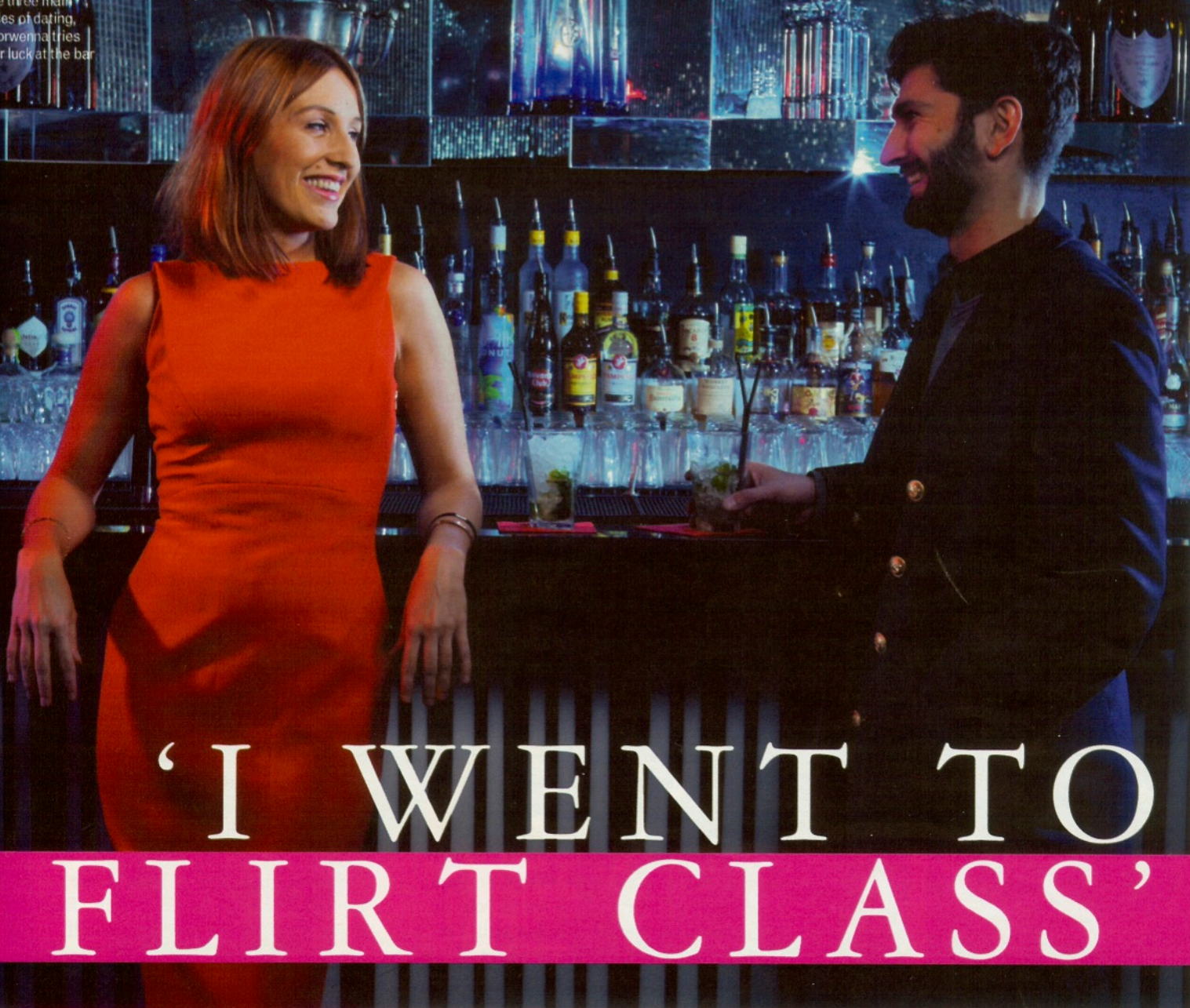


Equipped with the three main rules of dating, Morwenna tries her luck at the bar



'I WENT TO FLIRT CLASS'

Apparently, we Brits are the world's worst flirts, with over a third of men unable to tell we're doing it. But all is not lost, says 'flirtologist' Jean Smith, who reckons she can teach even the most hopeless female flirt how to get a man's number...

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PHOTOS: NEALE HAYNES

HERE IS A STORY of how *not* to flirt: one cold night in February, I met my friends at a pool hall in Dalston, East London. Recently single, my friends suggested I talk to a boy. It seemed a laughable prospect, but I obliged and did a lap of the hall, spotting someone alone at the bar. As opportunities go, it was golden, so I walked towards him. At the same time, I decided it was a terrible idea and instead of making eye contact, I bottled it, turned around and in the process knocked over his drink. I apologised and smiled; he frowned and walked off. Worst of all, he wasn't even that fit.

So yes – I suck at flirting. Really badly. In fact, given my record at approaching boys, it's almost as if feminism never happened. The good news, though, is that I'm not alone. According to social anthropologist and flirtologist Jean Smith, British women are among the worst globally at mastering the modern art.

Which is why she's just set up a Harley Street clinic to teach us hapless flirts the six key signals: eye contact, smiles, touch, body language, proximity and attention. And why I'm one of her first UK clients.

Jean runs flirting sessions, each 75 minutes long, which cost £75 per session. She also runs group flirtology tours, where she teaches men and women how to flirt, anywhere from supermarkets to NCPs, in real time. Her clients are both men and women, mostly in their thirties, in high-powered jobs, with little time for chance proppinquity. Her track record is impressive. 'Most people come away having successfully flirted, and most don't come back,' she tells me with pride.

I'm still not convinced. Jean is gorgeous, gregarious and American. Of course she can flirt. I have a broken nose, a tendency to mumble and am British. Of course I can't flirt. But Jean insists I just need a little ▶