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Opening extract from

Queen Bee!

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For Tisa, Jessica, Patrick and everyone who looked after me in Hamburg ~ A M
For Evie Grace Robbins ~ D R

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Matchmaker!

Chapter 1

"ANGELA NICELY!" cried Miss Darling. "Are you talking?"

"No, only whispering," said Angela.

"That's the same thing," said Miss Darling. "When I say work quietly I mean QUIETLY!"

Angela jumped. Miss Darling was certainly in a crabby mood today.

She'd already shouted at Maisie and snapped at Kevin for drawing on his face. Her eyes were red and she kept reaching for her hanky. Maybe she'd stayed up past her bedtime last night.

Angela noticed a magazine poking out of her teacher's bag. She squinted, trying to read the headline in red letters.

Angela sat up. That was it! That explained Miss Darling's bad mood. She'd been dumped by her boyfriend! Wait till she told Maisie and Laura. Angela was an expert on boyfriend trouble. She had split up with Bertie hundreds of times, although according to him they were never going out.

At break time Angela called an emergency meeting of the GOBS club (Girls Only, Boys Smell).

"Is everyone here?" she said.

"You can see we're here," sighed Maisie.

"Good, because we've got to do something about Miss Darling," said Angela. "She's been dumped by her boyfriend."

Laura gasped. "How do you know?"

"It's so obvious!" said Angela. "She's all moody, and you can tell she's been crying."

"So? I don't see what we can do," said Maisie.

Angela gave her a look. "Well, DUH!" she said. "We can find her a new boyfriend!"

The other two stared. It was a brilliant idea. After all, Miss Darling *deserved* a nice boyfriend.

"Okay, but who?" said Maisie.

Angela frowned. The fact was, boyfriends weren't exactly growing on trees. There was Bertie, of course, but he was Angela's boyfriend and anyway he picked his nose. Besides, it needed to be someone nearer Miss Darling's

age – about twenty-one or forty.

'There's Mr Grouch," she said.

'The caretaker? He's ancient!" cried Maisie.

"And bald *and* grumpy," added Laura.

Angela had to admit Mr Grouch wasn't a dream come true – he was more of a nightmare. But that only left one person.

'Then it'll have to be Mr Weakly," she said.

"MR WEAKLY?" squawked Laura. "Who'd want to go out with *him*?"

Mr Weakly was the only male teacher at the school. He was pale, nervous and hid behind a pair of thick glasses. Still, he was their only hope.

"He's just a bit shy," said Angela.

"Shy?" said Maisie. "He goes bright red if you ask a question! Can you imagine him asking Miss Darling out?"

Angela sighed. It was easier to imagine Mr Weakly becoming a lion tamer.

"Okay then, we'll just have to give him some tips!" she said.

Miss Darling was going to get a boyfriend even if it took all year. Angela was sure she'd be grateful. One day she might even need a bridesmaid…