

### **What others have said about *Meet Delaney***

“I have not met Mahaney. I can hardly wait to meet her. I loved her book....*Meet Delaney...A Single Girl's Story*...Mahaney is not afraid to take on big, controversial subjects...the author was able to write about life's personal difficulties with honesty and integrity...*Meet Delaney* transcends all ages, stages and genders of readers. This book is realistic fiction at its best.”

*Brenda Hill, Reviewer  
Longboat Key, FL*

“There's a reason why "Meet Delaney" resonates with women all across America... required reading for anyone who wants to better understand the mindset of women...”

*Austin Hill, Talk Show Host*

Author, "*White House: Confidential - - The Little Book Of Weird Presidential History*"

“Meet Delaney” is a charming, relatable book that is a joy for single and married women to read... Inspiring and encouraging to the end!

*Kelly Griffin, Publisher  
Phoenix Home & Garden Magazine*

“Delightfully engaging and fun.... Mahaney hits the nail right on the head covering the life of a single thirty-something woman.... Truly relatable... A laugh out loud good time.”

*Gina Taylor, Morning Show Host  
KMXP 96.9 – Phoenix, AZ*

“Witty and charming... a laugh out loud read. I found that I couldn't wait to get back to reading! Anxiously awaiting the sequel to 'Meet Delaney'.

*Lisa Hobalca Aguilar-Morning Show Producer  
99.9 KESZ - Phoenix, AZ*

“Meet Delaney... a single girl on a complicated journey to find *love*. She's one of us, and we've all been in her (high-heel) shoes. Jackie Mahaney is an extraordinary writer that takes us along Delaney's search for love and it is a wonderful ride. You know her thoughts, feel her pain, and cheer her triumphs. The dialogue is so real, you will swear that you've had the same conversations before. Read this book, and you will know what it is *really* like to be single girl. I loved Meet Delaney!”

*Angie Handa  
Asst. Program Director, Music Director, Radio personality  
Phoenix, AZ*

# **Meet Delaney**

**By: Jackie Mahaney**

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# Dedication

To single women all over the world.

Being on your own can become your greatest source of strength, if you allow it.

## Special thanks and acknowledgements

Writing this book has been a great source of enjoyment for me over the past nine years. During all of the trials and tribulations of being single, I can honestly say that I am thankful for the opportunity to have had these years as a part of my journey. Without them, I doubt that I would have gotten to know and trust myself as much as I do now. More than ever, I learned that family and friends are the pillars of our life and that people come into your path in order to teach, love and direct the course of your life. If you are aware, you will notice earth angels all over the world, and if you listen and follow – you will be guided to do what it is your life was meant to do.

Thanks must be given first and foremost to God, creator of the Universe and giver of my soul and life.

Next, dad – Pete Seymour who told me I should always have something interesting to say. I guess since I wrote this book – I had a few things to say...

My mother – Royal Seymour who is one of the most non-judgmental women I know. She has been a friend – most interested in my daily life – my whole life.

My sisters – I have four of them... Theresa Setka, Angie Weaver, Rita (Jamie) Seymour and Rhonda Gross. These are the four women that molded me into the woman I have become. I love them all.

My brother – Tim Seymour for his constant positive, loving, supportive role in my life.

The children in my life - nieces and nephews - Coltyn, Landon, Ali, Ian, Andin, Noelle, Lanny and Chloe.

To my cocker spaniel - Abigail- who was my most beloved companion for 13 years and showed me a whole new appreciation for determination and living fun.

To my best friends - Morgan Cooper, Denise Hart, Jill Jackson, Bryan McArdle, Lea Katharine Robbins, Scott Lacher, Christine Conlin, Mike Helberg, Dana Anderson and Michelle Conkey who put humpty dumpty back together again after my great fall.

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Thanks to Maralyn and Norm Hill for coaching me through this process, for editing “Meet Delaney” and for your support and encouragement of the project. As well, a big thank you to Brenda Hill for loving “Meet Delaney” enough to write my first great review!

Final thanks to my true love at last, my husband – Michael Eberhardt and my new puppy Emma Hope for giving me the family I have always wanted and a loving home to come to at the end of the day. I am a lucky woman, indeed.



# Introduction

# 1

## Single forever... and I just don't get it

It seems like I've been single...forever. And, quite frankly, I don't get it. Is there not a single man on this entire planet that I am compatible with? The last time I looked in the mirror, I was convinced that I am attractive enough to at least *lure* a prospective mate. The problem is what I seem to attract is *not* what I am wanting. Trust me. And then, of course, the ones that I wish to attract, well, they simply aren't interested and that is the most puzzling thing of all.

Last week I was in a professional sales training class. The lesson I got out of it was that I should expect nineteen no's before I get one yes. In other words, nineteen people have to say, "No, Delaney, you just aren't what I am looking for"... before one person says, "Yes, you are perfect."

My teacher stated that we should even take it one step further and celebrate the no's we get. "Every 'no' brings you one step closer to 'yes'!" she said in her most enthusiastic voice.

After class, I took a look at the bigger picture of this theory and decided that it also transferred very easily into my love life. The only problem is that I am unaware at this point as to how many no's I should have celebrated by now.

"No, Delaney, I'm not ready for a relationship" is one rejection I have heard.

"No, Delaney, I need to stay with my current girlfriend" is another line I've been told. Bummer was that I didn't know he had a current girlfriend.

"No, Delaney, I am too insecure to be with a successful, attractive woman like you," would be a great line of rejection, but of course, I've never heard that one.

Nineteen no's, huh? *Celebrate the rejections, huh?* Easier said than done.

For all of us single women out there—and there are a lot of us—perhaps this should be our theory. *Celebrate the no's!*

I read something recently that said 51% of all American women are single. If it takes nineteen no's before we each get one yes, that is a lot of celebration! Hell, we should have a national holiday for all single women, young, old, divorced and widowed too.

It could be called, "National Celebrate the NO Day". It works for me, I could always use another day off work.

Jackie Mahaney

So, here's the deal, I am a SWF, 36, successful advertising executive, 5'5", 125 lbs, (of course I am lying about the weight, but who cares, it's what I will weigh now that I am on my new diet... ) blonde hair, blue eyes, dynamic personality – who is seeking a 30 – 39 SWM for LTR (long term relationship). My ideal man is successful not only in business but in all aspects of life. He should be active, enjoy working out, and take good care of his body (no flabby arms or beer bellies please. Hair is good too and how about a nice set of choppers?) He should like nature and be able to mix an equal amount of hard work with fun play. My prince charming needs a certain amount of charm and charisma – otherwise he wouldn't be a prince. Furthermore, I like a man who has solid friendships and close family ties. He must adore cocker spaniels, as I have one named Abby and my final tiny request would need to be that he could get along with my mother. It would just make my life so much easier if he did.

Yet, as I re-evaluate that final request, I realize that it perhaps is the reason I am getting so many no's. What man is going to say out loud, "Delaney Moore, I just can't take your mother!"

I wrote my personal ad and it made me think about how times have changed. When I was a child, the only things that were advertised in the classifieds were stuff like used couches, refrigerators and dining room tables. Now, I hate to admit, the merchandise is me, crazy as it is.

When I was about eight, my mom once put an add in our small Iowa newspaper for an old green chair that no longer went with the décor in the "newly furnished" living room.

Ad read, "Slightly used sage recliner in excellent condition for sale."

Notice: My personal ad says nothing about being "slightly used," although I certainly have been a time or two. It does mention my "excellent condition," since, after all, I am trying to sell something here.

I am a 36 year old single woman, damn it! I have a great job, I own my own home and I'm quite attractive, I think. So, where are all the good men?

I've been told they're in one of two places: The Marines or in the classifieds, next to the "slightly used" recliners for sale.

I believe that when it comes to a relationship shopping, I know what I'm looking for. Unfortunately, I can't seem to find it. Perhaps, I'm shopping too many clearance centers or too many blue light specials, maybe.

Like most of us single women out there, my fear is that I may never find the man I am looking for or find that true happiness that only comes from falling deeply in love.

People have said, "When you least expect it, you fall in love." In return, I say that I've been "least expecting" it for awhile now, so what's the deal? Timing, life circumstances, being in the wrong place at the right time, or being in the right place at the wrong time, whatever the situation, I find myself alone still, without a partner. Sometimes it really sucks.

I don't want to appear melodramatic; I have had a few relationships with men in my life. It's not like I'm some martyr for all single women, but let's make no mistake about it, I've been single long enough to know that finding a good man, a true life partner, is no easy task.

I can and do take comfort in knowing that I am not alone in my plight for true love. With 51% of women in the United States being single, I realize that's more than half of us. There are at least half a dozen right now in downtown Phoenix at my place of employment. A whole lot of sisters are sitting around on Saturday nights by themselves, if you know what I mean.

Saturday nights aren't too bad. Actually, it's the Saturday mornings, the Sunday afternoons and the Wednesday nights after a long day at the office that I feel the most alone. At these times I often feel a pit of loneliness in my stomach that literally gives me an ache.

At times, I long for someone to share my life with. I want to wake up next to someone and cuddle in the mornings. I want to be able to call a lover during the middle of my workday just to say "hi." I want to connect with someone on a deep level, being able to look into his eyes and know that I am a part of his universe.

But then reality hits and I realize I am somewhere in the meantime, which means I am single and I am forced to deal with it, forced into finding peace, happiness and contentment without a partner to rely on.

They say it builds character and a greater sense of self esteem. Single people, without a partner, are measured up and down daily, judged on looks, personality, intelligence, success and attitude. It takes tremendous courage, strength and resiliency to accept rejection like some of us have had to face (Accept the "no's", Delaney, celebrate them).

Those who say it builds character *are* right – whoever they are.

Perhaps *they* are some happily married psychologist couple living in upstate New York, charging people like me a couple hundred bucks an hour to tell me about the sense of self and self esteem I am discovering.

I suppose there are some things I have discovered that I do like about being single. Some of these include the ability to wash only my underwear after I pick them up off the bedroom floor. I can listen to the music I like or have peace and quiet if I prefer. I never have to fight someone for the remote control, nor do I have to worry about what someone else wants to eat for dinner.

I can make my own plans, come and go as I please, I rarely argue with myself and no one is ever under foot. Most of the time, this seems like a pretty ideal situation. I can be as selfish as I want to be. After all, I am discovering myself and am being encouraged to do so. The reality is, I have total freedom to do what I want, when I want, with whom I want. Now, what is wrong with that?

Nothing, until Saturday morning, Sunday afternoon and Wednesday night roll around. Then, I want a boyfriend, a partner, a husband, maybe even a soul mate.

Jackie Mahaney

Call me crazy, but I've been thinking lately that perhaps people are created to be together, in pairs like the animals on Noah's ark. Maybe it's impossible to be truly content, to be happy as a single woman because we're genetically engineered to live life with a loving, honest, caring and of course, extremely *hot* man.

For some reason, that concept makes some sense to me, and, it makes me feel better because I don't seem so pathetic when I say that I long to be in love. Somebody please slip me some love potion number 9 already.

The other theory, tried and true, is the one in regards to the grass always being greener on the other side. When we're single, we want to be married, when we're married, we want to be single. I call it the "head in my ass" theory.

When you're not really sure what you want in life, or you think you want something you don't have, it's like not being able to breathe. In the interim, we hold our breath, just waiting to exhale a long, deep sigh of relief when we finally get what we want, if we ever do.

Getting what we want in life, being in love, living happily ever after – it is every girl's dream, isn't it?

And yet, here I am, a successful, single woman without a boyfriend or even a solid date in sight. It's been eight years since I was in a *real* relationship.

The last major one ended in divorce!

I was married while in my 20's to a boy from my Iowa hometown. A boy I met when I was 18 years old at a drive-in theatre. A boy I loved back then, who promised me love and commitment until my dying day. To that, I say, guess what? I'm not dead yet, so what happened?

## 2

### **The start of something single**

I'm a statistic. I'm one of the fifty some percent of divorcees walking around aimlessly wondering how I got here. What I did wrong, what he did wrong. How I am going to be better next time if I ever get over this pain.

It doesn't matter how I became single. Women never married, once married, twice married, three times a lady- widowed, does it matter? We all experience the same woes with the single life because ultimately, everyone wants to love and be loved. Even though so many people get divorced, no one really ever wants to get one, unless they are married to some total ass – and even then, it's a difficult process.

I certainly didn't want my divorce. I didn't ask for it and begged him to not to leave.

Truly, it was one of the most difficult experiences I have ever had to go through. Mentally, it tore me apart. And yet, there were times I felt a sense of freedom and happiness like I had never known. *Free, free* at last, baby...I am *free*! Big shock to say I never thought I would be divorced. Who does?

*Priest:* Delaney, do you take this man for better or worse, sickness and in health, till death do you part, or are you signing up for the eight year interval plan?

Why isn't that an option these days? Everything should be up for renegotiation.

I wasn't totally unhappily married. In fact, for the most part, I would say Ryan and I co-existed fairly well together. *Now*, of course, I realize that simply co-existing isn't really all the necessary ingredients for a happy life together.

*Good Marriage Recipe:* Add one tablespoon of love, mix with blend of respect, commitment and trust. Bake for a lifetime with fun, mutual goals and a great sex life and there you have it.

There is so much more than co-existing.

Jackie Mahaney

I felt safe and comfortable in my marriage. We were good friends, I thought, and we laughed often. That was the good part. Unfortunately, we didn't have similar goals or ideas about how life should be lived and that, I found out, was a problem.

Ryan wanted to have children and I wanted to have a career. Ryan liked noise, activity and excitement; I enjoyed a quieter environment. Ryan liked to drink and party, I don't drink at all.

I know what you're thinking...Ryan sounds like fun and I sound like a bore.

It's true, I *was* a bore back then and I didn't even know it. Unhappiness can do a lot to a person.

So finally...Ryan left me on September 23, 1997. In retrospect, I can't say I blame him. I can say it took me by surprise.

*Commanding officer:* O.k. troops, be prepared for a surprise attack. Those little bastards are up to something sneaky and all ground forces need to be deployed, *immediately!*

It changed my life.

It changed my world.

*It changed me!*

I won't ever forget that day in September. In fact, I have made it an anniversary of sorts. Now it is a day of celebration because it is the day I started to grow up. A psychic woman named Sandra told me that it was the day I walked into my destiny. I can tell you that she was right. Had Ryan not left me, I would never have had the opportunity to experience life as I have over the past nine years. Nevertheless, that terrible day I felt like the only destiny I was walking into was a lonely road towards hell.

*Satan:* "Hello Delaney, welcome to divorce *hell*, I've been expecting you!"

Ryan stood in the hallway, and his words still ring in my ears, "Delaney, I don't want to be married anymore."

"Excuse me?" I said, asking him to repeat what I was convinced I had not heard.

"I don't want to be married to you anymore. I don't love you."

Ryan and I had moved to Phoenix from Milwaukee that year to start a new life, a true future in a growing area with lots of opportunity, beautiful places to visit and great weather almost all year long. We bought a new house in the suburbs and watched it being built on a daily basis. I remember the excitement of choosing our tile floors and kitchen counter tops together. This house, *we thought*, would be the home we would live in for years to come. We would have our children in this home. We would share it with our friends and family.

Little did I know then, that four short months later, my cocker spaniel, Abby and I would be co-habiting there alone.

The bomb landed on a weekend that cousin Jimmy was in town visiting from Kansas City.

Cousin Jimmy was Ryan's favorite cousin as well as holding the title of best friend. They had always been close – so when we moved to Phoenix, Jimmy decided to take his two weeks vacation time all at once and come to our house. *Oh goodie!*

Ryan and Jimmy liked doing the usual “guy stuff” together like watching sports, drinking beers and hanging out. Nightly, they would climb into the car and head for downtown Tempe to get a beer. Most nights they wouldn't get home until 2 a.m.

*Now*, I realize that nothing besides panties goes down after 1 a.m., but back then, I thought they were just out having an innocent good time.

Over one weekend, they decided to take a trip to Flagstaff, so I was told. They were gone for two days before I heard from Ryan. I have to admit, that bugged me. I felt like I had been a pretty understanding wife for the past two weeks and didn't understand why Ryan didn't have the respect to even pick up the phone and let me know things were o.k.

On the third day, the phone finally rang.

“Hey Delaney, we're in Flagstaff, Ryan said, sounding half lit.

“Well, when are you coming home and why haven't you called before now?” I asked. “I've been worried about you.”

“Oh, come on, we're just having a little fun. I don't get to see Jimmy that much. You should be glad we're having a good time and stop being bitchy.”

*Bitchy? Did he say I was being bitchy? Bitchy!*

Look, I know how to be a bitch, I wasn't being one that day, trust me.

“We'll be home in a couple of days,” Ryan said as he hung up the phone.

*He hung up on me. Slam the phone down, man; I'm hanging up on you. Damn, this boy, he's getting ballsy with Jimmy around. We're having words when he gets home.*

For the next two days I stewed about it. I thought about Ryan and our marriage.

I wondered why he wasn't calling me and then when he did, why he seemed so short and distant. It wasn't like him, really.

On the contrary, Ryan had always been a pretty good husband, especially in the beginning, when he was great.

One of the first dates we had was at a party that Ryan had at his house. All of his friends were there, as well as a few people I knew from school. I must say that Ryan was a man with movie star looks. He was 6'2", dark brown hair, brown eyes, and beautiful white teeth with a smile that lit up a room. He was so charming, sweet and funny that I simply could not help but fall in love.

I'll never forget the time he was sitting down in his basement with his friends and his two brothers playing cards. He had that gorgeous grin on his face as he looked at me and announced out loud, “She's going to be my wife.”

I remember thinking, “Oh my god... am I really going to be his wife?”

A few days later, he packed his bags and went away to join the United States Navy. I cried for days and wrote him letters constantly. “Don't worry, honey, we're going

to get married soon,” was what he would say at the end of every letter and the end of every phone call.

That fall I went off to the local Iowa State College as Ryan served his time in the Navy. He would come home on leave and we would cuddle up for days planning a way to be together forever. I hated being away from him and the feeling was mutual. Finally, two years later, we eloped one weekend when he came home. We ran up to the justice of the peace in Elk Pointe, South Dakota and tied the knot.

The justice of the peace was an old woman and I remember that I took Ryan to be my lawfully wedded wife. Minor screw up, but whatever, we were all nervous that day.

When we left the judge’s chambers and went back to Ryan’s house, we found his mother crying at the kitchen table because we had run off and married without inviting her. To this day, I regret such a decision. I guess we wanted to keep it a secret. We knew that a year later we would have a church wedding with everyone present. Our immediate goal was to be legally married. This way we could have military benefits, I could transfer to California, and go to school.

I finished my sophomore year of college, while Ryan’s ship made a few excursions around the high seas. Then, finally, I moved to California with him and could not have been happier. I enrolled in a local California state college while he was working full time as a boiler tech operator. You should have seen him in his little sailor suit. Man, was he ever a knockout and I was very proud of my new husband. We had a lot of fun together back then.

Our weekends were spent on the beach roller blading. We would race down the board walk on our blades. Ryan was always crazy, going way too fast and putting anyone within a 20 ft. radius in danger. He never wore a helmet or gloves or anything. Had he fallen, he could have been injured seriously. I tried to keep up but never was as much of a daredevil as him. So, ahead of me, I would let him go and eventually I would catch up. After that we would go to the boardwalk and Ryan would order some expensive coffee and I would eat of bowl of chocolate chip ice cream. That was a typical Saturday for us.

At night, we would hang out in the Jacuzzi and snuggle. I loved him. He loved me too. Life was good. *Ahhhhh*...to be young and in love...

Now, back to September 1997...eight and a half years into our marriage – I didn’t know... anymore, I guess he didn’t either. We were both growing up.

Things that weren’t an issue before were starting to become issues now.

“When are we going to have children, Delaney?” Ryan asked *again* one afternoon after we got into the new house.

“Never,” I answered with spite...sick and tired of that same old question. I was tired of being badgered about it.

It wasn’t that I never wanted to have children; I just didn’t want them then. Or, maybe in my subconscious, I didn’t want to have them with him. Or, maybe I didn’t want to have them at all. I didn’t know.

I thought I wanted to wait until I had enough money in the bank and a stable career so that I could afford to take time off without a major set back.

Money was another thing we disagreed about. I wanted to save our money for retirement. Ryan wanted to spend every cent we made on just about anything – book clubs, designer clothes, baseball collector items, fishing equipment, hardware, software, underwear – it didn't matter. If he had a nickel, he spent a dime. That type of deal.

How to conduct our social life had become another problem. Ryan wanted to go out drinking with friends. I wanted to stay home and take the dog running.

I wanted to be serious about life so that I could have nice things later on. Ryan wanted to live for the moment.

Looking back, I realize we should have been able to take a little bit from each other; we should have been more balanced. But, we couldn't...not then. We didn't know how, we really didn't. Neither one of us was right or wrong. We were just different.

And yet, the thought of divorcing him never entered my mind. Apparently, it entered his...more often than I knew.

I have to admit, there were times when I did want to be free. Not free from Ryan, necessarily, just free in general. Free to grow up on my own. Free to be my own person. Free to live my life exactly the way I wanted to, with no one to hold me back.

And then one day, I got what I secretly wanted.

Thank you so much for reading the first two chapters of “Meet Delaney” I hope you find her story relatable, entertaining and heartfelt. 51% of all American women are single these days and “Meet Delaney” was written with them in mind.

[Order your copy of “Meet Delaney” today!](#)