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ANN AWOKE, SLIPPED INTO a robe, and then entered the living room of the Malibu beach house, shouting at Jan, “Did my father get up yet?”

“It’s almost noon. He left hours ago with Margie/Carol,” replied her best friend.

“Margie/Carol!” said Ann kicking the ground with he left foot. “And you didn’t go with them!”

“He drove her to work and then was going to see about getting her car fixed!”

“That’s what you think, “ shouted. “You should have gone with them!”

“I had more important things to do!”

“Nothing is more important than my father.”

“I’ve been working on my plan,” said Jan, which he is an integral part of —first things first. You’d better hurry and straighten yourself out. Chet Brown is on his way over to take you out for lunch.”

“Waaa —” screeched Ann. “He called?”

“I called him! You see, getting Margie/Carol and your father off the scene was in both our interests as well as that of Saint Mildred’s.”

“Where did you get his number?” asked Ann, who appeared to be preparing to faint.

“From your jacket pocket!”

“You made a date for me?”

“When your father went out to look at Margie/Carol’s car.”

“You made a date for me,” stammered Ann.

“He thinks I’m your agent.”

“How could you?” Ann sunk to the floor and began to chew on her nails.

“Ann,” said Jan, “that was the sole purpose of our trip out here. Getting you . . . together with Chet Brown.”

“I have to think about it,” moaned Ann.

“What? A date with the most desirable young star in Hollywood, and that’s *Entertainment Tonight*’s words, not mine.”

“I wouldn’t know what to do when I’m alone with him.”

“He’ll know. It’s only a lunch date. Nobody could be that uncivilized to mix lunch with you know what!”

Ann crossed to Jan, and looked straight in her eye. “Okay! But no hanky-panky!”

“Just remember, Saint Mildred’s girls do not hanky-panky until they are Seniors even though they are Wardens.”

“I have to think about it some more,” moaned Ann. She suddenly shuddered and then whispered, “What was that?”

“The doorbell!” replied Jan. “It’s probably Chet.”

Ann ran into the bathroom. “Answer it! I don’t want him to see me like this!”

Jan nodded and then strolled casually out of the bedroom and up to the front door. She shouted, “Who is it?”

“Chet!” replied the voice on the other side.

“Chet who?” asked Jan, suppressing a giggle.

“Chet Brown!”

“Oh,” said Ann. “That Chet! Just a minute.” She opened the door and then said, “Come on in. Ann’s getting dressed.”

Chet entered the house and studied the interior intently. “God!” he said, “they ask a million dollars for these shacks.” After locking the front door, Ann took him by the arm and led him into the living room where he slouched casually in a rattan chair.

Ann stuck her head out of the bedroom and shouted “Jan!” Chet Rose. She said, “Hi! Getting dressed,” and waved to Chet before withdrawing her head.

“Would you like a drink,” asked Jan. “There’s some vodka.”

“I don’t drink,” replied Chet. “It doesn’t mix with my business.”

Ann shouted from behind the closed bedroom door, “Jan, would you come in here for a moment!”

Jan went into the bedroom, closed the door behind her, and stared at Ann, who had only gotten as far as her pantyhose.

Ann whispered, “Why did you offer him a drink?”

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“To loosen him up in reference to the Lower School’s ‘New York, New York Fiesta and Sock Hop’. If you can’t get parents there sober, what hope do you have with a gorgeous movie star?”

Ann whispered, “Can’t get into anything. I need a corset.”

“I told you not to cut everything down so tight. Don’t you have a dress?”

“Only the black one!”

“Pull your tummy in and go for it!”

“He’s dressed casually,” whispered Ann frantically.

“In a nine-hundred-dollar leather jacket and tailored jeans. That’s not exactly casual.”

“But a dress,” whispered Ann.
“You’re from New York! You’re a Saint Mildred’s girl.
You always wear a dress on your first date.”
“Okay!” stammered Ann.”

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JAN LOOKED AT CHET BROWN. Chet Brown looked at his watch. Jan jumped up and said, "I'll go get her." She went to the bedroom door and knocked. Without waiting for an answer, she entered to find Ann seated on the bed with her hand clasped reverently.

"Ann, you don't have to pray. It's just a first date. An afternoon date! He's bringing you back after lunch."

"Lunch," said Ann with a shudder.

"Mineral water and a small salad. I already told Chet. He was at the big pig-out last night. Remember?"

"Okay!" said Ann, standing and finally showing some determination. "I know how to handle this."

"Don't mess it up!" said Ann.

“I’m just going to tell him that I’m just a kid and not used to dating . . . older men.”

“Just don’t tell him you’re not used to dating anyone at all,” said Jan.

Ann stomped the ground and thrust her chin out. “I — “

“Dance class when you were nine does not count!”

“I am not a child.” Ann steeled herself, made a sharp about-face, and marched into the living room as if she owned the world. She said, “Hi, Chet!”

As Chet rose, she took him by the hand, looked directly into his eyes, and said, “We’d better go. My father expects me back by three.”

Chet, turning to butter, allowed her to lead him to the front door, where he stopped and shouted back into the living room, “A poster for your parents! I’ll drop one off on the way back.”

“Bring a whole bunch,” said Ann, “for the girls at Saint Mildred’s.”

“You’ve got them!” said Chet.

Jan followed them out onto the front porch and watched as he led Ann to his car. “Nice wheels,” she said.

“Thanks,” said Chet. “It’s a Mercedes. There are only two of them in the United States.” He looked Ann in the eyes and said, “There’s one thing I’m extremely serious about. I don’t let anyone else drive it.” He

waited until she nodded in agreement before opening the door and helping her into the passenger seat. Getting behind the wheel, he spoke, but Ann was incapable of digesting words at the moment. Whatever they were, she hoped they weren't too sexy. A compliment would have been disastrous. She was trying to get up the courage to ask him to repeat himself when he slapped both hands on the wheel in frustration and bellowed, "The seat belt. Put on the seat belt!"

"Oh," muttered Ann, searching for the buckle. Being extremely careful not to touch her, Chet leaned over, pulled the buckle out from under her rear and secured it. Their knees touched for a moment, but there was no electricity. He then strapped himself in, started the engine, and looked out the side window, signaling with his both his arm and the flasher. When they finally joined the stream of traffic heading south, Ann muttered, "You're a careful driver."

Chet nodded. "But a little tense," she said with a little nod, which he returned. Ann asked, "Am I making you nervous?"

Chet didn't answer.

"I knew it," muttered Ann. "I making you nervous because I'm very uptight."

"You're making me nervous because I think you're . . . hot."

"Me!" said Ann.

“Sorry!” said Chet. “I shouldn’t have said hot. I just made you more uptight.”

Ann shrugged. “I’m sorry if I’m not behaving normally.”

Chet said, “My shrink says there isn’t any such thing as normal.”

“I’m not talking about normal like in crazy,” said Ann. “Like normal for a date. You must have hundreds of girlfriends.”

Chet shrugged. Ann said, “Okay! Then let’s just make this a regular first date. Get to know each other. I’ll tell you about myself, you tell me about you.”

“Okay,” said Chet. “I’m starting a picture next week.”

“Tell me about it?” asked Ann.

“It’s a black comedy! Boy meets girl. Boy thinks girl’s a murderer. Then it looks like the girl is both the murderer and the victim.”

“Who falls in love with you in this one?” asked Ann.

“Gloria Baker!”

“Is she one of your girlfriends!” asked Ann.

“Absolutely not!” snapped Chet. His hand began to choke the steering wheel and his knuckles turned as white as Ann’s the night before.

“Well!” said Ann. “You don’t have to bite my head off. I was just making conversation.”

“She’s promiscuous!” replied Chet.

“The character in the movie?”

“Gloria Baker!”

“Oh,” said Ann.

There was a long period of silence. Chet then said, “I don’t like to talk about movies. It’s very boring.”

“How can it be boring?” asked Ann.

“You’ll find out soon enough,” said Chet. After another long pause, he finally said, “Tell me about high school?”

“High school,” giggled Ann. “My high school?”

“Do you have a lot of boyfriends?”

“Ten,” replied Ann.

“I knew it,” said Chet. A great sense of relief came over him and he slapped the steering wheel with his left hand. He didn’t speak until they were in Santa Monica. Ann poked him.

“What,” he snapped.

“Did you believe me?”

“About what,” he said curtly.

“The ten boyfriends?”

“Why shouldn’t I have?”

“Can we go someplace and talk?” asked Ann.

“We are going someplace to talk. A restaurant. Then I’ll bring you right back home.”

“I mean now. Right now!”

“Right now!”

“I have a confession to make. There’s something you ought to know about me.”

"I knew it," said Chet. He took a deep breath and now, almost totally relaxed, said, "I'll pull over here."

When they stopped at the public beach, Ann pointed to a pier off in the distance. She said, "Is this Santa Monica?"

Chet nodded. Ann said, "That's where they shoot Bay Watch, right?"

"I guess so!" said Chet throwing his hands up into the air. "You had something you wanted to say."

Ann took a deep breath. "I don't have ten boyfriends. I don't even have one boyfriend."

"So?" asked Chet, barely paying attention.

"My mother and I are rather conservative. I know what goes on with some other girls my age. They talk. Even at my school . . . Saint Mildred's . . . which is . . . conservative. The girls talk a lot more than they actually . . . you know."

"So? You're different!"

Ann nodded.

"It isn't such a terrible thing," said Chet, forcing himself to be sympathetic.

Ann, startled, asked, "Not having a date before?"

"I don't understand," said Chet.

"You can take me right back to the house if you want to. The fact is that you . . . you're my first date. I mean, if you don't count dance class when I was nine. I'm a . . . you know . . . a virgin."