



This Matter of Marriage

Debbie Macomber

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Rediscover this classic favorite from #1 *New York Times* bestselling author Debbie Macomber.

The alarm on Hallie McCarthy's biological clock is buzzing away. She's hitting the big three-0 and there's no prospect of marriage, no man in sight. Hallie's an organized, goal-setting kind of person, so she makes a plan and gives herself a year to meet Mr. Knight in Shining Armor. But all her dates are disasters. (There's the cheapskate and the sex fiend and...well, never mind.)

Too bad she can't just fall for her good-looking neighbor, Steve Marris. He's definitely not her type. Anyway, Steve's busy trying to win back his ex-wife, who's busy getting married—but not to Steve. Life would be so much simpler if he could fall for someone else. Like...Hallie.

They're friends, though—and sometimes friends become lovers. Sometimes friends become more...

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This Matter of Marriage Details

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From Reader Review This Matter of Marriage for online ebook

Alaine says

I loved this book! It was one of those fantastic feel good romance books that just sweeps you away. This is my second Debbie Macomber novel and I loved it. The characters are real and down to earth and it's full of situations that you can easily relate to.

Hallie and Steve were real people who lived a real world and had real problems. Steve had been through a divorce that had completely blind-sided him and now shared his two kids with his ex-wife. He wants nothing more than to get his life back. Hallie is about to turn 30 and realised that while she was busy building a business and career she had neglected her personal life. Hallie wants to get married and have children so she makes a plan. Love however doesn't often work to a plan and this book is the story of Hallie's mishaps.

I don't read a lot of Contemporary Romance but I must say that I really love Debbie Macomber's books. This is the second book I've read of hers and they are light-hearted easy reads. I recommend this to anyone who enjoys a good romance.

C. says

Mild-sexual-situations-references, but is still one of my favorite romances ~ This Matter of Marriage by Debbie Macomber The bad dates and situations described are "milk out your nose" hilarious! I would not advise eating or drinking while reading this book!

Julie Barrett says

This Matter of Marriage by Debbie Macomber

Hallie McCathy is now 30 and ready for a family. She has set one year to meet the right man to marry.

Steve Marris lives next door and he has an ex wife. They become friends and she tells him of her mishaps with dates.

Hilarious escapades of the dates and throw in Steve's daughter and son who visits on weekends who wants a mother for her dad...

He wants to reunite with his wife and hopes she will reconsider.

I received this book from National Library Service for my BARD (Braille Audio Reading Device).

Hope Ortego says

Super predictable, but had really likable characters. I loved the audiobook because the narrator is awesome.

Holly B says

This was my first Debbie Macomber book (audio) and I enjoyed her writing style. Hallie and her bff Donalee are tired of being single so they decide to make marriage their goal. And the husband hunt begins...so many dates from hell and LOL moments. Hallie even had a first date rate her! I was furious at this guy! The book was full of humor and charm. The just divorced Steve moves in next door to Hallie and he is the perfect shoulder for her to cry on about all her dating foes, but he is her type?

If you want a charming feel good story (that is somewhat predictable), you might enjoy this one too! I will definitely be seeking out more novels from this author.

Rayni says

I don't know what kept me reading this book. Maybe to see what happened. I couldn't believe Hallie didn't wise up nor that Steve was so blind. The kids were great. They seemed older than they were supposed to be, especially Megan. This was not even on my to-read list. I have 70 books on that list. Not having an easy time finding them; so, since this was a Debbie Macomber book, I grabbed it. I figured if it was one of Macomber's books, it had to be good. She didn't disappoint.

Shelley says

I was looking for an easy read, but there isn't much to this book. So repetitive that by the time the couple gets together, I simply didn't care. Boring lather, rinse, repeat story with simple, cliché characters.

D.L. says

My Take:

Sometimes there's a novel you just enjoy, and you have no idea why. [This Matter of Marriage](#) was exactly that for me. The writing style was more women's fiction than romance, which usually turns me off of a book, and I can't remember anything particularly special about it, but damn, I sure did enjoy it.

Perhaps what had me hooked from the start was my mental image of the protagonists. For one thing, they were realistic, which was a breath of fresh air. As much as I love my over the top knight-in-shining-armor, there is nothing more entertaining or uplifting than the occasional (semi)realistic romance.

As her thirtieth birthday approaches, Hallie McCarthy makes the decision- to get married. Now all she has to do is find the groom. I said I liked her, not that she was especially stable. Steve Marris has just gone through a divorce and is determined to get his wife back and keep his family together. Read between the lines: he's obsessed with his ex and is using the kids as an excuse to cling to their failed relationships. He's definitely not stable.

Here's where my lovely mental images come in. Hallie is described as having dark, short, curly hair, but in

my mind all I could get was this over-bleached haywire perm, magenta sweats and leg warmers. Romantic, huh? And Steve... skinny, pasty, with thick glasses and a receding hairline. For the life of me I could not image him being good in the sack, a bad trait for a romance protagonist to lack. As the plot proceeded Hallie and Steve settled into themselves, but man were those first hundred pages one hilarious romp in my head.

Ok, ok, I lied somewhat. When I say it's a realistic romance I mean Hallie and Steve are people you could find on the street, in the grocery store, your therapists waiting room. The plot itself gets over the top at times. But what can I say- by the time I was sucked in I had already begun to like Hallie and Steve besides their obvious flaws, quirks, and abnormalities, and couldn't help but flip page after page to get closer and closer to that happy ending.

What to Watch Out For:

The plot takes forever to get moving. For two thirds of the novel we watch as Steve is a idiot and chases after his manipulating ex, and a desperate Hallie goes on a series of disastrous, albeit hilarious, blind dates. And of course, there are the kids-who-know-better-than-thou. Though one would assume that young children would have trouble dealing with their parents divorce and their mother's subsequent remarriage, there is only one, count it, one, scene where they express it. The rest of the time they're going around saying things like, "Don't you think Hallie would make a good mom?", and "Hallie, will you please marry our Dad?". Yes, that's definitely what they would be doing. Meanwhile, tension is supposedly building between Hallie and Steve. When, I don't know. I didn't feel it. There was some spark after they were together, but I really didn't feel the tension before hand. The constant reiterations of "...but we're just friends" seemed rather true. The one thing about the book that did annoy me was the speed at which everyone got married. I understand the main characters getting married after a short courting period. That's fairly common. I even understand the best friend getting engaged after a matter of days, but let me go through the relationship timelines real quick. Don't worry, it won't take long. Steve proposed to his first wife on their first date, Hallie and Steve get engaged after barely a month of being together, Donnalee (Hallie's best friend) married he first husband after a short courting period, she gets engaged again later after dating the guy a month, she meets Todd (Steve's best friend) and gets engaged to him after about a week, Todd married his first wife after just as short a dating period. Does nobody have a normal relationship first? No wonder three of the four (the one's who had been married) all got DIVORCED!

Rhoda says

I haven't read a single book by Debbie Macomber that I haven't loved. Her characters are just wonderfully written people you'd like to get to know better. Her stories never fail to entertain me or leave me with that "feel good" sentiment. This Matter of Marriage is just a good romantic comedy. As the main character, Hallie turns the big three-o, she realizes that she has spent way too much time building her career but her life is meaningless because she's lackign a husabnd and a child. Enter the great guy next door, Steve, who is unhappily divorced and still committed to his ex-wife. Steve and his two children, Meagan and Kenny move in next door to Hallie. The children decide long before their father and sometime babysitter that they'd make a wonderful family. Reading about Hallie's disasterous dates was extremely entertaining.

Dori says

I'm giving this book 4 stars simply because it is exactly what is intended to be: a light and easy romantic fun read. There's no mystery or surprise about the outcome and it was apparent from the beginning what the ending would be. It was a cute story to read to get to the ending and I enjoyed it a lot. The only thing I didn't care for was the switching from 1st person perspective from Hallie to 3rd person. It was a bit confusing at times and wasn't particularly necessary.

It's not the first thing I've read by Debbie Macomber Amit certainly won't be the last!

Linda says

I really enjoyed Hallie McCarthy, Steve Marris and THIS MATTER OF MARRIAGE. I whipped through this romance in less than 24 hours. The storyline provided just the right amount of humor to sweeten the tension between these two unlikely friends.

My 'Tagged' Review:

Hero Was Married Before~

'It wasn't as if the news would come as any great shock. Steve knew his ex-wife was dating again, although he'd chosen to ignore what that meant.'

Children Involved~ "Next week is Take Your Daughter to Work day," Meagan announced. "Mom's not working because she's in school, so I asked Dad about it and he said I could go to the office with him, but I don't want to be a machinist. I'm kind of interested in art and I'd like to see what you do, Hallie. Can I spend the day with you?"

"That would be wonderful. Are you sure your dad won't mind?" Hallie walked over to the door and watched as Meagan excitedly told her father she had agreed to take her to Artistic License. "You sure Meagan won't be a bother?" he called. "Positive."

Hallie could see his relief. "I owe you one neighbor."

Ahhh, Those Secondary Characters~

Hallie's BFF. "What's with you and your neighbor?" Donalee asked. "With us? Nothing. We're friends. He's a great guy, you know, but he's hung up on his ex-wife." "Ever thought about getting together with him?" "Nope," Hallie answered. "I like Steve, don't get me wrong, but he's not my type." "Tell me, what's your type?" "I want a man who'll love me, who'll appreciate me for the woman I am. Someone who is generous and honest. A man of integrity, who values family and commitment." Donalee looked at her. "Hmm. Does such a man really exist?"

Friendship~

"The ringing woke Steve out of a sound sleep. He grabbed his jeans and pulled them on and hobbled into the living room. He had no idea who was calling on him so late at night. "I'm sorry to wake you," Hallie said, her eyes desperate in the pale porch light. A scruffy-looking fellow hovered behind her and a taxi stood parked in her driveway. "Could I borrow twenty dollars?" He stared at her. "Just until tomorrow afternoon?" "Sure," he said, and reached in his hip pocket for his wallet, extracting a bill.

"Thank you," she breathed, then whirled around to give the taxi driver his money. "I told you you'd get paid!" she said fiercely. She waited until the driver had left before explaining. "Really, it's not as bad as it looks. I..I quit carrying my credit cards and didn't have my ATM card with me", she explained, rushing the words. "It took all my cash to pay for my half of the dinner. "It was just a date gone bad. It was arranged by a friend. A former friend." She filled in a few of the details: the questions, the restaurant bill, the car. He listened sympathetically, nodding now and then, marveling at her ability to laugh at her situation.

"Don't let it get you down," he advised. "I won't. It'd take more than a pudgy accountant to do that." "Good girl." He waited until she was all the way inside her house before closing the door. Only then, did he allow himself to laugh. The lady had grit.'

Dated Material~

"This wasn't going to work. Steve knew it the moment he saw Hallie grip the bowling ball and step in front of the pins. The first time he watched her throw the ball, he was reminded of an old Fred Flintstone cartoon. It looked, honest to God, as if she'd race down the alley on tiptoe.'

Snarky Humor~

'She responded to his knock by calling faintly for him to come inside. Steve opened the door to discover her sprawled on the sofa amid a conglomeration of pillows and blankets. Dressed in an old robe, she lay facedown, her arm dangling over the edge, knuckles brushing the carpet. "You look like hell," he said, "Are you sick or something?" "You don't miss much, do you?" She didn't lift her head. "My, my, are we a little testy? And, what, by the way, is your front door doing open? This isn't Little House On The Prairie, you know. When was the last time you ate?" "Please," she whispered miserably, "don't talk about food. I haven't been able to keep anything down for two days."

He stuck the dirty dishes in the dishwasher and wiped off the counter before bringing her a cup of tea. "Is there anything else I can do for you?" "Would you mind helping me into the bathroom? I tried to get up earlier but I felt lightheaded." "Of course." She sat up and he saw that her skin was pale, her hair on one side had gone completely flat, and the upholstery from her sofa had left a floral imprint on her cheek. She swayed when she stood upright and he slid his arm around her waist to steady her. He guided her down the hallway and turned on the bathroom light.

"Would you move the scale away from the wall for me? "The scale?", he asked incredulously. "I want to weigh myself." Steve was certain he misunderstood. "Why in the name of heaven would you want to do that?" She gave him a look that suggested that the answer couldn't be more obvious. "To see how much weight I've lost. I haven't had anything to eat for two days except juice and crackers." Steve knew better than to argue. He crouched down to pull the scale away from the wall. "There." She hesitated, "You can't look." "I beg your pardon?" "Turn around." "For the love of.." But Steve did as she requested and turned his back. He heard Hallie step on the scale, and then a pathetically feeble cry of triumph. "I take it you've lost?" ""Yes," she answered in a whisper. "Isn't that wonderful?"

Ssssss-The Sexual Tension~

Sharing cars, after taking his kids and their friends to a drive-in movie. 'She turned to Steve. "Thank you for being my friend," she whispered.

"Thank you for being mine." And then he leaned over and kissed her. His mouth grazed hers and lingered. Hallie kissed him back, increasing the pressure. She felt the sexual energy immediately and so, apparently, did Steve. He bolted upright and looked at her long and hard. She studied him, too. It was as if all the oxygen in the car was suddenly gone. Neither seemed capable of breathing, let alone talking. The only illumination

came from the screen and a solitary light by the refreshment stand but it was enough for Hallie to see Steve's face. His eyes were wary, as if to say he wasn't sure about this. For that matter, Hallie wasn't sure how she felt either.

"Hallie?" "Yes?" "What just happened?"

This was a wonderful shimmering romance that scattered its zest onto everything in its path.

Anneceleste says

A light romantic comedy about a successful 29 years old businesswoman who decides that it is the time to marry and her recently divorced neighbor. It is cliched and funny in an expected way but I enjoyed it during holidays.

Darlene says

Macomber eben.

Richtig fürs Herz, romantisch, Gänsehautfeeling, herrlich

Kristina says

Rating: 3.5 stars.

This book was a fun read. The story line was entertaining, very humorous and it kept me interested right up until the very end. The biggest let down for me was the sexual content. Most readers in today's society would probably laugh and disagree with me, not thinking much of it, but for me, it spoilt an otherwise well written and enjoyable story.

Hallie McCarthy was a successful graphic designer and business woman. She was turning thirty and thought it was time to find herself a husband and start a family. Her best friend Donnalee had been married in her late teens and was emotionally scarred by divorce. She too thought it was time for her and her friend to find themselves committed partners to share their lives. So they both started searching for men to date. Hallie met some very interesting characters resulting in some very funny dating situations.

Steve Marris was a 35 year old handsome, athletic, divorced father of two young children. He was still very much in love with his ex-wife Mary Lynn, who had also been his first love. He bought the condominium next to Hallie's and his children stayed with him on weekends. He was a devoted father and held onto hope that he would one day reunite with his wife. He never wanted the divorce but when his ex-wife announced she would re-marry, he reluctantly had to learn to let her go.

Steve developed a special friendship with Hallie, and his children learned to love and trust her. Hallie and Steve were falling in love without either of them realizing it. There were some laugh out loud moments between the two of them.

I found the characters very real. I could relate to Hallie and some of her experiences and emotions. Her obsession with her weight was spot on - that is how most women feel about themselves (unfortunately). Steve was both likeable and frustrating. Likeable because he was a "one woman" kind of man. He had wanted to stay married and take care of his family. He was always there for his children too. He was not on the prowl for one night stands. I liked that about him. He was frustrating because of his stubbornness and (understandable) fear of another commitment.

Overall, the book was a fun read. If the sex scenes and frequent sexual references were omitted, I would have given this book a 4.5 stars.

Carolyn Sisko says

Another great read by Debbie Macomber. I enjoyed the characters - Hallie, Steve, Donnalee, Meagan, Kenny...in this novel Hallie & Donnalee are striving to achieve their goals to find husbands & have children. Many dating experiences occur for these two women. Hallie & Steve become neighbors and really good friends. I love the plot.
