

If Your Nose Turns Yellow...

The Delirium Threemen
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Thoughts for Roy and Joanne are in italics.

If Your Nose Turns Yellow...

The sun reflected off the blue pool water while several boys in swimsuits milled about the deck waiting for directions from Coach Wynnes. Joanne Johnson stood off to the side of the starting blocks with two other girls from the Yearbook Staff. They were present to take some pictures of the Lancer Mermen for the yearbook. The coach ordered six of the boys to the starting blocks. Joanne knelt down and focused the camera as the boys took their starting positions on the blocks. She quickly snapped a picture just before the coach bellowed out "Stand up." She rejoined her two companions who stood a few feet off, away from the pool.

"I think I have great start position shot of them," Joanne said to Carolyn Marsh.

Tracey Valley began gushing over Roy DeSoto. "Gosh, will you look at him. He has the perfect swimmer's physique.

Carolyn rolled her eyes in Joanne's direction. "Looks like Howdy Doody in swim trunks," she snickered. She always found Roy looked a bit of a nerdish. Part nerd, but the boy-next-door part of his appearance made up for that and gave him a certain appeal. She could understand why some girls found him cute, but Tracey's constant boy-crazy rants drove her to the brink of insanity at times.

Tracey shot Carolyn a foul look. Joanne knew Carolyn had only made the comment to get under Tracey's skin. Roy was Tracey's crush of the month and she had no idea that Joanne had been pinning over him since the end of the last school year.

"Actually, I was thinking, if you added ten years to Opie Taylor you'd end up with Roy DeSoto," Joanne added. TV's little Opie Taylor reminded her of what Roy looked like the first time she had met him. Since she was nine-years-old, she had hung around him and his best friend Cuddy, at least, 'til they started high school.

Joanne always assumed the natural thing for her and Roy would be to pair up as a couple once they entered high school. Instead, they seemed to drift apart that first year. Joanne quickly began to lose her tomboy ways and got caught up in a teenage girl's world of makeup, hair, clothing and the latest Hollywood heart-throb. During her freshman year of high school the teen idols were Bobby Vinton, Bobby Rydel, Bobby Darin, and Bobby Vee. Joanne dubbed that year the "The Year of the Bobbies."

Over on the deck, Roy and Martin Ulrich were engaged in a conversation while waiting for their turn in the water. "Too bad coach made us promise to 'act accordingly' while the Yearbook Book Babes snap pictures today."

"Yeah, Carl Brooks was threatening to moon them," Roy said, "And Carl being Carl, you know he might have been boneheaded enough to pull a stunt like that."

"So uh, Roy, what do you think of Carolyn over there?" Martin asked.

"She's pretty enough. That cutie Joanne is more my type."

"Joanne?" Martin questioned. "Don't get me wrong, she's very pretty, but isn't she the dovey that set the stove on fire in Mrs. Riel's Homemaking class."

"Yep, that's the gal."

"All I can say Roy, is you better learn to cook."

Roy looked over at Joanne and thought about the promise he had made to himself about asking her out. Now that his car was finished and on the road, today was the day he needed to work up the courage to ask her.

"Ulrich, Cooper, Walsh, Gamble, DeSoto, and Malina get to the blocks," Coach Wynnes called out.

Joanne's head snapped to attention as she heard the coach call out 'DeSoto.' She got her camera ready as the boys started to climb onto the starting blocks. She focused the lens on Roy. He stood straight and tall on the block waiting for the coach to cue them to take the crouched starting position. She noted that he had to be at least six feet tall now. He had grown in height, quite a bit over the last year, she mused. His body had begun to fill out and take on a more manly appearance. She wasn't sure she liked the formation of hair that was starting to sprout in the middle of his chest. She changed her mind quickly when she glanced over at Jay Cooper and decided that chest hair was far more attractive than a 'pigeon' chest or being graced with bouncing boobies like Joe Malina.

Her eyes wandered back to Roy and she continued on with her assessment. She liked how the snug, black swim trunks fit him. His long legs were far more preferable to Mike Walsh's stout, tree trunk-like legs. His feet were a little on the flat side reminding her of the ones that belonged to that new cartoon character, Fred Flintstone. Roy's Flintstone feet were just a minor flaw in her eyes. Those feet are probably more suitable for swimming than powering a car, or braking, she thought.

Joanne snapped his picture and advanced the film quickly so she could get another shot in. She knew the yearbook editor Sue Morris would let her keep one of the photos. Sue didn't mind the girls sneaking a photo here and there for their own personal 'purposes' as long as nobody got carried away. It was normal out of the hundred or so pictures taken, that many didn't make the yearbook. In the past, it was an unspoken rule that the club members could have some of those discarded photos if they wanted them.

She got a second shot in just before Roy and the other boys assumed their starting positions. Joanne watched as he dove into the pool and wondered how he got his flat feet pointed so perfectly during his dive. Mesmerized, she observed him as he sliced gracefully through the water.

"Did you get a load of the six-pack on Steve Gamble," Tracey whispered in her ear interrupting her trance.

Joanne smiled to herself. Steve Gamble now had the honor of being Tracey's fixation for the next month. "Looks like I only have two shots left on this roll of film," she commented to Tracey.

Feeling they had enough pictures of the swim team to pick from, the three girls waved good-bye to Coach Wynnes and called out a 'thank you' to him as they left the pool area.

By the time Roy finished his laps and climbed out of the pool he noticed Joanne and her two companions were gone. He felt the nervousness roil in his gut as he thought about how to approach her later on after practice. Roy was almost thirteen when his dad had towed in a badly wrecked-up Porsche to the garage he owned and presented it to him. He spent many Saturdays over the last few years working on that car with his father. Unlike most of his teenage friends, he found his parents weren't all that square or uncool. He usually thought it was disrespectful whenever he heard a school mate refer to their parents as 'Old Lady' or 'Old Man.'

Sure, his parents were the same age as everyone else's parents, but he found they were pretty reasonable. Truth was, he felt close to his parents at an age when many teenagers started pushing them away. He actually enjoyed all the time and hard work with his dad fixing up the car. His dad's one rule was they could talk about anything they wanted while working on the car, no topic was off-limits. The last several months he had peppered his father with plenty of questions about girls. A lot of what his dad told him made sense. Advice like minding his manners, showing a lady proper courtesy and respect by opening doors, allowing her entrance first, and that type of stuff. Roy felt himself blush as he remembered their talk about sex and responsibility. His father had cleared up many of the locker room misconceptions he had heard. His thoughts were interrupted by the coach calling out his name.

He went back to the starting blocks for the 440 m freestyle. This time while he was in the water, he focused more on his swimming. The coach already pointed out that he messed up the last flip turn in his final lap the first time through. This time, he managed to perform it right and got his personal best time on the 440. Coach Wyness tended to use him more for the longer distance swims because he tended to have a negative split. That did not work out well for him on swims under 200 meters, but seemed to work more to his advantage in the longer swims. He had endurance, but it took him time to build up a steady and consistent speed.

Roy and the other swimmers hit the pool house after Coach Wyness dismissed them after their cool down period in the water. It was customary for him to point out any weak areas or flaws to the boys as they headed inside. The coach also made sure to praise them for what they did right and let them know where he was seeing improvements.

"Great time on the 440, Roy," the coach said to him as he grabbed his towel and grooming bag out of his locker.

He returned a shy 'thank you' and headed towards an empty shower stall. He washed his hair and body twice hoping to remove all traces of the chlorine smell from the pool. Once he dried off, he headed back to his locker, grabbed the bottle of Old Spice from the shelf and applied a sparing amount to his face and a touch on his chest. He began to get dressed after he had put on some deodorant.

Slowly, the pool house was emptying as Roy went to the mirror with his comb and Brylcreem in hand. He squeezed a small dab of the cream onto his hand and worked it through his short hair before styling it with his comb. He wasn't into the greaser look some of the guys sported. He kept his hair simple, short on the sides, little longer at the top, and parted at the side. He only used enough Brylcreem to keep his hair in place. He needed something to hold down his fine hair so it wouldn't get that 'fly-away' look.

Satisfied with his appearance he put his sundries away in his gym bag, along with his wet swim suit. He looked around the nearly empty pool house, making sure nobody could see him, he did a quick 'sniff test' before grabbing his school jacket from the locker. Leaving the pool house, he headed towards the school's courtyard where he promised to meet up with his best friend Cuddy. He could see his friend was engaged in a conversation with tall and pert Peggy Leonard.

"Today's the day, buddy," he called out to Roy.

Roy felt his pulse race nervously and his palms begin to sweat. "Yeah, but what if she turns me down?"

"Sounds like you're trying to bail out on the deal," Cuddy said as Roy sat down at the picnic table.

"Who is Roy all panicky about asking out," Peggy inquired as she smiled at Cuddy.

Roy groaned as Cuddy filled Peggy in. "Roy promised on the first day he drove his car to school that he'd ask Joanne Johnson out, and I, his dearly devoted friend, have made it my duty to make sure he doesn't chicken out."

"Maybe she's already left for home by now," Roy said.

"Ahhh, my fine feathered friend, I already know the answer to that question," Cuddy said triumphantly. "She's studying under a tree near the parking lot."

"Well then," Peggy added, "Quit wasting time Roy and head out there."

"Well uhh, first I need to go inside and get my books out of my locker."

Cuddy and Peggy stood up from the table. "Pegs and I shall escort you to your locker and then out the back door of the school."

Roy let out a defeated sigh as he got up and the three of them headed inside the school to his locker. Once he gathered his books, the three of them headed down the hall towards the rear of the school. Peggy wrapped an arm around a bicep of each boy.

"You know Pegs, Joanne's had a bad case of Roybies for years," Cuddy whispered loudly in Peggy's ear.

Peggy laughed, "What on earth is Roybies?"

"Cuddy, have I told you today that you're an ass," Roy mumbled.

"At least once a day, every day," he answered before turning to Peggy. "Roybies is the term I use to describe any girl that lusts for the studliness of Roy. Extreme cases involve foaming at the mouth."

Roy rolled his eyes as the three of them pushed open the back doors leading from the school to the outside. The sudden burst of sunlight on his face caused him to squint. A young girl with brown poofy hair walked by them and into the school.

"I wonder how long it takes Gail Helms to get her that Beehive hair," Cuddy commented to Peggy. "I mean, what's up with that dome-headed look all the girls style their hair in?"

"That's actually called a Bouffant, and it takes Gail over an hour in the morning to do her hair," Peggy answered. "On the other hand, a Beehive is more...well...it looks more like a giant, oval-shaped hive attached to the back of your head."

"Remember the girl Kenny brought to our 'Lavender and Lace' dance," Roy snickered as he recalled the young lady's wild hairdo.

"Awww man, that was one hideous head of hair. It looked like she had a chicken monster attached to her head," Cuddy added.

"I remember her," Peggy exclaimed, "That hairdo is called the Cockatoo."

Roy laughed, "Cuddy's right, it looked like a mutant chicken crash-landed on her head."

"There she is," Cuddy pointed to an auburn haired girl sitting under a tree.

"Our lovely Joanne over there is sporting a hairstyle called The Flip with a headband accessory," Peggy said as she looked up to Roy. "A much more subdued hair style that doesn't overwhelm the men or cause them to make fun of one's hair."

"Kind of looks like your style," Roy commented back.

"Yes it does. You're learning fast Roy, and now it's time for us to part," Peggy proclaimed as the three of them stopped walking.

"Don't forget Roy, 'Any man who can drive safely while kissing a pretty girl is simply not giving the kiss the attention it deserves'," Cuddy added as Peggy detached her arm from Roy.

"I love your one-liners, Cuddy," Peggy said as she snuggled up against him.

"He stole that line from Albert Einstein," Roy said dryly.

The three of them exchanged 'good byes' as Peggy and Cuddy continued towards the parking lot, leaving Roy standing on the sidewalk. He stared at the tree in front of him. He began to slowly walk towards it, his feet felt like they were encased in cement shoes. He trudged across the grass making his way towards the oak tree. Sitting on the other side of that tree was Joanne and it was no or never time for him.

Joanne waited patiently under the shade of a large oak tree on the lawn of the high school. The last thing she wanted to appear was obvious. Her history book lay open on the ground beside her as she tried to study. She absent-mindedly plucked a dandelion from the grass nearby. Removing one petal, "He loves me," her voice spoke inside of her head, and then "He loves me, not" as she removed a second petal. She

continued to bide her time removing the soft yellow petals, praying that when she got to the last one it would be "He loves me."

It wasn't long before she spotted him and two others exiting the school. In between him and his dark-haired best friend was Peggy Leonard with each arm linked through a young man. Peggy looked up at the tall reddish-blond fellow and laughed at something he had said. *Good old Leggy Peggy can't decide which young man to lead on*, Joanne thought sourly as she leaned back against the tree completely out of sight. "He loves me, not," a defeated whisper escaped from her as she pulled another petal from the dandelion in her hand.

"Hey, there," a voice startled her from the other side of the tree.

Joanne looked up at the grinning young man and then down at the strewn petals that covered her lap and books. She could feel the heat of embarrassment rushing to her face as the young man sat down next to her.

"You know, there's an easier way to find out if he likes you. A lot less messier than mutilating poor innocent dandelions," he said with a broad toothy grin.

"W-who likes me, w-what makes you think..." Joanne flustered as she tried to get her embarrassment under control before quickly muttering, "Nobody you know."

"Well...uhhh, I kinda heard you say 'He loves me, not'," he said bashfully as he plucked a nearby dandelion from the ground "Here smell this, if it leaves some yellow on your nose then it means you dig a guy," he explained as he held it towards her. *Geesh, I couldn't find a more stupid way to break the ice if I tried.*

"What are you up to Roy DeSoto?" She eyed him suspiciously, "The last time you held one of those my way you smeared it under my chin and that was after I told you I liked butter."

"I had to be sure you were telling the truth. Besides, that was over six years ago. We were ten and if you would have held still I wouldn't have smeared ya'." *Great, now my past misdeeds are catching up with me.* He plucked a second nearby dandelion and handed it to her. "Now, we'll do this together."

She hesitantly took the flower he held out, still somewhat leery of his intentions. *Dammit, he still thinks of me as that scruffy tomboy from down the street.* "If you pull anything stupid..."

"I promise," he said while crossing his heart. "Then maybe you can try it out on...you know...find out if he...he, well, likes you."

"Yeah, maybe," she answered softly as she started into his blue eyes. When they were kids, she could always tell when he was up to something by the trace of childish mischief that twinkled in his eyes. *There's nothing in his eyes to suggest he's up to no good.*

He smiled shyly as she held the blossom up to his nose. She leaned in and sniffed the blossom he held out to her. The smile melted from his face as he noted the yellow traces of pollen on her nose. He gave her an awkward look as the word "Damn" escaped from him. *She already has the hots for someone.*

"What?" Joanne questioned.

"Oh nothing, I mean there's no yellow on your nose," Roy fibbed. He had seen Doug Hall talking to her earlier in the hall before his first period English class. Most of the girls he knew would give their eyeteeth for a date with him. "I guess there's really nobody you're sweet on."

"Well then, would you mind telling me who you're all ga-ga over," Joanne asked as she reached over and brushed off the yellow pollen off his nose. *Silly wives' tale, my nose should be covered in yellow. Heck, I'm surprised he doesn't notice me staring at him every chance I get.*

"Me...ahh, I'm keeping that to myself," Roy blurted out as his face turned a ruddy color.

"My guess would be Peggy Leonard."

"Your guess is wrong. Cuddy's got his sights set on her."

"Tracey Valley," Joanne threw another female name his way. She noticed how Roy got flustered whenever Tracy batted her brown bovine-like eyes at him.

"No...I mean Tracey's okay, but she's not my type," Roy answered. Tracey tended to make him feel uncomfortable with her obvious flirting. *Come on Joanne, you can't figure out it's you.*

"Okay, I give up," Joanne huffed as she crossed her arms across her chest. "There once was a time when you told me your secrets."

An awkward silence filled the air between the two 16-year-olds before Roy finally spoke, "How about I give you a lift home?" He didn't see any of the telltale signs that she was 'in' to him, which left him feeling like a deflated balloon.

Joanne managed to suppress the giddiness that threatened to burst from her. "You have your Mom's car today?" *Keep it together, you'll scare him away if you start acting like a love-sick cow, that's Tracey Valley's department.*

Roy grinned from ear to ear, "Actually, I have my own car now."

"Really? You finally finished rebuilding that car," she asked excitedly.

"Hard to believe, but yeah, finally got it finished a few weeks ago and now all the paperwork is in order," Roy proclaimed proudly.

He stood up and held his hand out to assist her to her feet before gathering his gym bag and books. He helped her pick up her books before he escorted her to the student parking lot.

"So what it'd take, four years to restore that car?"

"Just about. Spent most of my Saturdays rebuilding it with my Dad. Sometimes, Cuddy or Kenny helped out," Roy answered as they neared the champagne yellow sports car.

He opened the passenger door and held it open for Joanne. "Your chariot awaits, my lady," he said as he waited for her to sit down.

How corny can he get? I bet his Dad taught him that line. "At least chivalry is not dead," Joanne sighed as she set her books on the floor in front of her. *Yes, this is a good sign when he's one of those guys that's considerate enough to hold doors open and such.*

He went to the front of the car and popped the trunk open. He stashed his gym bag and books in there as he grabbed the boot cover before opening the driver's side door. Roy sat down in the passenger seat and undid one latch to the roof before reaching over to the latch in front of Joanne. "Uhhh, excuse me," he said as Joanne breathed in his scent. She expected him to have a bit of a chlorine smell to him, but instead it was tangy and clean.

Once he had pushed back the canvas roof and secured the top boot cover he got into the driver's seat. "So what do you think?" he beamed proudly at her.

"Very nice," Joanne said softly as she returned a shy smile his way. Curiosity got the better of her, but she had to know. "Soooo...am I the first girl you've invited for a ride in your new car?" She had to know if he was just being nice or if he had a girl or two he was interested in.

"Ahhh, no," he answered uncomfortably before leaning closer to her. "I took my Mom for a spin around the block last night," he teased.

Joanne smiled at his answer, after all Moms don't count as competition. "How's your Mom doing? It's been a while since I've seen her," she asked.

"She's not all that crazy about riding in this car. Thinks it sits too close to the ground. Other than that, she's doing great. Just been promoted to assistant manager at the bank," he smiled proudly. He remembered how long and hard she had worked to get that position. Several times during her tenure at the bank she was passed over for promotions and he often wondered if it was because she was a woman.

"Really? That's great, when did this happen?" Joanne asked. *He always treats his Mother with so much respect. Grandma Johnson always said 'If he treats his mother well, it's a good sign he'll treat you well.'*

"Almost three weeks ago. I missed the Junior Class Howdy Hop because Dad and I took her out to Jack's at the Lake to celebrate," he answered. *Why would I want to go to the school dance knowing that Doug Hall was going to ask you out?*

"I missed the Hop too. I stayed home that night. Didn't really feel like going," Joanne informed him.

You mean, Doug decided to ask someone else at the last minute. I don't get how all the girls want to go out with him. All he does is string the girls along thinking he's doing one of them a great honor by asking her out. YOU deserve much better than that.

"Uhhh, I'm kind of glad you didn't go with Doug," Roy said quietly.

"I turned him down," Joanne proclaimed as he backed up the car from the parking space.

Hey, I always knew you were a sensible girl. So she doesn't want to go out with Doug? Interesting? No, that's not interesting, now I don't even know who my competition is.

"So what do you think of the car?"

"Hmmm, it's very nice."

Roy started up the car pulled out of the lot and onto Leffingwell Road. "Ya' know this car is a performance-proven, timeless beauty. The engine's been rebuilt with all original parts thanks to Dad having good connections with auto part dealers," he began to prattle on. "Reliable brakes, fully-synchronized, servomesh transmission. This car is the perfect interplay between man and machine. Driving in its purest form. Sheer, sensual, pleasure on wheels."

"I'm sure is," Joanne agreed as they headed north on Foster Road. *I haven't a clue what he's talking about. Oh dear, that bit about 'sensual pleasure on wheels' almost sounds like he wants to get it on with his car.*

"Powerful, compact, efficient, and not to mention economical to operate. Superb roadability. Torsion bar suspension," Roy continued keeping his eyes focused on the road ahead. *Keep going, I'm impressing the hell out of her.* He continued to rattle off the features of his car. "The car's rear springs help prevent over steering. It's rear wheel drive, by the way. 75 HP with mounted grey cast iron cylinders. Did I mention the engine's in the back of the car? Car gets its power from a 1582cc air-cooled, flat-four cylinder engine. The two air intake grilles on the back keep the engine cool. Tight and solid, no rattles and shakes coming from this baby."

"Sounds like a true delight to drive," Joanne said softly. She crossed her arms over her chest. *This is just great. He's talking to me as if I was Cuddy. To him, I'm just another one of the guys just like when we were kids.*

Roy wanted desperately to watch the wind blowing her beautiful auburn hair. *"I don't care how pretty she is, keep your eyes on the road."* He heard his Dad's voice ringing in his head. *Red light, please let me hit a red light. Man, Dad has no idea how pretty Joanne is. She makes this car look like an ugly stepsister.*

Joanne kept peeking over at Roy. *This is worse than I thought. He won't even steal a glance my way while he's driving. PLEASE Roy, stop talking about the damned car.*

FINALLY, a red light. He glanced over at his attractive passenger and noted that her arms crossed and she looked kind of annoyed. *Okay, so I failed to impress her with the car. How stupid can I be, of course girls aren't into all that junk about the engine.*

"Hey, you want to stop in at Harvey's Broiler?" he asked. *I remember Dad saying there are two ways to please a woman, jewelry and chocolate. Maybe if I feed her a chocolate sundae, she'll warm up to me. I bet pure chocolate sauce will make her purr like this car's engine.*

Joanne pasted on a shy smile as he turned left onto Firestone Boulevard. "That sounds great," she answered trying to sound cheerful. *Heaven help me, it's his stomach that's leading the way. Perhaps a longer ride might help the situation. It's very possible once he's stuffed his face he'll start paying more attention to me. Hah, Eileen tried to tell me men think with something else. If a man is hungry, nothing else matters until you feed him, and she thinks she knows everything about men.*

Roy pulled into the car hop at Harvey's before turning it off. A waitress in a short, dark, two-toned pleated skirt rolled by and signaled she'd be right with them. He glanced over at Joanne and smiled, "How about a chocolate sundae?"

"Sure, that sounds good," she replied as the waitress rolled up to Roy's side of the car to take their order.

"Must take some balance to work on those things," Roy said as he watched the waitress skate away.

"I supposed so," Joanne muttered trying to keep her jealousy under control. *This is a really bad sign. He's checking out the waitress with me sitting in his car.*

Uh-oh, I came off as too chummy with the waitress. Here's my chance and I'm blowing it. Think, Roy, think. He smiled uncomfortably as his brain fumbled around to come up with something to talk about.

"So did you get any good pictures of the swim team at practice today," he asked her. *Man, that's pure genius. Talk about her and what she's interested in.*

"Uh-huh, got some nice ones of Steve Gamble diving into the pool, and a few others," Joanne answered. *AND a delectable shot of one Roy DeSoto in his swim trunks up on the platform. That one is going into my personal scrapbook for me to drool over.*

"I bet you'll make sure the Yearbook Club comes out with a great edition this year," Roy stated.

Joanne chuckled, "Last year's yearbook was horrible, wasn't it. Well, don't worry about this year's El Lancero. It won't be another Gail Blair and friend's edition I assure you. That was the biggest complaint about last year's book. At the first Yearbook Club meeting, we pledged to represent all the students in the book, not just the seniors or the popular crowd."

"I bet you'll make sure that happens," Roy smiled broadly at her. *Hey, this is great. We're talking pretty freely now. That awkwardness between us seems to be disappearing.*

Awww, his cheeks still 'chipmunk out' when he smiles. "I have a great picture of Cuddy and you at the talent show."

"I thought we looked kinda dorky in those outfits and fake handlebar mustaches," he replied back. *Oh please, don't put that one in the yearbook. I'll buy you a lifetime supply of chocolate.*

"You guys were great. I personally thought the four of you should have won the talent show."

"What will it cost me to have you not put that picture in the yearbook?"

Joanne thought for a moment, "How about you tell me how Mr. Miller convinced you and Cuddy to join that barbershop quartet."

Roy blushed, "Well you see...it's like this...Cuddy and I were in the boy's washroom goofing around."

"Goofing around," Joanne repeated as she raised her eyebrows.

"He heard us singing some rather colorful songs, if you know what I mean."

I would have given my right arm to have the two of you get caught singing your dirty little ditties when we were kids. A day late and a dollar short, but you guys finally got caught. Joanne suppressed her glee. "Was it Grandfather's C-o-c...."

Roy's eyes bulged as she began to spell out the word. "It was that song and 'The Balls of O'Leary.' He gave us a choice of visiting Principal Rodgers and the Dean of Boys or joining his little quartet," he blurted out before she could finish. *JOANNE! You're not supposed to say those words or even spell them. Yeah, I know you heard us singing those songs back when we were kids, but you're a lady now.*

"You got off easy," Joanne playfully scolded him as the waitress rolled up with their sundaes. *Even though the songs were naughty, your voices together have always sounded good. The two of you harmonize very well and that's what saved your butts with Mr. Miller.*

Roy leaned forward to pull the wallet out of the back pocket of his trousers and handed the waitress a dollar from it. He stuffed the change in his front pocket before taking the sundaes from the waitress. "Here," he said as he handed one to Joanne.

"So how are you enjoying the Majorettes this year?" Roy asked as he scooped some ice cream and chocolate sauce onto his plastic spoon. *You look adorable with that purple tam perched on your head, those cute white booties and pleated skirt. I love that purple sleeveless top with the sequins on you.*

Joanne finished swallowing before answering, "It takes a lot of practice to not drop that baton when you toss it in the air, but yeah, I really enjoy it." *Good thing you know the difference between a Cheerleader and a Majorette or I'd have to beat you over the head with my baton. Hey, wait a minute, how did he know I made Majorette this year. He must have watched us practicing.*

Roy took the empty sundae cup from Joanne and got out of the car to put the empty containers in a nearby garbage can. He looked over at Joanne as he started to get back into the car. She was rubbing her hands up and down her arms as if she was cold. He removed his school jacket and handed it to her. "Here, you look a little chilly. Put this on."

She put her arms through the white sleeves of the purple school jacket and pushed the banded wrists to over her hands. *Awww, how sweet you're thinking ME! By the way Roy, you're not getting this jacket back when you drop me off unless you ask for it, even then I might not give it back.* She pulled the jacket around her as he started the car and pulled out of the car stop.

"You still part of the Cadet Corps," she asked as they headed home.

"Yeah, and the Jr. Red Cross. That's about all the school activities I can handle with my job at Harold and Chuck's Hardware," he answered keeping his eyes on the road. He stopped for the red light ahead and turned to her. "Saw you the other day with the Girl's Athletic Association playing field hockey. I'd sure hate to get near you girls when you're whacking around those sticks." Roy teased as he turned his head back to the road when the light turned green while the two of them continued talking.

"It can get a little dangerous out there," Joanne laughed remembering how Janice Dawson missed the ball and accidentally whopped her hard on the left calf leaving a nasty bruise. *Looks like he wasn't ignoring me earlier, of course he's keeping his eyes on the road while he's driving. Rather silly of me earlier to expect him to look at me and drive at the same time.*

Roy didn't miss an opportunity to glance her way at every stop sign and red light during the route to her house. *This is going great. I'm really starting to think she likes me. Should I chance asking her out on a date when I drop her off?*

Joanne could feel the disappointment begin to arise in her as he pulled into the driveway of her home. *I wish he would have made a wrong turn, or drove past the street, or something. I can't believe how comfortable we both seem with each other. It's a shame for the ride to end so soon.*

Just ask her out. It's like getting into a cold pool. Dive right in and in a few moments you won't notice the cold the water is. "Joanne, can I ask ya' something," Roy said as he turned off ignition. She looked his way and smiled. *Crap! She still has that yellow pollen on her nose. She'll think I pranked her when she goes inside and sees her face in the mirror.*

"Yes," she said as her smile beamed his way.

He leaned over and brought his hand up to her face. "Uh...let me get that yellow stuff off your nose." Her smiled melted and he could see the hurt look in her eyes. *I blew it. I just blew it with her.*

"You tricked me back at school with that dandelion nonsense," her voice was filled with hurt. *I can't believe he duped me.*

"It's not what you think," he stammered.

"Really, then why didn't you just tell me back at school that there was pollen on my nose? I bet you got all kinds of kicks driving around with a yellow-nosed girl in your car."

"I had a real good reason for not telling you..."

"Let me guess. You wanted my nose to match the color of the sheer, sensual pleasure on wheels you drive around in," she accused him, an angry heat emitting from her directed at him. *Oh Roy, you picked on the wrong girl. I'm just getting warmed up here.* Joanne inhaled and was about to fire off another barrage of fury-filled words towards him.

There's that fierceness in her eyes that she gets when she's about to cut loose on somebody. My goose is beyond cooked, it's charcoaled to a crisp. "I did it because I like you. I want to go out with you. I'm an idiot, okay," the words tumbled out as panic took him over completely.

Did he just say he wanted to go out with me? The volcano inside Joanne halted its production of lava. *ME! He really wants to go out with me.*

"I-I'm sorry I lied to you. I hated the idea that y-you might have wanted to date Doug Hall, and then you said you turned him down. If it's Steve Gamble you want to go out with, fine, he's a pretty decent guy. I'd rather you go out with him than that jerk Doug. I was hoping maybe you might go out with me. I didn't think you'd want to because of what happened the last time I tried to k-kiss you. That time we played spin-the-bottle behind the cinderblocks in my back yard y-you kept laughing every time I tried to ..."

Oh dear, he's going to hyperventilate soon if I don't stop him. "Shhhhhhh," Joanne covered his mouth with her hand. "I want to go out with Roy DeSoto. Not Doug, not sure what hole you pulled Steve Gamble out of. Now, quit babbling like a fool before I change my mind about going out with you." He nodded his head up and down while her hand remained over his mouth. She looked into his bewildered blue eyes, waiting for his breathing to return to normal before removing her hand. "We were 12-years-old when we played spin-the-bottle behind the incinerator. I couldn't help laughing then. You looked so funny with your lips puckered up. You reminded me so much of a fish gasping for air."

"My Dad was right. He always said I would regret teasing you one day when we were kids," he voice was full of remorse. *Yeah, my chickens are coming home to roost now. What's worse, no one wants to kiss a guy that resembles a blob fish.*

Joanne felt a tug in her heart as she saw the remorseful look coating his face. *Oh dear, he looks like a scolded puppy.* "Roy, there was more between us than the teasing. Don't you remember how you and Cuddy always watched out for me, protected me."

He took a deep breath as the words slowly came out of his mouth, "I always thought you were the neatest girl I ever met. You weren't afraid to dirty up your clothes playing."

"I recall those homemade scooters you and Cuddy put together using some old soapboxes and the wheels from a pair of roller skates. Remember the fun the three of us would have going up and down the street on those things."

"Yeah, but you sure scared the hell out of me that time you fell and badly scraped up the side of your leg. I felt so awful about that."

"It wasn't your fault I fell," Joanne smiled at him. *Why does he always try to find culpability with himself when something bad happens?* "I remember sitting in your kitchen while you helped your Mom clean me up. You insisted on wrapping the entire roll of gauze around my leg."

The beginnings of a smile appeared on his face, "I bet you thought I was trying to wrap you up like a mummy."

"No, I thought you were very sweet and caring. You looked like you wished you got hurt instead of me. My mother had no right to scold and blame you for what happened when you took me home afterwards," Joanne remembered how crushed he looked after her mother had chewed him out.

"So you're not holding the teasing against me?" he asked tepidly.

"Oh, there's a few moments I'm not likely to ever forget," she playfully taunted him. He smiled broadly back at her. *That's right Roy, I want to see those cute chipmunky cheeks now and that adorable smile. It's so funny how your smile always has that hint of shyness to it.* She beamed softly back at him. "Haven't you ever seen me following you around school?"

"I sorta thought maybe I was imagining that," Roy's voice spoke in a quiet whisper. "Hey, on the way home, did you notice how nice things were between us while we were talking....,"

"And not worrying so much about what the other was thinking," Joanne finished his sentence.

"Can I share something with you?" The smile faded a bit on his face on his face. "Do you know why I choose to paint my car yellow?"

"You wanted it to match my nose."

"No, but it looked rather cute when it was yellow," he winked at her. "Do you recall that day when you and Brenda were making circlets out of dandelions? You looked so pretty with that dandelion crown on your head."

"So in honor of the 'Dandelion Princess' you painted your car yellow." *There it is, that smile turns my insides into marshmellowy-goo.*

"Yeah, that's pretty much why I picked yellow."

I think now is the perfect time for a little revenge which is in order for that silly stunt you pulled at the end of my 'crowning ceremony'. "Roy, can you lean towards me a bit," she requested.

"This close enough," he said as he complied. Their faces were inches apart.

"Just hold still a moment. You seem to have a little chocolate sauce on the corner of your mouth," she fibbed as she brought her mouth close to his.

Hey, she's going to kiss me. They both felt a tingling jolt as her lips brushed slightly against his. Butterflies began rapidly beating their wings in her stomach. His heart beat so fast he thought it was going to explode when he felt the tip of her tongue touch the corner of his mouth. She finished the shadowy kiss and caught him off guard as she ran her tongue from the corner of his mouth to the middle of his cheek.

The look on his face was a mixture of pure bliss, passion, and confusion. She smiled mischievously at him. "I owed you that for what you did at the end of my coronation ceremony."

He gently brought his hand to her face, caressing her cheek before tilting her head slightly upward. He leaned in closer so their noses began gently rubbing against each other. She felt goosebumps rippling across her skin like a balmy breeze blowing briskly across the grass. He tilted his head slightly and his lips pressed against hers. He felt his lungs seize as the air seemed to stop moving in them. A roar filled his ears as the blood rushed to his head. Their lips continued to graze over each other while the thrill started to slowly boil between them.

He began to gently suck on her bottom lip, questioning whether he should pursue exploring it. He felt the tip of her tongue running across his top lip, he now had his answer. "Mmmmmm," the sound he made vibrated through both of them. Joanne's body exploded into a million shimmering pieces. Roy felt everything around him fade away, it was like the entire universe disappeared. The world at that moment was comprised of only him, her, and the sweetness they were sharing between themselves.

As the kiss ended, Roy felt the roar in his ear fade to a dull hum before disappearing. The rest of the world transcended back into existence. Joanne could feel each individual piece of her come back together one by one like a jigsaw puzzle being assembled. They continued to stare at each other. No words between them needed to be spoken. Wonderment and joy seemed to dance between them. A craving for another lover's morsel quickly thickened the air between them.

"Joanne," a shrill voice invaded their paradise. Eunice Johnson stood in the front doorway.

"Five minutes, Mother. I'll be in, in five minutes," Joanne called out to her mother before turning her attention back to Roy.

"Norwalk Drive-In, Saturday night?" he asked.

"Can't," Joanne looked disappointed, "Ever since they heard Eileen refer to a drive-in as a passion pit they've forbidden me to go to one."

"We can go to the theater instead. Pick you up at six."

She nodded affirmatively. "Drive me to school in the morning?" she added.

"I'll be here by eight," he leaned in for another kiss.

"I guess it's time for me to head inside."

"I'll walk you to the door," he offered, wanting every precious sand of remaining time with her.

He quickly hopped out of the car and opened her door. He gathered her books up from the car floor and held onto them as they walked up the edge of the driveway. Joanne spotted a dandelion that had gone to seed and quickly plucked it from the edge of the grass.

"Do you remember me ever talking about my grandparents," she asked.

"You were born on their farm."

She smiled, pleased that he remembered that little detail about her. "Well, Grandma Johnson told me that if you blow all the seeds off the dandelion in one breath and scatter them in the wind then you are loved if even one clings to the stalk then you are not."

"Really?" Roy said as he shifted her books to one hand. "Mom always said that's how you sent thoughts and Dad says that's how you make wishes."

"Could represent all three," Joanne offered.

Roy gently grasped her wrist and brought the white head closer to his mouth. He checked the nearby trees to see which direction the wind was blowing and maneuvered the both of them in that direction. He smiled at her as he took one deep breath and blew with all his might on the white down of the dandelion. She smiled back at him before both of them looked at the empty stalk.

"That was for Grandma Johnson." He quickly stole a kiss from her.

They both turned their heads as the front door of Joanne's house flew open again. Mrs. Johnson narrowed her eyes and fixated them on Roy. "Well, you're certainly not the brightest bulb in the box. Now Mr. Johnson will have more weeds to pull out of the lawn," she huffed at him.

Joanne grabbed her books from Roy's arm. "Sorry about that," she whispered before scurrying up the walkway and slipping past her Mother.

Oh boy, if that stare was a death-ray she'd disintegrate me into a pile of dust. Roy smiled awkwardly at Joanne's mother. Her matronly figure filled the doorway blocking his view of Joanne. "Silly fool," she muttered as she abruptly turned and closing the front door behind her.

Harriett nervously paced the kitchen and glanced at the clock. "Jim, you think Roy might have gotten into some trouble with his new car?"

Jim lifted his head from the newspaper he was reading. He pulled out a kitchen chair beside him and motioned for her to sit in it. "Roy's been driving your car for a while without any mishaps. I'm sure he's

just enjoying driving around and lost track of time," he assured her. "I remember my first car. I used up a whole tank of gas driving around in it the first day I got her."

"You think that's why he late tonight?"

"Honey, if he's not home by supper time then I'll go next door and see if Cuddy has any idea where he is."

Harriett was about to check the clock again when they heard a car pull up in their driveway.

"See honey, he's home now."

It was several minutes later Roy entered the kitchen with his books and gym bag in hand. His gait and manner were lackadaisical as he greeted his parents with a loopy ear-to-ear grin. Harriett shot Jim a concerned look as he plopped his books onto the kitchen table and turned towards the fridge.

"Roy," she said hesitantly, "Is everything okay?" She put a hand to his forehead and withdrew it when she detected no signs of a fever."

"Oh yeah, swell," his smile never changed as he looked at her. "Everything's swell."

Roy's manner began to concern Jim as he stood up from his chair and stood face to face with his son. "You make it to swim practice?"

"Oh yeah, Dad. Shaved off several seconds on the 440 freestyle today."

"That's good Roy. Do anything afterwards?"

His smile turned bashful. "I took Joanne Johnson out for a sundae before taking her home."

"And?"

"You were right about chocolate and girls."

"Roy, where's your school jacket," Harriett asked as she stood beside Jim.

"Joanne has it. We're going out to the movies Saturday."

"So how is Jo-Jo doing these days? Been awhile since the two of you hung out together," Jim inquired.

"Jo's perfect, just perfect. Only thing I'd change about her is her mother."

"Now Roy, that's not a very nice thing to say about the young lady's mother," Harriett admonished him.

"Ummm son," Jim tried not to chuckle. "Have you been making sparks or have you decided to start wearing pink lipstick?"

"Looks like Pink Melon to me," Harriett added as relief flooded into her. She pulled a Kleenex out of her apron pocket and dabbed off the lipstick on his face. "I'm sure it looks much better on her than you," she teased.

"How about you put your books away and get started on your homework before supper," Jim suggested.

Roy gathered up his books and began to head towards the stairs. "What time's supper," he asked as he started up the first few steps.

"'bout half an hour," Harriett called out to him. She turned to her husband. "I do hope you've had a talk with him about how to properly treat a gal."

"I made sure to fill him in on that stuff. Four years of talking while we worked on that car of his." Jim sat down at the kitchen table and motioned for Harriett to join him. "Part of the reason I had us rebuild that car was to keep us talking. Up until last year all the boy ever talked about was cars and sports. This year he's been asking about girls and other things."

"It just unsettles me when I hear about some of our friends' kids and the troubles they've gotten into. You don't want to know what I was thinking when he walked into the house."

Jim chuckled, "At least he's only drunk on love. So Jo-Jo Johnson is wearing his jacket."

"That means what, Jim?"

"She's his girl when she wears his jacket. He mentioned those little teenage rituals to me while we were rebuilding the car."

"I just hope he feels comfortable enough to come to us if any problems arise."

"I would say he probably will, judging from all the conversations we had at the shop. I kind of hoped doing a project like that together would help secure the lines of communication between us."

"So, did you ever act like that over a girl at his age?"

"I still get that old feeling whenever you're around."

"You better!" Harriett raised her eyebrow at Jim as he stood up.

"I saw you last night and got that old feeling, When you came in sight I got that old feeling," Jim sang softly as he offered his wife his hand for a slow dance in the kitchen. ***"The moment that you danced by I felt a thrill, And when you caught my eye."***

Upstairs in his room, Roy stretched out on his bed, faintly hearing the voice of his Dad singing. He smiled up at the ceiling and allowed his mind to replay the phenomenal kiss he shared with Joanne over and over again. *Making sparks, huh, wonder what she'll think when I ask her about making sparks with me.*

Dandelion Facts/Myths

The symbolism associated of the dandelion represents love, affection, desire, sympathy, faithfulness, happiness, and love's oracle.

In lieu of a daisy, many of us probably substituted a dandelion while trying to find out if "He loves, He loves me not."

It's been said that if you sniff a dandelion and your nose turns yellow, you are in love with a fellow, if you nose does not turn yellow, no fellow is in love with you. Another variation is if you are really in love and sniff a dandelion then the tip of your nose will become yellow. If things aren't meant to be, then there will be no yellow left behind.

Another blowing on a dandelion head myth and there are many of those. If you blow on a dandelion tock and scatter every seed in the wind then you are loved. If some seeds still cling to the stock then, you're out of luck. Another myth along the same vein is the more seeds remaining after blowing once on the dandelion the more you are being thought of or how much your lover is thinking of you (opposite of the one used in this story).

Author Notes:

The yellow Porsche shown in Season 4 Episode Foreign Trade was actually Kevin Tighe's personal vehicle just as the 1969 Land Rover was Randolph Mantooth's. Even Chet's VW van belonged to Tim Donnelly.

The Emergency! Behind the Scenes book by Richard Yokely and Rozane Sutherland states that the Porsche is a 356 Cabrio Speedster. No such thing as a Cabrio Speedster. It was a Porsche 356 Cabrio. A Speedster does not correspond to a coupe model while a Cabrio (short for cabriolet) does. Cabriolets and Coupes are related and what you will notice with a Cabriolet is that the windshield frame is the same color as the body. In a Speedster the window frame is chrome.

Top Back Cover/Back Cover is what you put over a convertible's roof when it is down. It snaps into place. Also known as a Tonneau cover.

I am grateful to my friend Kristi and her husband Lyle (and his expertise on classic cars) for helping narrow down the model and approximate year. It is at least a 1962 Porsche 356B Cabriolet based on a few things. The car color, Champagne Yellow, was first used by Porsche in 1962. The dual air vents on the back of the car and the gas filler door located on the front passenger side of the car were also introduced on the 1962 models. It is very hard to tell the 356B and 356C apart. The last production year for a Porsche 356 was 1965.

The Porsche that Roy and his Dad would have restored most likely would have been a few years older than a 1962 model, so yes, I am using creative liberties here.

Some of the wording Roy used when describing the car were taken from some Porsche brochures on the 1962 356B. *Driving in its purest form* and *Sheer sensual pleasure on wheels.* were some of the lines actually written in one of those brochures. I also was able to view some early sixties yearbooks from Norwalk High School, California and events like the 'Lavender and Lace' appeared in a couple of them so it may have been a yearly event at the school during that time period. It was pretty neat going through those old yearbooks. One book referred to the swim team as the Lancer Mermen so that may have either is a cute nickname for the swim team put into the yearbook by the staff and not the actual moniker for the team. No copyright infringement intended.

The words to the one dirty ditty mentioned in the story, The Balls of O'Leary (Sung to the Bells of St. Mary)

The balls of O'Leary,
Are wrinkled and hairy,
They're stately and shapely,
Like the dome of Saint Paul's.
The women all muster,
To view that great cluster,
Oh, they stand and they stare,
At the bloody great pair,
Of O'Leary's balls.

NO, I won't give you the words to the other song "Grandfather's C###." It's really raunchy and I would be forced to change to an M rating.