

DATED LIVES

A RADIO PLAY

by

COLLEEN DEWIS

SYNOPSIS: **Four women who attend a class reunion find their personal lives have run almost parallel. They are divorced with no children and have been seeking "Mr. Right" via internet dating sites. They decide to meet again and exchange dating stories.**

Are women who grew up in the 1970's cursed or merely products of their time ... the age of choice?

Will they find the answer together?

CHARACTERS:

JULIE: A banker age 42 years.

AMANDA: An arts administrator age 42 years.

PENNY: University lecturer age 42 years.

GAIL: I.T. engineer age 42 years.

SCENE 1: Julie's home.

SOUND: *Helen Reddy singing "I am Woman".*

JULIE: I propose a toast to "successful dating".

AMANDA, GAIL, PENNY: Here, here.

SOUND: *Clinking of glasses.*

GAIL: I've been trying to analyse our similar situations and have reached a conclusion. Tell me what you think of this theory.

PENNY: Trust you to have a theory.

GAIL: My theory is that there are so many men advertising themselves on the various dating sites that we will go on looking forever and never be satisfied.

PENNY: What you are suggesting is that we are too picky?

AMANDA: Actually I've been thinking along those lines myself.

JULIE: Accepting compromise would not be easy for me or perhaps for any of us having grown up in "the age of choice".

GAIL: I agree, we are dated. But I have enjoyed my freedom of choice very much and wouldn't have changed it for quids.

AMANDA: So different to when our mothers were young.

They were expected to get a good secretarial position, meet a nice boy, get engaged, then married before getting pregnant preferably.

JULIE: Yes, and all this **1** by the time they were 22 or 23 otherwise they might be described as being "left on the shelf".

GAIL: Yes, no wonder my mother was excited about my having a career and all the choices available to girls when I was growing up.

AMANDA: So, what are we searching for then? Is it for a soul mate, an equal, a permanent sex partner, or all of these? What have we missed?

PENNY: Probably loving and being loved, being one half of a couple, accepted as such by friends and family. That's what I'm thinking these days.

GAIL: (Because) there are so many specifications given in a profile on (joining) a match-making site, (such as) details of appearance, age and interests (.) I think we (are inclined to) act as if we are buying a product. **2**

JULIE: Hence the term "joining the meat market".

AMANDA: Thank goodness that term is dying out. Internet dating has a respectable status now.

JULIE: It has taken the place of the old town hall dances. Even young people looking for life partners find the internet a good option.

GAIL: I've found that no matter how close someone comes to being a really good match according to their profile a date can turn out to be a dismal failure when you actually meet and touch.

PENNY: That's so true. One of the advantages of meeting at town hall or Church dances was that sight and touch were ready guages of attraction, whereas now on Internet dating sites so many qualities, likes and dislikes, interests, etc are listed in a profile, its easy to be dazzled by the statistics.

JULIE: Then, of course to add to the confusion, quite a few people lie!

GAIL: Another angle that can't be overlooked is the fact that by the time people reach their forties they are no longer willing or able to adapt very easily.

JULIE: You mean being set in their ways and not wanting to change.

That probably fits me! I like how I am!

PENNY: Don't we all?

AMANDA: I'm going to tell you about my recent internet dating adventure. You are permitted to laugh, although it wasn't funny at the time.

JULIE: This sounds interesting.

AMANDA: I thought I would be married by now and living my dream life in New York with my perfect match, Zeb.

PENNY: This is serious stuff.

AMANDA: It was. Zeb and I were internet chatting for almost a year while I was waiting for my annual leave to become due so that we could meet in New York.

We exchanged photos and our profiles matched 99 %.

GAIL: So what happened?

AMANDA: I took my annual leave, booked my flight and accommodation and felt quite confident in meeting Zeb and I both really felt we had a future together.

JULIE: After chatting for the best part of a year you would have known all there was to know about each other.

AMANDA: Both being involved in the arts meant we had a lot in common. We had explored all aspects of our lives and I thought we had bonded.

JULIE: It would have been an exciting moment when you met in the flesh. Was it love at first sight?

AMANDA: I'm afraid the sighting was the problem.

PENNY: But you had exchanged photos?

AMANDA: Yes, but in his photos he was clean shaven. This was a man with a wispy grey and ginger goatee.

GAIL: Well, he could easily have shaved it off for you.

AMANDA: That's not all that was different. He had fudged on his height.

PENNY: Don't tell me he was a dwarf!

AMANDA: Not quite. He stood at about 5 feet 5 inches in cuban heels. His height was supposed to be 5.10 according to his profile. Apparently men lie about their height and women lie about their weight.

JULIE: I must remember that.

AMANDA: It took me a few moments before I realized it was him.

I was quite shocked to say the least. But his reaction when he recognized me was even worse.

PENNY: How come?

AMANDA: Well, the photo I sent him when we first started chatting was taken just after I'd completed my weight loss programme with Jenny Craig. I was down to a size 10.

JULIE: Oh. No wonder he was confused.

AMANDA: Yes, he wasn't prepared for a size 16, 5ft.9 (in bare feet), 6 feet in heels rather large woman,

PENNY: I guess you were both pretty disappointed and angry.

AMANDA: We realized we looked like the "odd couple" and not the perfect match we were expecting.

After the initial shock and recriminations on both sides we called a truce.

JULIE: You did say we could laugh and I can't help seeing the funny side of this.

You proved that size does matter. Ha, ha!

AMANDA: We also proved that we did have something in common after all. We are both very practical. I had spent a lot of money on fares and accommodation and Zeb had bought tickets to all the best shows and sightseeing tours so we decided to make the best of it as the "perfect odd couple" for two weeks.

There was no romance but we did manage a friendship.

PENNY: If there's a moral to your story it is to keep statistics up to date and fairly close to the truth when involved in internet dating or suffer the consequences.

Finis