

The Dating Game

My best friend and I had boyfriends who were also best friends. Unfortunately that didn't always work to our advantage as boys don't "tell" as much as girls so my best friend couldn't get out of her boyfriend any juicy information about my boyfriend and vice versa. But we were never without hope.

It was our senior year in high school and it seemed that the male gender became increasingly paranoid if they perceived the relationship might be getting serious. The college experience was just a matter of months away and a serious relationship with a girl back home or at another college just wouldn't be cool. Their attitude expressed, "How could anyone have fun at college already tied down?" This paranoia meant that our relationship of "going steady" was in a constant change of off and on.

One particular period my best friend and I found us in the "not going steady" with our boyfriends at the same time. This meant a double whammy for a senior girl. The guys had the entire student body as their dating pool, but the girls only had the pick of the senior class. And then that was limited because it wasn't acceptable for a guy to date another guy's former girlfriend, if there was any hint of a lingering fondness for her (that only the guys would know, of course.)

That summer we found ourselves dateless wallflowers pining for our boyfriends. We got wind that the guys had a double date planned with somebody's cousins from California. We were burning with envy, we were burning with curiosity, and we were burning with...who knows, we were just burning! These were "California girls" where all the girls are beautiful, blond and tan just like the Beach Boys' lyrics. And we heard they were going to a drive-in movie.

We had a plan. And we followed it through with absolute resolve. Yes, we would spy on them. We would find out just how close they sat in that car. And oh, if he should put his arm around her, that would be the heart breaker!

The drive-in theatre was on the edge of town, our dry, flat, treeless town where you could see everything for miles. Sticking up from nowhere were two huge screens flashing larger than life movie stars in action without sound unless you had your car parked on an ever so slight incline next to a little pole where a speaker could be unattached and hung on the inside window of a car. On a hot summer night all of the car windows were usually down to take advantage of any breeze of cool air. The awkward metal box had a knob for volume control and out of its poor quality sound, actors speaking, and background music would blare. In the car someone could be totally unaware of anything outside such as an approaching summertime thunderstorm, passers by on foot coming from the concession stand. And most unsuspecting, former girlfriends crouched and lurking between cars trying to get a close enough to check out the situation. Thankfully so, because we were giggling so much at the silliness of it all, the sneakiness of it all. What if we got caught? What if they saw us? What if word leaked out and they heard what we had done? Just thinking about it made us giggle more.

It wasn't long before the California girls had left town and we were on to other schemes of boy watching. They were never the wiser and no names have been mentioned, because my best friend made me PROMISE NOT TO TELL!