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Susan Shapiro's "Secrets of a Fix-Up Fanatic: How to Meet & Marry Your Match" (Delta, 2006) is a chatty, readable book full of practical suggestions for those who are looking for their besherts. Her advice boils down to two key tenets: Love yourself first, and then ask someone you know and respect to set you up.

"Single Mom Seeking: Playdates, Blind Dates and Other Dispatches From the Dating World" (Seal Press), by Rachel Sarah, is a memoir of the first few years of a single mom who is actively seeking Mr. Right. Sarah has an infant daughter; her longtime boyfriend, Eric, her baby's father, disappeared without a trace. Here's the endearing and steamy, if slightly self-indulgent, story of Sarah finding her way back into the dating world.

In "Mating in Captivity: Reconciling the Erotic and the Domestic" (HarperCollins, 2006), couples and family therapist Esther Perel walks readers through the various causes of, and some strategies to combat, matrimonial bed-death. Using real-life examples from her New York City private practice, Perel hypothesizes that "it is not a lack of closeness but too much closeness that impedes desire... desire is fueled by the unknown."

*Beth Schwartzapfel is a freelance writer based in Brooklyn. She is working toward a Master of Fine Arts in creative writing at the New School.*

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