

A young boy entering manhood experiences life's ups and downs through his family, friends and the music industry. There are happy times, sad times and lots of surprises all through the book.

HORN OF PLENTY

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HORN OF PLENTY

by

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THE FUNERAL

The gray hearse slipped noiselessly from a gathering of friends surrounding the fresh gravesite. Cold November rains increased as a north wind rattled brown leaves, still clinging to the darkened oaks. Colorful umbrellas blossomed; contrasting the dark moment as the mourners huddled together, murmuring their last prayers, consoling their grief.

Then slowly, one by one, each turned and left in a quiet procession. After everyone was gone, Steve raised the trumpet to his trembling lips. Darlene peered out from under her umbrella and watched him play. The trumpet pierced the wind; its mournful tattoo echoing hollow off the cold, granite stones. Then in silence, with tears hidden by rain, he stood there, hair matted and soaked; his stooped shoulders shuddered. He placed the golden instrument back into its case. Darlene waited for him to join her; she put her arm around his waist as he pulled her close. She kissed the salty raindrops from his face and then they walked to the car.

They rode in silence; Darlene was waiting for him to speak as she pulled out of the cemetery and headed toward town, their town. "I'm glad everybody came," Steve finally said. "There were even some people I didn't know."

"I saw them too. I wonder who they were. Did Sam have any relatives that you knew of?"

"I don't think so. He never mentioned any family, except Sheila, or anyone else since I'd known him."

Darlene slowed for the light at the top of Mountain Street. "What do you want to do?"

"Let's go to Eddie's, I'll bet that's where everyone went."

The light turned and Darlene headed down into town. She took a left at Bay View Street and then another left toward the waterfront. "Look, there's John's truck and there's Bill's, and Donnie's too. They're here all right." She parked in between John and Bill's trucks, shut off the engine then turned to Steve. "Are you going to be okay?"

Steve nodded. The rain was really coming down hard as they made a mad dash for the door.

Eddie's was warm and smoky. It occupied the bottom floor of a three story brick building built during the thirties. The second, or main floor, was once The Bay View Street Garage, which was on the same level as Bay View Street. That level now housed the popular restaurant, Peter Ott's. The third floor was converted into a small movie house that showed old classic films. Eddie's came about when the restaurant didn't want to cater to people who just came in to drink. The bottom floor was a natural tavern for people who enjoyed the informal atmosphere and "English Pub" feel about it. The waterfront had plenty of parking and the entrance to Eddie's was only accessible from there. During the summer, it bustled with tourists, but after Labor Day, the locals reclaimed it for the winter.

Once inside, Steve looked around and saw the guys sitting around a large, round table near the window. He led Darlene through the late afternoon crowd and approached the solemn group. They hadn't been there twenty minutes and already a pile of empty beer bottles littered the table.

"Hey guys." Steve slid a chair over from another table and held it for Darlene. He knew what she wanted and headed for the bar.

John watched him. "How's he taking it, Darlene?"

"He's doing really well. I wasn't sure what he was going to do."

"Isn't it strange how things worked out?"

"They certainly were two of a kind, Bill. Steve really looked up to him."

"If Mr. Sam hadn't gotten sick, I wonder how things would have worked out."

"I don't know Donnie. I guess we'll never know."

Steve returned and passed Darlene a glass of white Chablis, sat down beside her then took a long drink from his bottle. "The weather was appropriate, wasn't it?" Everyone nodded in agreement.

"Do you have a gig this weekend, Steve?"

"No. I've taken some time off. They're doing some changes on the new album and I don't have to be back in Memphis until a week from Sunday. It'll be nice to spend some time at home."

John slid another empty bottle toward the center of the table then tried to get the server's attention. "It's sure good to see you." Everyone nodded again.

"Do you guys want to get together and play some night?"

"Sure." John said as he finally gave up on the server. "Anybody need another?"

"Are *you* buying this round?" Bill asked bringing a needed smile to everyone's face.

"As long as you guys stick with beer, I'll buy." He left the table cursing the server under his breath.

Bill could always lighten up a conversation. "You watch, he'll be the last one to leave to make sure everyone else buys a round." They all laughed. "Do you really want to get together some night, Steve. Man, it's been a long time since we've done anything together."

"Yeah, for fun though, I'm getting a little tired of studio sessions. That's more like work." Steve was feeling the first relaxing waves that came quickly with a cold beer on an empty stomach. Lately, that was happening more.

Darlene was worried but kept denying he had a problem. After all, they had just come from a funeral.

"Well, you just name the time and place. Are you guys practicing at all now?"

"Donnie's cellar is so full of junk, there's no room. How about your mom's place, Steve, she'd love to see us all again."

"No, I don't think so." Steve couldn't bring himself to admitting he didn't want to be there. "There must be a place somewhere."

Bill spoke up. "We can go to my place. It's not big, but there's plenty of room in the living room."

Steve grinned. "Won't Martha have a fit?"

Bill's smile left his face as he looked down. "She's gone, Steve. She left me."

"I'm sorry, Bill. I didn't know." Steve felt like crawling under the table. "No one told me, what happened?"

"It was that kid thing again. Look, I'm getting older and I want some kids before I'm too old to enjoy them. Is that too much to ask?"

Darlene set her drink in front of her and looked over at him. "Come on Bill, you're not getting old."

"Yeah well, I think I'm getting pretty old if you ask me."

"Look, if it means that much to you, then you're better off without her, right?"

"She hurt my feelings, Darlene."

"Of course she did, but isn't it better the truth between you guys came out now instead of fighting for the next twenty years?"

"You're right. It's just that..."

"Enough!" Darlene gave him that look everyone knew and Bill couldn't help but smile again.

"You're *right*." He finished triumphantly.

Their conversations became familiar again as if time had stood still. They had all grown up in Middleton and, but for only a little interruption from the Vietnam War, they were always together. They agreed to meet at Bill's and left one at a time leaving Steve and Darlene wondering where they were going to eat. With too much to drink and too tired to move, they decided to let Eddie do the cooking that night.

Darlene looked at Steve staring out at the rain. "Why didn't you want to go to your mother's tonight? Is something wrong?"

"Everything's fine. I'd rather not talk about it."

"You need to talk about it if it's bothering you. Come on, you know she wants to see you."

"I just feel so uncomfortable around her. After the big fight with Dad, me moving off to Tennessee and then Dad dying, I really feel guilty about that."

"I thought you kinda settled that; it wasn't *your* fault you know."

"Well, I said some pretty mean things to Dad I wish I hadn't. I didn't know he was going to die."

"No one knew he was going to die. It just happened. Don't you think he forgave you? He *was* your father."

"That's not it."

"Then what is it?"

Steve hesitated. "I didn't, or haven't forgiven him."

"Ah, the truth at last; why don't you just forgive him now?"

"What do you mean? He's dead, Darlene."

"We'll go to the cemetery with your mother and you can forgive him right there."

"You're kidding, right?"

"No, I'm serious. In front of me, your mother and God, you can forgive him."

"I don't know. That's kinda weird."

"I think it's just what you need to get on with your life." Darlene looked down at her glass and wondered about their future. "You have a promising career in front of you now. You've got another album in the making and who knows what's going to happen after that."

Steve turned and looked her in the eyes. "Okay."

"Tomorrow?"

"Tomorrow?" His eyebrows rose as he quickly turned back toward the window.

"Yeah tomorrow, after church. We'll ask your mother to go to church with us and we'll go then."

"It's been awhile since I've been in church."

Darlene smiled. "I'm sure you haven't forgotten what to do. Give your mother a call right now while we're waiting."

The call was brief and dinner was waiting when he returned. "She wants me to stay there while I'm home."

"That's not a bad idea, is it?"

"I didn't think much about it, I guess. I really haven't made any plans."

"You could stay with me at my parents in Appleton."

"Thanks, but no thanks."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Oh, I like your parents okay, but I'm not sure how they'd take me coming there with you."

"I guess. But I think you'd hurt your mother's feelings if you didn't stay with her. Are any of the kids there?"

"Debbie's home; the rest are in school and of course, Marlene's married now."

"That's right, I forgot. What's Debbie doing now?"

"She was going to school but dropped out. I'm not sure why. I guess I'll find out soon enough."

Darlene reached for her wine. "Will *we* get a chance to be together while you're here?"

"Of course; we haven't talked much about that though have we?"

Darlene set her glass down and looked at him. "What *are* your feelings now?"

Steve hung his head. "I'm sorry Darlene. A lot has happened in a very short time and I guess, I'm sort of, well, been too wrapped up in myself lately. I really don't take you for granted, although it sure looks like it, doesn't it?"

"Look, we knew what was happening. I figured you'd be settled down by now. I don't know what to expect anymore."

Steve was cornered. "My music career is taking off and my year is almost up, let's just ride it out and see what happens. I'd love to see more of you though. Let's plan on doing something during your Christmas holiday break this year."

"I've got three weeks off. What do you have in mind?"

"Let's go on a trip."

Darlene's look questioned his intentions. "Where?"

"Where would you like to go?"

She leaned back and smiled. "Any place warm."

Steve was starting to realize the commitment he was making. He was making *some* money now, but his finances weren't adding up as fast as their vacation plans. But he knew this would solidify their relationship. "Florida has some great places that aren't too expensive."

Darlene nodded. "You make the arrangements and let me know. Anywhere will be fine."

They finished their meal then left. The rain had stopped but it was getting colder. Darlene started the car and they just sat there in the parking lot. "Well, where's it going to be, your mother's?"

"It's still kinda early; do you want to do something?"

Darlene looked at him. "We've both had quite a long day, let's do something tomorrow, okay?"

"Okay. Take me to Mom's, you'll come in and say hi won't you? She hasn't seen you and..."

"And it'll be easier on you if I'm there, right?" She laughed, backed out of the parking space then drove out onto Bay View Street.

Steve insisted his mother would want to see her and that was his real intention. Darlene slowed and started up the steep driveway.

"Don't try to go up, it's getting colder and after the rain, it may get slippery later."

"Maybe I should go along then."

"No, please come in, I want you to. If it's slippery, you can either stay or I can drive you home. Actually,

staying here is a great idea. There's plenty of room and Mom wouldn't want either of us driving if it does get bad."

Darlene was now the one being caught but didn't resist. "I'll call my mom and explain, she'll understand."

Hand in hand, they carefully walked up the driveway. Steve's mom greeted them at the door. "Come in, come in you two. I thought I heard a car."

Steve gave his mother a hug and stepped back. "Mom, you wouldn't mind if Darlene stayed the night, would you? I think it's going to be icy."

"Of course not. Darlene, it's so good to see you again." She took Darlene's coat and hung it by the doorway. "How's school going?"

"It's going great Mrs. Jamison. I just came home for the funeral. I have to get back by Monday."

"Come in and have some coffee, I just made some." She led Steve and Darlene into the kitchen. "Let's sit in here at the table."

Steve and Darlene sat down while Mrs. Jamison retrieved some mugs from the cupboard. "Do you have anything in yours Darlene?"

"No thanks, just black."

The three of them chatted for awhile then Darlene brought up a former subject of the evening. "Mrs. Jamison, Steve and I would like to go to church with you tomorrow."

Mrs. Jamison set her mug down and looked at Steve's surprised look. He'd forgotten his promise.

"That would be nice, Darlene. Steve, I didn't know you, uh..."

"I haven't been to church for quite some time, I know Mom, but Darlene and I were talking earlier."

"About what dear?"

"About Dad."

There was an awkward moment of silence. Then Darlene spoke. "Steve's feeling a little guilty toward you and his dad."

"I don't understand. What's she talking about Steve?"

"Well Mom, I didn't realize it at first, but Darlene has made some sense of it now. I was pretty mad at Dad for selling the business and I'm afraid I said some bad things."

"Your dad and I talked about this after you moved away and he understood how you felt, but he did what he thought was best and he also thought you'd come around and understand his decision after you'd had some time to think about it."

"I do understand now." Steve looked over to Darlene and took her hand. "For a long time, I was focused on me and it seems I've got all kinds of making up to do, with a lot of people."

Darlene patted his hand. "Making up is the fun part, don't you think?"

"I guess."

Mrs. Jamison interrupted their conversation. "Now what about this going to church thing?"

Steve took his mother's hand in his other hand and spoke to them. "I've got two of the most wonderful women in the world pulling for me and I've got to do something for them. We'll all go to church in the morning and then I want to go to the cemetery, to Dad's grave. I think there's something I need to say to him."

All three of them were in tears as Steve spoke those few words. The impact of that weekend, with the funeral

of Mr. Sam and the reuniting with his mother, had a lasting effect on Steve and Darlene's relationship.

Mrs. Jamison excused herself to prepare Darlene's bedroom; Steve and Darlene stayed in the kitchen talking.

"I should help your mom."

"No, stay with me. She likes to do those kinds of things by herself. She doesn't have anyone to wait on and it makes her feel needed."

"I do need to call my mom though." Darlene got up and used the phone in the kitchen. Steve collected the coffee mugs and put them in the sink. He stood watching Darlene as she spoke to her mother. The conversation was short.

"I think she was a little disappointed that I wasn't going to be there tonight, especially when I'm leaving tomorrow afternoon."

"You'll see her before you leave."

"Sure, but I want to leave tomorrow around four. That should get me back to school by seven."

"That doesn't give *us* much time."

"We'll have a lot of time in the future, won't we?"

Steve could feel the pressure mounting again and he knew he should ask her to marry him, but it seemed too soon. His future was looking bright but not secure, at least secure enough to support a wife and family. But still he wanted her to know that he did care for her very much and did, in fact, want to marry her. Before he started to say something, his mom came into the room.

"Well, you're all set for the night. I've put you in David's old room. It's on the second floor, second door on the left after the stairs."

"Thank you Mrs. Jamison. I don't suppose you've got a nightgown I could borrow?"

"I'll bet there's one in Debbie's room you could use. She's out on a date tonight and I don't know when she'll be in, but I'll leave a note on the kitchen table telling her you're here so she won't be startled. She's about your size."

"Is she working Mom?"

"No. She's looking though. Jobs this time of year are pretty scarce. I'm sure she'll find something once the holidays start."

"It's too bad she left school."

"What was she studying?"

"She wanted to be a nurse, like you Darlene, but she couldn't take the pressure and make the commitment."

"It's not as easy as some think. I'm sorry she didn't follow through with it. I think she would've made a fine nurse."

"She'll do okay. I have faith in her. Maybe you could talk to her in the morning. I'd like to see her try again."

"I'll be glad to. She's smart enough. Maybe she just got discouraged; I know I've been before." Darlene looked over at Steve. "Sometimes people need a little encouragement, and a push."

"Thank you Darlene. I'm off to bed now. You two watch television or whatever and go to bed when you like. I'll have breakfast ready by nine. That should give us plenty of time before church."

"Good night Mrs. Jamison."

"Good night Mom."

Mrs. Jamison kissed her son and headed upstairs. "I'll put the nightgown on your bed, Darlene."

"Thank you, Mrs. Jamison."

Steve looked at Darlene. "What do you want to do? Watch a little television, talk or what?"

"I think I'd like to go to bed myself."

"Okay. Do you know where the bathroom is? It's right across from your room. Do you want me to show you?"

With a coy smile and her finger on his chin, Darlene whispered. "I know what you're up to, boy. But I think I can find it all right. Are you coming up now?"

Unfazed by the rejection, Steve answered. "No, I want to look through the paper for a minute and then I'll be up. It won't take me long."

"All right, then I'll see you in the morning."

"Good night Darlene; and thanks." Steve took her in his arms and hugged her. She put her arms around him and kissed him. She had been waiting for some signs of affection ever since they had gotten together earlier that day. But with everything going on and all the people they had been with, nothing had happened. Steve returned her kiss and cradled her head with his hands. She opened her eyes to see him watching her. "I love you Darlene."

Darlene drew back. "Oh Steve, I love you too." And they kissed again. "I better go up now before we do something we shouldn't."

"That wouldn't be a bad thing, would it?"

"Get that silly grin off your face. Of course it would. We're not married, yet."

"Well, the last time I checked, you didn't have to be married to do it."

She put her hands on his chest. "You better get this straight. I have to be married to do it."

Steve's grin turned into laughter. "You're serious, aren't you?"

"You bet I am. And it's not funny either."

"Okay, okay, I'm sorry."

Darlene pushed him and turned away. "Don't patronize me Steve; it's very important that you respect me and what I stand for. It may be all right for some people and it's getting more commonplace, but I happen to believe in the 'old ways' that way, and if it was good enough back then, it's good enough for right now."

Steve reached out for her shoulder and turned her back toward him. "You're right. I'm sorry. It's just difficult nowadays to go through life without sex. It's everywhere!"

"If you believe in us and work hard at what you're doing, you'll make it and it will be worth it."

Steve's grin returned. "I know it'll be worth it."

"You're incorrigible, you know?"

"I can't help it; it's your fault."

Darlene was grinning now and threw a fake punch at him. "I'm going to bed, and don't *even* think of following me." She turned and headed up the stairs. She stopped midway. "God, you look like a heartbroken puppy. Get over it." And she continued up to her room.

Steve grabbed the paper and sat in the living room listening to Darlene go from her room to the bathroom and back. He tried to focus on the news stories but thoughts of them together kept creeping into his head. *Maybe he would sneak into her room when he went to bed. No, she'd kill him and his mother would probably wake up and then all hell would break out. No, better just go to bed.*

He finished the paper then climbed the stairs. He hesitated outside Darlene's room and listened for her. Then he went up to the third floor and lay across his old familiar bed. He wasn't sleepy, but he turned off the light and thought about what tomorrow would bring. He

finally fell asleep and dreamed about his dad, Mr. Sam and Memphis.

Steve woke to the smell of breakfast and coffee wafting up from the kitchen. He jumped into the shower and dressed quickly. On the way downstairs, he knocked on Darlene's door. "Are you awake?" There was no answer so he gently opened the door. The bed was already made up and Debbie's nightgown was hanging neatly on the footboard. He galloped down the rest of the stairs; he heard Darlene and his mom talking in the kitchen.

"Well, look who's finally up."

"Good morning Mom; morning Darlene."

"Good morning son; sleep well?"

"Great. I'd forgotten how comfortable my old bed was. Did you sleep okay Darlene?"

"Oh yes. After sleeping in those dorms at school, I could sleep anywhere, I swear."

They all shared a laugh. "I'm glad to have you both here. It's such a treat."

Steve sat at the end of the table across from Darlene. "Did Debbie make it in?"

"I heard her come in around two." Mrs. Jamison answered. "I'm afraid she won't be joining us this morning anytime soon."

They chatted at the table while eating the biggest breakfast Steve had had in a long time.

"I won't have to eat again until tomorrow." He said as he pushed away from the table.

"I shouldn't have eaten as much as I did, but it was so good Mrs. Jamison."

"It's nice to cook for a family again. Debbie isn't here for many meals and it's so hard to cook for one. Well,

look at the time. We better think of getting off to church, if we're still going."

Steve started cleaning off the table.

"Just put those in the sink, son. I'll put them in the dishwasher when I get home. Do you have your jacket Darlene?"

The church service was just like Steve remembered. He had been an altar boy for years. The priest talked about the upcoming holidays and Steve could almost recite the verses from memory. After the services, Debbie drove them to the cemetery. The sun was out and everything sparkled from yesterday's rain. They passed Mr. Sam's gravesite.

"Is that Mr. Owens?"

"Yes Mom, you'd never know it was the same place. Boy was it ever cold and rainy."

Darlene slowed the car. "The flowers are still beautiful though, aren't they? Now it's been awhile since I was in here; where is Mr. Jamison's grave?"

"I think it's too wet to drive to it, but if you pull up just a couple more roads, we can walk."

It was one of those November days that after a rain, the cool, bright blue sky took your breath away. Hardy blue jays flew from limb to limb squawking down at the trespassers. The road to the grave was two tire tracks completely grassed over and full of fresh rain. They had to walk single file down the center for about twenty yards. Set in back of the lot was a gray granite headstone about three feet high and four feet across with the name JAMISON engraved across the front in large bold letters. On the back were all of the family's names with their birth years next to them. Mrs. Jamison straightened out the

brass American Legion flag holder that had fallen and collected an empty flower pot.

"We've got to get some evergreens over here for the winter. This is a bleak time of year and I think they would spruce up the area, don't you think so son?"

"Yes ma'am. I'll do it before I leave, I promise."

The three of them stood in front of the stone holding hands. Steve looked around and recognized many of the names surrounding his own family plot. Names of people he grew up with, names that marked the streets of Middleton and even names he read about in history classes; a field of marble memories, some old, some new. Steve knew he would enter this granite garden one day and become a part of its history. But today he was there to honor his father and mother. He squeezed the women's hands as he spoke.

"This seems odd talking to a headstone but I didn't take the time or the responsibility to talk to you Dad while you were still alive. The feelings I have today are of sorrow, happiness and resolution. I miss you Dad. You taught me everything I needed to know and some things I didn't know I knew at the time. But you were there when I needed you and I feel like I let you down. Instead of the thankful son, I stomped away like a spoiled child only to regret it. I'm happy now because I realize what you were trying to teach me about having a family and the responsibilities that go with it and I hope Darlene accepts my proposal to begin our own family."

Darlene turned to Steve, her eyes grew wide and tears formed as she squeezed his hand in hers, a tender acceptance of his humble offer.

Steve continued. "I am resolute in becoming the son you knew I could be. I want to start my new life by

apologizing to you and to let you know I forgive you. I now know your decision about the business must have been very difficult and, of course, you made the right one. Thank you for being here one more time."

Both Darlene and Mrs. Jamison were crying now. The huge burden was gone from Steve's shoulders and he knew exactly what he was going to do from that day forward. He turned to Darlene. "I hope you forgive me for the side-door proposal, but it's what I've been thinking about for a long time. Will you marry me?"

Darlene blushed and answered softly. "Yes."

"Of course you'll finish school."

She laughed at his look. "Of course; and you'll finish your album."

"Of course."

And Mrs. Jamison, not to be left out of the conversation, added, "And of course you'll move back here."

All three laughed while heading back to the car. "We'll see Mom, we'll see."

On the way home, Darlene's mind was racing with the thoughts of getting married. She'd always hoped Steve would ask her. It was very important that she finish college, not for them especially, but for her. She was an only child and wanted her parents to be proud of her.

"I've got to call my mom when we get to your house. I told her I'd see her before I left and I'm afraid I'm running out of time. I need to get some clothes. Do you mind following me out to the house while I say hi to them then take me to the bus station?"

"Of course I don't mind, but I've got a better idea. Why don't I take you back to school? I don't have to be

anywhere special and it will give us some more time together."

"Are you sure? It's quite a long drive."

"Is it okay with you Mom? I'll have to borrow your car. I'll be back by nine."

"Of course you can son. Debbie can do without a car for one night, and it's Sunday night, she shouldn't be out anyway."

"Thank you Mrs. Jamison."

"I think you can start calling me Mom."

"Thanks Mom."

Darlene dropped Steve and Mrs. Jamison off at their house, then Steve followed her to Appleton. Darlene's mom and dad weren't very happy with the short visit but understood why she was even home. And then with the news of the engagement, all disappointment was substituted with joy. After a couple of hours, Darlene and Steve were on the road heading south.

"Your mom and dad seemed pleased that we're getting married, don't you think?"

"Yes, and Mom asked me if we had set a date."

"What did you tell her?"

"I told her I was going to finish college first."

"So, when are you finishing, do you know exactly?"

"It'll be June."

"Well, what do you think, a June wedding?"

"I don't know, what do you think?"

"It doesn't matter to me. You decide."

"I guess we don't have to right now. Let me think about it."

They drove for about twenty minutes before either of them spoke. The sun was beginning to set as they neared the New Hampshire border.

"Want to stop for a bite to eat?"

"Let's do it. There's a rest stop a few miles ahead with a restaurant. Is that okay?"

"Sure."

It was dark when they returned to the car. The rest of the journey was filled with light conversation about where they would like to have their honeymoon and how many kids they wanted. When Steve dropped her off at her dorm, it was seven thirty. He walked her to the door carrying her suitcase.

"Will I see you again before our holiday vacation?"

Darlene stopped on the first step and turned to him. "I don't think so. I've got exams coming up and you've got to finish your album. We'll both be pretty busy until then."

"I guess you're right. I'm going to miss you."

"I'm going to miss you too. But just remember our plans and the holidays will be here soon and then graduation and then..."

"...We'll be married. I can't wait."

On the step, she was as tall as he was so she wrapped her arms around his neck and they kissed, only to be interrupted by another student on her way out of the building.

"Hey you guys; get a room!"

They laughed and Steve kept his arms around her waist and turned to the smiling coed. "I wanted to, but she wouldn't let me."

Darlene made a fist in front of his nose. "I'm not sure if I want to go through this with you or not. You're a sex maniac, aren't you?"

Steve ducked her punch. “*You* wouldn’t know.” And he grabbed her and kissed her again. “I love you Darlene. I’ll call you; I promise.”

Darlene picked up her suitcase and headed inside. “You better; and I love you too. Thank you for this weekend.”

Steve blew her a kiss good bye and went back to the car. He was on cloud nine and the trip home went quickly.

A young boy entering manhood experiences life's ups and downs through his family, friends and the music industry. There are happy times, sad times and lots of surprises all through the book.

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