

A Dreamspinner Press Anthology



Make Me a Match, Vol. 1

Nicki Bennett, Clare London, Chrissy Munder, Catt Ford, Jaymz Connelly, Jaelyn Storm

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Whether he knows it—whether he wants it—every man in these stories is headed for his perfect match. Dating services, matchmakers, family introductions, even unlikely friends... the means may differ, and the road probably won't run straight, but ""happily ever after"" is guaranteed at the end. It's about romance and heart, but some steamy attraction never hurts! Be it a perfect stranger or a crush from long ago, all it takes is a little help to find that certain someone and ""Make Me a Match.""

Stories included are:

The Perfect Match by Jaelyn Storm

Crash and Burn by Catt Ford

Third Time's the Charm by Chrissy Munder

Dear Alex by Clare London

How to Woo a Straight Man by Jaymz Connelly

Three on a Match by Nicki Bennett

Make Me a Match, Vol. 1 Details

Date : Published October 13th 2008 by Dreamspinner Press (first published October 1st 2008)

ISBN :

Author : Nicki Bennett , Clare London , Chrissy Munder , Catt Ford , Jaymz Connelly , Jaelyn Storm

Format : Kindle Edition 284 pages

Genre : Romance, M M Romance, Anthologies, Contemporary

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From Reader Review Make Me a Match, Vol. 1 for online ebook

Mary says

Awesome anthology that I have read many times, all the stories are good. How To Woo a Straight Man by Jaymz Connelly is my favorite, the humor and the "out for you" theme is just fantastic.

Tailtiu says

Dear Alex by Clare London:

Crash and Burn by Catt Ford:

Third Time's the Charm by Chrissy Munder:

How to Woo a Straight Man by Jaymz Connelly:

Three on a Match by Nicki Bennett:

The Perfect Match by Jaelyn Storm:

Genre says

The book is a set of six m/m short stories. Each story contains a similar theme, in that the heroes are brought together by the action of a third party who is sometimes a friend, sometimes not. I'll take each story briefly in turn.

The Perfect Match by Jaelyn Storm

This is a paranormal story set in the 1920s. It was a bit of a surprise to be honest, as I thought all the stories were going to be contemporaries. The author makes a good attempt at utilising the language style and vocabulary of the time but this ultimately kept me at a distance from the story. The premise is that our hero, Adam, is lured out by a 'flapper', drugged and then brought to her 'master' as a birthday present. The story is told in the first person from Adam's POV, which worked well as we get to see his feelings develop towards Viktor. On the other hand, the fact that it was a short story meant that Adam fell in love too quickly (in the space of a week) and that left me with doubts about the HEA - this made me wonder about the rest of the anthology and how believable the other HEAs would be. This was the weakest story in the anthology, which is a shame because I liked the initial setting and idea.

Crash and Burn by Catt Ford

This story is based around a blind date. Rafael is set up on a double date with Peter and they hate each other from the beginning. Due to various circumstances they get snowed in together where they find common ground and the romance goes from there. I enjoyed this story at the beginning when the two men argued quite viciously with each other. You could tell there was a spark there and that it would lead to mutual passion. However, once again the short story format didn't work with the characterisation as the change in Raf happens too quickly. One minute he's angry and bad tempered and the next he's a completely different person. The HEA was believable though - there were no declarations of love but a willingness to carry on and see how the relationship worked.

Third Time's a Charm by Chrissy Munder

This was my favourite story in the anthology. It was a really sweet tale of doctor Nick and construction worker John who meet when John brings one of his workmen to the clinic where Nick works. John wants to ask Nick out but feels as a blue collar worker he is somehow 'beneath' Nick. When John does ask Nick out, Nick turns him down because he is too busy with his work for a relationship. It takes a crisis on the construction site to bring the two together. The only negative point I have about the story is that Nick's excuse for not seeing John is a bit flimsy. Other than that, this is a well written story with believable characters. Once again we are left at the end with a promise of things to come, in fact I wished that the story were longer as I wanted to take some of that journey with them - the mark of a good story.

Dear Alex by Clare London

In this story Ms London has been very brave by writing her first person narrator, Alex, as a bit of an anti-hero. Alex was very difficult to like at first but, through some very good plotting, he does change (or perhaps change back) into someone rather likeable after all. My only quibble would be that the other hero, Robbie, is a bit too nice. The plot centres on our two heroes who work for a gay 'agony aunt' magazine column titled 'Dear Alex'. The two men have had a relationship in the past which was broken off by a very selfish Alex. I really enjoyed this 'second chance at love' story and Alex's gradual realisation that he had turned into someone quite unpleasant was wonderful to read.

How to Woo a Straight Man by Jaymz Connelly I was a bit confused as to where this book was set. The words used made me think that it was set in England at first, but then I would occasionally come across the odd Americanism. This then made me think that the book was written by an American who hadn't done their research properly. It was only when I reached the end of the story and read the author blurb that it became clear - Ms Connelly is Australian. I wish she had made the setting clearer in her story - used a city name for example, as the language inconsistencies kept pulling me out of the story. The story revolves around Chris who leaves a night club on his own and is attacked by three homophobic skin heads. He is rescued by Vic, who takes him to the hospital and then sees him home safely. Vic is straight but starts to have feelings for Chris as their relationship develops over the next few weeks. I think we can all see what happens next. I'm not such a big fan of the 'I'm straight, oh no I'm attracted to this man, I must be gay' story line, but this was handled very well and I did believe that the two men would be happy together.

Three on a Match by Nicki Bennett

The final story in the anthology was another great story. The main problem I had with it was the choice of name for the lead character. The main hero is called Burk. Now, in the UK, a 'berk' is a gentle insult for someone who is stupid or clumsy. You can imagine my disbelief when I had to apply that word (albeit spelled differently) to a hero. Burk is descended from German immigrants - hence the name - but it still pulled me right out of the story every time I read it. The story itself is a lovely story of a very shy man whose friend puts his details (with a pseudonym) into the gay dating agency site where they both work. Burk is attracted to the man who runs the company, Adrian, and cannot believe it when Adrian himself contacts him. I also liked that what could have been a very awkward 'big misunderstanding' was handled sensitively. The story was very enjoyable and was my joint second favourite with 'Dear Alex'.

I've written more than I meant to about each story. I hope I haven't bored you too much by the lengthy review. I do recommend you read this anthology and I give it a 'Very Good' rating as I will definitely read it again.

Sheila says

Anthologies are so much fun--and a great way to get your hands on some new authors! My favorite story by far was the last one, Three to a Match, by Nikki Bennet. Shenanigans at a male-male dating service! Falling in love via email! Plus, an awesome best friend. If he does not feature prominently in a later anthology, or a book of his own, I will cry.

Marlolo says

Overall: 2,85 stars

The Perfect Match by Jaelyn Storm - 1 star

Crash and Burn by Catt Ford - 3.5 stars

Third Time's the Charm by Chrissy Munder - 2,5 stars

Dear Alex by Clare London - 3 stars

How to Woo a Straight Man by Jaymz Connelly - 3.5 stars

Three on a Match by Nicki Bennett -3.5 stars

Jean says

Some fun, sexy stories.

Idamus says

The Perfect Match by Jaelyn Storm - DNF

Crash and Burn by Catt Ford - 2 stars

Third Time's the Charm by Chrissy Munder - 2 stars

Dear Alex by Clare London - 1.5 stars

How to Woo a Straight Man by Jaymz Connelly - 2 stars

Three on a Match by Nicki Bennett - DNF

I first read this when it came out, apparently my taste has changed a lot, I didn't really like any of the stories/MCs this time.

Collette says

I loved all of the stories in this collection. :)

Lily says

This collection of six short stories was a pleasure to read.

The first story, The Perfect Match by Jaelyn Storm, is set in the 1920s and features college student Adam Taylor and Viktor Ravenika. This is a very entertaining take on the classic Vampire story with Viktor the handsome sophisticated man of the night and Adam the young and inexperienced "soul mate" Viktor's been longing for. The writing style was very nice and had me smiling at some of the expressions used. I was totally immersed in the 1920s and could picture the story in my mind almost as if I were watching a movie. Great little book!!!

Book two, Crash and Burn by Catt Ford, was a hilarious contemporary story featuring Rafael, an archeologist and Peter, a veterinarian. Rafael, set up on a blind date with Peter by his best friend Zelda and her boyfriend Zane, who is Peter's friend, is determined to not like Peter and is very obnoxious when they meet. Not yet recovered from a bad breakup, Raf just doesn't want to start something new, even if he does find himself interested. A chance meeting in a dog park finally leads them on the road to romance. This was a funny and sweet book. I enjoyed it!

Book three was Third Time's the Charm by Chrissy Munder. Construction supervisor John Turner meets Doctor Nick Davros when he takes his co-worker to the Urgent Care facility located next to their building site. Although Nick turns down an invitation from John to go out the second time they meet, he does so only because he's sure a relationship wouldn't work for them due to his crazy work schedule. They finally connect and admit their attraction after an accident at John's work site. Nick puts himself in danger to try and help John and realizes he's been a fool by letting his concerns keep them apart. This was a sweet romantic little story!!

The fourth book is Dear Alex by Clare London. In this excellent little book we meet Robbie and Alex, partners in an advice column for a magazine. Once lovers, they are now just friends and co-workers. Alex is a cynical man, whose cutting and sarcastic answers to the letters sent in has made the column successful. Robbie is the opposite, a kind man who takes the time to answers the letters not used in the magazine. I loved how Alex slowly came to realize that what he most needed in his life had been right in front of him all along. This was a beautifully written story!

Book five is How to Woo a Straight Man by Jaymz Connelly. Christopher Reardon meets Vic Urban when Vic rescues him from a gay bashing outside a club. Chris is surprised but pleased to find that straight Vic doesn't have a problem with his being gay. The two find themselves spending more and more time with each other as they become friends. Although this is a "gay for you" story, which I sometimes have problems with, I really liked this book. The dialogue was fabulous and had me laughing a few times. The book flows really well from first meeting, to being friends and then lovers. Really enjoyable!!

The last book is Three on a Match by Nicki Bennett. This is the story of Burk Rikert, who works at Matchless Men, a matchmaking service for gay men. Burk finds himself attracted to company owner Adrian Smithson but doesn't believe he could ever interest his handsome charismatic boss. Thanks to a little bit of trickery by his best friend Quinn, Burk and Adrian turn out to be a good "match." During an exchange of emails Burk, posing as Elliott, Adrian's "match" realizes that Adrian really could be the one for him. This was a delightful little story with a beautifully romantic ending. Loved it!!

To sum it up, I really enjoyed all six stories, something that doesn't always happen when I read an anthology. I highly recommend it and am looking forward to reading Volume 2 soon.

Sara says

kindle edition.

Good anthology. Includes a vampire story!
