just right.

KATHERINE

Why?

AUDREY

Because it's important!

KATHERINE

You should spend your time on other, more attractive talents.

AUDREY

What's the use? I could play the harp as good as any angel in heaven and it still wouldn't draw the attention of a suitor. Do you know what Lady Heather said? She said boys think I'm weird. Weird!

KATHERINE

Well, have you tried being less weird?

AUDREY

Katherine!

KATHERINE

You spent nearly a half hour with Lord Weston at the last ball. What did you two discuss?

AUDREY

The most fascinating book I just read, "The Theory of Colors." It was written by a German poet.

KATHERINE

And no marriage proposal- I'm shocked.

AUDREY

Oh who cares? His father raises hogs for slaughter. Marrying him would mean a lifetime of smelling like pig shit.

KATHERINE

Mistress!

AUDREY

It's true! And he had that awful gap between his front teeth. Everytime he said "I see" it whistled. It was most distracting.

KATHERINE

(Sighs) Audrey. If you don't secure a marriage proposal by the end of this season, your mother's sending you to live with your uncle.

AUDREY

Uncle Matthew? In the city? Why, whatever for?

KATHERINE

To teach you a trade. This is your third season since your debut and no one's shown you the slightest bit of interest.

AUDREY

But- but surely she's overreacting! I can't live with Uncle Matthew. He's mean and he would never let me paint! I won't do it!

KATHERINE

But you must.

AUDREY

Please, I'll do anything! I'll stop over-sleeping! I'll play the harpsichord! I'll marry Lord Pig Shit!

KATHERINE

Lucky for you, you have a maid who is on top of everything latest and greatest! It's called Tinder.

AUDREY

Tinder? I'm trying to find a husband, not burn down the estate.

KATHERINE

It's the name of a matchmaking service. Once you sign up, you're sent portraits of eligible suitors in your area and a note capturing their essence. Then you see if the one you've chosen chooses you back.

AUDREY

Oh. So it's for all the rejects who can't find love on their own.

KATHERINE

Like you? It's all we've got. Or shall I pack your luggage for Uncle Matthew's?

AUDREY

(She thinks) Fine! I'll do it.

KATHERINE

Yes, I know. I signed you up weeks ago. Let's begin, hm?

KATHERINE pulls out a package of three victorian-style portraits of young men.

AUDREY

I suppose it's too late to run.

KATHERINE

Yes. Here's your first suitor. (*She holds up a portrait*) His name is Master Henry. He enjoys rowing, fern collecting, and reading and writing Greek.

AUDREY

No. He's a liar.

KATHERINE

Whatever do you mean?

AUDREY

Nobody enjoys reading and writing Greek. I could never marry a liar. So, no. (*She literally "swipes" left in the air*)

KATHERINE

Here's your second suitor. (*She holds up a portrait*) His name is-

AUDREY

Ugh, no. (*She literally "swipes" left*)

KATHERINE

I didn't even tell you his name!

AUDREY

Does it matter? Look at his eyes, he looks manic.

KATHERINE

We have one left. (*She holds up a portrait*) Master George. Under interests he's only listed wild duck shooting and then he's written a quote. "Everything is hard before it is easy." What?

AUDREY

Goethe. That's Wolfgang von Goethe! The German poet who wrote "The Theory of Colors!" Yes! How do I say yes? (*She "swipes" right*)

KATHERINE

This is the one you want? Seriously?

AUDREY

Yes! He knows Goethe!

KATHERINE

Alright, I'll make your interest known. *(She gets up to leave)*

AUDREY

That's it? Don't I need to put together my materials? My portrait, my "essence?"

KATHERINE

I took care of all of that. Don't you worry about a thing, mistress. I captured you perfectly. *(She exits)*

*Focus shifts to GEORGE's chambers.
It's set up similar to AUDREY's,
just on the other side of the
stage. His valet WILL enters.*

GEORGE

I'm reading.

WILL

As always, Master George. But I bring news. You matched.

GEORGE

I matched what?

WILL

On Tinder. You made a match.

GEORGE

(He puts down his book) That can't be right. Who's the girl?

WILL

Mistress Audrey, sir. Her picture. *(He holds up her portrait)*

GEORGE

Hm. What was it she wrote again?

WILL

(Reading from a paper) "My favorite activities include sitting, keeping my mouth shut, and bearing children."

GEORGE

Absolutely not. She sounds daft. You must tell her no.

WILL

I'll do no such thing. She is your only match and you will treat her with respect. Now, what will you write to her?

GEORGE

This is exhausting.

WILL

You haven't done anything.

GEORGE

I'm mentally exhausted! All the possibilities- what do I say? Then there's all the outcomes- what comes next? The web is limitless.

WILL

Do you wish to know how I won over my wife? I spoke from the heart.

GEORGE

And it worked?

WILL

Eventually.

GEORGE

(He thinks) Leave me. I will write to this Audrey girl.

WILL

Remember sir, from the heart!