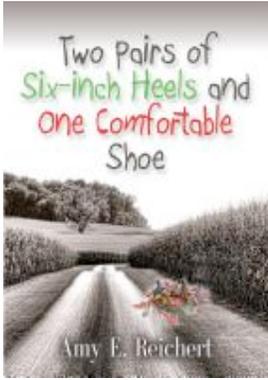


Two Pairs of  
Six-inch Heels and  
One Comfortable  
Shoe



Amy E. Reichert



*Two 6" Heels & One Comfortable Shoe is a story about working women born on the farm, raised in a small town, and their lives, relationships, decisions, struggles and triumphs. It's about the impact of ordinary women on social history and how they paved the way for the modern working woman. Learn about the strength of women, the decisions they make and the lives they chose to lead.*

# **Two Pairs of Six-inch Heels and One Comfortable Shoe**

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# **Two Pairs of Six-inch Heels and One Comfortable Shoe**

a novel

Amy E. Reichert

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## **Dedication**

This book is dedicated to my partner in all things - Robin L. Bowersock. I admire her ongoing sense of humor, adventure, and support of my projects and plans.



# Chapter 1

Here we are, we're starting at the end. 70 odd years of companionship, friendship, and annoying behaviors - It all ends here at this memorial service. I designed it, the peach roses mixed with white calla lilies and bright orange tiger lilies surrounding a copper urn with a winding ivy pattern winding around, and around, and around it until every smooth surface inch is covered. I designed it for my life. I'm Bea, the eldest of three sisters whom I grew up defending and surviving with.

Ironically enough this is my urn, beautifully encased in hues of peach and orange, bright, bold but yet still subtle - just enough color to make people uncomfortable. They're my favorite colors all swirling around like ivy, around and around like my life's path, yet green and strong and nearly, impenetrable.

It's me they're remembering. This is my memorial. Beatrice was my given name, but I changed it as soon as I turned 16 to Bea. Beatrice sounds like a giant, old milk cow and I moved off the farm and into town. Bea is more me - gentle, caring, independent, loving and, well, now dead. I made it 84 years and if it weren't for the cancer I'd probably have lived a lot longer. Maybe.

They've all come to say "goodbye" and eat food, and complain about the too sweet peach wine. I was the oldest of the three "bad" eggs – the children that abandoned the farm for the city life and our own careers. I created my own career and eventually my own business in interior design. I can design! Despite what my Father always said. Our lives support the fact that girls don't HAVE to secure a husband, or if they did – it was by choice rather than necessity. I made my own way, thank you. I did end up marrying once, big mistake – but we'll get to that later. I want to give you my side of the story. I've made it to the pearly gates and am now looking down on the rest of you and them. But, I leave behind my two beloved sisters, Lois and Liz. They were the wild twins, who also left the farm but for the bright lights and beaches of southern California.

Those sluts never gained a pound since high school. Despite my prodding, they've never quit wearing mini-skirts and six inch heels either. Just picture it, you know you can: Two 80ish women, thin as pencils, not two muscles between them, wearing matching bright orange skirts with peach toned tops, Liz with a horizontal white stripe and Lois with a vertical brown stripe. It's only mid-October, not Halloween. I have to admit however, that they do add a dash of fall color to my flowers and copper ivy urn. Looking over the crowd while some unknown Pastor mumbles on about my family, I see the twins have missed putting hair coloring on a spot on the top of each of their heads.

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Their frosted platinum blonde heads have a patch of gray right at the top. I've tried in vain to get them to stop frosting and teasing their hair in a swirling bouffant – it's so 1968 and it's 2014! Maybe it'll come back in style someday, but today is not that day. They aren't really twins you know. They just always like to dress alike and mimic each other's style. I'm 84, stocky, muscular and 5' 4" with natural gray-blond hair. Maybe not exactly all natural, but close! Lois is a year older than Liz, and they just dress in the bright hues of the 1960's and keep their tall hair in a swirling stiff bouffant. Sometimes seeing them, I think for a moment that I've stumbled into a time warp.

Between them they have 226 pairs of shoes. All pumps, with at least 6-inch heels, nothing more, nothing less. Pointy toes and round toes, in a dazzling array of colors. Don't believe me? Check out their closets. Two women, one 4 bedroom house and 6 closets full of shoes and the clothes that match them all.

Neighbors, friends and our own family members insinuated or even stated they were weird. The harder Father tried to pry them apart, the tighter they clung to each other. They weren't weird in a homosexual kind of way, they were different and to most people anything different than their established norm, is weird. It's just the definition of weird. Eventually, it's the weirdness or proposed, rumored, whispered weirdness that drove all of us from the farm.

Drove us away from the family pressure to conform, the churches pressure to marry, and the overall female tendency at the time to go along with it all. Weird or not, we couldn't live with the female standard. We'll get to the family history reasons for all that in a bit.

I love this small town, or it was a small town when I was young. It's a fairly large city now in 2014, and growing in every direction but still agricultural at least on the edges. I hated the farm, hated the constant smell of dirt, fertilizer and sweat. I hated the endless days, the sticky insects, and the long, hot summers. It was always work, bugs, and dirt. Over and over again – work, bugs, sweat, and dirt. I was determined to move to town and get a job as soon as I turned 16. I saved what I could, scoured the store signs and names whenever Mother and I came to town to shop. She'd noticed me jotting down the names of the stores and the city streets.

When she'd asked why I was writing it down, the guilt swelled up inside me and in bursts and fits of sobs I managed to convey my wish to move to town and work for myself in a badly organized, tumbling mess of words. "Look at me," she said after a few minutes. I continued looking at my shoes. "Beatrice, look at me," she said again. Mother had 10 children and did nothing but work from dawn to dusk. She looked at me with her deep brown eyes, and said "Okay, but people will talk and your Father will not approve your leaving before marriage," she said in a warning tone. "It'll be

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much harder than the farm,” she continued. “But, do what you must do, Beatrice. You’re a bright, loving girl – and strong, you’ll do fine. I will help when you’re 16,” she stated and off we went to the next store, not another word said.

## Chapter 2

I did move into town the winter I turned 16, just after Christmas. Mother found the house, negotiated the rent and talked the local paint store owner into hiring me as a clerk. I was in heaven! For a woman who never talked much, she understood me perfectly well. I moved into a tiny, 800 square foot home right downtown – walking distance to everything! It had one bathroom, and two bedrooms and a small yard both front and back. It sat nestled between little homes just like it, no signs of a cow, a chicken, or a stalk of corn anywhere near it. I was thrilled.

Despite my personal happiness, a part of me always resented Lois & Liz moving to California. I worked two jobs to afford the little house downtown. I could walk to work, to the store, to the bank, and visit my newfound friends. They insisted it was awful. They wanted to see the ocean, sunbathe on the beach, and date movie stars! When I said it was too far, they argued it wasn't far enough. When I argued the cities in California were too big and dangerous, it only meant new and sexy to them. I was four years older and never been further from this town than Denver. I wasn't very fond of it, and I could not see how bigger cities in California could be better, but only worse. I'd lived in town two years

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when they both showed up at my door in matching autumn outfits, bags in hand.

They showed up on a Friday night three weeks after Mother passed away. They had everything they owned crammed into two bags, and a gunnysack. They couldn't stand it any longer. I took them in, of course. We squeezed into that tiny house and made up for lost time. They spent their spare time after school cutting out photos of the San Diego beach out of various magazines. They saved the little money they earned bagging groceries at the store and bought bikinis. They were determined. "You've made it, so can we," they'd argue as we sat together over dinner. When they turned 18 and 19, my "twins" left for California.

I took them to the train station and saw them off. When I dropped them off they looked like farm girls, white, slim, and each holding a small purse and two suitcases containing everything they had. They were equipped with a high school education, enough saved money to get them there, and a double dose of stubborn and independent. We'll check back in with them once they get to California. For now, let's get back to the present circumstances and my memorial.

I'm here looking over these people as they start rustling in their pew chairs, uncomfortable in the surroundings or just tired of sitting through another memorial. I'm thinking how long it's been since I've seen many of them, how much they've changed and how damn old they look! I see them

commenting on the colors, on my choosing cremation. My fresh faced photo stares at them. Even with bad eyesight you can see that picture, loud and clear. I had it taken when I turned 30 and became the manager of the paint store. I had the glow of success and the full bloom of young adulthood.

Lois and Liz rose first to leave. Standing there in their bright orange hued outfits and matching patterns, they formed a solid contrast to those in less colorful outfits. Their bright heels clicked across the hardwood floor. Lois plucked my urn from amongst the flowers and then clicked her way down the aisle to the open front door. Liz stood at the entry and smiled, greeting everyone as they passed and pointing them downstairs for refreshments. Lois looked down, clinging to Liz's side, both hands on the urn. Their faces were worn and tired, but they had also a look of relief – it was finally over. As the last person made their way downstairs, they bolted (as fast as two old ladies in heels can bolt) down the front steps and out the doors of the church.

I followed, watching as they stowed me in the back seat of their Camaro and took off, convertible top down, and scarves billowing. Even the wind couldn't blow that hair though, only the scarves billowed past me in the urn. This is our story, our survival story – how we made it our way. It's our story of contrasts, colors, and the bright life – a life of outsiders. To understand us, our motivations to be “odd”, or “not normal” you'll need a brief family history.

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My parents immigrated to the United States from a German colony in Russia, just outside Odessa. They were farmers. Father was 21 and Mother 16 when they caught the train to escape Moscow and defect to the US. We never met our Grandfather, he died so we could live, my Father always said in a heavy, but nonchalant matter of fact way. After he'd had a few shots of bourbon in the evenings though, you'd get the whole horrid, bloody story – we were just never truly sure what to believe since when the bourbon was talking, some stories may have gotten exaggerated.

From Germany they traveled until they landed in New York and decided to head to Cheyenne, Wyoming where Father hand landed a job as a farmhand. Unable, after a few years, to find suitable farming land in Wyoming, they packed up and headed south to Greeley and purchased a 300 acre lot of dust and weeds. Father was well schooled and spoke fluent English. Mother only spoke Russian, so the three of us grew up speaking both. We had five older brothers and two older sisters or just enough hands to manage a small farm and a dairy. We all worked, sun up to sun down. Being the youngest, myself and the twins got assigned the smaller, but demeaning chores.

The boys worked in the fields or the barn. Mother started our mornings with a large breakfast complete with scrambled eggs, bacon, warm potatoes, and blinna or freshly sugared donuts. Leftovers we quickly packed into metal

boxes and sent with the boys for lunch. Our older sisters trailed after Mother all day. We helped clean, and then the three of us set out to feed the hens and gather the eggs. After gathering, we washed each one and placed it in the icebox. Once that was completed, we'd have at least an hour or two to ourselves.

Hopping and skipping over clumps of dirt, we would end up at the small creek that ran about a quarter mile behind the house. One by one, in line, we'd step on stones and cross to the middle to stare at the muddy bottom and check for toads, tadpoles, or the occasional sand turtle. We were three children surrounded by open fields of corn, potatoes, hay, sugar beets, and sunflowers.

I would sit down on a nearby stump to rest, and watch the other two. Liz holds onto one of Lois's hands while she tries to stretch her arm and catch a tadpole that had just wandered into her view. Slowly she quieted her breathing, while Liz holding steady lets her lean further into the creek. She quickly snags a little toad in her open hand and Liz pulls her up. Gently, finger by finger Lois opens her hand and views her treasure. We pass the toad back and forth. "Time to get back," I say, "We have to start the wash." Lois puts the toad back near the bank, and we each slink back slowly towards the house. The washer sits just around the back corner of our house near the garage. It's a large white ceramic basin with a ring in the center. I use both my arms

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and start the pump, up, down, up down until it's full. Then I measure out the exact amount of soap as Mother had shown me in previously, and grab the large ladle and stir. "Come on, you two are wasting time," I yelled as they slowly drug a cotton bag down the walk to the garage.

"Grumpy old cow!" Lois returns. Liz can't speak as she's out of breath. "It's heavy and it stinks!" Liz complains to no one in particular. The discussion continues until Mother comes around the corner to supervise. She gives us all a look and the talking ceases.

I throw the first few clothes in and spin them around. After a few rounds, Lois grabs each piece and starts it through the wringer. Liz then picks it up on the other side, and hangs them on the line, always on the seams and never in the middle she recites to herself. For Liz, the line always seemed a mile long. As the sun sinks below the distant mountains, I finally finish the last shirt. We're done! We head back to the house to bathe and get ready for dinner.

I'm responsible for drawing their bath. We each get 10 minutes in the tub so the boys have time to bathe while we make their dinner. Clean, cooled off and mostly refreshed we head downstairs to help Mother with the preparations. I'm responsible for setting the table with forks and spoons. Lois puts on the glasses, and Liz stacks the plates. We help Mother carry out dishes of mashed yams, cream gravy, ham, squash, butter and six loaves of warm, homemade bread.

Mother watches as each of us dig into the food, looking us over with a sense of gratification. Father bangs his glass against the table, and Mother jumps up to fill it with bourbon, again. At the end of the meal, Father announces that irrigating starts at dawn and everyone was to be at the barn. Silently, en masse we all quietly moan. Irrigating fields is a nasty chore.

At dawn we were all at the barn. We split up in groups, and head out. The three of us got the corn. We each took a turn moving the pipe into the ditch water, holding one hand against the open end as we whooshed the pipe through the water until suction made the water run. At the heat of noon, our brother Peter came to fetch us for lunch.

Our siblings and us shared a bond of surviving but we weren't close. They were closer in age, and we were 8 years behind them. Peter was our favorite brother because he always made sure we got our portion for lunch. He looked after us. Mother was always occupied, but kept a sharp eye on each while gathering each of us under her wing like a giant hen. Father was distant, a harsh taskmaster – it was his way of managing. He worked, ate and slept and had no use for talking. I never saw him hug any of us, mostly he just ignored the girls and worked the boys. When Father rose silently signaling the end of lunch, we all moved back to irrigating. In the early summer heat, I daydreamed of the day

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I'd leave that farm. The day I'd finally be away from the dirt, the stench of sweat, and the endless variety of sticky bugs.

I dreamed of a husband, and a house surrounded by a lawn and flowers. Our house would sit next to other houses. The grocery store just steps away, and people would be shopping and talking to each other. Families with kids in tow mingling after working hours and playing games like it was Christmas day. It sounded so nice in my head.

I moved away at 16 with Mother's help. But, six months later, she passed away. Mother died in her sleep. Peter gave me the news over the phone the next day. The funeral was quickly put together since it was still harvest time. All the eyes were red except Father's. He just stared straight ahead. He looked at me as if he didn't know who I was or didn't remember. He was drunk, which was typical. He sat present but not responsive. Peter eventually guided him out of the church and into the car, driving him back home. Two weeks later, he brought home Gracie, the stepmother. I still can't figure out to this day how he met a woman so quickly when he rarely ever left the farm except on market days and when he headed to town for liquor. From what I heard, she was a nightmare from day one. She cut Father off the bourbon, and took control of the family finances. Only Peter and Alex stayed, and our two older sisters were there just long enough to get married and leave. Home disappeared, although for me

maybe it was easier because I was already gone. That's when Lois and Liz showed up at my door.

I earned enough at 18 to feed and clothe myself and pay the rent on my little tiny house downtown. I was in heaven! When Lois and Liz showed up at my door, they hadn't told anyone but Peter where they were going. So, I called home to let them know. I thought they'd be worried or had realized the twins had left. Father answered the phone. "Father, it's Bea," I stated. "Hmmm," he mouthed and passed the phone to Gracie. "We're not giving you any money," she stated. "You should be here helping your family with the farm not living in town like a commoner," she continued. Before she could get any further, I hurried and said "Lois and Liz are here with me." "Fine," she said and the phone went quiet. The conversation ended. "Peter," she yelled across the yard, it's Beatrice, or sorry, Bea." I could hear his heavy footsteps coming across the yard to the phone. "Hi kiddo," he quipped. "Lois and Liz are with me," I repeated. "I just wanted them to know they were safe." "I'll catch up with you at the market next week," he said. "Gotta go!" and he hung up.

I don't know what I expected. I headed back to the girls. They were unpacking and had already divided the extra bedroom into two equal halves. I left them unpacking and headed to the kitchen to see what I had to feed us all with. Our first night in our new lives we had fried eggs, potatoes

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and bread with strawberry jam. One of Mothers jam supply she'd left me last time she'd been in town.

"It's so quiet here, so peaceful. No yelling, no banging, and no chickens," Liz nearly yelled, a smile running from ear to ear. "Eggs straight from the store," Lois echoed. "And you can shower or bathe whenever you want, your own water too!" I added. Excited now, they headed to the shower. I resolved to wait until morning to shower as I knew it'd be a cold one if I used it tonight. Once they were asleep with their door open a crack I peeked in as one slept on the bed and the other on the floor. We concluded that we'd discuss further plans in the morning. We would sleep in and get up when we were hungry, whenever that was!

That time went by so fast for me. One day we were setting up twin beds and whatever matching accessories we could get, and the next day I was watching them wave discreetly from a train headed to San Diego. It seemed to me looking back, they were there just briefly and then gone again almost as abruptly as they'd come. They promised to call me when they'd arrived and then again when they'd found a place and settled in.

## Chapter 3

The train rattled along, Liz and Lois took turns sleeping and watching over each other. They'd agreed not to fall asleep at the same time, so they could keep an eye on their bags and each other. They were both nervous and excited. They'd worked for two years to get the money saved for the train tickets, and a couple months worth of money they'd estimated for rent. They dreamed about the jobs they'd find, the city, the beach – mostly the beach, and the men they'd meet.

It was the fall of 1952, a time when women were just coming down from helping to fill jobs during World War II. As a group we were still riding the wave of independence brought on by a change in social history where women went to work. Many weren't willing to return the previous days where they were expected to quietly slink back into the shadows, marry, and have children. They wanted both or at least the option to choose.

Liz and Lois dreamed of time of beach parties, drinks, and nightlife the likes of which they could only imagine based off the photos in their magazines. It looked and smelled entirely different from the small farming community of Greeley. No longer would they smell fertilizer, wet dirt, or heavy sweat. They would be released from those small town

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ways where everyone watched and reported on everyone else. Instead, there would be, they imagined, at wild beach parties that started after 5pm and lasted all night long.

They'd already bought bikinis, and plenty of baby oil to get their tans started as soon as possible. They were heading to Monterey to a youth camp where they'd arranged a "temporary" stay through the church back home. They had 2 weeks to find jobs and a place to rent in Monterey. First they were going to spend two nights in San Diego and then take the bus up to Monterey. In the end, Liz and Lois stayed in Monterey for 30 years. They tanned at every beach from San Francisco south to San Diego and visited every coastal town in-between. Two weeks and three days later, they'd signed a rental contract on a little two-story house in Monterey just two blocks from the beach and stayed all weekend at the beach before starting their new jobs.

After unloading their suitcases and putting the final touches on her closet organization, Lois chimed "Let's go out tonight! There's that little bar off the coast just a half mile down the road, you know the one we passed on the bus advertising a beach party every night of the week?" "Are you sure?" Liz cautioned. "We need to be careful, you don't know what kind of men show up at beach parties." "The sexy Marlon Brando kind I hope," quipped Lois.

By 6:00 pm, both sets of hair were set and sprayed, and up high as the current style demanded. Make-up was on,

perfumed and polished, they checked each other's outfits and found the matching pumps. Eager with anticipation and excitement over their first nightlife adventure, they set out down the sidewalk. They lived roughly two blocks from the beach and it was just a few short blocks down the beach to the bar.

Outside the bar were tiny lights outlining a small circle of sand, and a volleyball court. In the center to the left were several seats around an outdoor fire, embers glowing softly with the cool beach breeze. A small crowd had gathered around the few tables and chairs that were setup on a patio. It is a warm, almost clammy evening and the tables each had a small bowl of salted pretzels, peanuts, and a single pink calla lily in a vase.

Simple and tasteful, just their style! They circled around the patio, taking in the crowd and summing up the competition. They finally settled on a table just on the edge of the deck. Lois ordered red wine, and Liz a martini. They sipped their drinks and watched the crowd grow and swirl in circles. A young man approached them, looking very confident with his back straight and head up. He had a movie star gait as he glided down the patio, and casually without looking directly at either one of them asked if the other seat was available. "Yes," said Lois with a bold air, looking directly at him. Liz murmured quietly and sipped her martini. He didn't look trustworthy to her.

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While this stranger settled in his chair, several other handsome, young men hovered nearby each scoping out the newcomers. A mixed group of youngsters then grabbed a volleyball from behind the bar, and managed to convince a few others to play a game. Laughing, drinking, and casually courting each other as they played. They laughed too hard at their mistakes while gracefully trying to ignore the mistakes of others. Liz and Lois were not the sporty type, they passed on each offer to play and remained tightly attached to their chairs. A few more hours, and a few more drinks later they'd loosened up enough to accept a few dances. They danced until the light of the sun was replaced by the gentle white glow of a full moon. Another game started, and they kicked off their pumps and joined in.

Liz was standing next to a tall man that looked like her favorite western actor, John Wayne, only much younger. He gave her a broad smile and stuck out his hand. "Toby at your service. What's your name?" Liz hesitated and looked around briefly for Lois, for support. Lois was already off in the back corner of the court chatting with the shifty eyed stranger from the table that Liz instantly hadn't liked. She smiled and answered, "Liz." "Glad to meet you Liz, whoops...looks like we're ready to get started," he answered and scampered into position. The men are both sides liked to encroach on her space but as the game went on and she deftly went left and right, backwards and forwards getting each ball, they finally backed off a bit. She might be tiny, but

she was always quite competitive and could hold her own in sports even if she didn't enjoy playing. Toby grinned and shook his head at what he could recognize as a solid, stubborn resolve. Liz held her part of the court for a good hour.

Lois is far more reserved in her playing style. She doesn't mind at all, and always encourages the young men near her to go ahead and come over and help her out. A little bump here, a little bump there left her quite happy. Now, the men crossing her way were fine, but she wasn't very keen on any of the other young women crossing her way at all. She'd give them her icy cold stare and turn in the opposite direction. Lois lacked a bit of self-confidence as she felt she was not as elegantly pretty as Liz. Lois was more "cute" than "pretty." She always felt her nose was a bit long and thin, and she looked forward to the day when she could have it fixed! But, after awhile she'd get to chatting and laughing and forget about comparing her nose to anyone else's.

A few games later, they were really starting to tire. Liz caught Lois's eye and they moved to exit the game and return to the table. They'd both worked up a bit of a sweat and were feeling a bit warm, and possibly light headed from the alcohol and activity combination. Toby and Michael followed them back. Toby had his big brown eyes on Liz, and Michael had outmaneuvered the creepy young man Liz didn't trust. Michael was an aspiring actor who currently

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worked as a sales representative for a Pharmaceutical company. His territory included Monterey and most of the California and Oregon coast. Toby was a student at the local university and had a basketball scholarship. He worked a few hours on the weekends as a teller for his father's bank in town.

As the night went on and morning neared, they exchanged numbers and the twins walked the few blocks back home. They are both tired and suffering from a bit of a blush of alcohol mixed with some physical activity and active flirting. Flirting takes a bit more energy when you're starting out than anyone realizes. They were exhausted and quickly headed to their bedrooms to sleep.

Liz woke the next morning in a fog, listening to the phone ringing and ringing. Lois was nowhere in sight. She stumbled into the kitchen and finally got her hand on the phone. She glanced at the clock and it was 1pm! That can't be right, she thought to herself. I never sleep past 7am. "Hello," she chirped automatically and cheerfully on the phone. "Is Liz there?" Toby inquired. She instantly recognized the voice of the tall young man she'd danced with last night. Her muscles relaxed and she could still feel the warmth of his arms around her waist, the muscular strength of his body as he went after the volleyball. "This is she," she answered. "What are you doing tonight?" he asked. Before she could answer he continued, "There's a great

seafood place about 10 miles towards San Diego, interested? I could pick you up or I can pick you both up if you'd prefer," he added. He finally paused, while Liz was working to stifle her immediate excitement and proceed with caution. She didn't know the man, but he seemed nice. But maybe that was going too far, too fast she worried. Maybe it'd be dangerous, but then again they could drive together and meet him there. As her mind raced, balancing the pros and cons, Lois's voice came on and she said, "Sure, we'd love to! Let me get a pen to write down the directions." She got directions, a time and they both said goodbye and hung up the phones. "It's quite a drive, and we don't really know him well," Liz said staring at Lois with her irritated expression. "And we'll never know if we don't try it, now will we," Lois countered. "He was a perfect gentleman last night, and maybe he has one for me!" she quipped, smiling and heading to the refrigerator. "I'm starving!" she announced.

They continued their discussion while they fixed their breakfast standard of one scrambled egg, two strips of bacon, and a slice of wheat toast. They made a plan to drive to the beach early and do some tanning, check out the area well before meeting for dinner. They also checked out the hotels just in case they stayed too late to drive back. Now energized they both started on their assigned household chores, evenly split in half. They re-divided it weekly because Liz still hated to do the laundry even though it was far easier now than it'd been when they were kids. Four hours later they

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had the house cleaned, and were dressed with hair high. They lightened a bit more than usual the past week, so it was a bit more blonde than they'd planned. However, they teased and pulled it around so it all swirled together and came off well blended. They decided to pick different colors of clothes this time so people wouldn't mistake them for twins. Lois chose red with a white top, and a blue scarf with matching navy pumps that included a tiny red bow on each buckle. Liz went with a bright yellow skirt, with a cotton yellow and white polka dot blouse that hung loosely around her hips. She picked matching white and yellow polka dot pumps with yellow heels. She was her own ray of sunshine.

They put their toiletries quickly together in a bag with a spare change of clothes, ended up using two bags to get everything they may need in case they decided to stay the night. As they drove, they stared at the flowers, the greenery, the sand, the ocean and the whole massive combination rolling together. Combined with the spring-like temperatures and the bright blue sky, it was perfect. Half way into their drive, they spotted a hamburger joint sitting at the far end of a public beach. They parked close, and found a spot and threw down their beach towels. They changed into their bikinis and laid down on the beach. They covered each other with baby oil and rolled like roasting chickens every 8 minutes. Maybe not like chicken, but rather like a browned apple pie. They napped, chatted, listened to the ocean waves wash by while they tried to relax. They were excited about

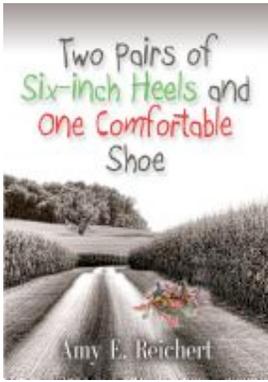
their newfound freedom as well as what the evening may bring. They'd never eaten seafood, and hadn't been out much as yet since they moved into the house. Mostly they'd been occupied working and getting the house setup to suit their tastes. They'd bought a used car as well so their funds were rather depleted. Finally, they were out on the beach tanning, using their bikinis, and soaking up the sun! They agreed at that moment to call me, Bea, on Sunday and fill me in on what I was missing.

As the sun started to set in the afternoon, they shook out their towels and headed to the beach house to change. After all that work this morning, they had to redo most everything except their hair. It was still perfect. They showered, scented and got their makeup on in all the right places. They put on their outfits again, checked for sand and then headed back to the car. They packed their beachwear in the trunk and headed off to the restaurant. They pulled into the parking lot with 32 minutes to spare. Looking around they noticed that the restaurant hung partially off the cliff of the beach, so there were some significant stairs to climb. On the front side, a terraced garden flourished with thousands of white and purple calla lilies mixed in with tiny white baby's breath.

As they checked out the flowers, a Ford pickup truck pulled up close to them. Toby and another young man jumped out and waved. The twins took a long deep breath, and opened their car doors. "Great car, wow – where you

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work a bank?” Toby asked. “Yes,” Liz quietly answered. “It’s used she said, it only has a few thousand miles on it,” she added almost guiltily. She didn’t have to feel guilty, Liz said to herself. Lois gave both men a visual tour of the 1952 Pontiac Streamliner Coupe. Toby managed to remember his manners, and introduced them. “Liz, this is my older brother Thomas, or Tom for short,” he said. “Hi, nice to meet you,” Liz said. “And this is,” Toby paused and Liz added “My younger sister Lois.” Lois shook Tom’s hand and Toby lead the way up the stairs to the restaurant door.



*Two 6" Heels & One Comfortable Shoe is a story about working women born on the farm, raised in a small town, and their lives, relationships, decisions, struggles and triumphs. It's about the impact of ordinary women on social history and how they paved the way for the modern working woman. Learn about the strength of women, the decisions they make and the lives they chose to lead.*

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