

# Kate O’Keeffe – Three Last First Dates

## Chapter 1

*MY NAME IS MARISSA Jones, and I’m totally committed to not being committed.*

There, I said it. It was out there.

In fact, I had a long and impressive history of avoiding commitment. I was the Commitment Phobia Queen, if you will. I was good at it, really good. If you looked “commitmentphobe” up in a dictionary, I wouldn’t have been at all surprised if you’d have found a photo of me, running away from some bewildered-looking guy as quickly as my feet could carry me.

That was why, when it came to dating, I was fussier than an OCD patient off their meds. And why not? A girl had to have standards, right? I never expected to “settle” for someone, and nor did I want to. No way. No one but Mr. Absolutely Right would do for me.

Only problem was, I was having a hard time finding him.

That’s why I agreed to a pact with my best friends to marry the next guy I dated. Which in hindsight, for a commitmentphobe like me, was an off-the-charts crazy thing to do. Certifiable. I had really only agreed to the pact because I was sick of dating—that and the large amount of chardonnay I had imbibed that evening.

To be perfectly honest, I hadn’t really taken it all that seriously at the time.

And then “the thing” happened and I knew I had to find him, I had to find The One. There was simply no more time to waste.

But, instead of going on a regular old date with some random guy, I decided to go on *three* dates in one day. I liked the math: one of me, three of them. It more than worked in my favor.

Not only that, I had thoroughly vetted each of the three guys before I even threw on my outfit for the first date. If this was going to work—and I really, really wanted it to—I needed to go in with my eyes wide open.

“I still can’t believe you’re doing this,” Paige said, shaking her head and smiling at me over our cups of coffee, what was left of our slices of cake in crumbs on our plates. “Three dates in one day? You’re brave.”

“Why not? You and Cassie put all your eggs in one basket, and I don’t want to do that. I mean, I know you ended up with the right guys in the end, but they weren’t the men you went on your Last First Dates with, right?” They nodded. “Well, I figured going out with three different guys *has* to improve the odds.”

“You’re right about that.” Paige nodded, her eyebrows raised. “Can you give us the lowdown on who these guys are? We need all the details, right, Cassie?”

“Oh, yes. Especially how good they look with their shirts off,” Cassie added with a wicked grin.

“Well, I’m hardly going to find *that* out on a first date, but”—I raised my hand in the Girl Guides’ salute—“I do solemnly swear to report all important details to you as they transpire.”