



# Fake Me a Match

*By Lauren Barnholdt*

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Avery LaDuke is in the market for a new best friend. Her former BFF, Sophie Burns, dumped her to hang out with the popular crowd at school. But the good news Avery's getting a new sister who's bound to be her new BFF too! Blake is her age and she's from New York. How cool is that? But things don't go quite as smoothly as Avery hoped. And what's with Blake becoming BFFs with Sophie? Huh?? That wasn't supposed to happen!

When Avery gets put in charge of the eighth grade charity project, an on-line matchmaking service, she thinks she can use this project to get Blake back on her side. She decides to fix the matches so that Blake gets matched with Sam, the most popular boy in school, but when the matches come out something has gone seriously wrong! Not only is Avery matched with Sam, but the class advisor knows that someone tampered with the program. On top of that, Avery discovers that she actually kind of, sort of, likes Sam . . . and he likes her back. Torn between the guy she likes and her sister/best friend, Avery is left wondering: is there any possible way she can keep them both?

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## Editorial Review

### Review

"Avery's spunky tenacity and upbeat attitude in the face of her many challenges will charm readers."  
*Kirkus Reviews*, September 2011

### About the Author

Lauren Barnholdt is the author of the teen novels *The Thing About the Truth*, *Sometimes It Happens*, *One Night That Changes Everything*, *Two-way Street*, *Right of Way*, and *Watch Me*. She is also the author of the middle grade novels *The Secret Identity of Devon Delaney*, *Devon Delaney Should Totally Know Better*, *Four Truths and a Lie*, *Rules for Secret-Keeping*, *Fake Me a Match*, and the Girl Meets Ghost series. She lives in Waltham, Massachusetts. Visit her at [LaurenBarnholdt.com](http://LaurenBarnholdt.com).

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Fake Me a Match

## one

**SO I'M KIND OF IN THE MARKET FOR A** new best friend. Reasons:

1. My old best friend, Sophie Burns, has apparently decided that we are not friends anymore. I'm still not clear on the exact reasons for this, but from what I can tell, it has something to do with us starting seventh grade. At the beginning of the year she found some new, more popular friends (Kaci Mitchell and K.J. Reynolds), who love to do nothing except talk about boys, boys, boys. And when they're not talking about boys, they're texting them, following them, or getting their hair highlighted in order to be noticed by them. Don't get me wrong, I like boys as much as the next person. (Especially Kevin Hudson, who, as far as I'm concerned, is the cutest boy at Heights Middle School, so totally cuter than Sam Humphrey, who everyone thinks is the cutest boy, but who definitely isn't due to his arrogant personality.) I just don't think they should be talked about and obsessed over all the time.

2. Everyone needs a best friend. Under normal circumstances, getting a best friend this late in the game would be almost impossible. I mean, everyone at my school either already has a best friend from elementary school, or they've already found their new middle-school best friend and ditched their old best friend for no reason (read: Sophie Burns).

Which is why it's totally lucky that I'm getting a new sister. And not a baby sister either. (Which would actually be a disaster, since who wants a baby crying and screaming and making messes all over the house?) No, I'm getting a real, honest-to-goodness thirteen-year-old stepsister. Her name is Blake (I know! How cool is that name for a girl?), and she's coming to live with us. Like, today.

"Do you think she likes green?" I ask my mom as I brush some green paint onto the wall of my room. Well, our room. Me and Blake are sharing until my mom can get all her fitness equipment cleaned out of our third bedroom. (Not like she minds. I mean, she used her treadmill maybe once, and her elliptical, like, twice. So really they're just these big dust magnets that are taking up space.)

Anyway, I decided to paint before Blake got here, and I picked this super-pretty sea-foam green that makes

the whole room open up and look bright and airy. (I heard that on a home-improvement show. I know it's weird that I watch home-improvement shows. But really, they're pretty interesting. Like, did you know you can paint your refrigerator? Seriously, how cool is that? I tried to get my mom to let us paint ours red, but she was totally not having it.)

"I'm not sure," my mom says, all distracted. She's over in the corner, sitting at my desk and looking at menus for her wedding. It's in three weeks. And she *just* got engaged to Blake's dad, Will, like, two months ago. It's been totally crazy, especially for my mom, who likes to have everything done five million years ahead of time.

"What do you mean you're not sure?" I say now. I take a step back and look at the wall. "Don't you think this color is gorgeous? It's called Sea-Foam Shell. How can that not be gorgeous?" A drip of paint slides down the wall, and I reach over and try to blot it up with the little foam brush they gave me at Home Depot. But I guess the paint must be super fast-drying or something, because it kind of just, uh, glops onto the brush. Hmmm. Well, whatever. I'm sure some touch-ups are to be expected. Even the pros can't just get it all smooth and perfect on the first try.

"No, it *is* gorgeous," my mom says. "Sorry, honey, I'm just distracted." She holds up two menus. "Do you think Italian food would be okay for a wedding? This place has an opening, but I'm not sure if Italian food is a good choice."

"I love Italian," I say. "That sounds delish." I dip my brush into the paint and start putting another coat onto the wall. This color is definitely a little darker than I thought it was going to be. But you can never really tell from a paint tag what the color is actually going to look like on the walls. Which is why you should always buy one of those little test cans. But really, who has time for one of those? I mean, Blake is going to be here TONIGHT. And I still have to make up our beds with the matching green and purple bedspreads I bought.

*Ding-dong.* The doorbell rings, and I scream and drop the roller I'm holding onto the floor. Sea-Foam Shell goes dribbling all over. Yikes. Good thing my mom made me put a plastic sheet down. I don't think paint comes out of carpet too well.

"Is that *them*?" I ask, panicked. "The room isn't even done yet. How can they be here *already*?"

"I don't know," my mom says. She's still looking through her glasses and down at the menus that are laid out on my desk.

"I'm a mess," I say. I look at myself in the mirror. I haven't showered yet, since I figured I'd do it after I got all messy painting. My cutoff jean shorts are splattered with bits of Sea-Foam Shell, my blond hair is a complete and total mess, and the old Villanova T-shirt of my mom's that I'm wearing has a big rip in the bottom. And I'm not sure it was there before I started painting.

"Avery," my mom says, "Will and Blake are our family now. You're going to have to get used to not freaking out whenever they show up. They're going to be living here. You don't have to get all dressed up every time they're around."

Good point. Still. Blake is from New York. As in New York *City*. I've only met her a few times, and every time she was wearing some super-fabulous outfit and doing something totally sophisticated, like ordering a cheese plate for an appetizer or something.

Oh, well. I'll just have to win her over with my personality. I rush by my mom and down the stairs, then fling open the front door.

"Hello!" I say.

"Hi," Blake says. Her long blond hair is in two French braids down the back of her head. Hmm. Maybe I should put mine like that! Then not only would we be sisters, we'd be twin sisters. Fab! Of course, we don't really look alike, but we could be fraternal.

"You guys are early," I say.

"Sorry," Will says. "We thought there would be more traffic, but the highways were totally clear."

"Good thing we brought some of our stuff," Blake says, "since the moving van won't be here until later."

Um, *some* of her stuff? I look doubtfully at the huge pile of things that are sitting on the porch behind her. And when I say pile, I literally mean pile. Clothes in big clear trash bags, a bunch of shoes that are tumbling out of a blue duffel bag, a big carton of books, a huge Ziploc bag holding a big ball of what looks like tangled-up jewelry, and a mini pink flat-screen TV with stickers stuck all over it.

"You have more stuff?" I ask.

"Yes," she says. "A lot more."

"Great!" I say brightly, even though inside I've started to freak out slightly. One, because I'm kind of a neat freak, and it doesn't seem like her stuff is, ah, very organized, and two, because our room is kind of small. But whatever. Having a sister is worth a little clutter, so yay, yay, yay! "Well, I guess we should get started bringing this stuff upstairs." I step out onto the porch and pick up a few of Blake's garbage bags. Blake picks up the smallest bag out there, the bag of shoes, and then follows me up the stairs.

Once we're in my room, she drops the bag she's holding and looks around. "You're painting," she says.

"Yeah," I tell her. "Green. I hope that's okay. It's my favorite color, and I figured it would match with whatever you have. This shade of green kind of goes with everything." Which isn't exactly true. It doesn't *really* go with her pink TV. Hmm. I wonder if you can paint TVs, too.

"It's fine," Blake says. She shrugs her shoulders. "Can I help?"

"Totally!" I say, thrilled. First day here and we're already bonding!

She picks up one of the brushes and slaps it against the wall. Green paint goes splattering into a sunburst pattern. Yikes.

"Um, don't you want to change first?" I ask her. "We have tons of old T-shirts. My mom's really into running, so every time she does a 5K or something she gets a shirt." I cross the room to my dresser and open my T-shirt drawer. "You could wear this one." I hold up a yellow shirt that we got from my school's "Run for Reading" 5K last summer.

"That's okay," she says. "I'll be careful."

Then she plops another brushful of paint right onto the wall. A blob of it goes running down and pools onto the plastic sheet that's covering the carpet. Blake doesn't seem to notice.

Hmmm. I wonder if it would be rude to go over there and tell her to be more careful. Probably. Besides, it wasn't like everything was going so perfectly before she got here. I had some blobs and runs myself. They probably make some kind of paint touch-up kit or something that we can pick up at the hardware store later. Not that I wanted to spend the morning at the hardware store, but—

"This is boring," Blake declares. She drops the paintbrush into the paint tray, and more paint splatters up and onto the wall. "Let's go see if my dad will drive us to the mall."

"Ummm ..." I look around at my half-painted room, and her bags that are just sitting there. "Maybe we should try to unpack a little bit first?" I'm glad she wants to hang out and everything, but how can she think of going to the mall at a time like this? We'd have to come home to a disgusting mess, which is so not the environment you want to bring new purchases into.

"Okay," Blake says, sighing like unpacking is a big imposition. She picks up one of her garbage bags and rips it down the middle. Which is kind of wasteful, when you think about it. I mean, it's a perfectly good garbage bag. She definitely could have used it again. I pick one up and open it very carefully, hoping she might learn from my example.

"Where should I put my clothes?" Blake asks.

"Oh, I cleaned out half my closet, and we brought up that dresser for you from the basement." I point to the corner where my mom put the dresser she used to use in our spare room, like, years ago.

Blake crosses the room and starts shoving her clothes into the drawers. "Done!" she declares, then slams the dresser drawer shut. Some jeans hang out over the side. "Now I just have to hang up my posters." She digs around the bottom of the ripped bag and pulls out some crumpled-up posters (all of bands I've never heard of, but that seem very indie and hip, like the kind of bands you'd know about if you lived in NYC), which she tacks up on the wall behind her bed. I want to tell her that, um, I'm going to be painting that wall at some point and so she'll just have to take them back down, but something tells me that's not the best idea.

"So you like dogs, huh?" I say, as she tacks up the last poster, the only one that's not of a band. It's of a dog, sitting in a field full of daisies and looking very cute.

"Yeah," she says. "I want to be a veterinarian when I grow up. But I'm not allowed to have one since my dad doesn't think I'm ready for the responsibility."

"Well, that's ridiculous," I say. "I'm sure you're very responsible." I try not to think about those jeans that are peeking out from the dresser and the paint splatches on the floor. She has to be responsible. I mean, she lived in New York City. She was allowed to ride the subway. By herself!

"I am," she says. "And I have a dog at my mom's house."

"You do?"

"Yeah. I really miss him."

Uh-oh. I know it's ridiculous, but I have this fear that Blake and I will become best friends and everything will be going perfectly, and then out of nowhere she'll somehow decide that she wants to go and live with her mom in Virginia. I know, it's crazy, right? But when you've already had one best friend ditch you out of nowhere, a person can start to get a little paranoid.

"You know," I say, suddenly getting a brilliant idea, "I bet my mom would be able to convince your dad to let us have a dog."

"You think?" Blake tilts her head and bites her lip, and I move over and sit down next to her on her bed.

"Yeah," I say. "My mom's actually pretty laid-back when it comes to things like that." I've always been a good kid, which means that when I want something, my mom usually trusts me to know that I can handle it. Which is really good when it comes to certain things, like this. Although ... I'm not sure I really *want* a dog. I mean, I like animals and everything, but dogs shed, and they make messes, and they need to be walked, like, all the time. Maybe we could get a small dog, though. I've heard those are easier to exercise.

"I want a huge dog," Blake says. Okay, then. "A black one."

"Um ... well, it will probably depend on—"

"So should we go ask her?"

"Right *now*?"

"Yeah."

"Um ... " I think about it. I mean, there's no real reason not to, right? No time like the present and all that. "Sure."

We head downstairs to where my mom and Will are making lunch in the kitchen. Blake's shoe must have gotten a tiny little bit of wet paint on it, because as she walks, little bits of gummy paint get deposited onto the carpet. I really hope I have a chance to get to the hardware store.

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Elizabeth Parker:**

Have you spare time for the day? What do you do when you have considerably more or little spare time? Yeah, you can choose the suitable activity regarding spend your time. Any person spent their own spare time to take a wander, shopping, or went to often the Mall. How about open as well as read a book entitled Fake Me a Match? Maybe it is being best activity for you. You already know beside you can spend your time along with your favorite's book, you can more intelligent than before. Do you agree with the opinion or you have other opinion?

**Melissa Wilcox:**

This Fake Me a Match book is not ordinary book, you have it then the world is in your hands. The benefit you obtain by reading this book is information inside this reserve incredible fresh, you will get details which is getting deeper anyone read a lot of information you will get. That Fake Me a Match without we understand teach the one who studying it become critical in considering and analyzing. Don't always be worry Fake Me a Match can bring any time you are and not make your case space or bookshelves' come to be full because you can have it in your lovely laptop even cell phone. This Fake Me a Match having great arrangement in word and also layout, so you will not truly feel uninterested in reading.

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