

Chapter 4

Joel saw her as soon as he entered the door. After checking in with the hostess, he walked over to Kristie's table.

"Hello...Kathy. I never expected to see you here."

She was still a little flustered but managed to respond appropriately. "Why, good evening, Mr. Taylor. Yeah, it's a bit of a surprise for me too." She wasn't quite sure why she hadn't called him Joel, but what was done was done. Joel looked over to the man sitting opposite her at the table. Yes, that was the cue; etiquette required that she introduce them. "Bob, this is Joel Taylor." Then looking at Joel, "Bob Newcomb." Bob rose and they shook hands.

"Please pardon the interruption, Bob," Joel said smoothly. "Kathy is an acquaintance of mine, and I wanted to say hello. I'll leave you two in peace. Enjoy your meal." Joel gave a formal nod of his head and walked over to the table selected by the hostess.

Then Kristie got another surprise. Joel was with three girls! Her thoughts about this were hard to pin down. Two of the girls she recognized, his receptionist and his secretary from Taylor Enterprises. Well, with three girls in tow, at least he could not possibly be on a date. But then she reprimanded herself again. Why should she be concerned about whether he was on a date?

With some effort, she pulled her thoughts back to Bob Newcomb as they continued their scintillating conversation on his personal genealogy.

Several times during the remainder of their meal, Kristie noticed Joel watching her. He appeared to be interested in how her date was going. Well, that was only natural: he had helped her work up her personality profile, so he probably was hoping to see her really enjoying herself. Too bad that he wanted her to enjoy herself with someone else.

Anyway, try as she might to present a positive image, it was no doubt evident to Joel, not to mention Bob, that she was not having the time of her life.

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Joel watched the two of them leave the restaurant. Indeed, he had noticed that there was no chemistry between Kristie and this Bob. While his three employees were chatting away, he did some serious thinking. It was clear that so far no one had come along and stolen her heart. Maybe he could get in a few dates before that happened. He liked Kristie. He had liked her from the first moment she came into his office. Oh, who was he trying to kid? He had liked her before she had come into his office. As he had brashly told her during that first meeting, he thought she had the sweetest voice he ever heard. Surely he could allow himself a few dates. Why not? He enjoyed being with her.

When he got back to his apartment that night, he went immediately to his computer and logged into MyForever.com. How should he word this? Yes, it would be better to keep it humorous. He created a new account for himself and started typing his personality profile.

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After her lack-luster date with Bob Newcomb, Kristie was getting discouraged again. Her new profile had kept her from being contacted by the dregs of society, but it certainly had not put her in contact with her knight in shining armor. Maybe she should try changing it again.

Sunday afternoon, she sat down at her computer to do just that. Out of habit, she checked to see if there were any new contacts. There was one. When she opened it, she was stunned.

Hello, Kathleen. I read your profile, and found it to be very cleverly written. Perhaps you would be so kind as to look at mine. Joel Taylor.

She could hardly believe her eyes. What was he up to? Even calling her Kathleen! But her excitement level was definitely climbing as she clicked the link to open his profile.

Relatively dull company executive, certainly not strikingly handsome, seeking date with young, pretty, vivacious, witty girl who loves classic rock-n-roll music and Vienna hot dogs. Must be a DJ at WKLS.

Kristie sat back and burst out laughing. How could he put that out on his own dating service? What if someone came across it during a search? Then she noticed something. Few people selected this option, but it was there for those who wanted it. Joel had selected the option of not placing his profile in the search data bank. That meant only those he contacted could gain access to his personality profile. So he had put this out there just to contact her. Why hadn't he simply called her, if he wanted a date? He was obviously being playful, maybe even trying to cheer her up. She thought for awhile on how best to answer him. Finally, the ideal response dawned on her.

Mr. Taylor: As you requested, I read your profile. For someone who offers so little, you certainly expect a lot! In that regard, I shouldn't even be responding. To pretend that I fit what you're looking for would make me shamelessly conceited. However, I will admit to loving classic rock-n-roll and Vienna hot dogs. So my phone number is Beechwood 4-5789. Kathleen Rydell.

Of course, that was not her phone number. He could easily contact her through the station, and replying in this way was much better than giving him her home phone. "Beechwood 4-5789" was the title of a song from 1962 by the Marvelettes. Kristie smiled brightly as she thought of the message it would surely communicate to someone familiar with this music. The song was about a girl who very much wanted to get better acquainted with a certain guy, so she gave him her phone number and encouraged him with that all-important line of the song: *You can call me up and have a date any old time.*

Yes, that would do nicely indeed.

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Joel was checking his Web-site email every couple hours on Sunday. Finally,

the email from Kristie arrived. As he read it, "Beechwood 4-5789" struck him like a bolt of lightning. There was no doubt what she was telling him. Funny, he thought, even at his age, that special kind of excitement still fills the heart when you discover that she likes you. He started singing the song to himself.

Monday afternoon, Joel gave Jim Patterson, WKLS's business manager, a call. Since he had recently been to see Patterson to buy advertising spots, he would know who was calling. Joel had decided not to go through the receptionist in his attempt to get Kristie on the phone.

"Hello, Jim. Joel Taylor here."

"Why Mr. Taylor, this is a pleasant surprise. How are you this afternoon?"

"Fine, just fine. Say, I'm calling to ask a favor."

"Sure, what can I do you you?"

"I'd like to talk with Kristie Rydell but thought it would be better to go through someone who knows me."

"I think I can arrange that," he responded reassuringly. "Did you want to talk with her about how she might introduce your commercials during her show?"

"No, Jim, this is actually a social call. I met Kristie when I was at the station to see you." That was a little deceptive, although quite true in a certain sense. He did not want to let it out that Kristie was a member of MyForever.com and that they had actually met at his office.

"A social call! Well, I'm really pleased. Kristie's a very nice girl, and sometimes the guys around here get to teasing her some."

"Right, don't tell anyone that I'm calling her. If it got around who I am, they'd really have something to tease her about."

"Sure thing, Mr. Taylor. I'll switch you over to her extension."

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Kristie was trying to get her prep done for that night's show but was finding it difficult to concentrate. She was still excited about the email exchange she had with Joel and was wondering whether he'd call today. Well, actually, she occasionally wondered whether he'd call at all. But then she would remind herself that he did specifically mention a date. Would he call right away today? Would he make her sit on pins and needles until Wednesday or Thursday?

Pins and needles. "Needles and Pins" by the Searchers, 1964. Yeah, that would be a good song for tonight's program. She liked it and had not played it for some time now.

Why was Joel monopolizing so much of her thoughts anyway? Well, the prospect of another first date always excited her--despite a long string of disappointments. But this excitement was different. A date with Joel was somehow

special. Joel was special. She felt all bubbly inside when she was with him. He seemed to understand her, they liked the same things, and she practically melted every time he looked at her with those gorgeous blue eyes.

But was there any future in it? Who could know? At least he wasn't already married. But one thing she did know: she liked him.

Yes, she liked him.

In the midst of this reverie, her phone rang, making her jump. She didn't get many calls. Was this Joel? Her heart started beating faster as she reached for the phone.

"Kristie Rydell."

"Hey, Kristie, it's Joel."

"Hi Joel. Say, that was quite an email you sent."

"Well, somehow after seeing you at the restaurant with Bob, I just thought maybe you could use some cheering up. Did I make you laugh?"

"Yeah, you made me laugh. But was that all you wanted to do? It sounded to me like you also wanted a date.

"I did...I mean I do."

"Did you remember the song? My answer was one line in the song."

"I remember the song--and that line. Really cute, Kristie. And that's why I'm calling. So you'd like to go out on a date with me?"

Her tone softened a little. "Yeah, Joel, I really would."

"Great! This Saturday?"

"This Saturday works for me. Of course, it's still early in the week. I'll probably have to turn down quite a few handsome guys from your Web site."

"I think they'll survive."

"So where are we going on our exciting date? What should I wear? You know I don't always show up properly attired."

"Exciting date?" He laughed. "Well, I hope so, but that remains to be seen. Remember, I admitted to being pretty dull."

"I'll take my chances. Now, where are we going?"

"Well, for starters, to a barbecue restaurant I know. It's just outside Chicago in Elmwood Park. If you haven't already been there, I think you'll love it. I do. It has a Sixties ambiance. Jukebox and all, filled with rock-n-roll from the Fifties and Sixties. So...dress for a casual Sixties date."

"You know I got in trouble before trying to dress 'casual.'"

"Yeah, I know. But you and I are in the same world, Kristie. We know what a casual date was like at a malt shop or a barbecue place."

Kristie was smiling. "We do, don't we! What time?" However, before Joel could answer, she continued, "Hey, how about this: 'Pick me up at eight and don't be late!'"

"Wrong decade for you. That was the Big Bopper in 1958. You don't play Fifties music."

"But I'm pretty familiar with it..."

"Anyway, I want to spend more time with you than that. I'll pick you up at six."

"Six it is...I can hardly wait," she added softly.

"Me too. See you then."

After they hung up, Kristie sat there for several minutes, her thoughts dancing about, just reveling in her coming date with Joel. Good grief, she thought, you'd think I was a teenager going on my first date. Well, maybe it's a good sign she could still feel the old excitement.

Then another thought stuck her. "You and I are in the same world," Joel had said. She really liked that thought.

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Kristie looked at the clock. It was almost six, and Joel would be arriving soon. Joel was not an unknown quantity, as first dates always are from a Web-based dating service. She knew Joel, and she liked him. In fact, he had a rather startling effect on her, and her excitement was growing by the minute.

"Dress for a casual Sixties date," he had said. Well, Kristie had plenty of pictures to go by and thought she had done a pretty good job. She was wearing a short, A-line skirt that stopped four or five inches above the knees. No hose of any kind. Definitely "casual." She had also chosen a baggy sweater that came down below her waist. It was adorned with rows of what to her looked like tomahawks and tepees. To complete the effect, she had on a pair of mid-calf, black-leather boots. Very Sixties. She had seen a Sixties picture of a girl dressed very much the same.

Wearing a miniskirt after her experiences with His Regalness was perhaps taking a big risk. But this was what girls wore in the Sixties, and she liked the way she looked in it. Besides, Joel was nothing like Reginald Van Velkenburg III. She could hardly wait to see how he was dressed.

He arrived at her apartment at precisely six o'clock. She felt her heart race as she reached for the door.

"Hi Joel. Come on it."

"Wow," he said, as his eyes scanned her entire figure with that keen male appraisal. "You look mighty cute--a real girl right out of the Sixties!"

Kristie felt her face flush, but his compliment greatly pleased her. It suddenly occurred to her that not once did His Regalness look at her like that.

"Why, thank you. You don't look too bad yourself," she added with a smile.

Joel was wearing tan slacks with a maroon turtleneck sweater and a casual-looking dark-brown sport coat that was hanging open.

"Well, now that we know we like how we look, what do say we get going before the place gets too crowded?"

"I'm ready, lets go."

Kristie had been wondering how Joel might act when they first left her apartment. Would he be ultra-formal like Reginald? Would he hold her hand? Her arm?

Well, as a matter of fact, he didn't touch her at all. Not bound by high-society formalities, a conservative guy from the Sixties probably wouldn't touch a girl during the first ten minutes of their first date. Kristie wasn't disappointed.

She also had wondered what kind of car he'd be driving. They had walked to the Vienna hot dog stand the day they had lunch together. When she saw his car, her eyes lit up in surprise. It was a completely restored 1964 Mustang: red, black vinyl top, white vinyl seats.

Joel opened the door for her, and when she got in, she couldn't help notice that the car had a stick shift.

"This car is really great," she said, after Joel got in and started it. The engine came to life with that characteristic American heavy-metal rumble. "What have you got in this?"

"Cleveland-351 with a four-barrel carburetor and duel exhaust. It's got a lot of pep."

"I can imagine. I've never been in a Sixties car before. This is really neat."

"Mustangs were mighty popular in the Sixties. Lee Iaccoca's brainchild. Remember the song?"

"'Mustang Sally,' the wicked Wilson Pickett, 1966."

"I usually stump people with that question, but I knew you'd get it."

As Joel pulled into traffic, Kristie reached out to the radio and flipped it on. "Let's just see what radio station this is tuned to." She listened for a few seconds. "My, my. That sounds like WKLS. And here I had you pegged as an NPR type."

"Now that's a good way to end a date real quick."

She reached over and touched his arm briefly. "Just kidding," she said reassuringly.

"You're going to love this place, Kristie," he said excitedly. "Definitely worth a trip out to the 'burbs. It's been around since 1956."

"I can't wait to see it--and taste the barbecue sandwiches."

Turning to face her, he added, "And hear it."

"What do you mean?"

"You just wait. It'll be a surprise."

"You already told me the Jukebox plays Fifties and Sixties rock-n-roll."

"You've still got a surprise coming."

"Hey, are there going to be car hops in short skirts and roller skates?"

He laughed. "No, but I wish there were!"

"Yeah, I'll bet you do!" Reginald Van Velkenburg III would certainly not have had any such wish. It crossed her mind, not for the first time this evening, how refreshing it was to be in the company of a genuine, red-blooded male. And one who enjoyed the same world that she did.

About twenty minutes later, they pulled into the parking lot of Johnny's Barbecue. Already it was three-quarters full. Joel got out and went around to open the car door for her, but he didn't help her out.

"Do you want me to test the wind up there by the entrance for you?" he asked in a playful tone.

She cocked her head and looked up at him. "No, Joel, that won't be necessary. This skirt is shorter but not nearly as flimsy as the other one. It's not going to blow anywhere."

After they entered, Kristie got two surprises simultaneously.

First, she heard "Light My Fire" by the Doors. But it wasn't coming from the central, mint-condition but old-fashioned Jukebox near the counter. It seemed to come from one end of the restaurant and wasn't as loud as she would have expected.

Second, she noticed the rustic but quite appealing decor. The interior had a dark-brown woody motif that created the ambiance of a Western lodge. The floor and

booths were wood, and the light fixtures overhead were in the hubs of wagon wheels.

Joel led the way to a booth in a less-crowded area of the restaurant. As Kristie sat down, she pointed to the glass-enclosed "box" on the wall. She'd noticed that every booth had one. "What are these things?"

"Ah, there you show your youthful age, Kristie. They're legitimate Sixties devices and therefore before your time--and mine too, actually. But I've talked with the owner about them and have also looked up some information on the Web. I'll tell you all about it when I get back. First, let me place our order at the counter. What would you like? They're most famous for their barbecue pork sandwich. It comes with coleslaw and French fries."

"That's what I'll have."

After he left, she looked around the restaurant and was struck by the range of ages represented. There were some young couples their age, but others were one and even two generations earlier. She wondered whether some of these older couples might have come here on dates when they were young. If so, they would likely appreciate how little the restaurant had changed over the decades. It would stir many romantic memories.

Another song started up, her all-time favorite from the Supremes, "Back in My Arms Again." Curiously the sound now seemed to come from a completely different location in the restaurant. Odd.

She looked more carefully at the "box" on the wall beside the booth. It had "pages" that could be turned just like a book. Each page consisted of rock-n-roll songs from the Fifties and Sixties. There must be well over a hundred of them. The central Jukebox probably held old 45s because the selections contained both a side A and B. At the bottom of the box were two rows of buttons, a line of letters and a line of numbers. Each song on the pages was identified by a letter and number. "Back in My Arms Again" was number B5. Obviously, this box was the means of selecting songs for the Jukebox to play.

Then she realized something else. Each of these boxes must have its own speakers. That was why different songs came from different parts of the restaurant.

How incredible! Right from your booth you could select your song, and it would play for you right there. She thought about that for a moment. The romantic implications were clear. A couple could flip through the pages and select their own special songs together, maybe even while holding hands. Then the music would play especially for them. She never knew there had been anything like this.

Two more songs played, again from entirely different locations, before Joel returned to the table with their food.

"The meat is hickory-smoked, but you put on your own sauce. Here, I brought you some." He laid two paper cups filled with sauce on the table in front of her.

She poured some sauce on the sandwich and tried it. "This tastes great!"

"Good, I'm glad you like it. The sauce is a little runny, but in my own humble opinion, the taste is quite unique and really excellent."

While they were eating, Kristie told Joel what she had concluded about the boxes on the wall.

"Right in every respect. This is a Seeburg system. Seeburg was actually the first company to introduce an all-45-rpm, vinyl-record jukebox in 1950 like the one used by the Fonz in 'Happy Days.' But then during the '60s they introduced this system, the Seeburg 3W1. These were called wall box remote selectors and were quite popular. The other major brand that provided individual booth selectors was Wurlitzer." He pointed to the selector. "There are two hundred selections to choose from. Now, see if you can guess what it would have cost back in the Sixties to play songs."

"No idea. Fifty cents a song?"

"Nope, back then it was ten cents for a single and a quarter for three selections. And guess what--the price is still the same here. The owner covers the cost by charging a little more for the sandwiches. These selectors and prices make this place very nostalgic for the generation that grew up in the Sixties and came here on dates."

Kristie told Joel about her theory of how romantic it was to have these selectors and speakers at the booths.

Putting his sandwich down, Joel sat back and looked at her. "You're right, of course. I knew you had a real sense of the romantic by the way you talk about these songs on your program."

They finished eating. The song just starting was coming from a booth quite close.

"Oh, this one's really good, the best of the doo wop era," Joel said as he became highly animated by the music. "Not in the decade of your show, but a real classic of rock-n-roll."

Kristie was also feeling the effect of the song. "No doubt about it. This is one of the most beautiful songs ever produced." They listened to the slow, doo wop introduction, and then the words began.

*In the still of the night
I held you,
Held you tight
'Cause I love,
Love you so.
...*

"Here comes my favorite part," Joel said.

*I remember
That night in May:*

*The stars were bright above.
I'll hope and I'll pray
To keep your precious love.
...*

*Well before the light,
Hold me again
With all of your might
In the still of the night,
In the still of the night.*

The song ended. For a moment, they sat quietly, still captivated by the mood the song had created, looking into each other's eyes.

"Joel, why is that verse your favorite part?"

His expression underwent a subtle change. "Well, I'm nostalgic about..." He paused. It looked to Kristie like he was having difficulty talking about whatever it was.

"A love in the past?" Kristie asked softly.

"Yeah, sometimes a few memories come back to me."

It was clear that he didn't really want to go into those memories. Probably painful. Fortunately, the next song they heard completely changed the mood. It was a bouncy, upbeat song about teenage romance, one of the most famous of all the songs by the Beatles, "I Want to Hold Your Hand."

"I've always liked this song," Joel said smiling and in a much brighter tone. "It's just so happy and speaks of the excitement of young love, sort of brings back the thrill of being a teenager again."

Kristie was already caught up in the music and remembered the magic that rock-n-roll can create in a young girl's heart. She moved her hand a little further out on the table.

"You know, Joel, there was another important line in 'Beachwood 4-5789.'"

He tried to come up with the line she was thinking about. "It's a little difficult to think of it while this song is playing."

"I'll give you a hint," she said softly. "If you'd like to say the title of this song to me, I can say the line I'm thinking about as my answer."

Joel smiled as he got it. "'I want to hold your hand,' Kristie."

"'You can hold my hand,'" she whispered.

While the Beatles were still inspiring that magic, Joel reached out slowly and took her hand in his. The magic in her heart spiked. His touch was warm as he gently moved his fingers over her skin. She shifted her hand to wrap her fingers around his.

For the first time in ages, Kristie experienced romantic emotions that she had so often dreamed about.

On an impulse and with bubbling excitement, she said, "Hey, let's pick out a song together. Something...well, something romantic, maybe capturing the moment."

"Okay, let's look." They continued holding hands as Joel flipped through the pages.

"Here's one," Kristie said, leaning forward in the booth to point one out. "I haven't heard this for a long time."

Joel looked at the title and gave her one of those devastating smiles. "All right, let's play that one."

She could tell by the expression on his face that he knew the words as well as she did. He dropped in a dime and pushed F9, selecting Rosie and the Originals with "Angel Baby."

The song began on their own personal speakers, a single guitar opening consisting of two sets of four notes, and then the haunting doo-wop-like melody started. Kristie was watching Joel's eyes as Rosie began to sing.

*It's just like heaven, bein' here with you.
You're like an angel, too good to be true.
But after all, I love you, I do,
Angel Baby, my Angel Baby.*

Joel looked at her with a quizzical expression on his face.

*When you are near me, my heart skips a beat.
I can hardly stand on my own two feet.
Because I love you, I love you, I do,
Angel Baby, my Angel Baby.*

To Kristie, the song created a very special aura. She pictured a past generation of kids falling in love while listening to this song when it was popular and doo wop was king. Walking in the moonlight, holding hands, then resting her head on his shoulders...

Joel kept watching her intently after the song ended. Finally, he spoke. "That sure is a special song..."

He released her hand and in a more matter-of-fact tone asked, "Say, would you classify that as doo wop?"

Slowly she came back down to earth and tried to gather her thoughts about his question. "Well, 1960 and '61 were sort of transition years. The Beach Boys and Jan and Dean were just starting up with a new sound. But still, even though it doesn't have the harmonized chanting in the background, the melody and style are definitely doo wop."

"Well, what do you say we go for a little drive. I'm thinking of another aspect of the Sixties I'd like to show you."

"Sure, I'd love to."

Once outside, Joel took her hand again, wrapping his around hers. But Kristie had always liked the other way. She worked her hand out and interlaced her fingers with his. He looked over at her and smiled. What a thrill it was just to hold hands, she thought, even on a casual date. Poor Reginald didn't know what he was missing.

As they pulled out of the parking lot, Joel said, "A lot of dating couples had one thing on their minds after leaving a hamburger joint or drive-in--finding a tail-light park. And there just happens to be one near here."

Kristie looked at him with an astonished smile on her face. "You want to park with me?"

"The thought crossed my mind."

She actually giggled. "Well, I have to admit this is a lot different from what those other guys wanted to do that I complained about in your office."

Joel's only response was to turn and grin.

After a few minutes, he pulled into a Forest Preserves park, Cook County's answer to the Chicago Park District. No one else was there, quite different from what it would have been like in the Sixties on a Saturday night.

Kristie looked at the gearshift that separated their bucket seats. "Hey, how did they used to do this in bucket seats?"

"You're showing your age again, Kristie. They got into the back seat."

"Oh, yeah? Well, how do you know so much about it? You don't look 60 years old to me."

"I've done a lot of reading on the Sixties, and whenever I meet someone from that generation, I pump him for information."

He pulled into the park, shut the engine off but left the tail lights on. They both got out and squeezed into the small back seat. Kristie was having considerable difficulty.

"Not so easy getting into these seats," she commented.

Joel laughed at her predicament. Her skirt had ridden up quite a bit, and he looked down at rather a generous length of exposed thighs. "Especially dressed the way you are."

Kristie followed his glance downward and grimaced. She began tugging and twisting her skirt but managed to say, "Yeah, well, this is nothing compared to the indignities I suffered on my dream date with His Regalness."

Finally prevailing after a valiant struggle, she sat back and relaxed. At least on this seat there was nothing between them. She turned slightly and watched him.

Joel put his arm around her. "Look, Kristie, I was just teasing you a little. I'm not going to try anything fresh. Maybe we can just sit here awhile like this."

She moved closer and nestled herself against him, feeling warm and protected, another romantic emotion she had often dreamed about.

"Did I complain?" She paused and then said more softly, "Remember the words from the song we played tonight? '*It's just like heaven, being here with you/When you are near me, my heart skips a beat.*'"

He didn't answer but turned her slightly, and they looked into each other's eyes. He gently put his hand to her face and then ran his fingers through her hair and behind her head. She closed her eyes and met his lips as he drew her to him and kissed her.

It was a soft, tender kiss. She thought of the song, "Lightning Striking," by her namesake and wondered what Joel was thinking. Whatever it was, he didn't say.

He brought his arm back from around her and slid down into the seat, taking her hand in both of his. They sat there in silence for several minutes letting "the stars put on a show for free" outside the window.

Quite abruptly, Joel sat up and said, "Say, why don't we go back into the city and buzz the Loop. I love the Chicago skyline at night."

Kristie sat up too and pulled her hand away. "Boy, some make-out session. One kiss. You might have done a lot of reading but you sure haven't done much experimenting."

They drove around for over an hour listening to WKLS, singing along with the songs, and having a lot of fun.

When Joel finally brought the car to a stop in the parking lot of Kristie's apartment, he hopped out quickly and came around to open the car door for her. It looked like he was in a singularly playful mood.

"Were all the guys this gallant during the Sixties?" she asked as she climbed out.

"No, not at all. I just do it so I can watch your legs as you get out."

She scowled at him. "How typical! And here I had built up such an illusion about you!" But inwardly, she knew she didn't mind at all.

While walking back to her apartment, he again took her hand. Kristie wondered what he would do. Would he want to come in? Should she ask him in? She

decided to wait and see what he did when they got to the door.

What he did was put his hands on her shoulders and turn her to face him. "I've had such a great time tonight--I can't remember when I've been this happy."

"Me too," she responded softly.

This was it! she thought, as her heart began to race. He's going to kiss me again...kiss me goodnight...a real tender kiss...

She moved toward him, and they embraced. While she was still pressed close to him waiting for him to kiss her, he began to move his hands down her back, to her waist, and then seductively around the curves of her hips.

Breathing more heavily, she looked up at him. "Are you trying to..." She took another breath and let it out with a soft sigh. "...trying to drive me crazy?"

Joel's response made it obvious that he was not at all in the throes of passion. His tone was calm and serene.

"No, I just wanted to feel your hips. I thought you looked a little hippy in that skirt. We should have played 'Hippy Hippy Shake' tonight."

Any passion she was feeling deflated like a punctured balloon. "Aargh! You are awful!" She pushed him away. "I am not hippy--I'm very petite! And furthermore..."

Joel was just standing there, grinning like the Cheshire cat.

"You were teasing me," she said, shaking her head in amazement. "You've got quite a sense of humor."

He reached out and touched her face. "And you're a lot of fun, Kristie. Goodnight." He reached out and ran his fingers through her hair but then turned and walked away.

Unlocking the door, she went into the apartment muttering, "Hippy Hippy Shake!" under her breath. But somehow she found herself carefully appraising her figure in the full-length mirror.

"Honestly!"

Abruptly turning away, she sat down on the sofa, her face slowly brightening as she thought back over the evening. Kristie couldn't remember the last time she had so much fun on a date. Then she thought of the Crystals and the song, "Then He Kissed Me." Hmmm...first date, and he kissed me. Will there be the next step in the song?

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