

George is all dressed up for a hot date with Nadine — cue much teasing from his flatmate Dan. This lesson is another example of ‘banter’ - a type of quick-witted, playful small talk.

Hot Date

Dan let out a wolf whistle as George appeared from his bedroom, **dressed up to the nines**.

“Get you in your fancy togs!” said Dan, in amazement. **“Where are you off to?”**

“I’ve got myself a hot date” said George, smugly.

“Oh? Who is she?” asked Dan.

“Nadine from the flat downstairs,” replied George. **“You know? The girl from France with the long dark hair that we met at the barbecue.”**

“You’re a dark horse!” said Dan. “You never mentioned anything about her. Where are you going?”

“Yeah, well I didn’t want to say anything until she’d said go out with me,” said George. **“Didn’t want to get my hopes up too much. Or yours, for that matter. We’re off for a meal at Valentino’s, down the road.”**

“Nice one!” said Dan. “She’ll be impressed with that. **Just make sure your table manners are up to scratch** – remember to use a knife and fork at all times. No picking up your pizza.”

“Give us a break!” said George. “I know how to behave myself, you know, **unlike a certain person not a million miles from where I’m standing who managed to disgrace himself at said barbecue.** I don’t think Nadine’s flatmate has forgiven you yet for throwing up in her flower bed.”

“Yes, well I was enjoying myself a bit too much that evening,” said Dan, **“and boy, did I pay for it the next morning. I felt like death warmed up.** So... you don’t think I’ve much of a chance with her flatmate then? I quite fancied her.”

“Not a cat’s chance in hell!” laughed George. **“You’re not in her good books.”**

“We’ll see about that,” said Dan. **“I’ll have to see what I can do to win her round...”**

Phrases and expressions

1. Dressed up to the nines = **“to the nines” is an idiom that means “to perfection”** — so “dressed up to the nines” means “dressed up to perfection”. They’ve put a lot of effort into getting all dressed up to go out, basically. This idiom is very common in this kind of situation (see the lesson “El Diablo” for another example).
2. “Get you in your fancy togs!” = “get you” is a very casual phrase that is **used to show someone is acting as if they’re more important, rich, successful, etc., then they really are.** It means basically the same thing as “look at you!” but is used sarcastically. Here it’s simply used as a way of commenting on George being all dressed up (which clearly isn’t normal). Another example of how this might be used, is say, when you’re at the bar and your friend says something like, *“I just scored a big deal at work! So the drinks are on me today!!”* and you could say something like *“Get you being all rich!”*.
3. “Where are you off to?” = a very casual way of saying “where are you going”
4. “I’ve got myself a hot date” = again, very casual language. **George is just saying he’s got a date.** There is a nuance of boasting in a playful kind of way here. Another phrase that uses the same pattern would be something like, “You’ve got yourself a deal” which would be a very casual way of saying “we have a deal”.

5. "You know?" = this is a very common chunk **used to indicate that the thing or person being referred to is one the listener knows or is familiar with.**
6. The girl from France with the long dark hair that we met at the barbecue = this doesn't really need any explanation, but I want to draw attention to this as **a great pattern for describing people** — especially in this kind of situation, where the person you're talking to knows them but needs reminding.
7. "You're a dark horse!" = a **"dark horse" is someone who keeps their interests or ideas secret.** This is especially common regarding some surprising skill or ability — for example you find out your friend has published a novel, but they never mentioned it — or in this kind of situation where you've been going out with someone, but kept it a secret.
8. Didn't want to get my hopes up too much = If you get your (or someone else's) you think or **expect something to happen (with the nuance that it is unlikely, and so you'll be left disappointed).**
9. Or yours, for that matter = **'for that matter' is a common chunk that means "besides" or "in addition"** — so here George is saying it seemed unlikely that Nadine would agree to go on a date with him, therefore he didn't take about it because he didn't want to get himself OR his friends disappointed).
10. "Nice one!" = Another super casual expression - **this means "well done"**. This is often used sarcastically too, to mean the opposite — for example say you're a manager, and you deal with a problem badly and a member of your team quits. Your friend in the HR department might say — "Nice one. Now we've got to find someone new."
11. Just make sure your table manners are up to scratch = if something is "up to scratch" it is up to a required standard.
12. "Give us a break!" = a very common phrase that means **"stop putting pressure on me!"** — really though there isn't much meaning in this phrase: it's just a common thing to say in reaction to the previous statement. Here it also has the nuance that Dan isn't the person to lecture about manners.

13. Unlike a certain person not a million miles from where I'm standing who managed to disgrace himself at said barbecue = This is a relatively common pattern, in this exact kind of situation. **You'd say something like this when you're (sarcastically) criticising someone for something.** Basically we're describing the person as if you wanted to keep their identity hidden, but at the same time making it really obvious who you mean. This'd only be used in this kind of very casual, banter-like conversation.
14. And boy, did I pay for it the next morning = if you "pay for something", you pay the price (in this case a bad hangover).
15. I felt like death warmed up = this is a common idiom that means **to feel (and look) really bad.** See the lesson "Man-flu" from May 2016 for another example of this.
16. "Not a cat's chance in hell!" = another common idiom. **This means there is no chance of being able to do or achieve something.** In America this idiom is "not a snowball's chance in hell" (which makes more sense than "cat"!)
17. "You're not in her good books." = yet another idiom. **If you're not in someone's "good books", that person is pissed off with you.** Generally this idiom is only used in the negative sense - we don't often say "I'm in her good books", though sometimes you might hear that as a play on the idiom.
18. "We'll see about that," = another great phrase — one often used in this kind of playful, banter situation — it's **used when you are contradicting or challenging something someone has just said.** So here George says "You've got no chance with her!" and Dan is replying with something like, "you're wrong — I'll win her around!".
19. "I'll have to see what I can do to win her round..." = **if you "win someone around" you get into their good books** (the nuance here is that you *were* in their bad books of course).