



# The Man Test

*Amanda Aksel*

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## **The Man Test** Amanda Aksel

She's out to prove he's no good. He's too good to be true. Will she prove her point or be swept off her feet?

Couples therapist Marin Johns is in love with love until she catches her fiancé in the act. Heartbroken and convinced her life is a lie, she's determined to show that all men are double-dealing pigs. So when the handsome and sweet James Young asks her on a date, she sees the perfect chance to prove her theory to the world.

From snooping in his apartment to hiring a fidelity inspector, Marin sets trap after trap to expose James as just another cheating male. But the therapist didn't realize that the harmless experiment would put her friends at risk. And she certainly didn't expect her unsuspecting subject to make her heart beat three times as fast...

Head over heels and deeply confused, will Marin double down on her theory or take one last chance on love?

The Man Test is the laugh-out-loud first book in The Marin Test chick-lit series. If you like witty banter, comic hijinks, and the search for the perfect guy, you'll love Amanda Aksel's charming tale.

Buy The Man Test to get an A+ in love today!

## **The Man Test Details**

Date : Published March 24th 2014

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Author : Amanda Aksel

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Genre : Romance, Womens Fiction, Chick Lit, Contemporary, Contemporary Romance

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## From Reader Review The Man Test for online ebook

### BestChickLit.com says

WOW... This is a brilliant, fast paced, hair-raising adventure during which I hardly had time to draw my breath!! I was completely enthralled in this story from the get go and I just loved the characters and the warmth that was developed amongst them. There is a bit of everything in here; true love (and we all love a bit of that, don't we!), forgiveness, infidelity, really friendship, honesty and of course a major dose of complete stupidity. The main character in the book is written in a truly real and honest way, so she comes across as a well-rounded character with a lot of depth and you feel almost from the first few pages like you know her and want things to work out well for her. All of the people in the book are beautifully written and even the not so lovely ones are very sympathetically portrayed.

There was a whole roller-coaster of emotions that I was taken on, starting with a great deal of humour, both in the situations and also in the dialogue which had me laughing, smiling and sniggering along. But then I found I was crying along with them too because it was so easy to empathise with what they were all going through. Ms Askel has depicted these characters so well and woven the storyline around and through them, so I found it all irresistible and I had to keep turning the pages. This was all incredibly well thought out and put together, every character's flaws and personality is out there for all to read, and the way they all intermingled with each other; the stupidity of some, the integrity of others, the warmth and hope the ending fills you with was to me just exactly how a good book should leave you.

Everyone should have this book on their shelves. I know this will be one I return to again and again and I cannot wait for the next release from this writer, as she has gone straight on my favourite writer list.

Reviewed by Noemie T Verlan on behalf of BestChickLit.com

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### Antonella says

Very confusing, all over the place with characters that got on my nerves a lot.

Cute cover.

I don't plan on reading next in the series.

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### Paula M. of Her Book Thoughts! says

MY REVIEWS ARE ALSO POSTED HERE.

When I first started reading The Man Test, a thought passed through my mind. Am I old enough to read this? ..Duh. Of course I am. What I was really concerned about is if I will connect with the character, be absorbed by the plot.. or if I will even relate to the story. Surprisingly, I did.

Can you believe I loved, enjoyed and cherished this story?! It's about Marin, she's a Couples Therapist and engaged to her '*man of her dreams*' until he cheated on her

Yes people. HE cheated. A Man cheating? WHAT A SHOCKER. (HA. No bitterness there at all)

And then Marin got so so sad and mooney of course, that I just wanna hug her. Honestly, she acted normal. And then she found a book that says that **ALL MEN ARE LIARS AND IT'S ALL IN THEIR NATURE. THEY CAN'T HELP IT.** Now, how to know if this statement is true? Why, you try a dry run of course! By doing it and proving it. And that's exactly what Marin did.

It's a completely messed up concept, if you ask me. I mean, dating a guy so you can catch him cheating so you can prove your theory to your friends? Pretty comical and messed up, right? Marin was so sure to catch this guy she's currently dating because in her head, ALL MEN ARE LIARS. Well, what if she got a Faithful one?

I JUST LOVED IT! All of it! First of all, Marin is such a wonderful protagonist. With plotlines like this, MC's were usually down right annoying. But she didn't irritate me even a bit. I have nothing but love, sympathy and ... I adore her! Maybe because she's really mature. But then again, I've read some books before with adult as MC and let's just say that their MC's actions says otherwise. So, simply put... Alex made a brilliant character! Real, quirky, sassy and klutz! An adorable klutz. Side characters are no different. They're vibrant and full of authenticity. Even the love interest stands out. Swoony and totally makes-my-heart-sigh swoony, which is so weird because he's old. For me, at least.

The way towards Marin's own definition of happily ever after wasn't easy of course. There were some begging that happened from her Ex. And I loved how Marin went all Taylor Swift on him.

**But The Man Test really worked for me because of Aksel's writing. So humorous and honest.** She has a way of making her readers laugh at Marin and feel for Marin. Her pacing was perfect. Not too slow but not too rushed either and OH! How I wished for more after reading the last page. It's a well thought plot because every woman has been on this stage. The doubts, the *is there still a decent guy out there* stage, or the *I'll just be a Cat lady forever* stage. But this story give us clarifications.. laughs.. and a heartmelting experience. It's entertaining, engaging and heartfelt! Perfect for fans of Sophie Kinsella!

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## Jane says

There are books that I actually quite like that start with the ex-boyfriend cheating on the heroine trope (e.g. Neanderthal Seeks Human), but unfortunately this book falls under the category of "I cannot force myself to read more". The plot and the characters made me feel bad as I didn't like them one bit. I felt that the plot was plain silly and the main character Marin was simply way too stupid to live. I simply am not in the mood to read about a psychologist with Ph.D. that believes a random book about all men being cheaters. I simply cannot force myself to read about a woman who's going to prove that all men are cheaters. And I also do not actually like reading about a character dating several people before coming to the conclusion that the right person for him/her has been right in front of their eyes the entire time (or at the very least I predicted that she's going to end up with her co-worker Andy, but if browsing other reviews is anything to go by, it's actually not so). Therefore this book is a DNF for me.

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## **R.G. says**

Normally romance novels don't get a very high rating with me... even though I absolutely love them... the fact is they are quite predictable... and it is something the genre really can't help and most authors don't even try to help... but Askel's book is about so much more than whether the girl gets the perfect guy in the end... it is funny and sweet and absolutely heartbreaking as it delves into the world of love and shows the many sides of it... some men cheat, some men are faithful, and women can be just as bad... but more so that some relationships are worth fighting to save while others were meant to end...

I loved the characters in this story... they really made it well rounded and nicely balanced... and Marin is someone that is so easy to relate to for all of us who have been in a relationship... who have been heartbroken... and who have gone a little crazy in the pursuit of truth... she is someone you can sympathize with because even as you know what she is doing is wrong you can see that she does too... that she's just gotten a little lost and doesn't know how to dig her way out of it yet... but it's a trip you don't mind taking beside her... this book is well worth the read...

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## **Alyssa says**

FTC Disclaimer: This book was sent to Alyssa for review from Mark My Words Book Publicity in exchange for an honest review. All opinions expressed are those of the reviewer and the reviewer alone.

Literally from the very beginning of this book, all I could think was, "This could be a movie. This could definitely be a movie." And, I'm serious - think *How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days* - and you have invoked the feel for Amanda Aksel's *The Man Test*. I've drawn this comparison with the very best intentions in mind. I am an absolute sucker for feel good, romantic comedies!

Like the Good Reads synopsis says, *The Man Test* is about thirty-something Marin Johns' venture to prove that all men are cheating a\*\*\*\*\*es. After walking in on her fiancé nearly cheating on her mere months from their wedding, Marin desperately searches for the reason as to why her supposedly perfect relationship failed. She is a couples' therapist, after all, and if she can't make a relationship work - who can? In a misguided attempt to wrap her brain around her ex-fiancé's infidelity, Marin clings to a self-help book that triumphs the "scientific" thought that all men are cheaters because its in their nature.

And what's the only way that Marin can prove this newly discovered theory? By testing it out herself, of course. Enter sweet and naive James - the quintessential nice guy who just happens to be one of the first men Marin dates after her broken engagement.

I'll just leave it at that - I'm sure you can guess what happens next.

All in all, I enjoyed this book. It was light-hearted and very easy to imagine. (Like I said, this plot is rom-com movie material.) I enjoyed Marin's internal dialogue as well as her interactions with both James, her family, and her friends. The action was fast paced and I never felt a lull in the story for a moment.

My only complaint was that Marin's character sometimes grated on my nerves. I couldn't get it out of my

head that she was supposed to be a mature adult with a degree in psychology. So why, oh why, couldn't she see how ridiculous her new belief system was and how potentially damaging it could be to James? However, the fact that she witnessed her fiancé very nearly cheating on her was enough to allow me to suspend my disbelief... I think that would seriously screw up the most level headed person and I could give Marin's behavior a pass.

Overall, this was a cute little read. I would recommend *The Man Test* to fans of chick lit and romance, or to anyone who is looking for a fun beach read!

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### **Maria Clark says**

*The Man Test* falls short for me in the fact that I had a hard time relating to Marin. Hurt by the betrayal of her fiancé, Marin decides to prove that all men will cheat given the opportunity. I went from feeling bad for her to disliking her and her indecisiveness. She starts out finding the evidence she needs until she meets James. After setting him up to fail, she might not get what she expects. I feel that Marin for a relationship therapist is childish and flippant with others feelings. She goes from beginning to have feelings for James to being inconsiderate when she finds that he too has been hurt. I felt like she should have been more compassionate at that point. He should not have been the target of her anger. That being said, I loved James and became invested in him receiving his HEA, therefore, I finished the story and now will read the others in hopes that he finds happiness and that Marin can redeem herself and prove herself not to be shallow and selfish.

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### **Lee says**

3.5 stars

I picked up *The Man Test* because I thought the storyline sounded interesting and different and it was a new author to me.

We are introduced to couples therapist Marin Johns who is engaged and looking forward to married life and having her happily ever after. Unfortunately, when she returns early from a girls weekend away, she stumbles in on Chad, her fiancé, having one last fling before he commits to Marin. Marin is understandably heartbroken, wondering why and how this happened and, more importantly wondering how, as a couples therapist, she didn't see the signs of this coming. She now has a very jaded view on love and goes looking for answers. When she comes across a book that details mens affairs and how men will always inevitably cheat, she begins her quest to prove that the book's theory is correct.

I felt the emotion of Marin's breakup and could relate to the feelings of loss and abandonment. I understood how she could have a very cynical view of relationships from this experience, and I had every empathy for her situation. When she 'picks' a man to help prove her new theory, and then proceeds to try to set him up, Marin started to lose me a bit. I kept waiting for her to realise that some of her methods were extreme, but it didn't come early enough for me. She had a very good group of girlfriends surrounding her that supported her when things got rough but she didn't heed their warnings either till it was too late.

Having said that I really enjoyed the ending, it was a realistic time line, it wasn't rushed, not tidied up too quickly. We saw Marin go back to the caring, thoughtful person she was and she went through her own

growth and redemption on the way to her HEA. She really did have to have her own epiphanies, accept responsibility for the part she may have played in her breakup and for what she had done to James so she could move forward and I liked how that played out. I also really liked James and the rest of the supporting characters. They all played a valuable part in the storyline.

This was a quick read for me and I will be interested to see what this author writes next.

*copy kindly provided by Netgalley and the publisher*

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## **Coco.V says**

? FREE on Amazon today (11/22/2017)! ?

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## **Emily says**

Everyone knows I love Heather Hildenbrand. Well, one of her friends wrote a book and was looking for reviewers so I told Heather to pass my info along. Talk about best idea ever. Amanda Aksel wrote a charming debut that left me feeling a wide range of emotions and changed my view of some topics regarding men.

No woman ever thinks that her man will cheat... until they walk in on it. Marin Johns thought everyone had that one special someone out there waiting for them, that everyone could have what her parents have, a happily ever after.

There are no words that could convey how amazingly awesome this book is. Marin was amusing to say the least. When I say amusing I don't just mean her comments and actions, I'm specifically talking about her thought process. I couldn't help but laugh my way through her story. She was out to prove that all men are lying, cheating bastards (pardon my French), and in the process turned into a basket case and I could see all the ways every choice she made could go wrong. It doesn't help that she herself is a couples therapist and should know better. I LOVED it.

So what specifically did I enjoy about this book? I loved that Marin reacted exactly as I would have had I caught a guy cheating. I found it ironic that a couples therapist happened to be the one it happened to and it resulted in this huge ordeal. I also liked that one of her best friends was anti-relationship and fully supportive of her "test" while the pro-relationship/happily-ever-after-can-happen other best friend told her not to do this. It's like she had her own personal devil and angel on her shoulders.

While I am completely and entirely in love with the story, at times I felt like I lost faith in men. I mean, I know this is fiction and what not, but being a psychology major I'm starting to question whether humans, as a species, were made to be monogamous. While I questioned the ability of a man to stay faithful, I also thought about what spurred Marin's idea to prove all were cheaters. It all started with a suggestion and that just goes to show what the power of suggestion can do.

Overall, I highly recommend The Man Test to anyone who wants to be amused by a therapist. It was witty,

clever, and ingenious. Definitely my favorite read so far this year.

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## **Julie Valerie says**

Loved the book from the initial intrigue of the inciting incident that leads to the quest: When Dr. Marin Johns, couples therapist, is cheated on by her fiancé, the hurt is so deep it manifests itself in a quest to prove all men are cheaters.

The juicy premise that there's a "man test" is a refreshing twist on a relationship-gone-bad storyline. I found it realistic that she was crushed when she was wronged, and I rooted for her when she set out to get her groove back. I especially loved her instinct to fall back on insights she's gained from her profession in the aftermath of finding out her fiancé, Chad, was cheating on her. I cheered for her watching how she handled Chad after learning about the affair. She was strong and decisive and immediately gained my admiration and respect.

So many times, romance books that open with a deceit simply follow a character's journey to heal and find love again, but Aksel's *The Man Test* uses a tell-all book as a vehicle the main character clings to in her "scorned woman" approach to getting over her fiancé. I, too, was intrigued by a book marketed like a secret FBI file that Marin found and that revealed "man secrets". When she finishes the book, she says, "I get it now. It all makes sense." The book, coupled with her occupation, solidifies Marin as a character on a quest with serious preconceptions about relationships. Marin, like so many women in her situation, is angry and disillusioned with men which makes her a very relatable character and one that readers will commit to reading. But locking her in as having a rock-solid point-of-view that flies in the face of finding love makes this a great read – because it "ups" the challenge for both the writer and the reader to get this girl turned around. Excellent premise for a book – great that it was developed so solidly and early on.

Enjoyed the first person narrative as it gave the reader immediate access to the thoughts and feelings of Marin, the main character. I think first person narratives add to the believability of the story because unlike third person narratives, in which someone is "telling" you the story, with first person, you experience the events alongside the main character.

A great vehicle for exploring and exposing relationship issues and gender differences is the occupation of the main character as a couples therapist. Here, we get to view her perspectives on not just her relationships, but the relationships of others which gives the story varied content for building upon the underlying questions about relationships. Interesting that her best friend, Telly, is a divorce lawyer. An exchange between them early in the book pegs Telly as a woman whose approach to relationships is more casual, more along gender lines of men. Marin acknowledges Telly is a bit blunt and opinionated, but this provides a useful tool for Marin to uncover the truth. Telly will be able not only to expose underlying truths, but be able to hold Marin accountable for choices she makes in the book. Idea for book #2: The two should start a talk show.

The plot thickens as a problem arises: Not everyone is as convinced as Marin is that all men are cheaters so she enters a fake relationship with James to prove her hypothesis. As we enter this storyline, Marin receives some good advice from an unlikely source: Holly.

Enter James, the love interest, and Marin's internal struggle to reconcile her newfound belief system about men and their lack of fidelity with the man that stands before her. James is wonderful and readers will adore and root for him.



Rock-solid dialogue, strong characters, a well-edited book that is very enjoyable to read. I'd recommend this to anyone, and I'd definitely put it into the hands of someone who'd just been cheated on. It doesn't dance around the hurt that comes with infidelity, not one bit, but it does give hope that the right guy is out there.

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### **Megan Johnson says**

Wouldn't it be nice if we could secretly put others through a test to determine their dependability before engaging in a relationship with them? Although a bit impractical, that's exactly what happens in this fabulous book!

If you know me or my reading habits, you probably know that my guilty pleasure is totally chick-lit. I don't think these should be limited to the beach – I read them year-round! So when Amanda Aksel, author of *The Man Test*, contacted me about reading her book I jumped on the opportunity.

And boy was I not disappointed!

*The Man Test* is about a woman named Marin who, after catching her fiancé cheating on her, sets out to prove that all men are just lying, cheating pigs. And on top of that, she's a relationship therapist herself, a supposed "professional" suddenly finding herself more in the role of patient than doctor. Whether it's setting up potential suitors with every opportunity they need to cheat and prove her hunch right, or making men "pay" for their unfaithfulness, she makes sure that she is the one who has the last laugh. But between ruined relationships and questioning her own motives, Marin learns that it's not always as cut-and-dry as you might wish.

If you've ever been in a serious relationship or been broken-hearted yourself, or even if you just enjoy a good laugh and fun read, this is a book that I HIGHLY RECOMMEND you check out for yourself! The characters will have you saying, "Oh my God, I know someone JUST like that!" and cracking up like a crazy person. Totally Worth it.

**\*\*I was provided with a free copy of this book in order to conduct this review\*\***

***If you would like for me to review + showcase your book on my blog TopsyWriter, contact me via email at [megan@tipsywriter.com](mailto:megan@tipsywriter.com)***

***Or check me out on TWITTER or FACEBOOK***

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### **Gwen ~the Book Diva says**

**4 stars!**

**\*ARC Provided to G & the Book Divas Blog in exchange for an honest review\***

This book was a trip! The entire time I just wanted to smack Marin then give her a hug. She was so full of hurt. She set to prove that all men were cheaters. She based this all on a book she found while in a post break

up depression then she began to treat this book like the gospel. Instead of proving her point she ended up proving herself foolish. Being right doesn't always feel like victory. Tough lesson, great read!

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### **Wendy says**

The Man Test is the first book in the Marin Test Series by Amanda Aksel. This was a tough book for me to read. Less than 2 chapters in and I hated the main character. She is bitter, childish and neurotic. For 70% of the book, she's complaining about why men suck and that they will all cheat and that its not worth it.

I just kept picturing her as a bitter old lady with 50 cats. She did however have a great group of friends that are in all honesty too good for her.

Besides having to pep- talk myself to finish this, the ending was quite nice.

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### **Maree Repa says**

This book is just amazing. I loved every moment of it from start to finish. So much fun, excitement and quite a few laugh along the way. This story is adventurous. And a lot of fun.

Meeting Dr Marin Johns who works as a couples therapist. After finding out her engaged boyfriend was sleeping around she decides to find a way to get the real truth in having the perfect relationship even if the relationship isn't real, just fictions.

I loved this book. I'm just so exciting about reading the series. I recommend this book to everyone who just like a great, fun romance!

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