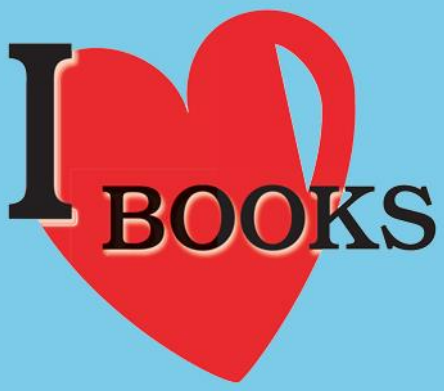


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Opening extract from

# Mate Match

Written by

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**Jen Collins**

Published by

**Barrington Stoke Ltd**

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*To my nephew, Harry, who read this book first and said he laughed out loud ...*

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# Chapter 1
# I'm Not Creepy

**Saturday 25th of June**

**7.20 p.m.**

**Matt's Party**

The girl was sitting on her own on the sofa.

"Did you just fart?" I asked her. "Because you totally blew me away."



Then I grinned at her. "I'm Joe," I said. "So what's your name?"

The girl didn't tell me. She just leaped up like a salmon and moved away very fast.

She obviously didn't like laughing. Still, there were tons more girls at the party so I wasn't bothered.

**7.50 p.m.**

I went up to this very pretty girl. "Will you check your pocket?" I said.

“Why?” she asked, and her cute face creased with worry.

I put on a funny voice so she’d know I was joking, and then I said, “Because you’ve just stolen my heart.”

She didn’t say anything in reply, and so I gave her a big smile. “I’m Joe,” I told her in my normal voice. “What’s your name?”

“Got to go to the toilet,” she said.

“That’s a funny name,” I called after her. “And a bit long. Do your friends just call you Toilet for short?”

**8.20 p.m.**

My big sister Georgia stormed over to me. She was the one who got me the invite to this party. And she didn't look happy.

"What on earth do you think you're doing?" she demanded.

"Only trying to make girls laugh," I said. "Everyone says that's the best way to break the ice. So I found a website with all these brilliant chat-up lines. And to make sure I didn't forget them – I wrote them all on my hands."

"Show me," she snapped.



I showed her. Then she glared at me.

"One word," she said. "Tragic. No wonder everyone thinks you're creepy."

I was shocked. I was horrified. "Who said that?" I asked.

"Every girl you've spoken to tonight," Georgia said. "Joe, go home."

"But it's still early."

She closed her eyes for a minute. "Just go home. Now."

**8.35 p.m.**

I did as I was told and went home.

I'M NOT CREEPY.

I talk to girls at school all the time. And they like me. Honest they do. Well, Kirsty does. I walk to school with her every day. She says I'm her very best friend. And she trusts me more than anyone.

The trouble is Kirsty's got a boyfriend. So have all the other girls I know. That was why Georgia got me the invite to that party – so I could meet some new girls. Only thing was, not one girl came near me.

So I had to go up to them. And that was dead hard. For a start, my tongue felt as if it was stuck down inside my mouth. And everything I wanted to say got all mixed up. That was why I thought some funny chat-up lines might come in handy ...

Only it was a total disaster.

And I haven't got a clue what to do next.