

Yente, the Lesbian

It's hard to keep the matchmaker in check.

Terry was the only other dyke in my water aerobics class, so naturally we bonded. We paddled around the pool together three times a week trying to achieve some buffitude without inflaming our menopausal joints. If nothing else, our jaw muscles got a good workout. We covered it all – who's getting together, who's breaking up, who's in therapy – on *The L Word* AND in real life. One day during warm-up scissor-legs, Terry confided her desire for a girlfriend.



My matchmaking demon perked up – maybe I could find Terry a date. If I hadn't been in the water up to my chin, Terry might have caught me salivating over the prospect. All during our frog jumps and sit-kicks, I grilled Terry on her particulars. While we bobbed around in our flotation belts, I asked Terry about her likes and dislikes – stuff I could mention to a prospective partner.

I considered my friend Jenny, an out and proud dyke who marches in Pride parades, competes in the Gay Games, and flaunts a rainbow bumper sticker. Terry, on the other hand, was still coming to terms with her gay identity, closeted with coworkers and family, and had never been to a women's music festival. What the heck, I've seen stranger matches.

Sure, it's none of my business, but imagine the glory if the connection sparked. How grateful the happy couple would be. They'd honor me on every anniversary. My matchmaking prowess would be revered all over dykedom.

I should know better than to offer to hook people up. My previous attempts at matchmaking have wrought nothing but disaster. Take the time I set out to make a match for my long-time bachelorette friend, Nelson. I spent weeks trying convince my friend that her ideal mate was out there somewhere – and that I was the one who could help find her. Free of charge.

Nelson wasn't sure my offer was such a bargain. But I wore her down and she agreed to go out with Bev who, according to the grapevine, was now open to meeting someone special. I called and told her a friend of mine wanted to meet her. I believe I may have actually said, "Do I have a girl for you!"

Never mind the fact that Bev is a process-oriented organic earth-goddess peace activist and Nelson is a homebody football and beer ex-military Southern Baptist. They're both lesbians, both single. What's not to like?

Poor gals.

Nothing went right on their date. Bev suggested a movie at the local art cinema, whose concession stand sells organic apple juice and vegan red vines. Nelson would have been happier on her own couch with a six-pack and a bag of Doritos in front of her surround-sound wide-screen high-def TV. Nelson was shocked to discover that Bev didn't even own a TV.

Convinced she was now on a date with an extraterrestrial, Nelson figured she'd at least be safe ordering popcorn. Adventurous Bev couldn't believe Nelson had never tasted brewer's yeast on popcorn. She encouraged Nelson to try it. Nelson was decidedly not interested. Bev kept urging. Nelson had to use her drill sergeant voice, "NO THANK YOU!" I'm lucky they both still speak to me.

How could I have known? I was only trying to help. Now here I was about to butt in again.

Terry and I splashed our way through the ab workout, and I kept my mouth shut. Terry worked up a froth doing double-time crunches, but I refrained from trying to hook her up with somebody who'd appreciate the benefits.

Sure, I'd like to see my single buddies find someone to love if that's what they're looking for. But they're going to have to do it on their own even if I do wish everyone could feel as lucky and happy as I do with Wifey. That's the only good match I ever made.

Writer Sally Sheklow abstains from matchmaking in Eugene, Oregon. Kudos and kvetches welcomed at sally@wymprov.com



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