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# the guardian

## RELATIONSHIPS

### Blind date Zarine Russell, 28, civil servant, meets Thomas Parry, 27, photographer

#### Zarine on Thomas

First impressions? Quite nervous, but easy to talk to, nicely dressed, unpretentious and friendly. What did you talk about? Travel, our nieces and nephews, university, concerts, my dubious taste in music - his words, not mine, although confessing my love for Take That early on in the evening probably didn't help - the weird and wonderful world of internet dating...

Any awkward moments? Only when trying to decipher what most of the food on the menu was. Good table manners?

Very polite indeed, especially when I asked to try his food.

Best thing about him? His smile and his dry sense of humour.

Did you go on somewhere? No. Marks out of 10? Can I plead the Fifth? Would you meet again? Only as friends. We've been in touch and I'd meet up again, but there was no attraction between us.



#### Thomas on Zarine

First impressions? I was pleasantly surprised: Zarine was well-dressed, with a nice smile and easy on the eye.

What did you talk about? The usual: travel, family, university, music tastes (she likes Take That, but each to their own). And we both confessed to enjoying the TV show *Mistresses*.

Any awkward moments? No uncomfortable silences or awkward moments - Zarine was easy to talk to. Good table manners? Impeccable. We shared our dishes and enjoyed the food.

Best thing about her? She's lived abroad and speaks Spanish. Hearing about the places she's explored was fascinating. Did you go on somewhere? We went to the station and got the same tube.

I asked her to text me to let me know she got back safely, and she did.

Marks out of 10? 8. Would you meet again?

Definitely maybe.

Zarine and Thomas ate at Shaka Zulu, London NW1, [shaka-zulu.com](http://shaka-zulu.com).

Fancy a blind date? Email [blind.date@guardian.co.uk](mailto:blind.date@guardian.co.uk).

### Diary of a disappointing daughter

#### SHAZIA MIRZA

While doing a show in Paris the other week, I was asked if I wanted to go to the Moulin Rouge. I was curious, so I said yes. I went on my own and, as I walked in, most people were in couples, many of them Japanese. I sat on a small table right in front of the stage and watched beautiful women with not much on dancing with ponies, snakes and a talking dog.

It was an amazing spectacle that I enjoyed by myself, but not as much as the two Japanese couples to my right, who whooped and screamed at every costume change.

I overheard their conversation on the way out. "My husband bought the ticket for our 40th wedding anniversary," one of the wives said.

"What a great present - an exciting husband!" said the other.

"Yes, it's important to do erotic things like this," the first wife said. "It keeps the marriage alive, and stops us having to look at each other for a couple of hours."

I tried to imagine my parents watching that show, but just couldn't see it - my mum would want to leave her seat every five minutes to go and pray, while my dad would be taking pictures.

I don't know what keeps a marriage alive, and I didn't consider the show erotic, but there were just as many women in there as men, and they were the ones cheering the most.

After 40 years of marriage, maybe you both need a night out looking at some long legs and a talking parrot. It'll give you something to talk about while fixing the sink.

LINDA NAYLOR FOR THE GUARDIAN ©