

SCRIPT: “Online Dating in Egypt Gone Wrong... Or Right?”

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This audio feature aims to reveal my hands on experience with online dating in Egypt using the online dating app Tinder and the struggles I faced to produce this audio.

*NATSOUND: People chatting about Tinder.*

*MUSIC: FADE IN: Cup of Wine - Illya Truhanov (0-55 secs from the start of the song)*

Let me tell you about Tinder, it’s an online dating app which millions from all around the world join to “Match. Chat. Date” as their website says. It’s a really popular dating app in the U.S. but not so much here in Egypt, and I’m telling you this because I decided to rebel against our Egyptian social norms, and use the app to have my own hands on experience.

To use Tinder, you have to sign up with a name and add at least one picture of yourself. The way the app works is that based on your location, you will find people who are near you. Let me walk you through it, you’re on the app and ready to explore people’s profiles, and based on what you see, you’ll either swipe left to see the next profile, or swipe right for liking them. If you match you dive into the conversation.

*SFX: Swish, Swoosh*

*SFX: Tinder message notification*

*SFX: Typing on iPhone*

*MUSIC: FADE OUT: Cup of Wine - Illya Truhanov*

*MUSIC: FADE IN: Sneaky Snitch - Kevin MacLeod (0-02:23 minutes from start of the song)*

After downloading Tinder, I made sure to provide very little information about myself by adding only my first name, my age, and one photo of myself. Honestly, I didn't want to be recognised by anyone on Tinder. I decided that I won't swipe right on anyone's profile because I didn't want to know any guys from this platform by all means. Based on my assumptions all of them will only want hookups or were fake accounts, maybe they'll want us to meet and steal my kidneys or something, I don't know.

*AHMED SAYED (AS): "You only had one picture with your back." (3 secs)*

Hmm, about this voice you hear, well, that was Ahmed Sayed, and you're hearing his voice because I may have swiped right a couple of times by mistake.. And maybe once or twice intentionally... Yes, I met a guy on Tinder and he's not as weird as I initially thought all guys would be.

*SFX: Ohhh, Ahhh*

*AS: "You seemed really interesting because we've chatted for two days without seeing your face which was like weird, but still it was interesting." (12 secs)*

Ahmed and I are good friends now, and he considers me to be one of the few good people he met on Tinder. But as you expected, not all people you'll meet online will be good people...

*AS: "I remember this one girl I matched and she started telling me about her mental illness. I felt really sorry for her. It was a long long time ago and but she started being too forward and telling me about her sexual life." (21 secs)*

After all, meeting unusual people was very expected from an online dating app.

*AS: "I really found it creepy, so I unmatched but she already asked for my number and I gave her the number, so she started calling me for 30 times in a row, so I blocked her." (13 secs)*

Ahmed went on to say how this girl pseudo stalked him. She started going to great extents and calling him from different numbers, and this led him to not answer any unknown numbers and even deleted Tinder for a whole year after this incident.

*MUSIC: FADE OUT: Sneaky Snitch - Kevin MacLeod*

Okay okay, enough with my experience with people on Tinder, and let's dive into behind the scenes of producing this audio piece.

*SFX: Swish*

*MUSIC: FADE IN: Technology Presentation (0-02:36 minutes from start of the song)*

*NATSOUND IN THE BACKGROUND: Conversation with mom saying “Will all people be able to listen to this?” (Said in Arabic)*

This is my mom in the background, and as a typical Egyptian parent, she cares too much about society and what will people think of me when they hear this story considering that I will be posting it publicly.

*NATSOUND IN THE BACKGROUND: Conversation with mom saying “Of course no! You will not do it.” (Said in Arabic)*

The words I've been dreading to hear the most... She totally refused the idea of my piece and was against publishing it on my social media accounts because of what will my relatives and friends think and speak of me when they hear this. So basically my day went from big plans of interviews and many draft scripts, to me trying to convince her that it's okay and that she should let me carry out my idea.

Even though, Egypt is becoming more westernised, our social norms are still prevailing when it comes to dating. It's not usual for a girl to talk to strange men on social media platforms, so imagine a girl meeting a guy on an online dating app. There will always be the question of “what

will the society think?” And let’s not forget the famous idea among our society which implies that a guy should always approach a girl first and not the other way around. So as you expect, the comments will probably shame the girl and her family.

Although I’m totally against the idea of caring about what others think, I understood where she was coming from. And if you’re wondering how I managed to publish this piece, let me tell you that it cost me some tears and a panic mode, so my mom just gave up and let me be.

This audio feature was produced by Ashrakat Hamad for the audio production course at The American University in Cairo taught by professor Kim Fox and teaching assistant Doaa Abdelghany in the Fall semester 2019. Special thanks for Ahmed Sayed for sharing his stories. Music downloaded from Royalty Free Music and all natsounds are recorded by me.

*MUSIC: FADE OUT: Technology Presentation*