

Bad tum

Dating at Perkins is a one-way route to poor conversation



Rainbow Rowell

"I once found a pamphlet by the cash register that featured a map of all the Perkins in America. I imagined taking a cross-country trip with Brian and having lousy conversations in each one."

Perkins. We went to movies because we couldn't think of anyplace better, and we went to Perkins because it was the only place open to high schoolers after the movies.

Movie theaters are OK for an occasional date, but if you only see someone at movie theaters, you never really talk.

Perkins is bad for the opposite reason; all you can do is talk (especially if you are scared to eat). But you can't talk about anything interesting at Perkins because Perkins — though a perfectly acceptable family ristorante — is the black hole of interesting conversation.

Maybe it's the lighting or maybe it's the pasty-faced wait staff. Maybe it's the Mambo Muffins.

All I know is that I spent hour after hour playing with my cutlery and staring at the people in the smoking section while Brian ate a wedge of French silk pie.

To add to the disaster, Brian and I usually saw bizarre foreign flicks that left us nothing to discuss over dinner.

"Boy that was weird," Brian would mumble, staring at his chocolatey delicious pie.

"What was up with that mime?" I would ask, fiddling with my salad fork.

I once found a pamphlet by the cash register that featured a map of all the Perkins in America. I imagined taking a cross-country trip with Brian and having lousy conversations in each one.

But we had to go to Perkins. We couldn't go to Brian's house because his parents scared me (bizarre phobia No. 3), and we never went to my house because my mom still didn't know he existed.

Brian did his best to spark up our dates. He had a charming habit of turning the wrong way onto one-way streets. Then he would scream curse words and jump a median at 50 mph.

One day — after watching an especially strange movie called "The Black Robe," Brian and I broke up.

We had never really fought. To be honest, I blame our demise on Perkins. If I watched that boy eat one more piece of dreamy chocolate goodness, I was going to lose my mind.

To be even more honest, I think he was sick of me.

But I learned my lesson.

When the next poor sap fell into my snare, I set some ground rules:

No movies without dialogue.
No 24-hour breakfast dives.
And I do all the driving.

Rowell is a senior news-editorial, advertising and English major and the Daily Nebraskan managing editor.

Dinner

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"The House of Blue Leaves," which was written about the pope's last visit, opened the day the pope returned to the United States last week.

"The House of Blue Leaves," is a "roller-coaster ride" of mistresses, loony bins and plans to bomb the pope, Rook said.

"Its zany elements of drama are great," he said.

Downtown Dinner Theatre draws its actors from local talent, Rook said, and works with Koor Entertainment production company.

"The House of Blue Leaves" will make its last run Oct. 11 through Oct. 13. Dinner is at 6 p.m. with the show following at 7:30 p.m.

"The dinner theater must be where it's at," Rook said. "You've got a good buffet too, because the chow is wonderful."

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