



A buddy for my husband | by Jillian Medoff

"It's the lunar eclipse, Mollie!" my husband, Keith, shouted, racing into the living room. "Let's go see it with the telescope." Mollie, who is 10, barely looked up. "It's Thursday night, Daddy," she said slowly, as if he were a foreigner and new to our customs. "Glee is on." Sensing Keith's disappointment, I offered to go, although I knew I was small consolation: It was Mollie—or her sisters, Sarah, 19, and Olivia, 14—he was after. "Thanks," he told me. "But I'm good." Then, with a fleeting, forlorn glance at Mollie, he gripped his telescope and headed outside alone.

This wasn't the first time that one of our daughters had rebuffed him. But Mollie is the youngest, making her Keith's last chance at a homegrown buddy. We don't have any boys, and while this didn't used to bother him, lately it's clear that he feels like the odd man out. You can hardly blame him: His life is teeming with women. The people with whom he is closest—me, our girls, our mothers, my two sisters—he loves deeply and unconditionally (well, deeply, anyway), but we share few of his interests. Keith is even less keen on ours.

When the girls were little, he was game for any type of activity. Once I found him sitting on the floor wearing a tiara and playing Pretty Pretty Princess. For their part, Sarah, Olivia, and Mollie loved Keith's adventures: his astronomy lessons and his tours of the subway stops near our Brooklyn home. But the girls are

older now; princesses have been replaced with iPods, shoe shopping, and Katniss Everdeen. We don't have Keith's love of science and random trivia, but even if we did, the fact remains: Our femaleness overwhelms him—all those boots, barrettes, and infinite lipsticks, not to mention our frequent melodramas. Why, Keith asks, must we feel so much, so often? And why do our feelings mutate so fast? We don't know, of course. It's as much a mystery to us as it is to him.

Imagine, then, how happy Keith would be if some guy came along and said, "Dude, what a cool telescope! Can I have a look?" Imagine, too, how happy I would be to relinquish my role as second-rate substitute. While I'm always willing to debate whether or not a 3× Barlow lens is necessary for viewing lunar details, Keith knows my heart is not in it. He needs an hombre, a Tonto, a wingman.

So in the spirit of holiday giving, what I want this Hanukkah is a brand-new go-to pal for my beloved, beleaguered husband. (Are you listening, Paul Rudd?) He deserves someone with whom he can study the sky, drink beers, eat wings, and escape for a while from his inscrutable girls.

Jillian Medoff is the author of, most recently, I Couldn't Love You More. She lives in Brooklyn.