Chapter 5: Neighbors Know My Name

I know what all this is starting to sound like: dating advice from a pickup artist. I want to make clear that's not the case. This is the only time I'm going to address my opinion on the subject of meeting or "picking up" women. I attribute any appearance of success to the fact that I'm very comfortable in my own skin.

The only advice I want to provide in this book is this:

MEN, you need to fix YOU before there can ever be a YOU + 1.

If you're reading and interested in that, I'm certain there are plenty of other books out there for you.

I debated whether to include this part of my life in this book, but I'm bipolar. I know you're thinking, what does that have to do with anything? Guess I lied twice. The intro said this was just a random dump of dating stories. But what I've come to realize is it's more about me expressing my life in a humorous way. Who doesn't love a rom com.

Does being bipolar affect dating? In a single word: YES. But that also depends on your definition of hinder and dating. Brazilian dating terminology would require an entire book to explain. I'm going to step over that huge elephant in the room and focus on the ways it hinders me [Vincent].

The most obvious one is when there are major depressive episodes. There are times when I'll sleep for multiple days in a row only waking to do a small bit of life admin before sleeping again. Surprisingly, the women you're "dating" aren't fond of you disappearing for any length of time. I'm sure I don't need to explain this to anyone who's married.

Also, bipolar isn't something people usually include in their dating profile. But I often post about it. I even had it in my IG bio for a while. Might not want to go around talking about it on a first date as well. The taboo of this subject is so strong that it can drive away close friends.

In the next chapter I'll discuss the countless other reasons why this would be a huge RED FLAG in dating. But the important bit is that I work every day to overcome these personal limitations in my own life, independent from anyone else.

My diagnosis didn't come until later in life. I had just ended my first very serious relationship in Los Angeles. I think the separation affected me much more than I realized at the time. I started what is referred to as a manic episode ramp-up: multiple days of escalating, chaotic behavior.

It eventually got so bad that I needed to admit myself to the psych hospital. This experience was extremely traumatic. Not for the reasons you'd think. I have a lot of strong opinions about mental

health (that's why I have the butterfly tattoo on the back of my neck), but I won't share them here. What I will say is that the system isn't designed to help. It's set up for people with the means to pay indefinitely for meds. There's also very little consideration for the problems affecting the individual person. (don't like the sound of this)

At this point I've surely lost you. When did this change from funny dating mishap stories from a misinformed gringo? And you're right, back to regular scheduled programming.

One day at a Carioca Coastal Club meetup, I was really enjoying the SUN (I'll use this as code for what we in the industry call being cross-faded). Cross-faded is when you're high and drunk at the same time. It's an interesting dynamic to hold in public. I normally end up making a fool of myself when I'm like this.

This day was chill. A few of the regulars showed up. What was special about this particular day is that a regular brought a very beautiful friend, [M], with her. I was curious to meet this new person. While I'm not particularly close to the friend who brought her, I'd consider us friends. I wasn't going to hit on [M] and make the dynamic awkward.

I thought I greeted her normally, per usual. My memory is extremely foggy here, so take all this as a cross-faded person's account. I asked her to be our DJ for the day. I listen to endless amounts of my own music, and it's nice when someone shares the DJ duties so I can relax. Hosting is a full time job and doesn't pay well. I was extremely reeeeelaxed this day.

A few weeks later, I invited [M] on a date after confirming with my friend that she'd be interested. On the date, [M] told me my memory of us meeting didn't go the way I had thought. I said, "Ohhhh, I was cross-faded that day. What embarrassing thing did I do?" I remembered falling, but it was a difficult position to get up from, sitting in the sand. (Not even with all my years of yoga would I have been able to pull it off easily, sober.) She told me that at some point I'd kissed her shoulder. She asked our mutual friend, "...What's wrong with him?"

I couldn't help but laugh at myself. I vaguely remember doing this, but I thought it was a quick peck. In her account, it was a full-on Brazilian make-out with her shoulder. Apparently Rio life has rubbed off on me too much, thinking it's okay to make out with a shoulder.

Needless to say I was pretty embarrassed on that date. Oddly enough, we discovered we are neighbors, and now my neighbors know me as Shoulder Kiss Guy.