



## Dinner for Two

*Mike Gayle*

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**Dave Harding's got a wonderful wife, a beautiful home, and a job he could do in his sleep...**

So no one is more surprised than Dave when he hears his own biological clock start ticking. Loudly.

Unfortunately, his better half, Izzy, has no nine-month plan for fat ankles or a credit line at Baby Gap. With even worse timing, the music magazine Dave writes for folds. Desperate for work, he's forced to become an advice columnist for a teen magazine.

**But he's about to get a serious wake-up call.**

Wading through letter after letter of adolescent angst is the last thing Dave wants to do, especially since he could use some help dealing with his own. But one letter is about to make all his little problems disappear -- and replace them with one big one.

The letter is from a teenage girl named Nicola. But she doesn't need advice about boys, or friends, or the latest fads. She's looking for her father, whom she's never met. She's looking for a man to call Dad.

She's looking for Dave.

## Dinner for Two Details

Date : Published June 1st 2004 by Gallery Books (first published 2002)

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Author : Mike Gayle

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## From Reader Review Dinner for Two for online ebook

**Carmen says**

This was a charming book. It was British. It is about a man who works as a music journalist. He has been married for years to a woman he really loves. She is strongly against having children, and he wants nothing more than to be a father. She accidentally gets pregnant. Later she has a miscarriage, leaving them both crushed. When his magazine shuts down, he gets a job as an agony uncle for a teen girl magazine. He finds he really loves the job. A girl writes him a letter saying she is his daughter from a one-night-stand he had when he was 18. They meet in secret and get to know each other. Eventually the truth comes out.

THINGS I LIKE: He doesn't number his chapters. They are instead named stuff like 'together', 'aged', 'welcome' and 'select'. Also, he makes his chapters short, which I enjoy. He is funny, but not stupid. He reminds me of Nick Hornby (High Fidelity). It's kind of like really good chick lit written by a man. He writes a man who is a good person and very in love with his wife and daughter. High marks all around.

“I have thought dozens of times of the similarities between my situation with Nicola and an affair: the lies, the sneaking around and, most of all, the fact that I have fallen hopelessly in love with someone other than my wife. It is an affair – just not a romantic one. But it will be equally catastrophic and devastating when the truth gets out.”

**NATCHAYA CHANTAWIWAT says**

## Juliana Graham says

I've read a few of Mike Gayle's book and think that he has a uniquely identifiable style - you can tell it's a Mike Gayle book you are reading, which is not a bad thing.

Dave is a thirty something journalist, happily married but about to suffer a career crisis. However, an unexpected letter from a daughter he didn't even know existed is about to throw a rather large spanner in the works of Dave's life!

Mike Gayle's main characters are always pretty likeable and very believable - ordinary, every day men with jobs, families, day to day problems but no major dramas. I always imagine that the author must base the characters quite heavily on himself as they seem quite similar to Mike in the autobiographical 'The To Do List'. Dave is no different and it was interesting to see how he coped with the dilemma he was faced with. I did find some of his actions quite frustrating (TELL IZZY, please!) but at no point did the book become infeasible.

A supporting cast of characters who were also realistic meant that reading this book really felt like I was stepping in to the world of Dave. My only criticism is that the end was a little bit soft and fuzzy, but it would have been a real shame if things had ended in any other way so I clearly can't be pleased whatever happens.

I'm going to a book night with Mike Gayle and Adele Parks next month and I'm really looking forward to hearing this author in person and finding out if he's really like Dave!

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### **Suzanne Williams says**

Not my usual type of read. I wasn't sure what to expect but found it wasn't too "sickly romantic", just a nice light read. A bit different in its chapter styling and I never knew what the next chapter would bring. Overall I enjoyed it and although I was wanting the story to end well for the main characters, I couldn't tell if or how it would!

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### **Stuart Harley says**

Another winner from Mike Gayle..... I loved the whole Agony Uncle routine and the "articles" he writes for various magazines giving the mans perspective on different topics.

I fond myself almost saying out loud, after he had met his daughter & not told his wife, bad mistake it'll end in tears.

Overall I found this every bit as good as the previous novels and enjoyable from start to finish.

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### **The Writer says**

Welcome to the world of male chick lit a.k.a. "dicklit" in Danish.

This is actually my first time reading this kind of novel written by a man, and tell you what? It ain't bad! As a matter of fact, reading this novel is healthy for the mind and soul \*cough\* now that you sort of able to figure out what's inside a man's head in a certain situation.

This novel is light, simple and divided into one-to five page "chapter" with a title – reflecting the simple minds of a man. The writing is hilarious yet evoking emotion at the same time realising that women and men are not as different as we thought (one being from Mars and Venus whatever).

Gayle wrote about a thirty one year old guy named Dave Harding who had a good life with his wife Izzi living in downtown London. Working as a music journalist in a fancy magazine called Louder certainly was not a bad profession but this all disappeared within seconds when Harding was forced to be unemployed following the folding of his magazine due to financial reasons.

Money wasn't a major issue though since the wife was working in a similarly fancy women magazine and they were the kind of couple that had double incomes and no kids, so they were still cruising on their lives. The kidless state, however, did turn into a big question but after Izzy had a miscarriage – the option of

having a kid had to be forgotten in the near future.

Until one day Harding received a letter from a 13-year old girl girl claiming to be his daughter . He fathered the kid when he was 18-year old over a holiday fling in Italy with a girl he never saw after that. His whole life changed, his so-called stable life was crumbling down, now he was torn between the feeling of wanting a kid and not wanting to tell his wife about the problem.

This novel, albeit written by a man, is a warm and full of emotions – you could see it is oozing from every words that Gayle wrote although they seemed short and uncomplex like those found in chicklit. Apart from the main story about Harding and his “long lost daughter” there were a lot of lessons to be learned from this book about what’s going on inside a man’s head.

It is a valuable book to read for a girl indeed and I’m thinking of rummaging the local library for another volume of Gayle’s work.

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### **Denz says**

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### **Thomas Strömquist says**

Extremely nice and funny feel-good by Mike Gayle, I would be hard put out to find a better beach book than this one. Luckily I could blame the tears in my eyes over the sweet ending on salt water and sun.

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### **Richard Pierson says**

#### **An interesting premise and well executed**

Quite a light easy read peppered with variety from Dave's agony uncle letters and features.. Underlying is the interesting premise of how a man and his partner react and cope with finding out he has a teenage daughter. An engaging and quite enjoyable read

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### **Angel Serrano says**

Un periodista que escribe en una revista musical como crítico lo tiene todo: una carrera seria, unos amigos dedicados y una esposa con éxito y embarazada. Pero algo de su pasado le alcanzará para cambiar su mundo cuando por cierre de la revista empieza a trabajar para una publicación de adolescentes como el Doctor Amor.

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## **Clair Spence says**

### **Excellent book but**

Ending was a bit cut throat, good book but would of liked a more detailed ending . worth a read

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## **The Final Sentence says**

Boredom. :/

It wasn't that bad, but not so good as well.

Just... boring

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## **Meera Agravat says**

### **Perfect emotional roller coaster**

I laughed I cried and I loved! This was definitely a very easy book to fall head first into. Thankyou!

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## **Ann Mulholland says**

I liked the story, its told by the male point of view and that was a nice change. Happily married man finds out that he has a teenage daughter from a long forgotten night. Well told

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## **Birgit says**

This is the second book by Mike Gayle that I read and once again it's a great male version of typical chick-lit. I don't know whether there is a term like bloke-lit, but as far as the content and fun goes it is just that. Once again he offers both male and female readers a fantastic read which gives insight into the male mind and he peppered the story with his well known light hearted humor.

So, boy finds out he has a daughter soon after his wife loses their first child. Trying to be a father to Nicola and at the same time not wanting to hurt his wife, Dave stupidly doesn't say a word until it's almost too late. While this plot actually engaged me more than the one in Mr Commitment, somehow the flow of the story and the character development didn't go as deep as I would have wished for. Still this is a lovely and honest read, but more on the average side than outstanding.

In short: Another funny and touching piece of male chick-lit by Mike Gayle!

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