

# *Beach Party Days*

## **Beach Party Days: Credits**

This book has made use of lyrics from numerous songs from the fifties and later decades. The lyrics were used as background to support the story line and help the reader to get a feel for the music of the times and what young people were listening to on radios, in movies and on record players.

In the vast majority of situations the authors used only portions of the song lyrics to set the tone of events and underscore what was happening in the personal lives of the characters. In a few cases we included the entire lyrics of a song when that added meaning to the story line. In addition there are several passing references to a song title and artist for which none of the lyrics are included. The lyrics used were transcribed by the authors from several sources, including the authors' memory, records and CD's owned by the authors, and from free websites on the internet.

The authors wish to acknowledge and give due credit to the artists, songwriters, and publishers who own the rights to the songs for which we used a portion or all of the lyrics. These credits are found at the back of the book in the Reference Pages. While every effort was made to identify the sources of the song lyrics used, we respectfully invoke a disclaimer if we mistakenly overlooked/misidentified any songwriter or publisher/administrator who owns the rights to the song lyrics. In many cases the songwriters are no longer living, particularly for those songs from the fifties.

It is not this book's authors' intent to benefit financially from the use of these lyrics, but only to help the reader gain a fuller understanding of the event and times depicted.

## **Beach Party Days: Forward**

*The road is long  
With many a winding turn  
That leads us to who knows where  
Who knows when  
But I'm strong  
Strong enough to carry him  
He ain't heavy, he's my brother*

*So on we go  
His welfare is of my concern  
No burden is he to bear  
We'll get there  
For I know  
He would not encumber me  
He ain't heavy, he's my brother...*

*From the song by The Hollies – “He Ain’t Heavy, He’s My Brother”*

This is a story about friendship. Many books have been written about friendship between and among women. But this book is about friendship among four men, a unique friendship that endured the test of time and survived to overcome distances of time and place. This story is written from a decidedly male perspective and at times the text may seem coarse or crude. There are two primary objectives that the authors set out to achieve.

First and foremost we wanted to relate how four men, who by happenstance began a friendship as teenagers, and then because of life’s vagaries went in separate directions, but many years later renewed their friendship with the help of the Internet.

Second we wanted to call attention to the unique period in the history of America that these four men were a product of and greatly influenced by – the period known as the Fifties, specifically the period that bridged the late Fifties and the early Sixties. The Fifties have been characterized by a number of historical observers, and by many who came of age then, as the last period of innocence in America. This period was characterized by popular TV shows such as “I Love Lucy”, “Father Knows Best”, “Leave it to Beaver”, and “The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet”. The Fifties were not all motherhood and apple pie, however; the winds of change were beginning to stir in the latter part of the decade.

The Sixties after the JFK assassination on the other hand were tumultuous, ushered in the “Me” generation, and several “revolutions”, namely in the sphere of race, sex, and feminism. Some would include a new spirit of anti-government sentiment, a deep distrust that manifested itself in the anti-war protests, cynicism, theories of

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government conspiracy, social experimentation, the spread of drug usage, and self-centered behaviors. America was forever changed following the Sixties.

While parents of teenagers in the fifties may have thought that the Rock and Roll and the Rhythm and Blues music of that era was the “Devil’s music”, imagine the consternation of parents with teenagers in the late Sixties, with the drug scene, Haight-Ashbury, Woodstock, and the sexual revolution. With all of the dramatic changes radiating out over the ensuing decades from those tumultuous Sixties, what would those parents of fifties teens, if they were still alive, think of today’s environment and its influence on today’s teenagers?

The four friends in this story were not unaffected by those dramatic changes – perhaps no one of their generation was; and yet the grounding they had from the culture of the Fifties era enabled them to hold on to a sense of romanticism about those years, and to some degree a yearning for the simpler, more sheltered, vibrant and wholesome era that their memories evoke.

Underlying the culture of the Fifties was a reliance on Moral Absolutism, a belief that most behaviors were unambiguously either right or wrong, that absolute good and evil existed in the world, and that certain actions are good or evil, regardless of the context of the act. The decades from the Sixties and beyond led to a gradual erosion of standards based on Moral Absolutism. What ensued was the ascendancy of a culture based on Moral Relativism, the thinking that there are no absolute truths and that behaviors embody varying degrees of right and wrong – that is, all “shades of gray” exist and that there is no one “right” way of doing many things. This yielded catch phrases like, “Do your own thing”, “If it feels good, go for it”, “I’m entitled”, and to some of today’s absurd postures emanating from “political correctness”. Various forms of these opposing world views have been around for a long time, going certainly as far back as the philosophers in ancient Greece, and probably to early biblical times.

The four central characters in this book, and indeed all the persons depicted, may bear some relation to actual persons, but in fact each character is a composite of a number of people, who were either known to the authors or in some measure fictional persons.

Much the same can be said about the episodes and exploits in which the central characters get involved. That is, while some of the exploits may be based on actual happenings, they have been intentionally embellished to make them more interesting to readers of all ages. At least that is our hope. Many of the episodes in this story were universal to teenagers during those times. But we have purposely used fictitious names, so that anyone who might think they recognize any of the characters or their exploits will not feel embarrassed or think we have been disloyal.

The exception is the numerous factoids that appear throughout the book – these are actual historical events that occurred in America and around the globe. We have tried to be true to the actual dates and descriptions in order to provide a perspective around the characters, their attitudes and the social framework of the times – to give readers a feel

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for what it was like. Obviously there were many more such factual, historical events, but we had to limit our selection to those that we felt would best show the tenor of the times and those that would have an influence on future decades.

We hope you will enjoy this story. For those who experienced the Fifties we hope you will find an affinity with this story. For those who were born in later decades, we hope you will gain a perspective on the history of those times and an appreciation for the tenor of that era and how it molded the authors.

Sincerely,  
Earle Burnell, Rafe Cerny, James Heinrick, Bo Orechio

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 1

*September 22, 2000...*

James Heinrich had just read the email chain that he received. He typed out his reply and sent it out to his three old friends...

**Subject:** Re: Cottage Rental

**Date:** September 22, 2000

**From:** James.Heinrich@cableband.com

**To:** Rafe.Cerny@usa.com, Orecchio.Boaz@usa.com, Earle.Burnell@usa.com

Hi Guys,

I'm really looking forward to getting together with the three of you. It's been six months in the planning since we first started communicating via email and almost that long when we first started talking about trying to get together for a long weekend. I think Nags Head is the perfect place for it, after all some of our best times together were at the beach in Sea Bright after we graduated from QHS almost forty years ago. We were good buddies then and it will be great to have this mini-reunion to catch up after all these years.

*Your Pal,  
Hein*

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**From:** Orecchio.Boaz@usa.com

**Sent:** Friday, September 22, 2000 2:54 PM

**To:** Earle.Burnell@usa.com, Rafe.Cerny@usa.com, James.Heinrich@cableband.com

**Subject:** Re: Cottage Rental

Great News on the cottage! Burn, don't give us any crap about the rent we're going to share the cost. Only a month to go; I can hardly wait!

Bo

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**From:** Rafe.Cerny@usa.com

**Sent:** Friday, September 22, 2000 2:08 PM

**To:** Earle.Burnell@usa.com, Orecchio.Boaz@usa.com,  
James.Heinrich@cableband.com

**Subject:** Re: Cottage Rental

Burn,

We want to split the cost of the rent; let us know what our share is. I'm looking forward to your Gumbo!

Rafe

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**From:** Earle.Burnell@usa.com  
**Sent:** Friday, September 22, 2000 1:35 PM  
**To:** Rafe.Cerny@usa.com, Orecchio.Boaz@usa.com, James.Heinrich@cableband.com  
**Subject:** Re: Cottage Rental

Hi Y'all,

We got the cottage on Nags Head for the weekend of October 27-29. We got a very good break on the rent because Carlie's family has rented the same cottage the past 3 summers, so no need to sweat the rent. I'm going to treat y'all to my Louisiana Cajun Gumbo, so come with an appetite.

I'll send directions to Hein separately. Bo, Denise, and Rafe are stopping at our farmhouse and we'll caravan down to Nags Head. I'll bring a cooler full of beer and soda pop.

Burn

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*Morning, October 27, 2000...*

Earle "Burn" Burnell hadn't felt such cheerful expectation in a long time, perhaps not since he and his wife Carlie were about to close on their farmhouse. He was taking the afternoon off and getting ready to leave work at 11:30am. It was a good while ago, when he last saw at least two of the old gang. And it seemed like an eternity the last time all four of them were piling around. His friends mostly called him by his nickname, rather than his given name of Earle, and he liked it that way. Not that he disliked his given name. He had recently become involved in tracing his family tree and discovered that "Earle" means "nobleman". And "Burnell" means "strong as a bear". He especially liked that.

It was more the anticipation than anything else that had him feeling "up". Yeah, he had been in touch with Bo often over the years...usually one or the other would call on New Years Eve. And during the last 8 years, they had gotten together a couple of times, with Bo and Denise coming down from New Jersey, or Earle and Carlie driving from their farm in Virginia to Bo's condo in New Jersey.

But today was different! It was Friday, October 27, 2000 and Bo, Denise and Rafe were already on the road to the Burnells' house. He had seen Rafe but once since the early 1960's. Earle, Bo and Rafe had had a bit of a reunion with others from high school in 1992, when the Quaytown High School Boosters Club had organized a dinner dance to honor athletes from past winning teams. Earle and Carlie had traveled up to New Jersey and stayed with Bo and Denise. God, that was great to see all the football, baseball,

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basketball players, and cheerleaders from those high school days. “It was 1959, when we graduated from QHS”, he mused. “I know a lot of years have come and gone since then, but I’ll be damned, in some respects it really doesn’t seem that long ago. So many memories are as crystal clear as a mountain stream where you can literally pick out the rainbow trout”.

The last time he saw Rafe before that Booster Club affair was a long time ago...August 1961 to be exact. The memories began to float back into his mind. Shit! 1961 seemed like such a long time ago. Yet he could recall a lot of things as clearly as if they had happened only weeks ago.

The world was *such* a different place then. The Korean War had ended in July 1953 and America was at peace until the Vietnam fiasco in the mid-60s. In between those two wars, with energy never before experienced, American industry expanded to meet peacetime needs. Americans began buying goods not previously available, which created corporate expansion and jobs. Growth everywhere! The baby boom that was underway following WWII was overloading suburban school systems. The “white flight” to suburbia was taking its toll on the large cities. That August of 1961 Earle was headed back to Louisiana in his 1956 blue Ford Fairlane and he dropped Rafe off at Milton College in Ohio on his way. “Damn! I loved that 1956 Ford Fairlane Custom!” he exclaimed aloud to himself.

But what made this all the more special was that James was coming up from Charleston and the four of them, along with Denise and Carlie, were renting a cottage on the Outer Banks in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina for a long weekend. It promised to be a great reunion for the four of them; a time to renew their friendships and laugh about their escapades together. Earle wondered what James would look like. He had not seen Hein, which was what they called James, since 1961. “Holy crap!” he thought. “There it was again, almost 40 years had gone by, since they had all been together.”

Well, he had to shake a leg. Bo, Denise and Rafe would be arriving within the hour at the Burnell farm and they would then caravan to Nags Head. James was to meet them there at the cottage that Earle and Carlie had rented through a friend. Carlie loves the beach, but Earle being fair of skin burns too easily. Even so, every year they vacation in the summer at a cottage on Nags Head. It is kind of a tradition in Carlie’s family and something that she and their two kids are all happy to continue.

Earle left his company’s office; his long lanky legs, just slightly bowed, covering the ground to the parking lot quickly, with his long sinewy arms attached to broad shoulders propelling him forward. Earle opened the driver side door on the company pickup truck, stepped on the step rail and easily slid his still trim 6’ 3” frame into the cab. He was maybe about 20 pounds heavier than he was in high school and college, although at one point after his first marriage ended he had put on more weight and had a bit of a beer belly; but after marrying Carlie he got back to working out and lost that excess baggage.



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“Damn, I’m still in pretty good shape for my age!” he thought to himself. Looking in the rear view mirror, he said under his breath, “Your hair is a bit gray and sparse these days, though, ole boy. And thank God for contact lenses”. A smile broke out across his broad face with high well-pronounced cheek bones, nearly perfect nose, strong chin and forehead and his pale blue eyes lit up with the self examination. He picked up the billed Louisiana State College cap from the seat, put it on, started the truck and headed home. He popped in one of the two CDs of late 50’s Rock and Roll music that Rafe had recorded and sent about a month ago. His could sense his excitement rising, as he listened to the sounds of Jerry Lee Lewis, belting out “Breathless”...

*Well, come on Baby, now don't be shy,  
This love was meant for you and I.  
Wind, Rain, Sleet or Snow,  
I'm gonna be wherever you go.  
You leave me Breathless!*

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Boaz “Bo” Orechio woke early. He always did when he felt anxious or excited. He hit the head, took a leak, brushed his teeth, shaved and took a shower. The hot water cascaded down and temporarily at least eased his racing mind...but not for long. Did he pack everything? He mentally went over a list in his mind, trying to discover anything that he and Denise might have forgotten. “Camera? Got it! Underwear, socks, shirts, other clothes? Yeah, got them! Oh, damn! Almost forgot the beach chairs.” He hurriedly dressed to leave the bathroom, so that Denise could get in and get ready.

As he rushed out of the bathroom, Denise was there waiting to get in, and trying to stifle a big yawn, she said, “Relax, Bo! We still have an hour before Rafe gets here. You are going to have a heart attack if you don’t calm down.”

Bo responded, “I can’t help it. I’ve been looking forward to this weekend for almost six months”. Then, he added, “We’ve been planning this since the spring. In fact we first started talking about this over email almost a year ago. You know that I feel that those days in high school and the years right after are among my greatest memories.”

Denise then went into the bathroom to get ready. Like just about everyone, except his mom, Denise preferred the use of his nickname, “Boaz seems so...what was it? Oh, I guess it’s just that it’s such an old time, biblical name” she said to herself, as she finished brushing her teeth and prepared to take a shower. “Bo sure gets himself worked up,” she thought. “He’s normally a bit high strung, but I haven’t seen him so excited in a long time. Must be something about that Italian blood” she said, amused at the thought. She stepped into the shower and closed the glass door behind her 5’5” trim and still shapely body, with particularly attractive legs that ran from firm thighs down to calves and ankles that most women her age would die for. She put on a shower cap so as not to get her hair wet. It was cut just above the shoulder and she had tinted it last night to maintain the auburn color, which complemented her deep blue eyes. She kept it parted in the center

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and curled with a curling iron and it cascaded down to cover her petite ears. Her face was angular finishing down to a thin but firm jaw. She had a small, dainty nose. When Denise smiled, it was with pearly white teeth through well-formed lips that were neither too thin nor too full.

She was six years younger than Bo and like Bo had been twice previously married and divorced. “Third time around should be the best and final”, she mused. They had been lovers for a number of years before deciding to get engaged; but they had decided to hold off getting married.

Bo went downstairs to the kitchen to have a cup of coffee and once again mentally went over the list of things for the trip. But he couldn't help himself; memories seemed to wander in and out of his mind, making it more difficult than it should have been to concentrate on checking for anything that might have been overlooked.

He stepped into the powder room across from the kitchen and looked at himself in the mirror. “Damn! The years have taken a toll on you, my friend”, he said kindly to the face looking back at him in the mirror. “People that knew my dad say I look a lot like him now; looking at his photo on the stairwell wall, I can agree with that”. He had gained weight since those days forty years ago, mostly in the last 10 years. “What happened to that skinny, 145 pound kid with the dark black wavy hair?” He mused. “At least the eyeglasses are gone, thanks to lasik surgery. Must be the good living”, he smiled back at the mirror. “You've had some ups and downs over the years, but by and large it's been a good ride. It just doesn't quite measure up to those carefree days when the four of us had been the closest of friends. Well, soon Rafe will be here and we'll get on our way.” He took one last look at the well-tanned face in the mirror with the black eyes, bushy gray-black eyebrows, broad nose, gray goatee and buzz cut gray hair that was a concession to the partly bald noggin. “I still tell the women that they don't know what they're missing if they haven't had Italian”, he laughed to himself and went back to the kitchen and his coffee.

He had been communicating via email over the last six months or so with Earle, Rafe and James. Between the four of them they had patched together all sorts of shared experiences from their high school and post high school years. It seemed that each of them was able to recall a few things that the others had forgotten, but for the most part they all remembered the same things about schoolmates, teachers, places and events. They were teenagers on the cusp of attaining manhood and those common experiences melded them together in a friendship that men only rarely achieve. Bo supposed that it was similar in ways to the tight bonds that develop between guys that fight side by side in wars.

“I can still remember the 1958-1959 school year like it was yesterday... the Thanksgiving Day football game against Mason, our arch rivals, the Senior Class trip to Washington, winning the Seacoast Conference in baseball, graduation, the Senior Prom, and fun times together on our trips to Staten Island”, Bo recalled. “Then there were those couple years after QHS. Fun times at the beach during the summers, sharing our college

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experiences through long letters to one another, getting back together on holiday breaks from college, and then that one year when Burn, Rafe and I worked together at the Emerson plant in Woodbridge. Burn and I had left college after that first year. Burn came back to New Jersey from Louisiana, and Rafe took a year off from college in Ohio. We used to car pool together and at lunch time check out the babes that worked in the office at Emerson.”

One of the most welcome items over the past several months was a crossword puzzle that Rafe had designed, complete with a list of clues. Rafe had sent it to the three of them by email. Bo remembered sitting at his kitchen table trying to do the puzzle until it was well past his normal bedtime. It was a large puzzle with over a hundred entries across and over a hundred down. The clues required recalling people, places, and events that the four friends had shared throughout the six years of high school and beyond during which they had been close.

A number of the clues were for memories of their escapades that the four of them had been recalling to one another in emails during the past few months. Others required digging out the QHS Yearbook in order to find the answer. Some of the things in the puzzle were hilarious, like the clue about what had happened to one of them in the back seat of a car the night of the senior prom. Bo and his date were going at it hot and heavy. He had the top of her gown pulled downward, caressing her tits and she had his zipper open with her hand around his cock. The answer to the clue was “sperm”.

“I couldn’t help but laugh my ass off at some of the clues and answers”, he recalled. And he burst out laughing again at the thought.

Once again he remembered the beach chairs, and went out the sliding doors, walked beyond the terrace, to the storage shed in the back yard common area of the condo complex. He opened the shed and pulled out three beach chairs, then went back into the house to the kitchen. Picking up his coffee cup he checked the wall clock again, for what must have been the hundredth time. Still nearly twenty minutes before Rafe is due. He looked around the floor in the hallway between the kitchen and the living room at all the bags and boxes and whatnot that were assembled for the trip.

“Shit!” he said to himself. “I hope the van has room for all of this stuff. It will be impossible trying to decide what to leave behind if we can’t fit it all in. Well, screw it! Denise is right! I’ve got to calm down and stop worrying. Rafe said he rented a seven passenger van, so there should be plenty of room.”

Ten minutes later Denise came out of the bathroom and walked downstairs to the kitchen to get a cup of coffee. “She smells as fresh and sweet as only a woman can after a morning shower”, he thought to himself. Bo put his arms around her and gave her a hug. “You’re right, I need to calm down”, he said. “You are really good for me, you know that?” he asked rhetorically.

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“And don’t you forget it”, Denise said with a big smile, and she kissed him. Then she moved over to the counter and poured herself a cup of coffee.

Just then from the kitchen window they saw the headlights of a van as it drove into a parking spot outside the house. Rafe had arrived a few minutes early.

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Rafe Cerny’s alarm rang at 3:30am. Well actually it was 2:45am, since he always kept the time set 15 minutes fast. He had had trouble sleeping during the night. Even though he had wanted to get to bed early, it just didn’t happen. He had made a list and had packed and checked off everything that was on the list, but it just took more time than he had anticipated. Typical, he thought! Whenever he got excited, his planning skills seemed to vanish like a puff of smoke on a windy day.

He was tempted to hit the doze button and take advantage of the 15-minute time differential, but he feared he might sleep through the alarm the next interval. He had to be on the road by 4:30am to make it to Bo’s by 5:30am. “One thing I know about myself”, he thought, “is that I passionately hate being late for anything, especially when I committed to someone.”

So Rafe dragged his ass out of bed, feeling like he hadn’t slept a wink (and in truth, had nodded off intermittently for no more than a couple of hours). He looked over at the other side of the bed, where he still imagined Paula would be asleep. “No time to get into that”, he scolded himself. Paula had no interest in going on the reunion trip to Nags Head. She had gone up to Connecticut to help her sister deal with their mom’s situation. Their mom was getting very forgetful, signs of dementia her doctor said.

Rafe nearly staggered into the bathroom, yawning and attempting to shake the cobwebs from his head, while scratching himself though the bottom of his PJ’s. He turned on the tap, splashed cold water on his face, grabbed a face towel and dried himself. He looked in the vanity mirror and almost winced at the image staring back at him. He silently addressed the mirror, “Forty years ago you had a full head of dark brown hair with a big wave combed up in the front. And your face was angular with deep blue eyes and good complexion, except for the occasional zit. Not to mention the body that used to be 165 lbs of well-proportioned and well-conditioned muscle.” He hesitated, not particularly liking where the comparison was headed. “Now you’ve got thinning, salt and pepper hair. You’re at least 50 lbs over your ‘playing weight’ and those tight abs have given way to a bit of a beer gut with love handles, and the chiseled chin and muscular neck are now disguised by a bit of a double chin when you look down. And the old saying holds, ‘like father, like son’ you inherited dad’s baggy eyes and Slavic nose.” He shook his head and proceeded to rinse out with Listerine and brush his teeth with Sensodine toothpaste. Then he shaved and looked again in the mirror. “Ah, what the hell! There are a lot of guys in much worse shape than me. I should be thankful. At least I’m still 5’ 10” and haven’t reached the age where I’ll start to shrink”, he chuckled.

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He shed the PJs, took a quick hot shower, dried off and walked naked back into the bedroom. Before pulling on his under shorts, he critically eyed his physique in the mirror on the dresser. “Well, despite the recent lack of use, at least the dick hasn’t shrunk, either,” he said with a short laugh that was a subconscious attempt to not betray his true feelings about the lack of use.

After getting dressed, Rafe made himself a cup of tea and finished packing the few remaining items in the rental van. He had picked up a 7-passenger Dodge Grand Caravan last night after work and packed most of the things before going to bed. Rafe and Bo would share the driving and the cost. One of the last things he put into the rear of the van was a surprise for the guys that he was pretty sure they would get a kick out of.

He took a couple sips from the tea and jumped into the van, popped a CD into the CD player and drove out of the driveway. The music on the CD was a mix of old 1950’s and early 1960’s rock and roll. As the smooth Doo Wop sound of the Flamingos singing, “A Kiss From Your Lips”, wafted out of the speakers, Rafe sang along ...

*A kiss from your lips changed my whole life around.  
A kiss like yours, no words can be found.  
Gee! Gee! How blessed I am to have the kiss from your lips*

*A kiss from your lips, holds a story still untold  
A kiss from your lips, more precious oh than gold  
Gee gee how blest I am to have a kiss from your lips*

*I've loved for many years  
And kissed oh oh a thousand lips  
But nothing went right, until that night  
I slipped a kiss from your lips...*

He began to get a feeling of contentment, and his mind ranged back to those “golden” days, as he began to recall some of those old memories about the girls he had dated ...while he sang along...

Rafe was recalling that summer of 1961. “Every Saturday and Sunday, the four of us would be down on the beach in Sea Bright. Sure, there were others in the crowd, guys and gals, but mostly it was Bo, Burn, Hein and I. We had all become good pals during our high school years at QHS, class of ‘59. And once we reached 18 in our senior year, we would invariably head over to Staten Island where the drinking age was 18. And even though Burn was a year younger, he looked the oldest, had the deepest voice, the heaviest beard, and had no trouble buying beer or whiskey even in the local package stores around Quaytown where the drinking age was 21.”

“Hein was in the Marines by ‘61, but he would hitchhike up on weekends, because he had met Lorrie, who would later become his first wife. On Saturdays, after leaving the beach, we would go home to get something to eat, change clothes and a group

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of us guys and gals would rendezvous at a house party or at a beach party in the Highlands. Gosh, those were some great times. We had a hell of a lot of fun, yet it was all clean and rather innocent compared to what I see going on these days with high school and college age kids.”

Rafe had to change lanes to pass a few slower cars and SUVs. When he got back in the center lane on the interstate, his mind returned to his thoughts about his three pals. “We were really great pals back then, but our lives soon led us down different paths after about 1962 and over the years we seemed to have lost that sort of group kinship we enjoyed back then. Seems like such a shame...all those years gone by the boards now.”

“Maybe that’s why the four of us have gotten such a strong sense of friendships renewed these past six months, communicating via email, sharing our collective recollections of those ‘Glory Days’. Not the sad shit that Bruce Springsteen sings about – we really and truly had some great times together, and although we have all grown in many ways, we can look back on those memories with fond appreciation, and yet still take satisfaction in what we have become and the hope we have in the future. Because when I think about all the history our age group has witnessed, it just astounds me!”

Rafe had paid the toll a few miles back. He exited the highway and headed for Bo’s condo.

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James “Hein” Heinrich had just finished packing his car. It was a used compact Kia Sephia that he only recently bought. It had reasonably low mileage and was in good mechanical condition with nary a scratch or dent. The last thing he wanted to be sure to pack was a surf pole and his piss bottle. He needed the bottle on long trips, because of the medication he was taking. “Damn near bought the farm last year with that massive heart attack!” he thought.

At 6 foot and 170 pounds, James was the same height as he was when he was honorably discharged from the marines and not that much over the 160 lbs he was then. He still had an ovular face with blue-gray eyes, a sturdy Germanic nose, firm chin, and a good shock of hair, although it was getting more gray than brown, but was still combed the way he had let it grow after his four years in the marines.

He hadn’t been to Nags Head for a number of years, ever since he and the “Bitch” got divorced. As part of the settlement, the two cottages they owned in Nags Head were sold. “Boy, did she ever rake my ass over the coals”, he said to himself. “But to hell with that bit of past history. Today I’m off to meet up with the guys”.

James’s second wife Ellie could not make the trip, because she worked in retail and was unable to get the time off. So the plan was that he and Rafe would share the 3<sup>rd</sup> bedroom at the rental cottage, the one with twin beds. “I hope my snoring doesn’t keep Rafe awake all night”, he thought to himself. “Ellie says that sometimes it sounds like

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one of those jackhammers they use to break up a street. I'll just have to make sure that Rafe gets plenty to drink and passes out, so he won't hear a thing. Har! Har! Har!" He laughed aloud.

James thought back to when he last saw Rafe, Bo, and Burn. "Let's see," he mused, "it must have been around 1981, when I last saw Rafe. That was when he left Municipal Life, where we both worked. I still remember being his Best Man at his wedding to Paula...must have been around 1968. While I was married to Lorrie, we used to have Rafe and Paula down to our house in Homevale for parties with my Marine buddy, Stan DelaCrois and his wife, Jill. And Rafe and Paula would stay over when there was one of the QHS class reunions, every 5 years."

"But then in 1982, the 'Bitch' had the balls to demand a divorce, after I caught her in the sack with our neighbor. At first I was reasonably satisfied with the divorce settlement, even though it took nine months of haggling. It wasn't until later that she decided to really screw me on college expenses for the kids...cost me a bundle. Ah, well, that's out of my control now, but it still pisses me off, because Ellie and I are still forking out the 'extortion' payments".

"As for Bo, I think the last time I saw him was at one of the QHS reunions...must have been way back at the 5-year reunion in 1964. After that he seemed to disappear. At the later QHS reunions, many a classmate asked about him, but no one seemed to know where he was living, and none of the classmates that still lived in Quaytown ever seemed to have seen him around. Sure will be good to see him. Someone said that he got divorced from Joan. I still remember his wedding at St. Cecilia's; same church where Lorrie and I got married."

"Now when was the last time I saw Burn? It must have been a couple of years after high school, when I was in the Marines. Burn had come back to Quaytown and we all hung out at Sea Bright during the summer. I used to hitch hike home from D.C. on weekends to see Lorrie. We'd all go to the beach and roast our asses on blankets, until it was time to hit the bar at the Danish Hop. Great location! Just walk out of the back door after a few cold ones and you were only thirty yards from the beach; even better going in the opposite direction. Har! Har! Har!"

James tossed in the surf pole and his tackle box. He double-checked to be sure he had his piss bottle that was a necessity due to the medicine he had to take, then got in the car and headed off. He remembered that he had those "Oldies" CDs from Rafe in the glove compartment, so he reached over, pulled them out and put one of them in the CD player on the dash. "It was Nice of Rafe to make up these CDs", he thought. "And the letter that accompanied the CDs explained why each song was selected. Rafe had attached each of the tunes to memories of people, places or events that had meaning to one or more of us".

## **Beach Party Days: Chapter 1**

Like Earle, James' close friends called him by his nickname of "Hein", a contraction of his surname. James headed out of Charleston on his way to Nags Head, as the Moonglows song, "Sincerely" came through the speakers....

*Sincerely, oh you know how I love you.  
I'll do anything for you.  
Please say you'll be mine.  
Oh, Lord won't you tell me why,  
I love that girl so...*

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At 5:40 am with the van fully packed, Bo, Denise, and Rafe drove out of the parking lot at Bo's condo complex. Both Bo and Rafe felt a measure of relief, mixed with anticipation now that they were finally starting on their trip to the reunion weekend that had been in the talking and planning stages for six months. The first thing they did was to stop for breakfast bagels and coffee and tea, which they ate on the road.

Denise settled into the center seat on the driver side. She took out her sewing kit and pulled out an appliqué she was working on that would ultimately be framed and hang on the wall in the hallway of their house. She quickly became engrossed in the project. Next destination would be the Burnells' farm in Virginia. The only stops along the way would be for pee breaks and gas for the Van.

Within a half hour Rafe had the Dodge Van headed down the New Jersey Turnpike, when Bo said, "Let's put on some of those 'Oldies' that you recorded, Rafe."

"Pull one from the stack in the cubby hole down there", replied Rafe, as he pointed to the compartment under the dash, below the radio. "I brought additional ones that I recorded recently, and a new one that I just finished yesterday."

Bo rifled through the CDs, selected one, opened the jewel case, and pushed the CD into the CD player in the dash. As the CD began to run through one song after another, Bo started to sing along and then Rafe joined in.

Hearing this, Denise couldn't help but exclaim half-jokingly, "I think I'll have to pick up a pair of ear plugs at the next stop we make. Do you think we can stop near a drug store next time?" She had to speak up to be heard over the combination of the melodic harmony of a fifties vocal group and the off-pitch monotones emanating from the two fellows in the front seats.

Bo and Rafe laughed at Denise's jibe, but that only interrupted their singing briefly. "Son-of-a-bitch!" said Bo excitedly. "These songs bring back so many memories."



## **Beach Party Days: Chapter 1**

“Yeah, we really had some great times”, said Rafe. “I’ll never forget that baseball game in our senior year, when we won the Seacoast Conference down in Toms River. Boy, did I ever have butterflies in my stomach in the ninth inning. I was out in Centerfield and that last out was a real high fly to me. It seemed like the damn thing was a little pea that was way up there and was taking forever to come down. Man, when it finally came down and nestled in my glove, I breathed a huge sigh of relief.”

“I remember catching Lenny that game”, mused Bo. “Everything he threw at them moved just enough to mess up their timing. I’m glad that Coach Zino gave us the choice to either go for the Seacoast Conference or enter into the Greater Newark Tournament, and I’m glad we decided unanimously as a team to play for the conference championship”.

There were a few minutes of silence as Bo and Rafe listened to the music and reflected on the memories that kept playing out in their conscious minds like old movies. Then Bo said, “I remember those pep rallies on Friday nights before our home football games. We would drive around and pick up wood and cardboard boxes and just about anything that would burn. Then we would toss all that stuff on the bonfire pile. Ruffy would introduce all of us players and whip up the schoolmates with a rousing speech about how we were going to go out and win one for the school. What a good coach he was! Then the bonfire would be lit and we’d sing the old Quaytown fight songs.”

Then Rafe responded, “And let’s not forget what Hein reminded us in his email last month. How after they thought that everyone left the field, Gerry Flower and Robin Edmonds would drive his car around back and under the grandstands and have passionate sex. I guess they thought that everyone was gone. But several of the students and players usually hung around and couldn’t help but hear the springs in Gerry’s car going up and down.”

From the back seat of the van, Denise said, “I heard that!” At that Bo and Rafe laughed so hard that tears began to trickle down their cheeks and their stomachs hurt.

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*Afternoon, October 27, 2000...*

Earle arrived home to his farmhouse about Noon, and after ascending to the top of the hill at the end of the long near quarter mile driveway, he slid the pickup to a quick stop in front of the garage. As he jumped out and closed the driver side door to the cab, he looked back to see the trail of dust he had stirred up in his race up the driveway. Just then, Carlie came out of the front door with that look on her face. “Uh, Oh!” he thought, “You done got yourself into a bit of trouble, boy!”

At a statuesque 5’ 7” Carlie can be an imposing woman. She has thick brown hair cut just below the nape of the neck. She has a cherub like face that lights up when she

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 1

laughs, but can adopt a serious, almost stern, look when she chooses, perhaps useful for her job as a high school guidance counselor.

Carlie walked up to Earle, put her arms around him to give him a hug and a kiss. Then she stepped back, looked over her shoulder at the dust trail that was still slowly wafting away in the breeze. She looked back at Earle and said, “Lord, Burn, what in thearnation has gotten into you? Seems to me you are a little old to be getting so excited about this weekend that you have to tear up the driveway like a teenager.”

“Who you calling *old*, woman!” Earle affectionately scolded. He hooked his right arm around her trim waist, pulled her close, and gave her a long kiss. “You still turn me on, darlin’”, he whispered in her ear.

“Oh, go on with you”, Carlie laughed. “You better come inside and help me get our gear together for this trip”. So they walked toward the house, went up the steps and into the front hallway, where the things they would be taking for the weekend were neatly stacked. Earle picked up their suitcases and headed out to their Ford Taurus station wagon parked near the garage, along side the pickup truck. Carlie picked up two bags of household things and followed Earle out to the car. They continued making several trips until they had just about everything stashed in the wagon.

Just then they heard the sound of an automobile heading up their driveway. As they turned to look they could see a Dodge van approaching. “Here they are”, Earle called out. The van made its way to the top of the hill and the left dogleg into the parking area behind the station wagon. Bo was the first one out from the front passenger side, then Rafe, who was driving the last leg of the trip slid out of his seat. Rafe opened the sliding side door on the driver’s side, so that Denise could get out.

Bo and Burn threw a bear hug around one another, and swatted each other on the back. Denise and Carlie embraced momentarily but warmly and began talking as if they had just been together hours before. Rafe and Earle hugged, stepped back to eye one another, both smiled and practically in unison exclaimed, “Good to see you again!” Earle jibed Rafe, “Put on a few pounds around the middle, since I saw you in 1992 at the sports banquet!”

“Yeah, I know, but you don’t have to rub it in”, retorted Rafe; “But you look like you’re in great shape...you had a bit of a pot belly at that banquet, as I recall, but now you’re trimmed down. Makes you look even taller.” Both Rafe and Boaz at 5’ 10’’ looked up a bit to Earle at 6’ 3’’. “Burn, you didn’t seem this tall when we played opposite ends on offense during football season. Either you’re standing on higher ground than me, or I’ve shrunk”, continued Rafe. They both laughed.

“Y’all made good time”, Earle exclaimed. “It’s 12:30. What time did y’all leave this morning?”

Bo replied, “I guess it was about 5:40am or so.”

## **Beach Party Days: Chapter 1**

Denise chimed in with mock petulance, “Yes, he made me get up way before I could finish my beauty sleep.”

“Ah, but you still look like a beauty queen to me”, said Earle graciously.

Denise smiled a bit devilishly and said to Bo, “Do you see that, Bo? Burn is *such* a southern gentleman. He holds the door open for women, and is always complimentary. How come you aren’t more like him, Bo?” she teased. “Carlie, you are so fortunate”, Denise continued.

“Don’t be fooled by the manners”, responded Carlie with a twinkle in her eye.

Bo pointed his finger at Earle and said, “Damn it Burn! See what trouble you’re causing me with that false southern bullshit? I ought to kick your ass!” And at that they all laughed.

Denise then said knowingly to Rafe, “You’ve got to get the tour of their farmhouse! Its a hundred years old and they have fixed it up beautifully.”

Carlie responded, “Yes, Rafe, and everyone, let’s go inside and see what Burn has done with the basement. We still have a few minutes before we have to leave, don’t we?”

Earle replied, “In our emails with Hein we planned on meeting at the beach cottage around 3:00pm. It’s only about 2 hours from here, so as long as we leave within about 20 minutes, we should be okay.”

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 2

*Afternoon, October 27, 2000...*

At 3:10 in the afternoon Bo pulled the Dodge van behind the Taurus into one of two short, but wide driveways for the cottage. Denise had paired up with Carlie in the Taurus, while Bo, Earle and Rafe had traveled in the van. James had not yet arrived, as they all piled out and surveyed the cottage. It was located in a great spot...only one other house between it and the beach road. The entrance to the beach was only about 150 feet away. You just couldn't go wrong with such a great location.

Just as they started to unpack the car and the van, James drove into the adjacent parking area in his Kia. The group of 5 went immediately to greet James. Introductions were made, hugs exchanged, and the autos quickly unpacked. Then to celebrate the moment, four beers magically appeared and several toasts were given. They assembled in the great room of the cottage, laughing and excitedly talking about how wonderful it was to see what they had been planning for 6 months finally come to fruition.

Rafe was really excited, so much so, that he had nearly forgotten his surprise. But something one of the guys said (probably James, who's wit they all knew well) about how surprisingly little they had changed in facial appearance, but as for the rest of their bodies...no comment, triggered him to remember. So, he quickly went to the bedroom he and James were sharing and came back with a large, black poster board. It was one of those that folded out into three panels; the kind used for presentations and displaying items at convention marketing shows.

Bo immediately got everyone's attention, when he said, "You've got to see what Rafe has put together as a surprise. It's great!" Rafe then opened up the two folds on the board to reveal blowups of the yearbook photos of the four of them. Under each photo he had written their first names in large block letters.

"How the hell did you do that!" exclaimed Earle.

Rafe replied, "I had a friend from church scan them from our senior yearbook into his computer, zoom up the digitized images and print them on an expensive printer".

James just shook his head and said with a devilish smirk, "What some guys won't do to look younger". At that everyone burst out laughing.

Bo looked at James and laughingly exclaimed, "Hein, you still have that great sense of humor!"

Then Rafe began to position the four of them holding the board in front. Denise and Carlie worked the several cameras and took photos of the four buddies standing behind their respective yearbook photos on the poster board. The photo board was then put aside and some good natured kidding ensued about who had put on the most weight and who still had the most hair and whose looks had changed the least. There was no contest on the hair situation...James

## **Beach Party Days: Chapter 2**

was the outright winner in that department, despite the gray weaved throughout his still course and full dark brown hair. Both he and Earle had crew cuts in high school, but Earle now had a sparse top that was cut quite short. Bo and Rafe on the other hand used to have full heads of wavy hair. But now Bo had a buzz cut of mostly gray hair and Rafe was sporting a thin mop of brown hair with a fair amount of gray strands.

Once everyone settled in, luggage stowed in the three bedrooms, and kitchen and bathroom essentials in place, the six got down to planning where to go for dinner. The planning did not take long and they quickly agreed to a nearby seafood restaurant. With a couple of hours remaining before they had to leave for the restaurant, five of the six were comfortably sitting on the couches and chairs, while Bo stretched out on the carpeted floor. The four old pals began to catch up with each other's lives.

"James, you look a bit tired from the long drive today", observed Carlie. "Would you like to take a short nap before dinner?"

"No, I'm okay. Just need to relax a bit", replied James. He continued, "I didn't want to make a big deal of it, but about a 15 months ago, I had heart surgery, and have a pacemaker implant".

Bo abruptly sat up, leaned against the coffee table, and said, "Oh, no, I'm sorry to hear that! We didn't know. How bad was it?" A few of the others reacted in a similar fashion, while the rest sat initially stunned.

Everyone's attention was now sharply focused, as James began to explain that he'd had a triple bypass and a valve replaced and that he had come very close to dying. He told them about how the emergency squad fortunately arrived quickly. They had to put the paddles on him as they rushed him to the hospital and it was their quick attention that saved his life. He remained in serious danger until about a day after the surgery.

Then, typical of James, to lighten the moment for the others, he finished off his discourse with a humorous anecdote. He recalled how when the surgeon came to see him a couple days after the operation, and the surgeon had remarked how lucky James had been, James asked him how long before he might be able to return to work. The doctor had told him it could take three to six months, and that he would have to take it extremely easy during that time. At this point, James hesitated slightly to set the hook, looked around the cottage living room at the other five, rubbed his hands together and with a wolfish grin gave the punch line. "I said to the doctor, 'Hmm. Let's see. That's anywhere from 90 to 180 days where I can sit on my ass, turn on the TV to whichever racetrack is being telecast, and play the ponies. Either I'll hit a lucky streak and be able to pay your bill, or you'll have to make it up on some other patient, because I'll be bankrupt".

The other five broke up with laughter. Rafe clapped his hands. Earle slapped his knee. Bo went to stand up, but slipped back down and lay on his back chuckling. Carlie, who had been rocking in the rocking chair, abruptly stopped rocking as she laughed. Denise was shaking her head and smiling in appreciation. James had turned the tenseness of the moment into one of

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 2

lightness with his humor. “Well, I see now what Bo meant about your sense of humor”, Denise declared.

With that Rafe got up and said, “That deserves another round. Who wants a beer?”

“Me”, replied Bo.

“Me, too”, responded Earle.

“I’m still good”, chipped in James. “You all remember how I was always the slow drinker when we used to go to Staten Island. Hell, the majority of the time I was the designated driver”.

“Yeah, and we did that long before the term and the idea of ‘designated driver’ came into fashion”, Rafe called out as he headed for the cooler out on the porch. He returned with three beers, and asked Denise and Carlie if they wanted a soda or anything to drink...both declined, answering “No thanks”.

As he handed a can of beer to Bo and Earle, Rafe added, “Hein, do you remember the time when you were driving your brother’s car and we ran out of a bar in Staten Island without paying the bill? Bo, you were there, too.” Rafe continued to relay the story to all.

“It was Fred Ballantine’s idea. He told Hein to go get the car, park up the street and keep it running with the lights off. I still remember that place. It had a bar along the rear wall with a kitchen behind that. On either side of the front door were a handful of square wooden tables and those wooden chairs with the curved backs. On each table was a red and white checked tablecloth. I remember being three sheets to the wind, leaning with my back against the bar and propping myself up on the bar with my elbows, giggling at Fred’s plan. Jack Pauley was with us and he was the most wasted of us all. Joey Silvo was there, too. Joey and I had to practically carry Jack out of the place, as Fred pretended like he was going to pay the bill. Next thing I remembered was running up the street, laughing, and jumping into the rear seat of the car next to Bo. Fred was the last one to come running like hell and jump in the back seat and he yelled to you ‘Go! Go!’ Then, well before we got to the Outer Bridge, Jack rolled down the window, took a gulp of air, pointed up at the sky and drunkenly said, ‘I have reached my star’. Then he threw up all over Joey Silvo who was in the center between Hein and Jack.

“The next day, still hung over, Bo and I went to Hein’s house to help clean the car, but he was just about finished when I got there.”

James laughed and added, “My brother was really pissed off and made me get up early to clean the barf up and fumigate the car. Cleaning the outside down the passenger side door and the rocker panel was the easy part. Cleaning the inside was nasty. I had to keep getting out, moving away and taking deep breaths to keep from up chucking.”

## **Beach Party Days: Chapter 2**

Carlie got up from the rocking chair and said with a hint of sarcasm, “Oh, nice story! Denise, how about we go to the store and get a few things we’ll need for the next couple of days?”

Denise jumped up and replied, “Sure, we have time before we go out to dinner tonight. Besides, I think the stories are going to get more outlandish as the afternoon wears on.” Denise looked at Bo and asked, “Is there anything you want from the store, honey?”

“No, I’m okay”, said Bo, as he got up. He gave her a hug. Then they were out the door and down the steps to the driveway and the Burnells’ car.

After a few minutes Bo said, “Hein, I know from our emails and from what Rafe told me, that you had a nasty divorce, but now you are remarried. Did your first wife, Lorrie wasn’t it, really have a warrant out for your arrest?”

“Yeah, after about nine month of negotiations, we reached a settlement agreement in 1982, which at the time I thought worked out pretty well. She got the house in Holmvale with a reasonably small monthly mortgage payment and child support. We agreed that when the kids were ready for college I would pay two-thirds of the education expenses. I got the two cottages in Nags Head, which when sold and the mortgages paid off, gave me enough for a down payment on a condo and enough, I thought, to invest for those college expenses.

“It was about 8 years later that she went back to court and got a decree for a rather sizeable increase in the support for college expenses for our youngest. This was after I had met Ellie and we had married and moved to Florida. I just didn’t have that kind of money, because the insurance business just wasn’t paying that well. She had the court issue a warrant to arrest me if I returned to Jersey. So, eventually, we had to reach a settlement, since Ellie still has family there. We’re still paying.”

Rafe shook his head and remarked, “I remember Hein telling me about the arrest warrant. I can’t remember whether I called you in Florida or you called me, James. But it was just around the time of the 1994 QHS reunion...must have been before, because I had asked whether or not you could make it up to Jersey to attend the reunion. Now that I think about it I got your phone number from a guy that graduated from QHS before us; he was a private detective. I can’t remember his name off the top of my head, but I probably have it written down somewhere.”

“So how did you and Ellie hook up?” asked Rafe, after a brief pause in the conversation. “She’s originally from Middlebury, right?”

“That’s right,” replied James. “We met through a dating service that specialized in helping divorced people get together. She went through a tough divorce, too. Her first husband was abusive and chased skirts all during the time they were married.

“What about the rest of you guys?” James asked. “I know Bo was first married to Joan from Ulster Beach, same town that Lorrie was from. Now Bo’s happily engaged to Denise. And, having now met Carlie, I can vouch for Burn’s good fortune in being married to her.”

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 2

Bo went on to describe how his first marriage ended when he discovered that Joan had become an alcoholic and wiped out all their savings on her habit. Then while she was in AA, she took up with one of the men she met there. Bo had hired a detective to track her and once he had enough evidence, he filed for a divorce and for custody of their son and daughter. Joan had no interest anymore in the kids and so Bo got custody and raised them. Sometime after that he had dated and married another woman, but soon they both realized that it was a mistake, and so they divorced. Then he met Denise about 10 years ago and when she got divorced from her second husband, they got together and have been very happy together, getting engaged last year.

“How about you, Burn?” James asked.

Burn had put his size fourteen feet up on the coffee table, and had just taken a swig of beer. He began, “I was married before to a girl I met after I graduated from LSC. It lasted only about nine years. No kids with her, but she had two from a prior marriage. It was not one of my best decisions. I had a lot of wild oats to sow back then, but looking back I think I was really naive when it came to women. Anyway I was drinking a lot and staying out late and had some scary close calls with the grim reaper. Damn near killed myself in a car accident once. After I moved to South Carolina to take a job, I met Carlie, who had just graduated from USC in Columbia. We hit it off pretty well right from the beginning. But, I’m not ashamed to tell you that she straightened this Rebel’s ass out right quick. I cut out the heavy drinking and with her help I guess you could say I grew up and became a man.”

“You grew up all right! Look at the size of those big feet! They are bigger than when we were in high school!” Bo teased.

“I’ll stick one of these size fourteen’s up where the sun don’t shine, boy, and kick your Yankee butt back to Jersey”, Earle jokingly responded.

“I can kick your ass anytime, you big overgrown Redneck”, Bo laughingly retorted.

“Is that the best you can come back with?” said Earle. “And what’s this fetish you have with my ass? That’s the second time today you talked about it.”

They all enjoyed the repartee. Then Earle said, “Well, I guess that leaves Rafe as the only one of us four who is still married to his first wife. Good for you, Rafe.”

“I was your best man”, James chipped in. “How many years is it now, Rafe. It was late 60’s, I believe, when you and Paula tied the knot.”

“December 21, 1968; it will be 32 years” Rafe answered.

“That’s great, Rafe,” said Bo. “There is definitely too much divorce these days”.

Rafe was feeling a bit uncomfortable. He quickly changed the subject. “I brought my Junior and Senior yearbooks and some notes I jotted down about things I remember from our



## Beach Party Days: Chapter 2

high school years and later. It helped to have our collective memories that we've shared through emails."

"I brought my senior yearbook and my scrapbook", Bo offered.

"And I brought some memorabilia from my stint in the Marine Honor Guard", said James.

"Shit! I couldn't find my yearbook", Earle said somewhat disappointedly. "And I forgot to pack the notes you emailed to us, Rafe".

"Not to worry", Rafe said to Earle. "I brought copies with me. Tonight when we get back from dinner, we can spend some time going through this stuff and talk some more about writing that book we all thought would be a good idea. Wasn't it your idea originally, Bo, that we ought to write a book about all the history we've lived through and how we renewed our friendships after all these years?"

"Yeah, but I think we all thought it was a good idea", Bo responded.

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*Evening, October 27, 2000...*

The group had returned from dinner and the guys had settled around the coffee table going through the yearbooks and the other memorabilia. During this process the stories of those past events just seemed to flow from each of the men. Early on, Bo got up from where he had been sitting and announced, "Time to open the scotch. Who wants a hit? I brought along some single malt that I've been saving just for this weekend" Four glasses were poured and the four friends resumed their rehashing of those stories from nearly 40 years ago.

Neither Denise nor Carlie felt strange watching all this, nor did they feel the least bit jealous at their husbands' attention to what to the women was this somewhat mysterious male bonding taking place. Both joined in the conversations and smilingly shook their heads in wonder whenever the four men laughed uproariously at some distant memory recalled. Of course as the stories began to be regaled by one or the other of the men, it occurred to them that some of these episodes were being somewhat embellished after 40 years. From both Carlie's and Denise's perspective some of the antics being recalled and the men's reactions could be interpreted that these four supposedly mature men were rapidly descending into their second childhood.

Bo was thumbing through senior class pictures in the QHS 1959 yearbook. He stopped at a page and said with a chuckle, "Jack Wing! Remember that '57 Chevy he had? He used to turn into a street, double clutch that sucker, throw it in reverse and back up in reverse around the corner to where he originally started to make the turn. I never saw anyone ever do that but him"

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Rafe jumped in with his own memory of Jack Wing. “Oh, I’ll never forget this one night a couple of us were out riding around with Jack in that Chevy. He knew where the Homevale police were hiding, waiting to catch someone speeding on Homevale Road. I think they only had two or three patrol cars in the whole town then. Anyway, he drives by them real slow, and then suddenly floors it, laying rubber for about 30 feet.

“By the time they get their headlights on and siren going and start to give chase, we have nearly a quarter mile lead, because Jack had the pedal down to floorboard. Jack knew those backcountry farm roads like the back of his hand, probably better than the police, and nobody, but nobody could take those turns, downshifting and up shifting like Jack. It didn’t take him long to lose them. At least we thought we had. We were all laughing and congratulating Jack, when he turns off into another road, and all of a sudden there are the cops, coming hell bent for election, with their sirens screaming and lights flashing, and here we go again.

“Jack just calmly said, ‘Watch this!’ After about three or four lefts and rights, we could still see the cop car on the other side of a cornfield. Suddenly we come around this bend doing about 50mph and Jack does a 90 degree turn, tires squealing, the car sliding; I don’t know how he did it without rolling that sucker over! But it was like you see those stunt drivers do it in the movies. Next thing I know we are accelerating through this narrow opening on the right side of the road, with trees and bushes on both sides. No way could the cops see this last maneuver. And low and behold we come out of this narrow path and are on the Garden State Parkway heading north. The trees are so thick between the Parkway and road we left before going through that narrow path that the cops couldn’t see us. They must have been scratching their heads the rest of the night.”

All were amused by the story. Bo said, “I was one of the passengers that night, along with Rafe and I think Fred Ballantine. Rafe isn’t embellishing what happened, not one bit!”

After a minute or so of quiet reflection, as they sipped their scotches, James jumped in and began to recall stories about some of the teachers they all had at QHS. “Remember when we were sophomores and Gerry Rome was a senior and got into fisticuffs with the shop teacher, Mr. Willey? Bam! Bam! Gerry landed two quick punches, then a group of other teachers grabbed and held both of them and the fight was over. You just know that Willey didn’t stand a chance. Rome would have done some real damage if they hadn’t stopped the fight.”

“Gerry had the fastest hands I ever saw”, said Earle. “He could clock you three quick shots before you could get your fists up to defend yourself. He was a tough cookie on the football field and off. I for one wouldn’t have wanted to tangle with him, even though he was only about 5’ 9”’. Lightning! Pure lightning!”

“That’s saying a lot, Burn”, Rafe responded. “I still remember that time at the basketball game down at Bayshore Highlands School.” Rafe looked around at the others as he continued, “This was in or junior year and Burn and I were up in the bleachers watching the QHS varsity against Bayshore, when a fight broke out on the floor. Before I could take a step, Burn shoves his jacket and glasses at me and says, ‘Hold this for me!’ I had to reach for his glasses to keep them from falling down through the opening in the bleacher seats.

## **Beach Party Days: Chapter 2**

“When I looked up, Burn was already out on the floor rushing at a guy from the other school. Burn threw a haymaker at this guy that I swear, if it had ever landed, that guy would have been pushing up daisies. Well, the guy moved slightly and the punch went whistling to the side of his head, maybe grazed his ear. Burn is off balance with his feet kind of sliding on the court, and the guy grabs on to Burn’s shirt and pulls it over his head. Burn is flailing away with both hands now, not seeing a thing, but steadily moving forward. The guy is backing up and ducking left and right with a look of absolute terror on his face, knowing that if one of those roundhouse punches finds their mark, he’s in big trouble. So he held on to the shirt for dear life, until he got backed into the wall, then he let go and ran like hell out of the gym. It took Burn a second or so to realize the guy was gone and stop swinging and pull his shirt back down.”

“I remember that like it was yesterday!” laughed Earle. “That was the most frustrating fight I think I ever had”.

It was now 11:00pm. Denise yawned, stood up, stretched and announced, “Well, I’m tired. I think I’ll turn in. Don’t stay up too late you guys. There are things to do tomorrow, places to go, and things to see.”

“I’m going to bed, too!” yawned Carlie. “These old war stories have tired me out. Good night y’all”.

“Good night, Hon,” Bo said to Denise and gave her a big hug and short kiss.

“Good night, Sugar,” Earle said to Carlie, as he squeezed her in a bear hug and kissed her on the lips. “We won’t be up much longer”.

“Good night!” James and Rafe called to Denise and Carlie.

After the women left the room, Bo said, “Okay, now we can get down to some serious remembrances.” By that he meant recalling the stories that the guys couldn’t or wouldn’t want to have the women hear.

Earle went into the kitchen and brought out the bottle of scotch. “This is pretty good, Bo; not too peaty, and not too light or dark. Anyone want a refill, help yourself.” Both Bo and Earle had become connoisseurs of single malt scotch.

The stories continued until some time after 2am. By this time the four old buddies had hit the wall, having all gotten up very early that day. They put the glasses and snack bowls in the dishwasher, then took turns in the bathroom before turning in.

“Good night”, Rafe said quietly. “I can’t remember when I last enjoyed such friendship; probably about 40 years ago, huh”.

“Right on old pal”, said Bo, stifling a yawn.

## **Beach Party Days: Chapter 2**

They all said their good nights and went to bed, a bit tipsy now, not so much drunk, as tired and feeling a peaceful glow. They were looking forward to the rest of the weekend to renew the kind of friendships that few men ever experience and that they had sorely missed for so many years. They all realized that they could never go back in time and pick up where they had left off, but they felt certain that they could build a renewed, more durable and deeper friendship from this time and place.

## **Beach Party Days: Chapter 3**

*Forty-five years earlier...*

It was 1955, halfway through the decade that arguably was the last “age of innocence” in the two hundred plus years of United States history. One needs only to have lived through it and compare it to the last four decades of the twentieth century and the initial years of the twenty first century to understand the special comfort that those years hold for the leading edge of the Baby Boomer generation that came of age in the fifties.

Most every generation looks back on its time of youth and vitality with a measure of nostalgia – a sense that those were the “good old days”, focusing through rose colored lenses on the good times, often forgetting or overlooking the not-so-good times. This is perhaps truer for those who came of age in the so-called “silent generation” of the fifties than for any decade since. It is a nostalgia that is inexorably hinged to selective memories somewhat clouded by the passage of time. These memories are stored in the synapses of the human brain; to be recalled in some mysterious way, whenever we are presented with a particular, all-too familiar visual image, sound, taste or smell.

After all, life can be hard. The vast majority of us feel fortunate to wake up yet another day to face yet another string of unpredictable events over which we often have little if any control. Thus, those stored memories (at least the pleasurable ones) give us an anchor to the past that helps us draw comparisons with the present, and perhaps with God’s grace, maintain some degree of hope for the future.

The fifties ushered in a period of dramatic growth and expansion that set America on a course of increasingly rapid change that was unparalleled in our short history. These changes ultimately have had even more of an impact on American culture than the Industrial Revolution. The engine of these changes was the Baby Boom that began in 1946 following the end of WWII.

The lubrication for this engine was the post war economy, which provided the wherewithal for the returning war veterans to demand and consume the goods and services developed by the captains of industry, who recognized and responded to those demands. During the war against Germany, Japan and Italy, Americans lived a life of sacrifice and denial, adapting to rationing and doing without. But once the war ended that pent up demand burst forth like the first flowers in spring.

The fuel that kept the engine humming was a renewed restlessness of the American spirit that took hold of Americans – restlessness not unlike that of the first pioneers who opened up the western frontier. It temporarily took a hiatus with the disillusionment of the mid-sixties, but is still there today in the American psyche. One result of this restlessness was the formation of large suburban areas surrounding the major cities, as people migrated out of the confining spaces of the cities in search of a more open and airy lifestyle. Some would even say a safer, quieter lifestyle. This mass migration set in motion events that forever changed the landscape of American culture. A complex mix of major and minor ingredients formulated this fuel – some

### **Beach Party Days: Chapter 3**

seemingly positive and some seemingly negative. The most significant of the major ingredients are the following.

First and foremost was a fervent hope for the future founded on belief in the “American Way” that was built on a rock-like foundation – the confidence that God was on our side and that therefore we were on the side of “Good”. America was a blessed land; “The land of the free and the home of the brave” was the catch phrase.

Secondly was a desire of parents, who had lived through the Second World War, to provide a better life for their children and grandchildren – a better life with respect to material welfare, yes, but also with regard to personal health, education and happiness.

Thirdly a weariness of war and its inevitable destruction – man’s inhumanity to man evidenced by the holocaust and the treatment of Allied POW’s at the hands of the Japanese. Then there was the necessity for dropping the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in order to end that “war to end all wars”. Yet despite this, or perhaps because of it, America was in the process of helping Germany and Japan rebuild. American financial and people resources came to their aid, something that in all probability no other country would do for its defeated enemies.

Fourthly an underlying, semi-conscious apprehension – an uneasiness fomented by the rise of Communism and the Cold War, the harnessing of nuclear energy with its awesome capability for potentially eradicating the human race, and a healthy distrust of unmitigated political power vested in a select few.

Lastly there was the indomitable American “can do” attitude – that optimism that led to numerous inventions and technological advances in the fifties and on into the following decades. In 1950, for example, electricity began to be generated by the first nuclear reactor, ushering in the peacetime use of nuclear energy. Early in the decade the first direct dial coast to coast telephone call was made. The jukebox was invented and mass-produced, expanding the availability of music to public places frequented by teenagers and helping to ignite the Rock and Roll phenomenon. As the decade advanced, American ingenuity produced the color TV and intercontinental broadcasting, TV dinners, the hula-hoop, Barbie dolls, the microchip, the shopping mall, the H-Bomb, the interstate highway system, and too many others to be listed.

The explosion in the availability of consumer goods and services led to an unprecedented level of affluence and disposable income for a large percentage of American teens. In an era that idealized American family life, through TV shows like “Father Knows Best”, “The Ozzie & Harriet Show”, “I Love Lucy”, and “Lassie”, the newfound affluence amidst the expansion and growth was sowing seeds of drastic, impending change. These were seeds that spawned the Civil Rights Movement, the Sexual Revolution, The Peace Movement and later the Women’s Movement. The forces of change that emerged would turn American culture upside down and inside out in a kind of gut-wrenching metamorphosis. That combined with the accelerated speed of change would leave Americans gasping for air and grasping or searching for answers that no longer seemed answerable by the traditional values of the fifties and earlier decades.

### Beach Party Days: Chapter 3

The boys and girls who made up the QHS class of 1959, along with their peers in high schools throughout the land, were born in 1941-1942 and were on the front cusp of the Baby Boom generation, known as the Pre-Boomers. This was the group to which Bo, Earle, James, and Rafe belonged and the fifties for them and many of their peers were “the good old days”.

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*Monday Afternoon, August 15, 1955...*

Rafe thought he was having a vision. She was just about the loveliest thing he had ever laid eyes on. Her medium length blonde hair, lightened from the summer sun, was gently curled and parted in the middle. It cascaded gently down along each side of her luminous face, hiding what he could only imagine were perfectly formed ears, and covering the sweet nape at the back of her neck, which was not too long or short.

She was sitting on a flat stone at the base of a large oak tree. Her hands loosely grasped the knees of her bare legs, which were pulled up towards her chest. She was wearing a pair of light blue mid-thigh length shorts with a plain, white blouse that was not tucked in, but worn outside the shorts and white cotton bobby sox in a pair of brown penny loafers. Rafe was standing directly in front of her, not more than a couple feet away, leaning on his baseball bat. From this angle he could see the top of her white bra and a bit of cleavage, since her blouse with the pointed collar was opened to the button just below the top of her breasts. At 13, she was still maturing and those breasts were not yet fully developed, but still Rafe had difficulty not furtively looking at them.

Rafe felt himself begin to blush as he became aware of a hardening in his loins. “Oh, God, no!” His mind fairly screamed at him. “What’s she going to think of me, if she sees that I have a hard-on?” Yet another part of him wanted so very much to hold her to him and kiss her...and yes, yes, yes, to make love to her and have mad, passionate sex with her!

But he was quickly brought back to the moment as he heard her asking him, “How about you, Rafe? Can you imagine how great it’s going to be?” They had been talking about a number of things: their recent graduation from North Kingsboro grammar school, the end of summer; and the anticipation of the start of high school.

In her excitement, she couldn’t hold on for Rafe to reply. “I can’t wait, Rafe! In just about two weeks we will be taking the school bus each day to Quaytown High School. Just think of all the new friends we will have! I’m going to get involved in as many activities as I can. It’s going to be *so* much fun! And just think of all the new things we will learn in high school classes. Oh, Rafe, we’re going to grow up and be bigger, stronger and smarter. We’re going to have a whole new world before us! I just can’t wait. It can’t come too soon for me.”

Rafe was mesmerized by her enthusiasm. She was looking up at him intently, her bottomless azure blue eyes sparkling, a slight smile playing at the corners of her perfect mouth.

### Beach Party Days: Chapter 3

Her face was aglow. Her lips had just a hint of red lipstick, which reminded him about his desire for her. He shook it off as he spoke, "I'm looking forward to playing sports. Maybe I can win a scholarship to college after high school, if I do well in sports and keep decent grades."

It occurred to him that he could not match her enthusiasm. In reality, he was somewhat apprehensive about high school, but he wanted to act "cool" about it. But high school! It was going to be another big change for him and in such a short time span. Just about 8 months ago his family had moved to North Kingsboro from Newark and he had to finish 8<sup>th</sup> grade with all new kids. It was difficult at first, because despite his outward "tough" city kid façade, he was by nature somewhat shy and uncertain in unfamiliar circumstances. Fortunately for him, he was good at sports and was able to gain acceptance from the boys after only a couple of touch football games during gym classes. And his "tough" guy act, with the short shirtsleeves rolled up, collar turned up, big wave of hair at the front, and two-toned, saddle-stitched, pegged-14 pants gave the girls something different to be curious about. More than a few of them angled to be noticed by him and looked on him as potential boyfriend material.

But of all the girls, this vision of beauty looking up at him was the one to whom he was most attracted. Unfortunately his shyness and protective aloofness prevented him from making his feelings toward her known. The last thing he wanted was to have her sense his apprehension, because that would not only be *not* "cool", but also might disappoint her and risk his losing her, once high school began. Sub-consciously, Rafe was vaguely aware of a fantasy that someday Cathy Wood would come to love him.

He was once more suddenly awoken from his internal thoughts, when he heard her Mom calling for her...her house was but a stone's throw from the open field where Rafe had been playing baseball with a few other kids. Cathy slowly got up, brushed Rafe's forearm with her gentle, soft hands, and said, "Bye Rafe, I have to go now. See you at the bus on our first day of high school, if I don't see you before then. Enjoy the last of the summer."

"So long Cathy. See you!" Rafe called after her as she headed off. Rafe then walked home to the little Cape Cod house several blocks away. His parents still commuted to work in the city, so he was alone in the house. It was times like this that he envied other kids who had brothers and sisters...someone to talk to or even argue with; it seemed kind of lonely in the house. Rafe went into his room, turned on the phonograph he had gotten last Christmas that his Mom had purchased with Green Stamps. He went through his stack of 45rpm records, put on "Earth Angel" by the Penguins, threw himself on his bed, and thought about Cathy. The lyrics were a perfect match for his feelings about her...

*Earth Angel, Earth Angel,  
Will you be mine.  
My darling, dear, loved you all the time.  
I'm just a fool, a fool in love with you.  
I fell for you, and I knew  
The vision of your loveliness...*



## Beach Party Days: Chapter 3

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*Tuesday Afternoon, September 6, 1955...*

Rafe boarded the school bus at the end of the first day of classes at QHS, along with all the other kids from North Kingsboro. He sat down in a seat next to Jack Pauley. Jack had also graduated from North Kingsboro grammar school. Unlike Rafe, Jack had grown up and lived his entire life in North Kingsboro. Rafe and Jack were beginning to form a friendship that would last beyond high school years and on into the early sixties, and would fade away after they went in different directions. It had really started that summer when they began to meet on the playground behind the grammar school to play baseball and basketball along with a group of other boys, some of whom had been in their grammar school class, some who were a year ahead of them and one who was a year behind them.

“How was the first day of high school for you, Jack?” Rafe asked.

“Eh, it was okay. I kind of knew something about what to expect, since my brother Brad is a senior and on the football team.” Jack replied. Jack was about an inch taller than Rafe, with a trim almost lanky body, and a brown crew cut on a face that a lot of the girls found attractive. He had blue-gray eyes, medium sized ears nearly flat against his head, a short thin nose, full lips and a strong chin.

“Boy, that one teacher, Miss Carbo seems like a real fruit case. I almost burst out laughing when she was talking about onomatopoeia, and giving examples like ‘The bee *buzzes* over the flowers’. Until she spelled the word out on the blackboard, it just struck me funny - I thought she was saying ‘on a ma toe pee ya’. And I pictured a guy peeing on her toe. Then she got into alliteration with examples like ‘Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers’ and doing stuff from Shakespeare.” Rafe was referring to the teacher they both had in English class. Rafe and Jack were in all the same classes and they were in the midst of comparing notes on the various teachers and subjects, when Cathy Wood entered the bus, and walked down the aisle to where Rafe and Jack were sitting.

She was wearing a rather tight fitting, mid-calf-length, red, white and dark blue checkered skirt and a pale blue blouse with a narrow rounded-ends collar. A white, lightweight button style sweater was draped around her shoulders, with only the top button engaged. Her arms were folded around two schoolbooks, which she held against her chest. She smiled that precious smile of hers that always made Rafe focus admiringly on her face – those deep blue eyes, the cherub cheeks, the soft rose petal lips, and the dainty chin, all surrounded by that golden blonde hair. She sat in the seat in front of Rafe and Jack, next to Amy Johnson.

“Hi Rafe! Hi Jack! How was your first day of high school?” She fairly bubbled.

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When Jack gave his patented smirk and shoulder shrug, as if to say, “Who gives a shit”, Cathy’s eyes went expectantly to Rafe.

Rafe responded almost too quietly, “It was okay, I guess. It was only the first day; I’ll have a better idea after a few more days. What about you?”

Cathy could barely wait for Rafe to finish. “Oh, Rafe, it’s just like I imagined it would be!” She exclaimed. “There are so many extra-curricular clubs and such – It’s not going to be easy to decide which ones to join, but I’m pretty sure I want to join the Yearbook staff, and the Drama Club, and the Future Nurses Club.”

“That seems like an awful lot to take on so soon”, Rafe offered. “How are you going to keep up with your class work?”

“Oh, well, I’m in the Commercial Track. The school work won’t be as demanding for me as for you, you being in the College Prep Track and all”.

“Maybe so”, Rafe said. Then Cathy turned to Amy Johnson and the two of them got into an animated discussion, comparing notes on their first day of school.

Jack had turned around to talk to Joey Melino, who was in the next seat to the rear. “Hey Joey, what are you reading?”

Joey held up what looked like a comic book. “Mad Magazine”, he said laughing. “They have Alfred E. Neumann as a write-in candidate for President of the U.S.”

Rafe let his imagination take wing. In his mind’s eye he was alone with Cathy and they were lying together on a blanket in a grassy field, holding each other and about to make love...

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*Friday Afternoon, September 9, 1955...*

Earle Burnell had just closed his locker and spun the dial on the combination lock. He had the 2 textbooks and 1 spiral notebook he needed for homework tonight and he was hurrying to catch his bus outside Lakeview High School. He had not yet been given the nickname of “Burn” as yet...that would come about a year later in another town in another state, by yet more strange kids with whom he would have to try to fit in with.

His family had arrived in Battle Creek, Michigan in July, having moved from Baton Rouge, Louisiana. For the past few years the Burnells had moved almost annually, with Earle attending 10 schools in 8 years. Earle’s Dad was in the construction business and when one job ended they picked up stakes and moved on to where another job opened up. It was the Fifties,

### Beach Party Days: Chapter 3

after all, and the construction business was booming. Expansion and growth were the order of the day. It had been kind of tough on Earle...coming into unfamiliar neighborhoods and schools, feeling like a stranger and trying so very hard to adapt to the new surroundings and make friends, so that he wouldn't feel so alone and so on the outside looking in.

This move to Battle Creek seemed even tougher on him, because this was the first time the Burnells had moved north of the Mason-Dixon Line. Earle had grown up as a Southerner and he was damn proud of it. But ever since arriving here he had experienced things he had not had to face before. A lot of people, adults and kids alike, seemed to be so cold and distant, especially when he tried to talk to them, even when he just tried to say hello. His southern accent became immediately apparent and seemed to make these "Yankees" suspicious, like he was some kind of yahoo Rebel that was out to pillage and rape.

But worse than that, there were several boys who had started to give him a difficult time. These boys belonged to a gang called "The Flames". They all wore their black gang jackets with the imprint of a powder blue hot rod with red flames shooting out of the exhaust and little squiggly white lines to give the impression that the car was racing down a track. "The Flames" was emblazoned in wide, white letters in an arc over the top of the hot rod. They all wore their hair long with sideburns, a big wave and ducktails. They all wore black slacks. And they all smoked. Earle's parents had forbidden him to smoke and having an interest in sports he really had no desire to start.

It all started innocently on that first day of school, on the 5<sup>th</sup> of September. Earle was still getting familiar with the layout of the hallways. He was walking down the main hallway looking for his locker, when he accidentally bumped into the "Flame" called Chino. Chino was the ringleader and the founder of the gang. Earle said immediately, "Oh, Excuse me. I didn't mean to bump you. I was looking for my locker and was not paying attention." Then he added as he smiled and offered his hand to shake, "Hi! My name is Earle Burnell. What's yours?"

Chino, being a couple inches shorter than Earle's six foot, at first looked up at Earle with his brow furrowed and a frown on his face. A smirk began to play at the corners of Chino's mouth, as his glance briefly scanned two of his gang buddies and then turned quickly back to Earle. "What are you, some kind of hillbilly? Why don't'cha watch where you're goin'! I ain't shaking no hands with no clumsy hillbilly who can't walk straight!" Then Chino laughed and his two pals joined in. The three of them walked away laughing, leaving Earle standing there at first perplexed and then angry. Earle could feel the hair on the back of his neck begin to rise up. "Dumb ass white trash, if you ask me", he thought to himself. But he let it go. He reined in his anger and went on to his next class. By the end of the day he had practically forgotten the encounter.

The very next day started off badly. Earle had his second encounter with Chino and his two "shadows". Earle was the last one to step off his school bus because he liked sitting in the back of the bus. His mind was engrossed by one of the math problems he had for homework last night. It was one of those tricky word problems and he was going back over his solution. He was

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reasonably sure he had the correct answer, but he just wanted to double-check it in his mind to reassure himself. Math was his first class and he still had time in Home Room to change his answer prior to the class, if necessary. He walked up the path toward the big blue double-doors that opened into the school's left side hallway. As he approached he noticed several kids standing at the bottom of the steps leading up to the doors. They were all wearing Flame gang jackets and surreptitiously smoking cigarettes...there weren't any monitors or teachers at this side of the school. As he got closer, he recognized Chino and the two other boys that were with Chino yesterday.

One of the boys saw Earle approaching and said something to Chino, as he nodded his head in Earle's direction. Chino turned his head, spotted Earle and flicked his cigarette away as his mouth formed an evil smirk. Earle instantly began to tense up. He had a sudden sense of foreboding – an apprehension that made his stomach do a little flip. It was as if there was a warning siren going off in his head, “Brrraap! Brrraap!” and a stilted, recorded voice blaring, “Danger! Danger!”

Just as Earle neared the stairway, Chino moved over to the center of the sidewalk, blocking Earle's access. Chino's two buddies stood on either side and slightly behind him. “Well, if it ain't the newly arrived Rebel Hillbilly! I guess no one has told you that we are in charge of who gets to go in this here door” Chino said as he gestured toward the door behind him with the thumb of his right hand over his right shoulder. Earle stopped about three feet from Chino and let his eyes rest on each of the gang members in turn. He willed himself to appear calm, cool and collected. He gave them his best “What, me worry?” look. Then in a teasing manner Chino added, “If you want to go in this door, you goin' to have to pay us a dollar a piece. Otherwise, you get to walk all the way around to the front door.”

Earle steeled himself. This was not the first time he'd had to face up to a bully or two. Seems like every school he'd attended had its share of guys who tried to demonstrate their position of power – guys who liked to taunt and intimidate those who were new or different – especially if they felt they held the upper hand. While Earle was a little taller than most kids in the 14-18 year old range, he had yet to fill out and was on the thin side with long lean legs, not much of a butt, and long lean arms. And of course there were his glasses. He'd had to start wearing glasses a couple of years ago due to myopia and for some reason all these bully assholes seem to think that guys with glasses were easy marks.

Yet he was a lot stronger than he looked and had learned to fight when he had to. There had been at least two prior occasions Earle recalled, when he had to fight some jerk in order to gain respect from them and the other kids. But those occasions had all occurred at schools in the South. He had heard that the kids in North, who belonged to gangs, were known to carry home-made zip guns and switch blade knives, and thus, a bit of uncertainty arose in him. “Well, no turning back now” he thought to himself. So, he planted his feet, looked Chino straight in the eyes and said firmly, “No way am I walking to any other door and no way am I paying you to get into the school through this door!”

### Beach Party Days: Chapter 3

The smirk on Chino's face changed to an angry frown and he took two short steps toward Earle. He poked his right index finger into Earle's chest and pushed, but Earle held his ground. Chino said menacingly, "Are you getting smart with me, you Southern Hick? I don't like it...we don't like it, when some clown doesn't do what we want!" Then he added, "Now...we can do this the easy way or the hard way!"

Earle took a half step back to be clear of the finger poking into his chest and quietly but adamantly said, "I'm going to ask you just once to kindly not put your hands on me again. And I intend to go in through this door". Earle noticed that the other two guys had not moved forward with Chino, but had remained where they were with big grins on their faces. "Take out the leader and the followers will fall away", Earle replayed in his mind this bit of advice his father had given him about defending himself against greater odds. Earle tossed his books over onto the grass to the right of the walkway. He removed his glasses and put them in the glass case that was in his shirt pocket.

Barely had Earle gotten his glasses away when Chino angrily pronounced, "Okay, Hillbilly, it looks like we gotta do this the hard way – don't say I didn't warn you!" And with that Chino lunged forward and threw a right-handed haymaker toward Earle's chin. Earle adroitly ducked under the blow and hit Chino in the solar plexus with a short, powerful right punch. He could hear the air immediately rushing out of Chino's lungs and expelling from his mouth, as Chino clutched for his stomach and started to double over. While still in his crouch and with his weight on the balls of his feet, Earle propelled himself upward and outward as his left fist exploded from the arc of a vicious left hook and landed on the right side of Chino's face just below and to the side of the right eye. The combination punches took less than a second. Chino's body spun halfway around, his knees buckled, and he seemed to fall to the ground like one of those buildings that are dynamited to implode in on itself.

With both hands still balled into tight fists, Earle glared at Chino's two buddies – they hadn't moved. Their eyes were filled with surprise at the unexpected happening as they stared at Chino, who was still on hands and knees gasping for air and shaking his head to clear the cobwebs. It took several seconds before one, and then the other, of the two made any sort of move. They both went to Chino to help him get to his feet. Chino managed to get to his feet and although wobbly, he looked at Earle, gave a painful smile and nodded his head, as if to say, "I respect you, man!" A bluish shiner was already ballooning around Chino's right eye.

Earle was surprised to see Chino standing. He had hit him hard enough to knockout cold all but a few guys. "Chino's a tough son-of-a bitch", Earle thought to himself. He unclenched his fists, fetched his books, walked past the three Flames and up the stairs, through the blue double doors, and into the school. The rest of the day proved uneventful, as there had been no witnesses and the fight was over in a flash.

### **Beach Party Days: Chapter 3**

One week later, following Freshman Football practice, Earle showered, dressed and left the school. As was his new routine since making the squad as a last minute walk-on, he started the walk to a public bus stop for his trip home. There were no school buses to pick up the high school kids who were involved in after school activities. He had to walk several blocks to get to the Boynton Street stop, where he could catch the # 6 cross-town bus. He had been warned early on by some of the other guys on the squad that some neighborhoods surrounding the school were not the friendliest of places to strangers. There were three competing gangs that claimed certain neighborhoods as their turf and anyone from the outside was looked upon with instant mistrust and subject to verbal and often physical harassing. Stories of people being robbed and beaten were numerous.

The entire area north of the school, from the Northeast to the Northwest, was the territory of the Flames, Chino and his gang. This territory took in half of the roughly square mile surrounding the John B. White Elementary School and Lakeview High School and included the small lake for which the high school had been named. The majority of the people in this section were white with mixed European heritage. While the Flames controlled this largest area and had the largest membership, they did not have the reputation of being the fiercest of the gangs. That reputation belonged to the Imperials, who controlled the neighborhood in the South/Southeast quadrant. The South/Southwest quadrant was the home of the Red Dragons.

The Red Dragons was a Chinese gang. Their neighborhood was dotted with Chinese restaurants, laundries, sweatshops and at least two brothels that catered to Asian clientele. The Red Dragons did not generally bother outsiders, unless provoked. They had a protection racket going in the neighborhood and they were smart enough to know that the businesses relied upon outside clients and that what was good for business was good for them. Thus, this was generally one of the safest of the surrounding neighborhoods.

The Imperials were another matter, however. Their neighborhood was predominantly Black, as were all of the gang's members. Their reputation as the fiercest gang stemmed from a recent gang "battle" between them and the Flames that occurred early in the summer of 1955. Like most stories of this nature, the retelling often leads to exaggerated legends. But there was no disputing at least the basic facts. A group of eight Imperials were able to hold their own against a larger group of twelve (some claim fifteen or sixteen) Flames. Both sides used knives, chains, and belts with brass buckles, in addition to bare fists in a melee that lasted about 20 minutes. It ended up with casualties on both sides, mostly minor cuts and nasty abrasions, but fortunately no deaths or permanent injuries. At the end a truce was declared, but it was evident that the Imperials could hold their own against superior odds. The enmity between the groups only increased.

Earle's bus stop on Boynton Street was near the "border" of the Imperials and the Flames turf, actually about a half city block into the Imperials zone. The street ran North and South. The intersection of Eighth Street and Boynton separated the two gangs' turf.

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As Earle approached the bus stop, a group of five Imperials were sauntering toward him from the opposite direction on Boynton Street. It was evident that their paths would intersect before he reached the streetlight at the bus stop. Earle did not break stride, despite recognizing that the five boys heading his way were fanned out along the width of the entire sidewalk. Earle was tired from a full day of school followed by football practice. Given that Earle was used to living in the South, his normal tendency would be to not yield his right of way, but expect one of the Imperials to make way for him.

“Let one of those Negro boys move aside...Aw the hell with it...I’m tired and not in the mood for a confrontation. I’ll just move to the curb and go around them”, he thought to himself. When he was within about 10 yards of the gang, he angled toward the street to work his way around the 5 boys. But suddenly they stopped.

One of the guys in the middle of the pack spoke to Earle, “Hey, man, what you doin’ here? This here is Imperial turf and you sho’ ain’t lookin’ like you belongs here. You better get yo’ white ass out of here, or we gonna mess you up.”

Earle tried to sidestep his way around the group, but the one on the end slid over to block his way. “Look y’all, I’m not lookin’ for trouble,” Earle declared. He pointed toward the bus stop behind the Imperials and said, “I just want to get to the bus stop there.”

Earle’s southern drawl was not lost on the boy in the center of the group, who appeared to be the leader. “Well! Well! Seems you not only on the wrong turf, but you also in the wrong part of this country. We don’t cotton to no white boys treadin’ on our turf, but southern white boys? No way, man!”

The other four boys chimed in with “Right on!”

Then the one closest to Earle said with a sneer, “Let’s off this motherf\_ \_ \_ \_ , Duane!” He was addressing the leader.

Another one of the Imperials removed his belt and wrapped it around his fist with the brass buckle glistening in the light from the street lamp. Several of the boys exclaimed, “Yeah! Let’s do him!” and they began to form a circle around him.

Earle’s sense of danger was reaching the alarm stage. He had never before felt so threatened and afraid. His tiredness was gone as the adrenalin began to surge through his body. He thought to himself, “God dammit! Am I ever in a big heap of shit! Well, if I’m going down I’m going to take some of these black bastards with me!” And he began to turn one way, then the other, waiting for the first guy to move in on him. He had already sized them up. Three of the four were at least four inches shorter than he. One was about his height, maybe a little taller, but fat and soft. The leader, Duane, was about two inches shorter than Earle, but more muscular than the others.

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But wait! What was that shouting coming from the North on Boynton? Earle and the Imperials stopped their circling and looked up the street. Running toward them yelling like banshees was a group of eight boys. It was the Flames! “Holy crap! Now I’m really in trouble,” Earle said gloomily under his breath.

The Flames all came to an abrupt stop within a few yards of where Earle and the Imperials were standing. Earle easily recognized Chino and the two gang members from last week’s incident at the school door. Earle noticed that the black eye was gone, as Chino stepped forward and demanded, “What’s goin’ down here!”

Duane stepped forward and responded, “What’s it to you, Chino? It’s none of your friggin’ business. This here is Imperial turf. You ought to know better than crossing the line on Eighth Street.”

Chino volleyed back, “I saw that this cat was in trouble and so I’m makin’ it my business.” Then he looked at Earle and queried, “what’re you doin’ on the wrong side of Boynton at this hour, Burnell?”

Earle replied, “I just finished football practice and have to get the # 6 bus at that stop. I’ve been doing this all week, but this is the first time I’ve been stopped.” Earle checked his watch, and continued, “My bus should be here any minute now”.

“We’ll just wait here to see that you get on the bus without any more hassle”, Chino declared as he surveyed the group of Imperials. Then he looked directly at Duane and said, “No need for you guys to hang around. As soon as he’s on the bus, we’ll get off your turf. Promise!”

“This ain’t over, Chino! You got the odds tonight, but you and me are goin’ to do battle yet. Sooner than Later, I’d say. Then we’ll see who’s the Man! Next time you cross over Eighth Street, you better come with some fire power, ‘cause we is...you can bet your white ass on that!” With that Duane took a step back, then turned and sauntered down Boynton. The other four Imperials, eyes coldly glaring, turned on their heels and followed Duane.

As Earle watched them go, he saw the # 6 bus stopped to pick up passengers three blocks further down Boynton. He turned back toward Chino and said with relief, “My bus is coming. I don’t know why you stepped in, but thanks!”

Chino nodded, “No sweat. I ain’t all that fond of you, but I hate them niggers, no end.” Then he added, “But I’d advise you to start getting the # 6 at the next stop north. It’s another 4 blocks to walk, but at least you’ll be in my territory and not the Imperial’s”.

The bus was now arriving and Earl yelled over his shoulder, “Thanks, again!” as he ran to the bus stop and hopped on. From then on Earle heeded Chino’s advice.

By year’s end, Earle and Chino were almost friends.



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That following summer Earle's dad finished his construction job and the family packed up their trailer home, hitched it to the family car and headed for New Jersey, to a town they knew nothing about, except the name – North Kingsboro. Earle looked back on Michigan with less than fondness, mainly because of the weather.

As the Burnells drove off toward their next destination, Earle started to doze in the back seat of the car and he reflected on this most recent of many places he had been...

He remembered arriving in Battle Creek and thinking, "Now ain't I in a hell of a mess. The short stay in Toledo, for the summer, had not been too bad, but Michigan. Who needed this? Definitely Yankee country! This was the place Mom & Dad decided would be home for a while. I never knew how long. By the time I learned who was the toughest or proved to be myself, it was time to move on. Sometimes I was ready; however the 3 years in Tennessee had been pretty nice. Lots of swimming, baseball, fishing, caves, girl dreaming and even a real date or two."

Then he recalled his first experience with weather north of the Mason-Dixon Line. "Winter set in early and I was not quite ready. This was real winter. The first snow came in October. Then it seemed to come back about every three days. There was no way to know that this would be the worst winter in a hundred years. We didn't see the ground again until March. Six months of the white stuff, which really was pretty the first day then ugly with all of the salt scum and road mess."

And lastly sports, "I went out for the football and basketball team. The JV teams were fairly easy to make and I enjoyed the physical contact. The JV football coach was an old guy of 35 or so, weighed over 200 pounds, short. I couldn't believe my ears on the first day of practice when he challenged the whole team to a 100 yard dash. No way was this old fart going to outrun this 14 year old. Well needless to say he outran the entire team by about 5 yards. I never saw such short fat legs moving so fast. Evidently he had been a running back in some junior college and had kept in good shape. "

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*Saturday Evening, August 27, 1955...*

James was on his way to Bo Orechio's house for an end of summer party. Bo had invited a bunch of the kids who had graduated from Quaytown Grammar School in June. They were all headed for Quaytown High School next week, right after Labor Day. James and Bo were pretty good friends he thought. After all they were teammates on the grammar school baseball team for the past two years. And both had been in the Quaytown Drum and Bugle Corps this summer.

James was about 5' 4" now and beginning to fill out, yet a bit gangly. He had a classic Germanic face, with a kind of rough-hewn look. He had a shock of dark brown hair that he had to frequently push back away from his forehead. James was outgoing and enjoyed telling funny

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stories. He had an unmistakable, infectious, hearty laugh that could be heard at a good distance. All of this combined to make him attractive to a lot of the girls.

His older brother, Jeremy was driving him. Jeremy was in high school and had just gotten his drivers' license. Like all high school juniors he was a bit full of himself and like all big brothers he seemed to get a real kick out of teasing a younger brother. "Going to be a lot of hot babes at this party, James? Got your eye on one or two? When we get there, introduce me to a couple and I'll show you how a real man operates. Nothing like young blood I always say. You sure you can handle it? If you want some pointers, Ole Jeremy will be glad to show you how it's done."

James shot back, "Stuff it, Jeremy! I can handle it by myself! I don't need any help from the *big man on campus!*"

When they arrived at Bo's, Jeremy said, "Okay, hot shot, what time is this shindig over, so I can come back to pick you up?"

"Eleven o'clock", James offered, as he quickly got out of the family's pale tan 1954 Ford and closed the passenger side door. Jeremy backed out of the driveway and took off, peeling rubber. "Dad better not see him doing that", James thought to himself, as he tucked his shirt into pants, brushed the sides of his hair with his hands, and walked up the driveway to the garage. Bo's parents had a large two-car detached garage and that's where the party was being held. James was neither early nor late. Most of the guys and a number of girls were already there. He could hear the music playing on a phonograph...one of those songs they played on that Saturday night TV show, "Your Hit Parade". Oh, yeah, it was the Four Aces singing, "Three Coins in the Fountain".

James sauntered into the garage, found Bo and they shook hands. Bo seemed happy to see him. "Glad you could make it, buddy! Sodas are in that old wash tub over in the corner there", Bo pointed to the right rear corner of the garage. "Food is on the table back there", Bo waved toward the table set up along the back wall. Like most parties of 13 and 14 year olds in the Fifties, the boys were all standing together on one side and the girls all stood or sat on the other side of the garage. Sometime later, of course, things would warm up. They always did - you can keep those raging hormones in check for only so long.

James got himself a coke and started for the food table, when he spotted Sue. "Susan Brownell is a real cute girl", James thought to himself. "No, she was more than cute; she was actually very pretty", he corrected himself. "Hmm", he corrected himself again, as he noticed her tight sweater, "With a set of tits like that to go with that face, she is one sexy babe! I think I'm in love!" He looked her over appreciably and mentally took inventory of Susan's anatomy, "Nice wavy brown hair parted on the right side and flipped up at the ends at her shoulders; face like a movie star, with tweezed brown eyebrows, a pert nose that turns up ever so slightly, a blemish free face that has all things in such proportion that it reminds me of that advertisement on match book covers of a near perfect woman's profile, that says, 'Draw me' and you were to mail your

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drawing in and they promise to tell you if you have talent.” Then he observed that Susan wore a pale yellow sweater, buttoned in the back; black Bermuda shorts cut just above the knees that failed to hide the eye-catching hips and ass; the checkered knee socks that came up over her calves, covering the lower portion of two well-formed legs.

Sue noticed James staring at her and blushed. But she also smiled in a coy way that James couldn't help but take as a reason to approach her and start a conversation. “Maybe I should ask her to dance”, James thought. But, feeling a tad nervous, he decided it would be best to hit the food table first for something to eat – he spied a plate of hot dogs. “One of them is calling my name”, he said to himself.

James snatched a hot dog, spread a little mustard on it, took a bite, chewed it and downed it with a swig of coke. Then, he headed toward Sue Brownell, who was talking with Emily Thurston, another, not so attractive, girl from their class. “What a dog!” he thought, as he took another bite of the hot dog. Another swig of coke and another stride and he came up behind Sue and ‘The Dog’. “Hi, Sue, how are you tonight? Enjoying the party? Hi, Emily.”

Sue and Emily turned around and looked up at James with instant smiles. Almost in unison, they said, “Hi James.” Then Sue said to James and Emily, “The party seems kind of juvenile to me now that we are going to start high school in another week. I imagine that parties with older high school kids will be more interesting...you know, more mature and adult like.”

James couldn't decide if Sue was just pretending to be more sophisticated, or if she was really just stuck up. It occurred to him that Sue was from one of the old-line families in Quaytown and she lived in one of the largest homes on Ridge Street. He therefore surmised that now that grammar school was behind them, she was thinking that the kids gathered at this party were all somehow beneath her and she was priming herself to move on to ‘bigger things’ – like older guys who had cars. Well, James was never one to walk away from a challenge, especially when it involved matching wits with a stuck-up broad who was in need of a little attitude adjustment. All the more so, as she caught him with his eyes resting hungrily on the round swells of her sweater. So, he began to hatch his plan...

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Bo had been one of the most popular guys in grammar school with both the boys and the girls. For a start, he was a good all-around athlete. But he also had the advantage of a particular handsomeness. He had wavy black hair and smooth, slightly olive skin from his Italian heritage. He was thin and wiry with a chiseled jaw, among the taller of the boys at this age, but not the tallest. In some photos, he could appear to be almost a double for a young Frank Sinatra.

In just about a week he would be starting his freshman year at QHS and he was looking forward to this next big step in his young life. He was getting excited about two things...playing sports and girls, girls, girls. “There will be a whole new crop of tail coming in” he mused. They

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would be coming from sending districts in several surrounding towns, because QHS was the public high school that served these towns. But there was one thing he wasn't exactly thrilled about. His parents and older sister, Mary Ann, had been harping about how he would have to knuckle down and study a lot more than ever before, if he wanted to maintain eligibility for sports and qualify for college.

Well, that was a matter for later. Right now Bo was enjoying himself at his party. It was 8:30pm and just about all the guys he invited were here and all but the one girl who he was really hoping would arrive soon. He had been anticipating this night for a week. He had been having fantasies about Judy Wallace ever since the last Drum and Bugle Corp competition a week ago.

It happened on the bus trip returning from the competition the previous Saturday night. He and Judy had been sitting together in the rear corner of the darkened bus and talking and laughing about a number of things, including the end of the summer, the end of the Drum and Bugle Corp competitions, and the beginning of a new school year. Bo had been surprised, when Judy had put his light summer jacket across his lap. He was a bit startled, when she reached her right hand under the jacket and started to rub his crotch. And then he was flabbergasted when she unzipped his pants, pulled out his hard-as-a-rock dick and began to give him a hand-job.

That's one reason why he had invited Judy. Even though she was already a sophomore at Ruby Creek Catholic High School and he thought her more mature than the girls in his grade, he was hoping that he could walk her home, find a secluded spot and get into *her* pants this time. But she hadn't shown up yet, even though she said she would.

He happened to glance over to the other side of the garage and saw Hein. He couldn't remember when James was given that nickname or by whom, but just about all of the guys called him by that. "Hein is kind of a cool guy", Bo thought to himself. "He's always ready with a story that ends up with some funny punch line." James was talking with Sue and Emily.

Bo remembered how embarrassed he felt on that last day of school in June, when Sue had thrown his ring at him in the Science Lab. They had been dating throughout the last 6 months of eighth grade and he had given her his grammar school ring to wear so that everyone would know that they were going "steady". But sometime in late May, a girl that was a senior at QHS took notice of him and Bo found himself dating her on the side. Then all hell broke loose when Sue found out (he still didn't know who ratted on him).

That day had to be one of the worst in his 14 years! "Damn!" He exclaimed to himself. "There must have been 15 kids in that classroom when she stomped in red-faced, called me a no good two-timing rat, hurled that ring across the room and ran out like a shot", he recalled. He had been totally stunned and couldn't move for a couple of minutes and when he finally ran out after her she was nowhere in sight.

Remembering that experience reminded Bo of the other reason he had invited Judy. He thought that it might be a way to let Sue know that he could get along without her very well,

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thank you! He reasoned that when Sue saw him with Judy, she would realize what she had thrown away, and become jealous. “Not that I would ever ask her to date again”, he told himself. “But maybe if she begged just a little, I might give in,” he chuckled under his breath.

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Bo was interrupted in his thoughts when he saw Hein leave his conversation with Sue and Emily and saunter over to where Bo was standing. James motioned with his eyes and head and Bo followed him out to the driveway where they could talk without anyone overhearing. In a conspiratorial tone James whispered, “Methinks your ex, Susan, is becoming really stuck up and could stand to be brought back down a peg. Are you still hurting from that day at the end of school when she embarrassed you in front of half the class?” Then he added with a wicked smile as he rubbed his hands together, “If you are, and you’d like to try and even the playing field a bit, I have a plan!”

Bo nodded and whispered in response, “Yeah! That’s one of the reasons I invited both her and Drum Corps Judy.” And Bo proceeded to tell James how he thought that Sue would get jealous when Judy arrived and they started holding hands and dancing together. He didn’t mention anything about his plan to walk Judy home and try to get a little action...just in case it didn’t come off. Then Bo added, as almost an afterthought, “But, you know Hein, I probably deserved to have Sue get mad at me. After all, I did sort of two-time her. But I never thought she’d find out. And I never imagined in my wildest dreams that she would have made such a public scene. So, while I feel somewhat like a shit head, I still can’t forget how embarrassed and hurt I was. And to be really honest...but don’t repeat this to anyone...I sort of miss going steady with her.” Then he quickly followed with, “Not that I would go back with her even if she asked me...she’s just, Oh I don’t know...just too much a Goody-Goody, I guess, and I’m not ready for getting tied down, what with starting high school next week. So, what’ve you got in mind?” James nodded his head in understanding, and continued whispering, “We’re goin’ to need a little help.” He called over to Alan Elmstead, a classmate who lived two houses up the street from the Orechio’s. “Hey Alan! Come over here!”

Alan sauntered over and asked, “What’s up, guys?”

James put his arm around Alan’s shoulder to draw him close, so no one would over hear. “We need your help to have a little fun and teach Miss Goody Two-Shoes, Susan Brownell, a lesson. Are you in?”

“Yeah, count me in”, Alan responded enthusiastically with a giggle.

“Okay!” James continued, rubbing his hands together again. “Here’s what we do. We wait until Judy gets here and Bo starts to put the “moves” on her. Then”...

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*Life could be a dream, Sh-Boom  
If I could take you up in paradise up above, Sh-Boom;  
If you would tell me I'm the only one that you love  
Life could be a dream, Sweetheart...*

Several of the boys and girls were dancing the jitterbug to the Crew Cuts rendition of “Sh-Boom”. Suddenly all heads turned in curiosity as Bo, dodging the dancers, rushed from the rear of the garage toward the driveway. “Judy!” he exclaimed, “I’m so glad you could make it!” Even the dancers stopped and all eyes were now on Judy Wallace as she sauntered up the driveway toward Bo. While not an exceedingly attractive girl, she was still kind of cute and it was evident that she was physically more mature than the eighth grade girls, and even more so relative to many of the boys. When Judy leaned against Bo and kissed him on the lips, a couple of the boys made catcalls and whistled.

All this was not lost on Susan Brownell, particularly the kiss. “How unrefined! Kissing in public like that! She must be a cheap tart.” Sue thought to herself. She turned toward her friend Emily and whispered, “Am I glad that I broke up with Bo. He’s a real rat!” Emily nodded in agreement, but her eyes betrayed a hint of a question.

Bo and Judy were now dancing to a slow song. Sue wasn’t certain as to why she was annoyed, but she quickly convinced herself that it had nothing to do with being jealous. “All the more reason to look forward to high school and more mature boys who know how to treat a ‘good’ girl with respect”, she intoned more to herself than to Emily.

Just then Alan walked over to Sue and Emily. “Hi Sue. Hi Emily”, he said with a smile. Normally Sue wouldn’t give the time of day to Alan Elmstead...not only was he not handsome and not very athletic, but he was rather short with a face full of acne and a squeaky voice.

But Sue knew that Emily sort of liked Alan, so she made a point of being polite and said, “Hello Alan”.

Alan then said rather matter-of-factly, “Hey, Sue, I was in the Quaytown Deli today and I overheard Billy Ballard talking about you.”

Susan’s face lit up like a child who sees all the presents under the tree on Christmas morning. “Really! What did he say about me?” she could barely disguise her excitement, though she made a conscious effort to not appear too interested.

Just about everyone in Quaytown knew of, or at least had heard of Billy Ballard. He was about to become a senior at QHS and was one of the most popular kids in town. He was tall and handsome, with dark brown hair and the air of the proverbial All American Boy. Billy came from an old-line family, much like Susan’s. The Yacht Club set, as they were often referred to with pride among their own group, and not without a hint of envy among the middle and lower classes in town. Billy could usually be seen riding around town in a powder blue 1954 Corvette

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with the hard shell roof removed. More often than not he had an attractive girl riding with him. Usually his closest friend Jimmy Howard would be following in his own jet black 1954 Corvette, also with a girl in the passenger seat, although somewhat less frequently than Billy.

Billy had a reputation as sort of a Playboy, but in the somewhat innocent, romantic sense of the 1950's, not in a negative sense. Those who knew him or met him for the first time (guys as well as gals) were impressed with his easy-going nature. He was polite and soft-spoken, always quick to give a firm handshake and a welcoming smile. Billy was not into high school athletics, despite the appearance of a well-tuned body. Outside of his interest in cars, daily trips to the beach in the summer, and occasional winter skiing trips, he didn't seem to have many other interests. Yet, there wasn't a girl in town that wouldn't feel like a princess if he stopped to talk to her. And to be seen riding in his car, well that was just the tops...it would make a girl's entire high school career complete.

No wonder that Susan was thrilled to know that Billy had been talking about her to his friends. Could it possibly be that he was "interested" in her? She had seen him several times at Yacht Club functions this year and was only recently introduced to him when both their parents brought them to a Yacht Club social tea. At the time she was still sulking over Bo and didn't give her introduction to Billy much thought. But now she couldn't hold her curiosity in check any longer. She looked intently at Alan with raised eyebrows and impatiently willed him to answer her question.

Alan avoided direct contact with Susan's eyes as he squeaked out a little nervously, "Ah, I, I, ah didn't catch the whole conversation, but it sounded like, ah, like he was saying something about trying to get a date with somebody...and then I couldn't quite make out some words, you know, but then I heard him mention your name. So, so I thought you'd like to know."

The clumsiness of Alan's reporting was lost on Sue, as her heart skipped several beats and her mind immediately leaped for the assumption that Billy Ballard was going to ask her out on a date. Billy Ballard...Billy Ballard...his name seemed to echo in her head. She looked over at Emily, who was staring wide-eyed at Sue with her mouth agape. Then Emily's hands flew up to cover her open mouth, as she attempted with some success to stifle an excited scream of "Billy Ballard!"

Then as Alan turned and began to sort of shuffle away, Sue remembered her manners and said as calmly as she could muster, "Thank you, Alan. I really appreciate your telling me." She turned again toward Emily and reflexively the two girls joined hands and began to talk excitedly at the same time...Emily offering congratulations and Sue countering with "Can it be True? Oh, I hope...I hope it is!"

Alan walked back to the driveway in front of the garage, where James was standing with Bo and Judy. He gave the thumbs up sign and then he and James set off out of the driveway. Judy asked Bo, "What's that all about?"

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Bo replied as he struggled to withhold a grin, “Oh, nothing, really...Let’s get a soda”, as he took her hand and led her to the tub of soda at the rear of the garage.

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About ten minutes later, Mr. Orechio emerged from the house, stood at the front of the garage and beckoned for Bo to come to him. Bo left Judy’s side and went to his Dad. Mr. Orechio told Bo that there was someone on the phone for one of his guests, Susan Brownell. Bo turned to see where Sue was at the moment. She was dancing a jitterbug with Emily. Bo raised his voice over the music and called to her, “Hey, Sue!” He waved her over. Sue stopped dancing, walked to where Bo and Mr. Orechio were standing, with Emily trailing behind. Bo introduced his Dad to Susan. Mr. Orechio told her that there was a phone call for her and he led her into the house, by way of the side door off the driveway, to where the phone was sitting off the hook on a table in the hallway between the kitchen and living room.

Along the way, Sue asked, “Who’s on the phone for me, Mr. Orechio? Is it my Mother or Father?”

“Sounds more like a young man. I think he said his name is Billy something”, Mr. Orechio replied.

Sue was a bit perplexed as she picked up the phone and said, “Hello, this is Susan Brownell. Who’s this?”

When a voice came back with, “Hi, Susan, this is Billy Ballard.” She nearly dropped the phone receiver.

“Hell...Hello, Billy” she fairly stammered in reply. The shock was too great for her mind to think of anything else to say and so she held her breath and waited for him to pick up the slack. There was a short pause on the line, which to her seemed like an eternity, but was perhaps no more than two or three seconds.

Then the voice on the line said, “I’ve had my eye on you for some time and now that you’ll be a freshman, I was wondering if you would like to go out on a double date...that is if your parents would allow it. Jimmy Howard and his date will double with us.”

Sue was having difficulty finding her voice, despite an overwhelming desire to blurt out, “Yes! Yes! Oh, God, Yes!” Instead she replied in a quivering voice, “I would love to go out with you, Billy!” She took a deep breath, got control over her voice, then continued more hurriedly, just as the boy’s voice on the other end began to clear his throat to begin speaking, “And I’m sure my parents will approve, since they know you and your parents from the Yacht Club.” She paused to give him a chance to fill in the details of the when and where.



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The voice then said, “Are you free next Saturday night?”

“Yes, I’m free”, she responded, not too quickly she hoped.

“Good! How about I pick you up, er, call for you at your house around seven o’clock, Saturday night?” asked the voice.

“Yes, that will be fine...but where will we be going...so, I know what to wear?” Sue countered.

“Oh, right! I was thinking we’d go to the movies at the Palace on Front Street. If that’s okay with you,” said the voice. “Then after the movies we can go to the Quaytown Diner for a malted milk. Okay?”

“Great! It sounds absolutely wonderful”, Sue cooed. “I’ll be expecting you then at seven next Saturday night. Bye for now.” And she hung up the phone, once he responded with his good bye. “This is just too fantastic! I feel like I’m going to die! Wait until Emily hears this!” She thought to herself as she walked half in a daze toward the door. “Oh, thank you so much!” she exclaimed to Mr. And Mrs. Orechio just before she exited through the screen door to head back to the party in the garage.

Then it struck her! She had been assuming that her parents would give their approval, but what if they wouldn’t? How devastating would that be? They had been letting her date boys since the seventh grade, but it was always with an adult driving them to chaperoned affairs and parties. But this would be entering into a whole new frontier, dating a boy with his own car without a chaperone. She then began to search out arguments to counter her parents’ objections...just in case. The first thing that came to mind was that she was now 14 and a freshman, no longer an immature grammar school girl. And it would be a double date, so she would not be “alone” with Billy. And they were going to public places...the movies and the diner. Now she felt a little more confident that she could get their approval. She had to hurry now to tell Emily...

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Meanwhile, at Alan’s house, Alan and James were laughing so hard that tears were streaming down their cheeks. Just a few minutes earlier, James had removed his handkerchief from the talking end of the phone and placed it back in its cradle. Nearly choking with laughter, Alan managed to blurt out, “Can’t you just see her face when she’s all dressed up for her big date and Billy Ballard doesn’t show up?” Still laughing convulsively he squeaked out, “I think I’m going to piss in my pants, if I don’t stop laughing so hard!”

Hearing that, James started laughing even harder than at first and had to fold his arms around his stomach to keep it from hurting...it felt like he was about to bust a gut. After a minute

### **Beach Party Days: Chapter 3**

or so, James was able to catch his breath and said; “I wonder how she’ll react to Billy...what will she say to him when she sees him in school on opening day? Will she give him the evil eye and stick up her nose or will she wag her finger at him and call him a dirty lying rat for standing her up?” Then James felt a bit strange as he gave voice to a thought that suddenly popped into his mind. “Hey, what will Billy do if he finds out that someone pulled this stunt pretending to be him?” Both boys suddenly became quiet as they began to ponder the potential ramifications of what had started out to be a joke.

James was starting to feel a little guilty. Yes, he had played some jokes on people in the past, but up until now they were all kind of innocent, perhaps even a bit silly, yet he had never wound up feeling any remorse when they were over. But this was a major prank to his way of thinking and he was uncomfortable now that he had examined the potential outcomes. James was normally not the type of kid who would willingly be cruel to or deliberately try to hurt someone else. His conscience was bothering him! An image of a TV show danced into his head...it was about a man trying to decide between doing right or wrong. On one shoulder was superimposed a small image of an angel and on the other was a small image of the devil. James began to wrestle within himself about whether or not there was something he could do to soften the effects on Susan of their prank. It also had to be something that would keep Billy Ballard from finding out, thereby eliminating any other potential repercussions. He would have to sleep on it, he decided. It was time to get back to the party and fill Bo in on the outcome of the prank. After all, no matter what, they will have succeeded in bringing Susan’s nose back down out of the clouds.

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 4

*Saturday Evening, September 17, 1955...*

*One, two, three o'clock, four o'clock, Rock!  
Five, six, seven o'clock, eight o'clock, Rock!  
Nine, ten, eleven o'clock, twelve o'clock, Rock!  
We're gonna rock around the clock tonight...*

The cartoons and newsreel were over. The 6:45 pm showing of the movie had just started and the song "Rock Around the Clock" by Bill Haley and the Comets was playing during the opening scene. The majority of kids in the theater were clapping to the beat of the music. Rafe Cerny and Jack Pauley were in the Palace movie house in Quaytown. They had ridden the bus from North Kingsboro. The twenty-five cent fare each way was worth it for the 6 mile ride to get them to the more happening town of Quaytown. There just was not that much to do in North Kingsboro, so the teens without "wheels" that lived there had only two reasonable choices: either hiking or busing down to the boardwalk area of Kingsboro or take the 25 minute bus ride to Quaytown.

During the past two days of school, a good deal of buzz was going around about this movie that was finally making the rounds to the Palace, *Blackboard Jungle*, starring Glenn Ford, Sidney Poitier and Vic Morrow. A lot of kids had heard about the movie and were intent on seeing it – the film had become somewhat notorious, since it had been banned in several towns and cities across America. That reaction to the movie was due to its disturbing representation of juvenile delinquency and life in an urban all-male high school. News reports about teenagers dancing in the aisles of theaters to "Rock Around the Clock" only added to the fear that the movie might lead to violence and teenage excess.

Rafe was a bit shaken, yet mesmerized throughout the movie. Having grown up from early childhood through his early teen years in the state's largest city, Newark, he immediately identified with many of the scenes in the movie. The high tension and fear that characterized school life amidst the backdrop of gang wars and juvenile delinquency came flooding back over him. He could feel the tension building within him, as if an inanimate, ghostly entity was oozing into his pores. Memories floated up out of his sub-conscious like air bubbles percolating in a coffee pot.

There was that time in the neighborhood store. Rafe was looking over the rack of Dell Comic books, deciding which to buy, when the storeowner suddenly rushed to close and lock the door. Outside the store, a gang of teens beat the crap out of a lone boy. Then there was that time when a gang of Negro youths surrounded the new white kid in school and took turns throwing punches at him when his back was turned. It ended once the boy's big brother showed up and chased the gang off. Rafe also remembered seeing a hand-made zip gun that a classmate carried to school one day. Intimidation was a fact of life in the city, both in and out of the classroom.

Jack, on the other hand, had a very different reaction to the movie. Having lived his whole life in the very peaceful confines of North Kingsboro, Jack was somewhat bemused by the

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 4

themes of violence in the movie. He just could not relate to it; it was more fantasy to him than reality.

As the movie ended, the house lights came on while the credits rolled down the screen. The audience, which was predominantly teenagers, made their way to the two aisles to exit the theater. While shuffling along with the exiting crowd, Rafe spotted two boys merging into the aisle from an opposite row. Rafe recognized them as fellow freshmen from QHS and especially Bo, with whom he had played baseball on the Quaytown Giants last summer. At about the same time, Bo Orechio also recognized Rafe and Jack and nodded. As the four of them headed up the aisle toward the exit, Bo said, “You guys go to QHS, right?”

“That’s right”, Rafe responded. “Jack, here, and I are both freshmen. And I recognize you two from school and Bo from last summer. We played on the Quaytown Giants Babe Ruth team. I think your name is James he said to the other boy. Did I get it right?”

“Yeah. I’m Bo Orechio and this is James Heinrich, but he’s better known as ‘Hein’.”

“I’m Rafe Cerny, and that’s Jack Pauley,” Rafe said as he half turned back toward Jack who was just behind him.

James nodded, smiled and said, “Hi, nice to meet you”, as he extended his hand for a quick handshake, first with Rafe and then Jack. Then Rafe and Jack shook hands with Bo. Within minutes they were outside of the theater and standing on the sidewalk.

Bo said, “That was a hell of a movie! I can see why it was banned in a lot of places. What did you guys think of it? I mean, can you imagine going to a school like that and living in a hell hole like those kids?”

“Makes our school seem kind of tame”, James offered. “I guess you could say we got it made compared to life in the city.”

Jack merely shrugged his shoulders, but Rafe, still a little unsettled said emphatically, “You can’t know what it’s like unless you’ve lived through it. I grew up in Newark and I can tell you that that movie pretty much tells it as it is. I feel like I’ve died and gone to heaven, since moving down here.”

“Well, as far as I’m concerned, the best thing about the movie was that song,” responded James. “What was the name, ‘Rock Around the Clock’?” he said seeking confirmation.

“Yeah, I really liked the beat,” chipped in Jack. And they all nodded in agreement.

“Hey, let’s all go to Stosh’s diner and grab a malted milk!” Bo suggested. “How about it - you guys all up for it? That’s where a lot of kids from town hang out. There should be a bunch of girls there tonight, too. Just thought I’d mention that,” he added with a wink.

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“I’m game,” responded Rafe with a smile. “We’ve just got to make sure we catch the 10:30 bus back to North Kingsboro.”

“Yeah, that’s Okay with me,” shrugged Jack

“Maybe we can run into Susan Brownell on her date with Billy Ballard,” James said in a devilish manner, as he rubbed his hands together. Bo and James both broke out laughing.

“What’s that all about?” questioned Rafe.

“Come on! We’ll fill you in on the way.” Bo answered while still chuckling.

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*Saturday Afternoon, September 24, 1955...*

The band was playing the QHS fight song and the home crowd was responding with a deafening chant of each chorus of “Go Bisons, Go! On to Victory! Go, Go, Go!” It was the second football game of the season and first home game for the QHS Bisons football squad. The team had lost the first game. Today they were favored by two touchdowns over the Ambrose Hills High School team. The Bisons were wearing their home uniforms of white jerseys with a deep blue numbering and with two red shoulder stripes surrounding a stripe of deep blue. The pants were a matching solid blue with a white stripe down the outside of each leg.

Rafe and Jack made their way up the bleachers on the home side of the field, searching for Bo and James. The four had agreed last night that whoever arrived first would save seats for the others. Rafe’s dad, Rick, had driven him and Jack to Quaytown and dropped them off at the high school. It was agreed that Rafe and Jack would take the bus back home after the game. Jack spotted Bo and James up on the top row of the bleachers, pointed toward them and yelled to Rafe over the crowd noise, “There they are! Up on the top row”.

Rafe & Jack made their way to the top, in the center section, just to the right of the 50yard line. After sharing hellos, Rafe shouted above the roar of a cheer, “Great seats! How early did you have to get here to get them?”

“I got here about twenty minutes ago”, Bo yelled back. Noticing that James was absorbed with something down near the playing field Bo added, “And Hein got here about five minutes ago. What the hell are you so interested in, Hein?”

Just then the cheer ended and the cheerleaders who had led the cheer came running off the field. They took up station on the cinder running track behind the players’ bench and nervously milled about, waiting for their captain’s instructions. James turned his attention back to the other boys. He grinned in a way that suggested he was about to divulge a delicious secret.

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He leaned toward the other three and his eyes twinkled as he nodded down toward the field and said in a confidential tone, “Check out the Power twins!”

Joan and Jane Power were nearly identical twins. They were seniors on the varsity cheerleading squad and very attractive girls. The four boys looked on in appreciation at the twins’ shoulder-length, wavy blond hair, deep blue eyes set in velvety skinned ovular faces, and shapely figures. The conservative cheerleader outfits consisted of long sleeved, cream colored jackets and skirts over dark blue blouses and slightly baggy bloomers. The skirts were pleated and came to mid-thigh. Saddle shoes, bobby sox and little cream colored, Eton-styled caps bobby-pinned on the top of their heads rounded out the attire. Oh, and of course the pom-poms, but what boy gave much attention to those? These cheerleader outfits did little to hide these girls’ obvious charms.

“Nice legs!” Rafe said admiringly.

“I’m in love with those tits”, responded James gleefully, as he gestured with his hands as if holding two melons. “Watch the next time they do a cheer and jump up and down”, he directed; “makes me dream of playing the windshield wiper kissing game with either of those sets of knockers!” Bo burst out laughing and then so did Rafe and Jack.

The boys continued to banter until the teams took the field for the start of the game and the playing of the “Star Spangled Banner”. Once the game started, the boys turned their attention primarily to the action on the field, except when the cheerleaders performed their routines. By game’s end the Power Twins Fan Club was born and lived until the end of basketball season in that school year of 1955-1956.

Oh, and yes, the Bisons won the game easily by three touchdowns.

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*Friday evening, October 7, 1955...*

Rafe and Jack had gotten a ride back to the high school from Jack’s older brother, Brad. Up until now, Rafe had not seen much of Brad as he was rarely home whenever Rafe went to Jack’s house after school or in the evenings. Brad was a senior on the QHS football team, playing offensive and defensive tackle, and when he wasn’t at football practice, he was out on a date or driving around with his teammates and other high school buddies. To Rafe, Brad seemed real cool. There was a simple casualness about him, almost an indifference to anything going on about him. Like a lot of big brothers he liked to lord it over his younger brother and he would tease Jack a bit.

Tonight the annual Freshman Autumn Dance was being held in the high school gym. Rafe and Jack entered the school and took the side stairs down to the basement level. They

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entered the ramp by the boys' restroom and lockers. Walking up the ramp toward the gym they passed two of the teachers who were acting as chaperones for the dance – Mrs. Purell and Mr. Fielder. Mrs. Purell was evidently into her teaching mode. Rafe overheard her explaining to Mr. Fielder the purpose of the dance. “First of all it is to provide a safe, chaperoned social setting to help the freshmen boys and girls get to know one another better. It is one of several school sponsored social interactions intended to mold the boys and girls, who come from the various towns, into a unified class.”

Mr. Fielder was politely nodding, and saying “Yes, I see”, as if what Mrs. Purell was saying was the most profound thing he had heard all day.

Mrs. Purell continued “It is expected that each class will become more solidified over its four years of high school and as the boys and girls mature into men and women they will form lasting bonds of friendship.”

Passing beyond the teachers Rafe and Jack ambled into the gym. The band was playing “The Tennessee Waltz”, a song that was made popular by Patti Page in 1951, but hardly anyone was dancing. The gym was decorated in an Autumn Harvest theme, with hay stalks, clumps of corn ears, and a handmade string of cutout letters declaring “Class of '59 Freshman Autumn Dance”. Crepe paper streamers ran the width and length of the gym forming a canopy high over the heads of the throng.

Boys were standing around hands in pockets in groups of two or three on the near side of the gym, occasionally talking to one another. It was as if there was an invisible chasm across the width of the basketball court and with one small step they might plunge into the depths, never to return.

On the far side all of the girls were also in small groups, some smiling confidently and some smiling nervously, but most were chatting away animatedly. Every once in a while a boy or girl would furtively scan the horizon across the gym floor, and shyly avert their eyes if they happened to lock onto another's across the way. Only a few brave souls were out on the floor dancing. And a rare few locked eyes as if to say to the other “Well, how about it? I'm willing if you are”.

On either side of the gym two ramps ran up from the basement level to the basketball court. Along the near side of the court was the auditorium section that spanned the length of the basketball court and rose up to the main or first floor. Directly across the court from the auditorium section was the stage on which the 6-piece band was performing. The band members, all in their thirties and forties, played a piano, drums, base fiddle, trumpet, trombone, and tenor sax. It was certainly not a rockin' band. Somehow they even managed to make a current pop song sound like elevator music.

“Undoubtedly our parents type of music”, Rafe remarked to Jack.

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“Humph! This looks like a funeral in here”, responded Jack.

Rafe and Jack picked their way towards the ramp on the other side of the auditorium, the ramp that led to the girls’ locker room and rest room. That way they figured they could more easily check out the girls as they went back and forth to “powder their nose”. On the way they spotted James who was already standing just off the ramp checking over the girls going back and forth. James then spotted them and waved them on. As they neared that end of the gym, there was Bo out on the dance floor, dancing with Cathy Wood.

Rafe’s initial reaction was one of near jealousy. He felt a bit envious of Bo, because it was obvious by now that Bo was one of the most popular guys in the freshman class, equally among the girls and guys. On top of that he was handsomer than Rafe. But a bond of friendship had already begun between them and so Rafe shrugged off that initial feeling. Then a more puzzling feeling edged its way into Rafe’s emotions. This feeling was stronger than the first and ultimately longer lasting. Rafe couldn’t be sure what it was then, but years later he came to understand that it was the beginning of the realization that Cathy would never be his girl. He had lost her even before he had made a serious attempt to win her heart.

Cathy spied Rafe and Jack and waved hello. The slow dance ended as the band finished its rendition of “The Tennessee Waltz” and Cathy led Bo over to where Rafe and Jack were standing with James. After exchanging pleasantries and the introduction of Cathy and James, Cathy said cheerfully as her gaze panned among the four boys “I’m so glad you all are already friends. I want everyone in our class to be friends, don’t you?”

Jack sort of snickered and shrugged. Bo, James and Rafe nodded their agreement, just to be polite.

Just then a very cute girl came out of the ramp. Cathy energetically waved the other girl over and they smiled at one another and hugged. “This is Martha Luchese from Holmvale” Cathy announced. “We were on the decorating committee for tonight’s dance and we had so much fun doing it”, she quickly added with a smile. Cathy then introduced Martha to Bo, James, Rafe and Jack. The four boys eyed Martha over with obvious appreciation. She was five foot three with a well-rounded proportional figure. Her hair was thick, dark brown, nearly black and fell just above her shoulders showing a small amount of the nape of her neck. Expressive Brown eyes leaped out from behind feminine-styled eyeglasses and dark brown eyebrows. Martha with her exotic Italian beauty was at least a year advanced in physical maturity than the majority of girls in the freshmen class.

The band started to play a cha-cha number. Cathy and Martha excused themselves and rushed out onto the floor to dance. James smiled and said, “That’s about as fine a looking gal as I seen. I’d stack her up against any of our girls from Quaytown; and that Cathy sure is cute, too, but not as developed in the all-important chest area as Martha”.



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“I could go for that Martha myself. In a *big* way, if you catch my drift”, Bo added as he slyly grinned.

“How big”, challenged Jack.

“Big enough”, Bo shot back with a chuckle.

Rafe didn't say anything. He was intent on watching Cathy as she turned and moved forward and backward to the cha-cha rhythm. He felt a sadness tug at his heart - sensing but not really understanding this sudden feeling of loss. Yet he could not quite give up hope that maybe someday...

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*Thursday evening, December 8, 1955...*

The football season was over and basketball season had begun. It was 5:30pm. Bo had just finished showering after the freshman basketball game and was getting dressed in the boys' locker room. He had had a good game, leading the QHS frosh with 17 points, 6 rebounds and 7 assists. But he was even happier at the fact that they had beaten the Barton Hall squad by 12 points, 44 to 32. Bo played one of the guard positions, along with Whizzie Grant, one of the two Negro boys on the squad. Bo and Whizzie had successfully executed a freeze for the last 2 ½ minutes of the game, taking turns dribbling the ball around the court, forcing the other team to foul in order to try and get possession of the ball. There was no shot clock in those days, so basketball games generally had lower scores.

After dressing, Bo went out through the double doors to the lockers in the basement hall that were set-aside for the boys on the team. He opened the combination lock, flung open the door and hung up his sweat stained basketball uniform, towel and soggy jockstrap on the hooks. Then he tossed in his sneakers and sweat socks to the bottom of the locker. Lastly he retrieved from the upper shelf his schoolbooks, which he had carried down from his regular school locker on the first floor. There was another game scheduled for after school tomorrow and then he would bring home his uniform and other gear for his mom to wash.

Bo closed the locker door, snapped the combo lock shut and spun the dial. He looked over to the right and saw Whizzie walking away down the hall toward the exit. “Great game, Whizzie, see ya tomorrow!” Bo called after Whizzie, who did not turn around, but merely raised his right arm and waved his hand goodbye. Bo wasn't sure what was on Whizzie's mind. He wondered if it had anything to do the current events of the last few days. Something about a Negro woman in Mississippi, name Rosa Parks, who had refused to give up her seat to a White person and move to the rear of a bus. Then just today in Miss Remson's civics class, she brought up a news story from the morning newspaper about a Negro minister, named Martin something King organizing a boycott of the busses in whatever town this was happening.

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“Oh, well” he thought to himself as he headed toward the exit, “no big deal. It really has nothing to do with us here in Quaytown. After all, this is the North and there are no restrictions on Negroes here in Quaytown. They can do just about anything that we can. Well, I guess that’s not completely true. The Palace movie house requires Negroes to sit in the balcony. But they don’t have to sit in the rear of the busses or use separate drinking fountains or bathrooms. And they can eat in just about any restaurant or diner, except for the Quaytown Yacht Club. But, hell, a lot of us White folks are not welcome there, either.”

Bo left the school and walked the eleven blocks to his home on Kinnelon Street. As he walked into the house, the aroma of Italian food filled his nostrils and he suddenly became aware of just how hungry he was. Mrs. Orechio was in the kitchen, but she sensed, more than heard the side door off the driveway open and close. “Get washed up, Bo. Dinner will be ready in a few minutes,” his mom said, as she half-turned to smile at him in that special way that mothers seem to reserve for their sons.

She had previously cooked and added Italian sausage, peppers, and onions to the tomato sauce in the large four-quart pot, and was stirring the ingredients to keep it from burning at the bottom of pot. In a separate pot the spaghetti noodles were just about cooked al a dente and so she turned off the gas.

Bo’s older sister, Mary Ann was in the kitchen helping Mrs. Orechio by setting the large kitchen table with five place settings. “Hi sis”, he said.

“Hello, Bo”, she replied rather distractedly. Then she added in a commanding, almost curt tone, “Hurry up, so we can have dinner...I have a date with my dreamboat tonight!”

“Right. Be ready in a flash. I’m starved!” Bo responded as he headed for the bathroom. The radio on the kitchen counter was turned on at a reasonable volume so as not to infringe on any conversation. It was tuned to WABC AM in New York City. Mary Ann began singing along to the song, “Only You” by the Platters. The Disk Jockey had just announced that the song was still in the top ten after being number one for weeks.

Younger brother, Chet was leaning against the doorway between the kitchen and the living room as Bo passed by. “Oh, I just can’t wait to see my dreamboat, tonight”, Chet teasingly mimicked Mary Ann.

That comment drew a huff from Mary Ann, who put one hand on her hip and glared at Chet with a look that could kill. “You had just better watch your mouth you little twerp, or I’ll tell that little Adriana that you have a crush on her”, she shot back mockingly.

“You wouldn’t!” Chet yelled back.

“All right children! That’s enough of that!” Mrs. Orechio said gently, but firmly. “Chet, tell your father that dinner is ready, as she finished ladling the tomato sauce into a large serving

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bowl. “Mary Ann, empty the pot of spaghetti into the colander to drain and then put it in that serving bowl and onto the table”, she directed, “and turn that radio off”.

At Chet’s signal, Mr. Orechio put down the newspaper, got up from his favorite chair in the living room, turned off the TV and the nightly CBS News Hour with Walter Cronkite, and made his way to the kitchen. He sat down at his customary place at the head of table, followed by Chet and Bo, who had returned from washing up. Mary Ann and Mrs. Orechio placed the serving bowls on the table in front of Mr. Orechio and then they, too, took their seats. After a short blessing of Grace, the family took turns filling their plates and started to eat. Chet was the first to ask Bo how his basketball game went and Bo related the highlights. During the remainder of the dinner, conversation ebbed and flowed around various topics until it was time to clear the table. Mary Ann hurriedly helped Mrs. Orechio, so that she could get ready for her date. Mr. Orechio returned to the living room to finish reading the newspaper and watch the start of the evening shows. One of his favorite shows, “You Bet Your Life” with Groucho Marx would be starting soon. Bo and Chet retired to their respective rooms to do homework. Later, at 9:00pm, the family would congregate in the living room to watch “Dragnet”.

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*Friday, April 20, 1956...*

“Hit that S.O.B.!” yelled one of the opposing team players.

“Yahoo! Go get him Coach Costello!” yelled one of the QHS players.

The baseball game between the two freshmen squads was being interrupted by a fistfight between the two coaches. The players on both squads surrounded the two combatants in a ragged circle. Some of the boys on both sides were jumping up and down, shouting encouragement; some were mimicking the two brawling coaches by flailing away at the empty air; a few were just laughing and enjoying the spectacle. Rafe had walked rapidly off the mound toward the fight in disbelief. Bo held his catcher’s mask in his left hand and had dropped his catcher’s mitt at home plate as he joined up with Rafe along the first base line where the fight was moving back and forth in front of the visiting team’s bench. Bo’s right fist was opening and closing. He was ready if one of the opposing teams wanted to get into it. Jack had ambled over from third base and Whizzie from second base. The shortstop and first baseman were among the first at the scene. James had run in from left field and came up alongside Bo. He was grinning. The rest of the outfielders came running up, too.

“Holy Toledo!” exclaimed Rafe to no one in particular. Then he turned first to Bo and James on his right and then Jack on his left and yelled to them above the noise of the crowd, “I don’t believe this! What the hell got into Coach Costello?”

“This isn’t the first time he’s gotten into it with the other team’s coach”, yelled back Bo.

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“He did it once last year in one of our eighth grade games.”

Events had started innocently enough. A batter on the opposing team had hit a slow ground ball to third that Jack had bobbled and then threw to first. The first base umpire had called a runner safe and it was a good call although quite close. Coach Costello had called timeout and charged out to argue with the umpire. Upon losing the argument, Coach Costello started back toward the visiting team bench. The opposing coach had walked up to the home plate umpire and with arms folded, yelled something to Coach Costello like “Are you satisfied? He was safe by mile!”

Coach Costello then ran up to home plate, nearly bumping the other coach, who was at least seven inches taller, and fairly spitting out (small specs of spittle were shooting out from his mouth like projectiles), “When I want your opinion, I’ll ask for it!” This led to first one, then the other yelling and jabbing their fingers at one another and progressively getting angrier. Within a heartbeat Coach Costello threw right and left combination punches at the other coach, the right one grazing off the shoulder and the left one missing wildly as the other coach moved back and to his right. Then it was the opposing coach’s turn. He landed a right punch that glanced off the top of Coach Costello’s head, knocking off his baseball cap. Almost without hesitation the two men grabbed fistfuls of each other’s baseball jackets and started to half wrestle and half push and pull one another, twisting around in circles as the taller man’s advantage of leverage caused them to end up along the first base line in front of the visitors’ bench. After letting go of one another and both missing with wild haymakers, the plate umpire was able to step in between and warn them that the game would be forfeited if they didn’t stop immediately. Obviously tired and having spent their anger, both dropped their hands, glared at each other, and walked back to their respective benches. The game proceeded without further altercations, but neither coach would shake hands after the game. The QHS freshman team won, however, 9 to 7.

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*The following night...*

Rafe and Jack were approaching Susan Brownell’s house. Rafe was immediately awed by its immense size. You could fit four or five of his cape cod house in Susan’s. Not only that but it was on a large corner lot that was at least three-quarters of an acre with lots of grass all around. The house fronted on Ridge Street, the Nob Hill of Quaytown. It had two stories with a basement and an attic under a green gabled roof. The house itself was sided with clapboard and painted white. A full-sized two car detached garage was behind the house facing Carter street on the side. A covered porch ran the full length of both Ridge and Carter streets. The front entrance was at the corner of the house, where Ridge and Carter intersect.

“I feel a bit nervous”, Rafe confided to Jack. “All of the Hoi Polloi, wealthy freshmen kids from Quaytown will be here. I hope I can make more friends”, he added expectantly. “I mean, after all, Sue and her crowd and most of the kids from Quaytown are the most popular

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kids and already the recognized leaders in our class.” Then to himself he continued, “Maybe some of that popularity can rub off on me. I’d like to be with the In Crowd for once in my life.”

Jack looked at Rafe as if to say, “What are you worried about?” But instead he shrugged his shoulders and said, “Yeah, I suppose. But I’ll reserve judgment until I get to know some of these kids better. I sure would like to get to know Susan Brownell a lot better...like maybe in a dark, secluded spot somewhere.”

Rafe said, “I second that! I also kind of dig that other Susan, Sue Barlow” And they both laughed. “Come on, Jack, let’s find Bo and James. Maybe they can smooth the way for us with a couple of girls named Sue”. By now they were walking up the front steps toward the front door. Small groups of guys and gals were mingling on the far ends of the porch. Music was streaming out from within the house through the partly open first floor windows. It was evident that the party was well underway...

*Oh-oh, yes I'm the great pretender  
Pretending that I'm doing well  
My need is such I pretend too much  
I'm lonely but no one can tell  
Oh-oh, yes I'm the great pretender  
Adrift in a world of my own  
I've played the game but to my real shame  
You've left me to grieve all alone*

*Too real is this feeling of make-believe  
Too real when I feel what my heart can't conceal...*

The Platters had scored another Top 10 hit with “The Great Pretender”, following right on the heels of “Only You”. The record was playing on a phonograph built into a console that housed a radio and a TV, all in one piece of hand-rubbed maple furniture. This was not your average teenager’s Hi-Fi phonograph, but an expensive item, known as an entertainment console. The cover was up and Rafe sauntered over to check out the stack of 45’s that were on the spindle. Except for the Platters, it was mostly goody-goody pop music; no R&B or real Rock & Roll. James walked up alongside Rafe and whispered “You won’t find anything hot in that stack of old folks’ music. Ain’t nothing there to get the blood boiling, or the hips to swayin’, or the boobs to bouncin’, or the thighs wet.”

“You got that right! How’s it goin’ Hein? How’s the party? Cookin’ yet?” Rafe said as he put the records back on the player stack. As he did so, it jostled the turntable and the pickup arm jumped ever so slightly causing a skip in the play of the Platters record.

James responded by saying with mock seriousness, “You’re in the house of Snow White. You can’t expect this to be a steamy and torrid affair. It just wouldn’t be proper, don’t you know?”

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Just then a rather mousy looking girl charged up to Rafe. She had a look of annoyance on her face. “Please, don’t handle the records; you’re liable to scratch them. Susan has put me in charge of them!” The word please sounded more like “pull ease” with two syllables drawn out in an exaggerated way.

“Hey, I’m sorry” Rafe pleaded, as James pulled him away. Rafe thought he heard the girl respond with a “Humph”.

“You have just had the pleasure of being tongue-lashed by the highly undesirable, Emily Thurston. Don’t you feel the better for it?” James said quietly with a hint of his trademark sarcasm. “Come on; let’s go meet the hostess with the mostess. Then we’ll find Bo and see if we can’t scap up a few lovelies.”

Rafe followed James out to the kitchen, and asked, “What does ‘scap’ mean?”

James whispered, “It’s like picking and choosing, or better yet picking up a girl.”

“Oh,” Rafe replied understanding what James meant with this word Rafe had never heard before. As they entered the kitchen, there was Sue Brownell talking with several obviously enthralled boys from the freshman class. He recognized a couple of them; they were guys from Holmvale, one of the three surrounding towns that sent their high school age kids to QHS, since neither of these towns had the wherewithal, or the population at this time, to justify building their own high school.

When Susan saw Rafe enter the kitchen with James, she smiled and waved for him to come over to where she was encamped. James meanwhile headed for the snacks that were placed on the center island counter, and said over his shoulder, “I’ll go round up Bo and meet you back here”.

“Gosh, she really is very pretty”, Rafe thought as he headed toward Sue. He still had that bit of a tough guy saunter that seemed to resurface whenever he felt uncertain or shy. It was an automatic defense mechanism that he imagined made him appear nonchalant and cool. There was only one class subject that Rafe had with Sue. It was American History on the main floor. Sue sat several seats behind Rafe and he had only a few minutes to get to his next class on the second floor so he rarely got to appreciate her fine looks or try to say more than hello.

Rafe was now admiring her silky brown hair, deep brown eyes, cute little turned up nose, and full sensual lips. Her friendly smile for him as he stopped across from her was a bit disarming but made Rafe feel somewhat more confident. He nodded to the two boys from Holmvale. The third boy had moved on as Rafe was approaching. Sue performed the introductions so adroitly that Rafe wondered if her parents had sent her to a charm school or finishing school of some type. Regardless, he was impressed – no, it was more like enamored. So much so that two minutes later he couldn’t remember the names of the Holmvale guys. “So glad you could come tonight, Rafe!” Sue remarked in a bubbly way. “I so much wanted to get all of

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the top students in our class together and I've been looking forward to this party for weeks. So, tell me, Rafe, how do you like QHS?"

Rafe hesitated for a second before answering. He was suddenly aware that he wanted very much to impress Sue and therefore he wanted his reply to be something more than a short sentence fragment like "Okay, I Guess", accompanied with a shrug of the shoulders. So, instead he responded, "I'm very happy with school. I like most of the teachers, and just about all of the kids are friendly, even the upperclassmen. It's a lot better than having to go to high school in Newark, where I lived before moving down here. How about you, Susan? I suppose that you pretty much knew what to expect, you being from Quaytown."

"Well good!" Sue said with a big friendly smile. "I'm glad you like it at QHS. And as for me, you're correct; the kids from Quaytown are familiar with the school system. Several of the high school teachers used to teach in the grammar school. And I hope you are enjoying the party and getting to meet a lot of people."

Just then the two boys from Holmvale excused themselves, nodding at Rafe and saying almost in sync, "Nice to meet you", as they headed off to the living room.

Sue's smile suddenly began to fade and she became perceptibly more serious as she watched the other two boys move off and then turned her gaze back to Rafe, while inching closer to him. "Thanks for rescuing me, Rafe", she whispered. "I'm sure they are very nice, but all they could talk about was farming – planting and harvesting zucchini, tomatoes, other kinds of vegetables and that sort of thing. It just got terribly boring after a while." Her smile returned as she continued with a low voice, "I've noticed in our American History class how you always seem to know the correct answers when Mrs. Cortese asks a question. You obviously keep up with the homework. I've tried to talk to you several times, but you always rush off after class."

Rafe felt himself beginning to blush at the compliment, and fought to keep from stammering. "My next class is Algebra and...and it's clear up on the far end of the second floor, and I have to get to my locker to exchange text books." He added rather earnestly, "I don't like to carry extra books around if I don't have to". Then attempting to smile and trying to add a little flirtatiousness to his voice, he said somewhat glibly, "I've wanted to say more than hello for months now. But you're such a popular girl, especially with the guys, that the opportunity somehow didn't seem to come up."

"Well, we'll just have to find a way to get better acquainted!" Sue stated coyly as she winked and smiled deliciously. "But now I have to play hostess and circulate with the others." Almost too quickly the coyness disappeared and the smile changed back to her less intimate version as she started to move off toward the adjoining family rec room.

As she was doing so, Bo and James, with Jack trailing entered the kitchen from the rec room. James had apparently found both Bo and Jack while Rafe was talking with Sue. Bo called out, "Hey, Rafe, where've you been?"

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At that Sue stopped in her tracks, looked first at Bo and then back at Rafe. The friendly smile was gone and in its place was a look of mild annoyance as if to say, “So you two are friends, huh?” Then she and Bo exchanged polite “hellos” and Sue scurried on.

Bo, James, Jack and Rafe then went into the living room at Bo’s suggestion. Emily was still taking charge of the music and “Heartbreak Hotel” was playing. Elvis Presley’s first recording for RCA Records had literally zoomed to the top of the charts faster than just about any song in history. A group of girls from Quaytown were gathered with Emily, not far from the entertainment console, all chatting vociferously. Rafe only recognized one of the other girls...it was Sue Barlow and Rafe was instantly alert to the opportunity to finally get to talk with her. He had mentioned his interest to James earlier and James had promised to arrange an introduction.

As they approached the group of girls, it sounded as if there were two or three different conversations going at the same time. The boys could only catch snippets of sentences.

“Don’t you just adore Elvis Presley?” they overheard one of the girls say.

“Oh, yes! What a dreamboat! Did you see the article and picture of him in *Seventeen*?” chirped another.

“He’s okay, but I still drool over James Dean, even though he died in that terrible car crash!” said a third.

That was one conversation. The other revolved around the hot news of the day...the marriage of the actress Grace Kelly to Prince Rainier. It had been *the* major news story on TV and the newspapers since the wedding two days ago, on Thursday.

“Wasn’t it just the most beautiful wedding?” one girl exclaimed dreamily.

“Absolutely the most! It was so extravagant and royal-like. It’s like a real life story of Cinderella! Can you imagine? Couldn’t you just die?” responded another rhetorically.

A third subject of conversation or stream of consciousness was ending as the boys approached, so they were unable to overhear more than something about some boy that one of the girls had evidently taken a fancy to.

To Bo and the other boys the amazing thing was not just that these subjects were all being discussed simultaneously, but that several of the girls seemed adept at rapidly switching from one then the other subject without losing the context.

“Hi!” announced James in order to break into the girls’ multi-level conversation. “Girls, you already know Bo, but I want you to meet two of the coolest guys to ever come out of North Kingsboro, Rafe Cerny and Jack Pauley.” Then he added, still with that grin that looked like the cat that ate the canary, “Guys, meet Sue Barlow, Dana Sloane, Carol Matthews, Heather O’Brien, Betty Armstrong, and last but not least Emily Thurston. Here we have assembled the



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crème de la crème of Quaytown freshmen girls”, he added with a hint of mock superiority in his voice, followed by a chuckle that bordered on a guffaw. Everyone laughed as the nervousness of being introduced to relative strangers was eased by James’s playful presentation.

The group of girls now imperceptibly opened up their ranks to allow the four boys to join with them into a larger circle. Cautious chatting went on for a few minutes. Rafe found himself next to Sue Barlow. He had observed her to be very talkative when she was among just the girls, but now she seemed a lot more reserved, if not demure. He asked her some innocuous questions about school and she answered in a straight-forward manner, though not effusively. Sue asked Rafe a few questions about his likes and dislikes, sort of feeling him out to see if perhaps there might be some things they had in common. Rafe began to feel that his quiet shyness was a bit of a hindrance, but after another minute or so of light conversation, Sue seemed to relax and that in turn helped Rafe to feel a little more confident. He made up his mind that he would ask her out on a date sometime soon. He had etched in his mind a replica of her figure... narrow waist, full hips, smallish breasts, and nice legs despite appearing to be ever so slightly bowed – it was a bit difficult to tell despite the tight skirt, because it came down to just below the knees. Sue had a cute, angular face with a narrow chin, brown wavy hair with no apparent part, blue eyes, a long delicate nose and somewhat thin but well-shaped lips.

Meanwhile Jack was talking it up with Betty Armstrong, who was cute but not overly attractive. The other four girls were laughing and joking with Bo and James. During a lull in his conversation with Sue Barlow, Rafe couldn’t help but notice James lean over and whisper something in Dana Sloane’s ear. Dana had been busily looking through the stack of 45’s during the introductions and only now did Rafe see what a stunning looking creature she was. She was as tall as James, stately and had the face and body of a fashion model. Rafe watched bemused as first Dana and a few seconds later James excused themselves. The rest of the group didn’t seem to notice, but Rafe watched out of the corner of his eye as Dana and James walked through the kitchen and out the side door to the back yard.

Rafe turned his attention back just as Sue was talking to him about a movie she liked. “Didn’t you just love that movie, *On the Waterfront*, with Marlon Brando?” she said animatedly.

“Yeah”, Rafe responded kind of half-heartedly. Then he added with more seriousness, “I thought it was very good acting by all of the stars in the film. But it was also kind of a downer - sort of depressing. I kind of like more upbeat movies. I guess I’m a sap for the happy ending kind of movies.”

“Well, sure, I like a happy ending, too”, agreed Sue quickly, with a smile and a twinkle in her eye.

Rafe sensed that this was a sort of signal and gathered up the courage. “Well, so...how about going to a movie with me. I mean would you like to, you know, ah, go to the Palace movie house with me sometime?”

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“Well, I suppose if we could go with another couple it would be OK with my parents. Do you think one of your friends would like to double date?” Sue inquired somewhat coyly.

“I’ll ask”, Rafe said almost too quickly. Then he added, “I’ll let you know in school”.

Just then James showed up and sidled up to Bo. He whispered something in Bo’s ear and they both started to chuckle. Rafe caught a hint of a red mark on the side of James’s face and wondered what had transpired in the back yard with Dana.

After about ten minutes, Bo and James turned to Rafe and Jack to signal it was time to move on. The boys said their goodbyes and headed out to the porch. Bo and James wanted a cigarette (they had started smoking recently) and wanted to get some air. Besides Susan Brownell’s parents forbade smoking in their house. Out on the porch the boys shared their opinions about the girls and the party. Bo couldn’t hold on to the secret and blurted out how James had gotten Dana to kiss him and then tried to cop a feel. James was laughing as he explained how he had French kissed Dana and then stealthily slid his hand up under her sweater to cup her right breast, and how she then pulled away from him and slapped him on his right cheek. “She was more surprised than angry about me touching her tit”, he chuckled.

After that James entertained with his impression of Emily Thurston, which brought rollicking laughter from the other three boys. By then it was time for Rafe and Jack to head for the bus stop to catch the 10:30pm bus home. Beginning in March the bus line had started running busses every hour after 9:30pm, up until 3:30am, but Rafe still had a curfew of 11:00pm, so he and Jack said goodnight.

On the bus trip home Rafe and Jack talked idly about the party and the kids they met. When they got off the bus, they made plans to play basketball at the North Kingsboro grammar school the next day. On his mile walk home from the bus stop, Rafe passed by Cathy Wood’s house and wondered how she had gotten home. He had seen her at the party and they had shared some small talk. She seemed a bit distant with him, but thoroughly alive and engrossed with a lot of kids from the class he didn’t know very well. Martha had not attended the party, much to Bo’s disappointment. Rumor was that she had very strict parents – the “old world” Italian type.

Rafe reached home, said goodnight to his parents, who were already in bed but not asleep, washed up, undressed and lay on his bed replaying the events of the night in his mind. As he slipped off to sleep, he began to have an erotic dream about running around in a grassy field with Sue Barlow. Well, at first it was Sue, but the girl kept changing back and forth between Sue and Cathy. And then it was morning...

## **Beach Party Days: Chapter 4**

*Tuesday, June 7, 1956...*

Rafe was in the freshmen boys' Phys Ed class. The teacher in charge was the varsity football coach Harold "Ruffy" Cook. With the exception of a few of the more nerdy freshmen boys, the boys in the school addressed him as either "Coach" or "Ruffy". The girls used the slightly more formal title of "Coach Cook". Only the nerds used the formal title of "Mr. Cook". Ruffy was a legend in the entire central New Jersey shore area. He had been head varsity football coach at QHS for over twenty years, and despite having a only a few truly successful teams over that time – an overall winning percentage just above fifty percent - he was well respected by most and adored by many. It was not unusual for a former player to visit with him at practices or in the school to seek his advice on a problem or opportunity they faced. To a lot of young and adult men, including some who never had the skills to play football, he was like a surrogate father. While he had this gruff outward persona, it didn't take long to figure out that underneath that exterior this man had a very big soft heart.

Coach Ruffy was a pear shaped man in his fifties, about five foot, six inches. He had a ruddy face with full cheeks, a good head of salt and pepper hair that was just beginning to thin out, bushy eyebrows, and a wide short nose on which hung a pair of black framed thick eyeglasses which he frequently pushed back up on the nose. He wore a pair of tan slacks and a white dress shirt with a red tie loosened at the neck.

When the bell rang, Rafe started to file out of the classroom along with the other boys. Coach Ruffy was standing just inside the doorway on the left and as Rafe reached the doorway and nodded goodbye, Ruffy delivered a jab to Rafe's gut with the back of his right hand. It wasn't all that hard of a blow and Rafe absorbed it easily, but it did force him to stop and look up with surprise at Ruffy, as if to say, "What was that for?"

Ruffy smiled and extended his left arm out to block Rafe from moving on. His left hand rested on Rafe's shoulder gently but firmly folding over the collarbone. With his characteristic make-believe gruff voice and stern look Ruffy said, "You passed my test, son. I expect to see you come out for football next season. What's your name again?"

"Rafe Cerny", Rafe responded obediently, while still trying to recover from the surprise "test".

"Okay, Cerny, practice starts in mid-August...Monday, August 20<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am to be exact. Team Physicals will be held here at the school on Friday, August 17<sup>th</sup> from 10:00am to Noon. You must pass Dr. Runyon's physical in order to try out for the team. You must also have your parents sign a permission slip, which you can get from the school office. If you know any of the football players on the freshmen team, JV's or Varsity, ask them for details. Otherwise stop in my coach's office before school ends for the summer and I'll answer any questions. Okay, now get going." Ruffy removed his hand to let Rafe exit the classroom.

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“Okay, bye, Coach”, Rafe said. As he hurried down the hall he thought to himself, “Wow. I can’t wait to try out for the football team. I wonder if I will make it”. It never occurred to him that his parents might not sign the permission slip; he was confident they would.

After his next class, Rafe ran into Bo in the hall and told him about his encounter with Ruffy. Bo laughed and said, “So, you evidently passed Ruffy’s patented test or else he wouldn’t have invited to come out for football”.

“Hope I can make the team”, Rafe said pensively.

“No sweat! No one gets cut unless they are a pussy or totally uncoordinated or can’t pass the physical, which by the way isn’t any more difficult than an army physical. As long as you don’t have a hernia, a heart condition or no fingers or toes, you’ll pass. Take my word for it.”

Rafe felt relieved. He reflected on the fact that since the beginning of school last fall, he had grown from five foot-two to five foot-six and had started to slim down from his former chunky build. He moved on to his next class, but for the rest of the school day he had trouble concentrating. He kept imagining running through the line with the ball and scoring a Touchdown. The crowd in the stands was cheering and pretty cheerleaders that looked like Susan Brownell, Cathy Wood, and Martha Luchese were all yelling “Go, Rafe, Go!”

“Mr. Cerny, are you here today or somewhere else?” Rafe was startled back to reality by the voice of Mrs. Cortese. The school period for American History had been in session only about five minutes at this point. “Do you wish me to repeat the question, Mr. Cerny?” ...

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*Saturday, August 11, 1956...*

*You-oooh send me; darling you-oooh send me.  
Darling you-oooh send me, honest you  
do. At first I thought it was infatuation,  
But ooh it’s lasted so-o-o long.  
Now I find myself wanting to  
marry you and take you home...*

The 1956 black and white four-door Ford Fairlane was heading North on the New Jersey Turnpike, approaching exit 9. Rafe was in the center of the front bench seat between his grandfather, Len, who was driving and his mom, Millie, who was on the passenger side. Rafe’s grandmother, Beth, and father, Rick, were sitting in the back seat. They were returning from a ten-day vacation in Florida. All the way from Florida Rafe had been working the AM radio finding stations that played Rhythm and Blues or Rock and Roll. The song “You Send Me” by

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Sam Cooke had become an instant hit and was being played on stations all the way from Florida through the Carolinas, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and on into New Jersey. Rafe's father had several times said, "What, that again?" But by now he was beginning to hum the tune and sing along.

Grandmother Beth was a consummate backseat driver, frequently requesting grandfather Len to slow down or watch out for a driver in another lane. Occasionally Len would snap back, "Relax, Beth, will you? I know what I'm doing". But mostly he just smiled, nodded, and continued on with the speedometer hugging the 70 mph mark.

After what seemed like the hundredth time that day of "slow down, Len, you're too close to that car in front", Beth turned to Rick and started to talk about her favorite TV shows. After running through a litany of her favorites, like "I Love Lucy", "Dragnet", and "The Colgate Comedy Hour" (with Milton Berle), she rather wistfully stated, "But, you know Rick, I think what I'll miss the most is Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis. It's too bad they broke up their act last month. They were so good together. Don't you think?"

Rick responded in his quiet way, "Yes. Lewis is a very funny slap-stick kind of comedian and Martin is a good crooner of love ballads. They had a unique act. I read in the paper that they were the most financially successful comedy act in history. But I think I still like Abbott and Costello more."

Millie joined in the conversation at this point, but Rafe's mind was tuning out. It had been a busy summer. Rafe had played baseball along with Bo in the Quaytown's entry to the Babe Ruth League. The Quaytown Giants were being coached by two college guys, one of whom was a Quaytown alumni and the other, a friend of his who had graduated from Mason High, the neighboring town school that was Quaytown's arch rival in all sports.

Rafe recalled one game where he was pitching and Bo was the catcher. Bo gave Rafe the sign for a fastball and he positioned the catcher's mitt as a target for Rafe to throw inside to the right-handed batter. Rafe took his windup and threw a fastball that instead of it going straight and off the inside corner, it suddenly darted across the inside corner for a strike. Bo pulled off his mask, called timeout and walked quickly out to the mound. He had a look of disbelief on his sweat-stained face, but a shit-eating grin as well. "What the *hell* was that pitch you just threw? It must have jumped a foot at the last second. I almost didn't catch it and I think the batter lost his jock...maybe shit his pants, too!"

Rafe could only laugh, shrug his shoulders, and reply, "If I knew I'd bottle it and make a fortune. That sucker really had some action to it, didn't it?"

When he wasn't playing baseball with Bo, Rafe and Jack hung out at the swimming pool in Kingsboro during the day or at the boardwalk at night. They played a lot of basketball, too. But now it was getting close to the start of football and Rafe was beginning to get excited. He was looking forward to school this year much more so than last year. After all he was no longer a

## **Beach Party Days: Chapter 4**

lowly freshman. He had gained another inch over the summer and grown five inches in the past year; he was hitting the five foot, seven inch mark and had become leaner and more mature looking. He was feeling a lot more confident and optimistic about life these days, but there was still a bit of awkwardness and shyness when he thought of girls, especially the pretty ones like Susan Brownell, Sue Barlow, Martha Luchese, and Cathy Wood, who could still get him excited with just her smile.

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 5

*Friday afternoon, August 31, 1956...*

Summer was over and school was starting the following Tuesday, September 4<sup>th</sup>. This was the last day of student led football camp; the last day of practicing without helmets and pads. The Seacoast Conference High School Interscholastic Athletic Council (SCHIAC) rules dictated that High School football teams could not officially begin “organized” football practice until after Labor Day. That meant that coaches were not permitted to conduct football practices before Labor Day. This rule was supposed to ensure that every school that fielded a football team would not start practice before any other, thereby putting all teams on an equal footing. Any school that got caught breaking the rule could be penalized by forfeiting the entire football season. Of course this rule was impractical in that teams only had at best two weeks to conduct organized practices under the direction of their coaching staffs before the first game of the season.

Consequently, every school resorted to some form of cheating. At QHS the coaches would select two seniors to be co-captains for the coming season and have these boys lead the other players in conditioning exercises and drilling the team on plays from the playbook. This had to be made to look like an informal gathering of boys on the high school football field, just in case someone from the HSIAC, or a “spy” from a rival school, came around checking up. Obviously the boys could not be wearing the school’s helmets or pads, so these practices involved practically no blocking and tackling, but the players could work out blocking on the seven-man and two-man sleds, albeit without the pads.

The QHS senior co-captains selected this year were Gerry Rome and Hap Clooney. Both boys hailed from the town of Ulster Beach. Of the three sending districts to QHS, Ulster Beach had the lowest economic status. The town was known for its many bars – practically one on every corner of the main drag, Ulster Ave. A number of the boys that came out of Ulster Beach had garnered reputations as good fighters. A fair-sized group of boys were also among QHS’s finest athletes. As to the girls from Ulster Beach, well there was an implicit sense among the boys at QHS that in general the Ulster Beach girls were “hot to trot”, that is, faster and looser than the supposedly more prim and proper girls from Quaytown or the other two sending districts. This perception, of course, was not always warranted or justified. It was merely one of those myths from which teenage legends mysteriously emerge.

Hap Clooney was to be the starting quarterback on offense and safety on defense. Gerry Rome was to be the starting left halfback on offense and right cornerback on defense. Hap was a natural leader and pretty much ran the conditioning practices and drills for the two-week football camp. Hap was a tough task master and everyone on the team, varsity and jayvees alike, quickly got into shape.

At the end of this day’s practice, the players all headed for the water fountain next to the field house, which was about thirty yards off the South end zone. Bo and Rafe and the other jayvee players got in line behind the varsity guys, waiting their turn to get a drink. They found themselves just behind two other about-to-be sophomore boys who had just transferred into QHS. One boy was Earle Burnell, who had moved into North Kingsboro from Michigan. When

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they first met Earle two weeks ago at the start of football camp it seemed odd that a guy from Michigan would have a southern accent, but Earle had explained that he was originally from Louisiana. His family moved around a lot because his dad was in construction. He told them his nickname was “Burn”.

The other new boy was Tommy Slade. He had moved into North Kingsboro from Oklahoma. Bo and Rafe, being five foot, seven inches had to look up at the new guys. Earle was six foot, one inch and Tommy was a shade over six foot. Earle and Tommy lived in the same development on the opposite side of North Kingsboro from where Rafe lived. They were just over the town border from Quaytown and walked to the high school, just over a mile away.

While the four boys were waiting their turn for a drink of water, they struck up a conversation. Bo said, “I can’t wait to get to the school and get my helmet, pads and practice uniform. How about you guys?”

“Me, too,” replied Tommy in his Oklahoma twang. Rafe and Earle followed suit.

“Clooney said that Coach Cook and the assistant coaches will be waiting for us at the school, right after this practice to hand out the equipment. We’re supposed to go to the hallway behind the gym, by the boys’ dressing room,” added Rafe. Then he asked, “Hey, Burn and Tommy, do kids here tease you about your accents? I can imagine that they might call Tommy like, ‘Hey, Okie’ or ask you where you left your ten gallon hat.”

“Naw, I haven’t gotten any of that”, responded Tommy. “Maybe once school starts. I haven’t met too many kids beyond you guys on the football team. I imagine some prick will try to have sport with me, but he’ll be sorry when I sock him one.”

“I can see that you don’t take no shit!” Bo chimed in.

“Me neither!” Earle stated emphatically. “I had a run-in with some gangster in Michigan, but I whupped his sorry ass. He was damn tough, too! But in the end we became almost friends...not quite friends, but more like respect for one another. You know what I mean?”

They all nodded their assent. “Too bad summer is over, but I’m looking forward to school starting and football season”, Rafe said. Then he asked, “When did you two arrive in North Kingsboro and what has your summer been like?”

Earle responded for both of them, “I got here around mid-June and Tommy arrived about a few weeks before me. We got to know each other pretty quick, since we have a bit in common, what with transferring in and being from the South. We had some fun raiding the peach orchards, watermelon patches and strawberry fields on the other side of the highway in Holmvale.”



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“Yeah, how about that time when that ole farmer came after us with his shotgun?” Tommy laughingly said. “Damn near shit my pants! You should have seen Burn and I hightailin’ it through the peach orchard!”

At that the four boys had a good laugh. They were now at the front of the line, so they took their drink of water and headed to the school to collect their equipment.

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*Thursday evening, September 13, 1956...*

The click-clack of metal cleats scraping on the asphalt street sounded like some strange discordant symphony. Bo, Rafe, and the newly arrived sophomores, Earle Burnell and Tommy Slade, collectively felt physically drained. Despite being in good condition the double practices were strenuous. The boys on the Jayvee football squad were making their way from the football field back to the school to hit the showers. The school was a long block’s walk from the field.

The Jayvees had the dubious pleasure of practicing against the Varsity squad and then after the varsity beat up on them and left the practice field, they then got to scrimmage among themselves. Against the Varsity they first had to simulate the offense of the Ambrose Hills team that the Bisons Varsity would be battling in the season’s first game on the coming Saturday. Then they had to simulate that opposing team’s defense. As they dragged their tired bodies along the street, the four boys discussed but could not decide whether playing offense or defense against the QHS Varsity was the tougher thing to do.

“Man, my ass is draggin’” Rafe pronounced. “Playing defensive cornerback and tryin’ to tackle that Gerry Rome coming through the line is a nightmare! One time it’s like tryin’ to tackle a Mack Truck that runs over you, knocking you flat on your ass. The next time he makes a feint and cuts away on a dime, leaving you grasping at air with your jockstrap down around your ankles. He’s one hell of a halfback!”

“Hell!” exclaimed Earle. “I was playing defensive end and that quarterback, Hap Clooney, would fake a handoff and roll around my end like a race horse. I’d fight off the blocker and go to tackle him, but he’d shove a stiff-arm in my face and all I could do was stumble and fall on my face. Then I’d wind up picking grass out of my facemask, spitting dirt and lookin’ like a fool. What gets me is that I could overhear the plays being called and knew what to expect. Several times I busted up the plays, but that Clooney has a mean stiff-arm.”

“It’s no picnic trying to quarterback a strange offense against our Varsity defense either”, declared Bo. “This year’s Varsity looks to be awfully good. They may not be the biggest team overall in the conference this year, but damn are they ever so fast and they all like to bang heads”, he added.

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“You got that right! Every muscle in my body aches”, responded Tommy, as he put his hands up under his practice jersey and loosened the straps on his shoulder pads under each arm.

“Good idea” Rafe said as he too pulled up his jersey and loosened the shoulder pad straps. “Hell’s bells, I can’t wait to get this soggy uniform off and hit the showers.”

The sun was already low on the horizon, as it was nearly 6:00 pm, when the boys walked through the rear schoolyard, clambered through the outer doorway and down the six steps to the boys’ dressing room. The lack of horseplay and just a few muffled conversations attested to the fact that the boys were physically spent. The football cleats came off first, then the jerseys and shoulder pads, next the pants with the inserted thigh and kneepads, then the buckle-on hip pads (only the varsity players were issued the new light-weight “girdle” trunks), and lastly the jockstraps and sweat socks. Several boys sat naked or nearly so on the benches with their backs against the lockers trying to will their aching bodies to get up and move to the shower room on the far side of the large dressing room. The shower room was rectangular, separated from the dressing room by an entrance on either side of the four foot high concrete block wall with grouted tile covering. There were only eight showers in the tiled room, so the boys had to wait their turn to get under an available showerhead.

Earle and Tommy were among the first to get under a vacant shower, followed seconds later by Bo and Rafe. Getting the water adjusted to the right temperature was a bit of a challenge, as each additional shower that was turned on or off required every other shower to be readjusted. An occasional yelp issued from one boy or another as their water suddenly became too cold or too hot. While lathering up, Earle simultaneously urinated and exclaimed, “Man, what a relief; been having to take a healthy pee since we left the practice field!”

Bo, under the adjoining shower, in order to be heard over the hissing of the cascading water and the echo effect on the concrete walls and ceiling, yelled toward Earle, “Hey, Burn! Where the hell have *you* been all summer? You look white as a ghost...makes those long, skinny legs look like two sticks of chalk.” Everyone in the shower area except Earle laughed. Just about all the other boys were still sporting their summer tans, particularly Bo, whose Italian heritage naturally allowed him to sport a deep golden bronze.

Earle had removed his sports glasses before showering and his pale blue eyes initially flashed with real anger. Bo did not notice as he had turned around toward Rafe still laughing, and lathering up under his armpits. Rafe saw Earle’s initial reaction and was about to say something to calm the situation, when Earle evidently realized that Bo was just doing some friendly teasing. Earle saw the concern on Rafe’s face and winked at him as he stepped up behind Bo with a now mock look of anger on his face and motioning with his index finger over his mouth for Rafe to not let on. Rafe couldn’t help but smile at the anticipated surprise that Bo was about to get. When Earle got to within about two feet of Bo, Bo sensed it and turned around. He let out a loud shout and jumped nearly out of his skin. The soap dropped out of his hand and hit the tile floor. “Don’t do that! You damn near gave me a heart attack, sneakin’ up on me like that!” he exclaimed, as his right hand reflexively went to his chest over the heart. Now everyone was laughing

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uproariously, including Bo after he got his breath back under control. Suddenly all the tiredness, aches and pains seemed to melt away in the silly hilarity of the moment.

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*Tuesday, November 6, 1956...*

*...Well she's the girl in the red blue jeans.  
She's the queen of all the teens.  
She's the one that I know  
She's the one that loves me so.*

*Say be-bop-a-lula she's my baby, Be-bop-a-lula  
I don't mean maybe. Be-bop-a-lula she's  
my baby  
Be-bop-a-lula I don't mean maybe  
Be-bop-a-lula she's my baby love,  
My baby love, my baby love...*

James was singing silently to himself the big hit by Gene Vincent and the Blue Caps while he made his way through the lunch line. He had packed his tray with a grilled ham and cheese sandwich with French fries, a slice of apple pie and a half pint carton of milk. He paid the cashier and headed out the door into the large school lunch room looking for his pals. He chuckled to himself as he recalled an event that happened here yesterday. The cafeteria was sometimes used for co-ed gym classes on occasions when the weather didn't permit outdoor activities. It rained like hell yesterday, so Miss Gill, the girls' Phys Ed teacher convinced Coach Ruffy to hold a joint class to teach the sophomore boys and girls the social graces of square dancing.

"What a hoot!" James thought to himself, as he recalled how flabbergasted Miss Gill got with the boys. Many of the boys began acting like this was the last thing in the world they wanted to do and had to be coaxed and cajoled into pairing up with a girl. A small group of boys purposely acted in an overzealous manner literally swinging their girl partners faster than was proper and causing them to get so dizzy, they had to sit down; one girl ultimately barfed on the floor and had to be taken to the nurse's room. Coach Ruffy tried to bark and bully the boys into behaving, but by the time the fifty minute class was over Miss Gill looked totally exasperated. A few of the girls were angry at the boys, a few were trying desperately to not laugh, but most were taking it in stride, recognizing the difference in maturity of some boys at this age.

James saw Bo and Rafe waving at him from a table over at the far end of the lunch room near the windows. He could see that Earle, Tommy, and Jack were also at the table. He made his way over and sat down in an empty chair across from Bo and between Rafe and Earle.

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“We saved you a seat,” Earle and Rafe said almost simultaneously. James said “Thanks”, then grinned devilishly at Bo, looked furtively about and queried in a low voice, “Have you told these guys yet?”

Bo chuckled and smiled broadly, “No, I was waiting for you. I’m not sure I can talk about it without falling out of my chair and rolling on the floor laughing so hard I’d split a gut!”

Curiosity grabbed at Rafe and the others and they all slid their chairs in closer and looked at James expectantly. James looked at each of the boys in turn, holding them in suspense. Then he rubbed his hands together, smiled impishly and began to relate what had happened that morning.

“You guys know Freddie Malcolm, right?”

Jack, nodding his head, was the first to respond. “He’s that little whinny twerp that looks like a cross between a mouse and a bird and talks with an annoying voice that makes you want to shout at him to shut the hell up. He bugs the shit out of just about everyone.”

“You got it. Well, Bo and I were in shop class this morning and Freddie was doing his usual whining to Mr. Willey, the shop teacher.” James continued with a fairly good imitation of Freddie “Oh, Mr. Willey, I need your heellp. I can’t seem to get this dowel into the base of the wooden traay. Oh, it is sooo hard for mee.”

“So, after Willey helps Freddie, he steps out of the room for a bit, probably to laugh his balls off so the rest of the class wouldn’t see. Then Bo walks over to me and whispers something to me about how freakin’ tired he is with Freddie and his whining voice, and that it’s about time to do something about it. So, I asked Bo if he had any ideas and he said, ‘Yeah, let’s put him somewhere where he won’t have to do any more work on his project today.’ So, we look around the room and we both focus on the wood closet; we nod at each other, walk over to that little piss ant, pick him up bodily with his feet off the ground, carry him over to the locker, stuff him in and nail the door shut with a two by four.”

At this the boys at the table all erupted in laughter. Bo laughed so hard that he had trouble breathing for several seconds. Tommy was slapping the table and laughing with loud guffaws. James caught the laughing bug, too, and with difficulty, finished up the story with, “Freddie was in there yelling and banging to get out. Mr. Willey came back and demanded to know what the fuss was, but no one squealed on us and then the bell rang. As we walked out of the shop class, Mr. Willey was prying the two by four away, and yelling, ‘You boys have to stop screwin’ around in Shop Class!’” More laughter burst from the boys and now people at nearby tables were staring and wondering what was so funny.

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*Thursday evening, November 22, 1956...*

The school year had seemingly been flying by. It was already Thanksgiving. The leaves on the trees had turned to a variety of glorious colors and were falling to the ground at an increasing rate. High School football was now over and basketball was about to start the first week in December. The boys and girls in QHS, as in most high schools across the land, were pre-occupied with their idyllic lifestyle, far removed from the events taking place elsewhere in the world...events that would ultimately affect that idyllic existence and impact the way people thought about America and its place in the world community. After World War II, we had rebuilt Japan and Germany (historically something no other powerful nation had done following the defeat of an enemy) and helped a number of other third world countries with our money, talents and ingenuity. For the most part, with the exception of the Communist countries, America was looked upon with respect and favor.

Just last month Russia, the U.S.S.R, had invaded Hungary. The United Nations demanded that Russia remove her troops. Of course they didn't and the U.N. was powerless to do anything.

Egypt had closed the Suez Canal in July and in October, Britain and France bombed Egypt and then in November they sent in troops. Meanwhile, Israel was mopping up Egyptian forces in the Sinai desert.

But most Americans were more interested in the perfect game that Don Larsen pitched for the Yankees in the World Series, or Eisenhower winning his second term as President, by defeating Adlai Stevenson, or for New Yorkers, that Brooklyn had stopped its street car service. But foreshadowing internal strife to come, the Supreme Court on November 13, struck down segregation of races on public busses.

This golden age of innocence, this period of safe isolation and sense that all is well in America, would fade away, replaced by a much harsher reality within a matter of seven years, almost to the day. But for now, life for the students at QHS was arguably as good as it gets.

Thanksgiving dinner at the Heinrich house had just completed and James was feeling pleasantly stuffed, after just finishing his second piece of pumpkin pie with a scoop of vanilla ice cream. He watched contentedly while his kid sister, Cheryl and his Mom busily began clearing the table. Older brother Jeremy had already left to drive over to his girlfriend's house – probably to play kissy face and sticky finger, James chuckled to himself. Mr. Heinrich had excused himself from the table and gone to his study to look over some papers...he had just been elected to the Quaytown school board earlier in the month. Despite being the only male left at the dining room table, James felt obligated to help clear the table, so he pushed back his chair, got up a bit leadenly with his full stomach, stacked up his plates and his brother's and brought them over to the sink where his Mom was preparing to wash them by hand. He went back to the table and gathered as many glasses as he could, but his Mom turned and said, "That's OK, James. Thank you for trying to help, bur Cheryl and I can manage. You go catch up on your homework, or watch something on television". James didn't need to hear it again.

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James went into the living room and turned on the TV, but as he got comfortable on the couch his mind wandered over the events of the day. The day had started with a typical blustery wind following a rainy evening, but by the time the traditional Turkey Day Game got underway at 10:30 am, the wind had subsided, yet the sky remained overcast. This was the biggest game for QHS in many years. The rivalry with Mason High went back decades and more often than not Mason came out the winner, but this year the Bison squad entered the game undefeated, while Mason had only lost one game. Whoever won this game would be the conference champs and the excitement had built to a fever pitch over the preceding days.

This was an away game, played at Mason's field. Aside from being a bit muddy the field was reasonably playable – not in as good a condition as the Quaytown field, however. The first quarter ended in no score, as neither team could sustain a drive. But at the beginning of the second quarter, Mason was forced to punt. The kick was not that high, but was deep and over Hap Clooney's head. Hap ran back, caught the ball over his shoulder, turned and headed toward the right sideline. After a few strides, Hap quickly changed direction and headed straight up the middle. At first the Mason players slanted toward the right sideline, trying to converge on the best angle to intercept Hap's path. When Hap turned up toward the center the Mason players adjusted their paths, but not enough, because a wall of Quaytown blockers was forming on the left side of the field and when Hap suddenly cut to his left, the Mason players were unable to adjust and the wall of Quaytown blockers began to mow them down. Hap ran like a stallion down the left sideline and would have gone all the way for the TD, if not for the final Mason player who got by the wall and tackled Hap at the 11 yard line.

On the first play from scrimmage, Gerry Rome took the handoff from Hap Clooney, flashed through a hole between right guard and tackle, made what seemed like an impossibly fast cut to his left, got a block from the left end on the linebacker, and literally steamrolled over the Mason Safety at the goal line. Touchdown! The QHS side of the field was electrified. The band played the QHS fight song and the away crowd screamed and yelled. The point after was good and the Bisons were on top 7 to 0.

The score remained that way until the middle of the fourth quarter, when the QHS defense recovered a Mason fumble near the fifty yard line. On the first play, Jerry Rome swept right end and reeled off thirty-five yards. Then Hap Clooney hit the left end, Larry Gilten, with short pass over the middle for nine yards. Next Hap faked a handoff to Gerry on a quick slant off right tackle, and ran a naked end around to the left and waltzed in for the score. The extra point was good and QHS was up 14 to 0, and the game was all but over. Mason tried valiantly to score in the final minutes, but could not break through the Bison defense.

James smiled as he recalled seeing his buddies, Bo, Rafe and the new kids, Earle and Tommy celebrating on the sideline. They were on the Jayvee squad, but dressed for the varsity game. They even got to play offense on the last series in the final minute, so James was happy for them.

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It was time for James to go to his room and do some homework, even though the thought made him feel like he'd rather swallow a worm. After all, it was Thanksgiving and there was no school again until Monday. But he knew that he had to get decent grades in order to be able to get into college, so he reluctantly closed the door to his room, sat at his desk and opened his math book. But he still wasn't in the mood. He turned on his radio, which was always tuned to WNJR, a Rhythm and Blues station from Newark. Daddy Sears was the Negro disk jockey and he just introduced a hit song, "Long Tall Sally", by Little Richard.

*Gonna tell Aunt Mary 'bout Uncle John,  
he says he has the blues but he has a lotta fun.*

*Oh baby, ye-e-e-  
eh baby,  
woo-o-o-oh baby,  
havin' me some fun tonight.*

*Well, long tall Sally has a lot on the ball  
and nobody cares if she's long and tall.*

*Oh baby, ye-e-e-  
eh baby,  
woo-o-o-oh baby,  
havin' me some fun tonight.*

*Well, I saw Uncle John with long tall Sally.  
He saw Aunt Mary commin' and he ducked back in the alley...*

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*Wednesday evening, January 16, 1957...*

The Jayvee basketball game had turned out to be an easy QHS victory over arch rival Mason High at the Bison home court. Bo was a starter on the Jayvee squad and substituted on the Varsity squad. Rafe, Earle and Jack Pauley had made the Jayvees as second stringers, but before the season ended, Earle was bumped up to starting forward, due to his height and rebounding ability. James wasn't one for basketball and typically joined the QHS fans in the bleachers on the stage area above the court, cheering on the team and working his charm on the sophomore and freshman girls in the crowd. After showering, Rafe, Earle and Jack joined James when the varsity took to the court.

The varsity basketball game proved a much more rowdy event than the Jayvee game. Rowdy is probably an understatement. It was more than just a hotly contested game which QHS barely won by a point on a disputed call. The bitter rivalry had been inflamed by the loss Mason had suffered to Quaytown in football last fall, because a number of players from both teams also

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played football. The nature of basketball with the battle for position under the basket led to a lot of bumping, jostling and heated words.

As the last seconds ticked down on the clock, Mason had just taken the ball out of bounds in the front court and were running a play to set up their top scorer, Paul Brenner. The crowd was in a frenzy and the noise was deafening. With three seconds remaining, Brenner ran around a pick behind the foul line, caught a pass and elevated into a jump shot. A sudden hush came over the crowd, in anticipation of the result of this last second chance to win the game.

One of the QHS guards called “Switch” when he saw the man guarding Brenner was picked off and leapt across in front of Brenner barely grazing the ball with the tip of his finger as it left Brenner’s hand and then on follow through getting a piece of Brenner’s shooting hand. The ball fell just short and to the right of the basket where the QHS center leaped and came down with the ball. The Mason coach was screaming for a foul practically apoplectic as a cacophony of sound erupted from the crowd. The buzzer went off signaling the end of the game, as Brenner was gesturing wildly to the referee, claiming he was fouled.

No one knew for sure what had started it, but suddenly the QHS center and a forward from Mason began throwing punches at one another (the QHS player later reported that the Mason player had cursed at him and tried to wrestle the ball away). Within an instant both benches cleared with the players all running on the court swinging at the nearest guy in the other teams’ uniform. Then the bleachers emptied and all hell broke loose.

Gerry Rome had been standing in the ramp when the Brenner shot was rebounded by the QHS center. He smiled, pumped his arm in a sign of triumph, and then turned to walk down the ramp toward the hallway behind the gym. As he reached the hallway, a student from Mason who had followed Gerry down the ramp overtook him and purposely bumped into him as he passed by Gerry. Gerry gave the guy a scowl and said, “Hey, watch where you’re going.”

The Mason student sneered at Gerry and said, “Kiss my ass!”

Gerry sort of smiled and said gently, “I don’t think so. I’m not lookin’ for trouble, but if that’s what you want, you can have it.” With that the guy from Mason took a step forward and reached out to push Gerry, but before his hand made contact, Gerry let loose with left and right combination punches that were so quick, it was like a blur of lightning. The left punch landed on the right eye of the other guy and the right connected with his jaw. His head snapped back, his knees buckled and he went down like a sack of potatoes. It happened so fast that hardly anyone noticed. Gerry quickly turned and walked away. He could hear someone saying with a shocked voice, “What happened to you, Sam?”

At almost the same time in the ramp on the other side of the gym, Larry Gilten was accosted by another Mason student. Larry, being a Negro, rightly took offense when the White Mason student sneered, “Get out of my way, Nigger!”



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“I don’t like being called that!” Larry replied angrily.

“Tough shit, ‘Blackie’, what are you going to do about it?” countered the Mason guy.

Bam! Like a shot Larry shot out a left jab that caught the other guy in the Adam’s apple. The boy grabbed his throat and dropped to his knees, gasping for air. As Larry turned to walk down the ramp, two other boys who were with the guy on his knees backed off with their hands up as if to say, “We don’t want any part of this”.

By now the two police officers on duty and the coaches from both teams had separated the players and brought order back to the scene on the gym floor. The players from both teams were making their way to their respective dressing rooms. When Larry got to the hallway he ran into Gerry and they walked out of the school together sharing their personal encounters of the past few minutes.

But their collective exploits did not go totally unnoticed. In Gerry’s case there were two juniors from QHS that happened to be in the hallway and witnessed the fight, while James, Rafe, and Jack had observed from the bleachers on the stage the single punch thrown by Larry. Earle had climbed down the bleachers and attempted to join the brawl on the floor, but by the time he got there the action was just about over. By the end of the school on the following day, everyone, students and teachers alike, knew about the two fights and the outcomes. And so among the students at least, Gerry’s legend as a fighter was elevated to the level of hero status and Larry became a new prodigy to go down in the annals of QHS folk lore.

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*Friday evening, February 15, 1957...*

The second annual Valentine’s Dance was underway at the QHS gym. Rafe and Jack Pauley had taken the bus into Quaytown from North Kingsboro and walked the mile from downtown. As they neared the school both declared they needed to take a leak. They arrived at the side door that led upstairs to the main floor, or downstairs to the basement level. They took the stairs down to the basement, went past the girls locker room and down the hall into the boys locker room.

As they entered the “In” side of the double doors, they immediately saw Earle and heard him yell softly, “It’s OK, just two of the guys!” They quickly learned that Earle was standing guard for Bo and James, who were in the bathroom area in front of the locker room smoking cigarettes.

“Hey, Burn, these two juvenile delinquents are going to get your ass in trouble, if one of the chaperones strolls in here to check up,” Rafe jokingly said to Earle, as he and Jack walked

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past Earle and headed for the urinals. “Hi, Bo. Whaddya say, Hein.” Rafe said as he unzipped and stepped up to relieve himself. Jack just grinned and shook his head at the two smokers, as he ambled over to a urinal.

“You guys want a drag on our cigs before going into the dance,” Bo inquired?

“Yeah, how about it guys? A couple of puffs will get you ready for the Senioritas. The freshman and sophomore babes like the smell of tobacco breath. Makes them think we’re big upperclassmen and know how to make a girl happy. Might even help us get into one of their hot panties”, James added with a chuckle.

Just then, Earle excitedly exclaimed in a voice well above a whisper, “Chickie! Someone’s coming...sounds like a teacher!”

Bo and James quickly doused their cigarettes in a commode, flushed it and ran to a sink to turn on the cold faucet and started combing their hair. Jack and Rafe had just finished their business, zipped up and also headed to one of the sinks to wash up.

The door to the locker room burst open and almost caught Earle in the arm as he headed to the “Out” door. Mr. Willey, followed by Mr. Fielder, stormed in and started sniffing. “I smell cigarette smoke! How about you Mr. Fiedler, don’t you smell it, too?”

“Yes, I most certainly, do,” responded Mr. Fielder, nodding his assent. “Have you boys been smoking in here, against school rules,” he continued.

“Oh, don’t be so easy on these trouble makers!” Mr. Willey said somewhat impatiently, with a quick look at Mr. Fielder, who had moved in alongside and blocked Earle from exiting. As Willey stood menacingly, with clenched fists on hips, he eyeballed Earle, Rafe, Bo, James and Jack, looking from one to the other. “So, what have we here? The five of you could not only get a suspension, but four of you could be benched from the basketball team, or worse, kicked off the squad for the rest of the season.”

“Maybe it would go easier on you if whichever ones of you who were smoking admitted it,” Mr. Fielder added rather courteously. At this, try as he might, James could not hold back a chuckle. It escaped from him sort of like a muffled squeak.

Mr. Willey lashed out, “Are you trying to be funny, Heinrich? Do you think this is a joke? Just because your father is on the board of education, doesn’t mean you can get special privileges!” After a hesitation and seeing a more serious look on James’s face, he continued, “Now I want to know which ones of you were smoking in here; and I don’t want to wait all night for an answer. Well?”

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Earle was the first to talk. In his southern drawl he said, “Mr. Willey, Sir, none of us here was doing the smoking. None of us smoke. It smelled that way when we all came in to go to the bathroom. Honestly, Sir.”

Mr. Willey seemed to settle down a bit. “Is that so?” he asked as he made eye contact with each of the boys. And each nodded in turn. “Well, I’m not so sure about some of you. But Burnell here is new to the school. I’m willing to give him, and by extension the rest of you, the benefit of the doubt. But if I ever catch any of you smoking, I’ll know you lied to me and I will have your butts up before Mr. Hunt, the Principal, before you can say ‘Jack Rabbit’. Do I make myself clear?” Seeing the boys nodding, he added, “Now get out of here and don’t do anything to cause me to look cross-eyed at you again during the dance tonight.”

The boys quickly exited and walked up the ramp to the gym. James quietly said to Earle, “Whew! That was fast thinking, Burn!”

When they reached the floor of the gym, Bo put his hand on James’s shoulder to draw him closer and asked with a subdued chuckle, “What the hell made you almost start laughing in there? I almost pissed my pants trying not to laugh aloud when I heard that weird squeaking sound coming from you.” The other three boys moved in closer to hear James’s answer.

“It just struck me that it was like watching an episode of Dragnet on TV, James responded. “You know the two cops playing Good Cop, Bad Cop with a suspect”. Then all five of them started to laugh, but turned nervously to be sure that the two chaperones were not looking their way. There was a band playing (rather badly) one of the popular songs, recorded by Pat Boone.

*On a day like today  
We passed the time away  
Writing love letters in the sand  
How you laughed when I cried  
Each time I saw the tide take our love  
letters from the sand....*

Bo spied Martha Luchese on the other side of the gym. She was very obviously of Italian heritage, with her olive skin, high cheekbones, dark full brown eyebrows which did not appear to have ever seen tweezers, and full lips with only a hint of red lipstick. Above all she had a pretty face, pert nose, and a trim but nicely formed body – smallish but firm breasts, thin waist, nice hips, dark brown hair that was a few hours out of curlers and cut just above the collar of her white blouse, and all packaged on a five foot, three inch almost perfectly proportioned frame.

He sauntered over to her and asked her to dance. It was a slow dance and once he got out on the floor and had her in his arms, he thought for a moment he was in heaven. Bo didn’t know exactly why, but there was something about this Martha Luchese that attracted him more than any girl since Susan Brownell. “Wow”, he thought to himself as he danced with Martha, “I

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haven't thought about Susan since last summer, when she told me her parents were sending her to a private school. Well, this Martha has got me interested...very interested. I wonder if she will take a walk with me outside. Maybe I can get a kiss or two. Hmmm. It's worth a try."

Meanwhile, James had gone off to dance with Sue Barlow and then a freshman girl that Rafe and Jack didn't know had come over to talk to Earle and they went off to dance. Rafe was scanning the gym looking for Cathy Wood, while having small talk with Jack about the Jayvee basketball games coming up next week. There she was! He spotted her, but quickly saw that she was dancing with a senior, Brian Arnschwagger. Brian lettered in football and basketball. He was a blond haired, blue-eyed, somewhat boyish, yet handsome guy, judging from the way the underclass girls reacted.

Rafe nodded to Jack, "There's Cathy over there dancing with Brian Arnschwagger. I'm not sure I like that guy. He seems to swagger when he walks, like he's the toast of the town, or some kind of hot shot."

"He thinks he's hot shit is more like it", snickered Jack. Then Jack proceeded to relay a conversation he overheard. One day recently, towards the end of football season, Jack got a ride to high school with his older brother, Brad. Brad had graduated last June, but he was still hanging around with a few of the guys from Ulster Beach, who were seniors this year and with whom he had played football the prior year. He had kicked around all summer and most of the fall, then enlisted for military service. He was biding his time, awaiting his call to go into the Army.

Brad had had his own car since his Senior year, and since the beginning of this school year he had established a routine of picking up Hap Clooney, Gerry Rome and Brian Arnschwagger and driving them to school, then he would go and work at Flynn's City Service gas station at the Five Corners in Quaytown, where he pumped gas and did some minor repair work. Five Corners was so named because three streets intersected the highway that separated Quaytown from the neighboring town of Mason.

On the day that Jack got a ride to school with Brad and the three guys from Ulster, Brian Arnschwagger was bragging about his dates with Cathy. According to Brian he and Cathy were making out "hot and heavy". The other guys listened earnestly, with occasional comments like, "Just stick to the facts, Brian, did you or did you not get laid?" And, "Did you at least get in her panties?" Brian apparently would not be specific, other than to say that he and Cathy had played "Back seat bingo", which *implied* that she had put out.

Upon hearing this from Jack, Rafe felt suddenly devastated. This was utterly shocking to him. How could this girl he had believed to be so pure and virginal act like some common slut? But he could not let on. He had never revealed his own desire, his fantasies, about Cathy to anyone, and he was not about to do so now. In truth he was envious of Brian and felt cheated.

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To cover his disappointment, Rafe eyed a freshman girl he had seen in the halls. She was standing with three other girls. He quickly walked over and asked her to dance. She said, "Yes, I would like that." He did not initially ask her name, but it did not seem to matter as it was a fast song to which you could only do the jitterbug dance and the band was playing quite loudly. Rafe was not much for talk normally when it came to the opposite sex, but after what he had just heard, he felt even less talkative. When the music ended, he politely thanked the girl, and almost as an after-thought, he told her his name and asked her what hers was. He only half listened, when she said, "Mary Beth Gardner".

"Nice to meet you, Mary Beth", Rafe said. "Again, thank you for the dance". And he walked back to where Jack was now talking with a couple of girls. When he got there, he recognized them from one of the classes that he, Jack and they had together. Jack was into his routine of being sarcastic and cynical, yet the two girls seemed to be fascinated with his curt remarks and the sort of smirk Jack had when he smiled. Jack had a way of making sport with girls and they seemed to like it. Rafe suspected it was a defensive mechanism for Jack to cover up his shyness.

But for Rafe, the night and the dance had lost its attraction. The Cathy thing had left him feeling a bit blue. The two girls left, giggling and went off to join up with a few other girls across the gym. First Earle, then James made their way back to where Rafe and Jack were standing. They were comparing notes as they approached.

"Did you see the tits on the babe I was dancing with?" Earle was saying to James. "Hot damn, but she could pose for the bullet front bumper on a '54 Buick, by golly! She said her name is Sarah Stevens."

"Yeah. Not bad. But I was too busy paying attention to that Sue Barlow I was talking with. That tight skirt was not hiding much of her sweet looking ass!" responded James. "I tried sliding my hand down her back onto the top of her ass, and she just smiled and lifted my hand back up. But then the damn song ended; otherwise I would have given it another try. I might still do that before the dance is over," he added rubbing his hands together and laughing.

Earle looked at Rafe and inquired, "Hey, Rafe, what's with you? You look like something crawled up your ass and died? Some little chickadee give you the brush off?"

"No, nothing's wrong. I'm just getting a bit bored and a bit tired from basketball practice after school today. Running up and down those steps got to me today. I was a little woozy after", Rafe replied, as he nodded to the auditorium area behind them that extended up from the gym floor to the main floor above, with stairs on either side.

"Hey, where's Bo? Anyone seen him since we got here?" asked James.

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Rafe replied, “Last I saw him he was dancing almost every dance with Martha Luchese and working his charm on her, trying hard to impress her. Maybe he and she skipped out for a little ‘exploration.’”

Just then Jack said with a smirk, as he nodded toward the opposite side of the gym, “I see them coming up the ramp over by the girls’ locker room. Maybe you’re right Rafe.”

They all turned to watch Bo and Martha walking hand-in-hand onto the gym floor, then separating as they said goodbye, with Martha rejoining a group of her friends from Holmvale, and Bo heading back toward the four guys.

When Bo rejoined them, no one said anything, but they all were grinning with a quizzical look, as if waiting for him to say something. “What? What? Why are you looking at me like that?” Bo asked, trying not to smile too much.

“Well?” asked James. “How did it go? Let’s have the ‘skinny’ on the fair maiden, Martha Luchese. And don’t leave out any details.”

Bo could not hold back a broad smile, followed by a deep sigh. “I think I’m in love, guys.” A few catcalls and boos followed.

“You’re not serious, Bo! You getting measured for a ball and chain? I don’t believe it” Rafe laughed.

“No really, guys! I really like her. But her parents are strict and she can’t go on dates until after this school year ends; and then only on double dates. She’s definitely a virgin, but she kisses like she’s hot to trot,” Bo excitedly whispered.

“So what are you goin’ to do, wait four months to get a date with Miss Virgin Hot Pants?” asked Earle.

“Well, and don’t go spreading this around...she’s invited me to her house to meet her parents. If they like me, they might just let her double date before June. After all, I’m Italian and so is she. That’s one thing in my favor.”

“Ha!” Jack chipped in. “But wait till they see that look of lust in your eyes. You’ll need a crowbar to get past the chastity belt her parents will lock around her.” They all laughed at that and then realized that the music for the last dance had just ended. Time to go home! The five boys parted with handshakes and goodbyes until school next Monday.

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*Thursday May 16, 1957...*

*In my diary,  
A lot of things I'm gonna' write;  
Write about the moon  
And that lonely night.*

*In my diary,  
I'll tell all about you;  
Tell of all your charms  
And the things you do...*

Rafe had a stack of 45's spindled on the phonograph his parents had purchased for him with some cash and green stamps his mom collected from myriad other purchases. "In My Diary", by the Moonglows was on the turntable circling around under the needle.

Spring was in full, inevitable march toward summer! Yet the re-awakening of new life was still permeating the air, even as the scent of re-born grass and flowers had become an everyday occurrence that was threatening to become predictable and taken for granted. Long gone was the snow of winter, the blustery winds of March, and the rains of April. Youthful hormones were erupting like the accelerated elapsed time photography of the blooming of a rose in the morning sun. It was a glorious time to be and feel alive, especially as a teenager in the Fifties.

Billy Westman, the starting Varsity catcher had not made his grades last term and so he was ineligible for baseball this year. After Basketball season, Bo had decided to get a part-time job after school at the Quaytown Delicatessen on Front Street, but when Westman became ineligible, Bo was called on to be Varsity catcher, so the job at the Deli had to take backseat until the season was over. Earle had decided he wanted to try Track, not without some encouragement from Coach Ruffy, who was also the head football coach. James, like Bo decided he needed to get a job after school to get some work experience, but more so to have some spending money for dating girls and to pay for the cigarette habit he had picked up last year; through Bo he also got a job at the Quaytown Deli. Rafe had moved up from the freshman baseball team to the Jayvees and occasional starting pitcher on the Varsity squad.

On this day, The Quaytown Weekly newspaper had just been published and Rafe excitedly turned to the Sports section. There it was! The headline read, "Quaytown Varsity Nine defeats Bayshore Highlands 15 – 4, behind Sophomore Cerny".

Rafe had been picked by Coach Zino, the varsity coach, to be starting pitcher against the Bayshore Highlands School squad. Coach Jerry Zino was a no-nonsense guy in his forties, who was firm and serious about the game. But he was an excellent teacher of the game, who willingly worked with any player who wanted to improve. He would get on a player's case, if he thought the player was giving it less than he was capable of, and he used his deep sharp voice like an

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instrument to both skillfully criticize and encourage, in order to get the best from his team. Coach Zino was a squat, powerful, muscular man about 5'4". He looked like someone who you would not want to wrestle with.

As Rafe read the story written by sportswriter, "Scoop" Woodsall, he began to replay the game in his mind...

It was an away game, and as he stood on the mound at the bottom the first inning, Rafe felt more nervous than he had ever felt in his life. From the time he was a twelve year old in Newark, when he first became a pitcher for one of 6 teams in the Little League sponsored by the Boys' Club, he had mostly considered himself a good pitcher. Yet he never felt so nervous before. His first varsity start and only a sophomore!

Rafe got off to a good start by holding the Bayshore Highlands squad scoreless for the first eight innings. Meanwhile the QHS team, led by Hap Clooney, who went four for five with a home run, triple and two singles, and Gerry Rome who chipped in with three hits, racked up fifteen runs to give Rafe a most comfortable lead going into the bottom of the ninth inning. Rafe himself had a double and a single.

Now in the bottom of the ninth, with a shutout in the offing, after getting the first batter out, Rafe suddenly lost a bit of control on his pitches and began missing the strike zone...not by much, but enough that he walked two straight batters.

Coach Zino made a trip to the mound to encourage Rafe. "You've got a fifteen run lead, so throw strikes and get those final two outs", he said firmly. "Follow through on your delivery to the plate", the coach added, as he turned to walk back to the bench.

Rafe got the next batter to hit a short fly to the outfield, holding the two runners, but then walked the very next batter to load the bases. Yet he still had a shutout possible. But struggling with his control, he got behind 3-2 on the next batter, a left handed hitter. He did not want to walk in a run to ruin the shutout, so he took a deep breath and looked in to get the sign from the Bo. "A fast ball. Good!" he said to himself. He did not trust his curveball with a 3-2 count and apparently Bo didn't either. Rafe went into a full windup and let go with a fastball, aiming for Bo's catcher's mitt which was positioned on the inside of the plate around thigh high.

The pitch did not make it to Bo's mitt. It headed for the center of the plate and a bit higher than the target, right down the middle about waist high. The batter swung and hit a long drive to left center, between the Left Fielder and the Center Fielder. By the time the left Fielder chased the ball down and relayed it into the Shortstop, the bases were cleared and the batter was rounding third on his way to home plate...a bases-loaded homerun.

Rafe felt horrible. He punched his right fist into his glove several times and growled loudly at himself. "Shit! Damn! Fuck!" He nearly screamed under his breath to himself.



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Coach Zino came running out to the mound. He stopped on the mound in front of Rafe, arms folded, and quietly, but forcefully said, “Ok, you’ve got one out to get. Forget about those walks and the last batter. Focus on getting that final out. You’ve got the bottom of the order up now, so throw strikes. No more walks! Do you think you can do that? Or do I have to bring in someone to relieve you?”

Rafe, still angry with himself, gritted his teeth and said, “But I lost the shutout, Coach!” Then quickly added, “Let me finish it Coach...let me get that last out.”

Coach Zino grasped the anger exuding from Rafe and simmering just beneath the surface. “You need to stop fighting yourself, son! Put aside your anger and do your job! Do I make myself clear?”

Rafe lowered his head, inhaled a deep breath and let it out slowly, then looked up into Coach Zino’s eyes and said, “I’m ready.”

By this time Bo had come out to the mound, and as Coach Zino walked back to the bench, he said to Rafe, “You already struck out this batter last time with mostly fast balls. He was way behind on his swing. Let’s go after him, but keep the ball on the inside part of the plate around the letters. Just throw to my target...throw to my glove and we’ll finish this and go home”.

Rafe nodded, “OK, Bo.” Bo returned and set up behind home plate. The batter stepped into the box and the umpire signaled for Rafe to start pitching. Rafe looked in to get the sign. Bo put one finger down between his thighs. Rafe nodded, went into his windup and fired a strike. Then he fired two more strikes and the game was over. The batter waved weakly at all three pitches.

After the customary handshakes with the opposing team’s players, Coach Zino gathered the QHS squad near the visiting team’s bench and congratulated the team on the victory. Then he looked over at Rafe and said, “Good job! Your first Varsity win!”

Everyone slapped Rafe on the back and congratulated him. Bo gave Rafe the game ball, and it was then that Rafe realized how good it felt to be a winner. “My first Varsity win. I can’t hardly believe it, but God it sure feels good”, he thought to himself and he smiled for the first time since the team had boarded the bus for the pre-game ride to the Bayshore Highlands field.

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*Friday Noon June 14, 1957...*

*A white sport coat and a pink carnation  
I'm all dressed up for the dance*

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*A white sport coat and a pink carnation  
I'm all alone in romance*

*Once you told me long ago  
To the prom with me you'd go  
Now you've changed your mind it seems  
Someone else will hold my dreams ....*

The Marty Robbins song was playing on the juke box at the store across from QHS. The owners of the store, Jim and Jane, catered to the QHS kids, especially at lunch time and after school. They provided fresh made sandwiches, along with cold sodas and snacks, some benches on which to sit and a juke box that held fifty 45 records. A number of kids, more girls than guys, hung out there listening to the juke box with all the latest 45 Rock and Roll and R and B hits. A few of them hung out there to smoke cigarettes.

What was special about today was that tonight was the Senior Prom and you could just see from the expressions on the faces of the girls in the store who was going and who was not. Occasionally, on school days, James, Bo, Rafe, Earle and Jack would pass up the school cafeteria and congregate at the store to have a quick lunch.

On this day, Rafe met Bo in the upstairs hall and they decided to walk over to the store. As soon as they entered the store, the boys saw Cathy Wood excitedly talking with Martha Luchese. As the boys approached, Rafe overheard Cathy say to Martha, "Oh, Martha, I wish you were going to the Prom tonight, then we could double date. As it is now, I'll be going with Brian Arnswagger and the other couple is Gerry Rome and his girlfriend, a senior from Mason, who I don't know. I'd feel better if I knew the other girl". As the boys drew up next to them, Martha shrugged her shoulders as if to say, "Gee, you are going to the prom with one of the best looking guys in the senior class and you're complaining?"

Rafe didn't know why, but when Cathy turned to greet him and Bo with blue eyes twinkling and a smile that showed her excitement, he felt a twinge of resentment. Was it jealousy? He couldn't be sure, but he stammered a "Hello" to both girls, and quickly decided to not show any reaction.

Bo leaned up against Martha and whispered something in her ear that neither Rafe nor Cathy could hear. Martha grinned sheepishly and a blush rose on her neck and cheeks that was evident even with her dark complexion and light makeup. After a few minutes of idle chatter about the end of the school year and who had what plans for the summer, Cathy and Martha said so long and headed back across the street to the school.

Rafe and Bo ordered sandwiches and a coke and while they wolfed down their lunch, they looked over the girls in the store and made a few comments and observations that sixteen year old boys typically do. Like "Nice ass, on that June over there."

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Rafe then asked Bo what he had said to Martha that made her react the way she had. Bo winked, laughed and said, “I just told her I came here for lunch and she looked good enough to eat”. With that they both laughed and headed back over to the school.

Final exams were finished and Bo and Rafe were anxious to get their report cards which were to be handed out at the last class of the day. Summer vacation was about to begin!

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1957 was proving to be an eventful year. 4.3 million Boomers were born this year, more than in any year before... or since. Over 1,000 computers were built in 1957....up from 20 in 1954. In September, President Eisenhower used federal troops to control demonstrations against integration in Little Rock, Arkansas. Doctors began testing the birth control pill to prevent unwanted pregnancies.

Ford spent \$250 million to market the Edsel, which became one of the most infamous bad decisions ever made by an American car manufacturer and the butt of many jokes over the ensuing years. The city of New York took its last trolley car out of service. Israel rejected a United Nations resolution calling for it to withdraw from Egypt's Gaza Strip and other occupied Egyptian territory unless she received more UN assurance that its own territory would be protected – a request that has been repeated many times since.

On July 6, Althea Gibson became the first black tennis player to win Wimbledon. Don Bowden became the first American to break the four minute mile. On July 12, President Eisenhower became the first president to fly in a helicopter. On July 29, the International Atomic Energy Agency was established by UN and the Tonight Show debuted with host Jack Parr. And on Aug 29 Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1957.

The world was undergoing changes that for the most part were ignored by the pre-Baby Boomers that were fumbling their way through their teenage years, unsure how they were to relate to the changes in their own bodies, let alone the changes in the world. War II and the Korean conflict were in the past. The atomic age and the cold war seemed so remote. America had the luxury of being far removed from the turmoil of Europe and the other continents.

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*Saturday afternoon, July 6, 1957...*

*Dum, dum, dum, dum, dum, de, doobe, dum  
Dum, dum, dum, dum, dum, de, doobe, dum  
Dum, dum, dum, dum, dum, de, doobe, dum  
Wah, wah, wah, wah wah*

*Love, love me darling, come and go with me  
Please don't send me way beyond the sea  
I need you darling so come go with me*

*Come come come come, come into my heart  
Tell me darling we will never part  
I need you darling so come go with me  
Whoa whoa whoa whoa...*

The Del Vikings hit song was playing on the Jeep's radio and Earle and Tommy Slade were riding around the new housing project. Tommy had gotten his driver's license near the end

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 6

of the sophomore school year and had a summer job as a guard watching over the new housing project. A developer was building homes in a cleared field across the highway from the trailer park where he and Earle lived in North Kingsboro. Earle was still only fifteen – not yet old enough to get a driving permit. But when Tommy suggested that Earle take the wheel in the jeep, Earle said enthusiastically, “Hot Damn! Pull this sucker over and switch seats with me!”

Now Earle had only driven his Dad’s four-door hardtop 1956 Pontiac Star Chief car a few times around the trailer park and therefore had little driving experience. So, when he took over driving the jeep, he was surprised by how stiff the steering was, since it did not have power steering like his Dad’s car. But in his excitement he didn’t think too much of it. As he maneuvered the car slowly around the subdivision, Tommy said, “Come on slowpoke, give it a little gas, I can run faster than you’re driving.” Then he egged Earle on, “Don’t be a pussy, Burn, get this dang jeep moving!”

Earle didn’t need too much egging on, as he was enjoying the feel of power behind the wheel, but the long shaft of the three-speed stick shift coming up from the floor was a bit sloppy and when he let out the clutch a little too late after stepping on the accelerator, the jeep literally jerked forward. But in short order, he got into third gear and was up to forty miles an hour. This was OK initially while he drove around the perimeter, but then Tommy said, “Turn left up here between the next two rows of foundations. I’m supposed to travel down each of the future roads a few times each day to make sure no one is trying to steal any lumber or concrete block.”

“OK”, Earle said. He downshifted as he made the left turn, but he forgot that without power steering the steering wheel would not return to center on its own. The jeep, instead of heading down the future street, kept heading left toward the foundation of the future house on the left corner. Tommy let out a frightened yell, “Holy Shit, Burn, turn the wheel back!” Earle’s heart leapt like it was going to burst out of his chest. He stepped on the brakes and started to yank the wheel to the right, but it was almost too little and too late. The jeep slid on the dirt road before it came to a stop, but not before the left front wheel was hanging over the precipice of the large, ten foot deep, thirty foot by forty foot hole where the foundation had been laid. The jeep was precariously situated with its driver’s side front hanging over the hole.

Both boys sat there for a minute, hardly breathing. Then as the reality set in of how close they came to possibly a fatal accident, they both began to nervously laugh, at first cautiously. Then Tommy, trying to control his breathing, said “Burn, here’s what I want you to do. Throw it in reverse, give it just a little gas and let the clutch out real slow like. Can you do that or do you want me to switch with you?”

“I’ll try”, Earle said still a bit shook up. He did as Tommy had directed and slowly the back wheels of the jeep moved the jeep back until it was fully on the road again. Tommy got out on the passenger side and Earle slid over, as Tommy got behind the wheel. They looked at each other and burst out in a hardy laugh, but underneath the boys felt a deep sense of relief. Both boys felt like they had looked death in the face and survived. Earle let out a whistle and said, “Wow, holy shit that was close! But if we survived that, we’ve got an angel lookin’ out for us and this could be one helluva fun summer”. And they both laughed again, this time with zest.

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 6

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*Wednesday afternoon, July 10, 1957...*

Rafe was lying face down on a bath towel on the deck of the Kingsboro public pool. This was the second summer that he had joined the pool along with Jack Pauley. While North Kingsboro was a township, Kingsboro was a borough that was nestled on the Jersey Bayshore. The pool was owned by Lou Cerrito, who also owned the adjoining ice skating rink. The pool was opened from Memorial Day through Labor Day. The vast majority of people who became members were residents of Kingsboro borough, eastern areas of North Kingsboro Township, and north eastern areas of Middlebury Township.

Rafe was in love, or most definitely infatuated. Rosemarie Cippo was an exotic Italian girl from the Bronx, with long, jet black hair, deeply tanned olive skin, high cheek bones on a narrow face with full but firm lips, and a classic Roman nose. It was Jack Pauley who first struck up a conversation with Rosemarie at the public pool, but Jack's wry, sarcastic humor was lost on Rosemarie. She was a city girl who was accustomed to more direct interactions with boys. It wasn't long before she began to initiate conversations with Rafe. Rafe was somewhat taken back by the sudden attention from this olive skinned girl.

Lying there on the deck, sunning himself, Rafe was trying to understand what Rosemarie was after. He realized that she was flirting with him, but wondered how sincere it was. Did she really like Jack and was merely trying to make Jack jealous, or was she really interested in Rafe? Was she only looking for a summer romance and then go back to a boyfriend in the Bronx?

Now Rafe was still a bit shy around the opposite sex, especially girls he did not know that well, and that led him to appear aloof and disinterested. It was a defense mechanism that was a hangover from having grown up in the city of Newark, during those blackboard jungle days. So, he wondered, was it that fake aloofness that attracted Rosemarie? But good lord, he mused, there was surely something very sexy about this Rosemarie. She had that jet black hair tied in a big pony tail that showed off her thin delicate neck. Over the bottom of her two piece bathing suit she typically wore form fitting white short shorts that accentuated her shapely ass and darkly tanned muscular but smooth legs that tapered to slender ankles and firm feet with red toenail polish. On top she usually wore a tight fitting cotton pullover that did justice to a pair of ripe, round breasts – not overly large, just about right. He had heard and observed that many Italian girls matured earlier than most. And damn if Rosemarie wasn't a great example of this.

Just behind him was the covered area that housed the snack bar and a small section with a juke box and room enough for a half dozen couples to dance to the Rock & Roll songs that blared from the 45 records in the juke box. Rafe was awakened from his reverie by the sound of The Dells harmonizing to...

*Oh, what a night (to love you dear)*

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*Oh, what a night (to hold you near)  
Oh, what a night (to squeeze you dear)  
That's why I love you so...*

Rafe shook off his reverie, looked up over his forearms on which his face was resting and he saw that Rosemarie and her mom had arrived and taken a place on the deck about ten feet from him. Rosemarie saw Rafe and gave him a smile that would melt chocolate in a freezer. Then somewhat casually, and not without a bit of purposeful playfulness, she began to remove her short shorts and cotton pullover. In his mind's eye Rafe imagined holding her close, kissing her, and gently moving his hand down between her thighs into that luscious crescent. "Shit", he grumbled to himself, "now I can't get up, lest everyone see that I have a hard-on. I just hope she doesn't decide to walk over here. Oh, hells bells! Here she comes!"

"Hi, Rafe. How are you today? Isn't it just a perfect day for the pool?" Rosemarie said with that same smile that could melt frozen chocolate (seductive, Rafe thought).

"Ah, it's OK, uh, really nice and warm and sunny", Rafe clumsily ventured. Then he offered, "Is that a new bathing suit?"

"Oh, this old thing? No, I bought it last year. But do you like it?" Rosemarie countered, as she slightly rotated her body left, then right.

"Yes, and I like what I see in it. Uh, I mean I like the way you look in it. Uh, no, what I really mean is that I like the suit just fine, it, it sort of just looks good on you," Rafe fumbled.

Rosemarie giggled and flashed that smile again and it was then that Rafe knew that he was hooked.

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*Friday evening, August 23, 1957...*

Another summer was drawing to a close. The three major TV stations were showing reruns of shows like *Gunsmoke*, *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet*, *Perry Mason*, and *Our Miss Brooks*.

Bo was getting ready to go out on his date. He was looking forward to seeing Fabiana. Fabiana was Martha Luchese's younger sister, by one year, and she was the wild one. Bo was a bit amazed at his luck – dating two sisters at the same time. Martha also had an older sister, Theresa, but she was a bit stuck up and Bo didn't care too much for her. While Bo had a strong crush on Martha, she was not as "available" as Fabiana. Martha always obeyed her parents' instructions and would not dream of hiding anything from them. She always let them know her whereabouts. And while Martha liked to make out, she would not let Bo get beyond the kissing and petting stage. She would immediately back off whenever Bo tried to cop a feel.

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But Fabiana, on the other hand, was not above sneaking off to have a secret date with Bo and telling her parents she was going to the library or to a girl friend's house. And best of all she knew that Bo was also dating her older sister, and did not let on that she was also dating Bo. So Martha, and more importantly her strict Italian parents, did not have a clue about Bo and Fabiana. While Martha was a "goody two-shoes" type of girl, Fabiana was a lot more adventurous. She would let Bo undo her bra and touch her tits and let him rub her between the thighs over her clothes, but that was as far as she had let him go thus far. "Maybe tonight would be different", Bo hoped as he finished combing his black wavy hair and splashing on a bit of Canoe after shave. On his way out of the door, he told his Mom that he would be home by midnight (that was his curfew on weekends even though it was summer and school had not yet started).

Despite being a year younger than Martha and three years younger than Theresa, Fabiana was about an inch or so taller. While Martha wore her hair cut to just before above her shoulders, Fabiana let her hair grow down to the middle of her back. And it was a shade lighter than Martha's, and much straighter. Her skin tone was whiter and her lips were tantalizingly fuller and when she was away from her parents, she put on a full covering of dark red lipstick, which would have earned her a smack on the rear end from her Dad and a good talking to from Mom Luchese. Fabiana was not as pretty as Martha, but her free-spirited vivaciousness, animation, and flirty smile more than made up for it.

Bo had just turned seventeen and had his driver's license. He had borrowed the keys to his Dad's 1953 four-door, tan Ford for his date. He was to meet Fabiana at the Holmvale public library. They would go to the drive-in, have some hot dogs, fries and coke while the cartoons were shown, and then get into the back seat and make out during the movie. As he drove out of the driveway, Bo was already imagining that he was going to get "lucky" this night. He reached down into his left pants pocket and double checked that he had a rubber. "Yep, good ole Trojan ready for service", he smiled to himself. He tuned the radio to 770 AM to listen to one of the DJs on WABC. A Chuck Berry song was playing and Bo tapped his fingers on the steering wheel as he drove toward the Holmvale library.

*Just let me hear some of that rock and roll music*

*Any old way you choose it*

*It's got a back beat, you can't lost it,*

*Any old time you use it*

*It's gotta be rock roll music*

*If you wanna dance with me*

*If you wanna dance with me*

*I've got no kick against modern jazz*

*Unless they try to play it too darn fast*

*And change the beauty of the melody*

*Until they sound just like a symphony...*



## **Beach Party Days: Chapter 6**

Fabiana was waiting for Bo outside the library. He pulled the car over to the curb, put the shift lever on the steering column in park, jumped out and went around the front of the car to open the door for Fabiana. Fabiana gave him a delicious, sly smile, and then slid into the front bench seat. Bo closed the door behind her, then went around and got in the driver's seat. He leaned over to give Fabiana a kiss, but she shook her head and said urgently, "Not here, Bo. There are neighbors over there that know my parents. Let's go, before they see us". Fabiana shifted her body so that she was facing toward Bo, with her back to the passenger door as Bo shifted the Ford into drive and quickly pulled away from the curb, after checking that no cars were coming.

Ten minutes later, Bo pulled into a row in rear of the drive-in theater, rolled down the window, pulled in a speaker from the pole, and rolled the window up as far as it would go with the speaker hooked over the window. After turning up the volume knob as far as it would go, he asked Fabiana, "Hot dog, fries and a coke Alright?"

Fabiana smiled and nodded yes and Bo opened the driver's door to get out. Just then Fabiana said, "Wait up, I'll go with you and visit the ladies room." Fabiana got out on the passenger side and she and Bo walked to the refreshment stand holding hands. Bo ordered the food and held it on the cardboard trays until Fabiana came out of the ladies rest room.

About a half hour later the cartoons were finished, the movie had begun and Bo and Fabiana were making out heavily in the back seat of the car. Bo had tried several times to get his hand into Fabiana's panties under her skirt, but each time she said, "No", and dug her nails into the back of his hand and he had to remove it or risk suffering further pain. After the third time, Bo decided that it was not going to happen and not worth the pain. He sat up, straightened his shirt, and lit up a cigarette. "Light one for me, Bo", Fabiana asked as she straightened out her red, green and blue plaid skirt and blue blouse.

Bo took out another Lucky Strike, put it in between his lips, lit it from his cigarette and handed it to Fabiana. Bo watched her intently as she took a deep drag and slowly exhaled. His curiosity got the better of him, so he asked as gently as he could, but not without a trace of frustration in his voice, "Fabiana, why do you act like you want to go all the way and then you suddenly put on the brakes? You get me all hot and bothered and then you expect me to stop when I'm damn near ready to explode. It makes me think you are just a big tease."

Fabiana giggled briefly and then realized how serious Bo was. She suddenly got very serious, looked at Bo with a glistening of tears in her huge brown eyes and said in a quiet, cracked voice, "Bo, I really like you, and I don't want you to think I am a fast girl – a tramp. But I also think that you like Martha a lot and I know she is crazy over you. It's just that I've always been the baby in the family and Martha has always had lots of boyfriends, while I...I just haven't gotten much attention from the boys when Martha is around. Please don't think poorly of me. I do like you, but I'm afraid to let you go all the way. It...it could ruin everything and you wouldn't respect me and sooner or later we'd be found out and... and that would be just a big mess! I just thought that this one time I could have a little of the popularity that Martha has. Please don't hate me!" Then she started to whimper.

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Bo thought to himself, “Oh, shit, please don’t cry. I can’t deal with that”. He pulled his hanky out and gave it to Fabiana. He put out his cigarette, took hers and put it out. Clearing his throat, he said sincerely, “Don’t cry. It’s OK. I do like you and yes, I want you, but I don’t think you are a tramp.”

Fabiana said with a bit of whimper, “What about Martha, if she ever found out, she would be hurt so bad, and I would feel like a real heel?”

“Yeah,” Bo countered, “I do like Martha a lot, too, and wouldn’t want to ruin my chances with her. But I still enjoy seeing you, and don’t really want to stop that.”

“Well, maybe we should just stop dating for a while. You know, until you and Martha can see if you are meant for each other”, Fabiana offered reluctantly.

Bo looked in her wet eyes and thought for a second before responding, “Maybe you’re right. But let’s not decide just now. Let’s just watch the rest of the movie and think about it tomorrow.”

That was the last date Bo had with Fabiana, but they remained friends.

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*Saturday evening August 31, 1957...*

James was a bit tired from working at the Quaytown Deli most of the day, but he was not about to let that spoil the evening. He had planned on this double date for over a week. His brother Jeremy had recently bought the family pale tan 1954 Ford. James had borrowed his it for the night and was going to pick up Bo and then they would pick up their dates. For James it was Sue Barlow, while Bo was dating Martha Luchese. He and Bo had finalized arrangements while at work at the deli earlier.

James finished shaving (it was now a twice weekly task), splashed some Old Spice on his face and brushed his teeth with Ipana toothpaste. He put on and buttoned a white shirt and tucked it into his tan khaki pants. He looked down and smiled at his new blue suede loafers. “Me and Elvis”, he thought and smiled. Time to go! He went out the side door while saying so long to his Mom and Dad, who were still sitting over a cup of coffee at the kitchen table, “Don’t wait up for me”, he said with authority. But he knew that even if his Mom and Dad went to bed before he got home one or both of them would lie awake until he came home.

James flipped on the car radio, tuned to WNJR and heard Daddy Sears introduce a song that was one of the earliest R & B ballad hits he first heard in 1955, Johnny Ace singing “Pledging My Love”...

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*Forever my darling our love will be true  
Always and forever I'll love only you  
Just promise me darling your love in return  
May this fire in my soul dear forever burn*

*My heart's at your command dear  
To keep love and to hold  
Making you happy is my desire dear  
Keeping you is my goal*

*I'll forever love you  
For the rest of my days  
I'll never part from you  
Or your loving ways  
Just promise me darling your love in return  
May this fire in my soul dear forever burn...*

By the time they got to the Drive-in Theater, it was almost time for the cartoons to begin. James and Bo went to get popcorn, candy and soda, since they had all eaten dinner and the girls had said they were not all that hungry, but popcorn, candy and soda would be fine.

On the way to the refreshment stand, Bo said to James, “What do you think Hein? Who’s going to make it to the World Series this year? Yankees and Dodgers again?”

“The Yanks, yes, but I don’t know about the Dodgers”, James replied, “With them moving to Los Angeles soon they may not be able to adjust to the move. And they are still about ten games behind the Milwaukee Braves and the Braves look really tough this year.”

“On a more important subject, Hein”, Bo continued, “How are you getting on with Sue? Getting much? Any poontang?”

“Ha!” James guffawed, “I haven’t gotten past first base thus far, but I’ve hit a lot of ‘singles’”. They both laughed. “Maybe tonight, she’ll let me hit at least one ‘double’ – sure would like to see the view from second base if you get my drift”, James said as he rubbed his hands together. Again, they both laughed.

“How about Martha, Miss Goody Two-Shoes, Bo? Have you breached her fortress yet?” James asked.

“No, just about the same as you and Sue”, Bo replied, “But, you know, I really, really like her and I’m glad she’s not that kind of girl. I’m not sure what I’d do if she should suddenly get all hot and say, ‘Take me, take me’!” After a brief pause, Bo continued jokingly, “But after that initial surprise, I doubt I’d hesitate more than a minute.” Once more they laughed.

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Then James got serious, “Did you hear about that science teacher, Mr. Lunar?”

“No”, Bo answered, “What about him?”

“He’s not coming back this year. It seems he was “porking” Patty Rodding all last year”, James informed Bo with a sly smile.

“You mean that cute senior girl with the big boobs, who always wore tight sweaters? How’d you learn about that?” Bo queried.

“You know my dad is on the board of education, so one night last week I overheard him talking on the phone with another board member about it”, James responded. By now they were in line at the refreshment stand and both were smiling as they mentally envisioned the chubby science teacher and Patty, who was a full-bodied girl, doing the dirty deed.

While the boys were gone to get the food, the girls were idly chatting in the car about the start of school, shopping for school clothes, which classes they would take, and who were their favorite teachers. Eventually they got around to comparing notes about their dates.

“Have you and Bo gone all the way?” Sue asked in a hushed voice filled with curiosity.

“Heavens no!” Martha fairly shouted. “I’m not that kind of girl and Bo wouldn’t respect me, if I did. How about you and Hein?”

Sue quickly responded, “I’m not that kind of girl either. I want to get married someday and want my husband to know he’s not getting used goods. You know what I mean?”

“Oh, yes, I feel the same way!” Martha said emphatically. “Well, here come the boys back with the refreshments.”

The rest of the evening went according to plan – the girls’ plan that is. Neither James nor Bo got past first base, but they did hit a lot of ‘singles’.

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 7

*Tuesday morning September 3, 1957...*

After an early Labor Day weekend, another school year was beginning. Bo, Earle, and Rafe had already been attending early football practice since mid-August. All three were assured of making the varsity squad as juniors. Pre-season workouts consisted of no pads, just a lot of calisthenics to lose the summer lethargy and get into condition, along with running through basic plays in the playbook. Then a loosely organized touch football game that occasionally got a little out of hand when someone got “touched” a bit too hard.

Rafe got off the school bus along with Jack Pauley, Cathy Wood, and the rest of the students bussed from the further reaches of the North Kingsboro district. Cathy was her usual effervescent self, but Rafe noticed a greater degree of maturity about her this year. She had filled out with more of an hour glass figure and had a more confident air about her. She still had that bright smile, but it was more self-assured, as if she knew more than one would expect for a sixteen year old girl in the late 1950’s.

Rafe, Jack and Cathy walked up the concrete steps to the side door of the school. On the big red double doors was posted the homeroom assignments for each of the four years. Rafe got there first to open the door and quickly scanned the list for the Junior Class. Homerooms were assigned by alphabetic groups, so Rafe was in room 201 for anyone who’s last name began with the letters A through F. “Jack, you are in room 203, and Cathy you are in room 204”, Rafe announced to Jack and Cathy.

They proceeded through the door and up the stairwell to the second floor. As they entered through the doors on the second floor they practically bumped into Earle, James and Bo, who were standing just inside the doorway laughing about something. “What’s so funny?” Cathy asked with a hint of a smile to cover her obvious curiosity.

“Oh, nothing much, just a joke that Hein told -- not something you’d be interested in”, Earle said as politely as he could, while trying not to burst out laughing again.

Cathy seemed to surmise that it was something off-color and not something she’d likely find funny. “Boys!” she thought to herself with a bit of annoyance. “Well I’m off to homeroom. Bo, what room are you in?” Cathy inquired.

“Room 203”, he answered, “but I’ll walk you down the hall and catch up on what your summer was like.”

As Bo and Cathy walked away, Jack looked at James and Earle and practically demanded, “OK, now share the joke with Rafe and me, so we can get a laugh before school starts.”

James then repeated the joke and Rafe and Jack roared, which only made Earle laugh again. “Hot Damn, Hein that was a good one!” Rafe managed through his guffaws. Then the bell

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rang signaling time to get to their respective homerooms. Earle and Rafe sauntered into room 201, while James and Jack went to rooms 202 and 203 respectively. In each of the classrooms, the homeroom teacher handed out the classroom assignments to each student and the 1957-1958 school year was officially underway.

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*Monday morning October 7, 1957...*

Last Friday, on October 4, a new show debuted on TV, called “Leave it to Beaver”. It would have a long run and ultimately become a symbolic cliché for the Fifties, particularly for those who look back on that time as the last “age of innocence”, when, for example you would never see a married couple in the same bed together.

But there was something diametrically opposed to this perspective that also occurred on October 4, 1957. This was the day that the USSR, Russia, launched Sputnik I, the first artificial Earth satellite. In the ensuing years the race to space was to become a major undertaking of both the USA and the USSR.

On this Monday however, the boys and girls at QHS had more uncomplicated things on their minds, and a couple of the boys had concocted a plot with a bit of mischief intended.

It was just before the start of third period in shop class and Earle and Whizzie Grant had just finished whispering to each other. They were among the first students in the classroom. Holding back a chuckle, Earle went to the door to act as lookout. Whizzie was carefully placing some clear tacks, point side up, on the shop teacher’s chair. Just as he finished, Earle whistled, the signal that Mr. Willey was coming down the hall. Other students were pouring into the shop and Earle and Whizzie quickly took their seats at their workbench.

Mr. Willey entered the room quickly and went to his desk. He turned around and announced, “OK, today we are going to continue working on the wooden serving trays we started yesterday. If there are no questions, then you know where the tool cabinet is, so get busy. I want to see some good work today. I’ll come around and inspect your work. Oh, but first let me take the roll. Answer ‘Here!’ when I call your name.”

With that he took his white shop coat off the back of the chair and put it on. The roll book was on his desk. Earle and Whizzie were anxiously awaiting him to sit down. Finally, Mr. Willey sat down on the chair. “Ouch! What the...?” yelled the shop teacher. Earle and Whizzie nearly burst a gut trying to not laugh. They did not dare look at one another for fear of losing it.

Mealy mouthed Freddie Malcolm inquired, “Oooh, Mr. Willey, what is the maaatter? Are you hurrtrt?”

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Looking down on his chair and simultaneously feeling his butt with his right hand, Mr. Willey exclaimed loudly, “Ok, who’s the wise guy who put tacks on my chair?” When no one confessed, he said, “I want to know now!” Still no response, some of the boys were trying to hold back a laugh, and some had a look of surprise on their faces. “Ok, if that’s the way it is, and no one is man enough to own up to this nasty prank, then every last one of you are getting detention after school today. Well? Is that it, or does someone want to admit they were the culprit, so that the rest of the class is not punished for the real prankster?”

Again, no one came forward. “Well that’s it then -- detention for all of you! Now, get busy on those projects,” the shop teacher declared, as he continued to rub his butt.

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*Thursday morning October 27, 1957...*

*Oh, Baby Doll  
When bells ring out the summer free  
Oh, baby doll  
Will it end for you and me  
We'll sing our old Alma Mater  
And think of things that used to be ...*

The Chuck Berry song, “Oh, Baby Doll”, had just ended. “This is it! There he is! There’s Dick Clark! Come on, now’s our chance to do what we came for!” Val Schultz was overly excited and when he got that way he typically ran his words together like a runaway freight train, with bits of spit exploding from his generous mouth. He was dragging Jan Lively by the hand and with the other hand waving frantically for the other QHS students to catch up with him.

This was American Bandstand, the hottest show on national TV for teens across the nation. The show had originated as a local dance show on a Philadelphia station, but had premiered nationwide on Oct. 7. Two carloads of QHS students had played hooky on this school day to drive to Philadelphia and get on the daily one hour afternoon show which aired at 4:00 PM. In just a few short weeks, the regular teens on the show had already become “stars” and nearly every teen who rushed home from school to watch the show could tell you the names of the regulars. The show featured couples dancing to Rock and Roll songs, some fast and some slow Doo Wop tunes. Each day Dick Clark would have a segment featuring a guest recording artist or vocal group with whom Dick would talk about their latest new release on a 45 record, and then the artist or group would mouth the words to the song as it played and the teens on the show would watch. And on occasion he would allow some teens who were not regulars, but who had traveled to central Philly just to get on the show, to come on camera and tell the audience something about where they came from.

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On this day one carload of QHS junior and senior year students consisted of Marnie Booker, Ben Scully, Carol Miller and Roger Vaccaro, in addition to Val and Jan. They were rushing to get to Dick Clark at the appointed time. They had already been cleared by the stage manager for what they wanted to present to Dick.

As they approached Dick Clark, he smiled and waived them on to center stage and the six students assembled three on each side of Dick, as they had been instructed by the stage manager. Dick looked into the camera and announced to the TV audience, “Here with us today are six students from Quaytown High School, who have come all the way to Philadelphia from east central New Jersey.” After getting their names, he looked at first one side then the other and queried, “I understand you have something you want to present today; what might that be?”

Ben Scully, who was positioned next to Dick’s right shoulder, took the object he was holding behind his back and handed it to Dick. With a nervous smile and flushed cheeks, Scully cleared his throat and said, “Mr. Clark, we would like to present you with a one of our varsity sports letters.” At that he handed Dick a red letter Q, bordered in white with a white football on a field of blue in the center of the Q.

“Why, thank you. Thank you very, much. What a fab present. This is the first gift of this type we’ve received on Bandstand.”

With that the six QHS students filed off camera to watch earnestly as their schoolmates who drove down in the other car made their way up to Dick. Bo was in this group, along with Ronnie McCloud and Seniors Rory LaClasse and Bill Foster. Rory carried a trumpet, Bill had a tenor saxophone and Ronnie had one of those school band drums that are strapped over the shoulders.

“And now we have four more students from Quaytown in New Jersey”, Dick announced to the TV audience as the three boys sidled up to him. After obtaining their names, he asked “What is it you young men want to present?”

“We are going to play one of the Quaytown fight songs for you and the audience”, Rory announced somewhat stiffly.

Dick looked at Bo and asked, “And what about you, Bo, I see you don’t have an instrument. Are you going to sing for us?”

Bo laughed, “That would clear the studio pretty darn quick! No, while the other guys play the QHS fight song, I’m going to model these new Flag Flyer sneakers”.

“Well, that’s a new one!” Dick chuckled. “OK, boys, let’s hear the Quaytown fight song and maybe the camera can get a close up of those new Flag Flyers that Bo is wearing.”

When the boys finished they received a polite round of applause from the regulars on the team and a few loud whistles and cheers from the first group of QHS students. All too soon the



## Beach Party Days: Chapter 7

show ended, but not before the QHS students had a chance to share the dance floor with the Bandstand regulars and other visitor teenagers. Bo walked up to a group of three girls who were non-regulars and asked if any of them would like to dance. It was a fast Elvis song. One girl shook her head “No”, but one of the remaining two nearly pushed him out toward the danced floor. When the song ended, Bo got her name and phone number, and told her he would call. But he knew he wouldn’t, once he learned that she lived in Blue Bell, PA and there was no way he would drive that four hour distance.

The ride home for the QHS students in both cars was euphoric. They had been on national TV on the hottest teenager show ever!

The next day when they arrived at school, they were treated as celebrities by the other students. Bo felt like he was walking on air as he walked into his homeroom. That is until Mr. Fielder walked up to him and in a low voice said, “Mr. Orechio, I’ve been instructed to tell you that you are wanted immediately in the Principal’s Office. Mr. Hunt wants to see you.”

Bo got up hesitantly and started walking toward the Principal’s Office at the front of the school. On the way to the office Bo was trying to figure out what this was about. He was still shaking his head as he entered the door into Mr. Hunt’s secretary’s office, through which you had to traverse in order to get to the door to the Principal’s office, or the Vice Principal’s office off to the right side. It was literally the buffer zone. Once inside the door, Bo stopped short as he saw the others sitting and standing there. All nine of the other students who had gone to Philadelphia yesterday were gathered there. “Oh, Oh!” thought Bo. “I think we’ve been had.”

“Ok, you can all go in now. Mr. Hunt is ready for you,” intoned Mrs. Sheppard, the secretary, with a mischievous glint in her eye, as if she were trying to hide an “I know what trouble you all are in” smile.

Once they had all filed into Mr. Hunt’s office, Mr. Hunt fixed a serious looking gaze on each of the students in turn before he spoke. “Yesterday, my daughter was watching television – a new show called Bandstand, er American Bandstand, that I am led to believe is a teenage dance show televised from Philadelphia. Well, you can imagine my shock when she told me that there were ten students on the show from Quaytown High School. She didn’t remember all of your names, but she remembered enough of you and after a little investigation with the help of Mr. Brown, our truant officer, and my daughter’s perusal of last year’s yearbook, we were able to identify all of you”.

Bo smiled and when Mr. Hunt noticed it, he raised his voice and pointed his finger at Bo, “This is nothing to smirk about, young man!” Then to all of them, “You all played hooky from school and you could have been involved in an automobile accident or worse. When you are supposed to be in school your parents expect the school to be responsible for you. Which reminds me, at this moment, a phone call is being made to each of your homes to report this incident to your parents. In addition each of you will be punished with two days detention after school. You are lucky that we haven’t taken the more serious step of suspending you for several

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days, but until now you have all been good students, and as leaders in your respective classes you should be more aware of the example you set for the rest of the students. Now, what do you have to say for yourselves?”

Two of the girls had tears forming in their eyes, and the boys all hung their heads. Ben Scully said solemnly, “I’m sorry. I think we’re all sorry; it won’t happen again”.

“It had better not. And just so you know, the truant officer, Mr. Brown, has a list of your names and the next time you do not show up in school, your houses will be the first to be visited by him”. Once again Mr. Hunt looked intently at each of the students and then said firmly, “Now get out of here and go to your first period classes.”

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*Friday evening November 8, 1957...*

The Sadie Hawkins dance was underway in the QHS gym. A local band from a nearby town was playing on the stage, called the Viscounts. They were all very good musicians and a few years later they would record a full album of instrumental songs. This night they played what would become their most remembered hits, both of which charted briefly on the top 100 in Billboard; “Harlem Nocturne” and “Night Train”.

The Viscounts featured Larry Vecchio on the organ, Harry Haller on sax, and Bobby Spievak on guitar. They had just finished playing “When the Saints Go Marching In”, and the guys and gals had danced a jitterbug to the music.

As the legend goes, a Sadie Hawkins dance is one where the girls ask the boys for a date and to accompany them to the dance. On this night, Bo had been asked by Martha Luchese, Earle had been asked by a newly arrived junior, named Penny Warlock, James had been asked by Sue Barlow, and Rafe had been asked by Lucy Millstone. All had accepted. Jack Pauley had been asked by Sarah Stevens, but declined. Jack was not into dancing.

Bo and James had once again double dated with Martha and Sue, with Bo borrowing his father’s 1954 Ford. Earle still did not have his license, so he double dated with Tommy Slade who had accepted a date with Sarah Stevens, after she had been turned down by Jack. Rafe had his driving permit, but it was against the law to drive at night and without an adult of twenty-one or over, so he and Lucy were driven by her older sister, Susan. The Millstones lived a few blocks from Rafe.

The night turned out to be a fun night for all of them. Bo, James, Earle, Tommy and their dates went to Stosh’s diner in downtown Quaytown after the dance. Rafe and Lucy were invited to join the others, but had to turn it down to be driven home by Susan Millstone.

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At the diner, inevitably the conversation turned to football, as the big Thanksgiving Day game against arch rival Mason was looming as the season was drawing to a close. The girls were listening politely to the banter, even though some of it was incomprehensible to them.

Bo was kidding Earle, “Burn, in tomorrow’s game I hope you don’t get any more of those fifteen yard penalties called on you for unnecessary roughness. It almost cost us the last game against Wall Township.”

“Weren’t my fault, Bo”, responded Earle. “Coach “Ruffy” grabbed me on the sideline just before Wall kicked off to us and told me flat out to go out there and hit someone. So I did. I just didn’t know that he meant block someone. Almost broke my hand on the face guard of that fella’s helmet!”

James, Tommy and Bo broke into a roaring laugh, with Tommy almost choking on the sip of coca cola he was drinking. Some of the girls thought it was a rather dumb thing to laugh about, but they hid their reactions. After all why spoil what had been thus far a nice date night.

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*Thursday morning November 28, 1957...*

Thus far the junior year for Bo, James, Earle, and Rafe had seemed to be zooming by. Bo, Earle and Rafe had been starters on the varsity football team, while James had concentrated on keeping up his grades, working at the Deli after school and on weekends to save for college and for spending money and dates.

It was 10:30 AM on Thanksgiving Day, almost time for the big turkey day game with Quaytown High’s arch rival Mason High. Game time was 11:00 AM. Both teams were on the field going through pre-game warm-ups, Mason on the North side of the fifty yard line and the Quaytown Bisons on the south side closest to the home and visitor teams field houses. Bo had just finished running the Quaytown offense through some plays, handing off to the backs and throwing passes to the ends. Earle was at right end, but Bo was disappointed that Rafe was missing. “Damn”, he thought, “we could have really used him today. We have a good shot at beating Mason and that would be two years in a row, which probably has never happened.”

Just then a car was being waved through the gate. It slowly made its way around the cinder running track that encircled the football field. The car finally stopped behind the Quaytown bench in front of the hometown stands that was filled with students, parents and alumni, and the band. The driver got out of the car to assist the passenger. Hobbling out of the passenger side on crutches was Rafe, who made his way to the Quaytown bench. Bo then realized that it was Rafe’s uncle driving the car, and he was glad that Rafe would be able to sit on the bench and root for the team.

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Earle sidled up to Bo and said, “Good to see Rafe will be here today for moral support. Too bad; sure could have used him on offense and defense against Mason”.

“Yeah! I feel the same”, Bo replied. But it was time to bring the team into the field house for the pre-game pep talk. Bo and Earle waved toward Rafe, but he didn’t see them, as all the cheerleaders were surrounding him and asking him how he was.

In the field house waiting for the pep talk, Bo was sitting on a bench with the worst case of butterflies in his stomach he’d ever experienced. “God, I hope I don’t have to up chuck!” he thought. He tried to think of something else and then he remembered the pep rally last night. It was exciting to be around the bonfire with his teammates, the cheerleaders and all the students who came out to wish the team well.

Bo was brought out of his reverie by the sound of Coach Costello. Despite the fact that he was one of two assistant football coaches, Coach Zino the other, it was Coach Costello who always made the pep talks to try and get the team fired up. Head football coach Ruffy Cook was always too nervous on game days. Invariably he would pace around the field house and when he did try to talk it came out in rapid fire bursts of several words accompanied by stuttering, squeaks and malapropisms.

So, it was always Coach Costello’s job to give the pep talk. Coach Costello was also the varsity basketball coach, and pep talks came natural to him. For football games he, too, got overly excited and it was not unusual that he would get into one of the boy’s face and work at getting the boy’s adrenalin flowing as high as a kite. Unfortunately, when he did this, he would get himself so worked up that he would start spitting as the words of encouragement poured out. This made some boys back away and made Coach Costello raise his voice even louder. But today he was in Earle’s face and Earle was not one to back off. “I’m ready to kick some Mason butt!” Earle exclaimed in reaction to the coach’s challenge.

Finally, after what seemed like an eternity, there was the expected knock on the door and the referee peeked in and said, “It’s time, Coach. Coin toss in five minutes!”

“Are you ready? Are you ready to go out there and win for Quaytown?” Coach Costello yelled.

A huge roar came from the boys as they all stood up in unison and strapped on their helmets. “Then get going!” yelled Coach Costello. And the boys left their field house running down the ramp onto the field through a path made of two lines by the band, majorettes, and cheerleaders. They ran to the home team sideline on the East side of the field. Behind them the Mason team ran to the visitors sideline on the west side of the field.

Five minutes later the game began with Quaytown kicking off to Mason. Rafe watched from the bench and wished he could be playing. But the surgery he’d had on his leg made that impossible. He looked down at his left leg and recalled the night that the injury occurred...

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It was Thursday night, November 14, two days prior to the final season game before the big Thanksgiving Day game. The Quaytown varsity was practicing with light pads which meant shoulder pads and helmets, but no hip or thigh pads. It was a chilly night so the boys all wore sweat pants and practice jerseys. The boys playing backfield and end positions were running through some simulated blocking drills. Rafe was squaring off against one of the backs. As they charged each other to simulate a block the smaller back came in lower than Rafe and his helmet rammed into Rafe's left thigh. Rafe felt a sudden sharp pain! He crumbled to the ground holding his thigh.

Rafe got up off the ground and continued to run through the drills as best he could until practice ended. But the pain did not diminish; it kept getting worse. Rafe had been wearing added padding on the left thigh for the past five games, ever since he suffered an initial bruise at the top of the thigh. The bruise originally happened and began to spread down the thigh by continuing to throw cross-body blocks against the bigger defensive tackles on off-tackle running plays. Since the beginning it had ached and his left pants leg in the chinos he wore seemed tighter. But tonight was different. This was real pain!

Rafe was limping a bit as he walked from the football field toward the shower room in the school. Earle and Bo sidled up to Rafe and asked why he was limping. It was now dark so they couldn't see the pain etched on his face.

"My thigh is really hurting. I hope it's just a charley horse", Bo responded through his pain.

"Well, shake it off, Rafe", Earle said. "We need you to catch a couple touchdown passes on Saturday".

"Yeah, and the turkey day game against Mason is next, so I hope it's just a charley horse. I know you've had that bruise and been wearing extra padding", Bo added.

After they reached the locker room, Rafe stripped off his practice togs and moved slowly toward the shower room. Near the entrance, Rory LaClasse was threatening to snap his towel at Tommy Slade. LaClasse was a broad shouldered six foot, 185 pound senior who played fullback. His family was one of the upper crust of Quaytown and he let everyone know it. Frankly he was a bit obnoxious and liked to throw his weight around. It was typical of him to pick on an underclassman.

Just as Rafe approached the entrance LaClasse snapped his towel and caught Tommy right on his dick. Tommy let out a yelp and grabbed himself in self-defense. LaClasse just laughed. Earle was standing next to Tommy and quickly stepped around between Tommy and Rory. Trying hard to suppress his anger Earle said, "Why the hell did you do that! You could hurt someone badly!"

"Oh, he's not hurt bad. He'll get over it. What are you, his mother?" laughed Rory.

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By now a small group of guys had ambled over to see what was going on. Tommy grabbed Earle's arm and said, "Let it go, Burn. I'm OK. He'll get his someday"

Earle glared at Rory and said, "Don't do that again." Rory just laughed and made a mock look of fear. He then walked off with one of his senior buddies toward the locker room to get dressed. The rest of the guys shrugged their shoulders and moved on to what they were doing before the incident.

Rafe finished a hot shower, got dressed and went out intending to hitchhike home as was his custom after football practice. But he got as far as the stairs heading up to the main level and had to sit down as the pain was now so bad that tears were welling in his eyes. As he sat there holding his leg and rocking back and forth, coach Ruffy saw him and asked how he was, but it was evident that Rafe was in real pain. "Come on, I'm going to take you to see Dr. Runyon and have him look at that leg."

Dr. Runyon's office was in his home in downtown Quaytown. He looked over Rafe's leg, misdiagnosed it as a deep bruise and applied a diathermy treatment. After the treatment, Rafe did not feel any improvement, but he didn't want to seem like a wimp, so he thanked the doctor. Coach Ruffy then drove Rafe the five miles to his home. Rafe's parents had a long commute and were not yet home from work when coach dropped him off.

By the time Rafe's parents arrived, the pain had become so bad that he could no longer keep the tears from falling. His parents then drove Rafe to the emergency room at the closest hospital that specialized in orthopedic injuries. The following day Rafe was operated on by a specialist. His bruised thigh had become so bruised it separated from the bone and broke the main vein. The diathermy treatment had only served to increase the internal bleeding.

Score! Rafe's focus was brought back to the game as he heard the roar from the crowd on the visitor side of the field. He had been watching despite his recollection of the injury. Mason had just scored a touchdown on a running play around left end. "Damn", he thought, "If I had been out there at defensive halfback, I might have stopped that run". He wasn't knocking his replacement; it was just that the boy was a sophomore and had less experience at tackling than did Rafe.

The first half ended with the score Mason 6 and Quaytown 0. Mason missed the extra point. In the second half, Quaytown had one chance to tie the game and win if they converted the extra point. The Bisons had moved the ball down to the Mason five yard line. A pass play was called with Rory LaClasse lined up as a slot back on the right. Rory ran into the end zone and did a button-hook. Bo faked a handoff to the right halfback, then stood up and fired a pass to Rory. Touchdown! "Oh, fuck! Rory dropped the pass! He dropped the friggin pass!" Rafe yelled his reaction.

The game ended; Mason 6, Quaytown 0. The crowd filed out. James was among them and like most of the QHS fans he was disappointed. He made his way over to where Rafe was

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waiting on the bench for his uncle to bring the car over. “How’s it going buddy? Too bad about your injury, you would have caught that pass.” offered James.

“Thanks, Hein, but there was a lot of pressure on Rory and anybody could have dropped the ball”, Rafe replied. “My uncle will be here in a minute. Hey, there’s Sue Barlow over there. Why not see if you can console her; she looks like she can use it.”

James turned around to see Sue in her color guard outfit, with the flag hanging down on the ground and looking sad. “Aha! Guess I will mosey over and put my arm around her”, he said with a chuckle. “Have a Happy Thanksgiving, Rafe. See Ya!”

“You too Hein”, Rafe replied as he started to walk with the crutches toward his uncle’s car.

There was a lot to be thankful for in Quaytown that day, but there would have been a lot more to be thankful for with a win by the QHS Bisons.

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*Wednesday evening, January 5, 1958...*

December flashed by for Bo, Earle, James and Rafe. On December 1, Sam Cooke and Buddy Holly and the Crickets debuted on the Ed Sullivan Show. Holly and the Crickets performed their smash hit “That’ll Be the Day”. On December 2, in Shippingport, PA the first US full-scale atomic electric power plant came on line. On December 12, Jerry Lee Lewis married his 13 year old cousin, Myra Gale Brown. He was still married at the time to his first wife. In the social fabric of the time this was something that just wasn’t done. He was ostracized both in America and Great Britain and his career nosedived as fast as it had risen. It was many years before he could again perform in America. On December 20, Elvis received his draft notice to join the U.S. Army. And on December 29, singers Steve Lawrence and Edie Gormé were wed in Las Vegas.

But now it was January. Christmas and New Years were past. 1958 ushered in another eventful year. The U.S. Explorer I space craft successfully orbited the earth. For the first time in twenty-six years the cost of a first class postage stamp was raised from three cents to four cents. Visa and Master credit cards were introduced. The first domestic jet-airline passenger service was begun by National Airlines between New York City and Miami. Sweet n' Low was introduced as an artificial Sweetener, using saccharin instead of sugar. Meanwhile, Cocoa Puffs was introduced; containing forty-three percent sugar. The Brooklyn Dodgers became the Los Angeles Dodgers and played their first season at the L.A. Coliseum.

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Basketball season was underway and the QHS varsity team had lost a lot of starters from the prior year's senior class. It was going to be an uphill battle this year. There was no game tonight, so the team had practiced after school. The team was in the locker room with the boys taking turns to shower up and get dressed.

In front of his locker Earle had finished stripping off the sweaty practice uniform, socks and sneakers and walked naked toward the shower. Rory LaClasse had just finished showering and as Earle approached, Rory smiled malevolently, pulled his towel from around his shoulders and snapped it toward Earle. But Earle was too quick and side-stepped before the end of the towel reached him.

As the end of the towel fell impotently to the floor, Earle took two rapid steps until he was within one foot of Rory. "I warned you before about doing that, the last time you did it to Tommy! Maybe you didn't understand me", Earle spoke with a hard edge to his voice.

Rory's grin turned to a sneer as he responded, "Who the hell do you think you're talking to? No southern hillbilly is going to tell me what I can or can't do!" And with that he pushed Earle.

That was his mistake, because Earle did not back off and pushed Rory back. Now Rory had a weight advantage on Earle and at six foot he was broader and more muscular. But Earle had a couple of inches on Rory and longer arms. Rory took a swing at Earle with a right haymaker, but Earle moved to his left and the blow glanced off Earle's right shoulder.

Several boys had moved closer to see the ensuing fight. One rooted for Rory, and two others rooted for Earle. Earle lowered his head and moved into Rory and hit him in the ribs with a left hook. Just then there was a shout! Coach Costello had come into the locker room in time to see Rory throw the first punch and he yelled at the top of his lungs, "Stop the fighting! Stop it right now!"

Then, although Coach Costello was all of five foot five inches, he ran between Rory and Earle and pushed them apart. "Okay", what started this?" He queried. "I want an answer now!"

"I was just playing around with him and he got all huffy about it", Rory offered, trying to act innocent.

"Bull! He's been snapping his towel at the underclassmen since football season. He almost hurt Tommy Slade badly by snapping it into his dick, and tonight he tried to hit me there", explained Earle, still somewhat angry.

"OK, you're teammates; you should try to get along!" Coach said firmly. "I saw most of what happened here. I will let you both know what action I'll take by tomorrow. We have a game on Friday. Now, get dressed and go home." He looked around the room, "All of you!"



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The following day Rory was off the team. It took a bit of courage on Coach Costello's part. Rory's family was among the town's most influential and it had been recently announced that Rory was being considered for an appointment to the Naval Academy, after he graduated in June.

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*Thursday afternoon, March 27, 1958...*

The QHS Basketball team had a so-so year and the season was finally over. Rafe was fully recovered from his leg injury and looking forward to the start of Baseball. On this day in the QHS gym after school he and Jack Pauley were playing a game of half-court two on two with Bo and Earle. James had left for the Quaytown Deli to work. There was an older boy down at the other basket shooting baskets. From what Rafe could see when he chanced to look after a basket was scored, the guy was not that well-coordinated, in fact when the fellow took shots at the basket, he shot the ball like a girl, although he had a well-developed masculine body.

Bo and Earle, having been on the varsity basketball team, were too much for Jack and Rafe. It was no contest and the game mercifully ended. As they were standing around taking a breather and chatting about nothing of consequence, the guy from the other end of the court walked over and introduced himself. As he approached, they realized that he was a Negro and a bit older than they were. He was about five foot nine inches with a round face, very short hair on a fair sized head, small ears tight to the sides of his face, a wide nose, large mouth with thick lips that showed near perfect white teeth when he smiled. He spoke with a deep, resonant voice.

"Hi, I'm Nathan, Nathan Leeson. I know most of your names, you're Bo Orechio", pointing to Bo. "And you're Earle Burnell, and you're Rafe Cerny," pointing to Earle and Rafe in turn. "But I'm afraid I can't remember this other fellow's name", nodding his head at Jack.

"I'm Jack Pauley", Jack responded with a quizzical look.

"I recognize your face, because you played on the jayvee basketball squad last year with Rafe. I just couldn't remember your name. I attend just about all of the QHS jayvee and varsity basketball games. I graduated from QHS in 1955."

"Well, its nice meeting you Nathan", Rafe said, and shook his hand.

"Me, too, and I've seen you around Quaytown", Bo stepped forward to shake his hand.

Earle and Jack responded in kind. Then Nathan said, "You boys like Rock and Roll?"

They all nodded their assent. "Well, do you know that Alan Freed is bringing a big show to the Brooklyn Paramount Theater tomorrow and Saturday? If you're interested in going

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Saturday, we can get there by bus and the New York subway. I've been there and know the way."

"How much are the tickets and won't they be sold out?" asked Rafe.

Nathan answered, "Balcony tickets are still available for just \$7.50 and they have a batch of them at the record shop in downtown Quaytown. Let me know if you want to go on Saturday. I'll be here again tomorrow afternoon". With that he said so long and walked away.

"What do you guys think?" Rafe asked the boys.

"I'm game", said Jack

"Me, too", said Bo.

Earle hesitated and then said somewhat unenthusiastically, "I'm not sure. I don't know this guy and besides my parents probably won't allow want me goin' off to no Rock and Roll show in Brooklyn of all places."

"Well, Rafe and Jack, why don't we walk downtown to the record shop and get the tickets now?" Bo suggested.

"We've already missed the school bus back to North Kingsboro, and have to go downtown anyway to get the Red and Tan bus", Rafe mused.

"Well, while you guys are makin' plans, this rebel is going to walk home. See ya'll tomorrow – last school day until after Spring Break", Earle said as he walked toward the ramp and waved so long.

The other three boys waved and said so long to Earle. Then Jack said somewhat sheepishly, "I don't have the \$7.50; just enough to pay for the bus."

"Not to worry, I'll cover you and you can pay me back tomorrow", Rafe offered. "Let's get going. If we hurry, maybe we can catch up with Nathan."

"We'd better walk down West Atlantis Street. Nathan probably lives down there in the Negro section", Bo said as they headed quickly to exit the gym and the school.

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*Saturday afternoon, March 29, 1958...*

*You are my destiny, you share my reverie you're  
more than life to me, that's what you are.  
Heaven and heaven alone can take your love from me  
But I'd be a fool to ever leave you dear,  
And a fool I'd never be...*

The Brooklyn Paramount was packed with screaming teenagers, boys and girls of all stripes, white, black, brown, or yellow, they were all standing and cheering at the top of their lungs. The sound system was loud enough, however, so that the lyrics and the orchestra were not totally drowned out, as Paul Anka, the talented sixteen year old from Canada, sang his new hit song, "You Are My Destiny". Bo, Jack, and Rafe were all standing along with Nathan. The three younger boys were in awe at the scene. They had never quite witnessed such organized chaos. Even at QHS Thanksgiving Day football games, with hundreds of people surrounding the field cheering from the stands and sidelines, it was never as loud and frenetic as it was here in this theater.

Last Thursday they had caught up with Nathan on West Atlantis Street and made arrangements to meet him on Saturday morning in downtown Quaytown to get the bus to the Port Authority in New York City. After taking the subway from Manhattan to Brooklyn, they had stepped off and walked down the stairs of the El. They had walked about a block to get to the Paramount Theater and along the way Rafe noticed that Jack and Bo seemed somewhat apprehensive. There were groups of kids streaming along both sides of the street toward the theater, many of them obviously members of various gangs judging from the jackets they wore, and the way they pushed each other about boisterously and cursed fluently.

"First time in Brooklyn?" Rafe had asked. Both boys nodded their heads. "I have relatives in Brooklyn and I grew up in Newark and there were lots of gangs and fights and such. Just don't make eye contact for more than a split second with anyone, or they might think you are challenging them. Then it could get tricky. Just walk like you belong here and act confident and no one will likely bother us", Rafe had advised. They had reached the theater, handed their tickets to one of the ticket takers, who told them to take the right stairwell up to the balcony. Once upstairs, an usher had showed them to their seats. The show had begun on time with Alan Freed introducing Paul Anka.

The boys quickly got into the excitement of the show, with big name stars appearing, one after another. Chuck Berry, The Everly Brothers, Jackie Wilson, Frankie Lyman & the Teenagers, Clyde McPhatter and the Drifters, and headlined by Buddy Holly & the Crickets. Brooklyn was the first city of a six week tour for what was billed as "The Big Beat Show".

When the show ended, the boys followed Nathan out of the theater. Surprisingly with all the excitement, with kids literally dancing in the aisles, and with such a diverse mix of cultures

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and backgrounds among them, there was not one fight, at least none that was evident to the QHS students. Nathan proved to be an excellent guide and leader, as they all returned to Quaytown without an incident. On the way home they couldn't help but relive the show, recounting how they were so impressed by the whole affair and Bo, Jack, and Rafe each had their favorite entertainers that they regaled one another about. This was a first for the QHS schoolmates.

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*Wednesday afternoon, June 18, 1958...*

The last day of school found Bo, Earle, James, and Rafe in the hallway by their lockers on the second floor. They had their yearbooks and were signing each other's books over their photos with expressions like, "Have a great summer. Get ready for our Senior Year - we are going to have a ball!"

The last few months had flown by in a blur for Rafe. He and Bo had played varsity baseball with Rafe alternating among first base, outfield and pitching, and Bo alternating at third base and catcher, where he shared the catching duties with a senior. Earle had turned in a good season on the Track Team, where he excelled at the Javelin, the shot put, the broad jump, and the high hurdles. James had continued to work at the Deli and Bo was set to work there during the summer.

James had continued to date Sue Barlow and Bo was still dating Martha Luchese. Earle had had a few dates with Penny Warlock, but he was still a bit shy and very much the southern gentleman when it came to girls. Penny was a bit of a live wire and was a good counterpoint to Earle, helping him to lose some of his shyness. She liked to tease him about his southern manners.

"So, Burn and Rafe, Hein and I are going to work at the Deli this summer. Come by and get a sandwich when you get into town. We can go to the drive-in, too. What are you two going to do this summer?" Bo asked.

"My dad has arranged for me to be a laborer at the construction company he works for", Earle replied. "That should toughen me up for football in September."

"Me? I'm just going to hang out at the pool in Kingsboro again. I'm hoping to spend time with that Rosemarie from the Bronx again", Rafe added. "Last summer, she told me she'd be back with her family. They rent a cottage a few blocks from the boardwalk and the pool."

As the boys continued talking about their plans, Cathy Wood and Martha Luchese walked over to say hello and ask what the boys were planning to do for the summer. It was obvious that Martha liked Bo very much, although she smiled and was friendly to all four of the boys. Cathy initially spent a few minutes talking with Rafe, and then he noticed something that seemed a bit

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odd. Cathy turned her biggest smile on Bo, and insinuated herself into a three person discussion with Bo and Martha. Rafe couldn't put his finger on anything specific, but the way Cathy was acting it just seemed curious, almost as if there was a bit of flirtatiousness about it. But as quickly as the impression came to him, Rafe let it go, and in his mind he was remembering what Rosemarie looked like last year, and wondering how she would look this summer.

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*Friday morning July 25, 1958...*

Bo dialed on the rotary phone, MI-7-3426 (this was before the push button phones and area codes). He sounded excited. "Rafe have you read any of the local newspapers?"

"No, what's up?" replied Rafe curiously.

"Do you have this week's Quaytown Weekly, or yesterday's Asbury Park Press?" Bo asked.

"I don't know, but I can look. What's so important?" Rafe answered, now with some concern because of the tone of Bo's voice.

Rafe could hear Bo exhale as if he'd taken a deep breath, "There was a really bad car accident on Thrill Hill Wednesday night. Keith Deacon's car took the jump at the top of the hill and literally flew into the railroad bridge. I just came from the hospital and he's in bad shape...head all bandaged, black eyes swollen shut and broken collar bone and ribs."

Rafe's mind quickly recalled an image of Keith, who had graduated from QHS just that past June. Rafe knew about Thrill Hill. He had once been in a car driven by Jack Wing, with Bo and James the other passengers. Thrill hill was located in Holmvale on a two lane road. Jack had raced up the hill at about forty miles an hour and when they hit the crest the drop off on the down side of the hill was such that the car left the road with all four wheels off the ground. The trick, according to Jack was to not go too fast, because two things could happen. Either the flight would take you into the railroad trestle, or if you landed before the railroad bridge, you could lose control and crash into the concrete wall on either side of the road. Of course, Jack advised, you also needed to know if another car was coming from the opposite direction. That's why you should always drive up from the east side first, and then turn around at the bottom and race up the west side, or better yet, post a look out at the top of the hill to wave when the coast was clear. No wonder he's called "Crazy" Jack Wing.

Rafe shook the memory off and quickly asked Bo "Was anyone else in the car with him?"

"Yeah, that's the really bad news. A sophomore girl, name of Jill Burkett, was in the passenger seat and was killed. The whole roof of the car was peeled off like the lid on a sardine can, the paper said. Really some sad shit!" Bo said with obvious emotion.

"Holy shit! God, what a horrible thing! The girl's parents and family must be devastated!" Rafe blurted out. "We've got to tell Hein and Burn; they both knew Keith."

"Already did", Bo answered. "I can't count the number of times I've been in cars that have gone over Thrill Hill. There were times when we left the ground and came down with our hearts up in our throat, fish-tailing under that railroad trestle until we could slow down to 25 mph. At least once I thought I'd piss my pants. But what a high! Never again, though. Never again! Anyway, the paper says that the mayor of Holmvale is calling on the County and State to

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do something about cutting down the steepness of the hill before some other teenager gets in a serious accident.”

Within a month the road was posted with lower speed signs and since Holmvale only had two full time police officers and squad cars, they hired the NJ State Police to patrol the road. Two months later the road would be closed and reopened after the hill was cut down. Thrill Hill was no more.

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*Saturday afternoon August 23, 1958...*

*Please wait for me; for I shall return;  
My love for you will forever burn  
Though we must part;  
There's no reason to cry  
Just say so long;  
Because lovers never say goodbye*

*I love you;  
My darling more than life itself  
I wouldn't try to hurt you;  
For I'd only be hurting my self*

*Just kiss me dear;  
And hold me tight;  
For you know this is not our last night  
Though we must part;  
There's no reason to cry  
Just say so long;  
Because lovers never say goodbye...*

Rafe was at the swimming pool in Kingsboro, in the snack area dancing with Rosemarie.. The juke box was playing the latest romantic ballad by the Flamingos, “Lovers Never Say Goodbye”. Rosemarie would be leaving in two weeks to return to the Bronx. Her parents were already making plans for closing up the rented bungalow for the season. Rafe and Rosemarie had gone on a date to the drive-in last night; he had borrowed the '56 Ford Fairlane from his parents. Things got a little heady last night, but while she let Rafe touch her breasts, that's as far as she would go. Rafe didn't want to push it, because despite the fact that this was just a summer romance, he really liked her and didn't want to risk a break up before the end of the summer. He also held out hope of continuing the romance all next summer.

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As they danced slowly together, he knew that he was terribly infatuated with this exotic girl with the coal black eyes, tempting red lips and melodic voice with scarcely a hint of a Bronx accent – more like Manhattan, Rafe thought. They were both in their bathing suits, Rosemarie with a flimsy white wrap-around beach top, opened in the front, over her two piece, and Rafe in just his blue brief style bathing trunks. Dancing this close and moving sensuously together was getting Rafe excited, and he could tell from her hot breath against the bottom of his neck that she was feeling it, too.

When the song ended, Rafe led her over toward the vacant jukebox, pretending to look at the song selection, but more to hide the hard-on bulging out the front of his bathing suit. Rosemarie was aware of the situation, and a smile played at the corner of her lips, but she politely ignored it, so as not to embarrass Rafe any more than he already was.

Then she said, “Rafe, my mom would like you to come to dinner tonight. My aunt will be there of course and my father and brother are coming from the Bronx. They are taking the weekend off from the catering business. I know its short notice, but can you make it?”

The mere thought of having dinner with her family, especially the father and brother, whom he had only met briefly, was enough to deflate the erection. “Well, I think it will be OK. I just need to let my parents know.”

“Oh, goody! Get there about 6:00 PM. Now, I need to get home and help my mom. Can you walk me to the bungalow?”

“Sure. Let’s get our towels and your beach bag.” Rafe responded. Then they went to pick up their things from the upper deck of the pool, which was the top most of a three-tiered deck on the bay side.

As they walked together toward the bungalow, they talked about what each would be doing once school started. Rosemarie initiated the discussion, “I’ll be a senior this year and graduating in June. My parents want me to go to college at either NYU or Fordham, but I’m not crazy about the idea. I want to get my diploma and then I’d rather get a job and someday get my own apartment. What about you, Rafe?”

“I can’t wait for football to start. We have a very good team this year and I want to win the Seacoast Conference. I’m going to work really hard this year to do my part. Being a senior makes it seem so much more important, especially since I missed the big Thanksgiving Day game last year with that injury.” Rosemarie was aware of the eagerness in Rafe’s voice, as he continued, “If the team and I have a good season, I might be able to get a scholarship to a college. That would surely help, since my parents don’t have a lot of money.”

Later that night, after the dinner dishes were cleared, Rafe and Rosemarie were left alone on the screened porch of the bungalow. Rosemarie’s brother had left to go to the boardwalk. Her parents and aunt went inside to do the dishes and watch television, conveniently leaving the two teenagers alone. “Will I see you again next summer?” asked Rosemarie suddenly.



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“As far as I know, I expect to be at the pool again, but maybe just on weekends as I’ll probably need to get a job to help pay for college – that’s if I get accepted at a college that my parents can afford”, Rafe answered thoughtfully. “What about you, Rose, are you definitely going to be here next summer?”

“I’m pretty sure, as long as my parents decide to rent the bungalow again”, she replied. “But there is something I want you to have.” Then she reached inside her purse and handed Rafe a color photo of herself. It was a standing pose in which she was wearing a red, rayon short-sleeved, summer weight sweater over white short shorts that showed off her well-tanned legs. The sweater showed off her firm high breasts. On her feet was a pair of red slip-on flats. She was looking at the camera with that enticing smile with her ruby red lips slightly parted.

Rafe stared at the photo for a while before saying, “Thank you. This is great. I’ll put it in a frame and keep it on the dresser in my bedroom.” Then he kissed her and she kissed him back somewhat fiercely.

When he got home, Rafe put the photo in the top drawer of his dresser, fully intending to get a frame for it.

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*Thursday afternoon August 28, 1958...*

In the news this August: the USS Nautilus became the first atomic sub to complete a trip under the North Pole; the U.S. and Great Britain continued performing nuclear tests, while the U.S.S.R. sent up a third Sputnik into space, this time with two dogs.

All sorts of sports events were in the news, but Bo, Earle and Rafe were more interested in getting ready for their senior year of QHS football. Pre-season practice sans pads had been under way since mid-August. Coach Ruffy had made an unannounced appearance last week (it was still against the scholastic athletic association policy for conference high school coaches to hold formal practices before Labor Day). He had quickly gathered the team to let them know that he had made Rafe and Bo the co-captains of the football team this year.

On this, one of the last days before formal practice with full gear, Earle was breathing a little heavily. He had just run a post pattern and caught a pass from Bo. He caught the pass on the dead run, then jukeed the junior playing safety, and outran him into the end zone.

Rafe had run a short pattern and turned to watch Earle and thought, “Man, Burn has great speed once he gets those long legs going.” Then he got a signal from Bo and lay down on the ground.

Earle stopped, turned around expecting to get an atta-boy shout from his teammates, but instead they were all lying on the ground, except Bo. Earle didn’t know what was going on, until

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Bo yelled, “Hey, you finally held onto a pass! Look, everyone was so shocked they all fell down in disbelief.”

With that all the players on the ground sat up and pointed at Earle, laughing, with shouts of, “Way to go, Burn! Way to go!” At first Earle was a little ticked off thinking he was being the butt of a joke. But then he had to laugh, since to be honest with himself he had dropped a few passes in games last year. It wasn’t the sports glasses he wore (contacts were not readily available or affordable in 1958), but rather that he got so excited when the pass was coming to him and wanting to catch it and run with the ball, that he tended to take his eyes off the ball and it would just seem to slither through his hands or bounce off his shoulder pads.

As he trotted back to the huddle, he was laughing along with the others. “Fooled y’all, didn’t I. Bet y’all I’m going to catch a touchdown pass or two or three this year.”

After another few plays it was time for the guys on offense to switch over to defense and vice-versa. On the fourth play the junior quarterback handed off to a sophomore running back, Walt Kinney, who was not only a fast runner, but shifty when he got out into the open. The runner ran off tackle, then made a quick cut-back and outran Rafe, who was playing defensive halfback, and Bo who was playing safety. To be fair, since it was only two-hand touch and tackling was not permitted without full gear, both Rafe and Bo could have stopped him with a flying tackle, but the most they could manage was to get one hand on the runner before he got by them.

When the sophomore got into the end zone, he threw the ball up in the air and jumped up and down making a big show of the fact that he had scored. Rafe ran up to him and said firmly, “Don’t ever do that again! Show boating is not what this team is all about. It’s not about you or me...it’s about *us*. What you just did is poor sportsmanship. If you were to do that in a game or even in a formal scrimmage, you may well get your ass kicked after the game, by the opposing team. Nobody likes a show-off!”

“I’m sorry”, the boy said sincerely, “I guess I just got excited. I want to make the varsity and get in some games this year.”

Bo had arrived just after Rafe and heard the conversation. “Rafe’s right. But if you can run like that, you’ll get into a lot of varsity games this year. I bet you would be good at returning punts and kickoffs”, Bo said. Rafe nodded his agreement.

“Thanks. I’ll be sure to practice on those returns”, the boy replied.

On opening day, the boy would return a punt for a touchdown and during the season he would become a fixture at returning kickoffs and punts.

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*Tuesday Noon September 9, 1958...*

Senior Year! The first day of school at QHS was underway. Earle, Bo, James and Rafe had been looking forward to this day ever since school had ended last June. All summer they had talked about it whenever they got together. This was it; this was what it felt like to be the Senior Class, the big men on campus; king of the hill!

The four of them assembled for lunch across the street at the store and ordered sandwiches from the owners, Jim and Jane. They each took a bottle of coke from the big red coke cooler box with the flip top lid, and used the towel provided to dry off the water from the ice in which the bottles were lying. Then they inserted the bottles into the bottle opener attached to the side of the red cooler to remove the bottle caps. They sipped on their cokes as they awaited the baloney with mustard sandwiches they had ordered.

“So how was your summer, Hein?” asked Earle.

“Mostly worked at the Deli downtown, and still dating Sue Barlow”, James replied. “Joe, the owner likes Bo and me and gives us as many hours as we want.” Then he looked pointedly at Bo and said with some animation, “Bo, you missed it at the Deli yesterday. This babe came in and asked for Joe – good looking chick, must have been late-twenties or early thirties – with a nice rack. I told her that Joe was busy in the back room, but she ignored that and walked into the back room like she was the Queen of Sheba or something. It was kind of quiet back there, just some mumbling between her and Joe. Then about five minutes later she comes waltzing out and gave me this quick look like she was hiding some secret. I noticed her face was a bit flushed as if she was embarrassed. She looked away and quickly left the store.”

James paused for a few seconds, knowing that he had set the hook. The other boys were curious and waiting for him to finish re-telling what had happened. “OK, Hein, and then what?” Bo asked probingly.

James continued, “So, Joe comes out of the back room just as this babe leaves the store. I looked at him and said, ‘Hey, Joe, what was that all about? And who is that sexy babe?’ Joe looked at me and didn’t answer right away. So, I asked him again. Then he tells me that she comes in about once a month to buy rubbers. Joe went on to say that she didn’t know me and was embarrassed, because Joe suspects that she is having an affair and was afraid that I might say something to her husband if he came in with her and I waited on them.”

“Hot Damn!” Bo exclaimed. “I would have liked to have been there. Sure would like to get to know the woman, might be some action there for us.” He joked.

They all chuckled at the thought.

Then Bo looked at Earle and Rafe and added, “Hein and I were working one night and this woman comes in to the Deli. There were no other customers and Joe was in the back room – I think he might be running a bookie parlor back there or something – anyway, this woman is

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 8

acting strange. Hein and I both asked if we could help her and she whispers something. Well, I didn't hear her, so I asked her to repeat what she said. But I look at Hein and he is turning away and holding back a laugh. Then the woman moves closer to the counter and points down at the lower shelf behind the counter and says shyly that she would like some Kotex. Well, I had a hard time trying to be nonchalant about it, but I managed to ring up the purchase and put it in a paper bag. Then after she left, Hein and I looked at each other, smiled, and just shook our heads."

Their sandwiches were ready. They ate and drank while continuing to talk about their expectations for the senior year. Several underclass girls came in to smoke cigarettes and play the jukebox. One was especially attractive, with a pretty face and a nice shape, accentuated by a really nice ass that curved out from her lower back. She was wearing a blue blouse with pointed collar, a tight skirt that reached below her knees and bobby sox with white and brown saddle shoes.

Earle asked, "Who is that fine lookin' gal over there? I could fall in love with that. Just look at that ass!"

"That's Carly Hershey; she's a sophomore from Quaytown; just moved here last year." Bo answered.

"Looks yummy!" offered James. "But I hate to ruin the fantasy, guys, early lunch period is just about over and we have to get back to classes." Because of the growth in population, with a lot of families moving into North Kingsboro and Holmvale, Quaytown High had a problem. The increase in students meant that Quaytown High had to go on split sessions. The juniors and seniors had early lunch and their school day started 90 minutes earlier and ended 90 minutes earlier. The sophomores and freshman started later and finished later, and were slotted for the second lunch period.

The four of them deposited their empty coke bottles in the wooden case on the floor at the side of the coke box and headed back across the street to school. On the way out they could hear the juke box playing a new song by Booby Darin...

*Splish, Splash, I was takin' a bath  
Long about Saturday night;  
Rub-a-dub, I was relaxin' in the tub  
Thinking everything was alright...*

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## Beach Party Days: Chapter 8

*Saturday evening October 29, 1958...*

September had flashed by. On September 5, the first color video recording on magnetic tape was made, and Doctor Zhivago by Boris Pasternak was published in the U.S. On September 9, race riots broke out in the Notting Hill section of London. On September 15, a commuter train crashed through a drawbridge in Elizabethport, NJ, killing forty-eight people. On September 28, France adopted a constitution, forming the Fifth French Republic and over the ensuing weeks and months, Guinea, Mauritania, the Congo, and the Central Africa Republic become independent from France, ending much of what was left of French colonialism.

October was nearly over. On October 8, Dr. Ake Senning installed the first pacemaker in Stockholm. On October 9, the New York Yankees defeated the Milwaukee Braves 4 games to 3, to win their seventh in the last ten World Series. And just two days ago on October 26, Pan Am flew the first transatlantic jet trip from New York to Paris.

But none of this mattered a great deal to the boys and girls of QHS, especially tonight.

Where are you little star?  
(Where are you?)

Whoah oh, oh, oh-uh-oh  
Ratta ta ta too-oooh-oooh  
Whoah oh, oh, oh-uh-oh  
Ratta ta ta too-oooh-oooh

Twinkle twinkle little star  
How I wonder where you are  
Wish I may, wish I might  
Make this wish come true tonight  
Searched all over for a love  
You're the one I'm thinkin' of...

Ronnie McCloud was singing the Elegant's song as he played the drums. His band, The Megatonnes had been hired for the QHS sock hop. This was the Megatonnes second appearance. They were a favorite, not just because Ronnie was a senior and on the Student Council, but mainly because they were good musicians and could play many of the Rock and Roll songs that were popular in 1957-1958.

James had just finished dancing with Sue Barlow. They walked over hand in hand to where Bo and Martha, Earle and Penny Warlock, and Rafe and Kim Whitestone were standing. Kim was a sophomore and Rafe had only recently been dating her. He had forgotten about Rosemarie; he assumed that she was dating someone in the Bronx by now.

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Earle and Penny had become an item around school, frequently seen walking down the hall holding hands. Penny was a cheerleader on the Jayvee squad. Penny was an attractive girl, who had the appearance of someone more mature than her age. She had short blond hair that she kept curled and waved with no part. Penny had fair skin and her face looked somewhat like the actress, Joanne Woodward, with high, but barely visible cheekbones. She was relatively tall at five foot, seven inches and guessing at her weight, it was perhaps 120 pounds, with a well-developed body that led some of the boys to form a betting pool going on who could come closest to her actual measurements. The winning statistics? 36-24-37, what really distinguished Penny, however, was that she was adroit at mixing a flirtatious manner with a bit of sarcasm and humor.

Rafe had begun dating Kim three weeks ago, after he accidentally bumped into her in the hall and her text books went flying down to the floor. Kim was one of the majorettes in the QHS band, so when he bumped into her he recognized her. Rafe apologized profusely, but Kim was all nervous smiles and seemed a bit shy; and she insisted that it was OK. Rafe picked up her books and handed them back to her. Looking at her, he realized how cute she was and out of the blue, spontaneously asked her if she would like to go out on a date. Kim had an oval, animate face that readily showed her emotions; she was sincere, open and unpretentious. Her mouth was a bit narrow, but with a smallish mouth, full, ripe lips, and a firm jaw, and her eyes were hazel, over which she had narrow, tweezed brown eyebrows. She had short, curly, dark brown hair cut halfway down her neck. Kim was petite, about five foot three inches with a rather nice body, small but firm looking breasts (as near as Rafe could tell from the sweaters she often wore), narrow waist, firm hips and ass and well defined legs with thin ankles and small feet.

As they all stood there talking about how much they liked the band, Cathy Wood and her date came by. He was obviously not from QHS. Cathy introduced him. "This is Barry Clark. He graduated from Ruby Creek Catholic last year. And he's in the Army now, but home on leave.

After all introductions were finished, the couples all went out on the floor to dance to a Cha-Cha number the band was playing with Ronnie singing the Everly Brother's song, "All I have to Do Is Dream". That was followed by the band's rendition of Chuck Berry's "Johnny, Be Good".

Rafe and Kim stayed out on the dance floor to dance to a slow number, but the rest of the couples took a breather. While they were standing around in front of the wall separating the auditorium from the gym floor, James began to relate an event that happened earlier that day in school. "It was in Mr. Sofwick's class today. I was sitting right behind Terry Marion. He had his History text book opened, standing it up on his desk, and inside the text book he was reading the paperback book, Peyton Place."

"Oh, my!" exclaimed Martha; Sue followed with the same expression. Penny, on the other hand just said, "And then what?"

James continued, "Mr. Sofwick was walking up and down the aisles as he asked questions about today's lesson on the Puritans at the Plymouth Colony in Massachusetts. So, he

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starts walking down the aisle where Terry and I are sitting. Terry is not paying attention – he’s engrossed in the book. And you know Mr. Sofwick, he’s so soft spoken with that monotonous monotone, and the pale face with the big lips. Well, he’s asking Terry a question about the Puritans and sees that Terry is ignoring him. He walks up beside Terry and finds him reading a book inside the text book. Terry is surprised when he looks up and sees Mr. Sofwick staring at him, so Terry tries to close the text book over Peyton Place, but when Mr. Sofwick holds out his hand, Terry hands him the book.”

“What happened then Hein?” asked Earle for the rest of the group.

“When Mr. Sofwick saw the title of the paperback book, I thought he was going to have a heart attack.” James then began to imitate the teacher’s reaction. “His face turned beat red and he started breathing heavy, and stammering. He didn’t know what to say -- he couldn’t find the words. Finally, trembling, he said in that deep low voice, ‘I’m taking you to the Vice Principal’s Office, young man!’ With that Terry got up and everyone in the class was curious as all get out about what the book was. When Mr. Sofwick and Terry left for the office, everyone was asking what it was. When I told them, most of the class laughed.”

“That’s funny! Hein, your imitation of Mr. Sofwick is great; I can just picture the look on Mr. Sofwick’s face”, laughed Bo. Earle and Penny started to laugh and Martha and Sue giggled.

When the dance was over, the group went to Stosh’s diner for ice cream and apple pie. James, Sue, Bo and Martha drove in Bo’s dad’s car. Earle and Penny went with Rafe and Kim, in Rafe’s parent’s car. Since there was a football game earlier that day, Bo, Earle, and Rafe were a bit tired and sore, so the boys got their dates home by 11:30 PM .

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*Thanksgiving, Thursday morning November 27, 1958...*

It was almost game time -- the biggest game that Earle, Bo, and Rafe had ever played in. Quaytown vs. Mason – just those words carried a significance that weighed on their mind with a magnitude that was almost overwhelming. The QHS team was assembled in the field house awaiting the pre-game briefing and pep talk. You could cut the nervousness with a knife. One of the boys had just barfed in the rest room. To try and get his mind off the butterflies in his stomach, Earle was thinking back to last night.

It was the biggest bon fire he had ever seen. Bo, Rafe, Earle and the teammates, with the help of Jack Wing and his pickup truck, had rounded up so much cardboard and loose wood that the pile literally was about 20 feet high. One of the players almost got hurt attempting to climb up and get the pile higher. Several hundred students and a few alumni had turned out for the Pep Rally – not bad for a Division three school with a total enrollment of around seven hundred.

## **Beach Party Days: Chapter 8**

Coach Ruffy had given a great talk using a PA system set up by the A-V department of the school and the cheerleaders really had their hearts into the cheers they led the crowd through. Coach Ruffy had said that the Thanksgiving games between Quaytown High and Mason High had taken on a legendary meaning similar to that in Professional football between teams like the Chicago Bears and the Green Bay Packers, or the New York Giants and the Baltimore Colts.

By the time the Pep Rally was over, all of the players felt pumped up. They were ready for the game and felt like they could not wait until game time tomorrow. As they were leaving the field, James came up to the Bo, Rafe and Earle to wish them good luck tomorrow. He then pulled them aside and said in a low voice, “Look back over at the home team bleachers. Do you see that car parked under the bleachers? I know it’s dark, but if you look hard you can barely see the car.”

“Oh, yeah, I see it”, Bo said. “What about it, Hein?”

“That’s Gerry Flower’s car and he and Robin are doing the back seat mambo”, James said with a smile in a hushed way.

“Well, that should relax Gerry for the game tomorrow; I just hope it makes him run those end runs faster”, said Rafe. And they all laughed.

Earle was brought back to the moment, as Coach Jim Dempsey started to give the pregame pep talk. Coach Dempsey was new this year – he had played football for QHS seven years earlier and had gone on to play for the University of Virginia. He was not as over the top as Coach Costello, but he had a greater sense of the game. Earle liked him, partly because Coach Dempsey had also played the offensive position of End and had been a big help to both Earle and Rafe this season.

QHS had had a winning season this year, but lost two key games to Remsen and Toms River by close margins that kept them from winning the Seacoast Conference. But a win today against Mason could make the season. QHS could lose every game and a win over Mason would salvage the entire season and give Quaytown residents bragging rights over Mason residents.

Coach Dempsey was speaking and pointing to defensive players as he addressed the positions they were to play, “Now on defense we are going to play a 6-3 on first and second downs, when Mason mostly runs the ball out of the Single Wing formation. You six defensive linemen have got to get penetration to stop the run. You defensive Ends have to be sure to keep their running backs from getting around your end. The middle linebacker and the two outside defensive backs need to be ready to stop the runners if they break through the front six; And you Safeties need to come up under control for any runners that break through the front nine, but you also need to be ready for a surprise pass – your key is on the Offensive Ends, if they release and on the Flankerback if he runs out into the flat.”



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After a brief pause to let his words sink in, Coach Dempsey continued, “Now on third downs and on obvious passing downs, we’ll play the 5-4 defense that we practiced all week. You should all know your roles there.”

Then the coach shifted his attention to the Offensive players. He reminded them of their roles on the various running and passing plays, and in particular the surprise play to be executed the first time they got the ball.

The door opened and the Referee poked his head in and announced. “Five minutes to game time, Quaytown!” Then he left and closed the door.

Then Coach Ruffy stepped into the center of the room and said with obvious emotion, “Okay, Bisons, are you guys all ready? This game is for each of you, and for the coaches, and for the school, and for the town. Let’s play hard, but clean football today, and leave the field winners. But even if we don’t come out on top today, let’s leave the field knowing that we gave it our all – that we gave it our very best! Play hard and hit like a hammer and tong! Let’s be agile, mobile, and virile. I’m proud of you all. Now let’s get out there and kick some Mason butt!”

The Quaytown boys stood up and yelled encouragement to each other, and then ran out of the field house behind their co-captains, Bo and Rafe. The QHS Bisons ran double-filed between the lines formed by the QHS Band, Majorettes, Twirlers, and Cheerleaders. The Mason team was already on the field getting warmed up and trying to settle the butterflies in their stomachs as well, Rafe assumed.

A few minutes later Gerry Flower and Rafe were standing at mid-field for the coin toss with the co-captains of Mason. “Gosh, they look big”, thought Rafe. Then the Ref said, “Quaytown, you’re the home team; you get the call for the coin toss, what do you call?”

“Heads!” Both Gerry and Rafe said in unison. The Ref flipped the coin up into the air and it turned end over end slowly as it arced upwards and then fell to the grass field.

The Ref picked up the coin and announced, “Heads it is!” and pointed to Gerry and Rafe. Then Mason was asked which goal they wanted to defend and their co-captains indicated the East end of the field. The Ref then aligned the four players and gave the sign that Mason would kick off to Quaytown. There were over a thousand fans in the stands and standing behind the red snow fence surrounding the field and the cheers went up, louder than any that Rafe and Gerry had ever heard. The QHS Band and Cheerleaders were leading the home crowd in singing The Bisons fight song.

*On Blue Bisons, On Blue Bisons, heroes strong, brave and true,  
March on down the field and score a touchdown for the white and blue,  
Go Bisons, Go! On to Victory! Go, Go, Go  
Fight! Fight! Fight! ...*

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Game Time! The Bisons took the opening kickoff and ran it back to their forty yard line – very good field position. Both teams were very familiar with each other’s style of play, having had the same coaches for many years. QHS typically was known to execute running plays on the first two downs and a passing play generally on third downs. So, Mason was anticipating a running play on the Bisons first snap.

Bo took the snap from center, turned to his right, faked a handoff first to the right halfback running into the hole between the right guard and right tackle, and then faked a handoff to the fullback running off tackle. To Mason it looked like the same old cross-buck play that QHS always ran. But Bo continued to turn full circle and threw a forward pass to Rafe. From his left end position, Rafe had run five yards down field, took a step toward the center of the field as if he were going to block for a running play, then cut left toward the sideline. Bo’s pass was right on the money and the Mason defensive back on that side and the safety were caught off-guard. Rafe caught the ball in stride just over the fifty yard line and ran down the sideline as fast as he could, well past the halfback. The safety recovered and was chasing Rafe. Rafe knew that the Mason player was fast – he ran the 100 yard and the 220 yard dashes on Mason’s track team.

Rafe was urging his legs on, “Faster, faster, damn it! Don’t let him catch up!” Forty yard line, thirty yard line, twenty yard line, and then Bang! The Mason Safety had caught up and tackled Rafe. But the Bisons were on the Mason nineteen yard line with a good chance to score first in this all-important game.

But the Mason team quickly regrouped and held Quaytown for four downs, first a run around right end by Gerry Flowers lost four yards, then a run up the middle by the fullback, Lenny Dean, was stopped at the line of scrimmage. On third down, Bo went back to pass to Earle, who ran a down and out to the right sideline, but was under such a rush that he had to take a sack back on the thirty-five yard line. The Bison’s punted into the end zone and Mason started on its twenty yard line.

Mason’s single wing attack moved the ball down the field, but stalled when the Bison defense stiffened. After trading punts, Mason got the ball in good field position and on second down their speedy tailback ran around end, broke a tackle and raced into the end zone. The extra point was missed – score Mason 6, Quaytown 0. The first quarter ended and most of the second quarter was a defensive battle with neither team able to score.

But with two and a half minutes left in the first half, Mason had to punt to Quaytown. Walt Kinney took the punt at the forty-five yard line of Quaytown, started running straight up the center of the field, and then cut sharply to his right. He warded off a tackler, then got a block from Earle and another from Rafe, and was finally run out of bounds at the Mason 5 yard line.

The clock was stopped at just under two minutes to move the chains. Quaytown took a timeout to set up a play. On first down, Bo handed off to the right halfback on a quick hitter between the right guard and right tackle, which advanced the ball to the two yard line. One minute and thirty seconds left. The Bisons had called two plays at the timeout, and they hurried to get set up for the second down. The Mason players were taking their time getting into position,

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but Bo finally took the snap and handed off to the fullback, Lenny Dean off right tackle. The play was stopped after another grudging yard gain.

Thirty seconds left – Bo called for a timeout – the Bisons last of the first half. He went over to the sidelines to confer with the Coaches and came back into the huddle. “OK, guys this is it. We may only have time for one more play. You linemen have got to block! We’ve tried the right side twice, now we’re going to try the left side. If we score we can still go for the extra point and go in at halftime with the lead.”

Bo took the snap, turned, took one step to the left and handed the ball to Lenny Dean who ran between the left tackle and left guard. The Mason defense went low on the Bisons tackle and guard and held up their forward charge for a brief second. Rafe charged forward and got to the inside on the defensive end and was holding him off. Lenny ran into the back of the left tackle and was unable to move forward from there initially, but the left tackle and Lenny both kept their legs driving against the force of the Mason defense. Then Lenny slid off the back of the left tackle and found a slit between him and Rafe. The left tackle and Rafe fell forward into the end zone and Lenny fell in between them for the touchdown.

Score! The Bisons had tied the game! But what was that? The Line Judge was talking to the Referee and waving his hands, signaling no touchdown! What the Hell?

There was mass confusion on the field. The Quaytown players were jumping up and down with joy believing they had scored the touchdown. The Mason players were feeling dejected. But the Referee was signaling that the clock had run out on the first half and that Quaytown had not scored because Lenny’s forward motion was stopped. Coaches Ruffy and Dempsey ran onto the field to argue the call and get an explanation from the Referee. Rafe tried to tell the Referee that Lenny had not been touched by any of the Mason players, and that he fell into the end zone after sliding off the back of the Bison’s left tackle. But the coaches shooed Rafe away, fearing he might get ejected from the game – they still had another half to play.

The coaches informed the Referee that Quaytown would play the rest of the game under protest, and then they got the QHS team into the field house to get things settled down and prepare for the second half. Needless to say it took a while for things to settle down in the QHS field house. To a man, the team felt like they had been screwed.

The second half turned out to be anti-climactic. Neither team could score. The game ended Mason 6, Quaytown 0, but the Quaytown players and all the people in the school and town would long remember that this was a Thanksgiving Day game that Quaytown should have rightfully won.

## **Beach Party Days: Chapter 8**

*Friday evening December 5, 1958...*

The Christmas Tree Inn was crowded. Bo, Earle, James, Rafe, Roger Vaccaro and Jimmy Barrone had gone to Staten Island for a night of adventure.

Jimmy Barrone had come to Quaytown in September, as a senior. He had tried out for the varsity football team and made the squad as the starting Center, despite the fact that he was not all that big in height or weight, but he was feisty and didn't back down from anyone. He also made the varsity basketball team as a guard. Jimmy was five foot, seven inches, 150 pounds, with gray eyes, black, short cropped hair parted on the left side and combed across to the left. For an Italian, he was fairly light skinned, and had a ruddy complexion when he was exerting himself in sports. He was also known to blush when a girl paid him a compliment and when he smiled dimples appeared in his cheeks. He had a short nose and a generous mouth with thin lips. The girls of QHS found him to be a cute guy. The guys enjoyed Jimmy's sense of humor and self-deprecating way.

Roger Vaccaro was one of the best looking guys in the senior class at QHS. The girls practically drooled over Roger. He played offensive tackle on the football team and threw the javelin for the track team. Roger was six foot, 175 pounds with broad shoulders, muscular chest, arms and legs and thin hips, which gave him a bit of a top half of an hour glass physique. With wavy golden brown hair combed back along the sides into a ducktail and a classic face that could have modeled for a bust of an ancient Roman Centurion, the girls at QHS practically fell all over one another to catch his attention. Yet he didn't much notice; Roger was a regular guy, not narcissistic or stuck up, which added to his being liked by the guys as well as the girls.

The drinking age may have been twenty-one in New Jersey, but in all five boroughs of New York, it was eighteen. It didn't matter that Bo and James were the only ones that were of age in New York. The Christmas Tree Inn and a couple other bars in Staten Island rarely checked for ID's, as long as a person looked eighteen and had the moxie to ask confidently for an alcoholic drink. This was why the Inn was popular with the kids from Quaytown and neighboring towns. The fact that it was a short trip across the Outerbridge Crossing from Perth Amboy on the Jersey side was added incentive.

The group had just ordered another round of Sloe Gin Fizzes (they were not exactly sophisticated drinkers at this stage). James had stopped at one drink, since he was the driver. It was well known that the Perth Amboy police held a checkpoint on the Jersey side of the bridge on weekend evenings to make sure that any teenagers coming back were not so intoxicated that they were likely to get into an accident. It didn't matter to the police if everyone in the car was puking, as long as the driver was sober. If they had even the slightest hint that the driver had been drinking, they would make him or her get out of the car and walk the walk and talk the talk. Any sign of inebriation would lead to a ride to the police station and a call to one or more parents to come and get their son or daughter.

The rest rooms were up on the second floor. Bo had had one too many Sloe Gin Fizzes and had gone upstairs to the men's' room. After taking a leak, he started down the stairs and

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suddenly something funny struck him that later he could not remember. But he started laughing and the next thing he knew his feet slipped out from under him and he landed on his ass on the next to top step. Now this struck him as even funnier than whatever had caused him to laugh initially, and he started giggling and laughing uncontrollably. At this point he sort of realized that he was drunk and figured that he was unable to stand up, lest he fall down the stairs.

Jimmy Barrone had to go to take a leak, and as he got to the bottom of the steps he saw Bo sitting near the top laughing. Bo spotted Jimmy and proceeded to bounce down the stairs on his ass. When Bo reached the bottom still laughing, Jimmy pulled him up by the hand and walked him to the table where the others were sitting. Bo shook his head to try and clear it and his laughing stopped, but now he had the hiccups. “I think Bo has had enough. Maybe we should get him a coffee. The rest of you don’t look too sober, either”, Jimmy said with a sarcastic chuckle. “Except for James”, he added. “But I still need to take a leak – I’ll be right back”. And he disappeared to go upstairs.

When Jimmy got to the men’s room, he found an open urinal. Next to him was a big guy who looked quite mean, like he could squash a smaller guy like Jimmy, and the guy was obviously a bit drunk and talking angrily to another guy, who was just leaving the men’s room. The mean looking guy finished just before Jimmy and went to wash his hands. As Jimmy shook his dick off and zipped up, he looked down and saw a wallet on the floor by the urinal that the big guy had just vacated. “Oh, Shit!” He thought. “If I point it out to that guy, he might think I tried to pick his pocket, and my ass will be grass.” So, Jimmy decided he would not say anything, but just get the hell out of there.

When Jimmy got downstairs the rest of the gang was ready to leave, and Bo was feeling a little better, although not exactly sober.

James drove home to Quaytown without any incident. Jimmy Barrone, Roger Vaccaro, and Rafe all lived in the same section of North Kingsboro, so Jimmy’s older brother, Tim, met them at Quaytown High School and drove the three of them home.

There would be many more trips to Staten Island before the boys reached the age of 21.

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January, 1959 rang in a special year for the seniors at QHS. They would be graduating in six months and about thirty-five percent would go on to college in September, a relatively high percentage at the end of the 1950's for the quiet Seacoast town of Quaytown. The boys and girls were less interested in what was going on outside of Quaytown than in what the next twelve months would mean in their individual lives.

On January 1, Castro led the Cuban rebels to victory, while dictator Batista fled to the Dominican Republic. On January 3, Alaska became the forty-ninth state. Also, in January "Rawhide" with Clint Eastwood debuted on CBS TV and "Bozo the Clown", a live children's TV show was first telecast.

In February, Swiss Males voted against giving voting rights to Swiss women, Texas Instruments requested a Patent for the Integrated Circuit, and the Barbie doll went on sale. But perhaps the event that most grabs the attention of the QHS students, along with teenagers across the nation, was the crash of a private airplane in Clear Lake, Iowa on February 3. Buddy Holly, Richie Valens, and The Big Bopper died in the crash.

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*Wednesday evening January 14, 1959...*

*Takes a Rockin' Chair to Rock,*

*Response: (Satisfy)*

*Takes a Rubber Ball to Roll,*

*Response: (Satisfy)*

*Takes a Team Like Quaytown,*

*Response: (Satisfy)*

*To Satisfy My Soul*

*Response: (Satisfy My Soul)...*

The basketball season was well under way. Rafe, James, and Jack Pauley were sitting with Nathan Leeson near the top row of the fold out stands on the stage area of the QHS gym. Nathan was leading the cheer by standing and yelling out the lines of the cheer, while the rest of the QHS fans followed with the response to each line.

The QHS varsity was drubbing the Bayshore Highlands team 45 to 25 late in the third quarter. Bo, at right Guard with 17 points, and Earle, at Left Forward with 11 points and over a dozen rebounds, were both having a great game. Whizzie Grant at Left Guard was leading the attack as the playmaker and point guard. Whizzie already had 14 assists and 7 points.

Whizzie and Bo were working a two man press against the BHS guards, picking them up around their own foul line as the basketball was in-bounded, and hounding them across the mid

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court. Whizzie's fast hands stole the ball away from the player he was guarding and he immediately passed the ball to Bo, who left his man when he saw Whizzie steal the ball.

It happened so fast that Bo was caught off guard; he hadn't expected it. As he caught the pass, he knew there was only a few seconds left in the third quarter and the buzzer would soon go off signaling time had expired. He overheard someone in the crowd yell, "shoot!" In a flash Bo turned and took his patented two hand set shot from about seventeen feet. Unfortunately it was at the wrong basket!

As the ball arced toward the BHS basket, he brought his hands back against either side of his face and stared in horror. "Oh, fuck!" He thought to himself, "What the hell did I just do?" With a blush of embarrassment rushing up his neck to his face he watched the ball as it descended toward the basket, almost as if it were in slow motion. After what seemed an eternity, the ball came down and bounced off the rim of the basket, falling harmlessly to the gym floor as the buzzer sounded. "Whew, thank you, God!" he whispered to himself and exhaled the breath he had been holding.

Just then there was commotion on the QHS bench, which was located on stage level off to the right next to the five steps leading down to the court surface. The reserve players were scrambling off the bench as if they were trying to avoid something. Everyone in the stands on the stage side stood up and leaned to the right to see what the matter was. The fans on the opposite side of the gym in the auditorium seats that elevated up to the second floor had a clearer view and you could hear some of them yell, "Oh, Yuck!" Coach Costello, who was sitting on one end of the bench, was initially oblivious to whatever was happening, as he had been concentrating on the players on the court and yelling out for the QHS team to guard their assigned players on the other team, just before the buzzer sounded.

As the QHS players cleared the bench one lonely player was there leaning away from Coach Costello and vomiting all over the bench and the edge of the stage. Jack Pauley had the best angle and informed the other boys, "Hey, Its Jimmy Barrone!"

"Oh, Shit!" James and Rafe said in unison.

"Poor fellow", said Nathan shuddering and scrunching up his face in distaste.

By now the Referees had noticed what was going on and called a referee timeout. Somebody on the auditorium side ran down the ramp to the boys' locker room and came running back with several bath towels. The custodian, who happened to be watching the game from the other ramp that led to the supply room, ran to get a mop and bucket.

Five minutes later everything was cleaned up and poor Jimmy, having thrown up his dinner, was in the shower room, feeling more embarrassed than sick. The game was continued without further incidents.

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Jimmy later explained that he had had ziti for dinner and got hit with a stomach bug. By the next day he was fully recovered, but his embarrassing incident became a well-remembered episode in the memories of those who witnessed it.

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*Friday evening February 27, 1959...*

“Run your asses off!” Fred Ballantine was yelling. Jack Pauley, Joey Silvo, Rafe and Bo were trying to get to the car as fast as their legs would carry them. Joey and Rafe were on either side of Jack pulling him along. Bo and Rafe were laughing hysterically. Joey was nervous and a bit afraid. Jack was having trouble running, but seemed terribly amused by it all. Fred was running behind the others and verbally pushing them to get to the car parked up the street. They were all a bit drunk – some more than a bit drunk.

James was in the car, the 1954 Tan Ford 4-door sedan borrowed from his brother. He had the engine running and the lights off, parked there while anxiously waiting for the others. It had rained heavily earlier while they were inside and he had just turned off the wipers. Then in the rearview mirror he saw the group running up the sidewalk toward the car. As they neared the car, his hands unconsciously tightened on the steering wheel in anticipation of making a quick getaway. His right foot goosed the accelerator causing the engine to race, but he let up on it – “Not just yet”, he cautioned himself.

Suddenly both doors on the passenger side, and simultaneously the rear door on the driver’s side opened. Bo jumped into the rear on the driver’s side, and Joey jumped into the front on the passenger side and slid to the center on the bench seat. Rafe literally shoved Jack into the front next to Joey, slammed the door and jumped into the back next to Bo, then Fred jumped into the back on the Driver’s side; he had been last because he was pretending to pay the bill, but told the bartender that he had to get more money from one of the other guys. Bo and Rafe were still laughing while Fred’s sharp voice reverberated through the car, “God damn it, hurry it up!”.

“Everyone in?” James asked eagerly.

“Yes!” yelled Fred. “Now take off, Hein! Get us the fuck out of here!”

James already had the car in gear; he took his foot off the brake, stepped on the gas and the car jerked forward. He turned on the headlights, made the first right turn then the first left and checked to see if anyone was following. “No one behind us, and I didn’t see anyone running up the sidewalk behind you after you all got in the car”, announced James, his voice a little more under control than he felt.



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After a few minutes, as they headed toward the Outerbridge Crossing, they all relaxed a bit. James said, “I don’t believe I’m saying this, but that was a fun adventure. I wasn’t sure we’d get away with it – running out without paying the tab.” He was relaxed enough now to chuckle.

“Shit, yeah! We must have stiffed that place for over forty bucks with all those beers we drank!” Bo said, and started to laugh again. That started Rafe laughing again. He was feeling silly from too many beers.

Then for the first time Fred started to laugh. “That was a real blast!” He said as he slapped his leg. It was Fred’s idea to run out without paying the bill, but it was not at all premeditated – it was an extemporaneous idea.

James had volunteered to drive to Staten Island and stay sober, limiting himself to only a couple of beers and then switching to cokes. After the others had drunk round after round of beers, Fred whispered to James that they were going to leave without paying the bill. He told James to walk casually out and get the car and park up the street, ready for a fast getaway. Then Fred surreptitiously told Bo, Rafe, Jack and Joey about the plan. Jack was the drunkest and the plan did not sink in too well, so when the time came, Rafe and Bo nearly had to guide Jack out of the door of the bar. It was not quite the blind drunk leading the blind drunk.

Just before they reached the bridge back to New Jersey, Jack rolled down the window. Everyone figured he was trying to get some air on this cool February evening with the car’s heater cranked up. Then Jack stuck his head out the window, pointed up toward the sky and declared drunkenly, “I have reached my star!” With that he brought his head back into the car and barfed all over the front passenger side, some of it into Joey’s lap.

“Oh, Damn! Hell! Shit” James said as the bridge appeared just ahead of them.

“Oh, God, did Jack just upchuck?” asked Fred. “Oh, fuck if he didn’t!”

Jack then slumped over against Joey. “Is he OK, Joey?” Rafe asked with concern.

“Looks like he just passed out”, Bo said, as he had a better view than Rafe.

“Yeah! He’s breathing, but passed out,” Joey said somewhat annoyed at being a target of Jack’s vomit.

They were on the bridge now and up ahead was a police car, stopping the occasional car crossing over to Jersey. “Oh, great! Police ahead” James announced.

“Joey, put your arm around Jack and try to keep him still, so he doesn’t wake up.” Fred quickly ordered. “Everyone else, if we get stopped, keep your mouths shut and let James do all the talking.”

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There were two patrolmen standing in the traffic lanes. They signaled James to stop. James opened the window and went through the routine of handing over his driver's license and the car's registration.

“Step out of the car, young man!” one of the patrolmen order James.

James's window was still open and the front passenger window was still rolled down a couple of inches to help reduce the odor. The boys in the car could hear the Patrolman asking James about where they had been, where they were headed and what was wrong with the fellow in the front seat. “He's got the flu and he just got sick”, James said. Then the Patrolman made James walk along with him, checking for any sign of inebriation. While he was doing that, the other patrolman shined a flashlight into the car on each of the passengers in turn. Rafe, Bo and Fred had sobered enough to act like they were sober. Joey still had his arm around Jack. Finding that James was really sober, the policemen let them go and got back in their patrol car to await another car with Jersey plates.

The rest of the ride home was uneventful and the conversation was mostly subdued, with an occasional bout of light laughter at the night's adventure. Well, uneventful, except for the aftermath. Jack temporarily awoke from his stupor, and when it appeared that he would be sick again, Joey quickly rolled down the window and nudged Jack to stick his head out and throw up outside the car this time.

Then when James pulled up to Jack's house, Fred and Joey practically carried Jack up the front walk, while James, Bo and Rafe remained in the car. Fred and Joey opened the screen door on the front porch, and quickly deposited Jack on the porch swing. Just then Jack's mother turned on the light, opened the front door of the house and started yelling, “What have you done to my son?”

Fred said nervously, “He's OK, just had too much to drink.” Then he and Joey ran out of the porch, back down the front walk and jumped into the car. James then drove off.

It also happened that the rain earlier that night had hit more heavily in North Kingsboro than on Staten Island. At the start of the evening Joey had parked his father's car at Rafe's house, where James had picked them up. When James later dropped them off, Joey discovered that he had left a window open, having smoked a cigarette when he had parked. Unfortunately there were blueprints in the car and the rain had nearly ruined them.

The next morning Joey turned up at Rafe's house seeking asylum from his father, who was on the war path. Fortunately for Joey the blueprints were not permanently ruined, just a little blurred after drying out.

Then Rafe and Joey went to James's house where they met Bo. The three of them had agreed to meet there to help James clean up his brother's car, but when they arrived, James had

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the garden hose out rinsing off the outside of the car. He had already cleaned up the interior of the car.

“Hey, Hein, we came to help you clean up your brother’s car and you’ve already done it”, Rafe said.

“I figured I had better get up early before my brother, so he wouldn’t be pissed off when he got a whiff of that puke”, James said as he finished toweling off the passenger door. “Besides, the shape you all were in last night, I wasn’t sure you would get here early enough this morning.”

Then Bo said what Rafe and Joey were thinking, “Actually I’m not sure I could have handled the look and smell of that puke!”

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March, 1959: Iran and the U.S. signed an economic/military pact, a pro-Egyptian coup failed in Iraq, Iraq and the U.S.S.R signed an economic/technical treaty, the first known radar contact is made with the planet Venus, “A Raisin in the Sun” the first play written by a black woman opened on Broadway, and President Eisenhower signed a bill making Hawaii the fiftieth state.

*Wednesday afternoon March 11, 1959...*

*Fe-fe, fi-fi, fo-fo, fum  
I smell smoke in the auditorium*

*Charlie Brown, Charlie Brown  
He's a clown, that Charlie Brown  
He's gonna get caught  
Just you wait and see  
(Why's everybody always pickin' on me)*

*That's him on his knees  
I know that's him  
Yeah, from 7 come 11  
Down in the boys' gym*

*Charlie Brown, Charlie Brown  
He's a clown, that Charlie Brown  
He's gonna get caught  
Just you wait and see  
(Why's everybody always pickin' on me)*

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*Who's always writing on the wall  
Who's always goofing in the hall  
Who's always throwing spit balls  
Guess who (who, me) yeah, you...*

The charter buses pulled into the parking lot of the Cherry Blossom Inn in Washington, DC. Bo, Earle, James and Rafe were in the lead bus. Mrs. Purell was the chaperone for the girls on this bus and Mr. Fielder was the chaperone for the boys. Four other teachers were chaperones for the girls and boys on the second and third buses. One of the senior boys sitting in the rear of the lead bus had brought with him one of the new transistor radios, a pocket-sized Sony TR-63. The group in the rear, which included James, Bo, Earle and Rafe had been singing along with the latest hit by the Coasters.

As the students exited the buses and filed into the Inn, Bo caught up with Martha Luchese and whispered, "Do you think we can get some time alone tonight?"

Martha whispered back, "Uh, I don't know, Bo. That might be difficult, what with Mrs. Purell and all the other chaperones -- would it be so terrible, if we can't get together alone?"

Bo didn't know why he was disappointed by Martha's reply, maybe he expected her to be more willing to take a risk. He tried to hide his feelings saying, "Well, let's try. When we all meet for dinner, let me know your room number and I'll call your room about an hour after curfew."

"OK, but we'll need to be very careful", Martha said quietly as she followed the line of the girls, who were all assigned to rooms on the second floor. Bo and the other boys were all assigned rooms on the third floor.

Bo, Earle, James and Rafe were assigned to adjoining rooms, sharing a common bath with toilet, sink and shower between the two rooms. Both rooms had two twin beds. Bo and Earle were in one room together and Rafe and James shared the other.

Upon entering their respective rooms and dropping their suitcases, the four boys congregated in the room occupied by Bo and Earle. For some unknown reason Earle decided to imagine that Penny Warlock was lying on the bed next to the window. The other three boys were amused when Earle claimed, "Ah, there she is; there's that fine filly, Penny, just waiting for good ole 'Burn' to make love to her!" With that he took a running start and leaped onto the bed.

Crash! The wooden slats under the mattress gave way and the mattress with Earle on top fell through the bed frame to the floor. Bo, James and Rafe burst out in laughter, as if this were the funniest thing they had seen in years. After his initial surprise, Earle joined in the laughter.

Just then two of the chaperones came rushing into the room seeking to find out what the ruckus was. "What's going on here?" asked Mr. Fielder. When the two teachers spotted Earle on

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the collapsed bed, they were initially alarmed. “OK, how did that happen?” inquired the other teacher.

“The bed just collapsed when Burn laid down on it”, James said as innocently as he could muster, while quelling his laughing.

Bo and Rafe nodded and added their confirmation, “Yeah, that’s right. Burn just lay down and the mattress fell through.”

The two teachers then went over and helped Earle get up. Bo and Earle then lifted up the mattress. Luckily the wooden slats had just been dislodged and not broken. After re-inserting the slats across the bed frame and replacing the mattress, the bed was back to normal. Mr. Fielder then said authoritatively, “I’m reminding you that dinner is in one hour, and after dinner there is to be no fraternizing with the girls on the second floor. Now, get your suitcases unpacked and get cleaned up for dinner.” The two teachers then left the room with a shake of their heads, but a smile emerging on their mouths.

The boys then set about unpacking their suitcases, hanging up suits, shirts and ties in the closets and putting the rest in the dressers. The boys took turns in the bathroom, and then the four boys got dressed for dinner and congregated once again in the room of Bo and Earle. Earle then surreptitiously pulled out a pint bottle of Seagram’s Seven from his suitcase. “Hmm! I wonder how this got in there”, he said with a sly grin.

“Holy shit, Burn, how the hell did you get that?” asked Rafe with a sense of surprise.

“At the liquor store on Center Street in Holmvale”, Earle replied with a bit of pride.

Bo interjected, “Oh, you guys should see Burn in action. Even though he’s younger than all of us, he just walks into a liquor store, picks out some beer or booze, slaps down some money, and walks out with the stuff; no questions asked and no one asks him for proof of age.”

“Damn!” said James. “We’re all eighteen and Burn, you’re only seventeen, but you pass for twenty-one? How the hell do you do that?”

Earle shrugged his shoulders and smiled as if to say, “No sweat!”

“It’s probably Burn’s heavy beard, the deep voice with that Rebel accent and those overgrown big feet”, Bo jibed.

“Watch that shit about my feet”, Earle responded with mock admonition. And they all laughed. Then Earle opened the bottle, took a sip, licked his lips and passed the bottle to Bo. They all took a sip and passed the bottle back to Earle. “Now, we’ve got to find a place to hide this from the chaperones, or we’ll be in deep shit”, Earle said. Then he pulled a roll of string out of his suitcase, tied a knot around the neck of the bottle, opened the window, lowered the bottle

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on the string down the side of the building and tied the other end of the string to the cord on the window shade. Then the boys went downstairs to the dining hall.

Dinner was served cafeteria style, salad, meatloaf, mashed potatoes, and string beans -- not exactly royal faire. Bo was the first of the four boys through the food line. He found Martha and sat at a table with her and Cathy Wood. Earle corralled Penny Warlock, and James looked for and found Sue Barlow and the four of them found their way to Bo's table. There was one more chair at the table and they saved it for Rafe, who was the last of the four to get through the food line. Rafe parked himself next to Cathy and they all proceeded to talk about what was in store for them on this trip and what was scheduled for tomorrow. They were slated to visit the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials and then the Washington Monument. The girls were all genuinely excited. The boys feigned nonchalance, but in reality they, too, looked forward to seeing these famous sites.

After dinner, the chaperones reminded all of the students that they had thirty minutes before curfew. They were not to go out of the hotel and by curfew they must be in their assigned rooms; the chaperones would be performing a room check to be sure.

Later, following the Chaperones room check, Bo called the Inn's front desk and asked to be transferred to Martha's room. He had gotten the room number during dinner. Cathy answered the phone and gave it to Martha.

"Meet me down on the main floor by the gift shop", Bo urged Martha.

Martha replied, "Oh, Bo, I don't think it is wise. I mean, the chaperones are in the rooms at the end of the hall by the elevators and stairwell. I don't think I can do it without getting caught, and I don't want to get into trouble."

Bo tried again to coax Martha into meeting him, but again she raised objections. Bo said somewhat annoyed, "Fine! I guess I'll see you tomorrow", and he hung up on her.

In the morning at breakfast, Cathy pulled Bo aside to tell him how upset Martha was about last night.

"Bo, Martha was afraid she would get caught and that both of you would get into trouble. Then if her parents found out, they might forbid her to go out with you anymore. Can you understand that?"

Bo shrugged and reluctantly nodded. "But, I really like being with her and thought we could spend some time alone. I don't think it is all that risky."

"Martha is not the type of girl to disobey the rules. She doesn't like taking risks and is not adventuresome like some other girls." Cathy said with a hint of mischief in her eyes.

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“Are you suggesting that you are one of the adventuresome ones”, Bo asked with a teasing smile.

“Maybe.”, Cathy said, slightly tilting her head flirtatiously to one side with a twinkle in her bright blue eyes, “but you and Martha have been dating for some time and she and I are friends. I don’t want to get in the middle of that. But, Bo, I don’t want to seem forward, if things change between you and Martha...” then her voice trailed off and she turned and walked away, leaving Bo somewhat mystified.

A moment later he realized that Cathy was telling him that she was really interested and was open to starting a more personal relationship. “Hmm! I may just have to see where that might lead”, he thought to himself.

Later that day, after visiting the Lincoln Memorial, the Jefferson Memorial, the Washington Memorial, and a few other sites, the boys and girls were given some free time to do some shopping for souvenirs. The buses had parked on a street near a tourist shopping area. They were instructed to be back to the buses at 4:00 PM for the return drive to the Inn. It was now 2:30 in the afternoon. James, Rafe, Fred Ballantine, Ronnie McCloud, and a fifth boy named Cary Spacek decided to sneak off and check out the bars. Fred had told them that the drinking age in D.C. was eighteen. They found a place about seven blocks away from the buses. Over the entrance way there was a large neon sign with the shape of a nineteenth century ship and the words “The Schooner Bar and Grill” molded in script in the neon glass tubing.

The five boys entered the front door and walked down the single aisle. There was a long bar with bar stools along the left wall, and a row of tables along the right wall. The place had a number of customers, but was not overly busy. They picked out a large round table that had room for the five of them. A non-descript waitress came over to see what they wanted to order. “We’d like some draught beers”, Fred said as though this was just a typical outing.

“Seven ounce glass or schooners”, the waitress asked, one hand on hip, cracking the gum she was chewing, and a look of half-hearted interest on her pale, sallow face.

“What’s a schooner?” asked James.

The waitress pointed to a nearby table and said, “See that big sixteen ounce round glass that looks like a fish bowl on a pedestal? That’s a schooner.”

“Oh, yeah, I’ll have one of those!” Fred said. “In fact bring us five of those” he ordered, and the waitress turned and walked over to the bartender, who was busy behind the bar.

“We’ve got to keep an eye on the time”, reminded Ronnie.

Rafe responded, “I’ve got my watch. I’ll be the timekeeper.” The rest of the guys nodded their assent.

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After the second round, Cary said, “I like these schooner glasses – nice big opening to drink from. Hey! Why don’t we call ourselves the Five Schooners?”

“Good idea, I think we should do that when we get back. It will be our own little joke and no one will know what it means,” Ronnie said, a little high, not being an experienced beer drinker.

After the third round, it was time to head back to the buses. The boys all chipped in four dollars each, which was enough for the beers and a healthy tip. They made it back to the buses just in time and took up seats in the rear. They didn’t want take the chance that the chaperones might smell the beer, even though they were all chomping on chewing gum like a herd of cows.

The chaperones checked to see that everyone had returned to their buses and then the drivers started to drive the buses back toward the Inn, which was a half hour away. Five minutes into the drive, and the “Five Schooners” realized they had to take a wicked piss (they were having such a good time in the bar they had neglected to go to the bathroom before leaving).

The “Five Schooners” walked up the aisle in single file and quietly asked the bus driver if he could find a place to stop where they could use a restroom. They tried to ignore the looks on the chaperones’ faces, but at this point they didn’t give a damn. They really had to go.

The bus driver was very accommodating and pulled over at a café. The five boys hustled off the bus and went into the café, which fortunately was not very busy. The men’s room was empty, but there were only two urinals and one commode. Fred and Rafe held back to let the other three piss first. But Fred said he couldn’t hold it any longer, and proceeded to piss in the sink. For some reason, the other four thought that was funny, and started laughing. That started Fred laughing, too. “Hey, stop making me laugh, I’m having trouble keeping the piss from splashing back on me”, Fred said practically snorting.

“I think I’ll pass on washing my hands”, James said with a chuckle, after zipping up.

“Me, too”, said Rafe as he stepped up to the urinal vacated by James.

The other three boys all concurred and when they had all finished, they hustled back to the bus. On boarding the bus, the other students gave them a round of applause. “The Five Schooners” sat down with a smile, knowing they had fashioned one of those silly memories that would not soon be forgotten.

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April: On April 7, Oklahoma ends prohibition after fifty-one years; on the 9<sup>th</sup> Bill Sharman of the Boston Celtics basketball team sets an NBA record by hitting his fifty-sixth



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straight foul shot without a miss; on the 15<sup>th</sup> Fidel Castro begins a good will tour of the U.S. and then later in the month Cuba invades Panama.

*Friday evening April 10, 1959...*

Rafe and Bo had had a baseball game earlier that day, the second game of the season. By the time they got back from the game with Wall Township, it was already almost 6:00 PM and the Open House was scheduled to start at 7:30 PM. Because he lived in Quaytown, Bo could walk home and after dinner, get dressed in his only suit and tie and drive his Mom and Dad to the High School for tonight's event.

Rafe had figured that he would not have time to hitch hike home the four miles after the game, so in the morning he brought his sport jacket, slacks and a tie with him on the school bus and stashed it in his sports locker in the lower hall outside the gym. Rafe would often hitch home after a game, as his parents both worked up in Newark and would not normally get home from their commute until after 6:30 PM. But they were to attend and then Rafe would go home with them after the event.

Rafe was in desperate need of a haircut, his full head of brown hair crawling over his ears, and curling up on the back of his thick neck. When Rafe got off the bus and walked into the school to take off the baseball uniform and shower up, coach Zino, the varsity baseball coach said to him, "Cerny, aren't you supposed to emcee the open house entertainment tonight?"

"Yes, coach", Rafe replied as he started to peel off the uniform.

"Well, you look like a ragamuffin, young man, with that hair. You could stand a haircut", the coach observed.

"I know, coach, but I don't have time to get home and besides the barber shop in North Kingsboro will be closed by the time I got there. And my parents don't get home until late, so I brought my change of clothes with me this morning," Rafe informed coach Zino.

Just then coach Ruffy, the varsity football coach came by. Coach Zino knew that coach Ruffy worked part time at the barber shop in downtown Quaytown, so he went up to him and explained the situation.

"Come on, Cerny! Let's go get you a haircut," coach Ruffy announced, as if he were calling out a football play.

"But, coach, I don't have enough money on me," Rafe responded, feeling a little embarrassed.

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“That’s OK, no problem”, coach Ruffy responded. “Come on, my car is outside.” About an hour later Rafe was back at the school getting dressed, even though he had another 30 minutes to kill.

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Meanwhile Earle was getting dressed and having a little problem getting his tie knotted, until his Mom came into his room and helped him. “Thanks Mom. I guess I’m just a bit nervous about tonight, getting up on the stage in front of all those parents. But I’m glad you and Dad will be there so I can look out at you and maybe not be so nervous,” Earle said, his nervousness due to the fact that he will be up on the stage as a member of the King’s court.

“You’ll be fine!” Mrs. Burnham said confidently. “Your Dad and I are very proud of you. We love you and will always be in your corner.”

“I know. Thanks, Mom.” Earle answered as Mrs. Burnell turned and left him to finish his preparations. Earle went into the bathroom and poured a little Canoe into the palm of his hand, folded both hands together to evenly spread the cologne and patted it against both cheeks. “Hmm!” Earle thought to himself, “I hope I don’t smell like a French Whorehouse. But maybe I’ll get lucky tonight with Penny Warlock. She’s been dating that Freeney guy with the ’53 Merc, who graduated last year, but I think I’ve got her interested in me...at least she seems to be since she burned my hand with her cigarette on the Senior trip last month.” Then Earle began to sing to himself the lyrics he had made up and substituted in the song, “Tom Dooley”, by the Kingston Trio...

*Hang down your head, Todd Freeney,  
hang down your head and cry  
Penny is going to leave you  
And you are bound to die...*

While continuing to hum the tune, Earle recalled that initially the finalists for King and Queen were selected by a vote from just the senior class, and that Rafe and Hein had missed being finalists by just a few votes. Then Earle thought back to earlier in the week at the Class Day assembly, when all of the candidates for King and Queen had to give a speech to the entire student body about why they should be elected King or Queen. Earle had said that he had mostly been involved in sports and when he mentioned that he specialized in track doing the broad jump, there was instant laughter from the boys in the audience.

The entire student body then voted on the finalists with the boy and girl receiving the most votes being selected as the King and Queen. Among the senior class Bo was the favored for King, with a near draw between Martha Luchese and Cathy Wood for Queen. When all of the votes were counted, the underclassmen voted a little more heavily for Val Schultz and he edged Bo out to be “anointed” as King. And Cathy edged out Martha for Queen.

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“I’d rather see Bo as King; and well at least Rafe will be the emcee tonight”, Earle mused as he made a final check in the bathroom mirror.

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A buzz of noise wafted up in the auditorium and over the gym floor. The parents were arriving in largely scattered groups and taking up folding chairs on the gym floor facing the stage. The early arrivers had already filled the permanent seats in the elevated portion of the auditorium across from the stage. The excitement that permeated the atmosphere was due to the QHS Open House. Parents were not only going to get to visit with their teenagers’ teachers, but were first being treated to a kind of talent show in the auditorium culminating with the crowning of the Senior Class King and Queen.

As the crowd assembled, Rafe was looking over the program for the night’s affair. He was standing in front of the big red curtain just off to the side of one of the two microphone stands that were at the center of the stage. The King, Queen and their court were all sitting in the first row of chairs on the gym floor. Rafe stole a look and was impressed at how great they all looked -- the guys in their suits and ties, and the girls looked especially beautiful in their makeup, white flowing gowns cut just below knee level, shapely legs in nylon stockings evident below the gowns, and high heeled shoes adding the finishing touch that made them look so mature and grown up. As his eyes scanned the row of seats he observed in turn, Burn, Bo, Gerry Flowers, Ben Scully, Roger Vaccaro, Ronnie McCloud, and soon to be King, Val Schultz. To the right of Val were soon to be Queen Cathy Wood, Martha Luchese, Jan Lively, Robin Etting, Julie Green, Carol Miller, and Penny Warlock.

As if by some form of magnetic energy, Rafe’s eyes were quickly drawn back to Cathy. She had a nervous smile on her face as she talked quietly to Val on one side and Martha on the other. Rafe had to shake his head to bring himself back to reality. He had been blown away by her beauty and his mind was roaring back to revisit some fantasies that he had had through the four years he had known her since those days back in grammar school.

He was helped out of his reverie by Miss Remsen, the civics teacher who was the faculty advisor for tonight’s event. She emerged out of the center of the red curtain. “Do you have any questions, Rafe?” She asked. “Do you need any suggestions on what to say in introducing the speakers or the entertainment?”

“No, no thank you, Miss Remsen. I think I’ve got it”, Rafe said with somewhat more confidence than he felt. He observed to himself that Miss Remsen looked more nervous than he felt, as she walked back behind the curtain to get things set up on the stage.

The lights dimmed and the buzz in the crowd died down. Rafe cleared his throat and stepped up to one of the microphones. “Good evening ladies and gentlemen, parents, friends, students, and faculty. Welcome to this year’s Senior Open House...”

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 9

Rafe went on with the welcome and then introduced in turn Principal Hunt, the QHS Choral Group, a small contingent of the QHS band, several members of the QHS drama club, and then asked the faculty members to stand up and be recognized.

Principal Hunt's remarks lasted no more than five minutes, welcoming the parents and then essentially describing the logistics for the parents' visits to the classrooms. The QHS Coral Group sang two songs in four part harmony, one ballad and one up tempo number. The band played the QHS Alma Mater and the QHS Fight Song with the Choral Group joining in with the lyrics. The Drama club gave a short scene from the play "On the Town". Each of the entertainment groups were followed by polite applause from the audience. Next it was time for short speeches by the senior class president, and the faculty advisors.

And then it was time for the presentation of the King and Queen and their Court. Rafe called on each of the guys and gals in turn until they were all standing and then asked them to proceed to the left stairway and up onto the stage. Rafe clapped his hands in applause and the audience followed suit. The two faculty advisors, Mr. Fielder and Miss Purell then appeared from behind the curtain each carrying a red pillow with a crown.

"This year's Queen is Cathy Wood", Rafe announced at one of the microphones and then he carefully placed the crown on Cathy's head. "God, you look beautiful", he wanted to say, but it just wouldn't come out.

"And this year's King is Val Schultz", Rafe announced and then somewhat less cautiously placed the crown on Val's head. "I should be doing this to Bo", he thought, trying not to show any disappointment. The audience was now instinctively applauding with a standing ovation. The King and Queen then led the others in their Court off the stage and back to their seats, while the applause continued.

Rafe then raised his hands for the applause to die down. "That ends the entertainment portion of tonight's Senior Open House. Parents and friends are now free to visit the classrooms that were assigned when you first arrived this evening. There are monitors in the halls to help you with directions. Thanks for coming! Good night!"

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Rafe, James, and Jack Pauley had just returned from Jack's house, having raided Jack's parents' liquor cabinet. They sat in the car outside the North Kingsboro Fire Department sharing sips from the bottle of Seagram's Seven whiskey and talking about the Senior Open House earlier that evening. Inside the fire house in the large hall parents and senior students were enjoying the party that was sponsored by the volunteer firemen. There was lots of food, soda and a jukebox for music. Not all of the seniors and their parents came, some deciding that the four mile drive from Quaytown or Holmvale was a bit too far; nor did any of the QHS faculty show up, even though they were invited.

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Inside Bo was sitting and talking and dancing with Cathy and Earle was with Penny. Martha was not there. The parents of the four guys and gals had already left, politely recognizing that their kids wanted some time alone to savor this special night in their lives.

After the party Bo drove Cathy home and then took Penny and Earle home. James dropped Rafe off and then drove home. Jack just had to walk up the block a short ways.

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*Saturday evening April 25, 1959...*

Spring had arrived a little early this year. The weather for the past week had been exceptionally beautiful, warm with temperatures in the mid-sixties and just a bit breezy. The flowers were blooming and trees were sporting new green leaves.

The QHS varsity baseball team was on its way to a successful season, having won its first six games without a loss. Bo and Rafe were team captains. Earle was leading the Track team again on the javelin, shot put, and high hurdles events. James continued earning money toward college in September, working at the Quaytown Deli, after school.

Meanwhile Spring was working its magic on the boys and girls of QHS, pumping up their teenage hormones. Bo had picked up Cathy Wood in his dad's 1954 Ford and they went on a solo date to the drive-in movie in North Kingsboro. They watched the cartoons and halfway through the first movie, Bo put his arm around Cathy and the next thing he knew they were in each other's arms, kissing hungrily. After coming up for air, Bo lit a cigarette and lit one for Cathy. They sat there smoking for a few minutes. The movie was playing, but neither of them was all that interested in it. Bo finished his cigarette, looked over at Cathy and said, "How about we get out of here and go someplace a little more private?"

"Yes, Bo, I think I'd like that", Cathy said huskily.

Bo started up the car and started to drive forward over the hump of earth that constituted the row in which they were parked. He had forgotten to remove the speaker that was hooked over the top of the driver's window to put it back on the speaker pole. Within seconds the wire attaching the speaker to the pole snapped off, leaving the speaker hanging sans wire inside the car window. "Oops! Another trophy", Bo said with a laugh as he glanced at Cathy, but his mind was already imagining another kind of trophy.

Sometime earlier, Rafe had driven his parent's Blue and White 1956 Ford Fairlane to Quaytown to pick up James, and then the two of them met Jack Wing downtown and went cruising with him in his Black 1957 Chevy with a three speed stick on the steering column and heavy duty clutch. At first they decided to go "scapping", looking to pick up some girls who might be looking for some "fun". The three of them were in the front on the bench seat.

## **Beach Party Days: Chapter 9**

They drove the off-highway connector road from Quaytown through Ulster Beach and came upon a girl James recognized, who was walking a dog. They pulled over to the curb and called her over to the car. James and Rafe struck up a conversation with her, with Jack occasionally interjecting a comment here and there. Her name was Annie and her home was just a block up the street. According to James, rumor had it that Annie was “easy”. Eventually they talked her into bringing the dog home and coming back out.

Jack slowly drove the car along the street until they were well past Annie’s house and he turned right at the first intersection, parking near the corner. James who had been nearest the passenger side got out and went into the back seat. A few minutes later Annie came out of her house, walked up to the corner, and approached the car. Rafe got out of the front and opened the rear door on the passenger side. Annie got in and slid over toward James, and Rafe followed her into the back seat. Jack drove off to a dead end street with no houses about a half mile away.

While Jack drove, James started kissing her, while Rafe rubbed her right thigh. Then Rafe took turns with James and kissed her, rubbing her breasts through her sweater, while James rubbed her left thigh and her side. When they arrived at the end of the dead end street, Jack parked the car and turned off the lights. Rafe had unzipped her jeans, but it was James’s turn and he started to put his hand down the front of Annie’s jeans and inside her panties. But at that Annie took exception. She grabbed James’s hand and pushed him away, while elbowing Rafe to get his hand off her.

“What’s up? You can’t stop now! You’ve got us all hot and bothered!” James called out breathlessly.

“Yeah! We’re fired up and ready to explode”, Rafe said. “We thought you wanted to do it.”

“I’m sorry. I can’t. Not tonight! I’ve got my period.” Annie said almost apologetically.

Jack started laughing, which only made James and Rafe feel even more frustrated.

“I’m sorry”, Annie said again, a bit lamely, “Maybe another night.” Then she said to Jack, “Would you please take me home? But let me off at the corner, OK?”

“Yeah, Jack, let’s take her home”, Rafe said, resignedly.

“But there will be another night, right?” James said to Annie hopefully, rubbing his hands together.

Annie didn’t answer immediately, but as Jack pulled the car up to the corner near her house, she said as she exited the car, “I walk the dog almost every night. If you boys come around in a week or two, I’ll probably be somewhere near here.” The boys watched with a sense of lost opportunity as Annie quickly walked down the street toward her home.

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“We definitely have to come back next week!” Rafe exclaimed.

“Right!” James concurred. “How about it, Jack. Are you in?”

“Just let me know”, Jack replied. “So, what do you want to do now, It’s still early.”

“How about Magnetic Hill?” Rafe offered

“OK, magnetic hill it is”, and Jack threw the shift lever into first, stomped on the gas pedal and laid rubber for fifteen feet, as he headed toward Holmvale.

Twenty minutes later they were at the foot of Magnetic Hill. They had driven up and over the hill. “Are you ready?” Jack asked rhetorically. He put the shift in neutral and took his foot off the break. Like magic the car started to roll backwards up the hill, as if it were being pulled by an invisible magnetic force. No one was able to explain this happening, but teenagers from all of the surrounding towns would come to experience this weird phenomenon first hand.

On the radio, Murray the K was holding forth on WINS AM in New York with his all night show of rock & roll music. Over the airways came his signature preamble, “This session of the Swingin’ Soiree is now in session. Are you guys and dolls ready for the submarine race watching tonight? Then let’s get it on! Here’s a song from Johnny Mathis that’s perfect for submarine race watching...”

*It's not for me to say, you love me  
It's not for me to say, you'll always care  
Oh, but here for the moment  
I can hold you fast  
And press your lips to mine  
And dream that love will last  
As far as I can see, this is heaven  
And speaking just for me, it's ours to share  
Perhaps the glow of love will grow  
With every passing day  
Or we may never meet again  
But then it's not for me to say...*

After the car had drifted backwards half way up the hill without using any power of its own, James said “It’s still only 9:30; too early to call it a night.” Taking a clue from Murray the K, he continued, “Why don’t we go to the Grapevine and do some submarine race watching on the cars in lover’s lane; then bushwhack one of them?”

“Couldn’t come up with a better idea, if I tried”, said Rafe. “How about it, Jack?”

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“We’re on our way”, Jack answered agreeably and took off like a bat out of hell, revving the Chevy up in first gear, double-clutching into second gear and getting from zero to 50 mph in a matter of seconds.

Twenty minutes later Jack slowed the Chevy as they approached the entrance to the Grapevine. He had driven south on the main highway leading to Ruby Creek and after reaching Middlebury turned off the highway onto a long, lonely country road through farm land. The Grapevine is an area surrounded and hidden by a large collection of tall trees that are so close together that the density hides what lies within its irregular shaped circumference. Inside the tree line is an overgrowth of abandoned grape and wild vines, and the vines surround a large open area with multiple pockets of land where cars can park with a good deal of privacy from other cars in the other pockets. On a busy night there could be as many as twenty cars in the Grapevine, all with one or two couples making out in the relative privacy of this lovers lane.

There is only one opening into the Grapevine that serves as the entrance and exit, with about 200 feet of dirt road leading into the clearing of hard packed sandy earth. As Jack steered the car onto the dirt road, he turned off the car’s lights and slowed to a crawl.

“If we find a car here that we recognize, that will be our target; agreed?” Jack said in a low conspiratorial voice.

“Yep!” Rafe concurred.

“Right! No need in bushwhacking someone we don’t know; you never know how they might react or if they might come out with a tire iron or baseball bat,” James responded.

Once into the clearing, Jack slowly steered the car in a clockwise direction around the irregular area, with all three of the boys looking for a car they recognized.

“Hey!” Jack said excitedly. “Isn’t that Bo’s car?”

“Sure looks like his dad’s ’54 Ford, but even in the moonlight, I can’t tell the color.” James nearly whispered. “Stop the car, Jack. I’ll get out and get a closer look. I think I’ll recognize the license plate number.” With that James got out, bent low and approached the pocket area where the car was parked. He came back in a hurry, quietly opened the door and slipped back in the car. “God Damn! It is Bo, but I didn’t see who he is with and didn’t want to get too close; don’t want to alert him before we do the nasty on him.”

“Damn! This is going to be fun. If we do it right and get away without Bo recognizing us, we’ll have a ball in school on Monday listening to him bitch about getting bushwhacked tonight.” Rafe said with a low chuckle.

Jack moved the Chevy around so that it was facing toward the entrance and about twenty feet away from Bo’s car and nearer the entrance, but he left the engine running, as the three of



## **Beach Party Days: Chapter 9**

them got out and left the doors ajar. From under the front seat Jack extracted a flashlight. The three of them then bent low so as not to be seen in the rear view window. But as they approached the car, all they could see was the top of Bo's head in the back seat. "He must be on top of the girl, whoever she is. I doubt it is Martha", Jack whispered to the other two.

James split off and crawled on hands and knees toward the driver's side of the Ford, and Rafe did likewise toward the passenger side, while Jack approached from the rear with the flashlight. When all three were in position, Jack turned on the flashlight and shined it into the rear window. At that signal Rafe and James rocked the car back and forth several times. The girl inside the car screamed and they heard Bo say in a shocked voice, "What the fuck!"

James was the first to run, with Rafe hot on his heels. Jack ran backwards keeping the flashlight shining into the rear window, with the light bouncing up and down. Bo rose up and looked out the back window, but because of the light, he could not recognize who the culprits were. Just before Jack turned to run to the Chevy, he saw the image of a girl raise up and look out the rear window, pulling down a sweater.

Rafe and Jack were in the Chevy laughing like hell, when Jack jumped into the driver's seat. Jack put the Chevy in gear and tore out of the clearing and onto the dirt road. At the entrance just as he turned out onto the country road, he put on the headlights. All three were laughing now.

"I can't wait to see Bo's face on Monday", James managed to squeak out through his laughter.

"Me, too, but I sure can't wait to find out who the girl was", Rafe said as he tried to control his laughter.

As Jack headed the Chevy back toward Quaytown, Cathy Wood was adjusting her bra under the sweater and smoothing her skirt. "Bo, what was that all about? That's never happened to me before. And who were those people?" she asked, with a mixture of fright and anger. "Take me home, Bo. Let's get out of here!"

"It's called bushwhacking, and I don't know who they were, but if I find out I'll kick some ass!" Bo said angrily, thinking about how close he had come to possibly getting laid tonight. He zipped up his pants and buckled his belt. They both got out of the back seat and into the front seat. Then Bo drove Cathy home, and along the way they hardly talked. After dropping Cathy off, Bo drove home initially still angry, but by the time he reached home the anger diminished and he even chuckled about it.

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 10

May, 1959: On May 4, the first Grammy Awards: Perry Como and Ella Fitzgerald won. On May 11, "Kookie, Kookie Lend Me Your Comb" by Edd Byrnes and Connie Stevens hit #4. On May 13, Kraft Music Hall with Milton Berle, last aired on NBC-TV. On May 20, Japanese-Americans regained their citizenship (it was removed during World War II). On May 21, "Gypsy" opened at Broadway Theater New York City for 702 performances. On May 23, the Presbyterian Church accepted women preachers. And on May 30, Iraq terminated the military assistance pact with the U.S. due to neutrality.

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*Tuesday morning May 19, 1959...*

*Volare, oh, oh!  
Cantare, oh, oh, oh, oh!  
Nel blu, dipinto di blu  
Felice di stare lassù  
E volavo, volavo felice più in alto del sole ed ancora più su  
Mentre il mondo pian piano spariva lontano laggiù  
Una musica dolce suonava soltanto per me...*

As he walked to his fourth period class, Bo was humming the words to "Volare", a 1958 Italian song by Domenico Modugno. Just then from around the corner came the Vice Principal, Mr. Jonas, apparently in some state of distress. When he saw Bo he grabbed him by the arm and pointed at Bo's chest. "What is that on your shirt, young man?" he asked with alarm. "That's the fifth one of those I've seen this morning. I want you to report immediately to my office. Wait there with the other four young men that I found wearing that, *that*, thing on their shirts! I will be there as soon as I find the sixth person wearing that badge, and then we will get to the bottom of this, *this* business." Jonas turned left and continued down the longer second floor hall still obviously agitated.

As he turned and walked toward the main office that housed both Jonas and Principal Hunt, Bo was perplexed. Why was Jonas in such an uproar? The badge on his chest was no big deal. All that was written on the badge was "The Cheetah Club". The circular badge had been fashioned from construction paper with two pieces of paper strips stapled to it, hanging down to mimic ribbons. He was still shaking his head in wonder as he reached the outer door to the Principal and Vice-Principal Offices.

Upon entering the outer door of the offices, Bo said hello to the school secretary, Mrs. Sheppard. She looked up from what she was doing and gave Bo a look as if to say, "What did you boys do now?" As she gestured with her hand, Bo turned to the right and entered the Vice Principal's office. Waiting there were Rafe, Jimmy Barrone, Whizzie Grant, and Andy Paul, all wearing one of the paper badges with the words "The Cheetah Club". As Bo walked in he

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gestured with his hands and his eyes looking for an explanation; they all shrugged in response indicating they were as much in the dark as was Bo.

After a few minutes, Mr. Jonas returned with Johnny Amato in tow. Jonas closed the door and looked at each of the boys in turn before demanding, “OK, we know you stole the paper, glue and scissors from the library, and fashioned those badges from those supplies. And you’ve been parading those badges around the school all morning. Now I demand to know what this Cheetah Club is all about!” Once again Jonas looked around at each of the six young men, with piercing brown eyes and firm set jaw, as if he was attempting to intimidate one of them into confessing whatever it was that he suspected them of doing. The boys all looked at him with a combination of puzzlement and bemusement. All except Johnny Amato, whose face displayed his typical sly smirk that made him look as if he knew something about you that you would prefer he didn’t. It was not unlike the grin on cartoon character Alfred E. Neumann from Mad Magazine.

“I have a strong suspicion that it is some sort of Communist organization!” The accusation came from Jonas so unexpectedly that it caught the boys unprepared. After an instant of unbelief that this school official could actually believe that the little prank that they drummed up was a communist plot, the boys looked at one another and broke out in a laugh. They could not help it – it was just too incredulous!

Mr. Jonas reacted with anger. The boys could see the red flush creeping up his neck to his face. Jimmy Barrone, whose father is an educator, was the first to speak up in an attempt to defuse the situation. “Ah, Mr. Jonas, this is nothing more than a joke, a prank. It all started a week or so ago, when Johnny here started using the expression, ‘What a cheetah’. He initially said it in jest when a baseball player from one of the other schools tripped over his own feet running the bases. We all thought that was funny and we started to use the expression more and more. Then we got the idea of starting a Cheetah Club, as a joke. It was just a joke!”

Mr. Jonas stared at Jimmy a few seconds until the explanation finally sunk in. Trying to hide his embarrassment at his overreaction, Jonas said, “Well thank you, young man. But it still does not excuse the fact that you stole school supplies from the library for this, this prank, and then paraded these badges around the school, causing the teachers and me concern over this so called Cheetah Club. Now I want you to remove those badges and leave them here. In addition you are to go as a group and apologize to the librarian. You will also do one night of detention, tomorrow after school.”

“Uh, Mr. Jonas, we have a baseball game tomorrow after school. Is it alright if we do detention on Thursday?” Rafe asked deferentially.

“Well, OK, I guess that will be OK”, Jonas replied. “Now get yourselves back to class after you apologize to the librarian, and no more of these pranks! Do I make myself clear?”

The boys all nodded that they understood, and exited the office. As they started down the hall, Whizzie said, “What an ass!”

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Bo added, "Yeah, do you believe that guy? A Communist organization?" It was so absurd that they all began to chuckle.

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June 1959: On June 3, the U.S. Air Force Academy graduated its first class and President Eisenhower sent Canadian Premier Diefenbaker a message that was bounced off the moon. On June 11, the Postmaster General banned the mailing of the sexually explicit D.H. Lawrence's book, Lady Chatterley's Lover. On June 26, Queen Elizabeth and President Eisenhower opened the St. Lawrence Seaway, and on June 27, the play "West Side Story" closed at the Winter Garden Theater in New York City after 734 performances.

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*Thursday Afternoon June 11, 1959...*

It seemed like an eternity. Rafe was waiting for the ball to come down out of the blue sky with nary a cloud, just a few puffs of white floating many thousands of feet above. Rafe was camped under the high fly ball off the bat of the Toms River player, as it arced ever so slowly down towards his waiting Wilson baseball glove. "Come on, damn it!" he whispered to himself, urging the ball to come down faster than gravity was pulling on it. Thirty feet, twenty feet, ten feet and "pop" as the ball nestled into his glove. "All right!" he screamed aloud!

With the recording of that last out, the QHS baseball team had just become the Seacoast Conference Baseball Champions, something that had not been accomplished by QHS in over 15 years. Pulling the ball out of his glove and holding it aloft in his right hand, Rafe raced toward the pitching mound from his position as centerfielder. Bo as the catcher was the first to reach the mound where the pitcher, Lennie Willis, was jumping up and down with both arms extended up toward the heavens. The infielders and the players on the bench were next to reach the mound. By the time Rafe and the other outfielders arrived there was already a pile up on the mound, with everyone jumping on and Lennie nearly crushed at the bottom of the pile.

What a game! The final score was QHS 7 and Toms River 1. Lennie had been phenomenal, pitching a shutout after giving up one run in the first inning, keeping the Toms River batters off stride at crucial times when they had runners on base after an occasional walk or base hit.

Whizzie Grant had had a great year batting nearly .700, and scored and drove in several runs today, scoring the first run on a hit by Bo. Rafe had played well, too, with a single and a sacrifice in three at bats. In the third inning, Rafe walked, stole second and third, on an overthrow by the Toms River catcher, came all the way home. But his biggest contribution was on defense, chasing down fly balls and covering left and right centerfield like a demon, taking away at least four extra base hits from Toms River.

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The bus ride back to QHS was filled with laughter and carefree banter, with congratulations all around for every member of the team. It had been a great season with only one loss to a team outside of the conference. "I'm really glad that as a team we voted for playing today for the Seacoast Conference, instead of entering the Greater Newark Tournament", Rafe said to Bo, who was seated next to the window in the row with Rafe.

"Damn right!" Bo declared. "Who knows what would have happened if we went up there today. We might have won and made it all the way though the single eliminations and won the tournament, but we'd have to play at least four more games and anything could happen."

Jimmy Barrone was sitting in the seats directly behind Bo and Rafe and he leaned over the back of their seat to add to the conversation. "It would have been a challenge, but from what I read in the papers, we would have had a good shot against the teams that were entered."

Rafe replied, "Yeah, I agree that we would have stood a good chance and winning that Greater Newark Tournament would have given us greater exposure, especially in state-wide newspapers like the Newark Star Ledger. We know Mason entered and we beat them twice this year. But like Bo said, winning five games in a single elimination tournament is heavier odds than winning one game today. So, I'm more than satisfied, because if we entered that tournament and didn't go all the way, we wouldn't have all that much to show for it. This way we are the Seacoast Conference champs and no one can take that away from us -- that's good enough for me."

"Right!" responded Bo and Jimmy.

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*Friday Afternoon June 19, 1959...*

Yearbooks! It was the final hour of the early split session school day and the seniors were milling around in the QHS gym, flagging down classmates they sought after to enter comments into their yearbooks. James, Bo, Earle, and Rafe found one another, wrote comments into one another's books over their photos and moved on to get as many of the boys and girls as they could, mostly girls of course, to add their comments and signatures.

For these seniors, final exams had been completed two days earlier and grades posted. All but three in their class made their grades and would be graduating next week. The three that didn't make their grades would have to attend summer school to make up the courses they failed.

When the hour was about up the seniors rushed from the gym to get their favorite underclassmen to sign the seniors' yearbooks, before most of them left to get their school buses or walk home.

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Rafe eventually made his way to the school bus to take the ride home. He met up with Cathy Wood and Cathy was as usual her spirited self. As they entered the bus and took seats across from each other, Cathy said, “Oh, Rafe, wasn’t that kind of sad there in the gym? To think that this may be the last time we may see some of our classmates and friends. Some of them will be going off to college in September like Bo -- and you of course, and some will be going into the Army, Navy, or Air Force. So many friends that we’ve had for these past four years; I wish we could all keep our friendships no matter what the future brings!”

“Yeah, I guess you have a point there, Cathy”, Rafe offered with less emotion than Cathy. “I’m pretty sure that Bo, James, Earle, Jack Pauley, Jimmy Barrone and I will stay in touch. Bo will be going to Queens College in Pennsylvania after he takes some prep courses at Newark Prep, Earle is going to LSC, James is going to the Citadel, and Jack and Jimmy are going to Glenboro. But we all agreed to keep in contact by writing letters to one another.”

“And you are going to Milton College in Ohio, I heard from Bo. How do you feel about going so far away from home, Rafe?” Cathy asked with some concern.

“Eh, no big deal; Ricky Briggs, who graduated last year is there and says I have a good chance to make the football team”, Bo answered. He actually was a little apprehensive, having never been that far away from home, but he disguised it as best he could.

“I’m so looking forward to the Prom tonight, Rafe. It should be a lot of fun at the Knobwood Inn in Mason, and after that a nightclub in New York City,” Cathy changed the subject. “Who are you taking to the Prom?”

Rafe already knew that Cathy was going to the Prom with Bo and that they were doubling with Roger Vaccaro and his date, Gladys Roderick, in Roger’s 1956 Mercury. He sensed that he was a bit jealous about Bo and Cathy, but he hid his feelings, as he responded to her question. “I’m taking Jill Brewler and double dating with Joey Silvo and his date. We’ll be going to New York City after the Prom, too. We have reservations at the Village Barn. Bo told me you are going to the city also.”

“Oh, yes! I can’t wait. I haven’t been to New York at night before. I’m not sure where we’ll be going, Bo has been keeping it a secret – a sort of surprise he said.” It was obvious that Cathy was excited in anticipation of the evening.

After a little more conversation, both of them fell quiet, thinking ahead to the things they needed to get done in preparation for the Prom.

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*Later the next morning after the Prom...*

*Mm dooby do, dahm dahm*

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*Dahm do dahm ooby do  
Dahm dahm, dahm do dahm, ooby do  
Dahm dahm, dahm do dahm, ooby do  
Dahm dahm, dahm ooh dahm  
Mm dooby do*

*(Come softly, darling)  
(Come softly, darling)  
(Come softly, darling)  
(Come softly, darling)  
(Come softly, darling)  
(Come to me, sta-ay)  
(You're my ob-session)  
(For ever and a da-ay)*

*I want, want you to kno-o-  
ow I love, I love you so  
Please hold, hold me so tight  
All through, all through the night..*

*(Speak softly, darling)  
(Hear what I sa-ay)  
(I love you always)  
(Always, always)*

*I've waited, waited so long  
For your kisses and your love  
Please come, come to me  
From up, from up above*

*(Come softly, darling)  
(Come softly, darling)  
I need, need you so much  
Wanna feel your wa-arm touch...*

It was 3:00 AM and the radio in the royal blue 1956 Mercury was playing “Come Softly To Me”, the recent romantic hit by the new group the Fleetwoods. Roger Vaccaro was driving home from New York City along the New Jersey Turnpike. After the Prom, they had gone to the Village Vanguard to see and listen to Art Tatum in Greenwich Village. His date Gladys was up against his side on the front bench seat, her left hand was caressing the top of his right thigh, while his right hand was stroking the inside of her left nylon covered thigh under the pale blue prom dress, not quite all the way up. Roger had the radio volume high enough that Gladys could not quite hear the moans and words coming from the back seat, but not so loud that she and Roger couldn't hear each other talk, even if they had to raise their voices somewhat.

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 10

“Oh, Bo, I love it when you touch me like that”, moaned Cathy Wood hoarsely in the back seat. Bo had pulled the white strapless prom dress down to expose Cathy’s bra and had slipped her bra up off her swelling breasts, gently rubbing his thumbs around her erect nipples while kissing her lips, neck, and ears. Then he slipped his left hand under her dress and rubbed the triangle in the crotch between her legs, feeling the wetness through her panty girdle. Cathy unzipped Bo’s tux trousers and slipped out his manhood, applying a firm grip on his rock hard, throbbing penis. A moan escaped from Bo as Cathy began to move her hand up and down the shaft of his cock, slowly at first, then gradually increasing the up and down strokes until Bo gasped and the ejaculation sent sperm flying up toward the roof of the car.

Bo felt a huge sexual relief, but he knew that Cathy was still aroused and had not yet felt any release of the tension that existed in her lovely body. Bo wanted so much to help her reach some release, but when he tried to slip his hand under her panty girdle, Cathy gently but firmly pulled his hand away and stopped him. “You satisfied me, and I just want to try and satisfy you”, Bo whispered.

“That’s OK, Bo. I’m fine. It’s enough for me that you had a, a, some relief”. Cathy answered. “Besides I see we are getting near our exit and will be home soon”.

Bo removed his hands, zipped up his fly, while Cathy reset her bra and pulled the strapless top of her dress up over her milky white shoulders. Bo took his pack of Lucky Strikes out of his shirt pocket, put two in his mouth at the same time, lit them and handed one to Cathy. He had seen that in a movie – was it Clark Gable? Whatever, he thought it was cool when he saw it in the movie and he wanted to appear romantic to Cathy. Cathy took the cigarette, took a long pull and exhaled a steam of smoke that curled up in little circles formed by her soft, full lips. With both of them blowing smoke, and it being a bit hot in the back seat on this warm June night, especially after their erotic lovemaking, Bo rolled down the rear window on his side of the car to let the smoke out and the somewhat cooler air in.

Within minutes they had arrived at Cathy’s house, where Bo had left his father’s 1954 Ford. Bo and Cathy said good night to Roger and Gladys, who drove off leaving Bo and Cathy alone in the driveway of her house. Cathy reached up and put her arms around Bo’s neck, pulling him close to her. “I had a wonderful time tonight, Bo. Are you still going to pick me up in a few hours to go to the beach at Sea Bright?”

“Yes, I’ll pick you up about 5:30 AM. I need to shower and shave and put on a bathing suit. I’ll bring the blanket. It may be a bit cool at the ocean until the sun gets up above the horizon, so you should probably bring a sweat shirt and a pair of jeans.”

Cathy responded, “OK, Bo, but you had better call me before you leave. I’m not absolutely sure my mother and father will let me go out again without getting some sleep.”

“Right! I’ll call you about 5:00 AM”, answered Bo, and with a quick look at his watch under the street light, “and that’s a little more than an hour from now.”



## Beach Party Days: Chapter 10

Cathy said softly with a glimmer of moisture in her eyes, "I want to see you as much as possible this summer, before you go off to Queens College and I start working as a secretary."

Bo leaned down and kissed her hard on the lips, then pulled his head back slightly as he felt an erection. He could not help but push his hips and erection forward against Cathy. "I want to see you, too. How about we make every Friday night a date night?"

"Yes, that would be wonderful, Bo. Now it's time I went in. Walk me to the back door", Cathy said just above a whisper. As they walked toward the door, with her left arm around Bo's thin waist Cathy reached her right hand around, unzipped Bo's pants and pulled his dick out, holding it tightly until they reached the steps leading up to the rear door. The light over the back door was lit and while still holding onto Bo's dick, Cathy reached up to kiss him good night, then let go, walked up the steps, opened the unlocked back door, went in and closed the door.

The back porch light went out. Bo stood there for a long minute, wanting more than anything to make love to her. Then almost self-consciously he put his dick back in, zipped up, turned and walked quickly to the Ford. He did not see Cathy watching him leave from the window above the back door, with a wistful smile and a long sigh.

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*That same morning following the Prom...*

It was 5:00 AM and sunrise was in progress. Rafe was driving his parent's '56 Ford Fairlane with his date, Jill Brewler, Joey Silvo and his date, Tracy Hines. They had stopped at Rafe's house before going on their way to Sea Bright, the Prom seeming like it was days ago instead of just the night before.

Jill Brewler was an Ulster Beach girl and had just completed her freshman year at QHS. She had a pretty wide face, high cheekbones with two cute dimples and a button nose. She was all of five foot, two inches and 105 pounds; thin, but not very and still maturing. She had thin but soft lips with a lovely smile that combined with the sparkle in her hazel eyes made her seem endearing, yet delicate.

Upon returning from New York City, they had already stopped at Jill's house so that the girls could shower and change into their bathing suits and beach attire. Next they had stopped at Rafe's house, where Joey and Rafe had quickly showered and changed into their bathing suits, shirts and khakis. Rafe and Joey had thrown a bunch of blankets in the trunk before going to the Prom. As they were leaving Rafe's house, his Dad, who was a volunteer fireman, was coming back from fighting a fire. He saw Rafe, Joey and the girls and he pulled Rafe aside. "Are you OK? Not too much to drink?" inquired Mr. Cerny.

"No, Dad, I'm fine. The drinks we had were pretty much watered down and I only had a few and with all the dancing we did, I worked those off." Rafe politely answered.

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“OK, then, but I expect you will be a gentleman. You understand?” Mr. Cerny asked as he looked Rafe in the eyes looking for the response that would tell him that Rafe understood.

“Yeah, Dad, I understand”, Rafe answered quietly, a bit annoyed and embarrassed that the girls might have overheard his father’s words. “We’ve got to get going, now. I’ll see you and Mom later.”

As the four teenagers got into the Ford, Rafe’s Mom appeared at the front door in her bathrobe and waved to the four. She remembered taking photos of the four outside the Cerny house last night before they had driven off to the Prom. How pretty the girls looked in their Prom dresses and how handsome Rafe and Joey looked in their tuxedos, she recalled. Mr. Cerny turned to her inside the front door and observed, “Millie, I am amazed. Rafe has been out all night without any sleep and yet he looks more rested than I do when I’ve had a full night’s sleep.”

“Well, Rick, there was a time when both of us could match that”, Mrs. Cerny said teasingly.

“Yeah, Millie, I guess you’re right. Seems like a long time ago”, Mr. Cerny responded, thinking back, shaking his head and smiling at the memories.

Twenty minutes later Rafe parked the Fairlane in the parking lot at the Sea Bright beach and he and Joey grabbed the blankets out of the trunk, two for each couple. The four of them walked onto the beach and laid out the blankets on the sand. Joey and his date moved off about thirty yards to the right, so that each of the couples might have a semblance of privacy. To their surprise there was not another soul on the beach. A cool morning breeze was blowing in off the ocean, so after removing their outer clothes to strip down to their bathing suits, it was necessary to get under the blankets to ward off a chill.

“I guess this is as good an excuse as any to cuddle up and keep each other warm”, Rafe teasingly said to Jill, as they laid down on one blanket and pulled the other over them.

They could faintly hear Joey and his date giggling under their blanket. Rafe turned Jill over so that her back was toward the other couple, just in case Joey and Tracy got too frisky. He needn’t have worried, as Jill pulled herself up so close to Rafe that he could feel the outline of her firm body against him. Immediately they wrapped arms around each other and started to kiss, at first softly, and then hungrily. Rafe pulled away just enough to move his arm and place his hand gently on Jill’s breast. Not very big, thought Rafe, and he recalled some older guy once saying that big tits were not all they were cracked up to be, as more than a mouthful would only go to waste. For some reason that struck him as funny and he had to quickly come back to the moment so as not to laugh and spoil things – Jill might think he was making fun at her expense and he didn’t want to hurt her feelings. He resumed gently rubbing her left breast and he felt her instantly respond by pushing her pelvis up against his already hard cock. He stopped kissing Jill on the lips and began kissing her neck and ear, and felt her hot breath on his face. They were both getting excited. Rafe worked his hand down until it was into the cleft between Jill’s legs and started to rub her there over the one piece bathing suit.

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“No, please don’t”, Jill whispered, breathing hard, and she took Rafe’s hand and moved it away. “We’d better stop now, Rafe, I don’t think we should go any further. I’m feeling tired and it’s been a long night. I really enjoyed it and want to see you again, and I don’t want you thinking I’m a loose girl”.

“OK”, Rafe said, realizing that he too was getting tired and the excitement of the physical contact had made it more evident. He was still a virgin and wasn’t sure how to proceed anyway. Plus he didn’t want Jill to think he was a bad guy. “I’m a little tired, too. Let’s just cuddle up and try to sleep a little.”

An hour later Rafe was shaken awake. He looked up and had to shield his eyes from the sun to see who had shaken him. Joey said, “Folks are starting to come onto the beach and Tracy wants to go home, Rafe – says she’s tired and wants to sleep in her bed. To be honest I’m tired, too. I don’t know how you’re still alert, after driving all night. Maybe I ought to become a Jock like you – nah, I think I’d rather stay a Lover.” Then Joey laughed in a silly way – he was obviously overtired. Rafe was feeling it, too, but not about to show it.

Jill was now awake, so Rafe said, “OK, let’s pack up and head home.” The four of them put their clothes on over the bathing suits. Joey and Rafe gathered the blankets and the four of them sort of stumbled through the sand until they reached the passage to the macadam parking lot. The trip home was subdued, as no one wanted to get into a prolonged conversation.

When Rafe finally got home after dropping off Tracy and Jill at their homes in Ulster beach and Joey at his home in North Kingsboro, he undressed and literally crashed onto his bed. Thank God, Mom did not pump me for a report on the entire night, he thought as he drifted off to sleep.

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*Also, that same morning following the Prom...*

Earle and Donna Conklin were necking in the back seat. James was driving and Sue Barlow was up tight against him. James had his right arm around Sue and steered the ’54 Ford with his left hand. Sue had her right hand on James’s chest and rested her head against his right side under his shoulder. The AM radio was tuned to the Cousin Brucie show on WINS, New York. They were on their way back from Manhattan, having gone to the Village Barn after the Prom at the Knobwood Inn in Mason.

Donna pulled away from kissing with Earle. “What’s the matter Donna”, Earle asked, hoping that she wasn’t once again putting a stop to their making out.

“Just tired, Burn; it’s been a long night and I’m not used to being out so late. By the way, what time is it?” asked Donna quietly.

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Earle looked at his watch. "It's 3:00 AM. I guess it is kinda late. I'm not used to being up this late either." Earle was beginning to feel his cock start to soften and was trying to will it to stay hard. He leaned forward to draw Donna close to him and kissed her on the neck.

"Let's just hold each other for a while, Burn. I really do feel sleepy." Donna said as she yawned against Earle's cheek.

"Shit! No hot lovin' again, tonight" Earle thought, as he realized that once again he wasn't going to get any further with Donna.

Meanwhile in the front seat, James was not having much better luck. Sue was practically asleep against his right side, her arms now folded across her own chest. It made it somewhat difficult for James to remove his arm from around her shoulder, without propping his elbow on top of her head. "Well, looks like another night with lack-of-nookie James thought to himself.

Not long after James pulled the car up at Donna's house and waited while Earle walked her to the door. The stop awoke Sue and she sat up and inquired, "What time is it Hein? I'm sorry I fell asleep on you. I guess I haven't been much of a lively date after we left New York."

"3:20 AM", James answered pleasantly, despite feeling some disappointment. "It has been a long night, Sue. You've a right to feel tired. I was just hoping we would have some time together alone before the night ended. You know what I mean?"

"I know we talked about maybe going to the beach in the morning, Hein, but I'm not sure I'd be very good company. I really need to get some sleep."

"OK, Sue. I'll take you home and then take Burn home", James said as he withdrew a Lucky Strike, lit it with the car lighter, took a long draw, and exhaled, blowing smoke rings out the side window on the driver's side.

"Thanks, Hein, you've been a real gentleman tonight and I enjoyed going to the Prom with you and to New York. I really like your real name, James, better. I think I'll call you 'James' from now on."

"OK by me", James said as he looked over at Sue and smiled.

A few minutes later, James kissed Sue goodnight on her front porch. He jumped back in the car and drove toward Earle's house. "Damn, I'm sorry I tried that Manhattan drink tonight. How can anyone drink that go awful crap", Earle asked rhetorically. Then he added, "Well, Hein it looks like both of us will have to have a late night date with "Mary Hand"", Earle said to James.

"Mary Hand?" James asked a bit befuddled, as he looked over at Earle?

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Earle did not reply. He just moved his closed hand up and down. James understood the universal sign for male masturbation and laughed.

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*Tuesday morning, June 23...*

Earle woke up with a hangover; no, it was more like something inside his head was trying to pound its way out...first by way of the temples, then the back of his head, then from behind his eyes, and continually making the rounds from one to the other. Graduation had been the night before, and after leaving his parents, Earle had gone to celebrate with a couple of classmates from Holmvale. They were two cousins who were Italian and the three of them finished off a jug of homemade Guinea red wine. Earle's head was telling him this morning that he had more than overdid it last night.

The door to his bedroom opened up and his dad peered in and said, "Time to get your butt up, son. After breakfast I need your help with the trailer, then we head on out to Long Island." Although his dad had spoken in his normal volume, it sounded to Earle like it was spoken through a megaphone.

Earle threw the covers off then tentatively moved one leg out and put one foot on the floor. So far, so good, he thought. He gently swung his other leg over and let the other foot touch the floor as he slowly sat up. Ouch! After a few deep breaths he next attempted to stand up, lost his balance and sat back on the bed. "Well, at least I don't feel like I have to up-chuck", he said to himself. On the second try he was able to stand up without falling back and one step after another made his way to the bathroom.

After a shower, hot, then cold, then hot again, Earle felt a little better. The smell of coffee and bacon and eggs filled his nostrils and made him realize he was hungry, despite the bit of sourness that crawled up into his esophagus from the rumbling in his stomach. A few sips of coffee, a bite of toast and a fork full of scrambled eggs went down without any adverse reaction. He purposely avoided his usual dashes of Tabasco sauce. After a little more food he started to feel like he just might survive.

Twenty-five minutes later Earle and his dad had unblocked the trailer and hooked it to the hitch on the big maroon Mercury four door sedan. Then Earle got into the back, while his mom got into the front passenger side of the bench seat and Mr. Burnell headed out of the trailer park; they were on their way to Riverside, Long Island where Mr. Burnell had a construction job waiting. He also arranged for Earle to work at the Nike Missile site there for the summer. They would all return to North Kingsboro at the end of the summer and Earle would use some of the money from his summer job and other savings to buy a good used car that he could drive to Louisiana State College in Louisiana. At least that was the plan.

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Minutes later the Burnells were on the Garden State Parkway heading north. Burn, still feeling a bit tired from his hangover, slumped down in the back seat and closed his eyes. He thought back to last night following graduation. He, Bo, James and Rafe had gathered outside of QHS while their parents talked among themselves, leaving the boys to say goodbye to Earle...

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*Earle remembers graduation night...*

“Well, I guess this is it. We’ll be heading off to Long Island tomorrow for the summer”, Earle said somewhat somberly to the other three guys. He felt a little sad, since he had come to consider them as the best friends he had ever had. With all of the moving around the country that his family had done, the three years at QHS was one of the longest stays of all – one of the happiest, and it came at the time of his life when he knew that he was on the way to becoming a man. He realized that soon he would be off to college on his own, away from mom and dad for the first time that he could remember, and while it was exciting, there was just a touch of uneasiness with the uncertainty ahead.

“But you’ll be back at the end of the summer, before heading off to LSC, right Burn?” Bo countered. Earle nodded to answer Bo’s question.

“Yeah, let us know when you get back and we’ll all get together for one last trip to Staten Island”, James said, rubbing his hands together and laughing that deep, infectious laugh of his.

“Try and get back before mid-August, Burn. I’ll be leaving for Milton College on Sunday August, 23 for two weeks of football camp before classes start and it will be good to see you before you leave for Louisiana. Take care of yourself and don’t work too hard.” Rafe said as he offered his hand to shake with Earle’s.

After hand-shakes all around the guys rejoined their parents and everyone said goodbye.

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Earle dozed off with the sound of “goodbyes” in his mind. He didn’t wake up until his mom shook him at the place they had stopped for lunch.

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Summer 1959: June 27, "West Side Story" closed at Winter Garden Theater New York City after 734 performances. July 5, Ben-Gurion's Israeli government resigned. July 17, Tibet abolished serfdom. July 21 the 1st nuclear powered merchant ship, NS Savannah, was christened in Camden, New Jersey. July 24, VP Nixon argued with Khrushchev, known as "Kitchen Debate". July 28, Great-Britain started using postal codes and Hawaii's first U.S. election sent the first Asian-Americans to Congress. August 7, Explorer 6 transmitted first TV photo of Earth from space. August 21, Hawaii became the fiftieth U.S. state. August 31, Los Angeles Dodger's Sandy Koufax broke Dizzy Dean's NL mark of eighteen strikeouts in a game.

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*Friday evening, June 26, 1959...*

*...When you see me in misery  
Come on baby, see about me  
Now yeah, all right, all right, aw play it, boy  
When you see me in misery  
Come on baby, see about me  
Now yeah, hey hey, all right  
See the girl with the red dress on  
She can do the Birdland all night long*

*Yeah yeah, what'd I say, all right  
Well, tell me what'd I say, yeah...*

Earle had moved to Riverside, Long Island for the summer. Bo, James and Rafe were standing on chairs against the back wall. Nathan Leeson was standing alongside. They all had a half full bottle of Shaeffer beer in one hand and keeping up with the rocking beat by tapping their free hand against the beer bottle. The place was literally rocking as Ray Charles and his band played a song that was just recently recorded on a two-sided 45 record. The song was "What'd I Say".

Bo, James and Rafe were the only white people in the place. It was a black venue named Colonel's Lounge, in Quaytown, several blocks from the high school in the predominantly black neighborhood. Nathan had invited the three of them and arranged for the tickets. Ray Charles had become increasingly popular with white youth since his first big hit on Atlantic Records made the cross-over to the pop charts in 1957. This was to be one of his last performances on what was called in black circles, the Chittlin' Circuit. He was doing this show as a favor for the Colonel, a retired army vet. Ray Charles was beginning to become a recognized performer for all

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audiences and he was booked to appear in large concert halls all around the country. He already had expanded into the Jazz scene by playing at the Newport Jazz Festival.

When they had first arrived and made their way to the bar to order drinks, there were quite a few stares and frowns from some of the patrons directed at the white guys. Obviously not many whites frequented Colonel's Lounge, and any new arrivals were treated with reservation and downright suspicion. The stares and the frowns would have made the three of them a lot more uncomfortable had they come in without Nathan as their benefactor. Just about everyone in the place knew Nathan, and once he introduced the three of them, most of the other patrons seemed to accept the white guys as non-threatening. Several of the blacks around the bar area were QHS alumni -- football fans and one-time players -- they recognized Bo and Rafe, by name if not by sight and offered to shake hands. One of the men at the bar made way for them and signaled one of the bartenders to come and serve them. By the time they had their first beers and the show was about to start, they were generally accepted. The three of them had moved to the back wall to get a better view of the show as Ray Charles was escorted onto the stage and seated at the piano. Against the back wall it was also further removed from the heavier smoke that hung over the bar area like a fog that appears on a cool night.

Rafe looked around and watched with fascination at the people dancing on the small dance floor and all around the bar area. The rapid energetic beat of the music was hypnotic and the extremely erotic lyrics with the wordplay between Ray and the three girl backup singers, the Raelets, was captivating. Just looking at the gyrating dancers was like watching a choreographed mating ceremony.

When the show ended, Nathan led the three of them out and a number of the patrons smiled and shook their hands. Several encouraged them to come again. Outside the night air was refreshingly cool and they said goodnight to Nathan. James had driven and they all piled into his car.

"Wow! Wasn't that a helluva show?" Rafe asked enthusiastically.

"God damn right!" replied Bo.

"He sure puts on a great show; great band, and I love the raw sound of the Raelets on several of those songs", offered James as he drove off. "I wonder what Earle would have thought - being from the South and all. I have to admit I was a little nervous when we first went in. Did you see the look that big black guy gave us when we walked in the door? It was obvious he was the bouncer. I wouldn't want to meet up with *him* in a dark alley."

"Shit, no! You got that right, Hein!" chipped in Bo. And Rafe and James laughed and offered their agreement.

Then upon reflection Rafe added, "Unlike Burn, I'm not from the South, but growing up in Newark I had experiences where some black kids were intimidating; outright bullies in fact.



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So, it *was* kind of uncomfortable walking in there being the only white guys, getting those looks as if we didn't belong and were intruders. I suppose that's the way blacks must feel when they walk into an all-white bar or restaurant."

"Yeah, I guess that's true, but I never thought about it – I mean with the shoe on the other foot", responded Bo.

James chipped in, "Okay, I agree it is sometimes true and maybe more in the South than up here in the North, but then what about guys like Nathan? He's been hanging out with us a lot and everywhere he comes with us, he is accepted and doesn't get the kind of looks that we got in Colonel's Lounge tonight."

Rafe responded, "Hein, you got a point there. But I think part of Nathan's acceptance in all-white places is that he is with one or more of us, and another part is the way he acts."

"The way he acts?" asked Bo. "What do you mean?"

"Well, he's not threatening", Rafe answered. "He always has a smile and a friendly demeanor and, ah, he's polite".

"Yeah, he doesn't carry a chip on his shoulder or act like he's angry at every white person as if we are all guilty for the slavery thing", James offered.

The three of them fell silent for a minute, mulling over the conversation that just ensued. Then James said, "Philosophical discussions always make me thirsty. Who's up for getting some containers of beer and continuing the conversation? We can park down by the boat launching area at the Quaytown Yacht Club."

"Great idea, Hein! I'm in", Bo quickly responded. "Let's get some containers at the Five Coins bar on First Street."

"Yep, I'm in. Let's go!" replied James.

"Me, too, I'm up for it", Rafe chipped in.

Fifteen minutes later the three of them were sipping draft beer out of quart cardboard containers at the Yacht Club and having a deep conversation about which girl in QHS had the best tits, ass, legs, and lastly prettiest face. But it wasn't long before the conversation turned to their plans for the rest of the summer and for college in the fall. It was time to get serious and start thinking about the future – a somewhat scary thing because of the uncertainty they all felt about leaving behind the comfortable life they had all known for the past four years.

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*Friday night, July 3, 1959...*

The guys started arriving around 7:30 P.M. and by 8:00 ten of the QHS football players from the class of 1959 were gathered in the garage at Bo's house, along with Nathan Leeson and James. Bo had invited his teammates, James and Nathan to view films of the QHS football games of the past three years. The films were provided by two of the players, whose fathers had volunteered to film the games at the request of Coach Ruffy. Nathan purchased the beer and snacks, but everyone chipped in to reimburse him.

Rafe and Jimmy Barrone arrived in Rafe's mother's '56 Ford; he had picked up Jimmy and they were the last to arrive, so he had to park several houses up the narrow street that dead ended at Bo's house. As they walked down the street they could hear the voices of the other guys laughing and joking, and as they entered the driveway that was filled with several cars, they were greeted with mock applause.

"About freakin' time you two got here!" yelled Bo, as he threw a bear hug around Rafe and then Jimmy.

"Yeah, where is it written that the co-captain of the team gets to show up late?" Roger Vaccaro joked with a bottle of beer in one hand and a cigarette in the other. "We had to do calisthenics without you."

"Wasn't my fault", responded Jimmy Barrone with a mock look of innocence, "I begged Rafe to drive faster."

A few of the other teammates joined in the good natured ribbing at Rafe's expense. Then all of the teammates welcomed Rafe and Jimmy with smiles, handshakes or slaps on the back. Following the football players, James and Nathan came forward and welcomed the new arrivals. Jimmy moved forward to talk with one of the other fellows.

"So what took you so long, Rafe", asked James with a smile, but a slight bit of concern reflected in his eyes and voice. "Did you have a problem with your mom's car?"

Rafe shrugged and answered, "Ah, no real problem...just that my folks got home late from work and I had to walk up to Tom's bar, where my mom picked up my dad who commutes by train on the Jersey Shore Line between North Kingsboro and Newark. Then I had to drive them home before I could take the car. So, by the time I picked up Jimmy, it was already after 7:30 PM."

Just then Bo walked over and handed Rafe a bottle of Schaefer beer, already opened. "Hey, Rafe, did you see my new car?" Bo asked with all the pride of every teenage boy who ever got the first set of their very own new wheels.

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Surprised, Rafe responded, “No way! Where?” Bo turned Rafe around to take another look at the three cars in the driveway, and pointed out a baby blue Triumph TR3 with a white rag top, a British import.

“Hot Damn! That’s a sexy looking machine, Bo!” exclaimed Rafe. “Must have cost a bundle; did you save that much money working at the Deli?”

“I saved enough for about half the cost and my dad added the balance as a graduation gift. Now I have my own set of wheels for commuting to Newark Prep in the Fall and then for College in January,” Bo replied with a huge smile. Rafe had never seen Bo as happy as he appeared at this moment.

“Hey Bo, let’s get the film show going before we all have too many beers to recognize which team was ours!” came a loud announcement from one of the teammates in the garage.

“Come on, Rafe, let’s go get those football films going before these guys get too rowdy and the neighbors call the cops”, Bo laughed. Then Rafe followed Bo into the garage and sat down on one of the folding chairs along with the rest of the group.

For the next two hours, the boys eagerly watched one game film after another. Comments flew through the night air like darts as one or another player recognized himself and remembered a particular play. When the film showed a QHS player making a good run or pass reception on offense or a good tackle or interception on defense, invariably the player involved would stand up and say something like, “Hey, did you see that great play? Let’s rewind the film and show it again”.

Just as invariably one of the other players would counter with a wisecrack like, “Look at that hole I opened; if it wasn’t for me you would have been on your ass before you reached the line”; or, “shit, my grandmother could tackle better than that.”

Laughter rained down in that garage that night as the one-time teammates shared a sort of group communion while re-living their mutual experiences on the football field and reminiscing about their high school experiences. Even James and Nathan thoroughly enjoyed the banter and interjected a few comments that drew laughs.

When the films had all been shown the guys all chipped in to straighten up the garage, fold up the chairs, and stack them up against the walls. Roger Vaccaro picked up an empty cardboard beer case and announced, “Hey, tomorrow is the Fourth of July, Right? So don’t we need to raise the flag up the flag pole? Well, I’ve got a better idea!”

A few minutes later, as each of the guys walked out of Bo’s driveway, they turned to take one last view of the flag pole in the back yard to the right of the garage. Several of the guys saluted toward the flag pole at the top of which was an empty cardboard beer case.

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 11

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*Wednesday afternoon, July 15, 1959...*

Bo and Rafe sat expectantly. They had just finished participating with about twenty-five other local ballplayers in a tryout for a professional baseball team. The Phillies were one of eight baseball teams in the National League and they had conducted the tryouts at the Quaytown High School baseball field. Bo and Rafe had been invited to the tryout by a local scout, Army Tanner, who had followed them during their Championship season. Army was often seen at practices as well as at the QHS games during the baseball season and was a personal friend of Coach Zino.

Bo and Rafe sat on the wooden bleachers listening anxiously to the head scout from the Philadelphia Phillies baseball team. After thanking the young men who attended and offering some platitudes about how pleased he was with the caliber of the ballplayers, he dropped what seemed like a verbal bomb. He told them that despite how talented they all were, what the Phillies organization was primarily looking for was the next great ballplayer with the talent of a Mickey Mantle, or a Willie Mays. The obvious inference was that none of those who had tried out today met that standard. When he saw the look of disappointment on their faces and heard the subdued groans of disillusionment, he attempted to soften the blow by encouraging the young men to continue to work hard on improving their skills and maybe they could get another opportunity to make it in a future tryout with one of the sixteen major league teams.

As the young men vacated the bleachers and started to leave the field, the sports reporter, whose nickname was “Scoop”, and the photographer from the Quaytown Weekly, stepped up to Bo and Rafe and led them up the first baseline along with the two scouts from the Phillies. Following a bit of small talk, Rafe was posed with the scouts and the next day the photo appeared in the Quaytown Weekly.

Bo and Rafe shook hands with the scouts, “Scoop” and the photographer; then they both walked off the field and out through the gate to where their cars were parked.

“What are you doing tonight, Bo?” asked Rafe as he threw his baseball glove and bat in the open trunk of the ’56 Ford and slammed it shut.

“Got to work down at the Deli for a few hours, then home for dinner, watch a little TV, then try and get a good night’s sleep”, Bo replied matter of factly. “How about you, Rafe?”

Rafe thought for a second, then responded, “It’s too late to go to Cerrito’s pool in Kingsboro, so I’ll just go home and listen to some new 45’s I just bought.”

“What’s happened with that girl from the Bronx you used to date in the summer at the pool? Rose something was her name?” Bo inquired.

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 11

“Ah, you mean Rosemarie. I haven’t seen her nor her mother so far this summer. I guess they aren’t going to spend the summer at that bungalow this year. Rosemarie is probably working – that’s what she said she’d do, last year when the summer ended.” Rafe said. “But I’ve got a date this Saturday with the girl I took to the Prom – the girl from Ulster Beach, Jill Brewler.”

“So much for those summer loves, but how’s it going with this Jill? Are you getting any?” Bo inquired with a mischievous smile.

“Nothing yet but damn near a case of blue balls last Saturday night”, Rafe answered with a laugh. “But this Saturday night might be the magic touch; speaking of magic touch, how about you and ‘Queenie Girl’, Cathy? Any more hand jobs?”

They both laughed at that remark, and then Bo said somewhat more seriously, “We’re double dating again this Saturday with Roger and Gladys. But while she’s been into my pants, I haven’t been able to get into her pants yet.” Once again they both laughed. Then Bo’s countenance became even more serious as he continued, “You know I really like Cathy, but I suspect she is dating someone else besides me. Do you remember that guy who showed up at our baseball practices in the Army uniform – he sat in the bleachers on the first base side where we sat today at the end of the try out? You know the one she introduced us to at one of the sock hops last year – the guy from Ruby Creek Catholic?”

“Oh yeah, I sort of remember; I just didn’t make the connection between him in the uniform and that time at the dance.” Rafe answered. “So what makes you think she’s dating him?”

“Oh, I’m not one hundred percent positive, but at least once she let his name slip while she was talking with Gladys, and then recently she seems to have gotten a bit cooler when we make out.”

Bo thought for a couple of seconds, then responded, “Maybe she feels that since you’re going off to college, you might find another girl at school and she doesn’t want to be left without any other options.”

“Maybe, we’ll see.” Bo said. Then they made tentative plans to get together next week, shook hands, jumped into their cars and drove off -- each of them engrossed in their thoughts.

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*Saturday evening, July 18, 1959...*

*You give me fever, fever in the morning,  
fever in the evening,*

## **Beach Party Days: Chapter 11**

*fever all through the night...*

Rafe had the Philadelphia radio station WADO tuned to the Jocko Henderson show. He was playing Little Willie John's original version of "Fever", later covered by Peggy Lee.

"Mmmm. I want you to make love to me", she whispered in his ear as she kissed him all around the ear, cheek, neck, and lips. She was pushing her pelvis down and rubbing herself slowly against his hardened dick.

Jill was sitting astride Rafe at the center of the front bench seat of the '56 Ford Fairlane. She was facing him with her legs curled up at the knees on either side of Rafe's lap. They had been making out for over twenty minutes in the driveway outside of Jill's house. Rafe thought to himself, "I may be an inexperienced virgin, but damn if she's not hot to trot. But what should I do? We are in her driveway. What if her father or mother comes out and find us doing it? Shit! Should I or Shouldn't I?"

"Mmmm, oh, this feels so good; make love to me, I want you to", Jill murmured.

Rafe had earlier been rubbing Jill's smallish breasts until the nipples were stiff and for the last couple of minutes he had moved his right hand up under Jill's dress, and had his hand down the back of her panties, caressing her ass. "No girdle or nylons!" he rejoiced silently. He started to maneuver his hand around her hip toward the front and into the cleft between her legs. Jill maneuvered her hand down and started to rub Rafe's swollen dick under his khakis. "This is it. Time to lose your Cherry, Rafe", he thought to himself. "I'm about to get laid for the first time!"

Suddenly the side porch light of the house came on and the side screen door loudly opened and slammed closed. Jill was nearly in a dream-like swoon. Rafe pulled out his hand and had to push Jill away; she withdrew reluctantly. Then in the light from the house Rafe saw something that scared the hell out of him. Jill's father was approaching the car holding a shotgun! "Holy crap! Your father's coming with a gun!" Rafe announced. Jill barely snapped out of her reverie and swung her body around so that she was off of Rafe facing the front windshield.

As Jill's father approached the car, Rafe's heart felt like it would burst out of his chest, the adrenaline coursing through his veins like a raging river. Twenty feet, fifteen feet, ten feet, and then Mr. Brewster suddenly stopped. The shotgun which he had been carrying pointed toward the car, he now lifted up with the barrel pointing skyward. And then Mr. Brewster laughed. He came up to the driver's side of the car, where the window was halfway rolled down and said with a chuckle, "Had ya worried, didn't I? Just joshing ya, son." Then he turned and walked back to the house, went in, closed the door, but left the light on – a signal that it was time to call it a night.

As Rafe drove out of the driveway, Jocko was doing his thing over the radio waves...

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 11

*Hello, Daddy-O and Mommy-O,  
This is Jocko, your Ace from Outer Space;  
Oo-papa-doo, how do you do;*

By the time Rafe got to the highway his heart rate was back to normal. That was the last time Rafe dated Jill.

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*Saturday afternoon, August 15, 1959...*

The pick up truck turned the corner a little too quickly. Rafe, James, Bo and Earle were in the back and almost lost their balance as Jack Wing made the sharp turn into the parking lot outside the Danish Hop in Sea Bright. What concerned the four guys in the back more than almost getting their asses tossed over the side was the makeshift movie camera they had set up on a tripod. It almost went flying off the side, but Earle reacted quickly and grabbed the tripod.

“Good catch, Burn!” James yelled as he righted himself on the bed of the pickup. “We don’t want to lose our Pussy Catcher. Earle had just recently returned from his summer job in Riverhead, Long Island.

“Shit, Burn, If you had only held on like that to those passes I threw to you during football season”, Bo said jokingly.

“Damn it, Bo, if you had thrown the passes harder, I wouldn’t have had time to get anxious waiting for the damn ball to reach me.” Burn returned the jibe. “But don’t forget I caught that Touchdown pass against Toms River, so kiss my royal Southern butt, Yankee!”

“OK, you two, enough horsing around, let’s concentrate on getting some babes to pose for our ‘movie audition’”, Rafe said with amusement.

A second later Jack pulled the pickup over to a stop in the parking lot. Three girls in bathing suits were walking along toward the beach with beach blankets and beach bags and approaching the truck. The four guys in the bed of the truck were dressed in jeans, sport shirts, loafers on bare feet, and baseball caps.

“Quick, throw the banners over the side!” James ordered.

“Got it, Hein”, Earle said as he and Bo unfurled a banner over each of the sides of the pickup bed.

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 11

Curiosity about what these guys were up to got to the three girls and they stopped on Bo's side of the truck to read the banner. It read "Paramount Studio's Traveling Auditions - Searching for Future Female Movie Stars! Take our Screen Test Today!"

"This is a joke, isn't it?" asked one of the girls. "Yeah, must be a joke", said the second girl. "You guys don't look like directors", said the third girl with a laugh of incredulity.

"We're the advance team", James said in direct response to the third girl. "The directors send us out to weed out the wheat from the chaff, to coin a phrase from the bible".

"In other words, we whittle down the list of potentials to a select few girls who have a high probability of making a winning screen test," Rafe jumped in, intentionally making eye contact with each of the three girls.

"I can attest to that", said Jack who had gotten out of the driver's seat and walked around to the back of the pickup. "I was hired by the studio to drive these four fellows around the shore looking for the next Annette Funicello for an upcoming Beach Party movie".

"So, are you three up to the challenge? We have the camera right here just waiting to get each of you on film", Bo said, taking the lead.

By now the three girls had put their beach bags and blankets down, indicating to the guys that they had at least sparked the girls' interest. The first two girls smiled and appeared to be buying the spiel, but the third girl crossed her arms and had a wary look on her face.

"OK; you!" James said pointing to the first girl. "Come on up here and let's get you on film! Give her a hand, Jack and Burn".

Jack lowered the tailgate and grabbed a bench seat off the back of the truck. Earle jumped down and the two of them helped the first girl step up on the bench and then up onto the truck bed. "What do you think guys, should we pose her against the back of the cab?"

Bo and Rafe nodded their heads. Bo answered for the rest of the guys, "Yeah that will do." And Rafe and Bo guided the girl to the front of the truck bed and turned her around so that her back was leaning against the cab. James took up position behind the tripod and camera, pretending to make an adjustment through the viewer of the Kodak Brownie Starmatic camera. The girl was trying to smile, but it was obvious that she was a bit nervous and beginning to wonder what she was getting into.

Then Rafe said as officiously as he could muster, "But first things first, Hein. We need to get her name, address, and phone number...ah, so the uh, studio can contact her if they think she's worthy of a screen test."



## Beach Party Days: Chapter 11

“I got it. I’ll get the clipboard and pen out of the cab”, Earle said and he quickly brought them back. Then he looked at the girl and in his thickest southern accent he asked, “OK, sweetheart, give me your name, address, and phone number.”

“M-My name is Sarah Tuttle, and I live at 33 Second Street, in Ruby Creek, and my, my phone number is Redstone 7-6542”, she answered still trying to maintain a smile, but feeling more nervous.

“Thank you”, Earle said, then walking toward the other two girls, “and what is your contact information?”

The second girl, still buying the spiel quickly started to reply, “My name is Joanne Kennedy, and I live at 56 Bay Avenue in Bayshore Highlands. My phone number is Atwater 4...”.

But before she could finish, the third girl sharply said, “Stop, don’t let these guys bamboozle you. This is all a bunch of hooey, can’t you see that? It’s just a scheme to trick you into giving them your phone numbers”. Then to the five guys, “Nice try. I’ve got to hand it to you. This took a lot of imagination. But as for me, I prefer a more honest approach.” And then for the first time she smiled. “Come on girls, let’s get to the beach.”

Earle and Jack helped the first girl down off the truck. As they did, she looked at Earle and said in a low voice, “I won’t mind if you call me sometime.” She smiled at Earle, went to pick up her beach bag and blanket, and joined up with the other girls. The three walked away laughing and one by one looked back at the guys, who were standing there yelling for them to come back and give their names and phone numbers.

As the girls departed toward the beach, the five boys started laughing. “Hot Damn! At least I got a contact and she wants me to call her”, bragged Earle.

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*Friday evening, August 21, 1959...*

*All of my love, all of my kissin'  
You don't know what you've been missin'  
Oh boy! (Oh boy!)  
When you're with me  
Oh boy! (Oh boy!)  
The world can see that you were meant for me*

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 11

*All of my life, I've been waitin'  
Tonight there'll be no hesitatin'  
Oh boy! (Oh boy!)  
When you're with me  
Oh boy! (Oh boy!)  
The world can see that you were meant for me*

*Stars appear and the shadows are fallin'  
You can hear my heart a-callin'  
A little bit of lovin' makes everything alright  
I'm gonna see my baby tonight...*

The Buddy Holy song, “Oh Boy” was playing on the radio on the Cousin Brucie show from WINS AM in New York. Earle, Bo, Rafe, and James were on the way to the Christmas Tree Inn on Staten Island. As usual, James was driving and would have no more than two drinks, while the other three would likely drink more than their share. Earlier they had gone to the Anvil Inn in Ulster Beach for some of the best pizza around.

“God that was good pizza tonight!” Bo exclaimed from the back seat next to Earle, as he let out a loud fart. “Here’s a kiss for you, Burn.”

“Damn, Bo, what crawled up your ass and died! Holy crap, open the friggin’ windows all the way!” Earle nearly shouted, even as they were already partly opened to let out the smoke from the cigarettes that James and Bo had earlier smoked.

“Sure glad I’m riding shotgun tonight”, Rafe laughed and turned around to see Bo and Earle doing their usual joking around.

“Best to let all that bad gas out now”, James said over his shoulder, loud enough to be heard over the laughter and ribbing in the back seat. “If we run into some babes at the Christmas Tree Inn, I don’t want you all scaring them off.”

“Good point there, Hein”, and Earle let go with a loud fart “and here’s kiss right back at ya, Bo”.

“Damn it Burn, yours is ten times worse than mine. Hein will need to have the car fumigated - anyone getting in will need a gas mask,” responded Bo.

After the laughter died down, Rafe turned around and asked Earle, “Hey, Burn, what’s with your love life since you got back from Long Island? Are you still seeing that girl you took to the Prom, what was her name, Donna something or other?”

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 11

“Donna Conklin; no, I called her right after I got back and she said she is going steady with someone else. I still have her picture from the Prom – pretty girl, but evidently she wants to date someone who is going to be around, while I’m going off to LSC.”

James then jumped in, “Too bad; what about our classmate, Penny Warlock? You and I doubled a couple of times when you dated her.”

“That was over before the Prom. She decided she liked that Freeneys guy”, Earle answered. He still had a crush on Penny. “What about you guys? What were y’all up to all summer?”

Rafe, still turned around toward the back seat, was first to respond, “Bo and I went with Nathan Leeson to Joey Pans house. You know Joey, he graduated the year before us. Well, Joey has a collection of Jazz music and we listened to jazz for a couple of hours. I had heard of some of the jazz musicians, but not all. Some were totally new to me – I liked most of it, but not all. He played selections from albums by Stan Kenton, Art Blakey, Dave Brubeck, and a group of scat singers Lambert, Hendricks and Ross. Didn’t you like some of the music, Bo?”

“Yeah, I thought some of the music was cool, but there was some that was just OK”, Bo answered. “Joey is a cool guy. Oh, and while we’re talking about jazz, Rafe and I went with Nathan to Birdland. We saw a guy named Maynard Fergusson, who plays the trumpet and his band and a singer named Gloria Lynn.”

Then Rafe jumped back in, “Burn and Hein, you should have been there. Birdland is a really cool place. It’s in mid-town Manhattan on Broadway. You enter and go down a stairway to get to the night club. As we started down the stairs we heard Maynard Fergusson playing a number he calls ‘Ole’, a kind of toreador piece like in the bullfights. Well, as we came down the stairs, he hit this really high group of notes with the trumpet – unfreakin’ believable.”

“Oh, shit yeah”, Bo chipped in. “I have never heard a trumpet played that high without any kind of wavering or loss of the notes. And remember I was in the drum and bugle corps in eighth grade. Man, was he wailin’ on the trumpet!”

Rafe continued the thread of conversation, “Then when we got down the stairs, off to the right a couple of steps down, like in a huge sunken living room, are a bunch of tables for people who want dinner and the show. In front of the tables is a good size stage. On the left is a bar, not as big as the bar at the Danish Hop, and just off to the right of the bar area are a bunch of about eight chairs. They call that the Peanut Gallery and that’s where we sat, with the stage only about thirty feet away. You can sit there without ordering food or drinks and listen to Jazz all night. You just pay a ten dollar cover charge. I liked that singer, Gloria Lynne, too, didn’t you, Bo?”

“Oh, yeah, she was good; nice voice”, Bo replied.

“And what about you, Hein, how did your summer go?” Earle asked.

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 11

“I had a date the night that they went to Birdland, and beyond that I’ve been pretty much working my ass off, saving money for the Citadel”, James answered as he turned the car onto the access road to the Outerbridge Crossing. Then he continued, “Besides working at the Deli, I took a part time job as a cook at the Howard Johnson restaurant up on the highway. A couple of other guys from QHS are working there, too. Rafe worked there one day and up and quit”, and he laughed.

Rafe felt like he needed to explain the circumstances and responded, “Well, I worked as a busboy, and after eight hours, I was drenched with sweat from the hot kitchen and my ass was dragging, and for what – a share of the waitresses tips? It wasn’t worth it. So I got a two week job at my dad’s company in Newark, taking inventory the last week in July and first week in August.”

Then James asked, “OK, Burn, what about your time out in Long Island? You must have had a few adventures you haven’t told us about yet.”

“Well, there was this one time that I went into a bar and, I don’t remember exactly how it started, but I got into a confrontation with three migrant workers – wetbacks from Mexico, I think”, Earle recalled somewhat hazily.

“So what happened?” James queried, anticipating a story about a barroom brawl.

Earle rubbed his stubble of beard as he answered, “Well, Hein, my memory is a bit fuzzy. I kinda recall that one of them bumped into me as I was playing pool on one of those junior size bar pool tables and he didn’t have the sense to say he was sorry or apologize. So, I said something like, ‘Hey! What the hell did you do that for?’”

“And then what happened? Did he give you some wise ass comeback?” Bo asked expectantly.

Earle continued, once again rubbing his bearded chin, “Damned right, this wetback made some sort of nasty remark in Spanish that I had no clue as to what he was saying, but I could tell from the sneer on his face that he wasn’t apologizing, nor was he wishing me a good evening. So I turned around with the pool stick in my hand and asked him what the fuck he said to me. Then next thing I know his two buddies who were sitting at the bar came over to back him up. I stood my ground and told him something like he was a rude son-of-a-bitch for bumping into me and not saying he was sorry, but if he and his buddies wanted to tangle with me they could come on and let’s get it on. They stared at me and at the pool cue in my hand and finally put their hands up and said something like ‘No mas’. Then they backed off and left. I was a little suspicious, so I went to the door to make sure they were not waiting for me outside, but they got into their car and drove off.”

“Any other adventures, Burn?” Rafe asked.

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 11

Earle thought for a second, smiled and said, “Well, I had this neighbor babe who really turned me on. She was married and about 24 years old. I had a number of wet dreams about her, but nothing ever happened.”

That brought a chuckle and a nod of understanding to the other three guys.

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*Later that night...*

The four guys were headed back from Staten Island, and surprisingly there wasn't a police checkpoint on the Outerbridge. “It figures there's no police tonight, since none of us are stoned, only about five or six beers each”, noted Earle.

“I'm still in love with that babe, Jane, I met tonight from Westfield. Man, would I like to get into her pants!” exclaimed Bo.

“Well, she may have been a hot body, but her three girlfriends escaped from the Bronx Zoo!” James retorted. And that brought on laughter from the others.

After a few minutes of silence, Rafe said something that was evidently on the minds of the other guys, as well. “Two more days and I'm off to Milton College for pre-season football camp; I'm going to miss you guys and our trips to Staten Island and the other fun we've had these past four years.”

That led to a somewhat serious conversation with each of the guys in turn talking about making their preparations for going off to college. “But we're all going to keep in touch, aren't we?” asked Bo, expecting confirmation.

“Yeah, we really should keep in touch”, James was the first to respond. “I've never been much for writing, but I will try to write a letter once a month or so.”

“Likewise about that letter writing stuff; even though I'm not into that. It was freakin' hard just to write those compositions in English Class – I hated it, but I'll give it a try”, said Earle.

Rafe suggested, “Well, since I'll be the first one leaving, I'll send a letter to you three with my college address. It's in the freshman dorm. Then you can write me your addresses with a letter, or even a postcard.”

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“I’ll probably be gone not long after you, Rafe, so I’ll send Bo a note when I get settled and he can send you and James my address.”

“Good idea, Burn”, said James and Rafe and Bo agreed.

“I’m going to try and keep in touch with Jimmy Barrone and Jack Pauley, too. They are both going to Clenboro College.” added Rafe, almost as an afterthought.

“Oh, yeah, that’s a good idea. We’ve really had some good times over at Jimmy’s house this summer”, Bo said.

“He’s got a great looking younger sister, too”, Earle added.

“I see you have a one-track mind, Burn!” laughed James. And they all shared in the laugh. It was just the touch to take the edge off their apprehension about leaving for college, and knowing that it was time for them to get serious about the next four years of college studies and much stiffer competition. No longer were they going to be the “kings of the hill”, but were about to enter the unknown. It was a sobering thought on this hot August night.

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 12

*Events: Fall Semester 1959...*

On September 13, Luna 2 launched by U.S.S.R. became the first spacecraft to impact on Moon. On September 15, Soviet Premier Khrushchev arrived in U.S. to begin a thirteen day visit; four days later he was denied access to Disneyland. On September 26, Japan was hit by typhoon Vera; about 5,000 die.

On October 2, Rod Serling's "Twilight Zone" premiered on CBS-TV. On October 8, the Los Angeles Dodgers beat Chicago White Sox, 4 games to 2 in 56th World Series. On October 10, Pan Am began regular flights around World. On October 15, "The Untouchables" premiered on TV.

On November 2, Charles Van Doren confessed that the TV quiz show-"21," was fixed. On November 16, "The Sound of Music" opened at Lunt Fontanne Theater New York City for 1443 performances. On November 19, "Rocky and His Friends" debuted on ABC. On November 20, NY radio station WABC fired Alan Freed over the payola scandal. On November 21, Jack Benny (violin) and Richard Nixon (piano) played their famed duet at the White House.

On December 1, the first color photograph of Earth from outer space was sent back. On December 21, Citizens of Deerfield, Illinois blocked building of interracial housing, and on December 25, Sony brought transistor TV 8-301 to the market.

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*Saturday evening, September 12, 1959...*

Rafe was seated at his desk in the freshman dorm on the campus of Milton College. He was just about to finish writing a letter to Bo and James. His roommate's radio was tuned to WJW-AM (850), the Cleveland Rock and Roll station where Alan Freed first became a nationally famous disk jockey. Eddie Cochran's "Summertime Blues" was playing, introduced by a local DJ who was not on a par with Freed.

*Well, I'm a-gonna raise a fuss,  
I'm a-gonna raise a holler  
About a-workin' all summer  
Just to try to earn a dollar  
But every time I call my baby Try'na  
get a date  
My boss says, "No dice, son,  
You gotta work a-late."  
Sometimes I wonder what I'm a-gonna do  
There ain't no cure for this summertime blues...*

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Rafe read over the letter to check for mistakes...

**...We had two weeks of twice a day practice on the practice football field. God, was my ass dragging! I would have lost weight if it hadn't of been for the meals we were fed at the Student Center dining room – lots of meat, potatoes and gravy, and seconds and thirds, if we wanted.**

**The worst part of the practices was the blocking drills, where two blockers faced each other straddled over a two by ten wooden plank – whenever I started to block the other guy and I stepped on the board with my cleats, my leg would go flying out and my knee would come down hard on the board. After two weeks of that shit, my knees were sore as hell. The idea is to train yourself to keep your legs separated and your feet under you to maintain your balance, but with that damn plank between your legs one push left or right from contact with the other guy and one or both of you wind up with a leg flying out, your balance destroyed and a knee crashing down on the plank.**

**This week was the start of classes and like the rest of the Freshmen that arrived on campus this week, I had to wear that stupid beanie. Fortunately being on the football team I didn't have to endure as much hazing as the new arrivals. During football camp we all hung out at the Delta Kappa Delta fraternity house. Ricky Briggs is a member of this Frat –you remember Ricky, he graduated the year before us and played center on the QHS team. He's playing offensive guard here at Milton.**

**The upper-class football players tell me that the best looking chicks are in the Chi Zeta sorority – lots of blondes, many from Connecticut and the New England states, as well as from Ohio. From what I've seen the first week, a lot of the sorority girls appear to come from upper middleclass or wealthy families, higher socioeconomic class than all of our families and the students at QHS. But I would stack Cathy Woods, Dana Sloane and Martha Luchese up against them.**

**Oh, have you seen in the news that the Soviets launched a spacecraft that is due to hit the moon tomorrow? The U.S.A. is running way behind in this technology – the Ruskies are beating our butts in space exploration. I read an article in Popular Mechanics that predicts that someday in the near future it will be possible to establish a platform in**



## Beach Party Days: Chapter 12

**Space from which rockets can be launched at any target on Earth. If the Soviets get there first, we will be in deep shit.**

**Well, guys, I got to sign off now, Time to go down to the local pub, Porky's, for a couple of 3.2 beers (at 18 in Ohio you can drink "low" beer, alcohol under 3.2%). Downstairs at the pub is a rathskeller. We just have to be careful not to have one of the football coaches see us.**

**So long and write back – let me know what you two are up to. Oh, and Bo or Hein, if you get a letter from Burn, send me his address.**

**Your Pal, Rafe**

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*That same evening...*

Earle was sitting in a booth at the Tiger Inn in Baton Rouge with a couple of other LSC freshmen from the same dorm, one of whom was like Earle a "walk-on" trying out for the LSC football team. The three of them had already downed several twenty-five cent beers to wash down the orders of six for a dollar hotdogs they shared. Earle looked at the other two guys and laughingly said, "We must look like damned fool assholes with our heads shaved and these dumb ass beanie caps."

Billy Joe Harkin, the other football hopeful, had been drinking from his beer glass and almost gagged as he started to laugh at Earle's comment while still swallowing the beer. When he recovered, he blurted out "God damn it, Burnell, I darn near choked to death!"

Jim Lasker the other classmate, also laughing, said "Well that may be true for y'all, but I think the freshmen ladies like the bald head on my shoulders; it kind of reminds them of my other bald head." Earle and Billy Joe looked quizzically at Jim and after a short pause he continued, "The one between my legs".

With that the three of them burst out laughing so hard that tears were forming in their eyes. About a minute later the three of them were able to get the hilarity under control and Earle said with as much seriousness as he could muster, "Well, after the first home game, it will be all she wrote; we can toss these beanies and let our hair grow back. But I'm not exactly thrilled that we're also supposed to wear our pajamas to that game."

"Y'all can wear your PJ's, but this ole' Rebel ain't going to. I'm pretty sure I'm going to get picked to suit up as one of the freshman players who will sit on the bench for the game", added Billy Joe.

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 12

“Ya think so?” queried Earle.

“One of the coaches told me he was going to recommend me to varsity backfield coach Lance”, replied Billy Joe.

“Well, good for you”, Earle said. He was both happy for Billy Joe and a little bit envious.

Jim nodded his agreement as he slid out of the booth. “Sorry guys --time for me to go; got a hot date with that cute freshman girl, Maggie Hornung; see y’all tomorrow”. And Jim left.

“Well, how about another round, Burnell?” asked Billy Joe.

“OK, my turn to buy”, responded Earle, and he slid out of the booth, went over to the bar, ordered two drafts of Budweiser, and a few minutes later came back to the booth with full glasses.

“I’m amazed, Burnell”, Billy Joe said quietly as Earle sat down and pushed one glass toward him. “You sure as shootin’ don’t look like your only sixteen, but you never get asked to show proof that you’re eighteen.”

“Only one time was I asked in a package store, but I had a phony ID and the guy hardly looked at it; and that was in New Jersey where the drinking age is twenty-one”, Earle said with a smile.

An hour later, Billy Joe and Earle walked back to the dorm. They were not drunk, but certainly feeling no pain and they were singing the LSC fight song, exceedingly off key. After saying goodnight, Earle took the stairs up to the second floor and entered his room.

His roommate, José, from South America, was sitting at his desk studying. “Damn, I got nothing in common with this rich bastard”, Earle thought to himself as he grabbed his PJs, robe, toothbrush and toothpaste and headed to the common bathroom down the hall. Earle was not into studying, as this was his first time away from home and no one around to watch over him. He had always managed to do OK without much studying all through high school. As an only child, he had no older siblings to look up to and mentor him. But he was used to adapting to new locations and people, having moved with his parents so many times to so many places.

After changing in the bathroom, he began to brush his teeth. In his mind he recalled the plane flight to Baton Rouge in August after saying farewell to Bo, Rafe, and Hein, and he wondered how they were doing. “Well, tomorrow is Sunday and the rates will be lower, so maybe I’ll try calling Bo’s house and talk to him if he’s there, or at least leave my address and the dorm phone with his family if he’s not there,” he mused as he examined his face for zits in the mirror. “Good! No zits; wouldn’t want to detract from this handsome face, even with this bald head”, he half-jokingly said to himself.

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Then as he left the bathroom and headed back to his room he thought to himself, “I’m not one for writing letters, but maybe I should give it a try; I have the addresses of Bo, Hein and Rafe written down on a piece of paper somewhere...probably in the suitcase. Eh, it’s easier to make a phone call...won’t have to drop too many coins in the dorm phone on Sunday, when the rates are lower”.

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*Wednesday Afternoon, September 23, 1959...*

The blue TR3 was humming along heading south on the Garden State Parkway. Bo was trying to relax after several hours of classes at Newark Prep. He was a little annoyed with himself for not applying himself more during high school and not taking more College Prep classes, but he knew that if he wanted to get into college, he had to get good grades on the three additional courses he was now taking to give himself the best chance of being accepted. “I’m going to do this!” he promised himself, gripping the steering wheel in a stranglehold to emphasize it.

Now that he had made that commitment, he relaxed and drove on. He had to get to work at the Deli, where he still worked several evenings and occasional Sundays. The job paid for gas for the TR3, cigarettes, and school. With his internal radar now calmly set on navigating to the Deli, Bo’s mind recalled the phone call from Burn week before last. “It was good to hear from Burn”, he thought to himself, “sounds like he’s having a ball in college; God damn Rebel is back with all those other Rebels.” And he laughed aloud at his private rib.

As the TR3 exited off the Parkway, Bo slowed to pay the toll and then went on toward downtown Quaytown. On his way down Ridge Street, his thoughts turned to the letter he had received from Rafe last week and the letter he had written back to Rafe. “Never thought I’d be writing letters, but it wasn’t that big of a deal. Rafe’s letter was over ten pages, so he must like to write. But it’s good that we can all keep in touch one way or another, and if it means writing an occasional letter then what the Hell...I’m OK with that. I hope Rafe and Hein can get home for Thanksgiving and we can go to the Turkey Day game at QHS – maybe this year they will beat Mason”.

Bo turned the TR3 off Ridge onto Front Street and was immediately shocked to see a police car and an ambulance outside the Deli. He quickly pulled the car over into a parking spot, got out and quickly stepped up the sidewalk to the Deli. “What’s going on?” He asked Patrolman Brody, who he knew.

“I can’t let you in the store, Bo”, the patrolman said officially. “There’s been a shooting”.

“A Shooting? What happened, was it a robbery? Is Joe alright?” Bo asked with great trepidation.

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“Well, since I know you, Bo, and you have worked for Joe for a long time, I suppose I can tell you”, responded Brody.

Now quite fearful, Bo pleadingly asked, “What, What’s happened?” A crowd had already gathered along the sidewalks on both sides of Front Street.

With a look of concern, Brody put his hand on Bo’s shoulder, pulled him aside and said in a quiet voice so that none of the other bystanders who had gathered would hear, “I’m afraid it appears to be a suicide; looks like Joe shot himself in the head. So that’s why I can’t allow you, or anyone, into the store. The coroner and the emergency squad is in their now, taking care of things”.

Bo was absolutely stunned! His mind could not seem to take this in. How could something like this happen? He had seen no evidence that Joe was depressed or seemed worried about anything?

Brody saw the look on Bo’s face and said sympathetically, “Nothing you can do here now; go home Bo; go home”.

Bo felt like he was in a stupor. He turned like a robot and walked back to his car. He didn’t remember driving home, and when he arrived, he was still in disbelief. He told his parents, ignored his mom’s offer of dinner, went to his bedroom, fought away the tears and wrestled with his thoughts until he fell asleep. But just before he fell asleep it occurred to him that he would have to write to Hein to let him know about Joe.

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*Friday morning, October 9, 1959...*

“Cadet Heinrich! Don’t you know how to make a proper bed? Where were you brought up, in a pigsty, you Knob head?” Upperclassman Seth Murray was fairly screaming at James. It was the customary Friday morning room inspection that the upperclassmen held to haze the first year Cadets, who were known as Knob heads because of the close haircuts, although for all-male military schools like the Citadel it was deemed “shaping up” the incoming class. It was part of an overall disciplinary approach intended to break down their individuality in order to meld them into a unified body of classmates and potential future military men; men who would obey orders and someday literally give their lives for their comrades in some war in a distant land.

“No, *Sir!*” barked James back to the upperclassman.

“What do you mean, ‘No Sir’?” yelled Murray who had moved so that his face and the bill of his military cap pushed up within a few inches of James’s face. He had to stand on his toes in

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order to be at the same height as James, who was standing at attention with all the six feet, one inch he could muster.

“No *Sir!* I was not born in a pigsty, *Sir!*” barked back James.

“Well, the way you made that bed sure looks like you were! Three demerits for you Cadet Heinrich! At next week’s room inspection I expect you will learn to make a proper bed – one that I can bounce a quarter off. Is that clear, Knob head Heinrich?” Murray barked with a bit of a sneer curled at one corner of his mouth.

“Yes, *Sir!*” answered James.

“Now that we understand each other, Cadet Heinrich, drop down and give me twenty!” ordered Murray. After James did the twenty pushups, counting each one out, he jumped up and stood at attention. Murray then turned on his heels and marched out of the room with the two other upperclassmen performing the inspection following.

Not until they left and closed the door behind them did James go to at ease and let out a “whew”. He turned to his roommate, fellow Plebe Wally Turrell, who also dropped the attention position and was looking sympathetically toward James. James said, “Damn it to Hell! That’s the first demerits I’ve received.” Then rhetorically he asked, “What the hell is Murray’s problem? That bed is made the same as every other week and it’s tight as a virgin’s pussy!”

“Ah, Murray probably got a ‘Dear John’ letter from his girlfriend and wanted to take it out on somebody”, offered Wally.

“Oh well, nothing I can do about it”, James said resigned, but still annoyed.

“Forget it, Hein”, replied Turrell, “it’s Friday night, let’s go to the Frosty Frog and get a couple of cold beers and something to eat.”

“You go ahead, Wally, I’ve got a letter to write. When I’m done I’ll meet you there. Hopefully if that bag of piss Murray is there, when I get there, he will be in a better frame of mind.”

After Wally left, James sat down at his desk and started to write a letter to Rafe and Bo.

*Hi Bo and Rafe,*

*It was really good to hear from you guys. Your letters came at a welcome time as life in the Citadel is so very different from those high school years and I admit to being a bit homesick remembering the good times we had.*

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*I'm really sad about Joe killing himself—just don't understand it. Why? I keep asking myself that question. Maybe we'll never know, but when something like that happens to someone you think you know so well and never in a thousand years would expect it to occur, it really leaves you with that one question - why the hell did he do it?*

*Life here is OK; I can handle the hazing, but the class work is harder than anything we had in high school. I'm a bit pissed off as I just got my first 3 demerits tonight and the S.O.B. upperclassman, Murray, who gave them to me, had no cause for it; he just wanted to be a prick. I'm going to head down now to the Frosty Frog and get a beer; if I run into that piss-ant Murray, I hope he doesn't give me any shit because I might just haul off and deck him - ah, I know I can't do that because it would screw me good and besides I don't want to give him the satisfaction of getting me suspended or expelled.*

*The other negative is the lack of female companionship. I never thought I'd get so horny, but I woke up after a wet dream the other night, dreaming of doing the horizontal mambo with Sue Barlow. And us Cadets are not even allowed to consort with the few skanks down at the Frosty Frog; if we get caught it's enough demerits to put us on suspension.*

*Oh, about Thanksgiving - I won't be able to get home for that, as we have drills scheduled up until the day before and then again that weekend, so it wouldn't make much sense for me to try to get home and back just for a day.*

*OK, guys, stay in touch, and I hope to get home for Christmas. Maybe we can make a trip to Staten Island then.*

*Your Pal,  
Hein*

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*Saturday afternoon, October 24, 1959...*

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The big Homecoming game was about to go into the fourth quarter with Milton College easily on top of Hiram College by 27 to 3 points. It was no contest. Head Coach Reed turned toward the bench and began picking out several substitutes. When Coach Reed pointed to him, Rafe jumped up, put on his helmet, and fairly flew to the coach's side, the adrenalin coursing through his system like a volcano about to erupt.

Coach Reed put his arm around Rafe's shoulder pads and said with a tone of encouragement, "OK, Cerny, I want you to go in there for Kerry Wilson at the next change of possessions and play defense as the right inside linebacker on the 5-4 and right defensive end on the 6-3. Then on offense you'll play right end. You got that?"

Rafe responded nervously, "Yes, coach, I got it!"

The whistle blew as the clock ran out on the third quarter with Milton on defense after having punted to Hiram. Coach Reed ordered, "Alright, Cerny, get in there and be agile, mobile and hit like a missile!" As he intentionally did in all of his pep talks, Coach Reed placed the emphasis on the last syllable of 'agile, mobile, and missile'; it was one of his pet phrases.

Rafe joined three other substitutes, who had been waiting to go into the game, and the four of them charged onto the field signaling the players they were replacing. Rafe felt like he was gliding on air as he ran to the defensive huddle.

Defensive captain Harold Falco called for a 6-3 defense, with six men on the defensive side of the line of scrimmage, three linebackers about four yards from the scrimmage line, and the two safeties back about ten yards behind the three linebackers. This was typically the call for anticipated running plays, but just in case the opponent tried a passing play, the linebackers and safeties cued on the offensive linemen, and then the quarterback. If the interior offensive linemen stood up instead of charging that was the first clue that it was probably a pass play and the defensive linemen and linebackers would yell out, "Pass! Pass!" to alert the safeties.

The Hiram squad broke the huddle and quickly came up to the line and got into their positions. Rafe was at right end in a crouched position with both arms slightly extended in front of him to ward off any player that might attempt to block him. The offensive halfback on Rafe's side was lined up as an outside flanker, about eight yards to Rafe's right and about three yards back from the line of scrimmage. The left offensive end initially came to the line immediately opposite Rafe, but then he took a side step to Rafe's right and Rafe knew immediately that this guy was attempting to get a better angle to block Rafe. Rafe surmised that the flanker was out there to attack the outside linebacker and that the offensive end was going to try and block Rafe in toward the center. "OK", Rafe said under his breath, "It looks just like that play we saw on the films from one of Hiram's previous games. The quarterback will take the snap from center, fake a handoff to the fullback running up the middle and then hand the ball to the other halfback, who will run around my end".

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Before the Hiram quarterback could set his team, Rafe took a quick side step to his right so that he was now again directly opposite the opposing end's outside shoulder. As the opposing end quickly took another sidestep to Rafe's right, again to get a blocking angle, "I guessed right", Rafe thought to himself with a bit of a smile behind the face mask of his helmet. "I got you now", Rafe said under his breath.

The Hiram quarterback bellowed, "*Set*". Now none of the offensive players could move or they would draw a penalty. Rafe quickly side-stepped once more to the right taking away the angle from his opponent; he was again aligned at the outside shoulder of his opponent. There was now a gap of almost five yards between the tackles and Rafe and his opponent. The quarterback started to call the signals, "*Hut-One*", "*Hut-Two*", *Hut-Three*".

On the third 'Hut' the center snapped the ball to the quarterback. The opposing end had the advantage of knowing the snap count and lunged out toward Rafe. Rafe had been looking down the line from his crouched viewpoint and as soon as the center's hand started to move the ball back between his legs, Rafe used his right arm and hand to push past his opponent, slicing in toward the tackle. The offensive end's lunge out toward where Rafe had been could do nothing to stop Rafe. Rafe shot through the gap that had been opened by both he and his opponent sidestepping. Aside from a slight bump from his contact with the offensive end, Rafe was barely slowed down; he quickly emerged into the backfield and sighted the quarterback handing the ball to the halfback.

With two strides Rafe was almost up to full speed. The halfback had just gotten the handoff and taken one step, when he saw Rafe. Rafe could see the look of surprise in the runner's eyes, the whites of them appearing like two large saucers surrounding the dark pupils. Rafe lowered his shoulders, buried his head into the runner's side and wrapped his arms around the runner's waist, driving his legs to finish off the tackle. "Oomph!" the halfback let out a gasp, as he landed on his back with Rafe on top.

Two more downs netted only seven yards for Hiram and they were forced to punt the ball back to Milton. Rafe played the whole fourth quarter and caught one pass for twelve yards and a first down. The final score was 30 to 3 and Milton was guaranteed a winning season with their record now at 5 wins 3 losses with just two games remaining.

When the clock ran out and the Head Umpire blew the whistle signaling the end of the game, Rafe walked off the field, helmet in hand. He caught up with Ricky Briggs and walked with him to the sideline. "Nice game, today, Rafe", offered Ricky, "That tackle you made on that first play of the fourth quarter was a joy to watch. I heard Coach Reed yelp like a happy puppy when you knifed though and made the tackle for a six yard loss."

"Thanks, Ricky, it felt good to get a clean tackle like that on my first play", responded Rafe. "I'm glad I got to play today".

"Do you have a date for the Homecoming dance tonight?" asked Ricky.



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Rafe sighed and replied, “Nah, I haven’t had much time for dating, what with three-hour afternoon labs twice a week, football practice and games, studying three to four hours a night and Saturday morning classes. Majoring in Physics is tough, and takes a lot of studying. High School was a breeze compared to this. I have a number of students from Ohio and Connecticut in my classes and they seem to have had better preparation in the sciences than we got at Quaytown.”

“Maybe so”, replied Ricky, “I’m glad that I’m majoring in Business Admin. Don’t publicize what I’m about to tell you, but if you join our fraternity next semester, we do have a file of recent mid-term and final exams for a lot of the courses. They can help you get an edge on studying for the tests.” Then he added in a confidential manner, “Heck, sometimes we even get an advanced copy of the actual exam” and he laughed.

“How can you get a copy before the exam”, Rafe asked naively.

Ricky looked around to be sure no one else was in ear shot and with a wink said, “Well, sometimes a professor’s assistant happens to leave a stencil in a garbage pail and one of our brothers just happens to find it before the trash is picked up.”

“Oh”, is all Rafe could say. He had heard stories about cheating in college, but it had never occurred to him that it could be that easy. He and Ricky walked back to the field house, showered and then Rafe went back to the freshman dorm.

On the walk back, Rafe reflected on the past several days of activities in campus life, leading up to Homecoming Weekend. There had been parties thrown by the various Greek Fraternities and Sororities, for returning alumni and other guests. There was the building of floats by each of the Sororities and Fraternities. Through Ricky, Rafe had been invited to help in the building of the Delta Kappa Delta float that was built at a barn on a farm out of town owned by an alumnus and former Delta Kappa.

But the most interesting event to Rafe was the Sorority Serenade on Wednesday night, where each of the Sororities put up a candidate for Homecoming Queen and made the rounds of the Fraternity Houses and the dorms, performing a serenade presenting their candidate. Each Sorority had a unique theme; one Rafe especially like was based on the book and movie, “The World of Suzie Wong”.

Then on Thursday, the campus voted on who would be Homecoming Queen for the Homecoming parade and game on Saturday. This year’s queen was from the Chi Zeta Sorority. She was decked out in a tight fitting white sequined gown complete with arm length white gloves and the proverbial bouquet of red roses. She sat up on the rear seat of a white 1958 Buick convertible, along with the guy who was President of the Student Body They were in the last vehicle in the parade of floats that traveled through the main streets around the campus and on into the athletic stadium. There was a ceremony during halftime, but the football team was in the field house and was oblivious to it.

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As he walked up the steps to the dorm, Rafe felt contented, but a bit tired as his body was feeling the aches and bruises from the game. "Well", he thought, "that's the third varsity game I've gotten in; not bad for a freshman. One thing's for sure, not only is there more studying involved in college, but football is definitely a step up with the players generally bigger and stronger." He was still debating whether he should have taken the invitation to tryout as a pitcher with the baseball Dodgers at the end of August, but he couldn't have done that and come out to Milton for football camp. He decided that he might never know if he made the right decision, especially since the Brooklyn Dodgers were now the Los Angeles Dodgers.

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*Friday Evening, November 27, 1959...*

Rafe was relating how he had taken his first ever airplane flight to get home for the Thanksgiving holiday, flying from Ohio to Newark Airport in an Alleghany Airlines twin turbine prop plane that seats 30 people, when on the radio, tuned to WABC AM, came the following song...

*Our guardian star lost all his glow  
The day that I lost you  
He lost all his glitter the day you said, no  
And his silver turned to blue  
Like him, I am doubtful that your love is true  
But if you decide to call on me  
Ask for Mr. Blue*

*I'm Mr. Blue (wah-a-wah-oooh)  
When you say you love me (ah, Mr. Blue)  
Then prove it by goin' out on the sly  
Provin' your love isn't true  
Call me Mr. Blue*

*I'm Mr. Blue (wah-a-wah-oooh)  
When you say you're sorry (ah, Mr. Blue)  
Then turn around, head for the lights of town  
Hurtin' me through and through  
Call me Mr. Blue*

*I stay at home at night (I stay at home)  
Right by the phone at night (right by the phone)  
But you won't call*

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*And I-I won't hurt my pride (call me Mr. Blue)*

*I won't tell you (wah-a-wah-oooh)  
Why you paint the town (ah, Mr. Blue)  
A bright red to turn it upside down  
I'm paintin' it too  
But I'm paintin' it blue  
Call me Mr. Blue (wah-a-wah-oooh)  
Call me Mr. Blue (wah-a-wah-oooh)*

“That song really gets to me. Damn it all! I really screwed up. I really liked them both so much, but I still can’t decide whether I’d rather be with Cathy or Martha. I’m really sad that I lost both of them,” Bo was relating his sense of misery as the song “Mr. Blue” by the Fleetwoods ended on the radio.

Rafe was driving his parents ’56 Ford with Bo, Nathan and Jimmy Barrone as passengers. They had just come up the shallow hill on Front Street into the center of downtown Quaytown. Nathan and Jimmy were in the back seat. When Rafe heard what Bo had said he looked over at him and saw that Bo had slid down in the seat so that his knees were up against the dash board. His arms were folded in front of him. Like Bo, Rafe and Jimmy were wearing their jackets that they were given by the Quaytown Mothers’ Club for winning the Seacoast Baseball Championship last spring. They each had their varsity letters sewn on the front. Nathan was wearing a three-quarter length car coat. It was cool out this evening, so the car heater was on despite the fact that they all wore sweaters under their jackets.

Rafe still carried feelings for Cathy, although he had finally realized that it could never be. Despite that he felt some empathy for his friend Bo, plus he was curious. He asked, “Let’s say you had to make a choice, Bo. What did you like most about each of them? And what did you like the least?”

“Well, let me think”, Bo responded as he looked up at the roof of the car, obviously trying to delve into his feelings. About thirty seconds passed when Bo sat up, turned in his seat, looked over at Rafe and said, “Cathy is more of an extemporaneous girl, lots of fun to be with, outgoing personality, and great at making out; but she likes to play the field and has had a lot of boyfriends. On the other hand Martha is more serious, not as uninhibited or ‘experienced’ as Cathy, and she and I are both Italian and Catholic; so if I were looking at it from which one would I most like to marry I’d pick Martha.” Then as if to lessen the impact of that observation, Bo said with more emphasis, “But not that I’m saying I *want* to get married, just that *if* I were, I’d prefer it was Martha”.

From the back seat, Jimmy laughed and said, “So, you’d like to bang Cathy, but have little Orechios with Martha?”

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That cracked up the four of them. Still laughing, Bo added, “I guess that about sums it up, Jimmy”.

Several minutes passed and by now they had driven out of the downtown Quaytown area, when the conversation turned to yesterday’s Thanksgiving Day game. Rafe initiated it by observing, “I’m glad we got to see Quaytown beat Mason yesterday. That fifty-five yard pass from Bradley to Hearn was a beauty. It was the old 57 play we used to run; the offensive line gave Bradley enough time to look downfield and pass to Hearn and then Hearn ran right past the safety for the TD.”

From the back, Jimmy laughed and interjected, “Yeah, last year with me playing center and that big Mason guy running over me, I’d turn around and see Bo either running for his life or flat on his ass; he’d either have gotten rid of the ball too soon or had to eat it for a sack.”

“Yeah, I took my lumps in more than a few games. At first I thought you guys on the offensive line were pissed off at me for something, then I realized you guys couldn’t block my grandmother; the front line was like a sieve unless I made a good fake on a play action pass play,” Bo responded jokingly, turning around towards the rear.

“What’d you want from a center that only weighed 145 pounds?” laughed Jimmy.

“But the game programs had you listed at 155 pounds”, Bo responded sarcastically.

Rafe jumped in smiling, “You know that’s because Coach Ruffy always added five to ten pounds and an inch or two for all of us.”

“Yeah, I know. Tell me about it,” Bo laughed back.

“I thought we were talking about this year’s football team, not you losers from last year,” Nathan, who had been silently listening to the banter, chimed in with an attempt at sarcastic humor.

“Ah, now Nathan, you know we would have won last year if that referee hadn’t blown the call when we scored a touchdown,” Rafe replied. “But it sure was cold up in the stands and I was glad you brought that pint of blackberry brandy.”

“Damn right,” Bo followed, “that warmed me up enough to handle the cold!”

Nathan interjected, “I was happy to oblige. It sure was freakin’ cold when the wind blew into the stands. I only regret that I didn’t wear two pairs of socks.”

“Yeah, well we should have said something to you about that. We are used to wearing two pairs for football games – cuts down on the blisters when you’re wearing those cleats”, offered Bo.

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“So, did everyone have a hearty Thanksgiving meal after the game?” asked Jimmy.

“Damned if I didn’t stuff my face like there was no tomorrow”, Bo responded, “I don’t think I’ll eat for a week”.

“Yeah, I overdid the seconds and the pumpkin pie”, Rafe offered.

No one realized that Nathan did not offer a reply. It just didn’t occur to them that Nathan, living in the more or less segregated Negro section of Quaytown, in a small ran-shackled cottage, perhaps did not have a multi-course Thanksgiving dinner with all of the trimmings.

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*Saturday Evening, November 28, 1959...*

The weather warmed up a bit this night, with temps in the mid-forties. Bo was riding down Ridge Street in his cousin Dom’s ’53 Mercury. They were heading toward the center of Quaytown planning on stopping at Stosh’s diner for coffee and a donut, when Bo spotted Mary Lou Walsh walking her dog in the same direction. Mary Lou had a reputation as a “fast” girl. She was a senior at QHS now.

“Stop!” Bo ordered his cousin. “Quick, pull over to the curb by that girl walking the dog.”

“What the...?” responded Dom. But he caught Bo’s urgency and pulled over ahead of Mary Lou.

Bo, smoking a cigarette, rolled down the partially open window all the way and leaned out to signal Mary Lou to stop for a conversation.

“Hi there, Mary Lou, what are you up to tonight?” asked Bo in a friendly, but insinuating voice. He threw out the remains of his cigarette into the gutter.

“Oh, Hi Bo, I didn’t know it was you at first. I thought it might be some creep trying to pick me up”, replied Mary Lou matter-of-factly. Then she came over closer to the car and smiled at Bo, pulling her dog by the leash toward the car. “I was just walking my dog, Betsy, and then going home. What are you two doing, tonight? Just cruisin’ around?”

Bo said nonchalantly, “We were headed for Stosh’s diner. But now that I’ve seen you I’d much rather you got in the car and let’s play a little”.

“Oh, Bo, don’t get fresh!” Mary Lou responded with mock annoyance. “I really do have to get home.”

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“But just for a little while?” Bo asked in a coy appeal.

Mary Lou hesitated a bit then replied somewhat uncertainly, “Oh, that might be nice, but really I should be getting on home, and besides I have Betsy here. She might get nervous in your friend’s car, and who is he anyway. I don’t think I know him.”

“Oh, this is my cousin, Dom. He’s a real nice guy. If you come into the car, he’ll watch your dog,” Bo pressed his case. He offered her a cigarette, but she shook her head “No”.

“Ah, I still don’t know. I don’t think I should”, Mary Lou said cautiously, “besides, where would we go, and how long? Because my parents will be worried if I’m out too long,”

“We’ll just go over to the floor tile factory where it’s quiet and private. I won’t keep you long. You can be home before your parents get concerned,” Bo said encouragingly.

Mary Lou said thoughtfully, “Uh, maybe I shouldn’t.” Then she shrugged her shoulders and lowered her voice so that only Bo would hear, simultaneously tugging on the impatient dog’s leash who was trying to pull away, “Maybe if you were by yourself?”

“Like I said”, Bo responded with a bit more urgency, “Dom will watch your dog when we get there, and it will actually only be the two of us in the car.”

“Oh, I just don’t know”, Mary Lou said hesitantly.

Now Bo was getting impatient. “Listen to me”, he said softly but with a commanding tone, “You either get in the car, or I’ll hurt Betsy.”

“You wouldn’t!” Mary Lou said in disbelief.

Bo got out of the car and opened the rear passenger side door. “Do you want to try me?” Bo said with a smile, trying to soften the threat somewhat.

At that Mary Lou somewhat grudgingly got into the back seat with her dog and Bo slid in beside her. Dom knowingly drove the few blocks to a street that dead-ended at the closed metal gate entrance to the floor tile factory. It was a favorite parking spot for kids, as there were no houses within two blocks and quite dark except for one light that shown on the entrance, but not out toward the street. Once parked, Dom dutifully opened the rear door, took Betsy’s leash from Mary Lou and began walking the dog up the street away from the factory.

Twenty minutes later, Mary Lou put her panties and pedal pusher pants back on, refastened her bra and pulled her sweater down and smoothed her hair. She looked over at Bo, who was zipping up the fly on his Levis and straightening his v-neck pullover. “You know, Bo”, Mary Lou said softly, “I always wondered what it would be like to do it with you, and it was

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really nice. You were such a catch in high school and now that you've graduated, I bet a lot of the girls would still like to go out with you."

"Thank you. I enjoyed it tonight, too. Now we should bring you back so you can get home before your parents get worried", Bo responded. Bo stepped out of the car and waived Dom back. Dom had been hanging back about a half block away and came quickly back with the dog, who was very happy to get back in the car with Mary Lou, licking her face and wagging its tail.

Several minutes later they dropped off Mary Lou and Betsy where they had picked her up on Ridge Street. Bo didn't get out of the car, just rolled down the window and stuck his head out to say good night. Mary Lou leaned over from the curb and gave Bo a kiss. "Do you think we could do this again, Bo?" she asked almost wistfully, as if sensing that the answer might be one that she didn't want to hear.

"Maybe", Bo responded non-committing, "Like I told you, I'm just finishing up courses at Newark Prep and have been accepted at Queens College in Pennsylvania for the Spring Semester. So, I probably won't be home very much." Then seeing the look of disappointment on her face, "But when I'm home I will definitely look for you walking your dog. Okay?"

"Okay, Bo, good luck in school. You're a great guy." Mary Lou said, turned and walked away.

"Bo?" Dom said quietly as they watched Mary Lou walk away, "I may be your cousin, and I love you as a cousin, but don't do that to me again. I don't want to be your whore master. Next time I get some of the action, or I don't play."

"Sorry, Dom, I would have invited you for sloppy seconds, but I got the feeling she wouldn't go for it", Bo answered. "She'll be around. You can pick up by yourself sometime."

"Hmmpf!" Dom replied, "I just may take a shot at that; although I probably don't have your gift of bullshit." And they both chuckled at that remark.

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*Saturday Evening, December 26, 1959...*

Earle was home for the Christmas holiday. His parents had moved to Old Hickory, TN while Earle was partying away at LSC. It was semester break, and the fall semester was history. Earle would not be going back – he had passed a total of six credits out of eighteen.

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While his parents were somewhat disappointed, they tried hard not to show it to him. They understood he was still younger than most boys who entered college and were proud that at least he had gotten a taste of college, something his dad and mom hadn't had the luxury to attain. Besides, they sensed that Earle was bright enough to make it, if and when he was ready to try again. Meanwhile they were just happy to have him back with them. He would get a job and earn his keep until he was ready to try again.

For his part Earle was a bit down on himself. To assuage his conscience, and to divert himself from dwelling on his own disappointment, he preferred to remember some less painful events from his freshman college days that were indelibly etched in his memory. Like passing his seventeenth birthday getting shit-faced in that bar in Baton Rouge. Like watching and wondering if his hair would grow back after having to shave it off upon his first day on campus. It was part of the ritual freshman hazing that took place on just about every college campus in 1959. Like the friends he did make and the nights of partying and his walk-on tryout for one of the biggest and best college football teams, known nationally for their history and excellence in the sport.

But he couldn't help the thought that maybe if he had applied himself more, if he had taken up with another student who would have been a better influence, he might have passed more of his courses and would have been going back after semester break was over. He didn't know then, but it would be more than a year before he'd be ready to give college another shot. Like a lot of young men coming out of high school, who in those days were shy and more innocent than not, he needed some time to grow up.

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That same night, James was driving his dad's car to pick up Rafe. He had already picked up Bo. He was feeling somewhat ambivalent. On the one the hand he was sort of proud of how he looked in his military school uniform. He smiled to himself remembering how he looked in the mirror at home in full blue-grey woolen military dress. The Eisenhower style jacket, with a tight Nehru like collar and tails down the rear, had embroidered black striping embossed in seven rows across the chest with three columns of brass buttons aligned on the rows of black striping – one column down the center that were actual buttons that kept the tunic closed and a column of sewed on buttons down each side of the chest at the ends of the rows of striping. The pants had creases that any tailor would be proud of with a light blue stripe down the sides. Then there were the finishing touches of the white gloves and the hat with the chin strap that sat across the front of the chin.

On the other hand he knew he had to make a decision and it had to be soon. But he shook off the thought and brought himself back to the situation at hand. They would pick up Rafe and then they would head over to Staten Island to sort of celebrate their getting together again after these four months. They were still well under twenty-one so Staten Island it was, and besides it had become kind of a ritual since their senior year in high school.



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Bo was saying something, which brought James out of his reverie. "...so Hein, how did your first semester at the Citadel go? I must say you look impressive in that uniform."

"I managed OK", James replied in a subdued voice. "It's not exactly what I expected. I mean the studies, not the military aspects...that I like, but the course work is a bit much. I don't think Quaytown High School was enough preparation, you know what I mean?"

"Yeah, I think so", Bo agreed. "In my case I just didn't take enough College Prep courses, and that's why I just finished taking additional courses at Newark Prep. Plus there was that one spring session in Quaytown when I got a bad grade. But at least the good news is that I have been accepted at Queens College for the Spring System."

"Way to go, Bo!" replied James, happy for his friend.

A few minutes later they pulled up outside Rafe's house. "You go to the door and I'll stay in the car", Bo said, "I want Rafe to see you in the uniform when he opens the door. Oh, and don't forget the hat!"

James walked up the sidewalk to the front door of Rafe's house and pushed the white button to ring the bell. He only had to wait a minute before it was opened by Rafe who nodded for him to step into the living room. The look on Rafe's face was one of amazement. It was all James could do to keep a straight, serious face. Rafe's parents welcomed James and they showed their approval for his appearance.

"Holy cow, Hein, you must have grown two inches since I last saw you!" Rafe finally said, still appreciating how James looked in the military garb.

"Aw, it's more that I learned how to square my shoulders and stand up straight", responded James self-effacingly.

"Well, whatever, you sure look good," Rafe said. With that they said their goodbyes to Rafe's parents and went to join Bo in the car, Rafe getting into the back seat.

"So what do you think of our man, 'General Heinrich?'" asked Bo as they pulled away from Rafe's house.

"I'm absolutely impressed! Damned if he isn't two inches taller and more sharp looking than I've ever seen him", Rafe answered Bo, leaning forward and giving James a couple of congratulatory taps on the shoulder.

"I thought we'd go to the Totten Villa tavern on the Island tonight. OK with you, Bo and Rafe?" James inquired as they headed up the highway toward the Parkway.

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Bo and Rafe both agreed and they were on their way. The three of them had a rollicking evening, swapping stories of the events of the past four months, drinking beer (James as the driver nursed three drafts), sharing a pizza, and by the time they headed back to New Jersey, each of them felt as if it was like old times.

Later that night, James made his decision. He would not be going back to the Citadel. “No, I think I’ll join the Marines”, he decided as he drifted off to sleep.

## **Beach Party Days: Chapter 13**

*Events: Spring Semester 1960...*

On January 3 - U.S. Senator John F. Kennedy (D-MA) announced that he is a candidate for the Democratic nomination for President of the U.S. On January 9, construction began on the Aswan Dam in Egypt to harness power from the Nile. On January 24, a major insurrection began in Algeria against French Colonial policy.

On February 1, In Greensboro, North Carolina, four black students from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University began a sit-in at a segregated Woolworth's lunch counter. Although they were refused service, they were allowed to stay at the counter. The event triggered many similar nonviolent protests throughout the Southern United States, and six months later the original four protesters are served lunch at the same counter. On February 9, Actress Joanne Woodward received the first star on the new Hollywood Walk of Fame. On that same day Adolph Coors III, Chairman of the Board of Coors Brewery Company was kidnapped for a ransom of \$500,000; he was later found dead. On February 13, France tested its first atomic bomb in the Sahara desert.

On March 3, Elvis Presley returned home from Germany after serving two years. On March 6, the U.S. announced that 3,500 troops will be sent to Vietnam. On March 17, 1960, the Eisenhower administration agreed to a recommendation from the CIA to equip and drill Cuban exiles for action against the new Castro government. Eisenhower stated that it was the policy of the U.S. government to aid anti-Castro guerilla forces. The CIA began to recruit and train antiCastro forces in the Sierra Madre Mountains on the Pacific coast of Guatemala.

On March 21, under Apartheid in South Africa, the Afrikaner police opened fire on unarmed black South African demonstrators, killing 69 and wounding 180 in the Sharpeville massacre. On March 22, the first patent for a laser was granted to Arthur Leonard Schawlow and Charles Hard Townes.

On April 1, the U.S. launched its first weather satellite, TIROS-1. On April 4, the first three female priests were ordained in Sweden. On April 27, Togo received its independence from the French administered UN trusteeship.

On May 1, A Soviet missile shot down an American Lockheed U2 spy plane; the pilot Francis Gary Powers was captured; later on the 16<sup>th</sup> at the Big Four Summit in Paris, Nikita Krushchev demanded an apology from President Eisenhower. On May 6, President Eisenhower signed the Civil Rights Act of 1960 into law. On May 9, the FDA approved the sale of the birth control pill. On May 9, the nuclear submarine USS *Nautilus* completed the first underwater circumnavigation of the Earth. On May 11, four Israeli Mossad agents abducted fugitive Nazi Adolph Eichmann in Buenos Aires and brought the war criminal back for sentencing.

On June 15, violent demonstrations at Tokyo University resulted in 182 arrests, 589 injuries. On June 30, the Belgian Congo gained independence from Belgium; civil war followed.

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*Wednesday evening, May 10, 1960...*

*Scotch and soda, mud in your eye.  
Baby, do I feel high,  
Oh, me, oh, my. Do I feel high.  
Dry martini, jigger of gin.  
Oh, what a spell you've got me in,  
oh, my. Do I feel high.  
People won't believe me.  
They'll think that I'm just braggin'.  
But I could feel the way I do  
and still be on the wagon.*

All I need is one of your smiles.  
Sunshine of your eyes, oh,  
me, oh, my. Do I feel high.

The Kingston Trio's song, Scotch and Soda was playing on the radio. Bo's sister Mary Ann was listening to it while drying the dinner dishes. Bo was sitting at the kitchen table at home in Quaytown, writing a letter to Rafe and James...

*Hi guys,*

I'm writing this from home because I've had to drop out of Queen's College due to some weird stomach ailment called colitis. Never heard of this thing, but it acts like diarrhea, only it goes on and on for days at a time. The doctor at the school infirmary put me on various medicines, but after two weeks, told me to go home. Our family doctor diagnosed it and now has me on some new medicine that finally seems to be working, but I barely passed the midterms and now I'm too far behind to catch up with the finals starting in a couple weeks. I'm disappointed, but oh, well, that's the way it goes; not much I can do about it; just need to get better and look for work and maybe go back in the Fall.

There was one wild thing that happened when I first went up to Queens in Pennsylvania. Jimmy Barrone and Tim Longly drove me up to school in Tim's car and the fog was so dense when we hit the Pocono Mountains, you could not see more than 20 feet ahead. So Jimmy said, "Stop the Car" and he got out and sat on the hood of the car and gave Tim hand signals. I thought I was going to have a heart attack. All I could think of was Jimmy sliding off the car and the car rolling over him, or that a truck would plow into us. Fortunately, the fog cleared after we got down the other side of the mountain and nothing bad happened.

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It was good to see Rafe over Spring Break. He came home from Milton and we got together with Nathan on a couple trips to the Island. But Jimmy Barrone wound up in the hospital with mono. Rafe, Nathan and I went to visit him at Riverside Hospital. Apparently he was overdoing things; two jobs, basketball and a high class load at Glenboro. At the hospital we saw his sister, Margie. God damn, but she is sweet looking; pretty face, dimpled cheeks, great smile and what a nice set of tits. It's really hard to keep your eyes from staring at her chest.

Rafe and I were thinking back to a joke Hein told us about playing windshield wipers across a gal's chest.

I heard from Burn the other day – he called; he sends his regards. He's working in an auto store – seems like a decent job what with how he loves cars. Says he's not dating anyone, so he's getting lots of practice with 'Mary Hand'. I kidded him about that, told him he needs to get some wet pussy so he can experience the real thing and not wind up as the world's oldest male virgin. Back in March, Burn had come up to visit with me for a weekend at Queens College from Tennessee. My roommate went home for the weekend and Burn stayed in my dorm room. We went out to the local pub and both of us got shit-faced.

Hein, I still can't get over you leaving the Citadel and joining the Marines back in January. I hope the duty down there in Camp Lejeune isn't as tough as boot camp on Parris Island, where the drill sergeant had you crawling through the mud and swamps. I guess by now you will be getting assigned somewhere else soon, if you haven't already. Let us know where you're going to wind up or where you may have already been reposted. I'm guessing the Marines will forward this to you wherever you are. I am betting our country is in good hands if the rest of the marines are like you.

Well, that's about it for now. My sister, Mary Ann, is finished with the dishes and wants me to get out of the kitchen so she can wipe down the table. She's giving me that look of hers which says she's getting annoyed. Got to Go. Keep in touch.

Your Pal,  
Bo

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*Saturday Evening, May 24, 1960...*

Upon his return at the end of the spring semester in late May, Rafe announced to his parents that he would not be going back in the fall for the sophomore year. He had told his parents that he wanted to work for a year to earn some money in order to help pay for some of his college expenses. It was not exactly a lie, after all his parents had taken out a loan to pay for his first year and were prepared to do so again for each subsequent year. Rafe knew that it was a burden on his folks and a part of him felt like he should help out some.

But that wasn't the whole story, he would admit under questioning. The fact was that he was somewhat disappointed in himself. In the first semester he had made the Dean's List with better than a grade point of 3.0, the equivalent of a 'B' average. He did that while playing football. In the Spring semester, while joining the Delta Kappa Sigma fraternity and playing on

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the varsity baseball team, his grades went down to where he earned a measly 'D' in three of his classes. He barely avoided being put on academic probation.

In attempting to understand why he had let down, it dawned on him that he had spent much too much time and effort experiencing the fraternity life and not enough on studies; and yet the studies had become a real challenge, much harder in the spring semester, than in the fall semester. Basically he just gave up and decided that he was not cut out for becoming an electrical engineer. So, if that course of study was out, then what did he want to do? Here then was his dilemma – he had not as yet figured out what different course of study he wanted to attempt. Thus, his decision to drop out a year, find work to earn some money, and moreover to “find himself”.

Like Earle, Rafe was a bit naïve and were the first in their families to even go on to college; in Rafe's case that included myriads of cousins, many of whom were younger and perhaps looking to Rafe to set the example. Both had no siblings on whom to draw for comparison of attitudes, ambitions, and plain old communication. And like Earle's parents, Rafe's mom and dad were supportive and hid well any disappointment they had.

At about 5:00 PM the phone rang in Rafe's house. Rafe was in his room listening to some 45's on his phonograph. His mom called to him to say that James was on the phone, so Rafe went out to the kitchen, picked up the phone and said, “Hey, Hein, what's up? Where are you calling from?”

Over the connection, James responded, “Hi Rafe. Guess what? I'm home on two weeks leave before I have to report back to the barracks in D.C. If you're up for it, Bo and I are going to cruise around tonight – scapping for babes; we can pick you up. What do you say?”

“Whoa, Hein”, Rafe replied, “first off, did you say D.C.? I thought you were stationed at Lejuene?”

“I was, but I've been reposted to D.C. I'll explain when I see you later, that is, if you're in”, James answered.

“I'm in! What time will you be here?” Rafe queried, only too glad for the opportunity to get out of the house. His attitude was swiftly on the upswing; he had been feeling a bit morose about dropping out of college.

“We'll be there about 7:00 PM, OK?” James said.

“OK, I'll be ready”, Rafe responded and hung up.

“What was that all about?” asked Rafe's mom, Millie, still the involved parent. Rick, Rafe's father, had gotten out of his chair to listen in as well.

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“Oh, just that Hein and Bo are coming by at 7:00 tonight and we’re going out to just drive around some.” Rafe was still a bit uneasy about being too candid with his parents about some of his activities.

“Well, how is Bo feeling? Has he gotten over that stomach problem?” queried Mrs. Cerny.

“Yeah, he said he’s fully recovered and feels back to normal,” replied Rafe.

“Oh, good; I’m happy for Bo”, his mom said with a smile. “OK, but don’t be too late.” And then as almost an after-thought, “We trust you won’t get into any trouble.” Rafe’s father nodded.

“Not to worry, Mom and Dad, we are just going to drive around and catch up. Hein is home on leave from the Marines. We haven’t seen him in months”, Rafe said to placate any concerns his parents might have.

A few minutes after 7:00 James drove up to Rafe’s house and he and Bo came to the door. Rafe had been watching for them and had the door ajar as they came up the walk. When they entered the living room, Rafe’s mom gave them both a hug and his dad shook their hands.

Rafe’s dad said, “Bo, I want you to know that I used to see some of your high school baseball games and I think you should have gotten a scholarship. You were a great catcher.”

“Gee, thanks, Mr. Cerny, that’s really nice to hear”, Bo replied pleased by the compliment, yet a bit embarrassed.

“Well, I mean it”, Mr. Cerny replied.

“You all look so handsome”, Rafe’s mom said earnestly, “now go have a good time, but please drive safe.”

“We will”, answered James. And the three young men left, Bo in the front passenger seat and Rafe in the rear.

As they drove away, Rafe couldn’t hold his curiosity any longer. “OK, Hein, now fill me in on why you are being reposted to D.C.?”

James glanced at Rafe in the rear view mirror, as he turned off Rafe’s street, and said not without a touch of satisfaction, “I’ve been picked to be in the Marine Ceremonial Guard, which is more commonly called the ‘Honor Guard’, which means I get to be a military guard for a lot of the politicians and whoever is in the White House.”

“No shit!” Rafe exclaimed. “Why, that’s fantastic! You must be proud as hell of that. And your parents must be thrilled, too.”

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“Yeah, all of that”, replied James, modestly.

Bo turned partly around in the front seat and said sincerely, “God damn, but it’s good to see one of us get that kind of honor. I know I’m proud of you, Hein!” Then to make light of the situation, he added after a brief pause, “You can come guard me anytime, Hein, and I know that I will feel as safe as a baby in his mother’s arms.” That brought a laugh from the three of them.

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*Saturday Evening, June 4, 1960...*

*(Now and then there's a fool such as I)  
Pardon me, if I'm sentimental  
When we say goodbye  
Don't be angry with me should I cry  
When you're gone, yet I'll dream  
A little dream as years go by  
Now and then there's a fool such as I*

*Now and then there's a fool such as I am over you  
You taught me how to love  
And now you say that we are through  
I'm a fool, but I'll love you dear  
Until the day I die  
Now and then there's a fool such as I*

The Elvis song, “Now and Then There’s a Fool Such As I” was playing on the juke box. Rafe was sitting in a booth across from Jack Pauley. They were drinking cokes with French fries and smoking Tarreyton cigarettes, the ones advertised on TV showing a guy with a black eye saying, “I’d rather fight than switch.” Jack had taken up smoking when he went off to Glenboro College in the fall, but Rafe had never smoked until a few weeks ago, after returning home from Milton College. Inhaling still made him a bit dizzy. Rafe had told Jack about seeing James when he was home on leave and how James had been chosen for the Honor Guard. He had also admitted that he wasn’t too happy with his second semester grades and that he was going to take a year off and work. Then he went silent for a couple of minutes, dwelling on his feelings of disappointment.

“I’m not going back to college, either”, announced Jack, “I’ve decided it’s just a waste of time. They can’t teach me anything I can’t learn on my own by just reading.”

Jack’s words shook Rafe out of his reverie, “So, what do you plan to do this summer and come September?” Rafe queried.



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Jack looked up at the ceiling pensively as he exhaled smoke rings and replied with a shrug of his shoulders, "I think I'll just bum around for the summer; maybe hang out at the pool in Kingsboro. And I'll borrow my mom's Ford whenever I want to cruise around looking for some available snatch who might want some lovin'. Then after the summer, I'll think about getting a job."

Rafe absorbed Jack's reply, and then added, "My folks had a contact from Tom's Tavern and I'll be learning to drive a Mr. Softee ice cream truck for the summer. And I saw in the Quaytown Weekly that a baseball team is being formed in Holmvale, so I'm going to try out for them. They're called the Darts".

"Good for you. As for me, I've had it with sports; tried some basketball at Glenboro on the Junior Varsity, and it was not very fulfilling", Jack added with the corner of his mouth curled up in his customary smirk.

"Ok, Jack, I'm heading home. I've got a training session with one of the owners of that Mr. Softee business tomorrow and I'm supposed to start on Monday with one of the other drivers showing me the route and giving me pointers." Rafe said as he crushed out his cigarette and slid out of the booth. The two of them said goodnight and went their separate ways.

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*Saturday Afternoon, July 16, 1960...*

The "Theme from a Summer Place" was playing on the portable transistor radio that Bo brought to the beach at Sea Bright. Bo, Rafe, James and Nathan were camped out on a couple of blankets that they had spread on the sand, conveniently positioned halfway between the surf and one of the three watering holes that attracted local crowds and visitors alike from among the beach goers. The bar that was the easiest of the three to get served under age was the Danish Hop. It was also the one where a number of older guys and gals from Quaytown frequented.

Bo and Nathan had driven down to Rafe's house in Bo's blue, two-seater TR3. Rafe had driven the three of them to the beach at Sea Bright in the green 1951 Hudson Hornet that Rafe's dad had recently bought for him from a fellow worker for fifty dollars. They were totally amazed when James had showed up and walked up to them on the beach.

"Ten-Hut!" James barked at the three of them in a mock call to attention, as he stood over the blanket.

"What the hell? How did you get here?" asked a surprised Bo.

"How did you know we were here?" asked Nathan.

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James answered, “First I called Bo’s house and his brother, Chet, said that Bo had left in his car, but he didn’t know where he went. Then I called Rafe’s house and Mrs. Cerny said that the three of you had just left to go to the beach. So, I borrowed the family car and voila, here I am.”

“Hein, it’s great to see you!” Rafe said to James. “But how’d you manage to get home from D.C? And when do you have to be back?”

“Well, when I got the word that I could get a three day pass, right after duty yesterday afternoon, I got my ass in gear, picked up a duffel bag and a cardboard sign that said ‘New Jersey’, that I had previously prepared, got a ride to the highway with a local jar head, and stuck out my thumb. Six hours later I was dropped off at the Quaytown diner and walked home from there.”

“Six hours from D.C. hitchhiking? Wow! That must be a record,” Rafe exclaimed. “As I remember when we went to D.C. on the senior trip, the bus ride was over four hours.”

“Well, I guess when you’re wearing a Marine uniform, and you stick out your thumb near the camp, it’s a cinch. The uniform acts like flypaper; who wouldn’t feel safe picking up a U.S. Fighting Marine?” James responded with a laugh.

“Yeah, and you don’t have to worry about some homo picking you up”, interjected Bo. And they all laughed.

“Are you still playing baseball this summer, Rafe?” asked James, who was always a big baseball fan and followed his Phillies relentlessly.

Rafe responded, “Nope. I played six games with the Holmvale Darts and in the sixth game, the coach ended the season for us. He is an Old Italian farmer from Holmvale who started the team so that his fifteen year old son would have a team to play on. The man was a bit whacky and had yelled at umpires in every game when they made a call against the team and especially against his son. Then in that last game he argued a call that was obvious to everyone else the right call by the umpire. But ole’ ‘Lefty’ as we knick named him pulled our team off the field in protest. We wound up forfeiting the game and half the team felt that it was the last straw and up and quit. Bye, bye team!”

“Damn shame!” James said and after a brief pause on request from Bo, he began to relate some stories about boot camp on Parris Island and his months at Lejuene before being stationed in D.C.

“Ok, enough with the war stories”, interjected Nathan. “Anyone else thirsty? I’m going to the Hop for a beer. Since we can’t drink on the beach, who’s going with me?”

Bo and Rafe jumped up from the blanket and collectively said “Count me in”.

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“I’m game”, added James. And the four of them walked barefoot over the hot sand to the back door of the Hop. As they entered through the rear screen door they heard the ending of “Only the Lonely (Know How I Feel)” playing on the juke box, the new hit from Roy Orbison...

*...(Dum, dum, dum, dumdy-do, ah)  
(Whoa, yeah, yeah, yeah-yaa)  
(Oh, whoa, whoa, whoa-oow, ah-ah)  
(Only the lonely)  
(Only the lonely)*

*Only the lonely  
Know the heartaches I've been through  
Only the lonely know I cry and cry for you  
May be tomorrow  
A new romance  
No more sorrow  
But that's the chance  
You've gotta take  
If you're lonely heartbreak  
Only the lonely*

Nathan led the way to four empty seats on the right side of the bar and the four of them pulled up bar stools, took off their sunglasses and put them down on the bar along with their wallets. The bar maid, Vivian, who was called Vi, came over. “What’ll y’all have?”

Four beers were ordered and served in the typical eight ounce bar glasses with their fluted, tapered cylinder forms and a donut shaped bottom. The four of them had chatted for a while over several beers, when another patron across the way began talking about politics. They didn’t know his name, but he was telling Vi, the bar maid, that he was disappointed that a Catholic had been nominated for President at the Democratic National Convention earlier that week on July 11. He was ardently trying to make a case that a Roman Catholic could not win, since there had never been a Catholic President. For her part, Vi seemed unconvinced and responded several times that the young senator from Massachusetts was a dashing, handsome man with a lovely wife and attractive family.

“Hey, Bo, are you catching what that guy is saying?” asked James, who was sitting next to Bo, but not too loudly, so as to avoid getting brought into any argument with the guy across the way. “Of the four of us, you are the only Catholic; do you think a Catholic could be elected President?”

Bo thought for a second, then shrugged his shoulders and answered, “You know, Hein, I hadn’t thought about it much and this is not the first I’ve heard about it. My sister has been talking about it at home non-stop. She’s all excited about it, but my mom and dad are somewhat reserved. Personally I don’t see why a Catholic couldn’t win, if he’s the best candidate. Me, I’m

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for the best candidate.” Bo was being circumspect, since only Nathan was old enough to vote or drink in New Jersey and he did not want a slip of the tongue to bring attention to the fact that three of them were not yet twenty-one.

After the fourth round of beers, the four of them left a tip and walked back to the beach. A dip in the ocean, with the water temperature still on the cool side, shocked away any effect of the alcohol. As the afternoon wore down and the sun had deepened the tans on all but Nathan, who they joked with as being already dark, it became time to leave the beach and head home for the usual Saturday family dinner.

This was the fourth weekend that Bo and Rafe had made the trip to Sea Bright, since the beginning of June; most of the time Nathan accompanied them. They didn't realize it at the time, but they were establishing a summer routine that would be repeated for the next two years. It would become the basis for a shared social life that would feature beach parties both days and nights and an occasional evening house party, nearly every weekend through the summer of 1962. A big part of that social life would be the melding of new friendships and romances with a group of young women and men that had graduated from Ruby Creek Catholic High and Centertown High, who also began hanging out on the beach at Sea Bright.

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The balance of the summer zoomed by. Bo had gotten a job in June at the tile factory in Quaytown. His blue TR3 was the only car like it in the area, so that wherever he went with it, people knew that Bo was there, and while it was a good intro for meeting new girls, it was not very convenient for making out – it was just too cramped inside. By summer's end, Bo decided to sell it and bought his father's tan '54 Ford, after Mr. Orechio bought a new '60 Ford.

Earle was still working in the auto parts store in Old Hickory, TN. He had purchased a blue '56 Ford with a 312 Police Interceptor engine. He spent a good deal of his time working on his car. He added three two-barrel carburetors, a floor shift kit and “cherry bomb” glass packs on the dual exhaust. He also put in a reverberator on the radio. He had dated a couple of girls, but was still rather shy and inexperienced, but he loved to listen to the Tennessee girls talk “Mountain talk”, a slow country drawl that is unique to the area and a bit different than the drawl of those who dwell in the hollows. But oh, the food! In addition to fairly good BBQ, there were ham biscuits, turnip greens, and cornbread. Many a night he ate his fill, until he had to unbutton his Levis and stretch out on a rocking chair. But as time wore on, he was beginning to think more and more about Bo, James and Rafe and the other friends he had made during the time he was in Quaytown.

In D.C. James had made friends with a black fellow marine, named James E. Tyler. One day when James, who had been out drinking with J.E. and another marine, decided he'd had enough and was going to return to the barracks by himself. A bit confused, he turned the wrong

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 13

way upon leaving the bar and wandered into a bad neighborhood; he was soon accosted by several black fellows. J.E. as he liked to be called was a big muscular young man and came to the rescue. He had followed James as he knew that James was a bit drunk. He chased off the would-be muggers and escorted James back to the barracks.

As for Rafe, he was still working at driving a Mr. Softee truck, serving soft ice cream, like that at a Dairy Queen or Carvel drive up store. His route was mostly through sections of Kingsboro, North Kingsboro and Holmvale. He was paid a small salary plus a percentage on what was sold. He didn't mind the driving and selling to customers, but the prep work before going on the route and cleanup after finishing and bringing the truck back to the garage was not his favorite activities. For part of the prep work he had to pour a large ten gallon box of liquid ice cream mix into the top of the machine that refrigerated and dispensed the soft ice cream. Plus he had to stock additional supplies of frozen ice cream pops and sandwiches into a separate freezer and load up the trays of toppings – walnuts, cherries, butterscotch, chocolate fudge, and caramel; then the cleanup after.

When Bo, Rafe and Nathan were not on the beach, they would go to the Drive-In movie, in Rafe's or Bo's car. Nathan never learned to drive and probably could not have afforded a car anyway, although he did have a job working in the tile factory. Nathan would buy the beer for them and they would watch the movies, while making fun of the actors and the scenes in the mostly 'B' movies. These days they paid the full fare, unlike those high school days when one guy might hide in the trunk or lie down on the floor in the back of the car under a blanket. The only thing that was hidden when they drove up to the pay booth was the six packs of bottled beer. Then there were the several times they went over to Joey Pans house and listen to Joey's jazz records.

At times Bo and Rafe would go solo taking a date to the Drive-In. Bo had his personal collection of speakers, the sound of which was generally a scratchy mono, that he'd forget to put back on the pole and would wide up driving away with the broken wire dragging behind, and taking home as a souvenir. Bo had several dates with various girls, and a couple of times doubled with Roger Vaccaro and Gladys, who had recently married.

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*Saturday evening, August 27, 1960...*

While driving to pick up Kim Whitestone for a date at the Drive-In, Rafe heard a song on the radio that brought back a memory of his date with Kim last summer before he went off to college...

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*...And darling, they say that our love won't grow.  
But I just want to tell them they don't know.  
For as long as you're in love with  
me, Our love will grow wider,  
Deeper than any sea.  
And of all the things that I want,  
In this whole wide world, is  
Just for you to say that you'll be my girl.  
Wanting you, I'm so lonely and blue.  
That's what love will do.*

It was the first hit by Jerry Butler, “Your Precious Love”, when he was with the Impressions, before striking out on his own as a solo artist. Rafe sang along as he thought back to that night last summer...

...He had been invited to dinner at Kim’s house with her parents and brother. It had been very cordial, but at first he had felt a bit anxious as Kim’s folks were quite obviously one of the elite of Quaytown. It was the first time that Rafe had been in the company of someone who had a maid to serve dinner. Kim’s dad was rather quiet and officious, but Kim’s mom was gracious and did her best to make Rafe feel at ease. On the other hand, Kim’s brother was home from college, acting the part of the self-important, nay pompous college student and seemed intent on trying to make Rafe feel like a rube. Rafe had to hold back a laugh when the brother came down to dinner in a blue smoking jacket with a red silk ascot about his neck, tucked into his shirt top and an unlit pipe in his mouth.

Fortunately, after dinner Kim led Rafe out to the pool in the back yard. They had changed into bathing suits and were sitting by the pool. Rafe had brought along the 45 of “Your Precious Love” and Kim brought out her phonograph, plugged it into an outdoor outlet and the two of them held hands while listening to the song. “Must have listened to it several times, before Kim put on her Connie Francis LP”, Rafe recalled smiling. “Ah, but tonight it’s to the Drive-In for some really good making out in this green hornet love machine”, he laughed. The Hudson was a great lover’s lane car, with the step-down floors like a sunken living room and the vertically narrow windows all around and the wide, full bench seat in the front. “Tonight just might be the night!” Rafe thought wishfully.

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*Events: September 1960 – January 1961...*

August 31 – September 13, Hurricane Donna kills 50 in Florida and New England and makes a mess of Long Island and the Jersey Shore, flooding Sea Bright and washing away beaches up and down the east coast.

On September 5, Cassius Clay, before his conversion to Muhammad Ali, wins the gold medal in boxing during the Summer Olympics.

On September 26, the two leading U. S. presidential contenders, Richard M. Nixon and John F. Kennedy, participate in the first ever televised presidential debate.

On October 1, Nigeria gains independence. On October 14, U.S. presidential candidate John F. Kennedy first suggests the idea for the Peace Corps. On October 30, Michael Woodruff performs the first successful kidney transplant in the United Kingdom, at the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary.

On November 2 Penguin Books is found not guilty of obscenity in the *Lady Chatterley's Lover* case. On November 8 in a close race, John F. Kennedy is elected over Richard M. Nixon, becoming in January 1961 the youngest man elected president of the U.S. On November 13 Sammy Davis, Jr. marries Swedish actress May Britt. Interracial marriage is still illegal in 31 U.S. states out of 50. On November 14 Belgium threatens to leave the United Nations, due to criticism of its Congo policy. On November 30 Production of the DeSoto automobile brand ceases.

On December 2 the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Rev. Geoffrey Francis Fisher, talks with Pope John XXIII for about an hour in the Vatican. It is the first time in more than 500 years that a head of the Anglican Church had visited the Pope. On December 2 U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower authorizes the use of \$1M for the relief and resettlement of Cuban refugees, who have been arriving in Florida at the rate of 1,000 a week. On December 7 the United Nations Security Council is called into session by the Soviet Union, to consider Soviet demands that the U.N. seek the immediate release of former Congolese Premier Patrice Lumumba, the deposed premier of the Congo who was arrested by troops of Colonel Joseph Mobutu. On December 9 French President Charles de Gaulle's visit to Algeria is marked by bloody riots by European and Muslim mobs in Algeria's largest cities, killing 127 people. On December 12 the U.S. Supreme Court upholds a Federal Court ruling that Louisiana's segregation laws are unconstitutional. On December 19 Fire sweeps through the *USS Constellation*, the largest U.S. aircraft carrier, while it is under construction at a Brooklyn Navy Yard pier, killing 50 and injuring 150.

On January 5, the U.S. breaks diplomatic relations with Cuba. On January 11, a racial riot occurs on the campus of the University of Georgia. On January 15, the Supremes sign a contract with Motown Records. On January 16, a Russian espionage ring is uncovered in Great Britain. On

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 14

January 20, JFK is inaugurated 35<sup>th</sup> President of the U.S; Robert Frost recites his poem "Gift Outright" at the ceremonies.

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*Saturday Evening, September 10,  
1960... This magic moment, so  
different and so new  
Was like any other until I kissed  
you And then it happened, it took  
me by surprise  
I knew that you felt it too,  
by the look in your eyes  
  
Sweeter than wine  
Softer than the summer night  
Everything I want, I have  
Whenever I hold you tight  
  
This magic moment while your  
lips are close to mine  
Will last forever, forever till  
the end of time...*

Bo was on his way in the '54 Ford to pick up his date, Judy Olivant, a senior in QHS. The Drifters song, "This Magic Moment" was playing on the car radio tuned to WABC 770 AM. Bo had dated Judy several times over the summer and he really liked her. "She's a bit of a flirt and a tease! She's pretty good at making out, but she frustrates the hell out of me, because she always stops the action just when it's getting hot and heavy", he said to himself. "But she's fun to be with -- a little wacky", he continued with a smile.

He stopped at Judy's house, got out of the car, dropped the remains of a cigarette on the ground, crushing it under his foot, and walked up to the front door. Just as he reached the door, it suddenly opened. Judy practically jumped out, with a big smile and half laugh at the surprised look on Bo's face. "Surprise! I'm ready!" she nearly squealed in excitement.

Bo recovered as Judy closed the door behind her and said, "Dam...Darn it, Judy, you almost gave me a heart attack! You're too much!"

"Oh, Bo, get used to it, that's the way I am. You'll never be bored with me", Judy laughed. "Well, come on, let's go! We haven't got all night and I want to get to the drive-in to see the cartoons before the movie."



## Beach Party Days: Chapter 14

Judy is 5'3", 115 lbs. of pure energy. Bo thought exaggeratingly that she could provide electricity in the event of a power failure. The thought led him to say, "I swear, Judy, Jersey Central Power & Light could use you if the lights go out, as a second source of power. I never saw anybody as energized as you."

"Oh, that's funny, Bo! I'll have to tell my girlfriend Sally that you said that about me", she replied enthusiastically, with a little giggle. She was wearing a pair of dark blue pedal pushers and a white sweater, with saddle shoes and bobby sox. As always she wore little makeup – she didn't need it – just a little on the eyelashes and a pale pink lipstick on her lips which were wide and full, but not overly so, but oh soft and sensual. She wore her hair down to her shoulders. It was naturally straight, so she generally spent time in the evenings donning the curlers and applying the curling lotion and papers, especially before date nights. She had a cherub like face, with naturally rosy cheeks, appropriately sized ears tight to the sides of her head, which you could see when she pulled her hair back in a pony-tail. Judy had a lithe body that was still in the process of maturing, but nonetheless appealing to any guy with two eyes and an appreciation for the opposite sex.

Bo just shook his head and had to laugh. "You are too much!" he repeated. They walked to his car; he opened the door for her and closed it once she was comfortably inside on the front bench seat.

When they got to the drive-in, Bo parked in one of the rearmost rows, a favorite for those who wanted a little privacy for necking. They held hands as they walked to the refreshment stand. Judy went to the ladies room, while Bo bought a large cup of buttered popcorn and two large cups of coke. They walked back to the car and snacked on the popcorn and sodas while watching the cartoons, the newsreel, and the coming attractions. They also suffered through the advertisements for the refreshments and then came the usual countdown of the clock up on the large screen as the time for the main feature neared.

Then the movie, Where the Boys Are, starring Connie Francis, started. Before the movie was a third of the way through, Bo was on top of Judy in the front seat. They were passionately kissing. Bo had pulled her sweater up and was rubbing his one hand over her bra covered tits and was dry humping her while trying to unzip her pants with his other hand. All of a sudden she blurted out, "Stop! Bo, please stop! I can't breathe."

Bo collected himself and pulled back to sit up on the driver side. He was breathing a bit hard as Judy pulled her sweater down and sat up next to Bo. She said somewhat apologetically, but firmly, "I'm sorry, Bo, but I'm not that sort of girl. I really like you and want to continue dating, but I can't let you into my pants. I really hope you understand."

Bo was feeling frustrated. He took a deep breath, looked at Judy and said with a half laugh, "You are such a tease, Judy." Then more seriously he added, "I like you a lot, too, but you always leave me wanting more. I want to go all the way with you. I want that really bad."

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 14

“I’m sorry, Bo, but it’s just not going to happen. I am not going to do it with anyone before I get married, and I am not ready for that either”, Judy said with conviction. Then while Bo stared angrily out at the movie screen and did not respond, she added “Please, Bo, you do understand, don’t you?”

Bo returned his glance to look at Judy. He could see the pleading look on her face. “Yeah! I guess I can understand”, he replied somewhat resignedly. “Let’s just watch the rest of the movie.” Then Bo picked up the pack of Lucky’s he had put on the dash, pulled out a cigarette and lit it.

Judy moved over to be close to Bo so that she leaned her head against his shoulder and said sweetly, “Thank you, Bo. I knew you’d understand.”

Bo put his arm around Judy and muttered, “Humph”. They watched the rest of the movie, occasionally commenting about the various scenes.

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*Friday Evening, October 7, 1960...*

Rafe was sitting on the couch next to Heidi Holtzmann in her living room. Heidi had graduated from QHS last June and was attending Montclair College to prepare for a job as a teacher. Heidi was an attractive young woman of 17 with long, thick brunette, almost black, hair down just below her shoulders. She had black eyebrows which, although tweezed were thick enough to stand out from a distance and arched ever so slightly. Heidi was 5’ 6” and 125 lbs which she carried with grace; she had been a varsity cheerleader at QHS. She had a nice body, with well-defined legs from the thighs down to firm calves and trim ankles, and she was well endowed in the tits department, although she attempted to hide the fact by not wearing push up bras and when she wore a sweater it was generally loose and sometimes a second layer over a blouse. He later assumed that was the influence of her mother. Her face was attractive, but not beautiful, definitely reflecting her Germanic heritage; it was however full of expression, showing instantly her feelings. But for some reason he couldn’t quite understand, Rafe just wanted to hold her, comfort her and kiss those soft rose petal lips.

Opposite them in separate easy chairs were Heidi’s parents. Rafe had a date with Heidi to see a movie at the drive-in; it was their first date. The main feature tonight was Elmer Gantry, starring Burt Lancaster and Jean Simmons; it was being touted as one of the best pictures of the year, with Burt Lancaster an early favorite for nomination as best actor.

From the time Rafe had arrived, Heidi’s dad had been quiet and reserved, reminding Rafe of his own dad. But as he entered the house and as he sat on the couch at her invitation, Rafe could feel Mrs. Holtzmann eying him over with a questioning look, as if sizing him up to assure herself that he was adequate dating material for her daughter.

## **Beach Party Days: Chapter 14**

“So, your name is Rafe, and what is your last name?” asked Heidi’s mom matter of factly.

“Cerny”, Rafe responded and spelled it for her and then anticipating her next question, “It’s Bohemian, which was absorbed into Czechoslovakia, but I’m half German on my mom’s side.”

“And what is your religion?” inquired Mrs. Holtzmann as if it were the most mundane of questions, at which Heidi shifted uncomfortably on the couch.

“I’m Protestant”, answered Rafe, not knowing if that would be considered a negative.

“Interesting”, Mrs. Holtzmann said thoughtfully, and then added with a bit more enthusiasm, “We are Catholic and Holtzmann is German; and it’s spelled with two ‘n’s” at the end.”

Rafe nodded that he understood, but he really wasn’t sure of where the conversation was going and why Heidi’s mom emphasized the spelling of ‘Holtzmann’; it was a few seconds later that he wondered if Heidi’s mom wanted him to know that there was no Jewish ancestry, as it was believed by some that a German name ending with ‘man’ instead of ‘mann’ might be Jewish. But Rafe quickly brushed that thought aside.

A few minutes later Mrs. Holtzmann said, “Heidi tells me that you have taken a year off from college to help your parents afford to pay for your return to college. I think that is commendable. Where are you working?”

“Last summer I drove a soft ice cream truck, but since September I’ve been working at my mom’s company, Winners Engineering; I work assembling varistors that are used for electronics”, Rafe replied. His answer seemed to satisfy Mrs. Holtzmann’s curiosity for the time being. Rafe felt like it had been more like the third degree or a grilling.

During all this time the TV was on and a short lull ensued. Then it became apparent that Heidi’s parents had been awaiting a special program that was about to start. The second debate between John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon was being televised. The first ever televised debate by two presidential candidates had taken place on September 26. Once again John F. Kennedy, the junior senator from Massachusetts was pitted against Richard M. Nixon, current Vice-President for eight years under President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Nixon with his many years of experience in foreign affairs was looked upon by many as the favorite based upon his advantage of experience over the young and minimally experienced Kennedy – particularly since this evenings debate was focusing on foreign affairs. But the TV screen, broadcast in black and white, actually favored the junior man. JFK, as he was being called by the media, who was not just young, but handsome, trim and photogenic. Nixon on the other hand came across on the screen as unattractive relative to JFK, dark and surly and as the heat from the lights bore down

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on the two, it was Nixon who was obviously perspiring. The fact that he had a touch of the flu was not publicized, so the impression was that he appeared the more nervous of the two.

About ten minutes into the debate, Rafe looked over at Heidi and quietly said, “We’d better get going, the movie will be starting soon, and we may already have missed the cartoons.”

Heidi nodded her assent and stood up. Rafe followed. Then came the one question he was not prepared for. Mrs. Holtzmann looked up at Rafe and gestured toward the TV. “If you were old enough to vote, would you vote for Nixon or Kennedy?”

“Uh, I think I’d vote for Nixon. He has been Vice-President and has more experience”, Rafe said honestly, yet somewhat hesitantly, because he was unsure of why he was being asked. Mrs. Holtzmann did not respond immediately, but the fleeting look on her face told Rafe that she was not enamored with his choice. But she covered that up and said looking at both of them, “Well, you two have a nice time at the movies; and don’t be too late tonight.” The ‘don’t be too late’ was directed specifically at Heidi.

Later that night, after the movie, Rafe drove his Hudson up to Heidi’s house, walked her to the door and said, “Goodnight, Heidi. It was nice.”

“Good night, Rafe. I enjoyed our date and the movie”, responded Heidi.

“Good. I’ll call you, OK?” queried Rafe, hoping for a ‘yes’ answer.

Heidi looked up at Rafe and said, “OK, that would be nice”.

Rafe leaned over to kiss her good night, and she let him, but held her hands against his chest to ensure some distance between them. Then he watched as she went into the house. He could see through the curtains in the living room window that Mrs. Holtzmann was awaiting her daughter’s return as she stood up when the front door opened.

Rafe got into his car, lit up a cigarette and drove away. He thought to himself, “Man, what a night. I could really like Heidi, but I’m not sure she is all that hot to trot, and I don’t think I made a great impression on her mother. We sure made out some at the drive-in, but she backed off when I tried to get beyond kissing and a little touchy-feely; but, by god, what a nice body she has and a pretty face; nice dark brunette hair, too.” Rafe recalled that he had liked her in high school, too, but she had been dating a guy that graduated in 1958 who went into military service. He had the impression that she was still stuck on that guy and waiting for him to return from the service. “Well, I’ll think about it tomorrow; about asking her out again. Meanwhile, I need to get home and release some of this ‘tension’ in my groin. Damn! Still a virgin”, he groaned to himself.

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*Friday afternoon, October 28, 1960...*

James and James E. Tyler were just back from the parade ground on the base in D.C. They had gone through two hours of the Evening Parade drills on the parade ground with their unit, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon, and they couldn't wait to get their parade dress uniforms off – especially the boots. “Damn, my poor feet!” exclaimed J.E.

“I'm with you buddy. I think we should take a shower and head out for a couple of cold ones at the slop shoot”, James said with a deep sigh. “A couple of brewskies and I'll sleep like a baby tonight.”

“Man, I'm not sure I can muster the energy, but I expect after a cold, hot, and cold again shower, I'll be ready to race you down to the pub”, J.E. responded wearily.

After they had both showered and dressed more comfortably in combat fatigues, they headed down to the pub on the base. “Did you see that other jarhead taking the pictures of our unit on the parade ground?” J.E. asked rhetorically as they walked side by side down the walkway. “Man, I hope he got a good shot of my pretty face while we was paradin' around the grounds. I'd like to see that on TV, so my woman back home in Savannah could see it. Then when I get home on leave, she'll be all over me like sugar on a donut. Man I can't wait to get me some of that blackberry cobbler.”

James couldn't hold back the laughter. Then kidding he said, “Shit, J.E., if he got a close up of your mug, the camera probably broke.” Then he added, rubbing his hands together, “Now, you take me, if he got me in one of those shots and it was shown on TV, and then when I get home all the babes back home in Quaytown will be lined up, each one just hoping I'd pick her for a roll in the hay.”

“Dream on, Hein! Yo' sure as hell got a vivid imagination”, J.E. said with a shake of his head and a chuckle. “Come on, we're here, I'll buy the first round and you can tell me more of those dreams yo' got. I need a good laugh.”

James laughed and clapped J.E. on the back as they entered the base pub. They grabbed a table and J.E. brought back two bottles of Schlitz. They ordered hamburgers and fries and sipped on the beers while they awaited the food, neither wanting to have a hangover the next day, as they were scheduled for special guard duty at the tomb of the Unknown Soldier; first J.E., then James. It wouldn't go over well with the brass to have red eyed, hung over marines standing guard in front of all those thousands of visitors.

“I'm kinda lookin' forward to standing guard tomorrow”, J.E. said as the food arrived. “But if some wise-ass kid comes by, makes stupid funny faces and tries to get me to break the protocol of staring ahead in silence and walking the prescribed routine, I want you to back me up and give the kid a swift boot in the ass. Think you can do that for your roommate?”

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“I got your back, buddy! After all I still owe you for coming to the rescue when I wandered into the wrong neighborhood last August”, James said as he raised his beer in a toast to J.E.

“Wrong neighborhood? Only for you white guys”, J.E. responded half-jokingly. And they both laughed aloud.

Then while they continued to eat, drink and talk, someone dropped a coin in the jukebox and played a song that got J.E melancholy....

*Georgia, Georgia,  
The whole day through  
Just an old sweet song  
Keeps Georgia on my mind*

*I'm say Georgia  
Georgia  
A song of you  
Comes as sweet and clear  
As moonlight through the pines*

*Other arms reach out to me  
Other eyes smile tenderly  
Still in peaceful dreams I see  
The road leads back to you*

*I said Georgia,  
Ooh Georgia, no peace I find  
Just an old sweet song  
Keeps Georgia on my mind...*

The recently released Ray Charles song made J.E. turn somber. It was the first time James had heard the song and he could sense from the rendition the blues effect that it had on his friend across the table. So James said nothing and let J.E. lose himself in the music.

When the song ended, J.E. looked over at James and said sincerely, “Man that sure makes me homesick. He’s the Man! Ray Charles! I love to listen to him. Makes me want to be shackled up with my little woman, you know?”

James nodded his understanding. Then, to try and break the mood, he said, “My turn to buy. You want another Schlitz or something stronger?”

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“Nah, I’m OK, Another beer will do just fine”, J.E. answered.

After the second round of drinks, the two marine buddies walked back to the barracks. J.E. was still thinking about getting home and confided in James a lot of personal things about his ‘little woman’ and their relationship. James just basically listened.

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*Friday morning, November 4, 1960...*

*They say for every boy and  
girl there's just one love in  
this old world and I know  
I've found mine*

*The heavenly touch of your  
embrace tells me no one can take  
your place Ever in my heart*

*Young love first love, filled  
with true devotion  
Young love our love, we  
share with deem emotion  
Just one kiss from your  
sweet lips will tell me that  
your love is real We will  
vow to one another there  
will never be any other  
[Guitar solo]  
And I can feel that it's true  
Love for you or for me...*

Earle was sitting in a booth in a diner. Across from him was Billy Ray Wilbur, another guy who was working with Earle at the 1001 Auto Parts store in Old Hickory, TN. Billy Ray had put a quarter in the compact Wurlitzer juke box attached to the wall on the right side of the booth, rifled through the pages by the sliding the metal tabs jutting out at the top of the box, and selected several Country and Western songs. “Young Love”, sung by Sonny James had just finished. They were having breakfast before going to work; Earle had ordered Ham Biscuits, two scrambled eggs, and coffee. Billy Ray had ordered a stack of buttermilk flapjacks, country ham, and coffee.

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“That song by Sonny James was a big hit last year. Do you remember it, Burn? I remember because I got laid by Brenda Sue Wallace while that song was playing on the radio in my ’57 Chevy”, Billy Ray announced. He had a habit, sometimes annoying to Earle, of prattling on about his conquests. Earle suspected that at least some of it was bullshit, but he didn’t want to confront a fellow worker, especially since he couldn’t be sure.

“I remember hearing that song when I was in high school in New Jersey”, Earle replied as he sipped his coffee. The food had yet to arrive. Billy Ray started speaking again, but Earle was hardly listening. He was thinking back to his days in Quaytown. Memories flooded back about the good times he had there with Bo, Hein, and Rafe. He wondered what had happened to those girls he had a crush on. “What was their names?” he tried to jog his memory. “Oh, yeah, first there was Penny Warlock, and later there was Donna Conklin. Gee I think I’m getting a hard on just thinking about Donna.” He laughed to himself out loud, which startled Billy Ray and brought a confused look to his face.

“What the?” Billy Ray had stopped talking in mid-sentence.

Earle came out of his reverie and said apologetically “Sorry, Billy Ray, but I was just remembering some things from my time in Quaytown, New Jersey.”

“Damned if you didn’t look like you were thinkin’ about some pretty young thing. What was her name and did you do the dirty with her?” Billy Ray inquired.

“Her name was Donna, and I got close a couple of times, but never crossed home plate”, Earle confessed.

The food arrived and they both chowed down. Earle was relieved that he didn’t have to listen to Billy Ray’s jabbering for a while. Billy Ray was busy stuffing his face and swilling his coffee. It gave Earle a brief time to enjoy the food, one of his favorite things next to girls, beer and booze. It was then that an idea that had been percolating in Earle’s mind came to the fore and took on reality, “I want to go back to Quaytown!” he said to himself. And at that instant he began to lay plans. He would work for another month or so to save up some additional money and then just pack up his car and drive up there. But first he would contact Bo. Bo would know where he might find work and an apartment to rent. “Yes! That’s what I’ll do by golly! I’ll have to discuss it with dad and mom, but I don’t think they will object.”

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*Thursday Morning, November 24, 1960...*

“Pass me that bottle; my ass is freezing!” Bo leaned across Rafe to make the request of Nathan. Nathan passed across the Blueberry Brandy in the brown paper bag to Bo, who wiped off the lip of the bottle and took a swig of the sweet alcohol. “Damn, that goes down nice and



## Beach Party Days: Chapter 14

warm”, he announced and handed the bag of brandy over to Rafe. Then Rafe took a swig and handed it back to Nathan.

“The game should be starting soon; then things should start to warm up a bit”, Rafe said hopefully, smacking his gloved hands together. “It’s definitely colder than last year or the year before when we played.”

“You can say that again”, responded Nathan, as he tugged up the collar on his three quarter length car coat.

The annual Thanksgiving game was scheduled to start at 11:00 AM between arch rival Quaytown and Mason at the Quaytown field. It was now 10:46 AM and the three of them had arrived at 10:30 AM to get good seats on the home team stands. What was different this year, in addition to the cold breeze blowing across the field directly into their faces, was the fact that Bo’s kid brother was the starting quarterback for Quaytown. There it was in the program, Chet Orechio, 5’ 7”, 160 lbs. Bo looked at that with a sense of pride, despite knowing that the stats for Chet should be more like 5’ 6” and 150 lbs, but then that was typical of Coach Ruffy, who always increased the stats of the players to try and intimidate the other teams.

The players from both teams had already had their warm ups and gone into the field houses for their pre-game prep talks. The Mason and Quaytown bands were on the field, lining up, awaiting the players to come charging out of the field houses for the pre-game coin toss. “Hey, Rafe, how did your season with the Monmouth Earls end up?” Bo asked still shivering a bit. He was referring to the fact that Rafe had played football this fall with the Earls in the Mid-Atlantic Semi-Pro League.

Rafe turned to Bo and answered, “We wound up with a 4 and 3 record. Most of the guys on the team are ex-QHS players, but a lot are from Ruby Creek Catholic and Centertown High. And one is an ex-Mason player. You came to the three games we played under the lights here on this field. We played one game up in Wooster, Massachusetts, and one down in South Jersey, but the most memorable game was the last one. We played against the prisoners in a state prison in Pennsylvania”.

“No shit! In a prison? Against a team of prisoners? Who won that game?” asked Bo. Nathan, listening in, shivered at the thought of being inside a prison.

Rafe answered, “Well, talk about scary; when we went through those huge heavy doors and they clanged shut behind us, it was the most eerie feeling I’ve ever had. Then the guards searched our equipment bags to make sure we weren’t bringing in anything the prisoners could use for...who knows, whatever.”

“I’d have been scared shitless!” announced Nathan.

Bo nodded his agreement. “But who won the game?”

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Rafe replied, “The prisoners! They have nothing to do but practice all week and then they have a team come in on the weekend and beat up on them. Hell, they beat us 12 to 0. On top of that, there wasn’t a blade of grass on the field, just hard dirt. I got my bell rung on one play when I got tackled after intercepting a pass. Oh! And what was really intimidating was that right behind our bench there were all these prisoners in the bleachers, who were betting on the game with match sticks. We could hear them yelling out for either of the teams, depending on which one they bet on. One of them who bet on us was really loud, yelling ‘you better score this time you Sons of Bitches’ ...talk about intimidation.”

“Jesus! That must have been some experience”, Bo said. Nathan again just shivered.

The players were now on the field and Mason won the toss. They elected to receive the ball. By halftime Mason was up 13 to 7 and the final score was 20 to 13. Bo’s brother, Chet, played well, but the QHS team couldn’t stop the running game of Mason, who had two really fast and shifty running backs.

On the way out of the QHS field, Nathan asked Bo and Rafe, “What do you think about the election, now that JFK is the newly elected President?”

“I just hope he picks some good advisors with background in foreign affairs”, responded Rafe. “We still have issues with the Russians and now that Cuba has become a Communist dictatorship, things could get even more complex”.

Bo thought for a second and said, “I think he’ll do OK. He has some good new ideas, like that Peace Corp.”

They shared a few other thoughts and then Bo drove off to bring Nathan home and then to his parent’s home for the family Turkey dinner. Bo had just moved into his own apartment in Quaytown. Rafe had driven to the game by himself and headed home. His family was invited to his mom’s sister’s house for Thanksgiving dinner with his aunt’s family.

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*Saturday Afternoon, December 24, 1960...*

The phone rang in Rafe’s house. Mr. Cerny answered the phone and called to Rafe, “Rafe, it’s for you – Bo’s on the line.”

Rafe accepted the phone from his dad, “Hey, Bo, what’s up?”

“Good news! I got a call from Burn last night. He’s coming back to Quaytown right after New Year’s”, answered Bo enthusiastically.

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“Hot Damn! That is good news! It will be good to see him again. Did he give a definite date when he’ll be here?” asked Rafe.

Bo responded, “It will be sometime around the weekend of January 6. He said it would depend on whether he decides to stop one or two nights at a motel. He thinks it will take about 20 hours from Old Hickory.”

“OK. That’s only a couple of weeks away. What’s his plan for a job? Does he have anything lined up? What about a place to stay?” Rafe inquired.

Bo replied, “He can stay with me at my pad, until he finds an apartment or a room to rent. As for work, I am starting a new job at Emerson in Woodbridge on January 2 – interviewed this week and got a call yesterday that I’m hired. It’s a brand new factory and they will manufacture air conditioners. They are looking to hire a lot of people. I’m sure Burn can get in. How about you Rafe? Aren’t you tired of that commute to Springfield to you mom’s work place? Why don’t you apply, too?”

“Sounds interesting; let me think about it – hey, if all three of us were working together we could car pool!” Rafe responded. “Oh, and it’s good that you got that bachelor pad, until Burn can find a place.”

Then Bo said, “OK, I gotta go get ready for a date tonight with Judy. Have a Merry Christmas, Rafe, and think about getting together for New Year’s Eve; maybe a double date over to Staten Island.”

“Have a Merry Christmas, Bo. I’ll let you know about New Year’s Eve.” Rafe said and hung up.

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*Friday evening, January 6, 1961...*

Rafe parked the Hudson outside Bo’s apartment complex in Quaytown. He had gotten a call from Bo saying that Earle had arrived. “Get your ass over here so we can have a few beers and talk about tomorrow!” Bo had ordered in a friendly manner. Rafe quickly walked from the car to front door of Bo’s apartment building D, and rang the bell for the second floor apartment, number D22. The intercom squawked, “Who’s there?”

“It’s me, Rafe. Buzz me in, Bo”, Rafe answered. The buzzer sounded and Rafe pushed through the unlocked door. Bo was standing on the top landing outside the open door to his apartment with a big smile on his face. Rafe took the stairs two at a time and they shared a quick bear hug. Then Bo led the way into the apartment. Standing in the living room was Earle with a warm grin on his face that could not disguise the tiredness from his long journey and a bottle of Schaeffer beer in his right hand.

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 14

“Hey, buddy, long time, no see”, Earle said as he stepped forward to greet Rafe. They hugged one another, slapped one another on the back, then stepped back and shook hands vigorously.

“Hot damn, Burn, you’re a sight for sore eyes!” Rafe said.

Then Bo went to the refrigerator, took out a bottle of beer, opened it with a church key and handed it to Rafe. He then picked up his opened bottle off the dinette table, and waived his guests to take a seat in the living room.

Rafe looked at Earle and said as they both sat on the couch, “Burn you look like you are ready to hit the hay. It must have been a grueling trip for you. Did you stop over once or twice?”

“Just the once”, Earle answered. “Yeah, took me 12 hours on that last leg of the trip and I’ll be ready for a good night’s sleep after another beer.”

“Or two or three”, Bo countered, with a laugh. Then, he said in a serious tone, “But about tomorrow. As you know I’m working at Emerson and Emerson is open tomorrow on a Saturday from 9:00 in the morning to 3:00 in the afternoon for people to come in and apply for jobs. They will have Personnel managers on hand to interview the most promising applicants. I’ve already put the word in for you two and I’m sure you both will get in.”

“Well, I’m game”, Rafe responded. “Bo, you’ll need to come along to guide us there. I can come up here and meet you and we can all go together.”

“Yeah, and I need to get a job as soon as possible, so I can afford to get my own pad”, Earle responded.

“Right! Good! It’s settled then”, Bo confirmed. “Rafe, if you can get here by 7:45 in the morning, I’ll drive us there, so you guys can be among the first in line. Oh, and damn it Earle, we are buddies and you can stay here and sleep on the couch as long as it takes. But we will definitely get the Sunday papers and start looking for apartments or rooms to rent in and around Quaytown, ‘cause I know you won’t be happy until you have your own place.” And to lighten the mood, “And besides, I’m not looking forward to weeks of hearing you snore at night and fart all day.” And the three of them laughed.

Then Rafe jumped in, “I remember one of those nights we came back from Staten Island and you two were having a farting contest. Hein and I were damn near asphyxiated and had to roll down the windows.”

“Hell, yeah, I remembered that night”, Earle answered. “As I recall, Bo won that contest. Must have been the beer on top of all that Italian food he ate before we went out.” That brought a laugh from the three of them and they raised their Schaeffers in salute.

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After a couple of minutes of silence, Earle announced, “Damn! It’s good to be together again. I missed y’all and Quaytown...some of my happiest times was here with you guys and Hein. Speaking of Hein, how’s he doing? Is he still in the marines down at Quantico? I think Bo, you told me something about the Honor Guard.”

Rafe responded, “Yeah, Hein is in D.C. with the Marine Honor Guard. You won’t believe Hein, he looks like he’s grown two inches taller. But we haven’t seen him since last summer.”

“I hope he gets a leave soon”, Bo said. “I miss his sense of humor”.

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The following day, Earle and Rafe were both offered jobs at Emerson with a start date on Monday, January 16.

Then on Sunday, Earle and Bo poured through the Sunday Asbury Park Press and found a few apartments to rent in Quaytown. They spent the afternoon checking out three that looked decent and where the rent was in the range that Earle felt he could afford. Earle settled on an apartment on Connector Street, which was a main road connecting Quaytown and Mason. The apartment was on the second floor of a two story house that had been converted into two apartments, with the landlord and his wife living on the first floor.

On Monday, the 9<sup>th</sup>, Rafe went into work with his mom and told the boss that he was giving a week’s notice. The boss was a bit annoyed that it wasn’t at least two weeks’ notice, but Rafe’s mom was supportive. Besides, Rafe would be getting a small increase in pay, even after paying union dues.

Three of the four old pals were once again reunited.

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*Friday evening, January 20, 1961...*

Brrr! James felt like he was in a deep freeze. The snow was blowing in a brisk northwest wind of about 18 mph, the temperature was well below freezing and there was about 10 inches of snow already accumulated on the ground. James was among a contingent of the Marine Honor Guard on duty by the main entrance of the Armory in D.C. They were there ostensibly as additional security for the Inaugural ball, but with all the local police and the Secret Service, it was perhaps more to add to the pomp and circumstance that accompanies such self-congratulatory affairs when a new President is inaugurated.

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There were five locations for the Inaugural Ball gala, but the Armory was the main location and the one where JFK, First Lady Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy had attended last. James and his mates had been on duty since the Inaugural Parade ended. Early on one of the featured entertainers arrived in a bus – it was Babatunde Olatunji and his Afro-Cuban band. Their groundbreaking "Drums of Passion" was one of the biggest selling albums of its day. Then they observed as many other dignitaries had arrived in one limo after another. The leading stars of Hollywood including Sidney Poitier, Joey Bishop, among others. But it was Frank Sinatra who caused the most excitement on his arrival. Sinatra was to be the Master of Ceremonies.

“Jesus Christ! It colder that a witch’s tit here!” Another marine complained to James. “I don’t know if my balls will defrost after tonight.” The other marine was named Stan DelaCrois and he and James had become close friends. It was a friendship that would last well beyond their years in the Marines. Stan was also from New Jersey.

“Friggin right!” James answered, trying to keep his teeth from chattering. “I’m trying to imagine being in front of a fireplace with a roaring fire, naked with a hot babe, but it’s not helping very much.”

Just then another limo pulled up at the front entrance and a beautiful blonde woman was escorted out of the car by her escort. Her top coat was unbuttoned and the fashionable gown she was wearing was all too obviously a low cut design that showed more of her ample bosom than modesty would expect, especially as she leaned over to get out of the car. As they walked past James and on into the armory, James and Stan had all they could do to keep their officious stance. Once the blonde and her escort had entered, James looked over to his mate and said as quietly as possible so as not to break protocol, “Holy Shit! Did you catch the cleavage on that blonde babe? She had no bra! I’d like to bury my face in that in front of a fireplace! That would make this duty more than worth freezing my ass off.”

“Hein, you’d have to fight me off first!” responded Stan with a subdued laugh. James wanted to laugh aloud, but he had to hold it in, because the protocol required it, and once again a cold gust of wind whipped at them.

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January and February of 1961 flew by, as Bo, Earle and Rafe car pooled to work at the Emerson plant during the work week. On weekends, when Bo or Rafe were without a date, one or both would hang out with Earle, who had not yet met a girl he liked, but that was about to change. None of them were 21 as yet, but access to beer or whiskey was not all that hard to come by, and on occasion there were always the bars in Staten Island.

Basketball season was underway and on some week evenings, the three would attend a QHS game, when it was a home game or at neighboring rival Mason High. It was more the opportunity to catch up with some of the Senior high school girls who had been underclassmen, when the three guys were seniors, and to check out some of the current crop of underclass girls.

In late February, on a weekend night when the weather had turned warmer, Earle picked up a couple six packs of Bud bottles, stashed them in the trunk of his '56 Ford, and the three of them and along with Nathan went to the drive-in to watch the movie, The Hustler, starring Paul Newman and Jackie Gleason.

As for James, he was having a few adventures of his own in his tour of duty with the Marine Honor Guard...

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*Thursday morning, March 2, 1961...*

“Holy Christ!” James grunted in pain through his clenched teeth. He and his platoon were in the midst of a 50 mile march with rifles and full back packs. The Commandant had taken up a challenge from Attorney General, Robert Kennedy, and claimed that all marines should be able to make a 50 mile forced march. What the Commandant overlooked was that those marines assigned to office duty, like most of those in James’s platoon, were no longer in the shape of those coming out of boot camp, or those who were on active duty in some hot spot around the globe, or those who were in the Special Forces.

By now a good number of the platoon had already dropped out due to exhaustion, leg-cramps or any number of minor injuries. James was determined that he was going to go all the way, but the pain in his feet was getting so severe that tears were beginning to roll down his cheeks, and his gait had become more like a man who was hobbled with some form of palsy.

Suddenly a jeep pulled up alongside James and slowed to a stop. The medic jumped out and walked over to James and said, “Looks like you’ve had it, jarhead!”

“No! No! I can make it all the way”, James grimaced, his face contorted in pain; “how much further to the end?” he grunted toward the medic.

“We just passed the 36 ticks and I’m pulling you out now, before you do serious damage to yourself,” the medic said firmly. Then he added, “We don’t need you out of commission for

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 15

long periods of recovery. You'll be needed for duty at Camp David and wherever else the President requires." With that he hooked his arm under James's arm, forcing him to stop and ordered, "Now, get your sorry butt into the jeep over here. I want you to take off those boots and let me examine those boats you call feet!"

James reluctantly let the medic guide him to the jeep and sit him down in the back seat. "Well I did make it for 36 miles" he thought to himself. At first he didn't notice his friend Stan DelaCrois on the other side of the jeep, but then Stan said to him jokingly, "Hell, Hein, you walk like a turtle!"

As James began to gingerly unlace his boots while the medic looked on concerned, James still grimacing with pain responded to Stan, "Screw you, DelaCrois, I would have finished if the medic had let me. By the way, it seems I made it further than you; what happened to you that you're in the jeep?"

"Leg cramps", came back Stan's reply, "about 4 ticks back".

"Ouch! Damn it that hurts!" James nearly yelled as he finally was able to pull off his right boot. The toe area of his sock was full of blood from blisters that had broken open.

"Just as I thought", said the medic with the nod of a professional doctor. "You are going to the base hospital, jarhead! My guess is you'll be laid up for a week or so. Too bad we don't have some nice female nurses to comfort you through your recovery", said the medic with a hint of sarcasm.

Despite the pain and discomfort James found the wherewithal to respond in his patented humorous way, "What? The Honor Guard is one of the most highly regarded units in the Marines and we can't recruit a few babes from Playboy magazine?"

The medic laughed heartily, "In your dreams, jarhead!"

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March 1961: On March 1, President Kennedy establishes the Peace Corp. On March 8, U.S. nuclear submarine Patrick Henry arrives at Scottish naval base of Holy Loch from South Carolina in a record undersea journey of 66 days 22 hrs. On March 9, a dog named Blackie becomes the 1st animal returned from space, aboard Russian spacecraft Sputnik 9. On March 13, Floyd Patterson KO's Ingemar Johansson in 6 rounds for the heavyweight boxing title. On March 18, Pillsbury introduces the Poppin' Fresh Pillsbury Dough Boy in TV commercials and magazine ads. On March 24, the New York Senate approves \$55M for a baseball stadium at Flushing Meadows that will become Shea Stadium, home of the NY Mets. On March 25, Elvis Presley performs live on the USS Arizona, and "Gypsy" closes at Broadway Theater New York City after 702 performances. On March 29, the 23rd Amendment is ratified, allowing Washington D.C. residents to vote for president, and after a 4 year trial Nelson Mandela is acquitted on a treason charge.



## Beach Party Days: Chapter 15

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*Saturday evening, March 11, 1961...*

“Oh, Rafe, I like you so much. I-I, maybe I, I think I love you”, Kim Whitestone whispered in Rafe’s ear. Rafe was on top of Kim in his Hudson Hornet. The windows were fogged up and they were both nearly naked. It had happened faster than he had thought it would, and now he began to wonder if it had been too fast, at least for Kim. But the thought that pushed itself to the fore in his mind was that at long last he was no longer a virgin! He had finally experienced what it was like to have sex.

That mystery of what to do about the insertion of his dick into a girl’s vagina was solved, at least partially so, because it was Kim who helped him get his misguided missile into that secret, moist, narrow passage by gently putting the fingers of her right hand around his engorged member and steering it into the opening like a light bulb into an electric socket. He was still in awe of how good it had felt and still felt.

...The evening had all started much the same as on previous dates he had had with Kim. Kim was wearing a white blouse with a rounded collar that buttoned up in the front and a red, blue and gray checkered skirt that fell loosely down to below her knees. Under the skirt was a pair of sheer nylons and a pair of penny loafers adorned her delicate feet.

They had gone to the drive-in to see the main feature, Breakfast at Tiffany’s, starring Audrey Hepburn. During the show they had the usual popcorn and soda and made out some. After the show, Rafe drove to a secluded spot in Holmvale, where they had parked several times before -- a place no one else seemed to know about, because no other cars ever showed up.

As things started to warm up between them from the kissing and the touching and the caressing, Rafe falteringly lifted Kim’s blouse and clumsily unhooked her bra to expose her small, but firm and well-formed tits. After several minutes of massaging her tits and kissing her, Rafe moved one hand down and under Kim’s skirt and as he did, Kim moved under him to open her legs, inviting his hand to explore the inside of her thighs.. Rafe was emboldened by her acceptance of his hand and he moved his hand up quickly to explore Kim’s undergarments. To his surprise he found that she was wearing a garter belt to hold up the nylons and under that was a pair of cotton panties.

His excitement grew as his fingers reached the cleft in the triangle between her legs and he felt the warm moisture through her panties. He started to rub her there and Kim began to breathe more heavily and make little moaning sounds. Then Rafe reached up and pulled the garter belt down. He had to get up off of Kim so that he could negotiate pulling the garter belt with the still hooked nylons down and down and down to Kim’s ankles. Kim had already kicked off her shoes and was helping Rafe’s trembling hands in order to avoid getting runs in her

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nylons. Together they removed the nylons over both of her feet and the garter belt and nylons fell to the floorboard.

While he was partly sitting up Rafe took his wallet out of his right rear pocket and took out the Trojan prophylactic he had been carrying in the wallet for months in the hope that someday he might get to use it. He rapidly unbuckled the belt on his khakis, unzipped and pulled down his white Haynes cotton briefs along with his pants until they were down to his ankles. He was so excited now that he nearly ripped Kim's panties as he reached up and pulled them down and over her feet and they, too, dropped to the floorboard. Fumbling with the wrapper, he succeeded in yanking out the rubber and rolled it onto his rock hard dick. Then he nearly dived back down onto Kim and resumed kissing her and rubbing her crotch. He inserted a finger into her vagina and moved it in and out for a minute or so. "So moist", he thought to himself. He could wait no longer! He started to try and get his hard member into that moist opening, not sure exactly where the opening was now that he had removed his finger, and then Kim's fingers guided him home. And it was wonderful he thought! Nothing like it in the world! Then after what seemed like a long time, but was perhaps no more than five minutes of thrusting each other's pelvises against each other, he felt the red hot explosion. A Crazy thought flew through his mind! He recalled a movie that had a scene about a fox hunt and the call of, "Release the Hounds!"

Rafe realized that he was breathing a bit hard, almost like after running a forty yard sprint. He was still inside Kim, but his dick was getting soft. He looked down at Kim and kissed her softly on the mouth. Then remembering stories he heard from older guys about rubbers that broke and girls getting pregnant, he removed his dick and took off the rubber, rolled down the window and threw the rubber out. He felt Kim shiver. "Are you OK?" he asked, not knowing what he should say at a time like this.

"Yes, Rafe, I feel good, but lie back down with me and hold me awhile", Kim responded somewhat dreamily. Rafe did and about ten minutes later, he felt himself getting hard again. He started to kiss Kim again and caress her mostly naked body. He sensed that she was inviting him again to make love to her and this time he was able to insert his dick without help. But Kim became a little alarmed and asked, "Rafe, do you have any more protection?"

Rafe said as confidently as he could, "No, but don't worry. I'll pull it out before it's too late". And they proceeded to make love again. It was after this that Kim confessed her feelings for Rafe. Rafe hesitated a second and said softly, "And I like you a lot, too, Kim. Tonight was really special and I want to continue to see you."

They then both began to put their clothes on. Rafe stepped out of the car to get some fresh air and smoke a cigarette. As he exited the car he noticed the rubber that he threw out the window had stuck to the door handle on the driver's side. He removed it and dropped it on the side of the dirt road...

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April 1961: On April 11, Israel begins Adolf Eichmann WW II war crimes trial. On April 12, Russian astronaut Yuri Gagarin becomes 1st person to orbit the Earth in the Vostok 1 spacecraft. On April 13, the U.N. General Assembly condemns South-Africa's apartheid. On April 15, "Music Man" closes at Majestic Theater New York City after 1375 performances. On April 17, 1,400 Cuban exiles land in Bay of Pigs attempt to overthrow Castro; President Kennedy takes responsibility for the invasion on April 24 and his administration is later criticized both for not supporting the invasion and for allowing it to go forth at all. On April 29, ABC's "Wide World of Sports, debuts on TV. On April 30, Eastern Airlines begins 1st shuttle flights between Washington D.C., Boston and New York City.

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*Saturday evening, April 8, 1961...*

*Tonight you're mine completely  
You give you love so sweetly*

*Tonight the light of love is in your eyes  
\But will you love me tomorrow?*

*Is this a lasting treasure Or  
just a moment's pleasure?  
Can I believe the magic of your sighs?  
Will you still love me tomorrow?*

*Tonight with words unspoken  
You say that I'm the only one  
But will my heart be broken  
When the night meets the morning sun? ...*

The radio was tuned to WINS and "Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow" by the Shirelles was being played. Earle and Bo were on a double date in Earle's '56 Ford. They had already picked up their dates, first Connie Sexton, who was Earle's date, and then Judy Olivant, who was Bo's date. They were on the way to the Drive-In movies to see The Absent Minded Professor starring Fred MacMurray. The Two girls were singing along with the radio, with Judy kidding around in the back seat by acting as if she was singing the lyrics to Bo and pretending that she was pleading with him to still love her after a night of love making.

"You're such a tease", Bo said with a half-laugh.

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But it didn't seem to faze Judy; she just continued through the entire song. Then when it was over she coyly said to Bo, "How do you know I'm only teasing? But you like it when I do, don't you, Bo".

"Be careful what you tease about", Bo warned in a half-joking voice, but with just a hint of advice, indicating that there were limits to the amount of teasing that he would tolerate.

Connie, unlike Judy, was a more quiet and serious girl, less given to extrovert behavior than Judy. Yet she was not cold either. She was more reserved, but friendly, with a quiet confidence and self-assurance. Connie was taller than Judy at 5'6", with black hair down to the top of the shoulder blades, flat across the top of her head, parted in the center and with a flip of a wave curling outward at the ends. She had an attractive face, not a raving beauty by any means, yet still pretty. Her nose was long and thin with a little "bulb" at the end that flared out. Her face was on the round side, wider on the side profile than from the front, with a wide mouth, nice lips, and black, natural eyebrows that were only slightly tweezed to a gentle arc over her dark brown eyes. She had on a deep red lipstick and a bit of rouge on her cheeks, which helped compensate for her pale, fair skin. The fair skin was one thing she shared with Earle, the second being that she was also a virgin.

Earle had first met Connie at one of the last QHS basketball games at the end of February and discovered in talking with her that she lived just down the block from him on Connector Street and that she was a Senior. He had liked her right away because of the way she carried herself and her friendliness and apparent honesty and had asked her for a date. She responded in the affirmative and they had dated several times since then, the first was a double date with Bo and another girl, Nancy, who Bo dated a few times.

Then Earle and Connie had gone on a few solo dates, each one ending the same way from Earle's perspective – lots of kissing and clinches with some rubbing about over the clothes, but nothing beyond an attempt to "steal second base". Earle still liked her and held out hopes of getting to second base and beyond. But he was getting frustrated with the progress and beginning to have doubts about how much Connie liked him and wondering if the relationship would advance beyond what was possibly just a convenient dating arrangement for Connie. Earle was too shy, and the southern gentleman manners were too ingrained in him at this stage of his life, to attempt to ask Connie outright.

For her part, Connie liked Earle and enjoyed their dates, but she was just not ready for a serious relationship. She was looking forward to going off to college in September and did not think it was a good idea to get deeply involved – it wouldn't be fair to Earle or her.

After the drive-in, Bo and Earle brought their dates home and then Earle drove Bo back to Bo's apartment. On the way the Cousin Brucie show was on the car radio and the song, "Run Around Sue" by Dion and the Belmonts was playing...

*Here's my story, sad but true*

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*It's about a girl that I once knew  
She took my love then ran around  
With every single guy in town*

*Ah, I should have known it from the very start  
This girl will leave me with a broken heart  
Now listen people what I'm telling you  
A-keep away from-a Runaround Sue*

*I miss her lips and the smile on her face  
The touch of her hair and this girl's warm embrace  
So if you don't wanna cry like I do  
A-keep away from-a Runaround Sue*

*Ah, she likes to travel around  
She'll love you but she'll put you down  
Now people let me put you wise  
Sue goes out with other guys...*

The two of them listened to the song and at the line “Sue goes out with other guys”, the two of them sang out loudly, “Sue goes *down* for other guys”.

“Hot damn”, said Earle, “ever since Rafe sang out that change in the song that night we all went to the drive-in with the case of beer, every time I hear that song, I can’t get that change out of my mind.”

Bo laughed, “Me, too. It’s like that should really be the words. They seem to fit better.”

When they pulled into the parking lot of his apartment, Bo said, “Hey, Burn why not come on up for a couple of beers and let’s shoot the shit for a while. I’m not ready to hit the sack yet. What do you say?”

Earle hesitated for a fraction of a second and then responded, “Sure, what the hell, I’ve got nothing to do tomorrow and if I go home now, I’ll just have to call on Mary Hand and play with myself.”

After they both shared their frustration at the lack of nookie with their current dates, the conversation turned to work, cars, sports and back again to girls. At 2:00 AM Bo and Earle decided to call it a night. “Good night, old buddy; it’s sure good to be back in Quaytown”, Earle said as he got out of the easy chair and stood up to leave.

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“Good night, Burn, it’s good to have you back. Despite the frustration of not getting some good lovin’, it was not a bad night, all told. Judy and Connie are good company and fun to be with, even if they are not going to put out”, Bo replied while stifling a yawn.

Then Earle drove back to his apartment, mentally recapping the evening.

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*Tuesday Afternoon, April 25, 1961...*

Camp David, Virginia...

James and his marine buddy Stan DelaCrois were standing guard in their parade dress uniforms and keeping a curious eye on the silent helicopter on the landing pad about fifty yards away. It had been thirty minutes since the Attorney General, Bobby Kennedy, an Army Major and an attractive Army woman sergeant had walked past James and Stan and gotten into the helicopter. The pilot was still in the copter, since it had arrived about fifteen minutes before Kennedy and his party had walked past the two Marines on guard and boarded the bird.

“Why haven’t they taken off yet”, James said curiously looking over at Stan. “It’s been a good half hour now and the pilot still hasn’t started up the rotors”.

“Didn’t you notice, the little bit of rocking on the skids?” asked Stan. Then he said with a smirk, “I’m guessing the A.T. is getting a little piece of ass in there; maybe the Major, too.”

“Nah! Really?” James replied, initially unsure. But then, accepting Stan’s observation, “Well, I’ll be damned. Certainly explains the delay and as you say, if there was a bit of bouncing of the bird carriage over the skids, that means we just witnessed the A.T. doing the dirty with someone other than his wife.” Then he added jokingly rubbing his white gloved hands together, “Hmmm, there ought to some way we could cash in on this.”

Stan chuckled. Just then the helicopter’s rotors started to rotate and the noise from the bird was too loud for further conversation until it had negotiated it’s lift off, made a turn toward Washington D.C. and sped off, leaving the wooded confines of Camp David.

When it was quiet enough to talk again, Stan looked over at James and said, “Hein, what do you make of our orders concerning the little Kennedy girl, Caroline? What’s with that? All of us in the Guard, when we’re on duty here at the Camp and the Kennedy family is here, have to jump into the woods, the Captain said.”

James shrugged his shoulders and replied, “It’s just what the Captain ordered us. First Lady, Jackie, doesn’t want her little girl to see us in uniform...she must think we will frighten

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the girl.” Then James added in jest, “I don’t see how I’d frighten the girl, but if she got a look at you with or without uniform, she’d probably scream her bloody head off and piss in her pants.”

“You shithead!” Stan shot back, and they both chuckled.

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On May 1, Castro declares there will be no more elections in Cuba, and the Pulitzer Prize is awarded to Harper Lee for his book, To Kill a Mockingbird. On May 5, Alan Shepherd becomes the first American in space, aboard the Freedom 7 spacecraft. On May 21, Alabama Governor Patterson declares martial law in Montgomery following an attack by a white mob on a group of Freedom Riders, which followed an earlier bombing and burning of a bus that was carrying Freedom Riders from Washington, D.C. to Alabama to conduct peaceful protests for civil rights. On May 25, President Kennedy sets a goal for the U.S. to put a man on the moon by the end of the decade. On May 28, the Orient Express makes its last trip from Paris to Bucharest after 78 years. On May 31, Judge Irving Kaufman orders the Board of Ed in New Rochelle, NY to integrate the schools.

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*Memorial Day, Monday Afternoon, May 28, 1961...*

Memorial Day is traditionally the day when the Jersey Shore awakens from the prior nine months of semi-hibernation in hungry anticipation of the summer tourist season. The extra traffic brings vacationers and day trippers from North and West Jersey, New York, and the Philadelphia areas to fill up the motels, hotels, rental cottages, restaurants, beaches and bars. The tourists come for the sun and the fun, but they also bring the most cherished of gifts –lots and lots of cash. It is the juice that makes the Jersey Shore towns hum with renewed energy as they emerge from the sleepy, restful months of the other three seasons. It is the largesse that allows many of the permanent residents, entrepreneurs, second home owners and lots of college students to make enough money to carry them until the next summer.

At one o’clock, Bo, Earle, Rafe, James, Nathan and a friend of his were sharing a several blankets on the beach at Sea Bright, conveniently located in their favorite area, about thirty feet from the ocean at high tide, and more importantly about sixty feet from the back door of the Danish Hop bar. James was home on leave from the Marines and had surprised the others when he called upon his arrival after hitchhiking home from D.C.

Nathan had brought along girl named Pam Rambler. Since Nathan did not drive, Pam drove the two of them to the beach. Like Nathan, Pam was black. She was a graduate of St. John’s in Mason and had such a likeable personality that she was immediately liked by the others. Pam had an attractive and sexy appearance. She had her hair cut in a similar fashion as

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## Beach Party Days: Chapter 15

Tina Turner, and indeed if you looked closely at her face, she looked a good deal like Tina, so much so that she could have passed for Tina's sister. Pam wore a black one-piece form fitting bathing suit that accentuated the curves of her body. Her body and face had a creamy smooth texture with a color of milk chocolate. Like Tina, she had the same square shoulders and firm yet smooth, silky neck. But there the similarities nearly ended. Pam's arms were more delicately feminine than Tina and she was not as muscular through the torso, hips and legs. Pam was slimmer in the hips and ass, but when she walked she had a very sexy roll to those hips and butt. Her legs were not skinny, just well-defined long muscles that tapered down to thin ankles and average sized feet for her height at 5' 5". There was yet one more likeness to Tina and that was Pam's husky voice, which only added to her sex appeal.

Scattered around them were other girls and guys who had graduated with them from QHS. It was the official opening day of the beach. Immediately adjacent to the four guys on separate blankets were five girls from Ruby Creek Catholic School, who had graduated in 1959 and 1960. One of these five girls was a neighbor of Rafe's, Mary Sue O'Brien, who had just gotten her own car. Rafe had suggested that she and her girl-friends go to Sea Bright and meet up with Rafe and his friends for a sort of beach party. The other four girls were Phyllis Marnellen, Penny Cogan, Patty Riley, and Clare Nelson. All five of the girls were attractive. With the exception of Penny and Clare who were blonds, the other three all had black hair. While the girls all referred to Phyllis as Marnie, a contraction of her surname, the other four referred to one another by their surnames, for example Mary Sue would say, "Hey, Cogan, hand me a coke."

Signs were posted at all entrances to the beach stating that alcoholic beverages were not allowed on the beach. The beach patrol would eject anyone who was caught drinking alcohol on the beach. But Earle had hid a pint of bourbon in a brown paper bag in his beach towel. The girls brought food: fried chicken, chips, and cokes. Bo and Rafe brought paper plates, napkins and a large cooler filled with ice for the cokes. After the nine of them drank off a little coke, Earle carefully poured a little bourbon into each of the coke bottles, while the other guys and gals kept a look out. Within a short time the girls were giddy, but after eating some food they soon sobered up. The guys took a quick dip in the ocean which was quite cold at the beginning of the season, and helped negate the effects of the booze.

Around three o'clock the guys decided to go into the Hop and have a couple of beers. The girls all declined. "We want to get a start on our summer tans", Mary Sue said.

In the Hop the guys began talking about sports, in particular what was happening in Major League Baseball, and whether the National or the American League was the strongest overall. "It looks like those damn Yankees are going to finish at the top of the American League again", asserted James. "And the Dodgers look like winners in the National League", he lamented. James had been a Phillies fan since he was a freshman in high school back in 1955.

After some banter back and forth in reaction to James's opening comments on baseball, the talk made a decided turn to be about the girls out on the beach. Aside from Mary Sue, whom Rafe's buddies had seen on occasion across the street when at Rafe's house, the others were all



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new territory for them. Presumably the Ruby Creek girls back on the beach were in turn talking about the four guys. Nathan was pumped for information about his friend Pam and he explained that they were just friends, not lovers; he had known her for about a year and had met her at St. John's church. About the time of the second round of beers, James said, "Rafe, weren't you dating Kim Whitestone? What's happening with her?"

Rafe didn't want to tell the whole story. He didn't want to reveal that one night on a date at the end of April Kim announced to him that she had missed her period. They had had sex several times since that first time in March, and he had always used a rubber, but it was still possible that she was pregnant. Rafe was prepared to do the honorable thing and marry Kim. It would put a crimp on both of their plans for college and the future, but Rafe truly liked Kim and he was sure that she more than liked him and they would try to make a go of it. The scary thing was how would they tell their parents and what would be their reaction? As it turned out Kim had her period two weeks late and they both breathed a sigh of relief. But it was obvious that they would have to stop dating.

So Rafe answered honestly, but in a way that avoided that incident, "Oh, well, Kim's got a summer job as a lifeguard at one of those Sea Bright beach clubs up along the peninsula. She started this weekend. But we're not dating anymore...we didn't want to get tied down. She's going off to college as a freshman in September, and I'm planning on going back to Milton."

"And how about you, Bo, are you still dating that girl from Ulster Beach?" James inquired.

"You mean Judy", Bo answered, "no she's a lot of fun, but I'm not ready for a serious relationship right now."

"Me thinks the Bo still has a thing for that sweet little Martha", James said teasing with a grin.

"Ha! Me thinks you've had too much to drink", Bo said with a laugh. "Shit! I haven't thought about her in a long time. Damn it, Hein, now you've got me thinking about her again." And they all laughed.

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Memorial Day 1961 ended, but it was the prelude to a summer that became so firmly imprinted in the memories of the Bo, Earle, James, and Rafe that it eventually took on the mystique of the best summer of their lives. The next three months would cement a friendship among the four of them that eventually bridged a generation, ultimately leading to a reunion nearly forty years later that resumed their friendship.

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Summer of 1961: On June 16, Soviet ballet dancer Rudolf Nureyev defects to West in Paris. On June 19, the U.S. Supreme Court strikes down a provision in Maryland's constitution requiring state office holders to believe in God. Also on June 19, Kuwait declares independence from U.K, and on June 24, Iraq demands dominion over Kuwait, but Kuwait refuses to be usurped. On July 7, James R. Hoffa is elected chairman of Teamsters. On July 15, Spain accepts equal rights for men and women. On July 31, Israel welcomes its one millionth immigrant. On August 9, James B Parsons becomes the first black appointed to Federal District Court. On August 16, Martin Luther King protests for black voting rights in Miami. On August 18, Russia erects the Berlin Wall to separate Communist controlled East Berlin from the West Berlin, which is under U.S. and UN protection as part of the free, democratic state of West Germany.

Baseball is "America's pastime"; the major sport in the country. The whole nation watches with excitement as Mickey Mantle and Roger Maris compete against each other in an effort to break Babe Ruth's home run record of 60 homers in a single season.

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*Saturday afternoon, June 3, 1961...*

Earle, Bo, James, Rafe, Nathan and Pam Rambler were sitting on bar stools on the left side of the bar in the Danish Hop at Sea Bright. They had walked in off the beach and were working on their third round of drinks -- beers for the guys and a screwdriver for Pam. Beers at the Hop went for twenty-five cents for a seven ounce fluted glass, and a screwdriver or just about any mixed drink cost seventy-five cents. The Ruby Creek girls, Mary Sue O'Brien, Phyllis "Marnie" Marnellen, and Patty Riley had returned to the beach after one round of beers and whiskey sours. Penny Cogan had not come in the Hop; she was out on the beach talking with one of the life guards, Bill Kinney, who had graduated from QHS in 1958 and was a star on the QHS Basketball Team that year.

Vi, the barmaid was busy serving drinks on the opposite side of the bar. No one knew Vi's last name, nor did anyone know the last name of the old fellow, Al, who was sitting down at the end of the bar nearest the rear door to the beach. Al was the perennial bar fly, who hung out at the Hop and performed some cleanup tasks for free drinks. Like he would sweep the floor and clean the rest rooms. He was what some would call an old bum. But he was a likeable old guy, with hair turned snow white and teeth in obvious need for dental work. And one of the odd things about him was the shape of his thumbs; they were curled outward like inverse hooks with long finger nails just begging for a nail trimmer. The other noticeable thing about Al was that he liked to play one of Elvis's recent hits, "Are You Lonesome Tonight" on the jukebox. Al would play it several times a day and sing along with it while sipping his beer. He had just played the song again...

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*Are you lonesome tonight, do  
you miss me tonight?  
Are you sorry we drifted apart? Does your  
memory stray to a brighter sunny day When I  
kissed you and called you sweetheart?  
Do the chairs in your parlor seem empty and bare?  
Do you gaze at your doorstep and picture me there?  
Is your heart filled with pain, shall I come back again?  
Tell me dear, are you lonesome tonight?...*

At this point in the song Elvis goes into talking the lyrics, which is a rather long bridge in the song. The talking part was one of the trademarks of earlier black singing groups, initially the Ink Spots, and later a number of groups like the Five Keys, the early Drifters, and the Harptones. Al spoke the words along with Elvis and his eyes misted over...

“I wonder if you're lonesome tonight  
You know someone said that the world's a stage  
And each must play a part.  
Fate had me playing in love, you as my sweet heart.  
Act one was when we met, I loved you at first glance  
You read your line so cleverly and never missed a cue  
Then came act two, you seemed to change and you acted strange  
And why I'll never know.  
Honey, you lied when you said you loved me  
And I had no cause to doubt you.  
But I'd rather go on hearing your lies  
Than go on living without you.  
Now the stage is bare and I'm standing there  
With emptiness all around  
And if you won't come back to me  
Then make them bring the curtain down...”

Then Elvis finishes with a last stanza that he sings. Al wiped his hands across his eyes with the odd thumbs curled outward from his face and then he pushed his empty beer glass toward the inside of the bar, apparently a signal to Vi that he'd like a refill.

Rafe had been curiously watching old Al, but the others were less than interested in Al and actively talking about the beach party that was on the agenda for tonight. Bo was sitting between Rafe on his right and Earle on his left; he elbowed Rafe to get his attention and ordered

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in a friendly way, “Hey, Rafe, fork over some cash for the beer and chips for the party tonight. Earle and I will pick it up and bring it in my big cooler”. James and Nathan had already thrown in three dollars each. Rafe had a fiver and two singles on the bar, so he gave the fiver to Bo, and Bo slid over two singles change.

James was on the stool on Earle’s left and Nathan and Pam were on the stools on to the right of Rafe. By now most of the other beach goers, who had come in to wet their whistle, had returned to the beach, leaving only a few regulars from the town. The group of six was now the only ones on the left side of the bar. With no music playing the bar had suddenly quieted down.

Earle turned to James and said, “Now, that Patty Riley, I like the looks of her. She’s cute and attractive. Reminds me of a girl I dated at LSC last year. I think I might just ask her out.”

“Well, don’t let me stop you, Burn!” James responded with a hearty laugh.

Bo jumped in with, “She’ll be at the beach party tonight, Burn. What better opportunity.”

“I guess I’m a little gun shy after Connie Sexton”, Earle said with a shrug of his shoulders.

Then Pam, who had been politely listening, got off her stool and walked over to Earle and offered, “Well, Burn, if you’d like, I’ll casually mention to her when we go back out to the beach, or tonight at the beach party, that you’re interested.”

“You’d do that?” said Earle rhetorically. “But I’d hate to ask her and be rejected”.

“Don’t worry, Burn. I’ll be discreet and if she shows the least sign that she would not say ‘yes’, when you ask her out, I’ll tell you before you ask. Just wait for me to tell you what she says.” Pam responded.

“Gee, thanks!” Earle replied to Pam, “Much appreciated.”

“Well, if we’re going to firm up plans for tonight, we better get back out on the beach, before the others leave. Its 3:30 PM,” Nathan announced as he got up off his stool.

“Yeah, I could use another dip in the ocean to sober up, before driving home”, Rafe said and got up off his stool.

“Right, me, too”, said Bo.

And the rest of the gang got up. They each left a dollar tip for Vi and walked out the rear door and on to the blankets on the beach. The group from Ruby Creek welcomed them back; they

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 16

had added a couple of guys who had also graduated from Ruby Creek Catholic. In addition, several others from QHS had heard about a party being planned for the evening and began congregating around the blankets.

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*Later that night...*

“Shush!” Rafe said to Clare Nelson, who was giggling a bit too loudly. “We’ve got to be quiet”, Rafe whispered the admonishment.

The ice and beer bottles in the heavy cooler were making a swishing and clanging noise as the cooler swayed back and forth. Bo, who had the handle on one side of the large flip-top, metal chest, whispered to Earle, who had the opposite handle, “Burn, slow it down! We’re banging the beer and sloshing the ice”.

Earle whispered back, “Damn it Bo, I’m going as easy as I can in this sand. I can’t help it if you’re too damn short and can’t hold the cooler at the same level as me.”

“With those friggin’ long, gorilla arms of yours, you and I should be holding this cooler at the same level”, Bo shot back in jest, just above a whisper.

“Shh!” Rafe whispered to Bo and Earle. Some of the others in the group had smaller coolers for their own personal choice of booze or non-alcoholic drinks. At least half of the group, except Earle and Bo were carrying beach blankets and towels; all of the gals carried their obligatory purses within beach tote bags.

The group of eighteen guys and gals were attempting to sneak through a trailer park located between a single lane road at the bottom of the Bayshore Highlands Mountain and a deep secluded beach area on the bay. There were two dozen trailer homes in the park in three rows of eight. The gang was in the process of negotiating the sandy pathway between two of the rows of trailers without the residents becoming aware that the group was traversing through the property. The sign at the entrance to the trailer park was the reason for the group’s stealth. It read “Private Property. No Trespassing”. It had been dark for a half hour and aside from a street lamp at the entrance to the park, only the occasional lights emanating out from windows of a few of the trailers, along with the light of the half-moon, which played peek-a-boo with passing clouds, provided sufficient vision for the group snaking its way through the rows of trailers.

Fifteen minutes later the entire group had managed to make it over a large sand dune to the beach without alerting any of the residents in the trailers. They quickly unloaded their burdens and spread the blankets out on various patches of sand in a sort of rectangular pattern. A gentle breeze blew in from the bay causing the water to lap up against the shoreline with a soft, soothing sound that is familiar to beach lovers everywhere.

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“Ok, who’s got the church key?” asked, Timmy Rush, one of the new comers from the Ruby Creek Catholic crowd, who was among the first to help himself to a beer out of the large cooler. He had graduated in 1959 from RCC along with Mary Sue O’Brien, Marnie Marnellen, Patty Riley, Penny Cogan, Clare Nelson and George Keller, and together they made up the group from RCC.

“Oh, shit!” Bo exclaimed and looking at Earle, said almost pleadingly, “Burn, I hope you remembered to bring one, because I totally forgot.”

“Hell, no, Bo, I thought you brought one!” Earle replied with a touch of pending doom in his voice.

“I brought one”, announced Danny French, one of the QHS group who had joined the group at Sea Bright earlier in the day. Danny was with Betty Armstrong, a cousin of Dana Sloane. Betty had just graduated from QHS. Dana was with Paul O’Leary; they had been dating since the Senior Prom. Also from QHS was Valerie Kalinsky, who had graduated from QHS with the class of 1960.

“Thank God, saved by a QHS classmate”, Rafe said, as he gently slapped Danny on the back. The church key was passed around and when everyone had a beer or whatever drink they had brought, James raised his beer in a toast and said, “Here’s to the sequel to the movie, ‘Beach Party Bingo’, starring the crew from QHS and RCC. I’m not sure who will be playing the part of Frankie Avalon, Annette Funicello, or Sandra Dee, but perhaps we can arrange for a screen test after you all have had several more drinks”. Everyone laughed and raised their drinks to the toast.

Following the toast, the group stood around for a few minutes drinking and talking. When the talking started to get a bit loud, someone, other than Rafe this time, shushed the crowd to remind them that they were still not that far away from the trailer park. Then after the initial drinks were consumed, some of the crowd sat down on their shared blankets, and a few of those who had come as couples started to walk down the beach for a little more privacy.

True to her promise, Pam Rambler had sidled up to Patty Riley and initiated a conversation during which she would adroitly sound out Patty to see if she had an interest in getting to know Earle better. She looked Patty over with the discerning eye that only one woman can apply to another. “She has a very pretty face, for a white girl”, Pam smiled at her inner thought, supposing that she might be discriminating just a bit and letting a bit of prejudice cloud her judgment. Pam shook off the thought and focused on her training as a nurse. She quickly evaluated Patty’s physical presence with a more professional eye. Patty was about 5’ 4” with thick natural raven black hair on that pretty face; dark brown almost black eyes, with thick black eyebrows, teased just enough to form a graceful arc; full soft lips on a wide, generous mouth; cheek bones that were set high on the face, just a little below the eyes, and a face that tapered down to include two well-formed dimples and a narrow, almost pointy chin. As for the body, she

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could see why boys would be more than attentive to Patty; full bosom, tapered waist with just a hint of handles above the full hips; legs? They were decent, but a bit muscular.

“Are you dating anyone?” Pam asked Patty.

“No, not at the moment”, Patty replied.

“There are a lot of guys here that seem unattached”, Pam responded nonchalantly, “any that caught your eye?”

Patty didn't know Pam that well and was somewhat reluctant to open up, so she shrugged her shoulders as if to say “I'm not sure”.

Then Pam said, “I guess it's difficult when you just meet new guys; you're not sure what they will be like on a date, and after a couple of dates. But I've been around these Quaytown guys for a while. If I were not black, I might like to get to know that tall guy, Earle, better. I think he's a bit shy, but he's been all around the country and probably is an interesting fellow.”

Patty looked at Pam and then over at where Earle was standing talking with Bo, Rafe, James, Nathan, Mary Sue and several others. Then she looked back at Pam and said quietly, “He is attractive in a gruff sort of way and I do like tall guys. He has that southern accent, too.”

“Well, maybe I shouldn't tell you this, but I did overhear him tell one of his friends that he was thinking of asking you for a date.” Pam said.

“I'd probably say yes, if he did”, responded Patty.

Pam couldn't be sure, but she suspected that she had been a bit too obvious in playing matchmaker and Patty had sensed it. But nevertheless she felt she had accomplished what she promised Earle. And to be truthful, Pam thought that Earle and Patty would make a good couple, despite not having known them for very long, but Pam was rather perceptive about people, even on first impressions.

Just then George Keller was attempting to light a camp fire on the beach. He had gathered some dry driftwood and crumpled up a couple of paper bags from some of the snacks that people had brought. He had reacted to something that Mary Sue had said to Rafe and the group she was standing with. The breeze had picked up and Mary Sue had almost finished her cold beer and started to giggle. She announced between giggles that her front teeth were numb. Mary Sue did not handle alcohol well; she had not had much practice at it, having only tried it occasionally after graduating RCC in 1959. So after one drink she was getting a bit silly.

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But before George could get the fire ignited, Bo told him that it probably was not a good idea, because it might attract the attention of someone from the trailer park, and they might call the police. So George abandoned the attempt. Nathan who also felt a chill coming on with the breeze kicking up said, "Maybe we need to find a better place to hold the next beach party, so we can have a small camp fire."

"Good idea", Earle agreed.

"Yeah, maybe we can look around for another beach", Rafe chimed in.

Timmy Rush overheard the discussion and stepped in closer to the group. "I know of a beach just a few miles from here. It's called the Viking Steps."

"How do we get there?" asked Bo and Rafe simultaneously.

"The best way is to come in from Main Street in Bayshore Highlands and up onto Mountain Drive. Then just about a quarter mile before you get to the highest point, you turn down this winding road to where the road dead ends. You can park up to about 10 cars there. Then you have to walk down this terraced dirt pathway through an opening in the woods to the beach, which is where the steps comes in. Rumor has it that a long time ago a Viking ship came into the bay and was run aground on the beach by a storm. That's how it became known as the Viking Steps. Once you're on the beach it is very private. It's protected on both sides and back by the mountain."

"Sounds like the place for our next nighttime beach party", Nathan said.

"Yes", Bo agreed, and Rafe and Earle nodded their assent.

"We should check it out tomorrow in the daylight", Rafe suggested.

Bo responded, "Let's do it on our way back from Sea Bright. We'll all be at Sea Bright tomorrow except for Hein, who has to go back to the Marine base in D.C., but we don't need all of us here to go. Earle, Rafe and I can check it out with Timmy."

At this point, Pam had left Patty to talk with Penny and Marnie and come over to Earle. She gave Earle the thumbs up and after a few minutes Earle collared James to go with him to talk to the group that Patty was with. It was James's job to get Penny and Marnie engaged in conversation, so that Earle could get Patty's attention to ask her out and get her phone number.

Pam and Nathan sat down on their blanket. Rafe and Mary Sue continued to talk with



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Timmy and George, and James had guided Marnie and Penny over. Dana and Paul and Liz and Danny had wandered off down the beach. Bo had struck up a conversation with Valerie and had wandered off in the opposite direction from Dana, Paul, Liz and Danny. Earle finally had his chance. He swallowed hard and screwed up his courage. Controlling his voice he quietly asked Patty if she would like to go on a date with him. She smiled and answered in the affirmative. Earle got her phone number which he repeated over and over in his mind, since he didn't have anything to write with. He later had both Rafe and Bo memorizing the number just in case he forgot it after he got home where he would write it down. He needn't have worried, he would see Patty on the beach at Sea Bright again tomorrow and could have gotten to write it down then, with help from Vi at the Hop.

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*One week later, Saturday evening, June 10, 1961... ..*

*I said Hello Mary Lou Goodbye heart  
Sweet Mary Lou  
I'm so in love with you  
I knew Mary Lou  
We'd never part  
So Hello Mary Lou  
Goodbye heart...*

Rafe was singing "Hello, Mary Sue" in deference to his neighbor Mary Sue, as Ricky Nelson's latest hit, "Hello, Mary Lou Goodbye Heart" was playing on the radio in Earle's car. Earle was negotiating the winding road down the dark hill off of Mountain Road. There were five other cars in the caravan following Earle down the hill. Bo, James and Rafe were in Earle's car. Behind Earle was Mary Sue driving Patty, Marnie, and Clare. Behind Mary Lou were Pam and Nathan in Pam's car. Behind Pam were Timmy and George in Timmy's car. Behind Timmy were Dana, Paul, Liz and Danny in Dana's car. And in the fifth car, Valerie was a passenger with a new girl to the group, Jill Howard, who had graduated from QHS in the same class as Valerie; Jill was driving her Brother's 1959 Corvette.

When the song ended, James announced that next weekend he had a date and would be at the beach in Sea Bright on Saturday afternoon, but would be skipping the Saturday night beach party.

"Is it that gal you were putting the hustle on at Sea Bright today, Hein?" asked Rafe.

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“Yeah”, James answered excitedly, “her name is Lorrie Bolles; she’s from Ulster Beach and graduated from Ruby Creek Catholic last month. I’m picking her up for Sea Bright during the day and then taking her to the drive-in next Saturday night.”

“Good for you, Hein!” Bo said.

“Way to go, Hein!” Earle added as he neared the end of the road. “We’re here, guys. I’m going to park a bit further up in that wider section, so the other cars can fit in behind us and there will be room to do a K turn to get back up the hill when we leave.”

“Good job, Burn”, said Bo, as the car came to a stop. The four of them piled out and waited for the other cars to park. Then Earle opened the trunk and he and Rafe pulled out the big cooler, while James and Bo grabbed the beach blankets and the bag with chips, Slim Jims, and Pretzels.

Once the rest of the crowd were out of their cars and had collected their beach party supplies, Earle and Rafe led them down the gradually descending ‘steps’ and onto the beach. There was no worry about being extremely quiet, as there were no houses within 100 yards in either direction. The sand on the beach glowed white in the light of the near full moon, with dark shadows scattered along the beach where vegetation, mostly dune grass, switch grass, broom grass, and sea rocket, had taken root on the numerous dunes. The group made their way toward the bay. The water was lapping gently against the shore. As they laid their blankets down, they surveyed the vacant beach. No one else was there. The beach ran a good 150 yards in length and about 70 yards in depth, in an amphitheater-like arena with high tree-lined hills on either end of the beach and behind, rising progressively upward to the road where the cars were parked. Private was an understatement. Secluded was more like it!

Within minutes drinks were handed out – this time several people remembered to bring church keys to open bottles and cans. Danny had brought wine and a corkscrew and dixie cups for the wine in a picnic basket. Several people had canvassed the beach and found enough dry driftwood for a fire. Like boy and girl scouts, someone produced a box of stick matches and enough paper bags to get the fire started, and it became a very nice fire indeed, with the flame initially rising up about two feet and then settling down to a steady flame as more driftwood was added as needed to maintain the fire.

With blankets laid out all around the fire, conversations and good natured kidding ensued, and the guys and gals from two very different schools and with different experiences began to get to know one another more than just superficially. A bond was forming among the entire group that would last not just through the summer of 1961, but on into future summers and the seasons between, through the summer of 1963. A few of the friendships that were formed between the people from QHS and RCC lasted well beyond 1963 and on into the late Sixties. The vagaries of

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life would ultimately take these young guys and gals in many different directions, but they would all remember the summers of 1961-1963, but mostly this summer of '61.

Gradually some of the guys and gals started to pair off. Danny and Liz went off in one direction. Paul and Dana went off in another direction. Then Bo and Valerie went off in yet another direction, and Earle and Patty went for a walk down the beach.

The rest of the crew continued to stay around the fire. They talked and laughed together, and had an occasional drink along with munching on pretzels, chips, or anything else available to help absorb the alcohol.

“Man, that watermelon we had on the beach today at Sea Bright was really good”, Rafe said to James.

“Damn right!” James added.

Rafe laughed and seeing the puzzled look on the faces of the others, he felt he had to explain, “Last night at Bo’s apartment we cut a small wedge out of the top of the watermelon and poured in a quart of vodka, then put the wedge back in. We let it sit all night to soak in and we brought it to the beach; with no alcohol allowed on the beach, who would have guessed that we were munching on pieces of watermelon embalmed in Vodka.”

Clare said, “I thought you guys were acting a little funny, especially when I saw a couple of you stagger and sit down in the sand, missing the blanket.” Everyone laughed.

As the night wound down toward Midnight, several of the gals with stricter parents began to get anxious about getting home. A call went out to those who had gone off to various parts of the beach (for necking it was assumed), and within minutes they all made their way back to the site of the camp fire. So, the fire was doused, the blankets picked up and shaken, and the refuse was bagged for dropping off in a garbage drop somewhere. The empty beer cans were dumped in the cooler for later disposal. With a last minute check that everyone had returned to the camp site and the fire was out, the crowd began their trek back across the beach and up the ‘steps’ to the waiting cars.

“My teeth are numb! I must be drunk! I don’t think I can drive.” Mary Sue announced as she got up to the top of the ‘steps’ by her car. Rafe was standing next to her, as James and Earle carried the cooler back to Earl’s car.

Rafe laughed at Mary Sue and said, “You only had maybe two beers; how can you feel you had too much?”

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“I don’t know, Rafe. I just know that my teeth are numb and...and look at that hill; it winds around up there and I don’t think I can drive up it and then all the way home,” Mary Sue said with a bit of a slur and a silly laugh, but Rafe suspected that she was serious and truly nervous about trying to drive.

“OK”, Rafe said, “How about I drive your car and drop off Patty, Clare and Marnie? And since you and I are neighbors, I let you drive the last 100 yards and drop me off, so your parents don’t get concerned?”

“Oh, Rafe, that’s the best idea I’ve heard all day. But we only need to drive Patty home, ‘cause Marnie left her car at my house...which as you probably know is across the street from your house.” Mary Sue said trying to be serious, but then laughing again.

All the other cars had left, except for Earle’s. Earle, Bo and James came over to see what was going on and to see if Rafe was ready to go with them. Rafe explained the situation. Patty suggested to Earle that if he took her home, he would know how to get to her house for their first date next Friday; in that way Rafe could just drive Mary Sue’s car to her house with Mary Sue and Marnie.

“OK”, James said, “looks like a plan. Let’s get the show on the road.” Rafe, Bo, and Earle remembered that Hein had to hitchhike back to D.C. tomorrow and needed to get some sleep tonight. So Patty went with Earle, James and Bo, and Rafe drove Mary Sue and Marnie in Mary Sue’s car, a ’57 blue and white Plymouth with an automatic transmission, which made it much easier to drive up the winding hill road, especially since Rafe was in reality more under the influence than Mary Sue.

“Put the radio on”, Marnie requested, having had enough of Mary Sue’s giddiness. Rafe turned the on/off dial to ‘on’ and the radio came on after a few seconds delay for the tubes to warm up. Cousin Brucie had just finished introducing the song, “Does Your Chewing Gum Lose Its Flavor (On the Bedpost Overnight)” by Lonnie Donegan, perhaps the silliest song of the year, but in the top five...

*... Does your chewing gum lose its flavor  
On the bedpost overnight  
If your mother says don't chew it  
Do you swallow it in spite  
Can you catch it on your tonsils  
Can you heave it left and right  
Does your chewing gum lose its flavor  
On the bedpost overnight*

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*Now the nation rise as one  
To send their only son  
Up to the White House  
Yes, the nation's only White House  
To voice their discontent  
Unto the Pres-I-dent  
They pawn the burning question  
What has swept this continent*

*(Lonnie speaks)  
If tin whistles are made of tin  
What do they make fog horns out of  
Boom, boom*

*Does your chewing gum lose its flavor  
On the bedpost overnight  
If your mother says don't chew it  
Do you swallow it in spite  
Can you catch it on your tonsils  
Can you heave it left and right  
Does your chewing gum lose its flavor  
On the bedpost overnight...*

True to his word, Rafe stopped the car one block up from Mary Sue's and his houses; they switched seats and Mary Sue, who had overcome the two beers and her giddiness on the ride home drove the final block faultlessly. Rafe said goodnight to the gals and walked over to his house. Marnie got in her car and drove to her home.

It was already Sunday and the whole gang would be back on the beach at Sea Bright again later that morning, tired but enjoying the summer weather and baking in the sun.

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*Friday evening, June 23, 1961...*

“Oh, Bo, don't stop!” Valerie whispered in Bo's ear. They were parked at the Grapevine, still a relatively secluded Lover's Lane in Middlebury. They were in Valerie's mother's car.

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Valerie and Bo had both been driving around downtown Quaytown on this Friday night and wound up meeting by chance at Stosh's Diner, when each had decided to stop for a coffee and something to eat. Bo had been sitting on one of the rotating padded stools at the counter, when Valerie arrived and crept up behind him, placed her hands over his eyes saying "Guess Who". They wound up sharing a booth and after coffee and a piece of apple pie ala mode, Valerie suggested that they go for a ride in her Buick. "Well, actually it's my mother's car, Bo", she confessed, as they got into the car, a 1959 white Buick Electra 4-door hardtop sedan with the huge canted tailfins, out on Ridge Street, where it was parked several cars behind Bo's.

Fact is they had dated twice since that earlier encounter at the first beach party at the Viking Steps. That first night had initiated a make out session when they had strolled down the beach away from the camp fire and found a sand dune to sit down behind...well actually to lay down behind. Since then each time they had been together, the physical attraction had gotten increasingly stronger, until Bo had concluded in his mind that, "soon; very soon, I'm going to bang Valerie." He sensed that she wanted to go all the way and, what the hell, he was horny as a rabbit that had just got a whiff of a female in heat.

They had been parked for almost 15 minutes and had been making out on the front bench seat of her mother's car. Things were really starting to heat up as the kisses and caresses became more and more sensual and urgent. Valerie wore a blue blouse buttoned in the front. Bo hastily unbuttoned her blouse and tugged her white bra up and over her full, round breasts. He kissed and ran his tongue all around those un-tanned, snow white mounds, finishing on the now firm, erect nipples.

Again Valerie repeated "Oh, Bo, don't stop!" Bo was hard as a rock by now. He reached behind her and rolled her on her hip so he could pull down the zipper at the back of her white, mid-thigh length shorts. He tugged the shorts off, as Valerie kicked off her penny loafers. Then Bo took out his wallet and clumsily extracted the foil covered rubber and set it on the dash board. Next he hurriedly unzipped his Khakis and slid them and his shorts down to his ankles. Valerie was hot to trot and quickly slid off her white silk panties.

Bo ripped open the foil encased Trojan rubber and rolled it on his throbbing dick. Valerie was in a near trance, breathing fast and deeply. Bo slid his hand down to the vee between her legs. "She's ready", he thought to himself and started to maneuver to put his cock into that moist channel.

At that moment Valerie whispered in Bo's ear, "Bo, I've had a crush on you since you were a Senior in QHS and I was just a Sophomore. I have dreamed of this night when I would lose my virginity to you."

Bo could not explain what the effect of that one sentence did to his ardor, but somewhere in the back of his mind a warning bell sounded. No, it was more like a siren. In his mind the

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thought flashed, “Is she going to want us to go steady? Or worse, is she going to expect me to marry her?” At that point Bo lost it. His erection started to soften. He was partly embarrassed and partly relieved at the sudden change. To Valerie he said regretfully, “Oh, God, I’m sorry, but I can’t do this. I can’t...I can’t be the one to take your cherry. I’m really sorry.”

Valerie was obviously shaken and tears formed in her eyes. But as Bo rolled off of her and started to pull his pants up, she reached out at his dick in an attempt to reinitiate what she had wanted to happen. But it was quickly obvious to her that the moment was gone and so she withdrew her hand, sat up and retrieved her panties from the floorboards. She got dressed along with Bo. Bo lit a Luck Strike and exhaled deeply as they sat together without speaking for several minutes. But soon the silence became hard to bear and Bo said once again, as he looked at her and shrugged his shoulders, “I’m sorry, Valerie, but I just couldn’t. I would feel like a heel, like I stole something that was...oh, I don’t know...something that was valuable and that I didn’t deserve”.

After a deep breath Valerie responded, “Ok, Bo, I still want you to make love to me...all the way...and maybe someday soon you will understand that it is Ok with me, whether you love me or not.” Tears began to form in her eyes again and Bo started to really feel like a heel.

Bo waited until Valerie wiped her eyes and then he said quietly, “I guess we’d better head back to the diner so I can pick up my car.”

“Right!” is all that Valerie could muster to say and they drove back to the diner in silence. When they reached Stosh’s, Bo reached over and stroked her gently on the shoulder. “Will I still see you?” she asked holding back a snuffle.

“Sure!” Bo said trying to ease the pain she felt and hide the mixed feelings he had. “I have a baseball game tomorrow afternoon, but there’ll be a beach party tomorrow night.” Then sensing that his answer was insufficient for her and that she wanted more, he added “And we’ll talk tomorrow night and set up another date to a movie or something”.

That seemed to mollify Valerie and she leaned over and they kissed goodnight.

As she drove home, Valerie turned on the radio. The song that was playing on WABC caused her to cry again so badly that she had to pull the car over on Ridge Street to compose herself. The song was the 1959 hit, “Since I Don’t Have You”, by the Skyliners...

*I don't have plans and schemes  
And I don't have hopes and dreams  
Baby, I just don't have anything  
Since I don't have you*

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*I don't have fond desires  
And I don't have happy hours  
Baby, I just don't have anything, anything  
Since I don't have you,*

*I don't have happiness, and I guess I  
never will ever again  
When you walked out on me  
In walked old misery  
And he's been here since then*

*I don't have love to share  
And I don't have one who cares  
Baby, I just don't have anything  
Since I don't have you...*

When the song ended, Valerie composed herself and resumed driving to her home. She was relieved when she entered the home and her parents were asleep.

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*Saturday afternoon, June 24, 1961...*

Earlier in the spring, sometime in April, Rafe had seen an article in the Quaytown Weekly about a baseball team being formed by a man named Donny Franco. The team was named the Holmvale Thunder and according to the article there were to be tryouts at a ball field in Holmvale on the next Saturday afternoon. Rafe had mentioned it to Bo and Earle the next day as the three of them car pooled to work at Emerson. Earle had long given up on baseball, so he was not in the least interested. Bo, on the other hand, after a moment's consideration said, "What the hell; why not"

"Ok, I'll meet you there", Rafe said.

At the tryouts both Bo and Rafe made the cut along with a number of other guys they had played baseball with at QHS and against from competing high schools. Several of the QHS guys had been on their 1959 QHS Championship team when they won the Seacoast Conference.

On this Saturday afternoon of June 24, the Holmvale Thunder had just finished playing a baseball game against Joe Black and his "All Stars". It was a charity game with a portion of the gate money going to the "Boys Clubs of America". Joe Black had been a star relief pitcher for



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the Brooklyn Dodgers before the franchise was moved to Los Angeles. He had appeared in World Series games and was well known in the New York metropolitan area until he “retired” in 1959. Like most relief pitchers of the day that relied on being able to blow a fastball past the batters, he had lost a little speed on that fastball and his contract was not renewed by the Dodgers, and no other clubs seemed interested.

So, Joe began to barnstorm around the east coast and in each stop he arranged through contacts to form an “All Star” team made up of local talent, mostly ball players who had been or were still playing minor league baseball. Then with advertising in local and major city newspapers, games were arranged for charity events against local baseball teams. In each of these games, to satisfy the local fans who would pay the gate fee to see the famous ex-major league ballplayer, Joe would appear and play half of the game as the starting pitcher. One of his signature mannerisms was that when he warmed up, he would start to throw the ball from a distance about ten feet further than the sixty foot, six inch distance between home plate and the pitcher’s mound. This was ostensibly to make him feel like he could throw the ball faster when he started to pitch from the shorter, normal distance.

As the game ended with the Thunder defeating the Joe Black All Stars 9-7, Rafe and Bo sat down together on the away team bench to remove their baseball cleats and put on their shoes for the drive home. After sharing congratulations with Donny and their other teammates, and they were alone on the bench, Bo said quietly, “Hey, Rafe, you know I’ve been dating Valerie Kalinsky since we started the beach parties.”

“Yeah, how’s that going?” Rafe asked as he slipped on the second of his loafers.

“You are not going to believe this”, Bo said as he looked around to be sure no one else was in ear shot, “but we were out at the grapevine last night and this morning I get a call from Valerie, all upset. Seems somehow, I don’t know how ‘cause I just don’t remember how it happened, but her mother found a rubber on the front floorboard of car.”

Rafe’s initial reaction was a short, confused laugh. “How the hell did that happen and why was her mother looking in Valerie’s car?”

“It was her *mother’s* car”, Bo said emphatically. “We ran into each other by chance at Stosh’s Diner last night and she suggested we go for a ride in her mom’s big ole’ Buick. One thing led to another, and we were at the Grapevine going at it hammer and tong.”

“So what did you do? Forget to discard the rubber after screwing her?” Rafe asked still a bit confused.

Bo replied “No, no! I couldn’t do it. I mean I *wouldn’t* do it. She started to say all these things about having wanted to have sex with me since we were in high school, and...”

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“So what was the problem?” Rafe asked not understanding.

Bo answered, “Just as I was about to slip it to her, she told me she was still a virgin and had waited for me since high school to be the guy who took her cherry, and that just shook me up. I started to think about what would happen if the rubber broke and she got pregnant, or what if after we did it she wanted to go steady or get married. Then I just couldn’t do it. I pulled out and she started to cry and then I don’t know how, but I forgot about the rubber and never realized it had fallen off on the floor.”

Rafe couldn’t help but smile and then the thought of Mrs. Kalinsky gingerly picking up the rubber like it was a dead mouse caused him to burst out laughing.

“Damn it, Rafe, it’s not funny! I won’t be able to look her mother in the eye. I don’t think I would even be allowed to go there and pick Valerie up for a date ever again, even if I wanted to”, Bo said with exasperation.

But after Rafe explained the vision he had of Mrs. Kalinsky picking up the rubber, Bo saw the humor of it and started to laugh along with Rafe.

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*Saturday afternoon, July 1, 1961 (start of July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend)...*

Bo and Rafe were driving down the Garden State Parkway in the 1954 tan Ford that Bo had bought from his dad last year. They were on the way to Wildwood. Jimmy Barrone had invited them down for the weekend.

Earle had been invited, too, but he had a date with Patty Riley; things were getting interesting there he told them, so he didn’t want to let a weekend go by without a date with her, before he went back to Louisiana at the end of the summer. Earle had decided that he wanted to go back to college at LSC, but he wanted to see where this summer romance was heading. “I think I’m getting close to getting in her pants”, he told Bo and Rafe on the commute to work yesterday.

James was still hitchhiking home from the Marine barracks in D.C. on just about every weekend and had been spending most of his time with Lorrie Bolles at Sea Bright on Saturday. On Saturday nights he and Lorrie alternated between the beach parties at the Viking Steps and on

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solo dates to the drive-in. “Things were moving along”, was all that James would admit to, but it was becoming clear to the others that his frequent trips home were romantically motivated.

Barrone was working down Wildwood, tending bar. He was sharing a rental house with a group of his college mates from Glenboro College, who also had summer jobs at various places around the boardwalk. So, Bo and Rafe decided to take Jimmy up on his enticement, since a couple of the Glenboro guys went home on weekends and there would be room for Bo and Rafe to sleep over.

“Only about a half-hour more and we’ll get off the exit for Wildwood”, Bo said expectantly as he looked over at Rafe.

“It will be good to see Barrone again”, Rafe replied. “Last time he was home was Spring Break”.

“Yeah, and before that was that weekend trip we took down to Glenboro in February to watch Jimmy play basketball. Jimmy was on the Jayvees and his older brother, Tony, played varsity.” Bo added.

“Right; I remember we slept overnight in a dorm and it was really cold. We went out for Pizza after the Varsity game.”

Both guys fell silent for a few minutes lost in their private thoughts. Then suddenly Bo said rhetorically, “You know that girl I met down at Sea Bright a couple of weekends ago; Joan Callaway?” Before Rafe could respond, Bo continued, “I called her up and asked her out.”

Rafe looked over at Bo to try and decipher what Bo was thinking. “I saw you go over to the blanket she and another girl was sharing. You spent a good deal of time talking with them and I figured you were putting on the charm. So, where is this Joan from?”

“She’s from Ulster Beach and just graduated from QHS this year.” Bo replied.

Rafe thought a second, and then said, “Huh, she must have been a Sophomore when we graduated. Funny, but she didn’t look familiar.”

“Maybe that’s because she just transferred in from Ruby Creek Catholic in our Senior Year”, Bo said.

“Well, good luck with that. Just don’t leave any rubbers in her mother’s car”, Rafe ribbed Bo jokingly. Bo started to laugh and then Rafe joined in.

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The parkway exit was just up ahead. Bo rolled down the driver side window, put his arm out to signal a right turn and moved into the exit lane. Fifteen minutes later they had reached the house where Jimmy was staying.

“Hey there, I see you made it with my directions”, said Jimmy as he opened the door to their knock.

“Rafe navigated and we didn’t make one wrong turn”, Bo responded.

“Ok, here’s the scoop,” Jimmy informed them, “I have to tend bar for a few hours, until 8:00 pm, at Sullivan’s Bar on the boardwalk. Now, there’s a 6:00 o’clock rock and roll show at the armory, a couple of blocks from Sullivan’s...some black guy, I think his name is Clyde McPhatter. Anyway, you could go see that, its five bucks to get in, or just hang out until I get out of work and meet you.”

“I know of Clyde McPhatter; he used to be the lead singer for the original Drifters, but went solo sometime around 1955.” Rafe said “He sang lead for the Drifters on ‘Money, Honey’, and a few other songs. One of his big solo hits was ‘Treasure of Love’”.

“Ok, I think I’d like to see the show”, Bo said. “I remember those songs from the Alan Freed radio show”.

“Ok”, then, its settled”, Jimmy said. “Why don’t you meet me at Sullivan’s after the show and we’ll go bar hopping. And if you walk with me to Sullivan’s now, I’ll give you directions to the armory. You can stroll along the boardwalk and get something to eat before the show.”

“Let’s go”, Bo said. And they were off.

Following the Clyde McPhatter show, Bo and Rafe went immediately to Sullivan’s. Things were a little slow there and the late night bartender had arrived early, so Jimmy was able to get off a little early at 7:45. Jimmy led the other two guys first to one bar then another. At each bar they had three rounds of beers so that everything was equitable. In all they went to four bars. It was at the last of the four that things got out of hand.

As they stepped up to the bar at the fourth bar, Jimmy ordered the first round, “Bartender, give us three depth charges.”

“Depth charges? What the hell kind of drink is that?” Rafe asked. Bo seconded the question.

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“You’ll see”, Jimmy said with that sly grin that Rafe and Bo were only too familiar with. They sensed immediately that Jimmy was up to something. When the bartender returned, he placed on the bar three seven ounce beer glasses and then he turned and brought back three shot glasses and a bottle of Seagram’s Seven rye whiskey.

“Shots with a beer chaser?” Bo asked rhetorically?

“Just watch”, Jimmy said, still with that grin that made him look like a cat that had just swallowed a canary. And Jimmy took each shot glass in turn and dropped it right side up into each of the beer glasses. Now the shot glasses filled with whiskey were sitting at the bottom of the beer glasses. The grin got bigger as he looked at the other two friends and said, “Now the trick is to drink from the beer glass and drink down the whiskey and the beer at the same time without spilling a drop and not letting the shot glass past your lips.”

“You’ve gotta be shitting!” Rafe said and laughed, because he was already feeling a bit high on the beer they already consumed. Bo just smiled and nodded his head.

Jimmy picked up his glass and tipped it to his mouth and drank the depth charge drink down in one long swallow, slowly turning the glass up until the beer and hard stuff were drained. Then he looked over at Bo and Rafe and issued the challenge, “Your turn!”

Bo immediately accepted the challenge and drained his glass. Rafe had some reservations about mixing whiskey and beer other than as drinking the whiskey and then sipping on the beer as a chaser. He had seen his dad drink shots and beer chasers, but drinking both at the same time? He looked over at Jimmy and Bo, who were both now silently issuing the challenge. Ok, Rafe said to himself, here goes nothing. He lifted his glass to his mouth and turned it slowly up. At first the taste of barley and hops in the beer was familiar and then the sour/sweet mixture of whiskey and beer rolled over his tongue and flowed down his throat. Rafe finished his glass, practically slammed the glass down on the bar, and couldn’t suppress a cough and a shudder of his head as the after taste started to bounce back up from his stomach.

Jimmy laughed, but Bo just smiled like it was no big deal. Two more rounds ensued, paid first by Bo and then by Rafe. Rafe was feeling good now. He looked at Bo and Jimmy and wondered if they were feeling as high as he was now.

“Rafe, what’s that shit-eating grin all about?” Bo asked.

“I’m just feeling good, Bo”, Rafe answered with a laugh.

Jimmy looked over at the clock on the wall and said, “Oops! It’s after midnight and I am scheduled to open up the bar tomorrow morning at 7:00 A.M.”

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“Yeah, I’m a bit tired after that drive down today. I could use some shut-eye”, Bo responded.

“Yeah, I think I’ve had enough of those dep sharges,” Rafe said, realizing he had started to slur his words.

The three of them left tips on the bar, went to the men’s room to take a leak and left the bar. As they started down the street and turned at the corner toward the house where they were staying, a group of four gals were walking up ahead. When the guys reached the house, Rafe decided to follow the gals and said to Bo and Jimmy, “I’m gonna see if those girls have a party I can crash; see you guys later. Hey, Bo, why not come with me. There’s two of them for each of us”.

“Naw, I’m bushed and had way too much to drink. I need some sleep. You go ahead. You sure you’re Ok, and can find your way back?” asked Bo.

“Sshure”, Rafe answered with a laugh, and then started off after the four gals.

At the next block Rafe had closed the gap and called out to the gals, who had been talking and laughing and knew that a guy was following them, “Hey ladies, where you headed? If it’s a party, can I join you?”

The gals stopped and looked back. They waited for Rafe to catch up and one of them said, “We’ve already partied and we’re going back to the house we rented. But if you’d like to come with us for a nightcap, come along.”

So Rafe walked with them one more block to the house they had rented and went in with them. The four gals took seats on two couches and offered Rafe an easy chair. They offered Rafe a beer and he said “Ssure! Never turn down a beer!” One of the young ladies went and got him a beer and the other three opened a conversation with Rafe, one that he later could not recall.

But as Rafe settled into the easy chair, he realized something was amiss. He was seeing eight gals, when he knew that he had followed four of them. It slowly dawned on Rafe that he must be really drunk, because he was seeing double. So, he excused himself, said goodnight and left. He didn’t hear the laughter, but even if he had, the way he was feeling it would not have mattered.

How he got back to the house Jimmy rented he could not remember, but he found the house and the bedroom he was allotted. As soon as he lay down, the room started to spin and a few minutes later Rafe threw up on the floor next to the bed, then he fell asleep.

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On Sunday morning Bo woke up with a huge headache; it felt like something was pounding inside his head and threatened to explode a hole out of the top of his head and out through his eyes and ears. He went into the bedroom where Rafe was staying to wake him up and almost puked. The smell of the vomit from earlier that morning hung over the room like a dead rat. He shuffled over to the cot where Rafe was laying and shook him saying as loud as he could without increasing the pain in his head, “Rafe, get your ass out of bed. We’re supposed to meet Barrone at Sullivan’s for breakfast.” At the thought of food, Bo’s stomach rumbled and he moved back to the doorway to get further away from the smell.

Rafe stirred and opened his eyes. The smell invaded his senses and as he sat up to get out of bed, his head felt like he had been hit with a two-by-four. He forced himself to get up, almost stepped in the pool of vomit on the floor, and immediately his stomach felt like it was doing somersaults. “Oh, God”, he begged under his breath, “Please don’t let me puke again”.

Twenty minutes later Rafe had finished cleaning up the floor; he had found a dish towel that he used to wipe up the floor and then he found a bucket, a mop and a container of Mr. Clean he used to disinfect the floor. But somehow the odor was still clinging to the hairs in his nostrils, so he went back into the bathroom to wash the odor away. Bo was ready to go when Rafe came out of the bathroom. They looked at each other’s blood shot and puffy eyes and started to laugh, but it was cut short by the pain in their heads.

They walked through the hallway toward the front door. And then they remembered how the hallway in the house was slanted; it was lower at one wall than on the other, so that you had to walk in a list with one leg lower than the other. “Damn, this floor could make you feel drunk even without alcohol”, Bo said.

Ten minutes later they were sitting at a table in Sullivan’s, while Jimmy was tending bar. Jimmy walked over and tried to laugh, but it was obvious that he had not escaped a major hangover, as well. Rafe and Bo looked at the breakfast menu, then looked at each other and at Jimmy, and shook their heads ever so slowly and placed the menus back on the table. “I can’t look at food or even think about eating anything”, Rafe said while rubbing his temples.

“Me either”, responded Bo.

“How about a hair of the dog that bit us?” Jimmy asked.

“Oh, hell, no”, Bo said. Rafe shook his head slowly. Then Bo had a thought, “Maybe I could handle a Bloody Mary”.

“Why not; worth a try”, Rafe said.

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“Ok, Bloody Mary’s coming up”, Jimmy said as he went back to the bar to make the drinks.

“Don’t say, ‘coming up’” Rafe said, and He and Bo laughed, but gently.

Jimmy came back with three drinks and the three of them raised them in a toast, then drank them slowly. A little while later the three of them felt somewhat better. After a second round their stomachs were quieted and the headaches were bearable. They had planned to stay through the afternoon, but Bo and Rafe decided they wanted to get home and rest up for work the next day. They both had to work Monday even though Tuesday was July 4<sup>th</sup>. So they said goodbye to Jimmy and took a short walk on the boardwalk inhaling the salt air, which made them begin to feel almost human again. The ride home was uneventful with idle chatter most of the way. Bo dropped Rafe off at his home and said with a yawn “Burn is driving our car pool tomorrow, so we’ll see you at my apartment in the morning. Get some rest.”

“You know it! You, too, Bo; see you in the morning”, Rafe replied as he got out of the car. Bo drove off and Rafe went in laid down on his bed and fell fast asleep. When Bo reached home he, too, hit the sheets and slept like a baby for the first time in days.

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*Friday evening, July 7, 1961...*

“OK! You’re doing fine with the steps; now you just got to bend your knees a little more and let your hips loosen up and sway left and right with each step in the same direction as your partner”, Mr. Roderick said, rather loudly to be overheard above the steel band playing on the patio of the Quay night club in Sea Bright. Rafe was learning to dance the merengue with Mrs. Roderick as his partner and Mr. Roderick as the instructor. They were Gladys’ parents and they frequented the Quay because they liked to dance to the Latin beat of the steel band from Trinidad.

Rafe felt a little stiff at first and a little embarrassed when his knees brushed against Mrs. Roderick’s, but gradually the two-step beat of the music relaxed him and he was able to do a fair job at this new dance he was learning. When the music stopped he thanked the Rodericks, as Bo, Earle, and James applauded, whistled and made cat-calls. Then as Rafe walked over to them at the bar, they clapped him on the back; Bo handed Rafe a bottle of Schaeffer beer.

“Alright!” Mr. Roderick said as he led the Mrs. over to the four young men, “who’s next to learn the merengue?” James shook his head no, as did Earle. But Earle volunteered Bo by gently pushing him forward.



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Mrs. Roderick smiled at Bo and held out her hand for him to join her on the dance floor. Bo shrugged his shoulders and stepped forward, taking Mrs. Roderick's hand, just as the band started playing and singing in Spanish another dance number. Mr. Roderick joined them on the dance floor and began instructing Bo. After a few minutes Bo, too, seemed to get the hang of it. When the music stopped the other three young men gave Bo the same treatment they afforded Rafe earlier.

As Mr. and Mrs. Roderick joined the four young men at the bar, Earle and James handed the Rodericks drinks that were paid for out of the kitty the four of them had set up when they arrived at the Quay. The Rodericks took a sip of their drinks and warmly complimented Bo and Rafe on their attempt to learn a new dance.

A moment later the steel band struck up another dance number, this one with a bit faster tempo. The Rodericks put their drinks on the bar and went out on the floor to dance. They were very fluid together and everyone in the place looked on admiringly as they danced out on the floor. "Now that's the way it should be done", observed Bo.

"Hell's bells, they look like professionals out there, just like we see on that TV show of the Arthur Murray dance studio", James said approvingly. The other three nodded in ascent. When the number ended, the four guys applauded the Rodericks and the other patrons in the club followed suit.

As the night wore on, Bo and Rafe each made a couple more attempts at the meringue first with Mrs. Roderick, then with a couple of other gals at the bar. Then when the kitty was used up, the four guys threw in enough money to leave a tip for the bar maid. They said good night to the Rodericks and left. As was customary, James was the driver and they headed for home.

Tomorrow would be another beach day with yet another beach party at night.

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 17

*The summer of 1961 continued... Friday evening, July 14, 1961...*

They were parked off to the side of the boat ramp at the Quaytown Country Club. It was dark except for the street lamp back on the street and an overhead lamp behind the wooden fence off to the right separating the boat ramp and the rear patio of the country club. The door in the fence was locked because the Yacht Club had closed at dusk. James had gotten a couple days leave and had hitchhiked home yesterday and the gang was in his car. Earle was in the front with James, and Bo, Nathan, and Rafe were in the rear.

They were drinking draft Schaeffer Beer out of the cylindrical one-quart cardboard containers that Nathan and Earle had brought out of the Five Coins Bar on the corner several blocks to the West. They were all trying diligently to not spill any of the beer in James's car – the cardboard containers were a little tricky to hold and avoid spills, when they were filled to the top. The cardboard tops had a little pinhole in the center to let any of the bubbles of the draft beer escape, and when taking off the tops sometimes the head on the beer would froth up and over the side due to the air in the beer. But after a few swigs of beer the initial danger was over and the only thing you needed to worry about was the cardboard container slipping through your hands, or kicking it over when you put it on the floor to take a rest from drinking or taking a drag from a cigarette.

“So Hein, what time did you get home last night and how'd the hitchhiking go”, asked Earle.

James replied as he exhaled a drag from his Lucky Strike, “Oh, I got in about midnight. No problem getting here; as you know I have my trusty sign that says ‘New Jersey’ on one side and ‘D.C.’ on the other. I've painted a big thumb on the sign now so I don't have to constantly stick out my actual one; that should come in handy in the winter. And of course the uniform gets me picked up a lot faster than if I were dressed like some hobo. Last night I got picked up right out of the base by this good looking blonde babe in a black Corvette convertible; fine looking honey, she was, and she brought me all the way up to the Delaware line and a rest stop there.”

“What year was it and what size engine did she have in the Vette?” Earle asked.

James laughed and said, “I couldn't tell you, Burn, I had all to do with feasting my eyes on the tight sweater with the full set of knockers and a very pretty face. She liked to talk, though. I practically got her life story.”

“Is that all you got? Are you sure you're telling us everything, Hein?” joked Rafe.

“Now, you guys know I would fill you in if there were anything to tell”, James answered with a short laugh.

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“Who’s going to Sea Bright tomorrow? And the Viking Steps tomorrow night?” asked Nathan after a short lull.

“Me”, said Rafe after swallowing a sip of beer. “And Mary Sue and the rest of the Ruby Creek Crowd are supposed to go, as well; at least to the nighttime beach party.

“Me, too”, answered Earle, “and I’m bringing Patty Riley to the Viking Steps”.

“Me and Joan will ride with Burn tomorrow night”, Bo answered.

“And I’ll be bringing Lorrie Bolles to the Steps for the first time”, announced James.

Rafe looked over at Nathan and asked, “Is Pam picking you up?”

“Yes for both Sea Bright and the Steps; do you want us to pick you up tomorrow night, so you won’t have to drive, Rafe?” queried Nathan.

“Sure, that would be cool”, Rafe said.

“And then if Mary Sue’s teeth get numb again, you can drive her home again in her car”, Bo said jokingly. And everyone laughed.

The banter continued through several subjects, including the home run race between Mickey Mantle and Roger Maris, other sports, comparison of the new car models coming out later in the fall (a sneak preview was published in the latest edition of Popular Mechanics magazine), and the latest movies playing at the drive-in and at the Palace Theater in Quaytown. Of course there was no shortage of banter about gals from Quaytown, Ulster Beach, North Kingsboro, and Ruby Creek Catholic.

A bit later, as the beer started to get drained out of the containers, the conversation took on more serious topics. The guys began to chat about their future ambitions and dreams, and about politics and then gradually into philosophical subjects.

“Hein, how much longer is your stint with the Marines?” asked Nathan.

“I have about two and a half years to go, Nathan”, James replied.

“And then what, Hein?” asked Bo.

“Look for a job, get an apartment, and maybe go to night school for at least a two year associate degree”, added James. “How about you guys?”

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Earle was first to answer, "I'm going to go back to school at LSC and see if I can buckle down long enough to get a full degree."

Rafe jumped in and said, "Me, too. I'm headed back to Milton. This time I will try hard to keep from goofing off. I don't want my parents to be disappointed and I don't want to feel guilty about them sacrificing to pay my tuition."

"What about sports, Rafe?" asked James.

"No to football, probably yes to baseball, Hein", responded Rafe.

Earle had an idea and said, "Hey, Rafe, if we can work it out schedule-wise, why don't I take you as far as Milton, and then I'll go on down to Baton Rouge. Milton is more or less on the way, especially if you don't mind stopping in West Virginia with me. I want to stop and see my Uncle and Aunt. They live a few hours from Milton, I think. We can check it out in an atlas to be sure."

Rafe liked the idea and responded, "Burn that sounds like a great idea! Let's talk about it after we check it out in an atlas. You'll probably have to leave earlier than me, but I don't mind getting there a few days or more before school starts, so I can get my head screwed on right."

"Ha! I can just picture you screwing your head on", Bo said, ribbing Rafe. That drew a laugh from everyone.

"And what about you, Bo and Nathan?" asked James.

Nathan said, "I'll just keep working at the tile factory, as long as business is good and I don't get laid off. I'm saving up for a car, but it's going to take a few years, because I have to support my mother."

Bo replied, "And I'll continue working at Emerson, at least for the time being. After I get more experience in the purchasing department, I'll look to make a move to another company for more money."

"What about college, any thoughts about going back, Bo?" asked Rafe.

Bo thought a second, and then answered, "Naw, I think I've pretty much had it with college for now. But I'll keep my options open and maybe go back to night school someday. But right now, as long as I am making a decent buck and have time for some fun, I'm satisfied."

After a couple of minutes of no conversation, while the guys lost in thoughts about their future, and some time to partake of a couple of drinks of beer, the topic again shifted.

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“Hein, what do you make of the situation with Cuba and Russia? Any scuttlebutt from your position in the Honor Guards?” Rafe asked James.

“Are you talking about that shithead Castro or that bald asshole, Krushchev?” James asked for clarification.

“Well, both I guess”, answered Rafe. “I mean Castro leads a revolution against a dictator, and is heralded here in the U.S. as a hero, then turns around and establishes a communist outpost right at our doors. And then Krushchev meets with Castro and guarantees the support of the Soviets. On top of that we shouldn’t forget that the Russians still have Gary Powers in prison, who they shot down in our U2 spy plane.”

“Yeah, I think we all got hoodwinked by Castro”, interjected Bo.

“I think we ought to find a way to take that commie bastard down”, Earle put forth.

“The thought of a communist government a short distance from southern Florida sure scares me”, Nathan added.

James thought for a second and then said, “Well, I can’t divulge everything I’ve heard, but with the fiasco of the Bay of Pigs, the Kennedy administration is still trying to distance themselves from that failure, even after JFK accepted responsibility.” Then he continued, “So, the administration has to play it cool for a while; don’t tell anyone where you heard this, but I wouldn’t be surprised if the CIA isn’t already planning to take Castro out, like maybe slip some poison in his food.”

“Couldn’t happen too soon as far as I’m concerned”, Earle said. And the rest of the guys agreed.

Some additional conversation ensued about the role of the U.S. in the world. Some of the guys voiced their opinions about how the U.S. should take a stronger stance against Cuba in particular and Russia in general in order to curtail the spread of communism. Others thought we should just strengthen our defenses and get less involved in foreign affairs. Pros and Cons of both strategies were discussed in honest dialogue, with no agreement being reached; yet everyone respected the opinions of the others and no disharmony ensued.

A bit of a lull ensued, while the guys took swigs of beer and the three that smoked (James, Bo, and Rafe) lit up another cigarette.

Then James broached another subject, “You know, guys, being that I’m stationed in D.C. I get to see a lot of the Maryland news through the papers and on TV. Did any of you know that in June the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a provision in Maryland's constitution requiring state office holders to believe in God?”

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“What?” Nathan and Earle practically responded in unison with disbelief.

“Yeah, they did”, said James. “I’m not exactly a bible thumping guy, but I think that this could have a big impact. In addition, you must have all seen in the news that the Israelis captured Adolph Eichmann and are trying him as a war criminal.”

“I think I see what you are driving at, Hein”, Rafe said. “On the one hand you have a highly religious race of people, who believe they are God’s chosen people and who had millions of their kind slaughtered by the Nazis, putting on trial one of Hitler’s most infamous henchmen. On the other hand, here in the good old U.S.A. we have a federal supreme court striking down a part of a state’s constitution that requires state office holders to profess their belief in God. Sounds like our supreme court is moving our country away from the Judeo-Christian foundation it was founded on.”

Nathan said, “That’s the holocaust you’re talking about, Rafe, right?”

“Yes, from what I’ve read the Nazis blamed the Jews for all the economic problems in Germany after the first World War. They basically used them as scapegoats, when it was more a result of the harsh penalties that the Allies, particularly the French, forced on the Germans at the Versailles Treaty, after their defeat. The Jews were an easy target because many of the wealthy Germans were merchants who happened to be Jewish. I’m not all that sure that there wasn’t some usury practiced by a few of the Jews; that gave the Nazis a convenient excuse to target all of them as a cause for the political and inflationary economic hardships that Germany underwent in the years after World War I.”

Bo then wondered aloud, “If the Jews are supposed to be God’s chosen people and the Nazis supposedly did not believe in God, then what does that say about where was God in all that? I mean how could God allow, what was it, six million of the Jews to be gassed and exterminated like so many rats?”

Rafe replied to Bo’s question, “Well, in this Philosophy course I took at Milton, one of the Philosophers we studied was Friedrich Nietzsche, who made the claim that ‘God is dead’. Nietzsche’s writings were also used by Hitler and his Nazi cohorts to justify their claims for building up the Aryan race.”

“Whoa!” responded Earle. “What’s this about God is dead?”

And James jumped in, “I don’t understand the connection between the Aryan race and this philosopher, what’s his name, NeeChee; what did his philosophy have to do with the Aryan race?”

Rafe continued, “It’s hard to explain without reading his works or interpretations of his writings, and I’m no expert on it, but I’ll try to simplify it as best I can from what I remember. Nietzsche didn’t actually mean that God is dead in a physical sense. He claimed that God was

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dead in a philosophical, psychological sense, because mankind is no longer able to believe in any absolute cosmic order, because they no longer recognize it. They can't really prove there is a God, and so men make up their own relative truths based on their personal perspectives. Then again they have always sought to invent some supernatural being to explain the unknown and unpredictable. This leads to a rejection of absolute values — to the rejection of belief in an objective and universal moral law, enforced upon all individuals. Over the centuries from early man to the nineteenth century, man has perverted his original inspiration of multiple gods and later the One God, by attributing human like emotions and behaviors to how those early gods and goddesses, and later the Judeo-Christian God, interact with humans.”

“I think I sort of understand that”, said Bo. “It’s like there is no longer a belief that something is either right and wrong or black or white, but there are gray areas.”

“Oh, like nothing is either 100% true or false, or no one or anything is either 100% good or evil? Is that what that guy was saying”, asked Earle.

“You both simplified it better than me”, responded Rafe.

“Yes, I think I understand it better now”, added Nathan.

Then James said, “Yes, but I still want to know about the Aryan Race connection”.

“That gets to another idea that Nietzsche put forth, that of the super human, what he named the overman, or in German the übermensch. These are people who emotionally and psychologically surpass most other men; the overman is a goal that humanity can achieve for itself, or that an individual can set for himself. Examples he gave were men like Julius Caesar, Aristotle, Ghengis Khan, and Jesus Christ.”

“What a combination. How does Jesus get in with those others?” asked Earle.

“He actually thought that Jesus was a super human type person, but he claimed the early Christians, particularly Saint Paul, bastardized Jesus’ teachings by distorting Jesus teachings like ‘If your enemy strikes you on one side of the face, turn the other cheek’. He believed that what Jesus was teaching was that personal revenge for insults like a slap on the face was wrong – that revenge must be God’s action and God had set up the system of Judges after the Exodus to deal with those who robbed, cheated or otherwise harmed their neighbors. The system of Judges ultimately became the legal systems and the governments that we’re familiar with today.”

“But according to Nietzsche, as well as other interpreters of the gospels, Jesus didn’t mean that we should not defend ourselves against evil when faced with the choice of protecting ourselves when our lives are threatened. Instead Nietzsche thought that the apostles and the early Christian Church corrupted that teaching by emphasizing it as a kind of nonviolent resistance; he viewed it as a means for the less powerful people to gain a sense of power over the more powerful. Think of it in terms of football. If an opponent knocks you ass over tea kettle, and

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despite some pain you jump right up, smile and say ‘nice block’, then you gain some one-upmanship on your opponent; he has to think that you can take all he can dish out, and that diminishes him in his own eyes and gives you the satisfaction of knowing it.”

“This was similar to what Nietzsche called the ‘Will to Power’, in that we all have a need to look down on someone else in order to raise ourselves up in our own eyes and the eyes of those we want to impress. So Nietzsche derived this duality between what he called the ‘master’ class and the ‘slave’ class. The master class are those in power and the slave class builds up a resentment of the master class and the only way they can attain any power is to do things that demonstrate to their ‘masters’ that they can peaceably resist or endure any kind of punishment or abuse that the masters can deal out.”

“Would that be something like Gandhi did in India with his peaceful resistance?” asked Nathan.

“Yeah, I think that’s a good example. He was instrumental in getting India out from under British rule”, replied Rafe.

“Hey, I’m still waiting to hear about the Nazi connection”, reminded James, now with a touch of friendly impatience.

Rafe turned his attention to James, “Right! Hein, here’s what I remember from that course I had. This idea that Nietzsche put forth about there being a master and a slave class, coupled with the proposition that God is dead, was twisted, taken out of context, and misapplied by the Nazis. They turned the idea of the super human, overman, into the so-called Aryan Race, which I think was something out of German folklore, that there was a tribe of early Germans who were all tall, blonde, blue-eyed, physically strong and attractive. They used it to not only exterminate the Jews, but euthanize anyone born with mental retardation or palsy, or other physical problems. And they used it to justify those horrible experiments they performed on people in hospitals. One sickening example I remember hearing about, from the Nuremburg trials in one of those newsreels at the movies, was making lamp shades out of human flesh.”

“Yuck! That gives me the shivers!” interjected Nathan. And the others nodded their agreement.

“Ok, so if the Nazis were twisting around this philosopher’s ideas, then what was he getting at with this superhuman or master class idea?” asked Bo.

Rafe answered “As I recall, and I’m not an expert on all of this”, Rafe responded, “Nietzsche proposed that since the concept of God is ‘dead’, then Christianity and all other religions based on the God of Judaism must eventually become meaningless. Christianity, because of its foundation of a supernatural triune God and angels in heaven, Satan and his angels on earth and in hell, and of an absolute truth regarding good and evil, would no longer be an answer to peoples’ need to explain the unknown. Once mankind accepts this, there would be a



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huge void, and for Nietzsche that void would be filled by men who endeavor to raise themselves to the level of supermen. These men would become in a sense gods on earth, free to make their own rules”.

“I’m still a bit confused,” Earle shook his head. And the others nodded their agreement.

“So, then, Rafe, is there a God? Do you believe there is?” asked Nathan.

Rafe thought for a second, and then responded, “At this point in my life I think I am an agnostic”.

“Agnostic? What the hell is that?” asked Bo.

“Not easy to explain,” Rafe replied again searching for the right words, “but it’s the idea that since we can’t prove through science or the experience of seeing, touching or hearing, then we can’t really know God in the same sense that we can know the things we can experience or prove through science or math.”

“Is that like being an atheist?” James asked.

Rafe answered, “No, atheists believe there is no God, but an agnostic says, ‘hey, I can’t be sure one way or the other – I can’t prove it or disprove it, so I’m going to sort of sit on the fence until some factual evidence or experience pushes me to one side or the other.’ Does that make sense to you, Hein?”

James hesitated and said, “Yeah, It sort of does.”

A pause ensued while each of the guys retreated to their own thoughts for a few minutes.

Then James said, “Well, I’m kind of amazed at the discussion we had tonight; it was more than interesting. But it’s getting late and it looks like the beer is gone and without more of the suds to imbibe, the conversation will likely go down-hill; so what say we call it a night?”

“Yeah, let’s do; we have a full day tomorrow at Sea Bright and at the Steps tomorrow night for our weekly beach party”, Bo answered for all of them, or it seemed almost all.

“Hell, it ain’t that late, but if you pussies want to go home, I guess I don’t mind”, Earle said jokingly.

“Pussies, my ass, Burn”, responded Bo, “you need to get your sleep, too, or you might not be able to get it up tomorrow night when Patty says, ‘Take me, Burn, I want it real bad’; and she’ll be very disappointed.”

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“Hell, she might be disappointed whether you get it up or not”, Nathan jumped in on the ribbing.

“Eat shit, you guys”, was all that Earle could muster in the midst of the good natured laughter from the others.

As the laughter started to die down, James and Bo collected the empty beer containers and dropped them in a garbage can along the fence by the yacht club.

When James and Rafe were back in the car, James said, “Hey, Rafe, the philosophical discussion really was interesting, do you have more of that from that course you took?”

“Ah, yeah, it was a course that covered about five of the prominent philosophers from about 1850 to the early 1900’s,” answered Rafe, as he rolled down the window and began to light up a cigarette. Then he added as he exhaled, “A few of them had theories that may be more easily understood, but there’s no time to get into it tonight; maybe another time.”

“Yeah, I’d like to have another philosophical discussion another time”, James said. The others offered their agreement.

Then James drove off to Bo’s apartment where Earle and Rafe had parked their cars. He dropped Nathan off down the street at his house and then went home, singing along to the radio, but thinking of Lorrie and looking forward to being with her tomorrow.

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*Saturday night, August 2, 1961...*

*Take out the papers and the trash  
Or you don't get no spendin' cash  
If you don't scrub that kitchen floor  
You ain't gonna rock and roll no more  
Yakety yak (don't talk back)*

*Just finish cleanin' up your room  
And sweep the dust out with that broom  
Get all that garbage out of sight  
Or you don't go out Friday night  
Yakety yak (don't talk back)...*

The Coasters song, “Yakety Yak”, from 1958 was playing on the phonograph in the living room. A few additional 45’s were stacked on the spindle waiting to be played in sequence.

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The crowd was at Phyllis “Marnie” Marnellen’s house in Mason. Last Saturday night at the customary beach party at the Steps, Marnie suggested a party at her house for this Saturday night. Everyone agreed that it would be a good change from the usual routine. At least one other house party had been held earlier in the summer at George Keller’s house in Kingsboro, and the crowd had enjoyed the respite from the weekly beach parties, and it didn’t hurt that it had rained that Saturday afternoon and evening. This evening was cloudy, but dry.

Bo was standing in the kitchen holding a beer, as was his date, Joan Calloway. Joan was 5’ 5” with an hour glass shape; fair sized breasts, a trim waist with no visible love handles, hips about the same dimensions as her chest, both about 36”, well turned legs with slim ankles and average sized feet. She had a fairly attractive face, more cute than beautiful, with a high forehead, button nose, gray eyes with a hint of blue eye shadow and a thin application of black eyelash makeup, a touch of light red rouge on the cheeks, medium full lips accented with a pale red lipstick, and a strong chin. Her thick hair, dyed dirty blonde, was tied up in a ponytail; otherwise it would have hung down to the back of her shoulder blades.

They were talking with Rafe and Marnie. Just outside the kitchen doorway in the living room, Mary Sue was chatting with Timmy Rush and his date, Margie Barrone. Margie is Jimmy Barrone’s younger sister; she had graduated from QHS, class of ’61 and was going on to Glenboro College next month, following as the third Barrone after Jimmy and their older brother, Tony. Also in the living room were Nathan and Pam, dancing to the music along with Penny Cogan, George Keller, and Clare Nelson.

“I thought I’d find you someplace close to the beer”, announced James, as he and Lorrie Bolles came into the kitchen. They had just arrived at the party. At 5’ 7”, Lorrie was just a few inches shorter than James. She was a bit on the slim side, but with well-placed curves; average sized breasts, a slim waist filling out into nicely curved hips, from which flowed down shapely legs with meaty thighs, firm calves, and thin ankles. Her dark auburn hair was cut at shoulder length covering her ears, curled out at the ends with a flip. Her eyes were green and expressive on a broad face that was attractive but not overly beautiful, with a long thin neck, high cheekbones, a firm jaw and thin lips on a generous mouth. Her smile at times seemed forced, as if she was trying to be polite even when she didn’t actually feel like it; for example, smiling at someone else’s attempt at being humorous.

Marnie welcomed James and Lorrie with a smile and said, “Help yourself to the beer; there’s a keg out on the porch, over there, and there’s some plastic cups and whiskey sours left in the pitcher on the kitchen table. And help yourself to some food out on the porch; there’s cold cuts, rolls, potato salad and macaroni salad”. Marnie and her mom had bought the booze and food after everyone had chipped in enough money to cover the expense earlier that day at the beach at Sea Bright. Mrs. Marnellen was in her bedroom watching her new 21 inch black and white television. Her door remained open and she occasionally came out to meet the newcomers, mostly to let them know that she was there as a chaperone to ensure that the party did not get out of hand.

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James poured Lorrie a whiskey sour, got himself a cup of beer from the pony keg on the porch, and he and Lorrie joined up with Bo, Joan, Rafe and Marnie. “Where’s Burn and Patty?” James asked.

“They should be here soon”, Bo answered. “You know it takes some gals a long time to get ready for a date.” That drew an elbow in the ribs from Joan and a look of mock disdain from Lorrie.

Marnie just laughed and said, “Gee I see there are more girls here than boys. Maybe it was Burn that took too long to get ready and was late picking up Patty.”

“Touché”, replied Bo with a laugh.

“How’s the baseball coming”, James asked Rafe and Bo. “Still playing ball with the Holmvale Thunder?”

“Last game is next Sunday afternoon”, Bo answered.

“If we win, we’ll finish with a 7 and 3 record”, Rafe added. “And Donny Franco, the team sponsor is having the whole team over at his place for a picnic in his back yard.”

“So, win or lose, you’ll have a winning season”, James observed.

“Yeah, it’s been fun”, Bo said. Just then Earle and Patty Riley arrived. After getting some beer and food they joined the conversation in the kitchen which became a bit too crowded and overflowed to the porch.

Everyone was too busy talking or dancing to notice when George and Clare went into the bathroom, closed and locked the door.

Inside the bathroom, George and Clare were making out. After about four minutes of kissing and rubbing each other, George got a bit impatient, unzipped Clare’s blue shorts, and pulled them down to the floor so that she could step out of them. Then George unzipped his shorts, dropped them down to the floor, and stepped out of them. All this while they continued to kiss one another hungrily and ran their hands over each other’s private parts. Clare was now standing in her black panties, and George was standing in his white cotton Fruit-of-the-Loom briefs, pulling Clare against his hard erection. Then things went awry!

George decided to sit down on the toilet after dropping the seat down and pulled Clare so that she was sitting on his lap, facing him with her legs astraddle him. Then he pulled aside her panties and rubbed his hand against her vagina and the hardened clitoris. Clare began to thrust hard against George’s hand and his erect penis. Then, “Crack!” The noise startled them and caused them to stop to investigate. They stood up and quickly realized that the toilet tank had a crack along the top portion; a small amount of water was starting to ooze out.

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“Oh, my god!” exclaimed Clare. “George, what are we going to do now? How are we going to explain this?” And tears began to form in Clare’s eyes. All she could think of was how embarrassing it was going to be and how ashamed she would feel.

“Shh!” George whispered. “Don’t panic.” He quickly put on his shorts and motioned to Clare to do the same. Then he walked over to the door, unlocked it, slowly opened it a crack to see if anyone was out in the hall waiting to get into the bathroom, or was down the hall that could see both of them leave the bathroom. When he was sure that no one was there, he put his finger to his mouth to signal Clare to keep quiet and motioned her out the door. “Go back to the party and pretend that you know nothing”, he whispered and gently pushed Clare out the door. He waited a few minutes then burst out of the door yelling, “Oh, no! Oh, no! The toilet is broken!”

When some of the others heard the yelling several came hurriedly to the bathroom. Mrs. Marnellen came quickly out of her bedroom. “What’s happened George?” asked Marnie, as her mom stood by somewhat alarmed.

George answered loudly, attempting to hide the lie, “I’m so sorry! I tripped when I went towards the toilet and put my hands out to stop myself against the toilet tank and I heard it crack. Then water began to leak out. I’m so sorry, Marnie and Mrs. Marnellen! I’ll pay you back for any repairs.”

“Well, just calm down and let’s see how bad it is”, Mrs. Marnellen said not at all feeling calm herself, as she walked into the bathroom.

Earle who had been one of the first to arrive after George’s yelling walked into the bathroom and said, “Mrs. Marnellen, let me take a look. I’ve had some experience with plumbing.” Mrs. Marnellen, looking aghast at the seepage of water leaking out of the tank, stepped out of Earle’s way. Earle immediately knelt down and turned off the valve for the water intake, then took off the tank top and flushed the toilet to let out the water in the tank. Then he examined the crack in the tank, turned around to Marnie and her mom and said with authority, “I can fix it temporarily until you get a new tank installed.”

“How? I mean please explain”, asked Mrs. Marnellen, still a bit upset. “And will we be able to use the toilet? It’s the only one in the house!”

“I’m sure you can use the toilet as long as...as long as you don’t try to flush too much down at one time”, responded Earle, trying to advise Marnie and her mom without alarming them.

Then Earle went into the tank and began to bend the ball cock down until it would stop the inflow of water just below the crack near the top of the tank. It took a couple of tries, each time letting the water in and shutting off the valve, until he had the water level stopped where he

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wanted it. “Okay, this will fix it temporarily until you get a new tank.” Then Earle showed Marnie and her mom how they could replace the tank themselves and save the cost of a plumber.

“Oh, gee, I don’t think we can do that”, Mrs. Marnellen said with a worried look on her face. Marnie shook her head in agreement.

“I’ll tell you what”, Earle said, “I don’t think a plumbing supply store will be open tomorrow on Sunday, so If you can pick one up Monday, I’ll install it one night this week. There’s a plumbing supply store in downtown Mason; don’t worry this is an American Standard, so just about any American Standard tank can replace this one just fine.”

“What a savior, you are!” said Mrs. Marnellen obviously quite thankful and relieved. “Marnie and I will go to the store on Monday; let Marnie have your phone number and we’ll call you once we have the new tank. Oh, and we thank you so much; what a fine young man you are!”

“My pleasure, ma’am”, Earle said, his southern accent adding to the politeness he normally demonstrated.

“Way to go Burn!” Bo called out. And everyone applauded.

Marnie gave Earle a hug and said, “Thanks, Burn”. Patty looked at Earle with new interest.

James saw the smile on Patty’s face and the look in her eyes, smiled and thought to himself, “Burn might just get lucky tonight”.

After all this excitement, it had gotten late, so the party began to break up. Marnie and her mom questioned everyone who was driving to be sure that they had not had too much to drink before driving home.

“Are you sure you are Ok? We will drive you home, or call a cab, if you’ve had too much to drink. Tell me how far you have to go? What direction are you heading from here?” These were just a few of the questions they asked each driver in order to hear the driver talk, so they could determine if the driver was not intoxicated and would not endanger himself/herself and their passengers.

The following Monday evening Earle installed the new tank for the Marnellens and was thanked with a homemade dinner of meatloaf, green beans almandine, biscuits, mashed potatoes and gravy. For desert they served him apple pie ala mode. Earle went home with a full stomach.

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*Friday night, August 15, 1961...*

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*...I never had it so good  
Yeah and I know you never could  
Until you get hip with that jive And take a  
band like the Church Street Five.*

*Oh don't you know that I danced,  
I danced till a quarter to three  
With the help last night of Daddy G.  
Everybody was as happy as they could be  
And they were swingin with Daddy G...*

The club was crowded, people two deep at the bar, and several deep standing around the perimeter of the bar. All the tables along the walls on the raised platforms were occupied with people. Bo, Earle, and Rafe were standing behind several people at the bar. Gary U.S. Bonds stood on the bandstand in the center of the huge rectangular bar, with a four piece band behind him. He was belting out the lyrics to his number one hit, "Quarter to Three". You could make out the words only because the mike was turned up, so that he wouldn't be drowned out by the band.

The three friends were sipping on bottles of Pabst Blue Ribbon beer, listening to the rapid beat of the music, and checking out the young babes, wondering if they might make a connection with one of them for some action tonight or another night.

"Sure is friggin' loud in here. When do you think Hein will get here?" yelled Earle, trying to make himself heard over the music and the crowd noise. It was so noisy in fact that Gary U.S. Bonds at all of 17 years of age, sweating under the lights and the lack of good air conditioning, looked frightened on the stage, as if he wasn't used to being this close to such a rowdy crowd. Being just about the only black person in the place probably added to his discomfort.

"Depends on how the hitchhiking goes, but my guess is that Hein will be here within the next hour", yelled back Bo.

"What's that?" yelled Rafe. And Bo leaned over to yell in Rafe's ear what Earle had asked and how he had replied.

"Oh", was all that Rafe could manage.

They were in a ramshackle nightclub, named the Beach House, on the east side of Kingsboro, near the border of Middlebury. It was on the beach with no other buildings within 100 yards in either direction, about 30 yards off the main street that ran along the bay beach connecting Kingsboro and Middlebury. There must have been close to seventy cars parked on the rough macadam laid down over the brown sand, each carrying several young people, which accounted for the large crowd this night.

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A few minutes later, Gary and the band completed their first of two sets for the night. The noise level of the crowd jabbering and laughing seemed to elevate to nearly reach the level of noise as when the band was playing. It was as if the people were trying to fill the vacuum left by the band and the music. But more likely it was the opportunity for the guys and gals to intermingle and play the timeless game of the sexes looking to make a connection, some seeking a long term connection, some seeking a one-night stand, and some not sure what they were seeking but just going with the flow.

Hein arrived during the band's interlude, still in his military garb. It wasn't long before the uniform attracted the attention of an attractive babe, who just happened to be with three of her girlfriends. In short order the four guys and gals had made introductions and paired off. Then Bo observed a group getting up from a table up on the platform, who had apparently decided to leave after the first set, and quickly grabbed the gal he was with to requisition the table for the eight of them; they had to scrounge around for a few additional chairs.

As the other three pairs joined Bo and the gal he was with, Hein said with a smile and a mock commander's accolade, "You did good Bo I think I'll send you out for future scouting expeditions". That brought a smile to all and then conversation began in earnest. The "dance" was on, with each person trying to present themselves in the best light and trying to decipher whether or not there was chemistry between themselves and the guy or gal with whom they had paired off. For politeness sake, of course, they all split their time between conversation with their new "partner" and participating in threads of conversation that involved the entire group.

By the time Gary and the band's second set began, all four guys had obtained the phone numbers of the gals they were paired with. Years later, when they recalled that night, they learned that Bo was the only one that followed up and called the gal. He had one date with her and realized that his heart was with Joan, and never called that gal again.

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*Saturday afternoon, August, 26, 1962...*

Earle was negotiating the legendary hair-pin turns in the mountains of West Virginia. Rafe was the passenger and was looking out with a bit of apprehension over the guard rails preventing autos from cascading down the cavernous precipices. "Thank God, Earle's a good driver", Rafe thought to himself.

"You've been kinda' quiet the last half hour", noted Earle as they exited the last of the turns and descended down the mountain road toward a more routine highway corridor. "What's on your mind", Earle asked, "if you don't mind my asking?"

"Well, those hair pin turns for one. I don't know if I ever told you, Burn, but I'm afraid of heights," Rafe said, a lot more comfortable now.

"I can understand that, Rafe, but that's only been for the last few minutes", added Earle.



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Then Rafe said, “Well, Burn, yeah, I’ve been thinking about several things. One is that I’m wondering how it’s going to be back in College again. I mean I’m determined to make a go of it and get my degree, so I can get a good job and not have to work on the assembly line like we did at Emerson. And then I was thinking about all the fun we had this summer; you, Bo, Hein, and me; all the beach and house parties and the gals we met. That’s something I’m going to miss”.

“Yeah, I hear you, Rafe; I’ll miss this summer and you guys, too. Of all the places I’ve lived, next to Louisiana, Quaytown and New Jersey are my favorites,” replied Earle. “And like you, I want to do better in college this time around, so I can have a better future – I know what you mean, buddy.”

Then Rafe said, “I think Bo is getting serious about Joan Callaway, and it’s pretty obvious that Hein is in love with Lorrie Bolles; how about you and Patty Riley, Burn?”

“You touched on a tender spot there, Rafe”, replied Earle. “I could really fall in love with that gal. We had some good ole’ times dating. We didn’t go all the way...not that I didn’t try, just that she wouldn’t let me; lots of tits and rubs, but no pussy, even tho’ she seemed to get hot to trot. On our last date last week when I went to pick her up, her mom said to me, ‘I expect you will leave my daughter as you found her’. I guess she figured since I was heading back to college in Louisiana, that I might take advantage of Patty.”

Rafe laughed and responded with “She would have been right if Patty had only let you!” And Earle laughed, too.

About a half hour later they arrived at Earle’s uncle’s farm on a hillside in West Virginia, about three hours from the crossover of the Ohio River to Mason, OH. Rafe met Earle’s Uncle Walter and Aunt Sarah and was welcomed as only southerners can welcome people. Dinner was practically a feast with roast pork, mashed potatoes and gravy, corn on the cob, collard greens, homemade corn bread and homemade peach pie. Then after dinner and before going to bed in the guest room, Rafe had his first experience of visiting an outhouse, complete with the half-moon carved in the door.

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On Sunday morning Earle and Rafe were treated to a huge breakfast of double portions of hot oatmeal with loads of cinnamon, a fruit salad of watermelon, bananas, apples, grapes, and cantaloupe, and sweet rolls with lots of hot tea and coffee to wash it all down. Then at 10:00 AM, as Earle and Rafe said their goodbyes and made ready to leave, Earle’s aunt Sarah handed them a paper sack with sandwiches of roast pork on thick homemade sourdough bread and a couple bottles of coke.

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“Wow”, Rafe said to Earle as they drove out of the gravel driveway. “I don’t think I’ve eaten that much since last Thanksgiving! What wonderful people your aunt and uncle are!”

Earle glanced over at Rafe with a knowing smile and said simply, “There’s nothing like southern hospitality, Rafe.”

A little over three hours later Earle pulled up the ’56 blue Ford at Rafe’s Delta Kappa Delta fraternity house on the Mason campus. They were greeted by Ricky Briggs, QHS class of ’58, who along with other DKD brothers on the football team were already moved into their rooms in the frat house; the football team was in pre-season camp getting in shape for the start of the season.

Rafe’s roommate wasn’t scheduled in until the following week, just before the start of classes, so Earle planned to spend the night and bunked in with Rafe. After unpacking their luggage in Rafe’s room, they went to the student union to sit at tables on the balcony overlooking the main street running through the Milton campus. There they ate the lunch Earle’s Aunt Sarah had made for them and chatted about recent memories.

“You know, Burn, one of the reasons I don’t think I want to wind up working on an assembly line is the likelihood that I’d have to be in a workers’ union. That experience at Emerson made me realize that”, Rafe said

“Why’s that?” asked Earle.

Rafe replied, “Well, do you remember that union meeting several weeks ago after work; the one at the American Legion Hall?”

“Yep”, Earle answered curious about what point Rafe was about to make.

Rafe continued, “I remember seeing that union big shot riding up in the long black limo with his two body guards. Then after we were served hot dogs and beer, the union biggie sat up on the platform, flashing huge diamond rings on both hands and giving us a spiel as to how the union was protecting the workers and fighting for them. Most of the workers in the audience knew that the raises the union had negotiated in the current contract were paltry; and the scuttlebutt was that this was a “sweetheart” union, in bed with the executives of Emerson”

“Yeah, I heard that, too, Rafe”, acknowledged Earle.

Then Rafe became more animate as he said, “But the thing that got to me was when that fellow Al, who was stationed up the assembly line from us, got up to question the union boss about some of the grievances that the shop stewards failed to resolve. And then Al said a ‘no, no’; he questioned why he and the rest of the workers were paying dues for very little support from the union. Then those two big goons came swooping down, grabbed Al and dragged his ass

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outside. I could only imagine that he was told in a not so friendly way to keep his mouth shut or there would be consequences.”

“Oh, shit, yeah, I remember that!” Earle said. “But I know that all unions aren’t like that; a lot of them really do negotiate contracts that are favorable to the union workers.”

Rafe thought about that a second, then added, “I’m sure you are right. I guess I just don’t like the idea of paying dues to support a group of thugs to enjoy a ritzy lifestyle. I’d rather negotiate for myself based on my own merits.”

“That may work on some jobs, like white collar office work, but not very well on blue collar jobs”, Earle suggested.

“You’re right there, Burn. That’s why I want to get my degree, so I can get a white collar job”, Rafe responded.

Then Rafe showed Earle around the campus and they wound up at the football team’s practice field and watched the team run through drills. “You gonna’ miss playing football?” Earle asked Rafe.

“A little; but not a whole lot; as you know from your first year at LSC, these guys are a lot bigger and stronger than the guys we played against in high school. They don’t have much body fat”, Rafe answered.

“You got that right”, Earle said.

Later that night Rafe took Earle down town to the main watering hole attended by the Milton college students, as well as a number of the guys and gals from the town, affectionately called “Townies” by the college students. There was a bit of resentment toward the college kids by some of the guys from the town, perhaps because a lot of the town girls took up with college guys after the gals graduated from Milton High.

The watering hole, Porky’s Hotel, called Pink’s by just about everyone, since the owners name was Pinkerton – it has three levels. The upper level is the hotel with eight rooms, which is occasionally used by students for one-night stands. On the street level there is a well-lit restaurant and bar with a double row of booths, several tables, and a small bar with stools. Downstairs, where Rafe took Earle, is a rathskeller with several rows of dark stained wooden booths and a long bar along one wall. The rathskeller was kept somewhat darkened with dim overhead lights providing a hushed atmosphere, perfect for young lovers and for meeting up with potential dates. Tonight there were only a few people downstairs. Rafe and Earle had a few beers and chatted a while. Someone played the jukebox and the Drifters sang, “There Goes My Baby”...

*(Bo-bo, doo-doot-doo-doo-doo-doo)*

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*(There she goes) (doo-doot-doo-doo-doo-doo)*  
*(There she goes) (doo-doot-doo-doo-doo-doo)*  
*(Bo-bo) (doo-doot-doo-doo)*  
*(Bo-bo) (doo-doo-doo-doo)*

*There goes my baby, movin' on down the line Wonder  
where, wonder where, wonder where she is bound?  
I broke her heart and made her cry  
Now I'm alone, so all alone  
What can I do, what can I do?*

*(There goes my baby) Whoa-oh-oh-oh-oh*  
*(There goes my baby) Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah*  
*(There goes my baby) Whoa-oh-oh-oh*  
*(There she goes) Yeah! (There she goes)*

*I wanna know if she loved me Did  
she really love me?  
Was she just playing me for a fool?*

Earle became a bit melancholy listening to the song. He looked across the table at Rafe and said, "That song makes me think about Patty Riley. I guess I'll always wonder if things would have worked out for us if I had stayed in Quaytown instead of going back to Louisiana. Damn. But that girl turned me on. She made me feel like I was a deer frozen in the headlights. All I could think about this past month was her."

"Understandable, Burn, she's a very pretty girl and she seemed to be a lot of fun to be with. Are you going to write her and keep in touch?" asked Rafe.

"Damn right! But unless I can get back to Quaytown on occasion, I'm not sure she'll still be available. Some guy is likely to snatch her up," Earle said sadly.

"Well, as the saying goes, there are many fish in the sea, and from what you've told us those southern girls know how to make a man happy," Rafe said.

Earle responded, "That's for sure! But it's getting late. We'd better get back to the frat house for some shut-eye; I want to get an early start tomorrow and drive straight through to Baton Rouge." Then the two of them went back to the frat house.

On the way back Rafe said to Earle, "You know, Burn, I think I'm attracted to Pam Rambler. Something about her turns me on."

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Earle was taken by surprise at Rafe's announcement, but after a second he replied, "Wow; I'm not sure I could take up with a Negro, Rafe, but she is kind of sexy, now that I think on it. But what about Nathan? I thought he and Pam was a couple, I mean they always seemed to be together at Sea Bright and at the parties at night."

Rafe responded, "They're just friends from what I can see. It's like it's more a convenience, so that neither of them are the lone Blacks at our get-togethers."

Earle shrugged his shoulders in acquiescence, "Well, you may want to be careful there, Rafe. I'm not sure how your parents would take to your dating a Black girl, but I know my parents would have a problem with that."

Rafe nodded at Earle's observation and said, "Yeah, that is something I need to consider for sure; but at this point it's all rather hypothetical. I don't know that she would be interested, even if I made a play for her". Then as an afterthought, "Anyway, I got other things to deal with, like getting back into the college life and the studies."

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On Monday morning, after packing his car, Earle and Rafe shook hands and a quick hug.

"Have a safe trip back to Baton Rouge, Burn, and good luck at LSC this year," Rafe said.

Earle patted Rafe on the back and said, "Thanks for sharing the ride part of the way, ole buddy. Good luck to you in school, as well. Let's keep in touch. I'll send y'all my address once I get settled down there. Oh, and thank your dad for letting me use the driveway at their house to replace the front grill on my car last week."

"He was happy to do it", Rafe responded.

As Earle drove off with a wave, he couldn't have known that he wouldn't see Rafe and Bo again for several years, and then only for a weekend. After that he wouldn't see Rafe again until 1992, and he wouldn't see James again until 2000.

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*Forty-six years later, Thursday morning, October 4, 2007...*

It was five in the morning; Bo was driving to Newark Liberty International Airport. Denise was with him, still half asleep. They had an 8:00 AM flight and were about a half hour from the off-airport parking lot, “Bo, I’m not sure I’ll forgive you for getting me up this early. I need my beauty sleep,” she said while trying to stifle a yawn.

“You’re beautiful even when you haven’t slept a wink; remember I’ve seen you with your hair up in curlers and your face covered in face cream”, Bo said with a teasing smile. And they both laughed.

Bo then reflected on their life together. They had been together for over twenty years with a couple of breakups, but both times it seemed inevitable that they would get back together. In all that time they never got to the point of marrying; engaged, but not marriage; when one of them wanted to get married, the other didn’t and vice-versa. “I guess we are both a bit gun shy since each of us were married and divorced twice, before we met”, he thought to himself.

“Bo, I bet you are looking forward to another get-together with the gang. I know I’m looking forward to seeing Ellie and Carlie again”, Denise said.

“Yeah, I’m always up for these long weekends with the guys. You know me, show me a beach and I’m happy as a pig in shit”, Bo replied. “Speaking of the beach, pull that Beach Boys CD out of the glove compartment and pop it in, please.” Denise inserted the CD and the first song that played was “California Girls”...

*Well East coast girls are hip  
I really dig those styles they wear  
And the Southern girls with the way they talk  
They knock me out when I'm down there*

*The Mid-West farmer's daughters really make you feel alright  
And the Northern girls with the way they kiss They  
keep their boyfriends warm at night*

*I wish they all could be California  
I wish they all could be California  
I wish they all could be California girls*

*The West coast has the sunshine  
And the girls all get so tanned  
I dig a French bikini on Hawaii Island  
Dolls by a palm tree in the sand...*

“Are you ever going to outgrow the Beach Boys music, Bo?” laughed Denise.

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“Never!” came back Bo’s emphatic reply.

Shortly after they arrived at the parking lot, they took the shuttle to Terminal C, and since both had only carry-on bags and had printed their boarding passes yesterday, they headed toward the security line. They were pleasantly surprised that the line at the security station was not very long and they were at the gate with plenty of time to spare.

As they sat in adjoining seats at the gate, Denise asked “What time did Burn say he and Carlie would meet us?”

“Carlie will be at the airport at ten o’clock when we are scheduled to arrive. Then she will drive you down to open up the cottage and unload her car with the bedding, towels and some food”, Bo answered. Then he continued, “Rafe isn’t scheduled in until about twelve-ten, so I’ll find a bar to sit at. Burn will leave work at around eleven and meet me in the Norfolk airport; the two of us will wait for Rafe at the bar. When Rafe arrives we’ll grab some lunch and then head down to the cottage on the Outer Banks. Burn didn’t say, but I think it’s probably in Kill Devil Hills near where we’ve stayed before.”

“Well, let’s hope our plane and Rafe’s plane aren’t delayed; especially Rafe’s plane. I’d hate for you and Burn to get smashed if Rafe arrives late”, Denise said half teasing, but with an undertone that indicated some concern.

“Burn is driving so he won’t have too much to drink,” Bo said, and then catching her drift, he added, “and I will take it easy, too, so you don’t have to worry, OK?”

“OK, Bo. But I do worry about you and the guys when you all get together; it’s like you’re all eighteen again, or wish you were,” Denise said and planted a kiss on Bo’s cheek.

“Well, we do go a long way back; nearly fifty years now. For me it has been one of the greatest things that we did when we renewed our friendship seven years ago”, Bo said, thinking back to that first reunion in October, 2000 and all of the times since then that Earle, James, Rafe and he had gotten together. Then bringing his thoughts back to the moment, he searched in his carry on duffel bag and pulled out the book he had brought along. It was a James Patterson novel, Beach Road, that he had just started reading. Denise followed Bo’s lead and got the October issue of Vogue magazine from her carry on and started to leaf through until she found the article, “Breast Cancer Update”, she had begun reading last night. They still had nearly an hour before the boarding of the plane would begin.

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*...Every day's a new day in love with you  
With each day comes a new way of loving you  
Every time I kiss your lips my mind starts to wander*

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*And if all my dreams come true  
I'll be spending time with you*

*Oh, I love you more today than yesterday  
But not as much as tomorrow  
I love you more today than yesterday  
But, darling, not as much as tomorrow*

*Tomorrow's date means springtime's just a day away  
Cupid, we don't need ya now, be on your way  
I thank the lord for love like ours that grows ever stronger  
And I always will be true  
I know you feel the same way too*

*Oh, I love you more today than yesterday  
But not as much as tomorrow  
I love you more today than yesterday  
But only half as much as tomorrow...*

James “Hein” Heinrich and his wife Ellie were on their way North on Route 17. They had packed the Kia Sorento SUV the night before and left their home in Charleston, SC at seven this morning. They expected to arrive at the cottage in Kill Devil Hills, NC around three in the afternoon. On the oldies station, the 1969 hit song “More Today than Yesterday”, by The Spiral Staircase had just ended.

James looked over at Ellie and thought the lyrics couldn't be more true to the way he felt about her. Ellie had been an absolute blessing for him after the contentious divorce from his first wife, Lorrie. James knew that it was mutual for Ellie, as she, too, had a first marriage that ended badly. James looked admiringly at Ellie. She sensed it and looked back at James, wondering why he was smiling. He was taking in Ellie's ovular face, her auburn hair, twinkling blue eyes, and full red lips. “She's still attractive to me; maybe a few pounds heavier than when we married, but the years have been kind to her”, he thought. Ellie smiled back at James. Ellie's five feet, four inch frame was comfortably seated in the passenger seat.

Ellie had been a god send for him throughout the ups and downs. There was the time he almost died of a heart attack, and just recently he was hospitalized with a severe case of pneumonia. Ellie was at the hospital throughout his stay and then attended his every need during a protracted recovery. Although he still was not yet a hundred percent, he had recovered enough for them to make the trip to Kill Devil Hills, on the Outer Banks. He and Ellie were looking forward to getting together with the gang again; it had been six months since they had entertained the gang at their home in Charleston.

True to Ellie's sense of humor and outright honesty, she remarked to James, using his first and middle initials as her pet name for him, “J.T., Why do we have to drive eight hours to



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go to a beach when we are only a half hour from the beach in Charleston? I don't quit see the logic in that."

James looked over at Ellie, smiled and answered, using his pet name for her, "Now, Mixi, we already talked about this. The gang has come down to Charleston for five times over the past 6 years in the spring and in all that time we have only gone up to the Outer Banks once and that was in October, 2005. Before that the last time we had a get-together on the Outer Banks was in 2001."

"Yes, but we also had get-togethers at The Burnell's home in Virginia a couple of times", Ellie observed.

"That's right", James replied, "That was to help Burn build porches on that original outside kitchen building they are converting into a guest house." Then James added with his customary humor, "And best of all, they let me play foreman and watch them work while I lay in the hammock tied to the trees by the guest house. That was the ideal job for me, har-har-har."

"Well, last I heard that guest house still isn't finished", Ellie observed. "But I guess we'd better not bring it up; it might be a sore spot between Burn and Carlie."

"I think that would be wise", James said with a knowing smile.

After a pause in the conversation, Ellie asked, "Are you sure you packed your medicine, J.T.?"

"Yes, dear, it's in with my shaving kit", James answered.

Then Ellie closed her eyes and dozed off, leaving James to concentrate on the driving; he switched the radio to a new FM station as they had traveled beyond the reception range of the Charleston station. James sighed contentedly as he anticipated getting to see his old buddies again.

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Traffic on Interstate 94 was not too bad at 5:30 AM central time, as Rafe Cerny drove toward General Mitchell International Airport. Rafe had been working on a consulting contract in the Milwaukee area for almost a year now and this morning he had a 7:30 AM flight to Norfolk, VA, after a stop in Cincinnati. "Burn is scheduled to get there around eleven-thirty Eastern Time; Bo and Denise are scheduled to arrive around ten and my flight is due just after Noon", Rafe was going over the plan in his mind. "I hope to hell there are no delays – at least the weather is supposed to hold up all the way through; too bad I couldn't get a direct flight."

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As he was negotiating a lane change, “Still”, a 1970’s Lionel Richie song, when he was with the Commodores, came on the radio and Rafe sang along...

*Lady*

*Morning's just a moment away  
And I'm without you once again  
You laughed at me  
You said you never needed me  
I wonder if you need me now*

*We played the games that people play  
We made our mistakes along the way  
Somehow I know deep in my heart  
You needed me  
Remembering the pain if I must say  
It's deep in my mind and locked away  
But then most of all  
I do love you...  
Still*

*Those memories*

*Times I'm sure we'll never forget  
Those feelings we can put aside  
For what we had  
Sometimes I try to understand  
But it's so heavy on my mind*

*So many dreams that flew away  
So many words we didn't say  
Two people lost in a storm  
Where did we go?  
Where'd we go?  
We lost what we both had found  
You know we let each other down  
But then most of all  
I do love you...  
Still*

*We played the games that people play  
We made our mistakes along the way  
Somehow I know deep in my heart  
You needed me  
'Cause I needed you so desperately*

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*We were too blind to see  
But then most of all  
I do love you...  
Still!*

The song had a poignant effect on Rafe, especially the pregnant pause before Richie whispers the word “Still”. It brought back memories that were still very much engraved on his mind and in his heart. “I really miss her!” he said aloud, while navigating around a backup of traffic getting off at an exit. He was thinking about her again, practically a daily thing; it had become an imbedded habit that he couldn’t seem to shake, even though a year had passed. Too many things reminded him of how happy he had been with her, even though the relationship lasted but eight months. Sarah Williams had been like a gift from heaven; they seemed to have a great deal in common. “More than I ever felt with Paula in the thirty-four years we were married”, Rafe silently voiced to himself. “Ah, but that’s not being exactly fair; for the first twenty-four years or so the marriage was good, then we just grew apart.”

He and Sarah had started dating in December, 2005, eighteen months after the divorce from Paula was finalized. He had noticed Sarah at church and felt an attraction to her, but assumed she was probably in a relationship with someone. A mutual friend at church adroitly got them together at church functions, and when Rafe asked Sarah to go with him to a dinner dance, she not only accepted, but seemed pleased he had asked. That first date was fun, after the initial nervousness of dating again, and Rafe asked Sarah for another date. Within a month they had started to date every week. By the third month it seemed as though the relationship had been raised to a new level; friends at church were noticing that they were acting like two teenagers; bright and cheerful Sarah, whose face was sunshine and in whose company was a comfort and gladness he had rarely known.

Then Sarah moved. It wasn’t a surprise; just before they had started dating Sarah had bought property in the Milwaukee suburbs, near one of her sons and was having a house built there. But they thought they could continue the relationship by alternating travel on weekends between New Jersey and Wisconsin. At first it looked as though it might work out, but then Sarah seemed to change. Rafe wanted to continue the relationship, but Sarah didn’t and so it ended. Rafe had tried to get a consulting contract in the suburbs near Sarah in hopes that the relationship could be rekindled, but the closest he could get was just outside of downtown Milwaukee. It made no difference; Sarah did not believe that it would work out. “Maybe I pushed too hard”, he thought; “after all she did have a bad divorce and had not had been in a relationship for a long time when we started dating.”

Rafe had to snap out of his reverie – the exit for the airport was just ahead. He exited, guided the car to an off airport parking lot and caught the shuttle. After clearing security, he sat at the gate waiting the time for boarding. A four day weekend with his buddies and their wives at a rental cottage in Kill Devil Hills was just hours away.

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 18

Earle “Burn” Burnell made the final entry in the spreadsheet on his office computer; this completed the estimate for a bid on a new construction contract, which if it won the day would bring in a cool \$5 Million gross income for his company. Earle was the newly appointed Director of the Industrial Construction Department at Norfolk Construction Company. He was in a hurry to wrap up the estimate, because he was taking off at 11:00 AM to pick up Bo and Rafe at the Norfolk International Airport and wanted to get there around eleven-thirty.

He quickly went over the plan in his mind. Bo had called earlier when he and Denise arrived in Norfolk around ten o’clock. Carlie, his wife, had met Bo and Denise at the airport and she and Denise were already on the way down to the cottage Carlie rented in Kill Devil Hills. It was their semi-annual get-together that had become nearly a ritual. Carlie had taken two days-vacation and was driving down in the 2006 silver family Ford 500 with all the bed linens, towels and supplies they would need for the four day event. Bo was waiting in the airport for Earle and the two of them will wait for Rafe to arrive. Then after a quick lunch, Earle would take the three of them down to the cottage in the company pickup.

Earl quickly sent off the estimate attached to an email to the Accounting Department and then closed down all the open applications, signed off, and powered off his computer. He stood up, stretched his still trim 6’ 3” gangly frame, grabbed his appointment book and walked quickly out of the building to the company supplied pickup truck in the parking lot. Once in the truck with his seat belt clicked, he started the truck and drove out of the parking lot onto the main street toward the interstate. Coming through the radio speakers was an oldie song by Ray Charles, “Born to Lose”...

*Born to lose, I've lived my life in vain  
Every dream has only brought me pain  
All my life I've always been so blue  
Born to lose and now I'm losing you*

Born to lose, it seems so hard to bear  
How I long to always have you near  
You've grown tired and now you say we're through  
Born to lose and now I'm losing you...

He had to laugh at the memory that the song evoked. It was back in the fall of 1961 and Patty Riley had flown down to Baton Rouge to spend the weekend with Earle, after he had rematriculated at LSC. They had dated all that summer and Earle had hoped they would continue to develop a lasting relationship. They had a busy weekend with football games and parties, but then as she was leaving on Sunday, Patty dropped a bombshell on Earle. It seems she had met a Wall Street high flyer and told Earle that she was serious about him and that she was breaking up with Earle. At the time Earle was devastated. He spent that night at the Tiger Inn, eating pickled pigs feet, and quail eggs, hot sausage & crackers, and washing it down with lots of beer. He must have played the Ray Charles songs “Born to Lose” and “Let’s Go Get Stoned” a hundred times

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 18

on the juke box that night. Then he got into a fight with some son of a bitch that spit on his pinball machine.

Earle shook off that memory and focused on the approaching exit off the freeway that would take him to the airport. Ten minutes later he parked the truck in the short term parking lot just outside the main terminal. He entered the terminal and looked for the bar where Bo had said he would wait for him. "Ah, there it is", he said to himself; "and there's Bo sitting at the bar". Knowing that Bo was nearly deaf in one ear and easily surprised, Earle snuck up behind Bo and slipped his right hand across the right side of Bo's face brushing his ear and cheek.

"Jesus Christ!" Bo yelled as he nearly jumped off the bar stool. Earle laughed and Bo turned around quickly and said, "Damn it, Burn, don't do that. You nearly gave me a heart attack!"

"Still skittish, I see", Earle said with a laugh, and Bo had to laugh as well.

"Grab a stool", Bo directed, "what do you want to drink, I've got a tab running?" He signaled the bar maid and then added, "I checked the arrivals screen and Rafe's flight should get in on time, so we have time for a drink. Rafe called when he was leaving Cincinnati and I told him to meet us here."

The bar maid came over and Earle ordered a draft of Bud Light. He sat down next to Bo and the two waited and talked about their jobs while waiting for Rafe to arrive.

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"I might have known you two would be half shit faced by the time I arrived", Rafe said jokingly as he came up behind Bo and Earle in the airport bar. He dropped his carryon bags next to Bo's, shared a bear hug with them and sat down on a stool next to Earle.

"Good, you made it on time. You've got some catching up to do, Rafe", Earle said half seriously.

Bo flagged the bar maid over and said pointing over to Rafe, "Give this old-timer there a drink and put it on my tab, please". Rafe ordered a Dewers and water. They chatted a bit about their jobs and wishing they could all afford to retire. After the three of them finished their drinks, Bo paid the tab.

Bo and Rafe picked up their bags and the three headed across the center court to Michael's Sea Food Restaurant for a quick lunch. The restaurant was nearly empty, so Rafe walked right by a sign that said, "Please wait to be seated", and headed toward an open table for four. Just then the hostess rushed over to lead them to an assigned table.

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“Wait, Rafe, don’t you read signs?” Earle yelled out; then seeing the hostess, Rafe stopped in his tracks.

“You’ll have to excuse our friend there; he’s from one of those Slavic countries and doesn’t read English very well”, Bo said to the hostess. People at one of the occupied tables laughed and so did the hostess.

The hostess then led them over to the table that Rafe had originally been headed for and as she seated them, she played along at Rafe’s expense. “Here’s our menus”, and talking to Bo she joked, “you’ll have to read it for him.” Then looking at Rafe, she said haltingly as if she were carefully pronouncing each word to a foreigner, “Your friend here will read you the menu and help you order.” That brought more laughs from the patrons who occupied the table across the way and Bo and Earle joined in. Rafe also laughed and took the ribbing in stride.

The three men had a quick lunch of the Maryland crab cakes special and a round of drinks. Rafe picked up the tab and then after a visit to the men’s room, they left the terminal, put the luggage in the back of the pickup and headed for the Outer Banks.

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Ninety minutes after leaving the airport, they had crossed the Wright Memorial Bridge on U.S. Route 158 and were at the town of Southern Shores on the Outer Banks. Earle pulled the pickup truck into a bank where Bo and Rafe accessed an ATM. They had discussed and agreed that they would each put a hundred dollars per person into a kitty (they’d inform James when he arrived), from which they would withdraw whenever they went to the store for food, beer and supplies, and for eating out in a restaurant one night. Next stop was to Carlie’s sister’s house to borrow some beach chairs and a beach umbrella. After that they went on to a Farm Barn supermarket to pick up a case of beer and a bag of ice, and then finally on to the three bedroom cottage in Kill Devil Hills.

The cottage (all houses that are not mansion-sized are generally called cottages on the Outer Banks) was one block off the beach with a pathway leading to the ocean beach, and like all the cottages it was built up on pilings with the living quarters up a flight of stairs.

Earle drove the pickup truck onto the second of two concrete parking slabs that ended underneath the house, alongside the Ford 500 that Carlie and Denise had arrived in a couple hours earlier. After unpacking the pickup truck the three men walked up the stairs and joined Carlie and Denise. The women had long finished opening up the cottage, putting away the supplies and getting the three bedrooms set up with pillows, sheets, and towels. They had been sitting talking in the living room.

“Well it’s about time you guys showed up. We were beginning to think you had gotten yourselves in trouble somewhere after leaving the airport”, Carlie said jokingly. “Bo, you and Denise are in the bedroom at the end of the hall, on the right hand side. James and Ellie will be in

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the one opposite the second bathroom. Rafe, you've got your choice of one of these two couches in the living room; both have pull-out beds."

Bo dropped his bags in his assigned bedroom and Rafe dropped his out on the enclosed side porch adjacent to the living room. Then Earle put some of the ice in the cooler and the rest in the freezer, and Bo and Rafe loaded the cooler with half of the case of beer, after opening three bottles for each to drink and raising a toast. The women were already drinking cokes. Rafe called James on James's cell phone to find out how far along they were and their expected time of arrival. Ellie answered. She reported that they had stopped off to get something to eat and would be there about three-thirty. It was now almost three o'clock.

While they awaited James and Ellie, Bo, Earle and Rafe grabbed another round of beer and beach chairs and walked the path over to the beach. They sat down looking out at the waves rolling in and listening to the sound of the ocean. That oh so familiar sound that had been such a big part of their memories when their friendship was initially cemented back in those high school and post high school years, culminating in that summer of 1961.

The three longtime friends returned from the beach in time to greet their fourth old friend James. They helped James and Ellie unpack their SUV and stash their bags in their bedroom. Then the group of seven sat around the living room discussing and making plans for the weekend.

"So it's settled then." Earle was summing up the discussion. "Tonight we go out to JK's Seafood Restaurant. Tomorrow, Friday, we go to the beach before and after lunch; the gals will go out shopping..."

"Without the credit cards", Bo interjected in a kidding way.

"Who says?" responded Denise.

"Who needs credit cards? We have other resources", Ellie remarked half-seriously.

"That's right!" Carlie said with a twinkle in her eye and a playful poke in Earle's ribs.

"Ok, Ok! Let me finish, alright?" Earle asked rhetorically. "Also, tomorrow the guys will go out food shopping for steaks we can cook on the grill and whatever other fixins' we need..."

This time Carlie interrupted, "You don't fool us; you're probably going to make another beer run, as well." Denise looked at Bo and nodded in agreement, as if to say, "Touche", and Ellie shrugged her shoulders as if to say, "What else is new".

"Well, Darlin' you know we are all growing boys and need something to wash down all the good food we're about to consume this weekend", Earle said lightheartedly. "Now as I was saying before all these interruptions"...

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“You’re all growing alright, but horizontally, not vertically”, chimed in Denise. And everyone shared a laugh.

Rafe, who had been smiling and silently listening with amusement to the repartee, said half seriously, “Now ladies, give the man a break; he’s trying to sum up the plans, so we’re all on the same page and know what to expect for the weekend.”

“Ok, Rafe, we’re going to put you in charge to make sure our men, your buddies, don’t go overboard, and if you don’t do a good job, there will be hell to pay; just remember that saying, there’s no fury like that of a woman scorned, or something like that”, joked Denise with a mischievous smile. Another short round of laughter followed.

“Ouch!” Rafe responded with pretended hurt.

“Ok, now let me finish the plans we discussed”, Earle tried again, sounding a bit exasperated. “So, On Saturday, the guys will go out and get all the fixins for the world famous ‘Burn’ gumbo I’ll make for dinner. This year we agreed that we’ll do a shrimp, oysters, and andouille sausage gumbo, instead of the chicken and andouille sausage gumbo we’ve done in the past. I think I’ll add some crabmeat, too.”

“And we’ll probably need to do another beer run”, Rafe added teasingly. For that he got a wry smile from Carlie and a sham slap on the arm from Denise. Ellie merely shrugged her shoulders.

“Ahem!” Earle continued. “And then on Sunday, we pack and clean up the place before heading out. Did I miss anything?”

“Only the part about a beer run”, said James, jokingly with a hearty laugh. And everyone joined in. The gang was now primed for another one of their get-togethers that began in the fall of 2000 and had become an annual event, and in a few of those a semi-annual event.

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*Saturday afternoon, October 6, 2007...*

The laughter rang out from the upper porch of the cottage that looked out toward the ocean one hundred yards away. The four friends were sitting on the walnut stained wooden benches drinking a beer.

“You should have been there, Hein. Bo jumped a foot off the ground when I sneaked up behind him and slipped an eight inch long package of Genoa salami into his hand and said, ‘hold this for me’; Bo reacted like it was a huge dick”. For the benefit of James, who had missed it, Earle had just finished relating what had happened when he, Bo, and Rafe had gone to the deli



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and bakery store to get bread to accompany the night's dinner with Earle's special gumbo recipe. While the three of them were out food shopping, James and Ellie had taken a drive down the road to see the two cottages that James and his first wife, Lorrie, had owned before they had divorced.

As the laughter died down, Bo said, "Damn, now I know why I look forward to our get-togethers. I think I laugh more on these weekends than I do the rest of the year."

"I know what you mean", responded Rafe.

"That goes for me, too", said James.

"It does help to temporarily forget the stress of work and all the other damn concerns that each of us have to deal with", said Earle.

After a short pause, James asked rhetorically, "how many times have we gotten together since that first one back in 2000? As I recall, after the first one here in the fall on the Outer Banks, we had a second just about a year later, again on the Outer Banks. Both of those were also in Kill Devil Hills but at another cottage."

"That cottage was a few blocks south of this one," added Earle. "It was damaged in the storm several years ago and was replaced with a much bigger cottage."

"Yeah, Rafe and I walked down that way the past two mornings; it is huge", said Bo.

"That second get-together was just about a month after 9-11 and we were watching a lot of the news on the TV," Rafe added. "That was a heartbreaking and tragic time."

"Yeah, those fucking terrorist bastards! And after all these years, we still haven't nailed that son-of-a-bitch, Bin Laden!" Bo said angrily. The others nodded that they felt the same. Then Bo added, "But I believe we had enough of our people killed and we should bring our troops home in an orderly way and let those assholes kill themselves off without us losing any more of our troops."

"Yeah, but we can't just withdraw without some form of government in place and some stability, or else the fuckin' Iranians will take over; and we know that they want to eradicate Israel and stick it to us", shot back James.

"You are both right in a way", injected Rafe. "If it wasn't for our dependence on foreign oil, we could stop trying to be the World Police; and now that we have liberated the Iraqis from Hussein, let them grow the balls to fight against the Jihadist fanatics. So, I think we would all agree that our government should move heaven and earth to establish the kind of ten-year objective that JFK did with the space program; ask the American people to support a program that gets us off of dependency on imported oil."

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“Yeah we would still need to provide them some backup”, added Earle, “but we probably could get the U.N. to put in a multi-national force to keep the peace while the Iraqis establish a permanent government.”

“I agree with getting off foreign oil, but we would need to tell the environmentalists to shut the fuck up; that part of the program must be drilling in that part of Alaska where no animals are endangered”, Bo responded with intensity. “That goes as well for other areas of our coasts, where deep drilling may yield more supplies; and then combine that with a wide-ranging plan for alternative sources like wind, water, ethanol and something I just read about - capturing geo-thermal energy from deep down in the earth.”

James came back with, “I agree. That should be our long term strategy. But in the short run we need to continue to fight the fucking Jihadists, and for my money it’s better to do that in the Middle East, or *anywhere* other than the good ole’ U.S.A. So let’s keep them busy over there, and beef up our intelligence forces and border security to at least make it a lot more difficult for another 9-11 type of attack to happen. But what scares me the most is if the bastards are able to poison our water supplies or detonate some dirty nuclear device in a populous area. That scares the shit out of me”.

After a minute or so of reflection on the conversation that had just occurred, all four of the men drew a deep breath, shook their heads and internalized the deep concern they all felt about the world situation and their fear of what was happening to the America of their youth. Each of them had doubts or uncertainties about what America’s role should be today with respect to the rest of the world.

But these men were products of a time when America was still in its ascendancy as the leader of the free world. A time when “made in America” was *the* prime standard; when the U.S. dollar was still underpinned on the gold standard and America was the primary exporter of goods to the rest of the world. A time when American leadership, generosity and charity had rebuilt the economies of Japan and Germany, despite the fact that they were defeated enemies. Since then the U.S. had ceded to other countries the manufacture of nearly all consumer and durable goods. First it was the shoe business, then clothing and automobiles and steel and so many other manufactured goods. Now even our Service Industry was being sent off-shore; all this in the name of “global economy”. “What’s next?” Each of them silently wondered.

Another minute passed as the men gathered their thoughts, sipped on their scotch and smiled warmly at one another, as only old friends can do after a disconcerting talk on a subject that affects them deeply.

It was Earle who broke the silence and said with a deep sigh, “Well, ain’t any of us in a position to change things with the wave of our hands, so how about we get back to James’s recounting of our reunions”. Bo and Rafe nodded their agreement.

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“Well that was 2001, and then the following spring in 2002 Ellie and I had all of you down to our place in Charleston”, James began again to recall the sequence. “Then if I recollect, we had another get-together in Charleston the spring of 2003 and then in the fall of 2003 we all went to Burn’s in Virginia to help put a porch and steps on the front of that guest house. And we went back again to Burn’s in August of 2004 to build the porch and steps on the back of the guest house.”

“Yeah, that’s when we had the beer butt chicken and the barbequed ribs”, interjected Rafe.

“Right,” James continued, “and then in the fall of 2004 we all went to the forty-fifth reunion with our QHS class in New Jersey. In the spring of 2005 we had everyone down to our place in Charleston again, this time after we had moved to that second home. The next get-together was in the fall of 2005 at this very cottage. In 2006 we had everyone down to Charleston in the spring and in December we all went to visit Roger and Gladys Vaccaro at their home in Tennessee.”

“Yeah, I’m glad we were able to do that. I hadn’t seen Roger and Gladys since the summer of 1961, and I guess the rest of you hadn’t seen them since just after high school,” said Bo.

“It was definitely a great idea to get out there to visit them,” said Rafe. “Roger and Gladys were as happy to see us, as we were to see them, especially since Roger has developed a rare case of some kind of muscular disease and is having some difficulty walking.”

Bo responded, “To see this guy who used to be like the Rock of Gibraltar having difficulty walking, even with a cane, just tore me up”.

Then Rafe added, “You’re saying it for all of us; it was an emotional scene when we left their home in Tennessee; five grown men fighting back the tears so as not to embarrass one another and holding out hope that his physical problems can be reversed”.

“God bless him, though”, said Earle. “He has a great attitude – there is no quit in Roger, just as he was when we played football together in high school.”

James offered, “We need to continue to pray that a modern medical cure will be found for his condition.” The others nodded their assent.

“Gladys certainly laid out the food”, Earle added, changing the subject somewhat to assuage the profound feelings they all felt.

“Leave it to Burn to bring up food”, Bo teased.

“Hey, food is one of my favorite pastimes; y’all know I love to eat”, Earle responded

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 18

“And he’s still almost as trim as he was in high school”, Rafe said laughing. “If I ate like Burn I’d have to waddle when I walked.”

“I think all that food just goes to his big feet”, Bo said kidding.

“Watch what you say, boy, or one of these size fourteen will go where the sun don’t shine and kick your ass back to Jersey,” Earle said with a mock threat. And they all enjoyed a laugh.

“Ok, did I miss anything?” asked James after the laughter died down.

“Just that this year we were all down in Charleston at your new house, and Roger and Gladys also joined us,” answered Rafe. “And of course we are here once again in Kill Devil Hills, where it all started”.

A few minutes later, the four friends saw that the women were walking back from the beach. As the women approached the cottage, they looked up at the men on the porch. “Burn, are you guys going to drink beer all day? That gumbo isn’t going to make itself”, chided Carlie.

“We were just getting ready to go down and start the preparations, Darlin’”, Earle answered good-naturedly. Then to the other three men, “It is about time to get that started.”

“I’ll cut up the peppers, while you get the roux started, Burn”, offered Rafe.

“And I’ll chop up the celery and onions”, said Bo.

“And I’ll perform my customary role as Supervisor”, James laughed, as the four made their way down the stairs to the main door to the living quarters of the cottage.

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*Later that night...*

“Well, Burn, you did it again. That gumbo was delicious! I especially liked the change to the shrimp, crabmeat, oysters and sausage this time”, announced Ellie.

“Thanks, I love to eat and it’s even better when sharing a meal with old friends”, Earle responded to the compliment.

“Amen to that!” Rafe said.

Then as Bo and James started to clear the dishes, Carlie said, “Just put those in the sink, guys. Since y’all did the cookin’, the women will do the cleanup. You men can go relax.”

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“Yes, and talk about that book you’ve been hinting at writing all these years”, interjected Denise.

“Thank god there’s a dishwasher here”, said Ellie with a short laugh, “washing dishes by hand is not one of my favorite things to do, and I don’t give a fig who knows it.” Then she turned to James and asked, “J.T. did you take your meds?”

“I was just about to do that, Mixi, but thanks for reminding me”, James replied; and he went over to the counter to pick up his meds and then to the sink to wash them down with a glass of water.

Once everyone was up and the table cleared, Bo said “It’s still kind of warm out tonight, why don’t we grab sweat shirts or something, in case the wind off the ocean gets chilly, and go up on the upper porch and chat about that book. We can bring the scotch for our traditional scotch tasting.”

“A little liquid refreshment will help to jog our memories”, replied Rafe.

“Ha! And then the stories about you guys’ past exploits will get more and more exaggerated with each drop of alcohol”, Denise said teasingly.

“We’ll just stay down here and talk about y’all”, teased Carlie.

“Is there *that* much to say?” Ellie said rhetorically with her typical flair for humorously saying whatever came to mind. That brought a laugh from all.

Then the four men gathered sweat shirts, two bottles of water, glasses and the scotch – two bottles of single malt and a bottle of a blend that Earle had made and aged in a two liter wooden cask. They switched on the outside lights, exited through the door and walked up the stairs to the upper porch lit up by two flood lights. They settled on the two opposing benches with a table in the center where they placed their glasses, the water bottles and the three bottles of scotch. Each of them briefly wondering if he could piece together chronologically moments in his past that would be of interest to the others and good material for a book.

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 19

*Saturday evening, October 6, 2007 continued...*

*On the upper porch of the beach cottage...*

“That Glenmorangie is my favorite of the two single malts, but I like your blend, too, Burn”, Rafe stated.

“It’s Glenmorangie’s twelve year old Madeira Wood Finish. On the tongue it’s smooth but spicy, initially sweet but then becoming drier, with a touch of cherry and vanilla, rum, butter, horehound, and licorice”, responded Earle. “That’s what I read in an article I picked up on the web.”

“Yeah, I agree, I like the Glenmorangie better than the Macallan”, Bo said, taking another sip”.

“I’m not an aficionado of scotch, but I agree on both the Glenmorangie and the Burn’s Blend”, James added.

“Ok,” James continued, “so let’s talk about this book. When we first got together in 2000, we all thought that it would be a good idea to write a book about our friendship; how we became friends in high school and later went our separate ways, and then forty years later reconnected through the Internet”.

Bo responded, “Yeah, we’ve talked about it for the past seven years, but we haven’t done much more than spend hours reminiscing and enjoying our get-togethers, but not getting anything down on paper.”

“Maybe it’s time to stop talking about it and doing something to make it happen”, Earle declared.

“I’ve got an idea”, Rafe offered. “Why not get a ghost writer to take our thoughts and rough words – our remembrances - and organize them into a book. I know a person in my church who writes for magazines and digests like Readers Digest. I bet he would do it for a small fee.”

Then James responded, “Well, hell, how hard would it be for us to do it together; I mean why pay someone when we would have to collect all our memories in writing through emails anyway. We just need to decide whether or not we are all committed.”

“Ok, yeah, we can all share emails and discuss our memories when we get together, but someone has to take all of that and organize it into a book,” suggested Bo. Then looking around at the other three, his eyes stopped on Rafe and he said, “Hey, Rafe, do you think you could be the organizer?” Earle and James looked at Rafe expectantly.

James spoke next, “How about it Rafe? Would you be willing?”

## Beach Party Days: Chapter 19

Rafe looked at his three friends and after a brief hesitation said, “Well I’ll give it a shot, but I can’t do it alone. Each of you has to chip in by opening up about events and happenings in your lives that occurred during those years when we lost contact with one another. And if I send you an email asking for additional info or clarification about something you mentioned in our discussions, I’ll expect you to send me a quick response.”

“I can go with that”, Earle said nodding his head in affirmation.

“So can I”, said Bo.

“Me too”, said James.

“And when it is finished, all of our names will be credited as the authors”, Rafe said looking for agreement from the other three. When they each nodded, he continued, “Good, then it’s settled.”

“So how should we get this started?” asked Bo.

James responded by saying, “I think Rafe hinted at it a minute ago. Before we got together that first time in 2000, we shared a lot of emails about our memories of high school, so we have that as a starting point. Then in all of the times we’ve gotten together, we have shared some things about our memories just after high school and the college years, but as Rafe said, there is a lot we haven’t yet shared about those years when we lost contact with one or another of us.”

“Right”, responded Rafe, “So, who wants to go first and summarize the keys events and stories that they had during the years we all started to go our separate ways? I know; why don’t we start with the years following the summer of 1961 – that was the year Burn went back to school in Louisiana, I went back to school in Ohio, and Bo and Hein fell in love and were married not too long after.” When Rafe saw the other three shrug their shoulders as if to say, “why not”, he looked at James and asked, “How about it, Hein? Why don’t you start the ball rolling?”

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*James’ account...*

“Well, let’s see; I guess I should start with the last years of my marine service”, James began. “I believe I already told you all about my being on guard for the JFK Inauguration and some of the stories at Camp David and in D.C.”

“But one story I don’t think I told you about happened during the Cuban Missile Crisis. In October 1962 before the crisis became a game of ‘who will back down first’, my platoon was boarded on one of about 12 buses from Camp Lejeune to Norfolk, where we were to board a ship that would be headed toward a blockade of Cuba. We had gone 36 hours without sleep due to

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being on alert and hopped up on coffee. We were in the lead bus and somewhere on the road to Norfolk, every marine on our bus had to take a wicked piss; but the asshole Lieutenant refused to let the bus stop. Finally a Sergeant knocked windows out of back of bus for those who couldn't hold it anymore; that led to the bus caravan stopping and 1200 marines pissing on the side of the road. All the house lights came on; the people must have thought it was an alien invasion." That drew a laugh from the other three men.

James continued, "Then once we got to Norfolk and Newport News, we doubled time onto the aircraft carrier, Boxer. We were on the carrier for three days and then transferred to the Francis Marion, command ship of amphibious squadron 12. We were part of the blockade of Cuba ordered by JFK to keep the Soviets from delivering missiles to the missile sights they had built in Cuba for Castro. We spent 75 days on that ship, wondering when we might get the orders to invade Cuba, or if we would get into a sea battle with the Soviet fleet. It was scary, and at the time we didn't know how close we really were to an allout war with the Russians. To pass the time and ease the tension, we played lots of poker." James hesitated a second, smiled, rubbed his hands together and added, "I was poker champ - paid a big, muscle-bound corporal to help me collect my debts." The other three men, who had been listening intently, couldn't help but chuckle – it was typical of James to come up with something humorous to offset the seriousness of an episode in his life.

James then continued, "About a year later, just before Thanksgiving, my unit was on duty at Camp David when the news reports came in that JFK was shot in Dallas. After he died and was transported up to D.C., we were on guard during the funeral procession. It was one of the saddest days I can remember. Thousands of people lined up along the streets sobbing – men as well as women."

James then changed the subject, "So, after spending the last two years of my service in G2 intelligence, I got my honorable discharge in February of '64, went home, and got engaged to Lorrie Bolles, who, as you may remember, I had been seeing since that summer of '61. Meeting her had given me added incentive to hitchhike home every weekend that I could get off the base."

Rafe then asked rhetorically, "And then you got married in June of '64, right?"

James responded, "Yes, it was June of '64. We were married in St. Cecelia's RC Church by Father Paul, same priest who married Bo and his first wife, a year earlier. In fact I was home on leave and Lorrie and I went to Bo's wedding; and so did you, Rafe, I think". Rafe nodded to confirm. Then James continued, "Well then Lorrie and I got an apartment at the Martha Washington Apartments in Quaytown. Jimmy Barrone's older brother, Tony and his first wife also lived there, and we double dated a lot with them. I got a job at the Wisdom Insurance Company in Newark and then on weekends I picked up a part-time job at Bill McKelvey's Atlantic gas station in Mason – you remember Bill, he graduated with us. When summer came Rafe was working in the Texaco gas station across the highway and when things were slow, we would play catch with a football, throwing it back and forth across the highway."



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“Then we had the five year reunion at the Horse Neck Inn in Horse Neck. Bo and his first wife, Joan, were there. But that was the last time I can remember seeing Bo; after that everyone I knew from our class couldn’t say where Bo was.” Bo acknowledged by nodding. “That’s when Rafe was dating an underage Italian girl; I remember her name was René. After the reunion we went back to our apartment for a nightcap and she got sick. Rafe had to have the emergency squad come and take her to Riverside Hospital.”

“What was that about?” asked Bo, with a mix of surprise and concern in his voice.

Rafe interjected to explain, “René was taking some kind of diet pills. She had a few whiskey sours at the reunion along with the food and when we got back to Hein’s apartment, she had another drink. The alcohol and the meds caused her to get bad stomach cramps and she practically fainted. At the hospital they had to pump out her stomach. I felt like a real shithead, when I had to call her parents and tell them what had happened, because the doctors in the emergency room wanted her to stay until the morning. She was only fifteen at the time, but could pass for nineteen. And the topper was that it was our first real date.”

Bo and Earle both shook their heads in empathy, understanding that Rafe could have been brought up on charges of feeding alcohol to a minor.

“So, James, what happened after 1964?” Rafe asked to get back to James’ recollections.

“Well, in 1965 my daughter Alicia was born and in 1967 my son Gary was born. During that time we moved into a larger apartment in Ruby Creek. Then, after semi-annual pay increases at Wisdom Insurance, in 1969 I left Wisdom for Residence Life in Manhattan for a good deal more money and we bought the house in Holmvale that summer, where we lived until the divorce in 1982. Seven years later, in 1976, I changed jobs again and got another bump in salary at Municipal Life in Newark; plus I made out because I no longer had to pay taxes to New York City and the commuting expenses were a lot less. Now that I think about it, Rafe started working at Wisdom Insurance a couple of years after I was there, and then he followed me to Municipal Life about two years after I got there; isn’t that right, Rafe?”

“Yep, Hein, you called me in 1978 about the reorganization that Municipal was going through and that they were hiring”, Rafe confirmed. “Then I interviewed and got hired at a good salary boost.”

James continued, “I need to back up a little. In 1965, Lorrie changed jobs for a bigger salary and better benefits. During that time, Rafe continued dating René, and they got engaged, but it didn’t last. But while they were together, her father got us part time work tending bar for a catering outfit. After Rafe and René split up, Rafe met Paula at the Wisdom, and when they got married, I was his Best Man.”

“Later In 1969, we went to the QHS ten-year reunion with Rafe and Paula. They stayed over at our house in Holmvale. And around that time I re-connected with my old Marine buddy,

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Stan DelaCrois. We had a lot of parties over at our house with Stan and his wife Jill, and Rafe and Paula. We went to the fifteenth and the twentieth QHS reunions with Rafe and Paula. Along about 1976, we bought the first cottage in Nags Head and started renting it out; two years later, about 1979 we bought the second cottage in Nags Head, again renting it out. We barely covered the mortgage with the rent and while Lorrie and the kids got to use them a lot during summers and off season, I got to use them much less, since I had a lot less vacation than Lorrie.”

James hesitated, his voice becoming more serious when he finally continued, “It was in 1981 that I came home early from work and found Lorrie in bed with a neighbor guy – I later learned that it wasn’t the first time; it had been going on for two months.”

“Jesus, Hein, it must have been a real shocker”, Earle interjected.

“Yeah, it definitely was”, James replied. “After the initial feeling of disbelief, I felt so angry the thought of killing both of them entered my mind, but just for a brief moment. She didn’t know I had my marine issued 45 stashed in a hidden spot in my tool bench in the basement. After that, all I felt was hurt and betrayed.” Bo put his arm around James’s shoulders and gave him a quick, sympathetic tug and Rafe tapped James on the upper arm. James continued, “Then, I’ve already told you about the negotiations leading up to the divorce, the initial settlement and about how Lorrie went back to courts eight years later and got that son-of-a-bitch judge to grant her a large increase in the settlement for child support, supposedly so the kids could go to more elite and more expensive colleges.”

James cleared his throat and in his inimitable way of once again adding humor to a serious conversation said jokingly, “My buddy Stan DelaCrois offered to hire somebody to rub her out or at least break both her legs, but I told him no, Har, Har.” Then more seriously, “But I got even in my own way. By then I had met and married, Ellie, the woman that has made it all seem worthwhile. After getting married, we moved to Florida in 1984, where I set up my own insurance agency as an agent for Municipal Life. So, we thumbed our noses at Lorrie and the Judge for several years, but then Lorrie got the judge to issue a warrant for my arrest if I ever set foot back in New Jersey. But Ellie still had kids and grandkids in New Jersey from her first marriage, so after a while, we agreed to pay the vigerish. Then my insurance business went to hell because Municipal ran into financial problems, and then I had the heart attack, which almost sent me to that castle in the sky. We wound up taking a ten year loan to pay for the judgment.”

James took a breath and continued, “Then the rest you pretty much know. Rafe somehow got my Florida address and phone number and called me around the time of the 1994 class reunion; that was while the arrest warrant was still in effect. Then in late 1999 after I recovered from the heart attack and we had reached a settlement with Lorrie, we moved up to Charleston. Ellie and I came up to New Jersey and I contacted Rafe on the phone – I think I got his number from his mom. We exchanged email addresses and then somehow, I don’t recall exactly, the four of us were communicating via email and planning our first get-together in Nags Head.”

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After a couple of minutes to absorb James's account, Rafe said, "Thanks Hein that fills in a lot of gaps for the rest of us."

"Yeah, thanks Hein that was interesting", added Bo; and Earle nodded.

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*Saturday evening, October 6, 2007 continued...*

*Still on the upper porch of the beach cottage...*

“Ok, who wants to go next? How about it Burn; do you want to go next?” Rafe asked, looking expectantly at Earle.

“Well, what the hell; why not”, Earle replied.

“Just keep it clean, Burn, I’ve heard some of the wild things you did with those Southern girls”, joked Bo.

“You must be thinking my history is like yours, Bo”, laughed Earle. And the others laughed as well.

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*Earle’s account...*

“Ok, as you know when the summer of 1961 ended, on my way back to Louisiana, I drove Rafe back to Milton College in Ohio. We drove down in my blue ’56 Ford.”

Rafe added, “On our way down I remember we stopped in West Virginia at Burn’s...was it your Uncle’s or Grandfather’s farm?” as he turned back for confirmation from Earle.

“Uncle Walter’s”, Earle answered.

“And guys, it was a nice farm, but I still remember it had an outhouse. I think that was my first experience with using an outhouse and I remember wondering what it would be like in the dead of winter, with a couple feet of snow on the ground, to have to trundle out there to take a crap in the middle of the night”, Rafe recalled.

Bo shook his head and said, “I can’t imagine”.

“You Yankees are a bunch of pussies!” Earle jokingly retorted. “My 80 year old Aunt has no problems with it. Y’all just have had life too easy. It would have been the other way around if the South had beaten the North”. That drew a chuckle from the others.

Then Earle continued, “After stopping at my Uncle Walter’s in West Virginia, we stayed overnight. Then I spent the next night in Mason with Rafe at his Frat House. We went out drinking and I remember I still had a crush on Patty Ryan, the girl from that Ruby Creek crowd we hooked up with that summer, and I was commiserating with Rafe about her. She was a hottie; lots of tits and rubs, but no pussy. I remember on our last date her mother, knowing I was going back to LSC telling me to leave her daughter as I found her. And I think Rafe was telling me

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about how he was interested in that black gal that was always with Nathan – can't remember her name.”

“That must have been Pam - Pam Warner”, Rafe interjected.

“Right”, Earle replied then continued. “Then the next morning I drove on down to Baton Rouge to re-enroll at LSC. In the fall of 1961, Patty Ryan flew down for an LSC game and told me about her new boyfriend in NYC as she was leaving for the plane back to Jersey. I went to the local pub to drown my sorrows. The Ray Charles song, “Born to Lose” was my big play on Juke box. Beer was now 30 Cents. Inflation!! I applied myself and did better in school. Then later that fall semester I met Dandrelle and lost my virginity; but after that first time, she would not see me any more - perhaps I did something wrong; like lasting about 15 seconds.” The other men knowingly grinned.

Earle resumed, “Then I met Jim Lasker again who had been in the same dorm my freshman year. We became good friends and still have seen each other over the years. He could drink more than anybody except Keith Joseph, who showed up in 1963 as a 16 yr old like I did in 1959. The three of us had a great time at LSC. Jim graduated and went to law school and became a lawyer. He had a photographic mind as he could read book and recite what he read page by page. Keith flunked out and later went to Vietnam and supposedly got a nut shot off!”

“During my sophomore year at LSC in 1962, I met Lilly. She was the Love of my LSC days. We went out for couple of years, got engaged, until I left school again in May of 1965. Then I moved to Chattanooga, Tennessee and worked as a pipe fitter. It was there I met a girl named June, whose mother ran a local BBQ; June really kept me hot. Her Mother caught us in bed one night. June told me not to move and she wouldn't notice me. Her mother never acknowledged it later as I saw her daughter a lot. Around that time I bought the 1965 High Performance Mustang; 271 horsepower, with four on the floor. It was blue with a white vinyl top and would beat a lot of Chevys; women liked it.”

“Sometime in the summer of '66 Lilly broke it off and gave me back the .75 caret diamond I had paid \$20.00 a month for a year. Great Quality! Then in the fall the Army drafted me the day after I had signed into the Army Reserve to escape Vietnam. I would have been killed for sure if I had gone over there, as I would have wanted to be on lead and shoot first. The draft notice gave me several months before I had to report for active duty, so I went to Camden, South Carolina and worked for DuPont as pipe sketcher. Amy the waitress and Beth the farmer's daughter kept me warm during that winter of '66 to '67. I was finally getting used to women and making love.”

James laughed and cracked, “A farmer's daughter? How many old jokes we used to hear about farmer's daughters? Did you have any of those kinds of episodes?”

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Earle laughed and responded, “Nah, I don’t think the father was wise to it, but he did have a gun rack in his pickup truck with a hunting rifle and a shotgun. So I cooled it after about a month or so, but we hooked up again in Baton Rouge – I’ll come back to that later.”

“After Lily, there was one time four of us from LSC went on a road trip to a whore house in Opelousas, just west of Baton Rouge. By the time the girl washed my dick I was really ready. That was probably the fastest \$25 she made that night. On the way back, Jim Lasker was driving my ’65 Mustang and he fell asleep at the wheel and almost rolled the ’65 up on edge, swears he touched the ground with his hand and pushed us back down. Could be true, but I couldn’t prove it, ’cause I was in back more than slightly inebriated”

“Then what, Burn?” asked Bo.

Earle continued, “Then the Army made me go back to Baton Rouge before active duty. I roomed with Keith and one night at a bar, he bet me twenty dollars that I couldn’t pick up a babe who was there and screw her on the first date. I introduced myself and met Lucy, who was a divorcee and horny as hell - very easy to win that twenty bucks. Lucy was a grocery store clerk and she kept me warm the remainder of that winter, before I went on to Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri for 179 days. While stationed there, several of us had some wild times at some girls’ college west of the fort; three of us horny soldiers and three college coeds in their off campus apartment with one bedroom, two beds and one shower. The Missouri girls’ college was probably my wildest sex time. Four people in the shower at one time – that was pretty wild even for a twenty-three or twenty-four year old. I had a lot of catching up for being so shy and backward towards girls for so many years.”

Then Rafe interjected with a short laugh, “Seems to me you didn’t waste a hell of a lot time getting caught up!” Bo and James laughed in agreement.

Earle smiled, shrugged his shoulders and repeated, “But it’s true, y’all knew me in high school and that year of ’61. Y’all knew how shy I was with the girls, especially during those QHS years.”

“Yeah, we know. The girls all thought you were a real southern gentleman”, Bo said kidding. “So, after you finished up your Army stint, then what?”

“After I got out of the Army, I went back to Baton Rouge and went to the union hall and got a job as a union pipe fitter working at local chemical plants and refineries. I was making good money, partying and keeping Budweiser working overtime to make enough beer for us in Louisiana. Keith was still at LSC and we roomed together off campus. We got into a local crowd of young men and women and had a lot of parties.”

“Then in the winter of ’67, I think it was, Beth, that farmer’s daughter from South Carolina came down for Mardi Gras with some female pro golfer that Keith fell in love with –

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can't remember her name. We partied in New Orleans for five or six days, Thursday through Tuesday."

"Some time after that Keith and I got drunk on a Sunday night and decided to go to Tennessee to get my license plate updated. I was driving and had the pipes open on the '65 Mustang. A cop stopped us as we were leaving Baton Rouge. Keith was a great bullshiter; he told the cop we were going to his mother's funeral in Chattanooga. The cop told him to drive as I was too drunk to be in a car much less driving. I remember hearing the car backfiring on I-59 in Mississippi and Keith said he was going 40 mph, but it was actually 4000 rpm and about 110 mph. We sobered up in Meridian, Mississippi and decided to go to South Carolina to see Beth and the pro golfer; they were very glad to see us; we had a full night of sex."

"After we returned to Baton Rouge, I lost the job; Keith flunked out of school and went into the Marines where he supposedly got one ball shot off. I never believed him; however there was no way to find out without getting very personal. Then in the fall of '67, I think it was, a hurricane came through leaving a flood that left some water in my '65 Mustang. So I sold the '65 and bought a new '67 yellow Mustang. About that time I met my first wife, Sally. I also met and dated this Cajun girl, Monique, who worked for Avis Rental Cars and was a couple of years older than me; damn, but what a bush she had, jet black and wiry. But anyway, Sally and I got married in 1969. She had two kids from an earlier marriage. But even at twenty-six, I wasn't quite ready to settle down, and after nine years we called it quits. During those years with Sally, I bought my first 1956 Corvette for \$850 and a bit later a second one from my cousin in California for \$3500 that was in a wreck. I wound up selling both in 1977 and ordered a brand new 1978 Silver Anniversary Vette, and gave the '67 Mustang to Sally. The cars were just one of the things Sally and I fought about."

There was a momentary pause as Earle stopped to think back and sort out some events in his mind. The four of them took a sip on their scotches. Two of the three bottles were down to about half, and the third one was still three quarters full.

Then Rafe asked Earle, "So, you left Sally and then what? Did you meet Carlie right away?"

Earle broke out of his recollections and responded, "I'll get to that, but I just remembered a couple of other things that happened during my time with Sally. I found a better job working in a pipe sketching crew. I took up Archery and was competitive - even joined the professional division for few years. I hunted with bow and arrow for five years before killing my first deer."

Bo interjected with, "You killed Bambi? How could you?" Rafe and James laughed, but Earle just shook his head as if to say, 'What's the big deal?' After all he did skin and dress the deer and store the venison in the freezer.

Earle quickly continued so as not to lose his train of thought, "Then in 1975 I made a 23 day 4000 mile round trip across the U.S. to California, Oregon, Washington, the Dakotas,

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Montana, Nevada, and Colorado. In Colorado, I discovered how good Coors beer was and brought six cases back to Louisiana as it was not available there.”

So, then after Sally and I divorced in ‘68, I did a job in Virginia and had a blind date with Carlie. We went to Richmond in the company plane – neither of us was all that impressed with each other on that first date. Despite that we dated for year, and are still ‘dating’! Y’all know the rest; meeting Carlie probably saved my life. I cut down on the drinking and finally got serious about love and family. We had two kids, Lorne and Jenna, who y’all have met. They’re off on their own and doing fine. Enough! That about covers it.”

“Holy shit, Burn” James declared, “If we write about your life down south before you met Carlie, it will read like a porno novel!” Rafe and Bo laughed and nodded in agreement, and James and Earle joined in. Then James asked, “Will Carlie be surprised at reading about all of that revelation?”

“Naw, she pretty much knows about my life before I met her”, replied Earle. “She teases me once in a while that some of the rebellion we’ve seen in our kids must come from me, because she had a quiet life compared to mine.”

Then Rafe asked, “Just one more question, Burn; do you recall where you were when JFK was assassinated?”

“I was walking across campus at LSC when people started screaming and running around like there was a fire or something and then heard someone run by yelling that JFK was shot. Think it was a Thursday. We had a football game next day and they decided to go ahead and play, but that was the most eerie game – it just seemed like the players were going through the motions, like in practice; and the fans in the stands hardly cheered, like they were stunned or something.”

After a short silence, Rafe said, “Thanks, Burn that was a lot of info about your life in the years when most of us were out of contact with you.”

“You sure sowed a lot of wild oats, my friend”, added Bo.

“Well, that leaves you and me Bo; how about you going next?” asked Rafe.

“Sure, what the hell; my adventures will seem tame compared to Burn’s,” Bo answered.

James added in a somewhat self-placating way, “Damn, compared to Burn’s stories my life after 1961 reads like a monk’s in an abbey!” The others laughed at James’ remark.



## Beach Party Days: Chapter 21

*Saturday evening, October 6, 2007 continued...*

*Still on the upper porch of the beach cottage...*

“Looks like we’ve got a kind of contest going here; Bo, can you relate some stories that can top Burn’s escapades?” Rafe inquired good-naturedly.

Bo laughed, “Ha Ha!” Then he added, “I can think of a couple of things, but I doubt I can match Burn’s adventures.”

“It’s you or I, Bo, and I know I can’t match up with Burn. So you have the gauntlet – it’s you vs. Burn mano-e-mano.”

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*Bo’s account...*

Bo began, “I’m not one to dig into that part of my past, as far as those years after ’61 are concerned. Some of the memories are too uncomfortable for me. But let’s see”, he said after a momentary hesitation, “You all know about Joan and me getting married in 1963. As Hein said we were married at St Cecelia’s in Ulster Beach; it was Joan’s family’s church. Father Paul was a bit strange. I remember that my parents arrived a few minutes late and Father Paul decided to start the wedding before my parents could be ushered down the aisle to the customary seats in the first pew for the parents of the groom.”

Rafe interjected, “Good lord, I didn’t remember that until my mother reminded me. I was one of the drivers for the wedding and used my mother’s ’57 Ford to chauffeur two of the couples who were wedding guests, plus my mom.”

“Now that you mention it, I do remember that”, added James. “Leave it to Father Paul; once he set his mind on something, it was his way or the highway.”

“That’s Right!” Bo responded. “The ushers had to hustle my parents down the aisle, after Joan and her attendants had marched down the aisle and the entire wedding party was already kneeling at the altar rail.” Earle laughed incredulously, having heard this for the first time.

“We had the reception at the Horse Neck Inn. Which reminds me, Rafe recently found a photo from his mom’s effects, after she passed away, of the wedding party at the main table. It showed Joan and me with my brother, Chet, who was my Best Man and Joan’s Maid of Honor at the table. Things went OK for the first five or six years; we had a son, Boaz Orechio III. in 1966 and then two years later a son Mack. At first I didn’t notice that Joan was drinking a lot more than usual, maybe because I’ve been known to have a few. But it wasn’t so much the quantity that she drank as the reaction she began to have; a lot more emotional changes; highs and lows.

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Then I started to catch her in some lies. But it wasn't until I discovered that she had wiped out our savings account (she worked in the bank where we had our account) that I realized she had a problem that needed serious attention. You pretty much know what happened from there; she went to AA and took up with the son of one of our teachers at QHS."

James interrupted to ask, "Which teacher was that, Bo?"

Bo answered, "Mrs. Barr, who taught History." Then Bo continued, "So after hiring a PI to gather the evidence, I went to court to get a divorce and custody of the kids. That was in 1971. I raised them on my own and Joan never made much of an attempt to re-connect with them."

Then Rafe cut in, "Raising your sons by yourself must not have been a picnic; I mean being the father and a substitute mother, must have been somewhat of a hardship."

Bo responded, "I won't tell you it was easy; at times I really wondered if I could handle it. But I had left Emerson in the fall of 1963 and got a job for a lot more money as purchasing manager at Queen Vacuum Company. After the divorce, the extra money and vacation time allowed me to hire someone to come in every two weeks and do some of the cleaning, but I still had to do double duty as a single parent. And for a couple of years, 1972-1973, I think, I shared the rent on a house with another guy, who had a young kid. But we survived and I think my kids appreciate what I did."

Then after a slight pause, Bo said, "But I left out something that might come close to one of Burn's adventures. After the two kids came along and Joan began to act weird with her drinking problem, we weren't getting along. In fact we were only having sex together occasionally. Being a young horny Italian I wound up getting involved with a woman from work whose husband worked at nights. Her name was Angela. She had this long blonde hair and was really hot to trot. About one night a week I would make up an excuse to tell Joan, and I would go to Angela's apartment or meet her at a motel while her husband was at work. I would bang her in their bed and then leave, always well before her husband came home. But as the weekly sex fests went on I began to get a little nervous about it, like maybe I was pressing my luck that either Joan or Angela's husband would find out."

Then Earle asked, "So, did you say 'adios' then?"

Bo continued, "Not right away. But one night did it for me. It was bowling night at the Quaytown Lanes, and bowling night had become an easier alibi than that I was working late. I was on a team with several guys who graduated after us. You might remember Phil Lucas and Johnny Lambson, they were in the class behind us." Rafe and James nodded, but Earle shrugged his shoulders, not recollecting the two names.

Bo went on, "So, this one night, I left the bowling alley just before the first game started and the team did what it usually did – took a scratch for me. Well, I get to Angela's apartment and there's a note on the door that says, 'Bo, come on in'. Now the door is not only unlocked,

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but open a crack. And I started to get this really uncomfortable feeling. I mean, come on, she leaves a friggin' note taped to an unlocked door?"

"No shit!" exclaimed Earle.

Bo nods and goes on, "So, I cautiously push open the door and step inside. As I get into the living room, Angela comes out of the bathroom in nothing but a towel, slithers up to me and puts her arms around my neck. I can tell that she has nothing on under the towel, but I'm still a little concerned about that damn note on the door, so I go back and pull off the note, crumple it up and put it in my pocket – the last thing I needed was for hubby to come home and find that note."

"Then Angela takes my hand and pulls me into the bedroom and helps me get undressed. Just as we were about to get it on, the front door bell rings and Angela goes out to the front room to see who's there. I can hear her talking to someone, so I get my naked ass under the bed just in case it's her husband. Now my heart is beating like a base drum. But it turned out to be a neighbor, a woman in the next apartment, who had gone out to walk her dog and had seen the door slightly open with a note on it. Well, the neighbor's dog is this little lap dog and it finds its way into the bedroom and starts barking at me under the bed. I tried to kick the dog away, but it just kept yapping at me in a high-pitched yelp. Now, I'm getting nearly frantic – what if the neighbor comes in to get her dog and looks under the bed?" The other three men couldn't help but laugh at the vision of Bo under the bed.

Bo paused for effect, but he was also sort of re-living the experience. The others were now shaking their heads with amusement. Then Bo went on, "Finally Angela came into the room, scooped up the dog and handed it to the neighbor. The neighbor leaves and Angela comes back and tells me its all clear. I get out from under the bed and get back on top of the bed. Angela drops off the towel and gets on the bed naked as a jay bird and she's hot; she wants to do it. But I'm lying there saying to myself, 'Am I crazy for doing this? What am I getting into?'" Angela starts to try and get me hard, but I just can't get beyond the feeling that this is crazy. So I tell her I just can't do it tonight. I get up, put my pants and clothes back on, and as I turn to leave, I can see the disappointment in her face. But there was no way! I never hooked up with her again, but still saw her at the office, until shortly after she quit."

"Wow, What a story!" James exclaimed. "That one is right up there with some of Burn's."

"But that's not quite the end of it", Bo countered.

"There's more?" asked Rafe, his voice displaying his wonder.

"Yep", Bo responded, "after I got back to the bowling alley, Johnny Lambson tells me that I'm in trouble, because Joan had called the alley looking for me and the dumb ass told her I

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wasn't there that night. So, Rafe I don't know if you remember but I called you and asked you to alibi for me, by saying I was with you in case Joan called you to verify."

Rafe smiled and said, "I vaguely remember that, but she never did call me. That episode definitely should go in the book, Bo. Do you have any more adventures?"

Bo reflected a second, then said, "Later, after the divorce, there was this Sales Rep for Queen Vacuum that I met on a business trip to Biloxi, Mississippi, where Queen had a factory. Her name was Marge; she had this horse-like face, but a body that wouldn't quit. I mean she was built like a brick shit house. One night a bunch of us went out to dinner and then to a bar for drinks. One thing led to another and Marge invited me to her hotel room for a night cap. After some idle chit chat and a couple sips of the vodka she poured us, I put my arm around her, pulled her close and kissed her. I'm not sure exactly how it happened but it was like something inside her was just itching to get out. Almost instantly she became hot as a firecracker. The next thing I know we are completely nude and bouncing off one wall onto another, then rolling on the floor. Then I remember picking her up and setting her naked ass down on the dresser and banging the hell out of her. We fell asleep on the bed and when we woke up we went at it again; god what a night that was!" After a brief hesitation, Bo added, "Too bad the next trip I made down there she was no longer with the company."

"So, any more escapades, Bo?" James asked with a smile and an encouraging nod of his head? "We still don't have a clear winner in the contest. I'm still not sure if I should put my money on Win, Place or Show". That brought a laugh from the other men. They knew James was into betting on the ponies and the analogy didn't elude them.

Bo reflected a moment, then shook his head and replied, "I know there were some, but I can't remember enough to retell anything that might add to the book or be of interest to your porno focused minds."

"Porno minds?" You got that right, joked Earle.

"Yeah, but it was Burn's episodes that were triple-x rated", James added kidding, and they all laughed.

Then Rafe asked, "Any interesting stories from other business trips you were on, Bo?"

After a second, Bo said, "There were a couple of trips I made to China and Korea while I worked for Queen. One of the things that really impressed me was the little one-person booths where the person would be assembling things. Some of them had their own little stamping press and would die cut parts for all sorts of machines. Others had like this big tray on a table with a trough cut out on the top and both sides and they would manually assemble small parts into larger parts. The smaller parts were all lined up in the grooved trough and their hands would move like greased lightning to assemble the parts; they moved about as fast as any machine could."

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“These little one-person workshops allowed them to have their own business; they would be paid by a state sponsored or state owned company based on how many widgets they produced. Wages of course were miniscule compared to what we’re used to. It was then that I realized that we here in America would not be able to compete much longer in the stamping and assembly of all sorts of manufactured parts and goods. Once these Asian countries got further mechanized, we could not compete with that low cost of labor.” The other men nodded their heads, acknowledging Bo’s conclusion.

Earle responded, “Seems to me we have already reached the point of losing the edge in manufacturing. I mean look at all the things we import from China and the Far East.”

“Yeah, and we already gave away the manufacture of shoes and sneakers, the steel business, and the clothing business. And over the last five years or so, we have been outsourcing much of the service industry that was the last underpinning of our economy. The information age is going to pass us by and we will be hard pressed to compete with whatever we have left to export”, Rafe added with an angry edge to his voice.

James then jumped in with, “That does sort of piss me off. If things aren’t turned around soon, we will be on a par with most of the third world countries – no longer the leader of the free world. Our kids and grandkids will be the ones who will suffer the most, in my opinion.”

The four men fell silent for a moment, pondering the glumness they all felt. It was Bo who broke the silence, “I don’t know that we can do much about it. It seems like whoever gets voted in for the congress or the administration, Democrats or Republicans, only looks out for themselves. They are about as useful and effective as a boil on a gnat’s ass!” The others nodded their assent.

Then Bo said, “Well, back to my recap for the book. Around 1973 I moved to an apartment in Mason where my kids went to school and later graduated from Mason High; I started dating Phyllis, a teacher from Mason; the kids and I moved in to her house and after a few years we decided to get married – big mistake! Within a year we both knew it was a mistake; what had been a fun relationship turned into a sour one and we got a divorce. We’re still friends, though.”

“I then got an apartment in Mason, where the kids and I lived until 1990, when I bought the condo in Mason where I still live. About 1987, Denise came to work at Queen. She was in the process of getting a divorce and we hooked up and are still together, although we did split up a couple of times. Along about 1989 Queen went out of business and I found a short term job doing consulting for the company that was handling Queen’s demise and bankruptcy.”

“Then in 1990 I got my current job at Omega Wire and Cable. That’s about all I can add for the book. You all pretty much know the rest; after Denise and I got together, there were a couple of times when we briefly split up, but *not* for long! We eventually got engaged about a

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year before that first time we got together here in Nags Head in 2000. Gee, was that really seven years ago? It just doesn't seem like it has been that long!"

Then James asked, "Well hell, you've been together a long time – what, about twenty years? Are you ever going to tie the knot or are you both still a little afraid that it might spoil things?"

Bo thought for a second, and then responded, "Yeah, I guess after two divorces each we both are kind of leery of taking that step again. Not that we haven't talked about it a number of times. But when she wanted to, I didn't. And when I wanted to, she didn't."

Earle jumped in and said, "Well, hell's bells, maybe in another twenty years you'll both agree to do it!" That brought a laugh from all four of the men.

At that point, Bo said, "Well, Rafe, you're the last one to bring the rest of us up to date with your life between 1961 and 2000. It's your turn to see if you have some episodes that meet or top Earle's."

"Doubtful", Rafe said, shaking his head while still laughing.

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*Saturday evening, October 6, 2007 continued...*

*Still on the upper porch of the beach cottage...*

“Now the stallions are into the final turn and here comes Rafe’s horse trying to move up on entries by the Hein, Burn and Bo stables”, intoned James imitating an announcer calling a horse race at the Kentucky Derby.

The others laughed at James’s horse race analogy and Bo added, “OK, Rafe, I’ve got my money on you to win, place, or show. You might say I’m hedging my bets” That led to more laughter.

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*Rafe’s account...*

Rafe began, “Let’s see; Burn has covered our trip back to college in August of ’61, and James and Bo have covered their weddings. One thing to add to Hein’s account was that his wedding reception was at Ducky Jones hall in Middlebury. I mention it because I don’t remember much about it, except I think I brought Pam Warner to the wedding and reception.”

James inserted, “Now that I think about it, yeah, you did.”

Earle interjected, “You mean the black girl that was always with that Nathan guy?”

“Yes”, Rafe responded, “I thought I told you that I was interested in her when you dropped me off at Milton College in 1961, on your way to LSC.”

“Gee, now that you mention it, I do recall you saying something about it, and me telling you to think hard about it, what with her being black and all”, Earle replied. “Back then it was frowned upon, especially down South with the racial upheaval in the sixties.”

“It wasn’t just the South and Old Dixie”, James said, “it may have started there because of segregation and the Civil Rights movement, but as the sixties progressed we had race riots in Boston, Watts, and Newark, and other cities north of the Mason Dixon Line.”

Then Rafe continued, “That’s true. But let me tell you about my dating Pam. It all started kind of innocent; it was always in a small group in the beginning, which was along about winter of ’61-’62 when Pam, Nathan, another white girl who worked with Pam and I would meet for casual parties at my parents’ house or go to one or another of those night clubs in Kingsboro or up in Shayville. At first it was just a group of friends, but then things started to get a little more serious between Pam and me. One night in the summer of 1963, we were making out pretty heavy on the front bench seat of that Hudson I had. I was a bit drunk and realizing how attracted I was to her, yet still trying to get in her pants, I proposed to Pam.”

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“Get out!” Bo exclaimed as if it was something he didn’t want to believe.

“I swear”, Rafe replied, “I actually asked her to marry me. But she was a lot more sober than me. She handled my proposal in a very dignified way, and turned me down very gently and compassionately. Needless to say, nothing was consummated. I always had the greatest respect for her after that and we remained very good friends and continued to date whenever I was home from college, There was one time at the end of that summer of ’63, before I went back to Milton for my senior year, when Pam invited me to go on a boat ride with one of her co-workers, who owned a thirty foot cabin cruiser. Pam and I sat up on the bow of the boat, as we cruised around Raritan bay between New Jersey and Staten Island. We dated up until the summer of ’64.”

Earle inquired, “What happened then?”

Rafe answered, “After graduating from Milton, I had a degree, but no job and not sure what I wanted to do. All along I had just assumed that I would become an electrical engineer, but I had no prospects. After making Dean’s list my first semester at Milton, I joined Delta Alpha Sigma fraternity and got too involved in the campus Greek scene. I dropped out of football after getting in three varsity games my freshman year. Then I quit the baseball team in my sophomore year; I got benched because I went home for Spring Break rather than stay on campus for baseball practice. So I went from starting right fielder to sitting the bench, and I said ‘screw that’ and quit. I’ll get back to those college years – there are a couple of episodes that may be of interest – but first let me get back to Burn’s question.”

Rafe continued, “So, while I was home on Spring Break in ’64, I went over to Jimmy Barrone’s house; he and I went out for drinks. His sister, Margie, was there; both of them home on break from Glenboro College and both studying to become teachers. His older brother, Tony was already teaching. Jimmy’s dad suggested to me that I should try my hand at teaching. That got me thinking. So, when summer came and I had no prospects I enrolled at Union State College. For the 1964-1965 school year I took evening courses, enough to qualify to teach all subjects at the elementary school level – K through 8. The only thing I wasn’t able to fulfill was student teaching, because that whole time I worked in that brand new Texaco gas station in Mason on highway 43. Hein already told us about working across the street from each other.”

Bo interjected, “So you went back to school for teaching courses and I remember you told us once that you wound up teaching for two years at that catholic school in Holmvale, St. Francis. But why did you and Pam stop dating?”

Rafe responded, “Two things kind of happened at about the same time. One was that Pam and I realized that it was not going to work – it wasn’t just the ebony and ivory thing, we were somewhat Ok with that, but our backgrounds were very different, and although she had been over my house many times and was generally accepted by my parents, my parents always thought that she was Nathan’s girlfriend – I never acknowledged that she and I were dating, I thought they might have guessed it. For her part, she had never invited me to meet her parents,



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so in a way we both realized that it might be difficult in 1964 for both our parents to accept an interracial relationship.”

“The second thing was that I met René Tomino. Well, actually I had first met her the day after JFK was shot. My parents had arranged to renew their wedding vows for their twenty-fifth anniversary, on Saturday November 23. They had rented the North Kingsboro firehouse for the ceremony and a party. I got a ride home with Jeff, a fraternity brother. René’s mom worked with mine; her parents came to the affair and brought René with them. She was only fourteen, nearly fifteen at the time, but already well-endowed and looked several years older. But I left the party with Pam that night and didn’t see René again until the following summer of ’64. Hein already told you about the QHS reunion in September, when I had to have the emergency squad take her to the hospital and they pumped out her stomach.”

Earle then asked, “So then what?”

Rafe continued, “We started dating consistently, while she was fifteen, going on sixteen, and both our parents were happy about it. Before long the hormones did their thing and we were having sex every week. She and her parents lived up in North Lima, not far from Newark. Even after I started teaching at St. Francis, I still lived at home – couldn’t afford not to on a yearly salary of \$3800. I did however buy a ’65 Mustang convertible, gold with a white top. We had sex when she stayed overnight at my parents and when I stayed overnight at her parents. Either she or I would sneak out to where the other was sleeping after we were sure that the parents were asleep. I always wondered if they knew what was going on and were too embarrassed to intervene, or didn’t want to embarrass us, or were in denial.”

James inquired with a grin, “And this all started when she was only fifteen? You are lucky my friend that her parents didn’t intervene – you could have been hauled off to jail on a statutory rape conviction.”

Rafe responded, “Never occurred to me, or if it did I blocked it out of my mind. I mean almost from the beginning René and I both felt that it was love, not just hot, wanton sex. It was like we couldn’t get enough of each other. I remember there was one time, after she was sixteen, we borrowed her parents’ station wagon and went down to the beach at Point Pleasant. On the way back from the beach, we came around one of those circles where two of the highways intersected. There was a place off this circle, where you could drive in on a dirt road and into a circular clearing, surrounded by trees. It was a perfect lovers’ lane – a perfect place to park out of sight of anyone. We were both horny as hell – she had her hand slid up my right thigh under my bathing suit with a firm grip on my cock and while steering with my left hand, I was rubbing her at the top of the vee between her thighs. So I drove around the circle again until I could see that no other car would see us, and I drove off the circle onto the dirt road and discovered this clearing; never been there before. It was like an uninhabited island in the midst of those two highways”

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“After parking the car and assuring that we were absolutely alone, we dropped the split bench seat on the passenger side, frantically took off the bottoms of our bathing suits and went at it. After we had sex, René decided that she was going to take off her top as well. She got out of the car buck naked, took a beach blanket and climbed up onto the roof of the station wagon and laid down up there on the blanket between the roof racks, with the remains of the sun at about five o’clock streaming down through the top of the trees over the clearing. I could sense that she wanted me to go up there with her and bang her again. But I became apprehensive that someone would come into the clearing. I couldn’t imagine that no one else knew about this spot, maybe even the cops. So, I put my swimming trunks back on and told her if she would come down I would find a motel for us where we could spend an hour and after that stop someplace for dinner.” The others were all enjoying Rafe’s tale, judging by their smiles and rapt attention.

Bo asked while laughing, “So, did that get her to come down?”

Rafe answered, “Yep, but not immediately. It was almost as if she wanted someone to see us that way. And maybe I wasn’t all that convincing about the motel; after all until then I had never in my life checked into a motel pretending to be a married couple, and I didn’t have the nerve to try it straight up as for what it was. I was sure that any of the entire contingents of motel managers in the area would immediately guess that I was not checking in with a wife. Neither René nor I had a wedding ring. Well, what transpired was I stopped at a decent looking motel up the highway and left René in the car while I went in and registered for a room under the name of Mr. and Mrs. Smith.”

“The old Mr. and Mrs. Smith check in routine. I think every motel desk clerk heard that one hundreds of times”, Bo interjected, and they all laughed.

Rafe continued, “When the man at the desk asked me how long I wanted the room I nervously blurted out that we would only be an hour, as we just came from the beach and wanted a shower before going out to dinner. The man looked at me as if he obviously knew what this was all about and that just made me more nervous, despite trying to force myself to appear nonchalant. Well, we did go in and take separate showers, although I tried for a joint shower, thinking it would be sexier, but René thought otherwise. She went first and when I finished mine, she was in bed with the covers pulled up just high enough for me to get a gander at the top of her tits. I didn’t need any more encouragement! Dinner was anti-climactic – I don’t even remember where we ate other than we had packed a change of clothes for a nice restaurant.”

James said, “Great story, Rafe; I could just visualize René, as attractive as I remember her, up on the car roof, like a little Eve in the Garden of Eden. Har! Har!” Bo and Earle joined in the laughter.

Rafe resumed, “Well, there is one other story about ‘Little Eve’. There was the time after we got engaged. She had graduated from North Lima High and was working in Newark as a secretary and commuting by train. I was teaching at St. Francis and on this one Friday drove up to pick her up at the train station after work. It was a sunny day in May of ’66 I recall, about 5:30

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PM, and it was still very light out. It had been a week since we had seen each other. After picking her up at the station we decided to park and make out. There was this street a block away from her parents' home that dead ended by the railroad tracks which were elevated about twenty feet over a cement wall. We parked the car and started to make out. She was wearing this flowing yellow A-line dress, the kind that had the tight waist up under the boobs and flared out to just around the knees. She unzipped my Khakis, pulled out my cock, and got on top of me. I arranged the bottom of her dress so that it covered what we were about to do. I pulled aside her panties – she wasn't wearing panty hose or nylons – and we went at it with the car bouncing up and down. This was still daylight and there were houses on either side of the street not thirty yards away from where we were parked below the railroad tracks.”

Then Bo asked, “So what happened with ‘Little Eve’ and you? What brought that to an end? It seems like it was one hell of a great sexual romance.”

Rafe thought a second and replied, “I think part of it was that she was emotionally younger than she was physically. René had this romance magazine view on our relationship. She wanted my full attention when we got together on weekends, but in my mind my job as a teacher required me to read and grade papers, before I turned my attention to René. That way I felt I could devote the remaining time on her without the nagging thought that I still had students relying on me to grade their work. Then after she got out of high school and went to work, she was in a more adult situation. Being an attractive Italian girl with obvious charms, she received a lot of attention from the men in the office. I think she began to question whether what we had was really love or just sex, and perhaps she began to feel that she was too young to make a lifetime commitment, especially after the new vistas opened up in the real world. She postponed the wedding and several months later broke off the engagement. I later found out that she had been seeing a divorced guy at work that had been aggressively pursuing her.”

James added, “I remember you were a bit broken up about it, Rafe”.

Rafe responded, “Yeah, I was all set to marry her and then felt like I got jilted. My mom started to bug me about what was wrong and one day I lost my temper and put my fist through the kitchen wall. That's when I decided it was time to grow up and I moved out shortly after and got my own apartment in Mason. At least it didn't happen at the altar on the day of the wedding”, he added with a laugh reflecting the fact that he had long since accepted it as a part of growing up.

Then Rafe continued, “That occurred in the spring of 1967 and led me to decide to leave teaching for a job at Wisdom Insurance Company where Hein was already working. That's where I met Paula; we started dating and married in December of 1968. As Hein mentioned before, he was my Best Man. Paula moved into my apartment in Mason. Within three years we had two children, Jody and Brock and moved to a larger apartment closer to Newark. Those early years were financially challenging and I worked a second job three nights a week so we could afford to save for a down payment on a house. We bought our first house in Montgomery Township with a loan from Paula's parents, and two years later, in 1973, we moved to Black

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Rock in north Jersey. Those early years in Black Rock were probably the happiest in our marriage. In 1978 I left Wisdom and got a job at Municipal Life, following Hein who had gone there before me. Several years later I moved on to a job at Webster Publishing Company.”

“It was just after that that I got a call from Hein that he and Lorrie were divorcing. My father died at the end of 1981 and for some reason I can’t recall, I lost contact with Hein. We didn’t reconnect until I tracked him down in 1994 for the 35<sup>th</sup> QHS reunion. I had gotten an email from Don Twigg, who you might remember graduated from QHS two years before us. He told me he was a private detective in Florida. I think it was Martha Luchese, one of the organizers planning the reunion who told me that she thought Hein had moved to Florida. So I sent Twigg an email and asked if he could locate Hein. He sent me back Hein’s address and phone number. That’s when I called him and he told me he could not set foot in Jersey because Lorrie had a warrant out for his arrest.”

James interjected, “Yeah, I remember talking with you and catching up on what had happened with us over those twelve years or so. I think it was your phone number that enabled me to contact you after I settled with Lorrie about the judgment for the additional college costs. And that led to us starting to communicate via email.”

Then Bo interjected, “And in 1992 we had that Sports Banquet organized by the QHS Boosters Club. Burn and Carlie came up from Virginia and we saw Rafe for the first time since the Sixties.”

“That’s when we exchanged addresses and phone numbers and that eventually led the four of us to make the contacts to share email addresses,” Earle added.

Then Rafe continued, “Right! But let me get back to my work history. After Webster Publishing I moved on to work for Benson Computer Corporation, where I worked until the recession of 1991. I got caught in the layoff and wound up getting a job as a consultant. I’ve been doing that ever since; that about sums up my work history. But it was during the seven years at Benson that I began to do a lot of business travel and somewhere along those years Paula and I began to grow apart. Then when the layoff came and both kids in college, and two mortgages, things got dicey financially. The stress ate at both of us, while I was job hunting, until I landed the consulting job several months later. In retrospect, I don’t think our marriage ever recovered from that.” The others nodded their understanding of what Rafe and Paula had gone through.

Then Earle, trying to lighten the mood asked, “But what about those years at Milton? Don’t you have stories about your college life?”

Rafe thought for a second, and then replied, “Well, there was a couple of times that I won my fraternity’s ‘This Week’s Lover Award’, but I assure you there were a few brothers who won it many more times than me.”

Bo nearly jumped up off the bench he was sitting on, “This Week’s Lover Award? This

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Week's Lover Award? I have to hear this story!"

Rafe then began, "First some background on the award: The Delta Kappa Delta 'This Week's Lover Award' was made from a large piece of red construction paper from which a cutout was made in the shape of a big heart about two feet by two feet. Scotch taped on the red heart was a sheet of lined paper on which would be an entry for each week of the name of the person who was given the award. Whoever got the award was responsible for giving it to another fraternity brother the following week. New sheets of paper were attached as the prior one filled up. So one brother could not win it two weeks in a row, but could win it multiple times."

"The object was to catch a brother in a compromising situation with a coed or a girl from the town, but catch him unaware, so that there was always a bit of mystery at each week's fraternity business meeting. Looking back on it now, I suppose you could think of it like a modification of that old game, submarine race watching, we used to play, where we'd sneak up on a couple parked in a lover's lane catch them having sex or just making out hot and heavy."

"Oh, I get it," Earle said. "So, tell us about why you got the award."

Rafe continued, "One more thing about the award – whoever got the award was obliged to attach it on the outside of the door to his room. So, he was likely to get busted about it by his roommate all that week and by any of the brothers passing by the room. Now, let me get to how I won it the first time."

"On one of the winter semester breaks when I stayed at school a few days before going home to New Jersey, I was down at the local watering hole, Porky's, having a few low beers – in those days you could be served beer with no more than 3.2% alcohol if you were 18. I think it was a Thursday night. I wound up sitting at a table with a few gals from the Tri-Gamma sorority and another guy from another fraternity. Now, there weren't too many students left on campus – most of them had gone home. The girls still had curfew and had to be back in their dorms and sorority houses by 11:00 PM. I had been sitting next to this gal Joan Slate, who was a niece of a well-known editor at one of the big publishing houses in Manhattan; we were both a bit high and walking her back to her dorm, I could just tell she was ready for a little action. So, I asked her to sneak out of her dorm after she signed in and go with me to my frat house. I told her 'Everyone has gone home and we can go up the side fire escape to avoid my fraternity's House Mother'."

James asked rhetorically, "and then she snuck out and you snuck her into your frat house?"

"Right", Rafe responded. "My room was on the second floor about halfway down a long hall with rooms on both sides except where the bath and shower room was; we quietly walked up the fire escape and into my room. My roommate had gone home for the break and the entire second floor was vacant."

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Bo was impatient and asked, “Ok, so cut to the chase, I can almost guess, but what was the award for?”

Rafe hesitated, feeling a little bit like it wasn't in his makeup to toot his own horn about such a thing, and after a pause he said as nonchalantly as possible, “The award was for screwing eight times in five hours.” Then he quickly added, “I must have bragged just a little to my roommate when he got back from break, because at the first frat business meeting after the break, my roomie got up and announced it to all of the brothers. Now he had gotten the award just before the semester break, but I can't remember for what.”

After the laughter died down, James asked, “So wait a minute, this heart shaped award was already on the door to your room when you snuck this babe up the fire escape and down this hallway. She must have seen it! How did she react? Did she think she was going into the lion's den? Or better yet, did she think she was in for a long night of hot sex?”

Laughing, Earle said, “It probably raised her expectations to the point that she was ready to do it all night long.”

“I hate to disappoint you all, but I had left the door open and I guided her into the room such that her back was to the door, and then I closed it,” Rafe rejoined. “If she did see it, it would have been early the next morning about sunrise, when we left. I walked her back to her dorm, and one of her sorority sisters surreptitiously let her in the side door.”

James said, “Well that's a pretty good episode. I put that almost, but not quite, on par with some of Burn's and with Bo's hiding under the bed story. But you said you won that award another time, Rafe. Tell us about that one.”

Rafe responded, “It was during Spring Break 1964, the year I graduated. Once again most of the campus had gone home except for a few of us. It was a warm day and another brother with a car drove us out to a little beach along a tributary river that fed into the Ohio River. We had our swim trunks on and a beach blanket. We met a couple of girls and after striking up a conversation we paired off. The girl I met was Nancy Bishop, not a Milton coed; she lived in Milton, but was the daughter of an alumna from my fraternity. She said she had sore muscles on her back from her job as a nurse. So I offered to give her a back massage and she welcomed it. She rolled over on her stomach and I sat on her straddled on her butt. While I was massaging her back, she said, ‘Ah, that feels almost as good as humping’, so it occurred to me that I should ask her out, thinking it might be rewarding, if you catch my drift.”

“I think we know where this is heading”, laughed Earle.

Rafe nodded and continued, “Well, I dated Nancy that night and brought her up the fire escape of the frat house. We had sex in another brother's room on a bare mattress, because the sheets were being laundered. But I found a towel and we walked down the hall to the bathroom and shower room and showered together in one of the four showers.”

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“Ok, but how did you get the award?” Bo asked.

Rafe answered, “While she and I were in the shower together, a brother opened the shower room door and asked who was in the shower room, I stuck my head out of the shower to let him know it was me, not realizing that he had been in another room on the floor and had seen the gal and I walking down the hall buck naked. Not only that but the shower curtains did not go all the way to the bottom of the shower stalls, and he could see four feet under the curtain. I could tell from his shit-eating grin that he knew I had a gal in the shower with me. So, he was the one that told the previous winner of the lover award and that’s how I got the award at the first fraternity meeting after Spring Break. What sort of pissed me off though was that after that brother opened the shower room door, any hope I had of stand-up sex in the shower was gone.”

James said with a chuckle, “Great story and I think the Rafe horse has drawn even with the horses from Earle’s and Bo’s stable. So, no clear winner yet. You got any more college stories or post college stories, Rafe?”

“That’s about it for those years”, Rafe replied with a shrug.

Bo asked, “What about your divorce from Paula and that woman you had a relationship with last year, Rafe?”

Rafe hesitated a few seconds to think about how to respond to Bo’s question. He began, “I still remember our wedding date, December 21, 1968, at a 5:00 PM church ceremony. But I can’t tell you the exact date in August, 2004, when the divorce decree was signed by the judge.”

“Is the fact that you don’t have the exact day of your divorce memorized significant?” asked James. “I mean do you think perhaps you might still love Paula??”

Rafe answered, “No, not that; more like it was one thing in my life I didn’t want to fail at. I mean I still have feelings for Paula – protective, affection, or something – but not love. That died sometime during the last five years as we grew further and further apart. Neither of us were the same people we were during the first 20 years or so.” Then he added, “You know, all of our parents married for the full term; no quitters; no divorces. That was my example, and I believed that it would be my destiny; I *wanted* it to be my destiny.

“When my dad passed away – you know I loved and respected him. But it was my mom who taught me what it is to love. All those years after dad died, she never took up with another man; in her mind there could be no replacement. My dad was not a rich or wealthy man, or a man of power, no great politician or business mogul – just a nice guy, and my mom showed me that it’s not *who* you are, or what things you accumulate, but *what* you are that counts and has real meaning. ...and that’s the way I thought my marriage would be or should be; that I’d marry a woman with whom I’d spend the rest of my days.”

Bo said emphatically, “It was the same with my mom after my dad died.”

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James interjected sympathetically, “We know what you mean about not wanting to fail and thinking that when we got married the first time it would be forever.”

Bo added, “Right! You fail and you go on. You don’t give up, but continue to hope that you’ll still meet that special woman with whom you will spend the rest of your life – just like our parents. Look at me. I’ve been divorced twice; and so has Denise. We believe things will get better, because we’ve witnessed it with our parents. Their lives were not all a bed of roses – it was a journey through hills and valleys and they made the best of it through the ups and downs.”

“Ain’t that the truth!” Earle responded. “I feel fortunate to have met Carlie and expect that we’ll be together until one or both of us leave this life.”

After a brief moment of introspection by the men, James said as if he had a revelation, “We were the first generation to enjoy the fruits of a new era of affluence after World War II and Korea. Our parents fought and sacrificed during World War II and we heard all the stories about rationing, the scarcity of food and staples. We listened to the war news from Korea on the radio and at the movies we saw news reels about World War II and Korea. We saw the Hollywood movies that were made about World War II and how America was the good guys – John Wayne movies about Iwo Jima and other battles. We heard all about how the women like Rosie the Riveter went to work in the factories to take up jobs that were vacated by the men who went off to war.”

Rafe then responded, “So what you’re saying is that we’re the first generation to experience the freedom and affluence won by the sacrifices our parents’ generation made, and we were somewhat spoiled because we didn’t have to experience the hardships our parents did. Did that make our generation more inclined to accept divorce and not work out our differences with our spouses?”

James shrugged as if to say he thought it was a good explanation. Earle interjected, “I think Rafe has a point there. But let’s get back to Rafe’s account. I’d like to hear about this woman that Rafe met after his divorce. The three of us didn’t get to meet her at our get-togethers last year, but we did get to see a photo of her; quite attractive, as I remember”

As the others looked to Rafe, he responded, “That would be Sarah; Sarah Williams. We met at a church function in November 2005 and started dating that December. Within a couple of months it led to a serious relationship, despite the fact that just before we started dating, she had made plans to move to the suburbs of Milwaukee to be near family. Sarah was a bright shining light in my life - the months I was with her I felt alive again. We seemed to have a great deal in common and she was the first woman I felt so comfortable with - that I could be very open and vulnerable with. We seemed to get along very well and I did not want to lose her when she moved.”

“But after she moved and I made several trips out to Milwaukee to be with her, she seemed to change. She no longer wanted to keep our relationship going. I couldn’t figure out



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why she had changed. At times I wonder if she viewed our relationship as just a fling, knowing she was moving away, and never seriously believing that we could make it together over that distance; or that I might follow her to Milwaukee.

“Perhaps she wanted to have something to remember New Jersey by, without any future commitments – I really don’t know the reason, because she wouldn’t open up to be as vulnerable and emotionally available to me as I was with her. I could only go by the feelings I sensed while we were together *before* she moved – that down deep she did want to be with me and wanted to make a commitment, but was afraid that it would become an upheaval to her and the plans she had laid out for herself before we started dating. Sarah had had a traumatic divorce that at the time left her depressed and she told me she had not had a serious relationship in the fifteen years following her divorce. It was obvious that she did not want to be hurt again. So, maybe I pushed too hard. Then again maybe it was just that she came to realize she didn’t really care as deeply for me, as I did for her and didn’t want to hurt me.

“Then again, perhaps it had to do with the hurt she experienced in her divorce; and now that she was back in Milwaukee with her three sons and her grandkids, she wanted to show her ex that she was able to make it without him. She wanted to prove to him and herself that she could be successful despite the pain he put her thru by leaving her for another woman. But that’s all speculation and of much less importance to me. The fact is I really did love her, or at least wanted to, if she would have let me. I wanted to erase that pain from her heart and her memory; and by doing so I could feel whole again and end the loneliness. After a pause, Rafe added, “That’s about it.”

Bo reached over and squeezed Rafe on the shoulder. Earle and James tapped him on the back. Then Earle said, “Thanks Rafe. That’s a lot of info I didn’t know about your life and good material for the book.”

Bo picked up the bottle of Glenmorangie and said as he poured some into each of their glasses, “This bottle has just about enough left for a toast, so we might as well finish it.”

When Bo finished pouring the last of the Glenmorangie, James raised his glass and said, “Here’s to the four of us; we’ve come a long way, and we have an even better friendship now than we had back in those beach party days.”

“Cheers!” the other three said practically in unison, as the clinked their glasses together.

Just then Carlie came up the stairs to the porch and announced, “We ladies are tired and we’re off to bed. We hope y’all don’t stay up too long drinking and wake up with wicked hangovers tomorrow, or it will not be a pleasant drive home for y’all.” Then she smiled sweetly and walked back down the stairs.

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“Did y’all have enough time to talk about us?” Earle said with a laugh, remembering Ellie’s earlier comment when the four men left the living room downstairs and were about to begin their reminiscences up on the porch.

Over her shoulder Carlie responded jokingly, “Ellie had it right, there wasn’t all that much to say; we spent the time in ‘girl talk’”. The four men laughed knowingly, picked up the scotch, water and glasses, and headed down to the living room.

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*Saturday evening, October 6, 2007 continued...*

*Back in the living room of the beach cottage...*

“Now the stallions are approaching the wire and Rafe’s horse has caught up with the horses from the Burn and Bo stables; Hein’s horse has fallen back and looks to finish out of the money”, intoned James, once again imitating an announcer calling a horse race at the Kentucky Derby. He was of course talking about the conversation the men had had up on the porch, when each had related stories about their lives during the years when they had gone their separate ways.

The others laughed once more at James’s horse race analogy. They had taken seats in the living room. When they had made their way down from the upper porch, they found that the women had all retired, but left the TV on; a football game between Virginia Tech and Pittsburgh was just ending with VT winning by a comfortable ten points. Rafe said, “Well, we killed the Glenmorangie, and we hardly touched the Macallan, but we made a wee bit of a dent in the Burn’s Blend. Personally the Macallan is a bit too peaty for me after the Glenmorangie, so I’m going to have a bit more of Burn’s Blend. Anyone else like a taste of either?”

“None for me”, answered James. “You know me; I was always the slow drinker.”

“And usually the designated driver”, Rafe said smiling at the memories. “How about you Bo and Earle, care for a taste?”

“Yeah, I’ll go another round”, answered Bo. “It will make me sleep better.”

“Just one more, Rafe”, answered Earle after Rafe had poured two fingers for Bo. “I’m driving you two back to the airport tomorrow after we straighten this place up and pack the pickup. We need to bring the beach chair and umbrella back to Carlie’s sister’s place, before we head out.”

While they were sipping and talking idly about how they had all had a great time getting together again, Earle was channel surfing the TV with the remote. He hit on a PBS channel that had one of those music retrospectives on the “British invasion” rock era.

Rafe said to Earle, “Hold it there, Burn, I like this song.”

There on the screen was a taped version of one of the old sixties TV shows with the Hollies singing one of their big hits, “He Ain’t Heavy, He’s My Brother”...

*The road is long  
With many a winding turn  
That leads us to who knows where  
Who knows when*

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*But I'm strong  
Strong enough to carry him  
He ain't heavy, he's my brother*

*So on we go  
His welfare is of my concern  
No burden is he to bear  
We'll get there  
For I know  
He would not encumber me  
He ain't heavy, he's my brother*

*If I'm laden at all  
I'm laden with sadness  
That everyone's heart  
Isn't filled with the gladness  
Of love for one another*

*It's a long, long road  
From which there is no return  
While we're on the way to there  
Why not share  
And the load  
Doesn't weigh me down at all  
He ain't heavy, he's my brother*

*He's my brother He ain't heavy,  
he's my brother...*

As the four men watched and listened, they were suddenly quiet. When the song ended, Rafe looked at the others and asked, “Do you all feel like I do? That the lyrics in that song kind of say a lot about our friendship?”

“How do you mean that, Rafe?” asked Earle.

Rafe answered, “Just think about how we re-established the friendship we once had over forty-five years ago. And how we just finished sharing with each other what happened to us when life had taken us off on our separate paths.”

James added, “I think what it means is that as great as it is to have a buddy to be there when you need support, it is even better to be there for a buddy when he needs support. There’s just no way to describe that feeling of being connected to another human being with whom you have a good deal in common.”

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Bo interjected, “It’s that brotherhood thing. It’s kind of unique for four guys to be such good friends when they were young and then to rekindle that friendship after so many years.” “It is about brotherhood, but we’re all talking around the edges, here, I think”, Rafe said. “The point is that when we became buddies in high school and the couple of years following, we looked out for one another – not every day, but often. Just the fact that Hein was usually the designated driver is one example. And there were the times we looked out for one another on the playing field or basketball court or when drinking at Staten Island, or at those beach parties. In some ways you guys were like brothers to me – I don’t know if Burn feels the same way, since like me he’s an only child. We shared the same interests as we grew up through our fumbling teens during a time in America when we all felt safe and far removed from the social and political disturbances in the rest of the world – at least until the turmoil and chaos of the sixties struck America here and abroad.

“But what really brings it home to me are the times we’ve been there for one another during the past seven years, since we renewed our friendship. I can give a great example. When my mother passed away, Bo and Denise helped me in so many ways – from cleaning out the house, to painting the attic and the rooms after removing the wallpaper, and just being there with their emotional support. That’s the kind of thing that that song captures for me.”

“Yes! I follow you now!” exclaimed Bo. “You returned the favor when my mom was dying. You came down to the nursing home and took me out for lunch to help me get my mind off the burden of making those hard decisions, just like you had to make with your mom. And Burn and Carlie came up from Virginia for my mom’s funeral; and Rafe came in from Milwaukee. That registered big with me, because my brother and sister were of no help during the years; I had the burden of caring for my mom all by myself, after my dad died.”

“Yeah! Rafe put Carlie and me up at his home the day of the funeral. And y’all came down twice to our home in Virginia and helped me build those porches,” Earle added. “And Carlie and I had some rough times with my dad and her mom and dad, but y’all kept in touch and offered a sympathetic ear.”

James interjected, “I remember the time Ellie and I came up to New Jersey and I met Rafe at his mom’s house and we went out to Tom’s Tavern to have a few beers. My car had a flat tire and Rafe changed it for me, because I have that pacemaker implant for my heart.”

“Then there was the time that Denise planned a surprise for my birthday,” Bo said. That was another time that Burn and Carlie came up to surprise me. Rafe rented an SUV and we went down the shore and out on a river boat for dinner and dancing.”

“And when I was sick with pneumonia, the three of you called often to check up on me,” James added. “I may not have told you as much, but those calls really perked me up.”

Rafe said, “Then there was the time just after my divorce was finalized and Hein was visiting New Jersey. Bo and Hein took me down to Sea Bright for lunch and drinks to

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commiserate with me and let me vent. We went to our old watering hole, the Danish Hop, although it's under a new name now.

James responded, "That's because Bo and I had both gone through the emotional turmoil in our divorces and we pretty much knew what you were going through; and on top of that you had been married a lot longer than either of us."

Rafe replied, "Well, it meant a lot to me to know that I had buddies who gave a shit about me at that time. But what probably epitomizes the brotherhood thing and where the lyrics of that song really comes alive with meaning for me was the visit we all made to Tennessee to see Roger and Gladys last winter."

"Oh, yeah, definitely," responded Bo remembering that weekend. "When we heard about his condition we all committed, practically in unison, to schedule the trip down there. I flew down from Newark, Burn drove out from Virginia, Hein and Ellie drove out from South Carolina, and Rafe flew down from Milwaukee."

Earle added, "But Rafe's flight was canceled due to poor weather and he got there a day after the rest of us."

"But it was worth it," Rafe responded. "I hadn't seen Roger and Gladys since just after we graduated high school. I guess that goes for the four of us. It was really great to spend time with them and learn how strong his spirit is in spite of that infirmity. What a great example for me, when I complain about my age related aches and pains."

"That goes for all of us, I think," Bo added.

"And then Roger and Gladys joined us at our place in Charleston last spring," James added. "It was good that they could make the trip. We all took turns helping Roger get from place to place and at the end of the weekend, it was another emotional good-bye."

"It would have been nice if they could have made it for this weekend, but it's better that they are going to the Mayo Clinic to see if there is something that can be done to reverse his condition. We've got to keep them in our prayers," Bo said, shaking his head while attempting to voice the concern and hope that they all felt.

For a couple of minutes the four men fell silent, each one reflecting on the what they had just been discussing and what they had revealed to one another earlier up on the porch.

Breaking the silence, James said, "Well, guys, it's getting late and I need some shut-eye. That eight hour drive back to Charleston tomorrow is facing me, and you three have to get back up to Virginia so Bo and Rafe can catch their flights." Then rubbing his hands together, as he was about to do when he was about to make one of his patented humorous remarks, James grinned devilishly and announced, "But before I head off to bed, as the *unofficial* judge of the outcome of the horse race, that is contest, for which of you had the raunchiest life stories...I

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hereby declare a photo finish with Burn's horse the *winnah* by a nose, and Bo's and Rafe's horses tied for Place. And that leaves my horse coming in close behind at Show." That brought a short laugh from the others.

"What?" Bo exclaimed, still laughing lightly, "I think my under-the-bed story was better than any of Burn's."

"No way," retorted Earle, feigning incredulity. "My wild oats beat your wild oats any day. Besides everyone knows southern gals have it all over those northern gals."

Bo smiled and said, "Well, thinking back to my business trips to Mississippi, you might have a point there." And they all had a chuckle.

Rafe interjected, "Hey, I accept the judge's decision. I'm not sure I'd like for the readers of the book to come away thinking I had the raunchiest history. Let Burn go to the winner's circle."

"Oh, now wait a minute," Earle responded, "I'm not sure I want the honor either, now that I think about it. That could ruin my reputation as a fine southern gentleman." That brought another chuckle from the four men.

Then Rafe said, "Hein, I have to hand it to you. Once again you injected your unique brand of humor when the conversation became a little too serious."

"Damn right!" Bo exclaimed.

"So, let's have one more toast to our friendship before we hit the sack", Rafe proposed. He picked up the bottle of Burn's Blend and poured a shot into each of the four glasses.

The four of them raised their glasses and Bo toasted, "To the 'book'; and to more beach party days!"

Earle declared, "To our health and many more get-togethers!"

James declared, "To our friendship! The Heinrich homestead is available for the next get together!"

Rafe added, "To brotherhood and my adopted 'brothers'!"

## Beach Party Days: References

### Song Lyrics Used

#### Forward & Chapter 23:

Song Title	Artist(s)	Songwriter(s)	Licensed With	Publisher(s)/Administrator(s)
"He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother"	The Hollies	Lyrics: Sidney Keith Russell, known as Bob Russell; d. 1970 (ASCAP); Music: Robert William (Bobby) Scott; d. 2000	ASCAP	HARRISON MUSIC CORP % INTERNATIONAL MUSIC SERVICES (AIRDROME MUSIC DIVISION) 10061 RIVERSIDE DRIVE P.O. BOX 1026 TOLUCA LAKE , CA, 91602  JENNY MUSIC INC. ATT JUDITH SCOTT 70-20 108TH STREET #7K FOREST HILLS , NY, 11375

#### Chapter 1:

Song Title	Artist(s)	Songwriter(s)	Licensed With	Publisher(s)/Administrator(s)
"Breathless"	Jerry Lee Lewis	Otis Blackwell, d. 2002 (BMI)	BMI	SCREEN GEMS-EMI MUSIC INC CAE/IPI #: 36205509 75 NINTH AVENUE 4TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10011  SONGS OF UNIVERSAL INC CAE/IPI #: 353271280 C/O SONGS OF UNIVERSAL INC ATTN: COPYRIGHT MANAGER 2440 SEPULVEDA BLVD SUITE 100 LOS ANGELES, CA 90064-1712  UNICHAPPELL MUSIC INC UNICHAPPELL MUSIC INC SP ACCT 1 C/O WARNER CHAPPELL MUSIC INC 10585 SANTA MONICA BLVD LOS ANGELES, CA 90025-4950
"A Kiss From Your Lips"	The Flamingos	David Roquel (ASCAP); Russell D. Fratto (BMI)	BMI	ARC MUSIC CORP 630 NINTH AVE SUITE 1004 NEW YORK, NY 10036-3744
"Sincerely"	The Moonglows	Harvey Fuqua and Alan Freed; (BMI)	BMI	ARC MUSIC CORP 630 NINTH AVE SUITE 1004 NEW YORK, NY 10036-3744  IRVING MUSIC Contact: IRVING MUSIC 2440 SEPULVEDA BLVD STE 100 LOS ANGELES, CA 90064  LIAISON TWO PUBLISHING INC LIAISON TWO PUBLISHING INC 12 SCARBOROUGH WAY RANCHO MIRAGE, CA 92270-1624

#### Chapter 3:

Song Title	Artist(s)	Songwriter(s)	Licensed With	Publisher(s)/Administrator(s)
"Earth Angel"	The Penguins	Jesse Belvin, Gaynel Hodge and Curtis	BMI	EMBASSY MUSIC CORPORATION 257 PARK AVE SOUTH



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		Williams (BMI)		20TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10010
"Sh-Boom Life Could Be a Dream"	The Crew Cuts	Carl Feaster, William R. Edwards, Floyd Mcrae, James C. Keyes, Claude Feaster (BMI)	BMI	UNICHAPPELL MUSIC INC UNICHAPPELL MUSIC INC SP ACCT 1 C/O WARNER CHAPPELL MUSIC INC 10585 SANTA MONICA BLVD LOS ANGELES, CA 90025-4950

### Chapter 4:

Song Title	Artist(s)	Songwriter(s)	Licensed With	Publisher(s)/Administrator(s)
"Rock Around The Clock"	Bill Haley & The Comets	Max C. Freedman & Jimmy de Knight (nee James E. Myers )	ASCAP	MYERS MUSIC INC % SONY/ATV TUNES LLC ATTN: LACEY CHEMSAK 8 MUSIC SQUARE WEST NASHVILLE , TN, 37203  MEASURELESS PUBLISHING C/O BRIAN A CAPANO SR 46 MEMORIAL AVENUE GIBBSTOWN , NJ, 08027  ROBERT W CINQUE 845 THIRD AVENUE SUITE 1400 NEW YORK , NY, 10022
"The Great Pretender"	The Platters	Buck Ram	ASCAP	PANTHER MUSIC CORP PEER-SOUTHERN ORGANIZATION % WILL SAVAGE 5358 MELROSE AVENUE SUITE 400 LOS ANGELES , CA, 90038
"You Send Me"	Sam Cooke	Sam Cooke	BMI	ABKCO MUSIC INC ABKCO MUSIC INC 1700 BROADWAY NEW YORK, NY 10019-5905

### Chapter 5:

Song Title	Artist(s)	Songwriter(s)	Licensed With	Publisher(s)/Administrator(s)
"Be Bop a Lula"	Gene Vincent & The Bluecaps	Tex Davis, Gene Vincent	BMI	SONY/ATV MUSIC PUBLISHING 8 MUSIC SQUARE WEST NASHVILLE, TN 37203 INFO@SONYATV.COM  THREE WISE BOYS MUSIC LLC Contact: C/O EMBASSY MUS CORP 257 PARK AVE SOUTH NEW YORK, NY 10010
"Long Tall Sally"	Little Richard	Robert Alexander "Bumps" Blackwell, Enotris Johnson and Richard W. Penniman (known as "Little Richard"),	BMI	SONY/ATV MUSIC PUBLISHING 8 MUSIC SQUARE WEST NASHVILLE, TN 37203
"Love Letters In The sand"	Pat Boone	J Fred Coots (d 1985), Lyrics by Charles F Kenny (ASCAP; d. 1992), Nick N Kenny (d. 1975)	ASCAP	BOURNE CO 5 WEST 37TH STREET 6TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY, 10018  TOY TOWN TUNES INC % WB MUSIC CORP

## Beach Party Days: References

				% WARNER CHAPPELL MUSIC INC 10585 SANTA MONICA BLVD LOS ANGELES , CA, 90025
"In My Diary"	The Moonglows	Michael Angelo Graham (BMI), Mark Silverman	BMI	ARC MUSIC CORP 630 NINTH AVE SUITE 1004 NEW YORK, NY 10036-3744
"A White Sport Coat and a Pink Carnation"	Marty Robbins	Marty Robbins	BMI	INTEGRATED COPYRIGHT GROUP INC A/C, DIRECTOR OF ADMIN & COPYRIGHT DEPT MARIPOSA MUSIC INC PO BOX 24149 NASHVILLE, TN 37202 ADMINDEPT@ICGCOPYRIGHT.COM

### Chapter 6:

Song Title	Artist(s)	Songwriter(s)	Licensed With	Publisher(s)/Administrator(s)
"Come, Go With Me"	The Del Vikings	Clarence E. Quick (BMI)	BMI	DIMENSIONAL SONGS OF THE KNOLL MICHAEL CONNELLY CHERRY RIVER MUSIC CO 6 EAST 32ND ST 11TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10016  GIL MUSIC CORPORATION 1650 BROADWAY SUITE 1008 10TH FL NEW YORK, NY 10019-6833
"Oh, What a Night"	The Dells	Johnny Funches (BMI), Marvin Junior (BMI)	BMI	CONRAD Music Arc Music Corp A/C CONRAD MUSIC 630 NINTH AVE SUITE 1004 NEW YORK, NY 10036-3744
"Rock and Roll Music"	Chuck Berry	Chuck Berry	BMI	Arc Music Corp: 630 NINTH AVE SUITE 1004 NEW YORK, NY 10036-3744  CHARLES E BERRY DBA ISALEE MUSIC PUBLISHING COMPANY 691 BUCKNER ROAD WENTZVILLE, MO 63385-5442
"Pledging My Love"	Johnny Ace	Ferdinand Washington and Don D. Robey	BMI	LITTLE M MUSIC Contact: BETTY WASHINGTON P O BOX 150126 DALLAS, TX 75315-0126  SONGS OF UNIVERSAL INC Contact: C/O SONGS OF UNIVERSAL INC ATTN: COPYRIGHT MANAGER 2440 SEPULVEDA BLVD SUITE 100 LOS ANGELES, CA 90064-1712  WEMAR MUSIC CORP 9861 W SAMPLE ROAD STE 246 CORAL SPRINGS, FL 33065

### Chapter 7:

Song Title	Artist(s)	Songwriter(s)	Licensed With	Publisher(s)/Administrator(s)
"Oh, Baby Doll"	Chuck Berry	Chuck Berry	BMI	Arc Music Corp: 630 NINTH AVE SUITE 1004 NEW YORK, NY 10036-3744

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				CHARLES E BERRY DBA ISALEE MUSIC PUBLISHING COMPANY 691 BUCKNER ROAD WENTZVILLE, MO 63385-5442
"You Are My Destiny"	Paul Anka	Paul Anka	BMI	CHRYSLIS STANDARDS INC Contact: CHRYSLIS STANDARDS INC C/O CHRYSLIS MUSIC GROUP INC 8500 MELROSE AVENUE SUITE 207 LOS ANGELES, CA 90069

### Chapter 8:

Song Title	Artist(s)	Songwriter(s)	Licensed With	Publisher(s)/Administrator(s)
"Lovers Never Say Goodbye"	The Flamingos	Terry Johnson, Paul Wilson	BMI	PREMIER ALBUMS MUSIC PUBLISHING INC C/O CHUCK RUBIN ARTIST RIGHTS ENFORCEMENT 250 WEST 57TH STREET NEW YORK, NY 10019
"Splish Splash"	Bobby Darin	Boby Darin (BMI), Murray Kaufman (BMI)	BMI	ALLEY MUSIC CORP Contact: ALLEY MUSIC CORP % CARLIN AMERICA INC 126 EAST 38TH STREET NEW YORK, NY 10016  EMI UNART CATALOG INC 75 NINTH AVENUE 4TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10011  OIRT MUSIC INC C/O BUG MUSIC INC 7750 SUNSET BLVD LOS ANGELES, CA 90046
"Where Are You, Little Star"	The Elegants	Arthur R. Venosa (BMI) and Vito J. Picone (BMI)	BMI	EMI LONGITUDE MUSIC Contact: 75 NINTH AVENUE 4TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10011

### Chapter 9:

Song Title	Artist(s)	Songwriter(s)	Licensed With	Publisher(s)/Administrator(s)
"Charlie Brown"	The Coasters	Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller	ASCAP	SONY/ATV TUNES LLC ATTN: ADMINISTRATION 8 MUSIC SQUARE WEST NASHVILLE, TN, 37203
"It's Not For Me To Say"	Johnny Mathis	Robert Allen (d. 2000), Al Stillman (Lyrics) (d. 1979)	ASCAP	CHARLIE DEITCHER PRODUCTIONS INC P O BOX 487 QUOGUE , NY, 11959  MUSIC SALES CORP 257 PARK AVENUE SOUTH 20TH FL NEW YORK , NY, 10010
"Tom Dooley"	The Kingston Trio	Alan Lomax (BMI), Frank M. Warner (BMI)	BMI	LUDLOW MUSIC INC C/O THE RICHMOND ORGANIZATION 266 WEST 37TH STREET 17TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10018 (LYRICS Slightly Modified When Used)

## Beach Party Days: References

### Chapter 10:

Song Title	Artist(s)	Songwriter(s)	Licensed With	Publisher(s)/Administrator(s)
“Volare, (Nel blu dipinto di blu)”	Domenico Modugno	Domenico Modugno (d. 1994)(music and lyrics) and Franco Migliacci (lyrics),	ASCAP	EMI ROBBINS CATALOG INC % EMI APRIL MUSIC INC C/O EMI MUSIC PUBLISHING 75 NINTH AVENUE, 4TH FLOOR NEW YORK , NY, 10011
“Come Softly To Me”	The Fleetwoods	Gretchen Christopher (BMI), Barbara L. Ellis (BMI), Gary R. Troxel (BMI)	BMI	EMI UNART CATALOG INC 75 NINTH AVENUE 4TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10011

### Chapter 11:

Song Title	Artist(s)	Songwriter(s)	Licensed With	Publisher(s)/Administrator(s)
“What’d I Say”	Ray Charles	Ray Charles	BMI	UNICHAPPELL MUSIC INC SP ACCT 1 C/O WARNER CHAPPELL MUSIC INC 10585 SANTA MONICA BLVD LOS ANGELES, CA 90025-4950
“Fever”	Little Willie John	Eddie Cooley and Otis Blackwell alias "John Davenport", d. 2002	BMI	FORT KNOX MUSIC INC C/O CARLIN AMERICA, INC 126 EAST 38TH STREET NEW YORK, NY 10016  TRIO MUSIC COMPANY DBA TRIO MUSIC COMPANY C/O BUG MUSIC 7750 SUNSET BLVD LOS ANGELES, CA 90046
“Oh Boy”	Buddy Holly	Norman Petty (BMI), Bill Tilghman (BMI), Sonny West (BMI)	BMI	WREN MUSIC CO INC C/O CHERIO CORP ATT JOHN EASTMAN ESQ 41 WEST 54TH ST NEW YORK, NY 10019-5414

### Chapter 12:

Song Title	Artist(s)	Songwriter(s)	Licensed With	Publisher(s)/Administrator(s)
“Summertime Blues”	Eddie Cochran	Jerry N. Capehart (BMI), Eddie Cochran (BMI)	BMI	WARNER-TAMERLANE PUBLISHING CO C/O WARNER/CHAPPELL MUSIC INC 10585 SANTA MONICA BLVD LOS ANGELES, CA 90025-4950
“Mr. Blue”	The Fleetwoods	Dewayne Blackwell (BMI)	BMI	EMI UNART CATALOG INC 75 NINTH AVENUE 4TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10011

### Chapter 13:

Song Title	Artist(s)	Songwriter(s)	Licensed With	Publisher(s)/Administrator(s)
“(Now and Then There’s) A Fool Such as I”	Elvis Presley	William Marvin Trader	ASCAP	UNIVERSAL MUSIC CORPORATION 2440 SEPULVEDA BLVD. SUITE 100 LOS ANGELES , CA, 90064 Tel. (310) 235-4700
“Only the Lonely”	Roy Orbison	Joe Melson (BMI), Roy K. Orbison	BMI	BARBARA ORBISON MUSIC COMPANY C/O INTEGRATED COPYRIGHT GROUP

## Beach Party Days: References

				INC P O BOX 24129 NASHVILLE, TN 37202-4149  SONY/ATV ACUFF ROSE MUSIC SONY/ATV MUSIC PUBLISHING 8 MUSIC SQUARE WEST NASHVILLE, TN 37203 INFO@SONYATV.COM
"For Your Precious Love"	Jerry Butler & the Impressions	Arthur and Richard Brooks and Jerry Butler	ASCAP	SUNFLOWER MUSIC INC 630 9TH AVENUE SUITE 1004 NEW YORK , NY, 10036

### Chapter 14:

Song Title	Artist(s)	Songwriter(s)	Licensed With	Publisher(s)/Administrator(s)
"This Magic Moment"	The Drifters	Doc Pomus (lyrics) & Mort Shuman; both BMI	BMI	UNICHAPPELL MUSIC INC SP ACCT 1 C/O WARNER CHAPPELL MUSIC INC 10585 SANTA MONICA BLVD LOS ANGELES, CA 90025-4950
"Georgia On My Mind"	Ray Charles	Hoagy Carmichael (ASCAP), Stuart Gorrell (lyrics)(BMI)	ASCAP/BMI	PEERMUSIC III LTD 5358 MELROSE BLVD SUITE 400 LOS ANGELES, CA 90038
"Young Love"	Sonny James	Ric Cartey (BMI), Carole Joyner (BMI)	BMI	SONY/ATV MUSIC PUBLISHING 8 MUSIC SQUARE WEST NASHVILLE, TN 37203 INFO@SONYATV.COM

### Chapter 15:

Song Title	Artist(s)	Songwriter(s)	Licensed With	Publisher(s)/Administrator(s)
"Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow"	The Shirelles	Gerry Goffin (BMI) and Carole King (BMI)	BMI	SCREEN GEMS-EMI MUSIC INC 75 NINTH AVENUE 4TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10011
"Runaround Sue"	Dion & The Belmonts	Dion Di Mucci (ASCAP), Earnest Maresca (BMI)	ASCAP/BMI	MIJAC MUSIC WARNER-TAMERLANE PUB CORP A/C MIJAC MUSIC 10585 SANTA MONICA BLVD LOS ANGELES, CA 90025-4921  BRONX SOUL MUSIC INC 3099 N W 63RD STREET BOCA RATON , FL, 33496

### Chapter 16:

Song Title	Artist(s)	Songwriter(s)	Licensed With	Publisher(s)/Administrator(s)
"Are You Lonesome Tonight?"	Elvis Presley	Roy Turk (lyrics) and Lou Handman (music)	ASCAP	BOURNE CO 5 WEST 37TH STREET 6TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY, 10018 Tel. (212) 391-4300  CROMWELL MUSIC INC C/O THE RICHMOND ORGANIZATION 266 W 37TH STREET 17TH FLOOR NEW YORK , NY, 10018 Tel. (212) 594-9795

## Beach Party Days: References

“Hello, Mary Lou Goodbye Heart”	Ricky Nelson	Cayet Mangiaracina (BMI), Gene Pitney (BMI)	BMI	UNICHAPPELL MUSIC INC C/O WARNER CHAPPELL 10585 SANTA MONICA BLVD. LOS ANGELES, CA 90025-4950
“Does Your Chewing Gum Lose Its Flavor (on the Bedpost Overnight)”	Lonnie Donegan	BILLY ROSE (ROSENBERG, WILLIAM SAMUEL), ERNEST BREUER, MARTY BLOOM	ASCAP	BILLY ROSE FOUNDATION INC 1633 BROADWAY, 47TH FL NEW YORK, NY, 10019  EMI MILLS MUSIC INC C/O EMI MUSIC PUBL ATT: JENNIFER INSOGNA 75 NINTH AVENUE, 4TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY, 10011
“Since I Don’t Have You”	The Skyliners	Music: James Beaumont and Lennie Martin, d. 1963; Walter P. Lester Jr, John H. Taylor, Joseph W. Versharen, Janet F. Vogel, Lyrics: Joseph V. Rock, d. 2000	ASCAP	BONNYVIEW MUSIC CORP 7120 SUNSET BLVD HOLLYWOOD, CA, 90046  SOUTHERN MUSIC PUBL CO INC % PEER-SOUTHERN ORGANIZATION ATTN: WILL SAVAGE 5358 MELROSE AVENUE SUITE 400 LOS ANGELES, CA, 90038

### Chapter 17:

Song Title	Artist(s)	Songwriter(s)	Licensed With	Publisher(s)/Administrator(s)
“Yakety Yak”	The Coasters	Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller	ASCAP	SONY/ATV TUNES LLC ATTN: ADMINISTRATION 8 MUSIC SQUARE WEST NASHVILLE, TN, 37203
“There Goes My Baby”	The Drifters	Ben E. King, Jerry Leiber (ASCAP) and Mike Stoller (ASCAP); Benjamin Nelson, Lover Patterson, George Treadwell (all 3 BMI)	ASCAP/BMI	SONY/ATV TUNES LLC ATTN: ADMINISTRATION 8 MUSIC SQUARE WEST NASHVILLE, TN, 37203  SHERMAN JOT ENTERPRISES INC P O BOX 987 BRYN MAWR, PA 19010-0987
“Quarter to Three”	Gary U.S. Bonds	Gary L. Anderson (real name of US Bonds) (BMI); Gene Barge-d 2007 (BMI), Lyrics by Frank J Guida; d. 2007 (BMI); Joseph F Royster (BMI)	BMI	Unknown? (Orinally Released 1961 on Legrand Records, owned by Frank Guida).

### Chapter 18:

Song Title	Artist(s)	Songwriter(s)	Licensed With	Publisher(s)/Administrator(s)
“California Girls”	The Beach Boys	Michael Edward Love (BMI); Brian Wilson (BMI)	BMI	IRVING MUSIC IRVING MUSIC 2440 SEPULVEDA BLVD STE 100 LOS ANGELES, CA 90064
“More Today Than Yesterday”	The Spiral Starecase	Patrick N Upton (BMI)	BMI	REGENT MUSIC CORP 630 NINTH AVE SUITE 1004 NEW YORK, NY 10036-3744
“Still”	Lionel Ritchie & The Commodores	Lionel B. Ritchie	ASCAP	BRENDA RICHIE PUBLISHING % THE LAW OFFICES OF MARIO F GONZALES ATTN: MARIO F. GONZALEZ, ESQ. 2450 COLORADO AVENUE

## Beach Party Days: References

				SUITE 400E SANTA MONICA , CA, 90404  JOBETE MUSIC CO INC % EMI MUSIC PUBLISHING ATTN: VICE PRES., COPYRIGHT ADMIN. 810 SEVENTH AVENUE 36TH FLOOR NEW YORK , NY,  LIBREN MUSIC C/O PROVIDENT FINANCIAL MGMT 2850 OCEAN PARK BOULEVARD #300 SANTA MONICA , CA, 90405
"Born to Lose"	Ray Charles	Frankie Brown	BMI	APRS PEERMUSIC, COPYRIGHT DEPARTMENT 5358 MELROSE BLVD STE 400 LOS ANGELES, CA 90038

### Song Titles and Artists Mentioned, But No Lyrics Used:

Chapter	Song Title	Artist
4	"Only You"	The Platters
7	"Night Train", "Harlem Nocturne", "When The Saints Go Marching In"	The Viscounts
8	"All I Have To Do Is Dream"	The Everly Brothers
8	"Johnny Be Goode"	Chuck Berry
10	"Kookie Kookie Lend Me Your Comb"	Edd Byrnes & Connie Stevens
13	"Theme from A Summer Place"	Percy Faith Orchestra