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Empire Date: Getting In the Right Frame Of Mind

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The painting's main draw wasn't really itself, it was its frame. I was 24 and for my first adult apartment, I wanted only framed pictures. This cheap copy of [Gustave Caillebot's Paris, A Rainy Day](#), fit the bill.

Over time, however, I came to love the Caillebot. As the painting kept me company through the ups and downs of life, it came to represent a sort of eternal truth. Yes, there's always Paris, but there's also always rain.

I stuck with the painting and I grew to love it. Coming off a string of dates with good people who just weren't right, I began to feel more and more like what I was missing was commitment. I committed to the Caillebot for the flimsiest of reasons and now I loved it, I thought.

Why not apply that mentality to dating?



Me and my new mentality strode into [Belcourt](#), a French brasserie in the East Village, to meet Dominic. We had connected through [Howaboutwe.com](#) when he responded to my suggestion that we walk over the George Washington Bridge -- a lifelong dream. But our walk proved tough to coordinate, and we settled on dinner at a restaurant.

I was excited to meet Dominic. He was a musician, and I love music. He was older than me; this just seems like the kind of thing I ought to be into. He had a child. A psychic once told me I was destined to raise children "not my own."

I arrived late due to "weird Google maps directions" (for me, virtually synonymous with "my own poor sense of direction.") Dominic looked mildly annoyed, but I think any initial bad feelings were quickly swept aside.

The conversation was great. We connected over having day jobs and true passions (in my case writing, in his music). We talked about our families, our love of French food, and experiences online dating. He said he had "had a lot of first dates over the years," and I nodded knowingly. It seemed like we were on the same page in a lot of ways. I felt like Dominic was at a stage in his life where he knew himself and was comfortable with who he was.

And what he said genuinely interested me. For instance, he mentioned he wanted someone who would be able to go to concerts with him and enjoy them as much as he did. I countered that with "you're more likely to find someone who would pretend to like those things so they could be with you." He asked me if I had done something like this, and I wasn't really sure. Given that I'm an [ENFJ](#), though, it seems likely.

When the date was over, I went home feeling certain I'd say yes to another date. I had some doubts. There was a bit of a tightness to Dominic that I wasn't sure I could gel with. Sometimes I feel people are drawn to what may seem like my own free-spirited, frank nature. This free spirit learned a while ago that she does not want to be breaking others out of their cages. Still, I remembered how the Caillebot grew in meaning for me over time, and I wanted to give Dominic a chance to do the same. Plus, staring at the endless gallery of profiles of potential mates was beginning to make me feel numb. Just like when I got lost in the Louvre and became blind to the great art around me.

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