

SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE

By
Carol L. Bluestein

There was something about her walk, the swing of her hips, that was all too familiar. I caught up to her and said, “Charlotte is that you?”

“John?” she said, setting down her well used shopping bags.

“You remembered,” I said.

“It’s been a while, but I’d never forget,” she said, combing her hair with her fingers. “How is David?”

“He graduates from Junior High this June” I said. “Big as he is, he still misses his mom. He was just too young to understand.”

“And I was too young to be a mom.”

“He’d want to meet you. How about coming to the house for dinner?”

“I can’t,” she said. “Thank you.”

“Oh, come on. You can see how I fixed up the place and, of course, David.”

“I’m sorry. I can’t. I have to go,” she said turning away.

It’s been so long. I missed her. I touched her arm. “I’d be happy to pick you up and drive you home,” I said.

She moved her head in my direction, her eyes averted. “I can’t.”

“How about this – I’ll go home, pick up David and we’ll meet you at our old hang-out, Jerry’s Food Emporium,”

“John, you’re not hearing me. And, you are not seeing me. “

Those were the last words she said to me when she left. I didn't get it then and I don't get it now. "I see you. You're standing right here."

"And?"

I'm confused and, of all things, hungry. I hate being put on the spot. Feeling cornered, I look at her and try to figure out what she wants from me.

"Okay, Okay. You're hair is grayer and longer. And, I see you're not wearing a wrist-watch." I said. "You used to wear one and look at it all the time."

"And?"

I know I'm failing her test. I could really use a hamburger and a coke right now. I wonder if the Yankee Game has started.? "And, you're wearing the coat I bought you at Macy's for Christmas the year David was born," I said.

"And?"

I'm looking at her for all I'm worth. I scan her head to toe. Hair, said that. Coat, said that too. Breasts, great breasts. Boy, do I miss those breasts . Those breast and a beer. A cold beer -- right now.

"Your shoes don't match. Right? That's it, isn't it. "

"Yes, John" she says. "That's it."

"So, you'll come and meet David?"

As she raises her eyes to meet mine, I see her face is lined with charcoal edged tear tracks.

"I can't," she says, as she picks up her shopping bags,

Before I can stop her, she's gone. I hear the announcer, on the TV, in the bar across the street; call the start of the Yankee game. Better get home, David will be waiting.