

## HOME SWEET HOME

*After the Infinity tour wrapped and after the last bus ride back home and after the last meeting the guys said their goodbyes and two of the five were on their way back home to their families. The two remaining Gregg and Neal were in the process of leaving when they noticed Steve sitting all by himself, his bags at his feet, on the retaining wall out in front of the offices looking less like a lead singer and more like a lost puppy dog with no where to go. Neal walked by him as he put on his sunglasses without even a backward glance then along came Gregg with his bag slung over his shoulder he walked passed Steve he stopped then he looked back over his shoulder.*

*“Hey Steve can I give you a ride somewhere?” Gregg asks.*

*Steve’s foot is resting on one of his bags, his elbow propped up on his knee his chin in his hand. “Nah man I called a cab.”*

*By now Neal had made it to his car and he stood leaning on the open driver’s side door listening.*

*“Hey man save the price of a cab ride I’ll take you to the hotel. Hop in.” Gregg says as he motions to his car.*

*“I’m not going to a hotel.” Steve says.*

*“No hotel? Then where are you going?” Gregg asks.*

*“Lemoore.” Steve replies.*

*Gregg makes a face. “Lemoore? Where in the hell is that?”*

*Steve motions. “Head towards Bakersfield and hang a left man.”*

*Gregg laughs. “Jesus Steve that is like two hundred something miles isn’t it?” Gregg looks over at Neal who just shrugs.*

*“Well yeah man give or take a few miles you know.” Steve replies.*

*“Holy shit Steve that will be some cab fare!” Gregg says. “Why are you going way out there man?”*

*“It’s my folk’s house, when I joined the band I gave up my apartment and moved all my shit to their house. My car and my clothes....” Steve replies as he counts items off using his fingers. “....furniture. I was going to stay there until I found a house out here....”*

*“You mean drive back and forth all that way just to find a place to live?” Gregg asks.*

*“Well yeah man I guess what else can I do?” Steve asks.*

*“I have an idea....” Gregg replies.*

*Neal has been standing there listening and for some insane reason, maybe because he knew Gregg so well, he knew exactly what Gregg was going to say even before he said it and that is when Neal started to gesture.*

*“....why don’t you stay with me?” Gregg says.*

*“Stay with you?” Steve replies.*

*“Yeah man. I have a basement....”*

*Gregg glances at Neal who is shaking his head, waving his hands back and forth and silently mouthing the word ‘no!’*

*“A basement?” Steve replies.*

*Gregg nods. “Yeah a basement. I mean it isn’t fancy or anything but there is plenty of room and you can live there rent free until you....”*

*Gregg glances up at Neal again who by now was doing the cutting motion with his hand at his throat shaking his head and silently mouthing the word ‘no!’ but this time Steve looks back over his shoulder too which causes Neal to think quickly and he pretends to swat at imaginary bugs.*

*“Damn! There are some huge flies out here!” Neal replies.*

*“I don’t know Gregg....” Steve says as he continues to look over his shoulder at Neal then he slowly turns back to face Gregg. “I don’t want to get in the way or anything.”*

*“You won’t be in the way I mean you’re be in the basement and I have a great realtor I can introduce you to....” Gregg says.*

*“Well....” Steve replies.*

*“Oh come on man! I mean I have lived with you for nine months what’s a few more weeks?”*

*“It would help me out I mean I won’t have to drive back and forth so okay....I’ll do it! I guess we will be housemates!”*

*Gregg and Steve shake as Neal covers his eyes with his hands and he grimaces.*

*“Cool man so let’s hit the road!”*

*Steve grabbed his bags and he threw them in the trunk of Gregg’s car along with Gregg’s bags and then they were off to Novato.*

*Novato, California is the northernmost city in Marin County, approximately twenty-nine miles north of San Francisco and thirty-seven miles northwest of Oakland and it was a 45 minute drive and if they had waited any longer they would have hit horrendous traffic but they didn’t. As Gregg drove he listened to Steve talk about Lemoore and his family and when they finally reached Novato Gregg drove through the city pointing out local interest spots and places Steve might like to visit, like the local grocery store.*

*As they drove through Gregg’s neighborhood Steve admired the houses and the freshly manicured lawns and the closer they got to Gregg’s house he pointed out the neighbors that he knew. They pulled into the driveway of Gregg’s house and Gregg hit a button and the garage door opened and he drove in. The house was two stories, a hacienda type of house made out of stucco and Mexican tiles on the roof and this was normally a two car garage but one half was filled with junk.*

*“Man that was cool with the garage door and all!” Steve says as they get out of the car.*

*“Automatic garage door opener.” Gregg replies as he opens the trunk and Steve grabs his bags.*

*“I want one of those on my house!” Steve says.*

*Gregg laughs as he points at a door. “That goes to the kitchen. Go in and make yourself at home I need to check on the sprinklers. After they have been off for awhile they tend to act strange. Grab a beer while you’re at it.”*

*“Sure.”*

*Steve carries his bags over to the door and he opens it and the door opens into a large kitchen with Spanish tiles on the floor, a kitchen island, a lot of counter space and cabinets and all the fashionable, modern day appliances that were around in 1978. Dropping his bags Steve notices there is a back door that heads out to a deck and peeking out of the window Steve sees the pool and he takes another quick glance around the kitchen as he goes over to the fridge and he takes out a beer after he opens it he wanders thru the arched doorway into the sunken living room.*

*The living room was huge with a lot of windows that sported wrought iron decorations, a leather sofa, loveseat and a reclining chair that was placed strategically in front of an entertainment center that held the latest technology of the day, a television and a stereo system with a turntable, and in the corner was a fireplace that shows a lot of usage.*

*Steve takes a seat in the reclining chair and before he knew it he was dozing off and just then Gregg came into the room and he touched him on the head.*

*“That is my chair kiddo!”*

*Steve jumps. “Oh man I’m sorry I’ll...”*

*Gregg laughs as he goes over and he jumps onto the sofa and he stretches out. “Don’t get up its cool. Man there is nothing like being home.”*

*Steve nods. “This is a great house Gregg. So....who takes care of all of this while you’re gone.”*

*“Well my business manager mainly....” Gregg says.*

*“Business manager?” Steve asks.*

*“Yeah man business manager, you need to get one of those. He arranges to pay your bills; he takes care of my house, turning on and off of the utilities. A week before the tour ends I call him up he turns all the stuff back on and then Connie, my girlfriend, comes in a few days before and she stocks the fridge, the pantry with groceries. Come on let me give you the grand tour!”*

*Gregg helps Steve out of the recliner and he takes him through the rest of the house. Upstairs was the master bedroom with its own balcony and master bath and a guest bedroom which Gregg was planning on turning into a home studio, that is, if he ever got around to it. After the upstairs Gregg took him back downstairs and showed him the pool and then back thru the kitchen to the basement. Down a little hall was the door to the basement which opened onto a landing then the stairs.*

*“Well Steve this will be your place.”*

*The basement was a typical basement with a washer and dryer at the bottom of the stairs and in one corner was a dresser, a sofa and a bed and two end tables. An area rug was rolled up and leaning against the dresser.*

*“See I told you it wasn’t much....”*

*“Oh no man this is cool.” Steve says as he heads down the stairs. “Look I even have windows.” Steve says as he points to two windows high up on the wall. “I have a bed and a dresser that is all I need really.”*

*“Now I can’t promise how comfortable this bed is. It was in the guest room but I took them out to start work on the studio but I guess you saw how far that got! You got the dresser and the end tables and the lamps work so....”*

*“This is great and I appreciate it Gregg, I really do.”*

*Gregg raises his hand. “Don’t mention it. Oh by the way there isn’t a bathroom down here but you can use the one in the guest room, also you’re find sheets for the bed.”*

*“Cool.”*

*“Steve I hate to do this to you man....”*

*“What?”*

*“Well I had plans to go and spend the night with Connie, you know, reconnect, but I hate to leave you alone in this strange house.”*

*“Oh hey Gregg go man go! Don’t worry about me. I am wiped out anyway, I was going to eat something, take a shower then crash man. So go and see your girl.”*

*“You’re sure?” Gregg asks.*

*Steve makes a face. “Gregg why in the world would you stay here with me while you have a woman waiting on you?”*

*“You know that is a good point.”*

*“Uh huh, so go.”*

*“Okay and oh there is plenty of food so help yourself, drink some beer, watch some television, relax man you deserve it.” Gregg pats him on the arm.*

*“Thanks Gregg. See you later.”*

*“Later man.”*

*After Gregg left Steve grabbed his overnight bag and he headed for the quest room and the shower and that shower felt good after being on the road for so long. He took his time combing thru his long hair to get all the tangles out of it and when he was finished with that he went down to the kitchen where he perused the panty and he wanted something quick but filling so he chose an old standby his mother used to fix, a grilled cheese sandwich and tomato soup. After he prepared it he took it into the living room on a tray and he turned on the television and he sat down to eat it and Steve remembers eating half of it and after that when he woke it was ten o’clock.*

*He was able to get himself up and grab the tray before he wandered into the kitchen and he deposited the dishes in the sink then he sleepily and in the dark made his way down to the basement and to his bed and when his head hit the pillow he remembered he forgot to put sheets on the bed and he was too tired to care.*

*It was the warmth of the sun that woke him it was nothing else since he didn't have an alarm clock and when he finally did find his watch it was close to nine in the morning and he had to get going. He had made plans for the day and he had been hoping to be on the road before now but that is what 'Tour Lag' will do for you. Since this was Steve's first tour with the band he had a lot to get use to and the recovery time was just one of those things. While the coffee brewed he took a shower to help him wake up and while he drank his coffee he looked through the local phone book to find a cab and a car rental place. He needed one before he could get to the other. As he waited for the cab he wrote Gregg a note telling him that he was going to Lemoore and that he would be back in a few days.*

*The ride back to Lemoore was long and uneventful but it gave him time to think, to think about his life before. How hard he struggled, for years, to make it in the music business and how at one time he couldn't even afford to put gas in this car let alone rent it. Now he was thinking about buying a house and how odd was that! What was Gregg saying that he needed? A business manager and now that Steve had money he was going to need a financial manager as well and he needed advice about buying a house, he heard it could be a long, drawn out process. The house, besides being affordable, needed to be....well....perfect. If he had ever got to the point to where he could buy a house he knew exactly what it should look like, he carried around a picture in his head of it, now all he had to do was to find it.*

*Steve spent a few days with his folks, they wanted to hear all about his first tour and he a lot to share and he had a lot to pack up and put in his car. More of his clothes, odds and ends, the trunk of the small car and the back seat was full and it was another long drive back to Novato. Steve made it as far as Newman California and he had to stop and spend the night there then the next morning he was off again and he made it to Gregg's house early in the afternoon and Steve decided to park around by the deck he thought that would be easier and closer to unload at least some of his boxes. He pulled up to the house and he parked and as he was getting out of the car he heard someone yelling at him.*

*"It's about time you showed up!"*

*Steve looked around then when he realized the voice was coming from the pool area he looked back over his shoulder. She was leaning over the deck railing, her long light brown hair hanging down and Steve noticed that her hair was covering more than the bikini top she was wearing. She was pretty, shapely and just maybe a little sunburned.*

*"You're talking to me?" Steve replies as he points to himself.*

*She stands up straight her hands on her hips. "Well do you see anybody else?"*

*Steve looks around. "No."*

*"I called you over two hours ago. There is something wrong with the pump or the filter or something!" She says.*

*"There is?" Steve replies.*

*"Do you always answer a question with another question?" She asks just a tad frustrated.*

*"Well I..." Steve starts to say.*

*She opens the gate and motions for him to come up. "What are you waiting for?"*

*Steve knows that she has got him confused with the pool repair guy so Steve decides to play along. "I just need to grab my tools that's all."*

*"Could you hurry please?"*

*Steve waves at her then he opens up the hood of the car and he takes a tool box that he just happened to have out and he goes up the stairs to the deck where the girl is impatiently taping her foot her arms folded across her chest.*

*"So ma'm what's the problem?" Steve asks in his best pool repairman's voice.*

*"The pump isn't pumping and the filter isn't filtering I guess! How long will it take to fix it?" She asks.*

*Steve looks at her and he knows that this has to be Gregg's girlfriend, Connie, and he is standing so close to her that he can smell Coppertone and all he can think of is that Gregg is a lucky man. A very lucky man.*

*"After I take a look at it I will let you know." Steve says as he smiles at her.*

*After a few minutes has passed she says, "Well?"*

*"Oh! Yeah right I better get going." Steve says as he starts to walk around the pool looking.*

*"If you're looking for the access panel thingy it's over there." She says as she points.*

*"Oh yeah I knew that."*

*Under her watchful eyes Steve goes over to the access panel and he gets down on one knee, he opens the tool box and he takes out a screwdriver and he is just about to pry it open when he hears Gregg say, "Steve what in the hell are you doing?"*

*"You know him?" Connie asks.*

*“Yeah Connie that’s Steve Perry our lead singer.” Gregg says.*

*“No it isn’t he’s the pool repair guy.” Connie says.*

*“No honey he isn’t. That is Steve Perry.” Gregg says as he tries not to laugh.*

*“Oh but I thought....he looks like....he was driving a....Oh my god I am so....embarrassed! But....but....you don’t look like a rock star!” Connie says as she raises her hands to her mouth. “You’re the guy who’s living in the basement!”*

*Steve and Gregg laugh as Steve comes over to them. “Yes that would be me. It’s nice to meet you Connie.”*

*“Oh Steve I am so sorry.” Connie says.*

*“It’s cool don’t worry about it.” Steve says.*

*“Steve do you like Chinese food I was going to go and pick some up.” Connie asks.*

*“Oh sure but don’t go to any trouble....” Steve replies.*

*“Oh no it isn’t it’s the least I can do after this....I’ll be back in awhile Gregg.” Connie stands on her tip-toes to kiss him and then she goes into the house.*

*“She is very sweet, you are a lucky guy there Gregg.”*

*“I think so, so Steve that VW bug out there is yours?” Gregg asks as points over his shoulder.*

*“Yes she is.”*

*“And you drove that all the way from....?”*

*“Lemoore.” Steve says.*

*“Lemoore. And it got you here?” Gregg asks.*

*“Hey man don’t knock the Bug it’s been a great car.”*

*“I’ll help you bring some of those boxes in.” Gregg says.*



## ***A MONTH LATER....***

*Neal has been out of town for a good month doing the family and friend thing, he had done the motorcycle thing with his father but now he was ready to get back to work. He was just a tad antsy so he called Gregg up to see what was happening and if he felt like working on some new material and maybe even Steve had some stuff going on, Steve was always writing, and that is how Gregg happened to stop by Neal's house that early fall day.*

*"Okay buddy let me have it." Neal says.*

*"Have what?" Gregg asks.*

*Neal gives him a look. "Steve's new address and phone number." Neal pushes a note pad and pen across the table to Gregg who takes it and he begins to write and when he finishes he shoves it back across the table.*

*Neal looks at it then he starts to laugh. "Hey wait man this is your address."*

*Gregg takes a swig of beer as he nods. "No shit Sherlock."*

*"Gregg don't tell me he is still..." Neal laughs.*

*"Okay I won't tell you that he is still living in my basement but he is...." Gregg replies.*

*"Holy shit man I would have thought by now that he would have found a place...I thought that you were going to introduce him to your realtor?" Neal asks.*

*Gregg nods as he moves the beer bottle around in a circle. "I did and that is an interesting story in itself..."*

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*"Okay Steve here you go man guard this card with your life."*

*"What is it?" Steve ask as he makes a grab for it but Gregg pulls it away.*

*"You have to swear." Gregg says seriously.*

*Steve sighs and he rolls his eyes. "I swear."*

*“Cross your heart?” Gregg says.*

*“Gregg come on!” Steve pleads.*

*“No cross your heart.” Gregg says seriously.*

*“Oh alright! I swear to guard that card with my life and....cross my heart.” Steve crosses his heart. “Now can I see it?”*

*Gregg hesitates but he hands him the card. “That card you are holding my friend is a link to the greatest realtor in the world.”*

*Steve looks at it then he looks at Gregg. “How so?”*

*“Because she works miracles. She can find you anything you are looking for. She knows all the ins and outs about financing, loans, mortgages; she can broker you a great deal. She can get you a house for a song!” Gregg laughs. “No pun intended man.”*

*“Erica Cox?” Steve says.*

*“Uh huh.”*

*“For a song?” Steve asks.*

*“Uh huh.”*

*“Maybe I should sing to her.” Steve laughs but Gregg doesn’t. “It was a joke.”*

*“Uh huh.”*

*“Thanks and I’ll call her tomorrow.”*

*“So....uh Steve do you have any idea whatcha looking for? Price range and all?” Gregg asks.*

*“Yeah sorta I wrote it all down.” Steve pulls a sheet of paper out of his back pocket and he hands it to Gregg who unfolds it and he reads it.*

*“Well Steve this is impressive I must say. Wow! You’re planning on putting down that much?”*

*“Well yeah I want to pay it off in say....ten years maybe even....”*

*Gregg starts to laugh.*

*“...Less. What’s so funny?”*

*“Ten years Steve? This house has a thirty year mortgage and the payments are....”  
Gregg whispers in his ear.*

*“Wow man that is low! So in about 17 years you will pay off the interest and then you can start paying for the house.” Steve says as he pats him on the back.*

*“What?”*

*“Yeah man, you see my mom is an accountant and she explained it to me this way....”*

*Steve spent a few minutes explaining to Gregg what was explained to him by his mother and it left Gregg scratching his head.*

*“Well okay man I can see how that might work but you might have a hard time finding a lender. Their bottom line is money and with this plan they will lose a big chunk of change so it might take some time to find someone you know....”*

*“That’s cool man I have time....I want it to be....well....perfect. The perfect house, the perfect location and the perfect financing.”*

*“Steve in the housing game there is no such thing as perfect.”*

*“Oh yes there is you just have to find it. Besides you said....” Steve looks at the realtor’s business card again. “Erica can work miracles....”*

*“I know I said that but....” Gregg replies.*

*“You said ‘She knows all the ins and outs about financing, loans, mortgages; she can broker you a great deal.’” Steve says.*

*“Yeah man I know I said that but....”*

*“For a song you said!” Steve says.*

*Gregg takes a deep breath. “Yes I know....”*

*“So....I’ll call her tomorrow and see what she has to offer....” Steve laughs. “I might even throw in a couple of verses of “Good Morning Girl” just to sweeten the pot!”*

*The next day it was late afternoon and Gregg was lounging by the pool with a magazine over his face when Steve bounded up the stairs and slapped him on the arm which caused Gregg to come up and out of the lounge chair.*

*“Who! What! Where! How!” Gregg yells.*

*“You sly old dog you!” Steve says.*

*“Jesus Steve you could have killed me! You scared the hell out of me!”*

*“Oh hey man I’m sorry were you sleeping?”*

*“Not anymore. How did it go with Erica?” Gregg asks as he sits back down in the chair.*

*Steve wags his finger at him. “You didn’t tell me what a knockout she is!”*

*Uh oh Gregg thinks he has seen that look on Steve’s face before when he has been bitten by the ‘Women Bug’ when he gets around a beautiful woman he loses all reasoning and his bearings are way off....sorta like now.*

*“Honestly Steve I didn’t notice.” Gregg says matter of factly.*

*Steve snorts. “You are such a liar! How could you not notice....her assets?”*

*“I have a girlfriend remember?” Gregg says.*

*“Oh yeah I know and Connie is very hot too....”*

*Gregg gives him a menacing look. “That was a compliment Gregg old man.”*

*“Uh huh. Anyway, how did the meeting go? What did you two talk about? Did she show you any houses yet?”*

*Steve scratches his head. “Ah well man I don’t remember.”*

*“You don’t remember what?” Gregg asks.*

*“What we talked about but I know she didn’t show me any houses. She is going to do that tonight. Hey man can I borrow your car?”*

*“What do you mean she is going to do that tonight? Why do you want to borrow my car?”*

*Steve snaps his fingers. “A limo! A limo would be much better!” Steve says as he turns and he starts to walk to the house at a fast clip and Gregg can’t get out of the chair fast enough. Gregg had a bad habit of wrapping his feet around the legs of the chair and when Steve took off Gregg practically fell out of the chair.*

*“Steve! Wait! Why do you want a limo?”*

*By now Steve is already in the house consulting the phone book when Gregg finally untangled himself from the chair and when Gregg got into the kitchen Steve was already on the phone.*

*“Yeah hello I want to know how much it would cost to rent a....hey!”*

*Gregg snatches the phone out of Steve’s hand and he hangs it back up.*

*“Back up a few Steve, tell me again why you want to rent a limo?”*

*“Because it is more impressive than my Bug out there! I don’t want to pick her up in my old car....” Steve says as if Gregg should already know this.*

*“Okay wait I am confused. You did have a meeting with her today didn’t you?”*

*“Yes!”*

*“And what happened at the meeting?” Gregg asks.*

*“Well....I think I told her what I was looking for....she told me what she had I guess....and that I had such specific things that I was looking for that it was going to take awhile for her to pull some property information so I suggested that we talk over dinner.....”*

*“DINNER!” Gregg says just a little too loudly.*

*Steve covers his ears. “Yes dinner! What in the hell is wrong with you?”*

*“Steve you’re supposed to be buying a house not asking her out on a date!”*

*“Now I wouldn’t actually call it a date exactly.” Steve says.*

*“Oh really? Let’s see you’re going to rent a limo and I bet....” Gregg points his finger at him. “....you’re thinking about flowers too? Am I right?”*

*Steve grins then he looks at the floor. “Well maybe....”*

*Gregg slaps his hands together loudly which causes Steve to jump. “Ah ha! Flowers! I knew it! Flowers always constitute a date!”*

*“So what is the big deal? I was liking her and she was liking me....”*

*“It’s a conflict of interest!” Gregg says as he crosses his arms over his chest.*

*Steve laughs. "What? What? A conflict of interest? Oh hell Gregg something tells me that you want me out of here as fast as possible. That is the whole point of all of this isn't it?"*

*"No that isn't the point of all of this." Gregg says.*

*"Then what is it?!" Steve asks.*

*Gregg thinks a minute. "It's just never....a good idea....to date someone...."*

*"Yeah come on Gregg...."*

*"....That you're doing business with!"*

*Steve stops and he thinks a minute then he says, "How did you meet Connie?"*

*Gregg makes a face. "Well you know that is neither here nor there."*

*"Gregg how did you meet Connie?" Steve asks again.*

*"Oh alright she writes for a music magazine...." Gregg finally says.*

*"Gotcha!" Steve says happily.*

*"Now no that isn't the same thing! She wasn't trying to sell me a house! Oh Steve! You are very crafty! Yes you are!"*

*"I don't know what you're talking about." Steve says.*

*"You're thinking that if you wine and dine her she will cut you a break! Shave a little bit here....shave a little bit there. Tsk, tsk, tsk shame on you!"*

*Steve points at him. "Only you in your evil little mind would think that. That never crossed my mind. Now can I please get back to what I was doing?"*

*"Yeah suit yourself." Gregg motions as he wanders to the back door.*

*"Thank you mother!" Steve yells after him.*

**XXXX**

*"Well Gregg I will say one thing about Steve...."*

*Gregg looks at Neal across the table.*

*“....Steve is right Erica is a knock-out. So....is he driving you crazy yet?” Neal asks as he smiles and he raises his beer bottle to his lips. “You know I did try to warn you.”*

*“When?” Gregg asks.*

*“You know when, in the parking lot of the office. The day the bus drop us off.”*

*“You mean all this waving around of your hands were a warning?” Gregg asks.*

*“Well yeah everybody knows what this means.” Neal demonstrates using the same hand motions that he used on that day.*

*Gregg leans over the table as he says, “Well I am not everybody and I didn’t know what that meant! I didn’t know if you were signaling a small plane in for a landing or if you wanted me to walk Steve or strike him out!”*

*Neal laughs. “Why do I sense there is something more that you aren’t telling me?”*

*Gregg takes a deep breath. “Connie likes him.”*

*Neal inhales deeply as he pretends to be shocked. “Oh my god no! Connie likes him!”*

*“Let me tell you, you don’t know the half of it. She says that he is cute, funny, and sensitive and that he is a good listener!”*

*“Gregg you better hope that he finds a house quick.”*

*“Neal do you know that boy will make somebody a great wife one day? I came home one day and do you know what Steve was doing?”*

*“What?” Neal asks.*

**XXXX**

*Ever since Gregg got off tour he hasn’t been home much what with obligations to family, friends, his girlfriend and some other musician types he knows that want to do gigs with him and he has felt a little bad about leaving Steve all to himself in this house. But Connie will be going out of town and then Gregg planned on spending time with Steve, maybe doing some writing, and he might even help him look for that elusive house. This had been another day where Gregg had been out and about and now he was back at home, parking the car in the garage, he got out and he open the door that goes into the kitchen and he was just about to step into the kitchen, as a matter of fact he had his foot raised and already to plant it when Steve yelled.*

*“Don’t! The floor is wet!”*

*Gregg grabbed a hold of the door jamb with both hands to stop himself.*

*“What? Why is the floor wet? Did something overflow did something burst?” Gregg asks.*

*“No nothing like that. It’s wet because I mopped it.” Steve says proudly.*

*Gregg looks at him. “You....mopped the floor did you spill something?”*

*“No I didn’t spill anything. The floor was filthy so I mopped it. I mean it’s the least I can do.”*

*“Well Steve you didn’t have to....wow! What smells so good?”*

*“Dinner.”*

*“You made dinner too?” Gregg asks.*

*“Yeah but it isn’t ready yet. Why don’t you go around and come in the front door, you know, until the floor is dry.” Steve says.*

*“Good idea.” Gregg says as he heads around to the front door.*

*Thirty minutes later the dinner was ready and the floor was dry.*

*“Gregg dinner is served.”*

*“I thought we were eating in the living room?” Gregg asks.*

*“Oh no, no this dinner is best served in the dining room.”*

*The dining room was set with the everyday dishes and glasses and on the table was lasagna, fresh out of the oven and garlic bread and red wine.*

*“Wow Steve I am impressed. I didn’t know that you knew how to cook.”*

*“When you’re a bachelor you have to know how. My mom taught me.”*

*Gregg put a forkful of lasagna in his mouth. “This is really good! I have never tasted lasagna like this before.”*

*“It’s fresh. I made the pasta and everything. Hey thanks for fixing up my room like you did, I mean the basement.”*



*“That was Connie’s idea. She felt bad about the pool thing you know. So how is the house hunting going?”*

*Steve shrugs. “You know its going. I’ve seen a lot of houses but I haven’t seen the perfect one just yet.”*

*“So what are you looking for exactly?” Gregg asks.*

*“I can’t explain it but I’ll know when I see it.” Steve says.*

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*“The perfect house? Gregg did you tell him there is no such animal?”*

*“Yes Neal I did.”*

*“So Stevie made dinner and he mopped the floor.” Neal laughs. “You know the next thing you’ll be telling me is that when he does laundry he separates the colors from the whites.”*

*“Oh he does that too.”*

*“He does?!” Neal asks.*

*Gregg nods his head. “Did I tell you about the cops coming to the house?”*

*“The cops?” Neal asks surprised.*

*“Yeah man the cops.” Gregg replies.*

**XXXX**

*Steve had been gone for hours and Gregg was assuming that he was out with Erica looking at houses and just as it was getting dark Gregg heard a knock on the front door but this was no ordinary knock. This knock had an authority sound to it and it was loud and as Gregg walked to the door to open it he had a bad feeling and when he opened it he found out why. Standing on the other side of the door were two huge Novato police officers and Steve was standing in front of them and Steve was dwarfed by them, he looked like a teenager being brought home by the cops and his father just opened the door.*

*Steve raised his hand and he waved his fingers at Gregg.*

*“Hi.” Was all Steve said.*

*Gregg looked at Steve then he looked at the officers. “Is there a problem officers?”*

*One of the officers behind Steve put his hand on Steve’s shoulder and Steve jumped like he had been bit.*

*“Are you Mr. Rolie? Mr. Gregg Rolie?”*

*“Ah yes officer.” Gregg replies a bit reluctantly.*

*“Mr. Perry says that he lives here. Does he?”*

*Gregg looks at Steve then at the officers. “Ah well yes sir he does. What did he do? Is he....under arrest?”*

*“No he was just acting suspiciously. Driving through the neighborhoods, casing the....”*

*“I wasn’t casing....” Steve tries to interrupt.*

*“Zip it!” One of the officers said.*

*“....Houses.” The other officer finishes as he glances down at Steve. “His driver license has an old address at least two hundred miles away and he was driving a VW bug and a few citizens were concerned.”*

*Steve takes a deep breath as he crosses his arms over his chest. “Something about a serial killer that drives a car like mine, I ask you, what are the odds?” Steve says.*

*“Well officers what can I say? He does live here....” Gregg replies.*

*“Alright I guess this time you’ll get off with a warning.” One of the officers said.*

*One of the officers point at Gregg as Steve goes into the house. “Now you two get along, no more lover’s spats. Good night.”*

*“Good night....officers.” Gregg shuts the door and when he turns around to ask Steve a question he finds that Steve has already beat a hasty retreat out of the room.*

*“Steve!”*

*“What?”*

*“What do you mean what? What was all that about? Suspicious activity, driving through the neighborhood, casing....?”*

*“I...wasn’t casing any houses, I was looking at houses! There is a big difference between casing and looking you know!” Steve replies.*

*“Okay then what about that....that....remark?” Gregg asks.*

*“What remark?” Steve asks innocently.*

*“That....that lover’s spat remark and not to mention that look he gave us. Steve, what did you tell him?”*

*“Nothing.” Steve says.*

*“STEVE!”*

*“Oh alright I may have said something about that I live here and....”*

*“....And?” Gregg replies.*

*“Now Gregg I freaked out when they pulled me over and I don’t really know what I said....exactly....”*

*“....And?” Gregg replies.*

*“....And....I meant to say friendship but I think I said....relationship.” Steve says slowly.*

*“What?!” Gregg says loudly as he approaches Steve.*

*“Gregg now calm down. I saw Erica today and we looked at some houses, I didn’t find any that I liked....”*

*“Imagine that!” Gregg replies sarcastically.*

*“So she suggested that I might want to build a house.”*

*“WHAT! BUILD A HOUSE?!” Gregg says at the top of his voice.*

*“Sssshhh! So I was driving around the neighborhood looking at houses to get some ideas....”*

*“Steve do you not know that there is a serial killer out there that drives a car just like yours!”*

*“Well...I know that now.” Steve replies sheepishly.*

*“That still doesn’t explain that ‘lover’s spat’ thing!” Gregg says.*

*“I’m getting to that, like I said I freaked out when they pulled me over and when they started asking me questions I told them that we had a fight and I was driving around to cool off....”*

*“Why didn’t you just tell them the truth Steve?” Gregg asks.*

*“No way! I didn’t want them to think that I was casing those houses!”*

*“They thought that anyway! So....you told them that we were....you know.” Gregg says.*

*Steve points at him. “Oh no I didn’t say that, like I said I meant to say friendship but I think I said something like we were having a....relationship...”*

*“Oh no!” Gregg covers his eyes with his hands.*

*“....Or something like that. You try to keep your composure when two cops pull you over....”*

*Gregg then grabs Steve by his jacket. “They didn’t recognize you did they?”*

*“Ah no I don’t think so.” Steve replies.*

*Gregg loosens his grip a little. “Well that’s good....”*

*“But I can’t say the same for the crowd that was there....” Steve says.*

*Gregg jerks him back up by his jacket. “A crowd?!”*

*“It was just a little crowd. Four, six, twelve I don’t really know I wasn’t counting....”*

*Gregg looks Steve in the eyes. “From now on you’re....grounded!”*

*“Grou....grounded?!” Steve sputters.*

*“Yes grounded! You’re grounded from cruising around MY NEIGHBORHOOD casing....”*

*Steve interrupts him, “....looking!”*

*“Whatever! You’re grounded from cruising around my neighborhood doing whatever it was that you were doing! Got it!”*

*“You can’t ground me, I’m an adult!” Steve replies smugly.*

*Gregg thinks a minute then he says, “I’ll call your mother!”*

*“Okay I’m grounded.” Steve says. “Now will you let me go.”*

*Gregg lets go of his jacket and as Steve brushes the wrinkles out of it he says, “Can you drive me to my car?”*

*“Drive you to your....where’s your car?” Gregg asks.*

*“I left it where they pulled me over. They put me in the back of the police car and they drove me here and if you would have said no they were taking me to jail. Can we go and get it please I’m worried that something might happen to it.”*

*“What’s going to happen to it?” Gregg asks.*

*“Somebody could steal it!” Steve says.*

*Gregg laughs. “Who would want to steal that car?”*

*“Hey man don’t knock the Bug! Can we go....please?” Steve says.*

*“Okay, okay let me grab my jacket and my keys.”*

**XXXX**

*“It isn’t funny.” Gregg says.*

*Neal is laughing hysterically. “Oh yes it is! Relationship instead of friendship! That’s funny! Sounds like you’ve have an interesting month and all I did was go on a boring motorcycle ride.”*

*“Oh there’s more.” Gregg says.*

*“There is?!” Neal replies.*

*Gregg nods his head.*

**XXXX**

*Gregg was a little worried. He was worried about Connie. Gregg thinks that Connie has formed an 'attachment' to Steve. Connie calls it a 'friendship' but Gregg thinks that she and Steve got friendly real quick. They had lunch together, they cooked dinner together, and they always seem to have their heads together, so Gregg was a little worried. Not that he didn't trust either of them it was just that....well....it was just that, Gregg knew that Steve would never, ever put the moves on his girlfriend, would he? No, no of course not but today Gregg was bothered. He had been out so he decided to stop by Connie's work and she wasn't there and nobody seem to know where she was, Gregg called her apartment and she wasn't there either and so Gregg called his house, nobody answered except the answering machine. Now Gregg was scared.*

*Gregg drove back home and when he pulled into the driveway he suddenly felt his stomach drop, both of their cars were in the driveway, Connie's and Steve's, the sheer horror of it was too much too comprehend. They couldn't be together or could they, well, there was only one way to find out. Gregg quietly crept into his own house and he didn't hear anything and they weren't downstairs so like a thief he silently made his way up the stairs avoiding the places that he knew would give him away and he made his way down the hall to the master bedroom where the door was closed, closing his eyes he put his ear to the door and he heard voices.*

*"....How long have you been doing this again?" Connie asks.*

*"....Oh since I was 16 why?" Steve replies.*

*"....You just seem....experienced." Connie says. "You're very good, you know, with your hands."*

*Gregg grimaces as he runs his hands over his face.*

*"....So are you." Steve replies.*

*"....Oh no I'm too nervous, I don't know what to do with my hands." Connie says.*

*"....I'll show you, put one hand here and the other here, there you go. Now how does that feel?" Steve asks.*

*Gregg, on the other side of the door covers his mouth to stop himself from crying out.*

*"....It's not as hard as I thought it was going to be...." Connie replies.*

*"....I need more leverage....This position is not working for me..." Steve replies.*

*"....Do you want me to move?" Connie asks."*

*"....No, no stay there I'll get behind you." Steve replies. "....Move your hand right there. There! That's it! How does that feel?"*

*“...Wow that is amazing!” Connie replies.*

*“...Okay now don't move I'm going to put this in that hole...”*

*On the other side of the door Gregg had heard enough and he couldn't stand to hear anymore and he was expecting the door to be locked but it wasn't so when he put his shoulder into it, it gave away with a huge, cracking, groaning wood breaking sound and when it hit the wall on the other side it made a loud 'WHACK!' and it left a huge crater in the sheetrock. Gregg was headed for the floor but he was able to right himself and his forward progression was stopped by the dresser and when he looked back over his shoulder he was expecting to see them, together in the bed, but what he saw shocked him even more.*

*Steve was behind Connie alright but at the time she was helping to hold up some shelves that they were attempting to hang on the wall and they were both stopped short and in frozen in place. Connie's eyes were huge as she looked back over her shoulder and Steve's eyes also registered shock as he looked back over his shoulder at Gregg. One of Steve's hands was holding up the shelf and he was holding a screwdriver in the other and he was just about to put a screw into the hole when Gregg broke the door down.*

*“Holy Shit!” Steve exclaims.*

*“Gregg! What in the hell are you doing?” Connie asks.*

*Gregg breathing hard and feeling like a fool runs his hand through his hair. “Me? What are you two....doing?”*

*Steve and Connie look at one another then Steve looks at Gregg. “What in the Sam Hill does it look like we're doing?!”*

*“Ah....putting up....shelves?” Gregg replies.*

*“Ding! Ding! Ding! We have a winner! Yes Gregg we are putting up shelves!” Steve replies.*

*“Gregg you scared the hell out of me!” Connie says.*

*“Connie I'm sorry I....” Gregg says.*

*Steve puts the screwdriver in his back pocket as he grabs the shelf with both hands so Connie can let go then he takes the shelf and he leans it against the wall.*

*“We wanted to surprise you. Remember you said that you wanted to put these shelves up....?” Connie says as she goes to him and she puts her arms around him.*

*Gregg looks down at her. "Well yeah...."*

*"Steve said he would put them up for you....Gregg?" Connie looks into his face and it suddenly dawns on her what Gregg had been thinking. "Gregg? You didn't think....?"*

*"Connie...." Gregg says as Connie backs away from him.*

*"You didn't think.....you wouldn't think....that Steve and I....?"*

*"Connie, honey, just hear me out." Gregg says.*

*"No! Oh my god! I can't believe that you would think....that Steve and I...me and Steve....that he and I?" Connie says as she looks at Steve then she looks back at Gregg then she covers her mouth with her hand then she inhales sharply. "You did think that!"*

*"Connie I'm sorry!"*

*But this time Connie doesn't answer she just turns and runs out of the room.*

*"Well that was certainly stupid!" Steve says as he goes about picking up his tools.*

*"What did you expect me to think!? You two have gotten chummy lately!"*

*"Friends Gregg we are friends! I can't believe that you think that I....with Connie....that she and I....that me and her!"*

*Gregg points to the now destroyed bedroom door. "You....weren't on the other side of that door! You didn't hear what I heard! It sounded....well....sexual!"*

*Steve points a hammer at him. "That is because you have an evil, little mind! Sounded sexual! That is the most stupidest thing...."*

*Steve continues to mutter to himself as he goes around and he collects the rest of his tools as Gregg watches him.*

*"Steve, man, I'm sorry." Gregg replies.*

*"Gregg I'm not the one you should be apologizing to." Steve says.*

*"Yeah, yeah you're right, I better go and....Connie! Connie!" Gregg says as he leaves the room.*

**XXXX**



*Gregg points at Neal. "Don't give me that look Neal, if you have been on the other side of that door and heard that you would have thought the same thing and don't tell me that you wouldn't have!"*

*"Yeah okay man I would have. Do you want another beer?" Neal asks as he heads towards the kitchen.*

*"Yeah."*

*A few minutes later Neal returns with two beers and he hands one to Gregg. "So did you tell him about your neighbors?"*

*Gregg doesn't answer all he does is smile.*

**XXXX**

*Gregg reasons that everybody has their share of strange neighbors and he certainly has had more than his share in the few years that he has lived here, most of the time his neighbors could really care less who he is or what he does but then again....there are those two young women that live across the street. Gregg remembers when he and Neal first started Journey and they were just a typical jam band and their audiences consisted mostly of guys but all the changed when Steve joined. Gregg has never seen so many women and Gregg had never seen so much, well okay, boobage until Steve joined. When Gregg first moved into this house the women across the street watched him and Gregg soon found out that they weren't shy about telling him what they wanted, hell, Gregg thinks that they even had binoculars.*

*So maybe Gregg should have told Steve about those two but he didn't. After all Steve is a grown man and he can take care of himself. Right?*

*Steve was going to make one more lap across the pool then he was going to call it quits and when he reached the other side that was when he noticed that he had an audience. An audience of one. She was standing by the edge of the pool, holding two cans of beer by the plastic rings, wearing a very skimpy bikini, long blonde hair and tanned skin completed the picture.*

*"Hi." She says.*

*"Hi. Where did you come from?" Steve asks.*

*"From the across the street. Gregg lets me use his pool. I didn't know that he had a....ah....houseguest." She says as she twirls a strand of hair around her finger and she smiles.*

*Steve could have sworn that she licked her lips but he could have imagined that. Didn't he? Steve lifts himself out of the pool and he makes his way over to his towel and before he knows it she is right by him.*

*"Oh!" Steve says startled.*

*"Oh I'm sorry did I scare you?" She asks.*

*"No I just wasn't expecting you to be there." Steve says.*

*"Why don't you have a seat?" She says.*

*Steve laughs. "No really I don't feel like sitting."*

*"Sure you do." She says as she shoves him backwards and he lands in the chair almost tipping it over then before Steve can react she is sitting in his lap. "See that is much better. Don't you think?"*

*"Maybe I should introduce myself I am...." Steve says.*

*"Oh I know who you are. You're Steve."*

*Steve looks at her. "I thought you said that you didn't know that Gregg had a houseguest?"*

*"I lied." She says simply.*

*"Oh." Steve clears his throat. "Can I ask you a question?"*

*"Sure." She says.*

*"How old are you?" Steve asks.*

*"Does it matter?" She looks at him her blue eyes never leaving his face.*

*"Well yes!" Steve says.*

*"I am old enough. How old are you?" She asks as she makes circles across his chest with her finger.*

*"Probably older than you. What's your name?" Steve asks.*

*"Virginia. Have you ever been to Virginia Steve?" She asks.*

*Steve looks at her. "I'll....uh....well."*

*“Would you like to go?” She asks seriously. “You know you are so cute, I could just eat....you....up!”*

*“GREGG!” Steve yells back over his shoulder.*

*“Are you scared of me?” Virginia asks.*

*“No, no why do you say that?” Steve asks.*

*“You do like girls, don’t you Steve?” Virginia asks as she shifts her weight and now she is straddling him.*

*“Sure I like girls! Why do you ask that?” Steve asks.*

*“You just seem awfully nervous that’s all.” Virginia says.*

*“It’s just that....well you see....I have a girlfriend and....” Steve says as he fibs just a little.*

*“Oh that’s okay I do too.” Virginia says matter-of-factly.*

*Steve hesitates then he says surprised “You do?”*

*Virginia nods her head as she bites her upper lip. “And we like threesomes; do you want to join us?”*

*Steve turns his head and he yells over his shoulder, “GREGG!”*

*Virginia puts her chest against his.*

*“I thought you wanted to go for a swim?” Steve replies trying to ignore her chest.*

*“Hmmm after.” Virginia says as she takes his hands and she puts them on her hips.*

*“After? After what?” Steve asks even though he already knows the answer.*

*“After we get to know each other better....wouldn’t you like....to get to know....me better....Stevie?” Virginia asks as she takes his hands and she places them over her breasts. “Hmmm that’s better.” Then she grabs him by the head and she kisses him Steve’s eyes widen as he feels her tongue push into his mouth.*

*Finally coming up for air Virginia says, “Do you have a favorite position, Stevie?”*

*“Do I have a....” Steve replies stilled stunned.*

*“Stevie do you think it’s better to give....or receive?” Virginia asks as she slowly slides down from Steve’s lap in the direction of the deck. “Personally, I like to give. Do you have a few hours Stevie?”*

*“A....a few hours, holy....you know you’re awfully....pushy.” Steve replies.*

*“I can be submissive too.....come on Stevie let’s go.” Virginia says as she suddenly stands and grabs Steve hand and she pulls him from the chair.*

*“Where are we going?” Steve asks as she pulls him across the deck to the gate.*

*“My house.” Virginia says.*

*“You’re house? Wait....GREGG! GREGG!” Steve yells as he tries to drag his feet.*

*“Virginia you know you’re scaring the boy.” Gregg says from the driveway.*

*Virginia laughs. “Ah Gregg baby a girl has to have some fun.”*

*Steve takes a deep breath. “Thank goodness, where were you?”*

*“I went to the store.” Gregg replies as he climbs the stairs to the deck. “Go home Virginia.”*

*“Why don’t you come with me....with us? We could have some fun.” Virginia replies.*

*“Go home Virginia.” Gregg says as he crosses his arms over his chest.*

*Virginia pouts then she lets go of Steve’s hand. “Maybe some other time Stevie baby. Bye.” Virginia says as she waves her fingers at them as she goes thru the gate and down the stairs.*

*“Jesus!” Steve says as he grabs his head. “Who or what was that!”*

*“That was a neighbor.” Gregg replies. “You didn’t like her?”*

*“That! She....is a barracuda!” Steve replies.*

*“No actually she is an exhibitionist.” Gregg says.*

*“An exhibitionist? She mentioned that she has a girlfriend....like you have a girlfriend, right?” Steve points at Gregg.*

*“Yeah.”*

*“So if she’s...?” Steve says.*

*“No she’s....” Gregg replies.*

*“She swings both....ways?” Steve replies.*

*“Exactly.” Gregg says.*

*Steve looks at Gregg. “Have you ever....?”*

*“Oh no! You know Steve I can’t leave you alone for a minute. So....were you thinking about....?” Gregg motions with his head in the direction of Virginia’s house.”*

*“Well maybe....for a minute....it did cross my mind....” Steve says.*

*Gregg heads for the house. “Well it’s a good thing you didn’t go....the mailman knocked on their door and he was missing for days.”*

*“The mailman? I guess that gives a new meaning to delivering the mail.” Steve says as he laughs and he follows Gregg into the house. “So you said she is a.... exhibitionist? Got any binoculars?”*

*“No Steve.”*

**XXXX**

*Neal laughs. “Ah shit man! I wish I’ve could been there to see that! Old Perry flustered! You know if he stays there much longer you should charge him rent!”*

*“Yeah it might help pay for some of the damages.” Gregg replies.*

*Neal was raising the beer bottle to his lips but that made him stop. “Damages? What damages?”*

**XXXX**

*Gregg was in the kitchen enjoying another cup of coffee when he heard the front door slam....loud. Gregg sits his coffee cup down as he goes around the corner to investigate and he sees Steve with his ear pressed up against the door, listening obviously, but to what and Gregg also notices that the shirt Steve was wearing, or what was left of it, was almost torn from his back and what was left of it was in shreds and he was really out of breath.*

*“What in the hell happened to you?” Gregg asks as he comes into the living room.*

*“Sssshhhhh! Close the curtains!” Steve whispers.*

*“What? Why? What’s happened?”*

*“Shhhhhhh! Just close the curtains!” Steve says again.*

*“Alright!” Gregg goes over and he closes the curtains on the windows.*

*“Now can you tell me what’s going on?” Gregg asks again as he watches Steve with his ear still pressed to the door.*

*Steve holds up one finger. “Do you have a barricade?” Steve asks.*

*Gregg laughs. “A what! You have until the count of five to tell me....”*

*“Okay! It was women!”*

*“Women?!” Gregg says surprised.*

*“Oh yeah man a lot of women!” Steve turns around to face Gregg his hair all in tangles. “I was at the gas station....”*

*“Which gas station?” Gregg asks.*

*“The one at the corner....” Steve says.*

*“The one at the....Steve! That is like four miles....!”*

*“More like five!”*

*“You ran five miles?!” Gregg asks.*

*Steve puts his hand on his chest still trying to catch his breath. “You would too if a pack of women were chasing you!”*

*“Steve! Come on man! A pack!” Gregg laughs.*

*“Oh yeah a pack! Look at me! If I hadn’t ran track in High School there would be no way I would be standing here!! I have never been so scared!”*

*“What happened?” Gregg asks.*

*“I went to the gas station to fill the Bug you know and after I finished I went into to pay and when I came out there was two car loads of girls, two!” As emphasis Steve*

*holds up two fingers. "And they recognized me! One of the girls yelled and pointed and then the chase was on!"*

*"Why didn't you just get back in your car?"*

*"They had the Bug cut off! So I took off! I was jumping hedges and running thru yards, I think I scared an old lady hanging out her laundry!"*

*"So how did they catch you?" Gregg asks.*

*"I was looking behind me and I tripped and when I hit the ground four of them were on me!! I mean Gregg it was scary! They were trying to get me in their car! If that had happened you would never see me again! I could be in Anaheim by now!"*

*"How did you get away?" Gregg asks.*

*"When my shirt ripped they lost their hold on me and I was gone!"*

*Gregg pats him on his back. "Well I think you're safe...."*

*Steve eyes widen as his hands go to his back pockets or where they were.*

*"Oh shit! Oh shit!" Steve says.*

*"What?" Gregg asks.*

*"My wallet! My wallets gone! Gregg my wallet's gone!" Steve says as he grabs Gregg.*

*"Steve calm down it'll be alright."*

*"No Gregg you don't understand! They can track me here! Shit!"*

*"How? This address isn't on your license."*

*"I know, I know but I put a piece of paper in my wallet with you're.....!!!"*

*Gregg's eyes widen then as he grabs a hold of Steve.*

*"Maybe they won't find it...." Gregg says.*

*"Sssshhhhhh! Did you hear that?" Steve says as he looks towards the window then he walks slowly over to it and he just barely moves the curtain aside and he peeks out.*

*"Oh shit!!!" Steve exclaims.*

*"What?" Gregg says.*

*The next thing they hear is loud pounding on the front door making it vibrate and a chorus of female voices.*

**“STEVE! STEVE! WE WANT STEVE!”**

*Steve looks at Gregg and Gregg motions to the sofa and they managed to drag it in front of the front door.*

**“STEVE! STEVE! WE WANT STEVE!”**

**“HE ISN’T HERE! NOW GO AWAY!”** Gregg yells toward the front door.

**“YES HE IS! WE KNOW HE’S IN THERE! ALL WE WANT IS AN AUTOGRAPH!”**

**“IF YOU DON’T GO AWAY I’LL CALL THE COPS! YOU HAVE UNTIL THE COUNT OF FIVE! ONE!....TWO!”** Gregg yells.

*The pounding on the front door continues.*

**“THREE!....FOUR!”**

*The pounding slacks off a little then it finally stops. Steve and Gregg look at one another as Steve puts his ear up against the door again.*

*“I don’t hear anything. Maybe they left.” Steve says.*

*Gregg goes over to one of the living room windows and he just barely peeks out between the curtains.*

*“I don’t see any cars....” Gregg says.*

*Steve slides down onto the sofa trying to catch his breath. “Gregg I’m sorry....” Then all of a sudden Steve gets a very bad feeling.*

**“Gregg!”**

*Gregg looks over at Steve. “What?”*

*“The back door? Is it locked?!” Steve points toward the kitchen as he comes up off of the sofa and Gregg’s eyes widen.*

*“Oh shit!” Gregg exclaims as he runs towards the kitchen and Steve follows after him and Steve didn’t know what hit him. The back door, as it turns out, was not locked and of the girls had found her way to it and she was in the kitchen and she tackled Steve with a move that would have made any linebacker proud. In the melee Steve lost one of his shoes and a good hank of hair before Gregg was able to pry her off of him.*



***“Steve! Run man run! Go upstairs!”***

*Steve backpedaled on his butt across the floor until he was able to find his feet then he took off like a jack rabbit for the stairs. He scaled them three at a time and when he got to the master bedroom he slammed the door behind him and he locked it. Steve was holding his head where she pulled out his hair and about fifteen minutes later Steve heard a knock on the bedroom door.*

***“Steve open the door man it’s me!”***

***“Are you....alone?” Steve asks.***

***“Yes open the door! This is heavy!”***

*Steve unlocks the door. “What’s heavy?”*

*Gregg pushes the door open the rest of the way with his back and when he turns around as he comes into the room Steve sees that he is carrying a laundry basket full of clean clothes.*

***“Hey what are you doing?!” Steve asks.***

*Gregg crosses the room carrying the laundry basket then when he gets to the door that goes out to the balcony he motions for Steve to open it.*

***“Gregg what are you doing? Are the girls gone?” Steve asks as he opens the door and Gregg carries the basket out to the balcony and he sits it on a table that is there.***

***“Not yet.” Gregg replies.***

***“What do you mean not yet?” Steve asks as he goes out to the balcony and all of a sudden he hears them yelling and when he looks out he sees them assembled on the front yard and when they see him they really start to yell.***

***“STEVE! STEVE! STEVE!”***

*Steve then runs back inside the bedroom.*

***“What are you doing?” Steve asks.***

***“See that note pad on the nightstand?” Gregg points and Steve looks.***

***“Yeah.” Steve says.***

*“I suggest you start signing your name.” Gregg says as he picks up an article of clothing out of the laundry basket and he flings it over the side of the balcony to the girls below.*

*“GREGG! What in the hell are you doing?” Steve yells.*

*Gregg ignores him as he chooses another article of clothing from the basket and he throws it out and over the balcony.*

*“HEY! THOSE ARE MY CLOTHES!” Steve yells. “HEY! THAT’S MY ROLLING STONE T-SHIRT!!!!”*

*“I know that! I had to make a deal.” Gregg says.*

*“A....a deal?”*

*“Yes a deal!” Gregg says as he continues to throw Steve’s clothes down to the girls below.*

*“I told them that I would give them your clothes if they went away!” Gregg says.*

*“You told them what?!”*

*“Do you want to go down there?” Gregg asks.*

*Steve shakes his head.*

*“I also told them that you would give them your autograph so I suggest you get to writing!”*

*Steve stands there looking perturbed with his hands on his hips tapping his foot.*

*“NOW!”*

*Steve exhales loudly as he goes over to the nightstand and he grabs the notepad and a pen.*

*“Just write on every page and when you’re done I’ll toss the whole thing out to them. “*

*“Why don’t you throw them some of your clothes?” Steve says.*

*“Because they don’t want my clothes! They want your clothes! Actually they want you in them! This was the only way to appease them.”*

*“Yeah well what if they don’t go away? What then?”*

*“They will, they promised me and if the don’t I told them I would call the cops. Look at this as the price of fame Steve. You can always buy more clothes but you can’t buy another you.”*

*“That is very astute of you.” Steve says as he starts to fill the pages of the notepad with his signature.*

*“I’ll be back.” Gregg says as he passes Steve carrying the now empty laundry basket.*

*“Where are you going?” Steve asks.*

*“To get more of your clothes.”*

*“WHAT! TO GET MORE OF MY.....!”*

*An hour later it was finally finished the girls were gone and Steve’s clothes were gone and Steve had filled at least two notepads with his signature which Gregg had tossed over the balcony.*

*“Well I think they are finally gone.” Gregg exclaims happily.*

*“Good I think I have writer’s cramp.” Steve says as he rubs his right hand.*

*“You know that was amazing I’ve never seen girls fight over a shirt before, it was oddly stimulating.” Gregg says as Steve glances worriedly at him. “And let that be a lesson to you!” Gregg says as he points at Steve.*

*“Let that be a lesson to me! Are you saying it was my fault and that I did that on purpose?!”*

*“You need to be more careful Steve!” Gregg says.*

*“Be more careful?! How?” Steve says.*

*“If you have to do stuff do it when it gets dark and wear a hat! Steve you can’t go out anymore looking like you!”*

*“Then whom am I suppose to look like?” Steve asks.*

*“You need a disguise.” Gregg says.*

*“A disguise?” Steve says.*

*“Yeah we’re work on that later.”*

**XXXX**

*“Wow! So you tossed out all of Steve’s clothes?” Neal asks as he laughs.*

*“That I did.” Gregg replies.*

*“So what was this about damages?” Neal asks.*

*“Oh well it seems they wanted to take anything that they thought that Steve might have touched, so they took the lounge chairs from the pool deck, they took some grass, plants off of the front porch and oh yeah, the mailbox.”*

*“What?!” Neal laughs. “That is wild man!”*

*“Oh by the way did you know that Steve can yodel?” Gregg asks.*

*Neal looks at him funny. “No I didn’t know that.”*

*“If we ever need somebody to yodel on one of our records we won’t have to hire anyone we have Steve!” Gregg looks at Neal who is squirming in his chair and he has a look on his face.*

*“What?” Gregg asks.*

*“Nothing.” Neal says as he waves him off.*

*“Oh yes there is I can tell. What is it?” Gregg asks.*

*“Well, with Steve being there and all does it put a cramp in your style? If you know what I mean....”*

*“Funny you should ask that.” Gregg says.*

**XXXX**

*It wasn’t that late in the evening but Gregg and Connie were relaxing in Gregg’s bedroom, the television was on and Connie was lying next to Gregg reading a book and Gregg was channel surfing. Steve was in the shower in the guest bedroom, they could hear the pipes rattling and that wasn’t all they could hear.*

*“Gregg?” Connie says.*

*“Hmmm?”*

*“What is that noise?” Connie asks.*

*“What noise?” Gregg replies.*

*“Listen.”*

*Gregg turns the volume down on the television and he listens.*

*“Oh you mean that?” Gregg replies as Connie nods her head.*

*“That’s Steve yodeling.” Gregg says.*

*Connie laughs. “He yodels? No!”*

*“Yeah he does mostly when he’s in the shower. He says it helps him with his cords or something, he calls it ‘vocalizing.’”*

*Connie continues to laugh. “Oh my god that is so....cute! He sounds like that Swiss Miss Hot Chocolate commercial!!”*

*“I am sure Steve would be gratified to know that.” Gregg switches off the television then he reaches over and he takes the book out of Connie’s hands and he tosses it onto the floor.*

*“Hey!”*

*“There is nothing on television so why don’t we fool around?” Gregg says as he puts his arms around her and he draws her closer and he kisses her on her neck.*

*“Gregg, Gregg I....I don’t know.” Connie says.*

*“Why? What’s the problem? Oh is it that time of the month?”*

*Connie hits him on the arm. “No! It’s just that....”*

*“What?” Gregg asks.*

*“Steve is here and he is right down the hall.”*

*“So? He’s in the shower and he can’t hear us.” Gregg says as he pulls her closer and his hand goes under her shirt.*

*“Maybe but I....”*

*“Connie he can’t hear us....so come on.” Gregg kisses her and she kisses him back and he thinks that she is beginning to see things his way when the shower stops and Connie stops kissing him.*

*“The shower stopped.” Connie says.*

*“Yes I heard but he still can’t hear us and the bedroom door is locked.”*

*“I don’t know Gregg I just can’t.”*

*Gregg looks at Connie as they hear Steve turn the blow dryer on in the guest bathroom and they can hear him vocalizing over the roar of it then they head the bathroom door open and then they hear the guest bedroom door open and they hear the floor board squeak as Steve walks on them pass their door.*

*“See he’s going downstairs. Now he is going to go and call his mom and dad then he’s going to watch some television in the living room and then he’ll do some writing. It’s the same routine every night. So come on, he can’t hear us, he probably doesn’t even care that we’re here.”*

*“Gregg I know but....if we were at my apartment and my sister was in the next room could you make love to me?” Connie asks seriously.*

*And Gregg doesn’t even hesitate when he says, “Yes! Absolutely! No problem!”*

*“Gregg!! How could you do that?”*

*“Connie I am in a rock band and when you’re on tour and you share a room with five rock musicians and one of them is in the bed next to you having sex with a groupie you just sort a tune it out. If you know what I mean.”*

*Connie looks shocked. “Gregg that is disgusting!”*

*Gregg laughs out of frustration and when he moves the bed squeaks.*

*“Did you hear that?” Connie asks.*

*“What?” Gregg asks as he looks around.*

*“The bed! It squeaks!” Connie says seriously.*

*“Connie honey come on!!” Gregg pleads as he hits the mattress.*

*“I’m sorry Gregg I just can’t!” Connie says as she pulls the sheet up closer around her neck and Gregg sits up in bed.*

*“What are you going to do?” Connie asks.*

*“Prove a point.” Gregg says then he cups his hands around his mouth and he yells as loud as he can. “STEVE!”*

*Connie covers her ears then she whacks him on the arm. “Gregg!”*

*“STEVE!!” And Gregg yells one more time for good measure. “STEVE!!!” Gregg then looks down at Connie. “See I told you....”*

*Then in a few minutes they hear a knock at the bedroom door and they both turn to look at it.*

*“Gregg? Hey man were you yelling? Is everything alright?” Steve says from the other side of the door.*

*Connie covers her mouth to stop from laughing as Gregg’s mouth drops open. “Oh yeah man everything is just peachy!!”*

*“Oh okay then well goodnight.” Steve says.*

*“Night.” Gregg says just slightly disgusted.*

*“See I was right!” Connie says smugly.*

*Gregg doesn’t say anything he just pushes the covers off of himself then he gets out of bed and he pulls on a pair of pants.*

*“Gregg where are you going?” Connie asks.*

*“Just stay there I’ll be back.” Gregg says.*

*Gregg goes downstairs and he goes through the kitchen into the living to find Steve sitting in his recliner with a notepad and a recorder, the sound down on the television and Steve looks up when Gregg comes into the room.*

*“Gregg.” Steve says as he goes back to what he was doing but Gregg just stands there causing Steve to look up again.*

*“Steve can I ask you for a big favor?” Gregg says.*

*“Ah yeah I guess what is it?” Steve asks as he chews on the cap of the pen.*

*“Do you think you could go to the movies for a couple of hours, ah hell, make it a double feature even?” Gregg asks.*

*Steve glances at the clock on the wall. "Ah Gregg man I don't know I mean I'm already settled in for the night. I have my comfy pajamas on and I don't even know what's playing...." Steve laughs. "...I don't even know where the theater is and I hate going by myself." Steve then puts the pen back in his mouth.*

*Gregg looks at the floor as he takes a deep breath then he goes over to the newspaper and he goes thru it until he finds the section where the movies are then he opens it to that page and he takes the pen out of Steve's mouth and he circles the nearest theater with the times and he tosses it and the pen back into Steve's lap and as Steve picks it up Gregg goes over to the phone and before he picks it up he thinks a minute then he picks it up and he punches in a number.*

*"Monica?" Gregg says. "Yeah hi it's Gregg. Hey are you busy? Would you like to go to the movies? No....with Steve!" Gregg says as he looks over at Steve.*

*"Hey Gregg what in the hell are you doing? Wait!" Steve says as he propels himself out of the recliner and he runs over to Gregg.*

*"Yeah that is what I said Steve....no Perry."*

*"Gregg! Who in the hell is Monica? Gregg!" Steve says as he pokes Gregg in the shoulder.*

*"Yeah the cute one. Can you be ready in thirty minutes?" Gregg says.*

*"What? Thirty minutes! Gregg wait who in the hell is Monica?"*

*"Great! He'll see you then! Bye." Gregg hangs up the phone.*

*"Holy shit! I can't believe that you just did that!!! Who in the hell is Monica??"*

*"She's Connie's friend." Gregg says as he goes over and he grabs a piece of paper and he starts to draw a map.*

*"What does she look like? What are you doing now?"*

*"Drawing a map to the theater." After he finishes with the map he takes his wallet out of his back pocket and he takes two fifty dollar bills out of it and he shoves the wallet back into his back pocket.*

*"Wow is she that ugly?" Steve asks.*

*"No of course not! Here is enough money for the movie and for popcorn and Goobers and anything else you want and you can even put gas in the car."*

*"What car?" Steve asks.*



*“My car.” Gregg replies.*

*“Your car?! Wow! You mean the car that you won’t let anybody else drive?” Steve asks surprised.*

*“Yes that one.”*

*“Where does Monica live?” Steve asks as he takes the money and the map.*

*“You know where the apartment complex is that Connie lives at right?” Gregg asks.*

*“Yeah.”*

*“Monica lives in that same apartment complex. She lives in apartment 501.”*

*“501.” Steve repeats it as he writes it down on the map to the theater.*

*“Now you better get ready to go.” Gregg says as he steers him toward the basement.*

*“What does she look like?” Steve asks again.*

*“Don’t worry about it. She’s pretty and you’re like her and besides the theater is dark.”*

*“Wait! What in the hell does that mean?” Steve asks as Gregg pushes him toward the basement door.*

*“Nothing absolutely nothing.” Gregg replies as Steve opens the door.*

*“What should I wear?” Steve asks as he goes out to the landing.*

*“Something clean is always a good choice.” Gregg replies as he watches Steve go downstairs.*

*“No I mean what should I wear?” Steve asks again.*

*“What do you always wear Steve?” Gregg asks.*

*“Jeans, t-shirts and tennis shoes.” Steve replies.*

*“There you go.” Gregg says as Steve slips into his clothes.*

*“Maybe I should wear boots you know. Is she taller than me?” Steve asks as he holds up a pair of boots.*

*“Steve everybody is taller than you.” Gregg replies.*

*“Gregg that is just rude!”*

*“Tennis shoes are fine.” Gregg replies.*

*“So....who wants me out of here? You or Connie?” Steve asks as he puts his tennis shoes on.*

*Gregg scratches his head. “Steve honestly man it’s nothing against you but you know how women are, she’s a little self conscious about you being here and you know....”*

*“Yeah and your bed does squeak.” Steve replies as he comes up the stairs and Gregg just looks at him. “How do I look?”*

*“Beautiful.” Gregg says.*

*“Do you think she’ll like me?” Steve asks.*

*“Steve I think half the women, maybe more, in North America likes you so yes I think she’ll like you.”*

*“Maybe I should go and do something with my hair?” Steve says as he starts to go upstairs and Gregg grabs him by the arm.*

*“Just do....ah....that flip thing....that you do....you know.” Gregg says as he gestures.*

*Steve looks at him like he doesn’t know what he’s talking about then Steve’s eyes widen and he snaps his fingers when he finally figures out what Gregg is talking about.*

*“You mean like this?” Steve says as he flips his hair over his head then he quickly flips it back over into place again. “How’s that?”*

*“Wow that is pretty good actually.” Gregg goes over to the closet and he takes out Steve’s jacket and he hands it to him.*

*“Maybe I should shave?” Steve asks as he rubs his chin.*

*Gregg says exasperated, “It adds even more to your undeniable charm.”*

*“I should brush my teeth.” Steve replies as Gregg pushes Steve towards the door that goes out to the garage.*

*“There is gum in the car.” Gregg says as he opens the door to the garage and he gently nudges Steve out into the garage and Steve turns around holding his jacket against him.*

*“Am I going to have to do this every time you and Connie want to have sex?” Steve asks.*

*“Yes probably.”*

*“Just checking.” Steve says.*

*“Now enjoy the movie, have fun, and I’ll see you later. Bye!” Gregg says as he shuts the door in Steve’s face and just as Gregg gets a few steps away Gregg hears Steve knocking on the door. Gregg stops then he takes a few steps backwards to the door and he opens it.*

*“I need the keys.” Steve says as he puts out his hand.*

*Gregg grabs them off of the hook and he tosses them at Steve. “You’re really horny aren’t you?” Steve asks.*

*Gregg responds by closing the door once again in Steve’s face.*

**XXXX**

*Neal laughs. “That is classic man how you got Steve out of the house! Ah I love it! Did you ever, you know, catch him with a girl or two?” Neal asks with an evil grin.*

*“Well....now that you mentioned it....” Gregg replies as leans over the table. “...There was a couple of times....”*

**XXXX**

*It had been an odd day Gregg and Ross hooked up for brunch and Steve was suppose to be have been there too but he didn’t show and Gregg had no clue what had happened to him, he called the house and nobody answered, the machine picked up and that was it. Gregg ran a few errands, talked to a few people then he headed for the house. He parked the car in the garage and when he went in thru the kitchen he saw a strange sight. The refrigerator was standing open and since the refrigerator was on the other side of the island Gregg crossed the room and he was just about to round the island when Steve suddenly popped up on the other side.*

*“Hey.” Steve says as he waves his fingers at him with a silly sloppy grin plastered on his face.*

*“Jesus Steve you scared the hell out of me!” Gregg says as he jumps and immediately Gregg noticed that Steve wasn’t wearing a shirt but that wasn’t so unusual. “What’s happening man?” Gregg asks.*

*“Nothing man nothing, what’s happening with you?” Steve replies.*

*“Ross and I we missed you at....ah the fridge is open Steve.” Gregg points in its direction.*

*“Yeah I know.” Steve says.*

*“Well are you going to close it?” Gregg asks.*

*Steve scratches his head. “Ah....well....yeah you know....eventually.”*

*Gregg starts to come around the island but Steve raises his hands. “Gregg what are you doing?”*

*“I’m going to close the fridge.”*

*“Could you just....you know....stay on that side man?” Steve asks.*

*“Why do I get the feeling that something odd is going on?” Gregg asks.*

*Steve makes a face, “Well....no....not odd actually....”*

*“You’re naked aren’t you Steve?” Gregg asks.*

*Steve looks down at himself. “Well....yeah....okay....you could say that.”*

*“Steve what in the hell....?!” Before Gregg can finish he is suddenly interrupted by a female voice that comes from the basement.*

*“Steve, honey, what are you doing up there? I’m thirsty!”*

*Gregg turns and he looks in the direction of the basement door then he looks at Steve who just glances in his direction his hand covering his mouth as he shrugs.*

*“Who is that?” Gregg asks.*

*“Oh....hmmmm....a old, old friend from....Hanford! You don’t know her!”*

*“They why does she sound....?”*

*“Steve what are you doing?” The girl says again.*

*“....Familiar....?”*

*Steve looks at Gregg again. "I'll be down...."*

*"That's Monica!" Gregg says.*

*"....In a minute." Steve finishes.*

*"Can you bring some food too honey?" She asks.*

*"Yeah honey can you bring some food too?" Gregg mimics.*

*"Yeah sure just give me a few minutes." Steve says.*

*"I'll help you! I have to go to the bathroom anyway." She says.*

*"No don't come up!" Steve says as he tries to stop her but it's too late because she is already coming through the door and when she sees Gregg she stops dead in her tracks. Gregg covers his eyes but thankfully she is wearing one of Steve's shirts which she tugs at the hem of.*

*"Gregg!! I....I didn't know....that you were....here."*

*Gregg looks at Steve. "That makes two of us. How's it going Monica?"*

*"Fine Gregg how's its going with you?" Monica says.*

*"So Stevie wanted to show you his gold records huh?" Gregg says as he glances at Steve who rolls his eyes up toward the ceiling.*

*"Yeah....how did you know?" Monica replies. "Well I'll guess I'll let you two guys....you know....talk....I have to go to the....you know....the bathroom." Monica says as she backs up a few steps then she turns and she runs up the stairs.*

*"I thought you two just went to the movies?" Gregg asks.*

*"We did and we had a great time and you said I could have....company." Steve says.*

*"Yes I know...." Gregg says.*

*"....And we have a lot in common!" Steve says.*

*"Such as?" Gregg asks surprised.*

*Steve stands there for a few seconds thinking then he snaps his fingers, "We both enjoyed the movie!"*

*“Anything else Steve?”*

*“Can I get back to you later on that?” Steve asks.*

*“Steve I am shocked....” Gregg says.*

*“About what?” Steve says as he leans on the counter.*

*“Well besides the fact that you’re standing naked in my kitchen, and that is disturbing in itself, is the fact that well, Monica is a little, how do I put this delicately?”*

*“....Ditzy?” Steve adds.*

*“You noticed?”*

*“Well yeah....” Steve says.*

*“Steve didn’t you tell me that you don’t really like ditzy women?” Gregg says.*

*“Well yeah but I was attracted to her.” Steve says.*

*“Really? So what attracted you to her?” Gregg asks seriously.*

*Steve makes a face as he moves his hands down to his rear. “....Ass....”*

*“So her ass attracted you to her, well at least your honest man.”*

*“No of course not! My ass, among other things, is cold.”*

*“Well no shit man you’re been standing in front of the fridge....why don’t I come over and....” Gregg moves a little in Steve’s direction.*

*Steve raises his hand up to stop him. “No! I’ll do it. “I’ll do it.”*

*“What are you waiting for?” Gregg asks.*

*“You....you have to turn around.”*

*“Steve we were on the road for nine months, we shared hotel rooms, bathrooms and even on occasion a bed or two....”*

*“....And I wouldn’t go around saying that, that is how rumors get started! In all that time Gregg did you ever see me naked?”*

*“I tried very hard not to....” Gregg says.*

*“And you aren’t now so turn around!” Steve says.*

*“Why don’t you grab that potholder over there and use that to cover yourself!” Gregg says as he laughs.*

*“Ha! Ha! Very funny! Turn around!”*

*Gregg continues to laugh as he turns around. When Steve makes sure that Gregg has his back turned Steve leaves the safety and the coverage of the island as he scampers over to the fridge and he closes the door then he scampers back to the island.*

*“Okay.” Steve says.*

*“You know I think I’m jealous.” Gregg says as he turns back around.*

*“You looked didn’t you?” Steve says as he points his finger at him.*

*“No! I’m jealous because you got to spend the morning with a girl and I got to spend it with Ross. Why are you naked up here anyway?” Gregg asks.*

*“You heard her; she was thirsty so I came up to get us something to drink. I wasn’t planning on being up here long! So I just thought I could, you know, run up and grab us two cokes or whatever and run back down. But oh no! You had to come home!” Steve says.*

*“Well this is my house you know! I just can’t believe that you slept with Monica! I can’t wait to tell Connie about this and speaking of Monica she’s been upstairs a long time; you should go and check on her.” Gregg says.*

*“Me? What about you?” Steve says. “This is your house.”*

*“I didn’t sleep with her!” Gregg replies.*

*“True.” Steve says as he takes a deep breath. “She’s probably asleep in your bedroom.”*

*“In my bedroom? On my bed? That is even a better reason to go upstairs and check on her....Steve?” Gregg looks at him.*

*“What?” Steve says.*

*“You never....I mean....you wouldn’t....you didn’t did you?” Gregg asks sheepishly.*

*Steve thinks a minute looking at him with his forehead wrinkled in thought trying to decipher what Gregg just said and when he finally figures it out he says, “Oh no! I didn’t and I wouldn’t. Your bed is too squeaky. Do you think you could do me a favor?”*

*“What?” Gregg asks.*

*“Could you grab my pants off of the stairs....?”*

*“Off of the stairs? You two couldn’t wait until you got downstairs?” Gregg asks.*

*“Could you just grab my pants off of the stairs, please?” Steve asks again.*

*“Sure.” Gregg says as he turns and he opens the door to the basement and he disappears and a few minutes later he returns with a pair of jeans and he tosses them to Steve.*

*“Holy shit Steve what happened to the basement?” Gregg asks.*

*“What can I say the woman is adventurous?” Steve replies as he puts the jeans on.*

*“So did you put up the trapeze?” Gregg laughs.*

*“Ha-ha funny! Gregg, you know man, I think you gave me the wrong pants.”*

*“Why do say that?” Gregg asks.*

*Steve comes out from behind the island. “I think these are girl’s pants.”*

*“Girl’s pants?” Gregg asks.*

*“Yeah girl’s pants, I think you gave me Monica’s pants.”*

*Gregg laughs. “So are you going to ask me if your butt looks fat in them?”*

*Steve makes a face at Gregg then he turns himself around as he tries to look down at his butt.*

*“Do they make my butt look fat?” Steve asks.*

*“No. Even if they are Monica’s pants they fit you and how weird is that. Steve you are one skinny dude, man.”*

*“Uh huh. Well I better go and check on Monica. What are you going to do?” Steve asks.*

*“Disinfect the kitchen.”*

**XXXX**



*“Steve naked? In your kitchen? That is pretty bizarre. Monica? Hey wait, isn’t that the chick who thinks that dust bunnies are real rabbits?”*

*“Yeah that would be her.” Gregg says as he nods.*

*“And our Stevie was banging her?” Neal asks.*

*“Yeah, well you know maybe he wanted to try something different. You know like that redhead and long legs phase you went thru.” Gregg says.*

*“Yeah man do I miss that phase.” Neal says as his eyes glass over. “Did....did you say something?” Neal asks.*

*“I said....Steve may not have bought a house but he did buy something.” Gregg says.*

*“What?” Neal asks.*

**XXXX**

*It was a lazy Saturday afternoon, nice and sunny and Gregg and Connie were enjoying some alone time on the deck. They had been swimming and Gregg was rubbing suntanned lotion on Connie’s naked back, since they were alone Connie was sunbathing topless which was quite all right with Gregg. Gregg leaned over her to kiss her on her cheek.*

*“HMMMM where’s Steve?” Connie asks.*

*Gregg stops in mid-kiss near her cheek. “Why did you have to bring him up?”*

*“No reason. I just haven’t seen him in a couple of days. How’s his house hunting going?”*

*“Well today he was supposed to go with Erica and look at some houses. They left early this morning.”*

*The next thing Gregg knew he heard footsteps running up the deck and when he looked up he saw Steve coming thru the gate onto the deck.*

*“Hey guys I’ve got some great news!” Steve says happily.*

*“You found a house?!” Gregg says excited.*

*“No! Even better!”*

*Gregg and Connie look at one another.*

*“What could be better than that?” Gregg asks.*

*“Well, why don’t you two come and see?” Steve says as he rocks back and forth on his heels. “Come on what are you two waiting on?”*

*“Huh Steve....Connie is....you have to turn around.” Gregg says as he moves his finger in a circle.*

*Steve’s eyes widen as he looks at Connie then he realizes what Gregg is talking about. “Oh shit! I’m sorry! Connie I’m sorry....” Steve says as he covers his eyes as he turns around.*

*Connie laughs. “Steve it’s okay.” Connie sits up and Gregg helps her retie her bikini top then he helps Connie to her feet. “Alright Steve you can look now.” Connie says.*

*Steve looks over his shoulder. “Come on follow me!” Steve says happily.*

*They follow Steve down the stairs to the driveway and to a strange new car that was parked in the driveway.*

*“Steve whose car is that?” Connie asks.*

*“Mine! It’s my car! I bought it today! It’s a Mercedes Coup! I have always wanted a Mercedes!” Steve says.*

*“Oh Steve it’s gorgeous!” Connie says as she comes closer to the car.*

*“Isn’t she? Oh man Connie I wanted this car for a really long time....Gregg what do you think?”*

*“Steve I thought you went out today to look at houses?” Gregg asks.*

*“Oh well yeah I did....I mean....we did and we drove by the Mercedes dealership and I just had to stop and look and I saw her and I fell in love! I had to get her!”*

*“Steve! Oh can I go for a ride?” Connie asks as she jumps up and down.*

*“Yeah sure but not like that.” Steve replies as he points at her and Connie looks down at herself.*

*“What’s wrong with this?” Connie asks.*

*“You’re all covered in....suntan lotion....those seats are leather!”*

*“Oh okay! I’ll go and take a quick shower! Don’t go anywhere!” Connie says as she turns and runs up the stairs.*

*All this time Gregg has been standing there looking at the car and listening and now he walks around taking a look at it.*

*“Gregg say something man! You’re making me feel like you’re my dad and I’m the son and I just brought home the wrong girl! I detect a note of disapproval!”*

*“Steve! You’re supposed to be buying a house not a car!” Gregg says finally.*

*“I will but this is the perfect car! It will go in front of my perfect house and I got a great deal!”*

*“Steve I told you before there is no such thing as the perfect house!”*

*“Yes there is and it’s right here!” Steve says as he points to his head. “For as long as I can remember I have dreamt of owning my own house, I mean it’s the American Dream isn’t it? How long did it take you to find this house?”*

*Gregg looks back at his house. “Well....I....it took a little while....”*

*“Why did it take a little while because you wanted it to be....perfect, right?”*

*“Well....?” Gregg says.*

*“....Right?” Steve repeats.*

*“Yeah okay.” Gregg says.*

*“Look at it this way Gregg houses are sorta like women.” Steve says simply.*

*“How so?” Gregg says.*

*“No matter how many houses you end up buying you never forget your first. Right? So this first house has to be special!”*

*“Steve you know your logic really scares the hell out of me sometimes. What is it, an Aquarius thing man?”*

*Before Steve can answer Connie comes out of the house, fresh out of the shower, wearing jeans and carrying her purse.*

*“Okay I am ready to go!!” Connie says as she happily jumps up and down.*

*Steve smiles as he opens the door for her. “Your carriage awaits my lady!”*

*“Gregg honey do you want to go too?” Connie asks as she gets into the front seat.*

*“Na you two kids go for now.” Gregg says as he shuts the door then he leans in and he kisses her.*

*“See you later!” Steve says as they drive off and they wave at Gregg.*

**XXXX**

*“Wow! So Stevie bought a Mercedes?” Neal says.*

*“Oh yeah and I’m afraid that he spent his down payment for his house on his new car.”*

*“Speaking of which, maybe he should find a new realtor. If he and Erica aren’t getting along....”*

*Gregg says. “Oh they’re getting along alright.”*

*Neal looks at him sideways. “What does that mean....exactly?”*

*“It means that Steve found a new way to give me a headache!” Gregg replies.*

**XXXX**

*Gregg had met Connie for lunch and now it was back home to do some chores. Yes even Gregg had household chores to do. First he cleaned the pool then after that he went upstairs and he collected the laundry. Clothes, sheets, towels, the usual assortment which he carted down to the kitchen. He set the laundry basket down on the floor and then he opened the door to the basement and then he picked the laundry basket up and it was a balancing act to carry it down the basement stairs to the washing machine.*

*Now Gregg was not easily embarrassed and he wasn’t naïve and he had been around that block a few times so when he first heard what he thought that he was hearing he thought Steve had brought a television down into the basement and was watching the adult channels. It sounded like a porn movie, the heavy breathing, etc it sounded exactly like that because it was that....except....it wasn’t a movie it was real life. It was real life, in full blown color down in Neal’s basement and it was the sound of love*

*making. Gregg glanced just long enough to see Steve and a girl going at it hot and heavy and that was when Gregg tripped.*

*Gregg tripped on a shoe and Gregg was enough aware that it was Steve's and when he started that long, dangerous fall down those steps the laundry basket went over the railing and Gregg bumped and grinded his way down the stairs. Gregg was rolling, head over ass and he couldn't stop himself all he could do was to try and cover his head. Gregg saw his life flash before his eyes in black and white footage and the last thought he had was that if he survived this....he would kill Steve. He would kill Steve and bury his skinny ass body in the back yard....then the world....went black.*

*"Gregg? Gregg? Can you hear me?"*

*It was a voice and it seem to come from a galaxy, far away, it was tinny and tunnel like and distorted. His head was ringing and his neck and back were on fire and he had come to rest against something, although at the moment he wasn't sure what it was.*

*".....Hmmmmm." Was all Gregg managed to say without opening his mouth.*

*"Oh thank god! I....I thought you were dead!" Steve says. "Oh...don't move!" Steve says as Gregg attempts to move his head. "Something might be broken!"*

*Gregg manages to move his head in the direction of Steve's voice and he opens his eyes.*

*"Ohhhhhh Shit!!!" Gregg says. Now Gregg has seen a lot of looks, expressions and emotions on Steve's face but this one was one of sheer terror and worry. Steve looked like he had been crying. His hair was really mussed and he had dressed in a hurry because all he was wearing was a pair of ripped jeans. Gregg had never seen Steve looked so scared....or guilty for that matter.*

*"Holy shit Gregg you scared the shit out of me!" Steve says.*

*Gregg gingerly moves his arm up to his neck as he winces.*

*"I....scared....the....shit....out....of....you?!" Gregg says as he tries to sit up.*

*"OWWWWWWWW! HOLY SHIT!!!"*

*"Gregg! Gregg! Don't move man! Something might be broken!" Steve repeats.*

*"Maybe I should go and call a doctor or....or...an ambulance or something!!!"*

*"NO! Help me up! Something....something is poking me in my back! Steve tell me the truth!" Gregg says loudly.*

*"What man what?" Steve asks.*

*"Do you see any blood? OWWWWWWWWW!"*

*Steve looks around and then behind him. "No, no blood."*

*"Then what.....what is poking me!!" Gregg asks.*

*"Well man it's the dryer." Steve replies.*

*"Owwwwwww! Holy Mary.....the dryer?"*

*"Yeah man the dryer, you really smashed into it, there's a huge dent. It's sorta formed....you know....to your body. It probably saved your life."*

*Gregg holds his neck with both hands as he looks at Steve. "Help me up."*

*"Gregg that isn't a good idea, I mean. You could really be...."*

*"HELP ME UP!" Gregg says.*

*"Hmmm....yeah sure. Can you move your feet and your legs." Steve asks.*

*In response Gregg moves his feet and his legs although it pains him to do so.*

*"Alright....we're just go slow." Steve says as he grabs a hold of Gregg's hand and he starts to pull. It took some doing, since Gregg had a few pounds and inches on Steve and Gregg was none to steady at the moment and when Steve did give that last final, good hard yank the sound it made when Gregg was released from the metal confines of the dryer was one of groaning and the cry of twisted metal, the suction was such it sound like a cork coming out of a bottle. It was at that moment when Gregg was on his feet that he screamed, his head was swimming and he was dizzy, he leaned on Steve who had one of his arms around Gregg to hold him up and that wasn't easy.*

*"Gregg man are you alright?" Steve asks.*

*"I just fell down a flight of freaking stairs and I could have broken my neck and you ask me if I'm alright! Do I look alright to you!" Gregg says loudly. "Owwwww shit!"*

*"Well....no....I'm really sorry." Steve says.*

*"Just give me a minute." Gregg says.*

*After standing there for a few minutes Gregg says. "Okay let's go."*

*Steve and Gregg take little baby steps. "Do you want to go on the bed?" Steve asks.*

*Gregg glances at the bed which was almost completely devoid of sheets. "Ah no the sofa man. Put me on the sofa."*

*“Are you sure?” Steve asks.*

*“Positive.” Gregg says.*

*Steve helps him over to the sofa and he gently as he possibly can he sits Gregg down on the sofa with Gregg wincing and moaning all the way down to the cushions. Gregg manages to sit then with Steve’s help he carefully grabs Gregg’s legs and he puts them up on the sofa.*

*Gregg grabs his head. “Oh my fucking head!”*

*“I’ll be back!” Steve says as he starts to run off.*

*“Where....where are you going?” Gregg asks.*

*“To the kitchen!” Steve says as he runs up the stairs taking them two at a time up to the kitchen. To Gregg it seems that Steve was gone forever but it was only ten minutes and the next thing Gregg knew he felt something very cold on his head.*

*“What is that?” Gregg asks.*

*“Frozen vegetables wrapped in a dish towel, I couldn’t find an ice pack. It’ll help your head and I brought you some aspirin and a glass of water.”*

*Gregg takes the aspirin that Steve offers him and he chases it down with some of the water.*

*“Gregg I should call your doctor....take you to the hospital....something! You could have a concussion! Internal injuries!”*

*“Okay you can take me to the hospital!!!” Gregg says.*

*“Great man let me just....” Steve says as he starts to walk off but Gregg grabs him by the arm.*

*“And when they get finished you can pay the bill!!” Gregg says.*

*“Me?” Steve asks.*

*“Yes you! I....I tripped over your fucking shoe!”*

*Steve looks back at the staircase. “I....well....I....”*

*“And what in the holy hell were you doing!!! Before I tripped I saw...I know I saw....WHAT WAS THAT STEVE!”*

*Steve scratches his head as he hems and haws and he beats around the bush. "What do you mean?" Steve asks.*

*"WHAT....WHAT DO I MEAN?!" Gregg says loudly as Steve winces.*

*"Well Gregg you don't know what that was? I mean it was just a simple but highly effective position and it....."*

*"I know what it was you moron.....but....Steve what was it! Holy shit I can't believe I saw what I saw!!! That was Erica wasn't it?" Gregg asks.*

*"I....well....you know...I..." Steve rambles.*

*"STEVE!" Gregg yells.*

*"Oh alright! Yes! That was Erica!" Steve says.*

*"You were screwing the realtor?!" Gregg asks as he winces. "In my house? In my basement?"*

*"You wasn't home!" Steve says.*

*"Yes I was too home! You didn't hear me moving around upstairs?"*

*"Gregg did it look like I cared what was going on upstairs!!? You could've knocked!!"*

*"....Knock....knocked??!! Knocked on what and why? This is my house and my basement! I didn't know you were home for crap sakes!!" Gregg replies.*

*"You didn't see the stuff in the living room?" Steve asks.*

*"No! I came in through the back! Steve I can't believe you were screwing the realtor!!!"*

*"I'm sorry but I was attracted to her! I didn't plan it! It just sorta happened!!"*

*"Uh huh!" Gregg replies.*

*"No really it's the truth! She came over here and we were looking at pictures of houses and floor plans and she was talking about square footage, neighborhoods, and I was sitting next to her on the sofa! I was listening to her talk but then all of a sudden I wondered what it would be like to kiss her and BAM! Before I knew it I was kissing her....we were kissing....and then I said I would stop if she wanted to and she said that she didn't want to....we were both really turned on and then before I knew it we were down here!"*



*“Oh yeah likely story!”*

*“No Gregg I swear it’s the truth! I’m sorry....one thing just sorta lead to another!”*

*“You can stop explaining it!” Gregg says.*

*“Oh well okay I’m sorry.” Steve says.*

*“And will you stop saying you’re sorry!” Gregg says.*

*“I’m sorry!”*

*“STEVE!”*

*“Okay! Gregg man Erica isn’t like some relative of yours, is she?”*

*“No.” Gregg says.*

*“An old girlfriend?” Steve asks.*

*“No of course not! Why do you ask?” Gregg asks.*

*“Whew! Thank god! Well because Neal explained to me the rules, you know the unwritten rules.” Steve says.*

*“Unwritten rules?” Gregg says.*

*“Yeah you know. The band rules. No dating old girlfriends, exes, and no dating relatives and that includes cousins, sisters, daughters and anyone else that might be related. And if Erica doesn’t fit any of those then I think I am in the clear.” Steve says.*

*Gregg rubs his eyes. “Jesus! Neal told you this?”*

*“Well yeah...” Steve replies.*

*“Jesus Steve Neal was yanking your chain! There are no such band rules!”*

*“What? There’s not?!” Steve asks shocked.*

*“No! He just made that up! He didn’t want you putting the moves on anybody that he knew! Neal has some really, hot looking cousins and I think that he considers you a bit of a....well a wolf!!”*

*“Me?! A wolf?! What would give him that idea?” Steve asks.*

*“Well let’s see I think there was Dallas....Boston....” Gregg says.*

*“Oh alright already!! I can’t help it if women like me!”*

*“Speaking of women, where’s Erica?” Gregg asks.*

*“When you fell down the stairs she freaked man and she bolted.”*

*“Well I am sorry to have interrupted you two....” Gregg replies.*

*“Gregg man you know it was just for fun....she and I....I mean it wasn’t serious....it’s no big deal really.” Steve says.*

*“And I sure that is what she said when she got a look at....”*

*“Oh now that’s rude!” Steve says.*

*Gregg glances over to the dryer and Steve looks back over his shoulder at it. “I’ll....buy you a new washer and dryer.”*

*“Oh my fucking head!” Gregg says as he holds his head.*

*“What can I do to help?” Steve asks.*

*“Buy a house!” Gregg says.*

*“HMMMM well if you want me out just say the word man I’ll get a frigging hotel room!”*

*“No Steve it’s just that your perfectionism is going to kill me!”*

*“I’ll make a deal with you, if I don’t find anything by say, next week I’ll pay you rent, okay?”*

*“Oh alright.”*

*“And I’ll put a lock on that door just so we don’t have any more....mishaps.” Steve says.*

*“Okay. Oh man I think I am going to lay here for awhile. I think these vegetables have defrosted.” Gregg says as he hands them to Steve. “There is an ice pack in the guest bathroom.”*

*“Okay. You just rest and I’ll take care of everything! I’ll clean up and fix dinner. I’ll be back with that ice pack.”*

*As Steve goes upstairs Gregg lies back on the sofa and he closes his eyes.*

**XXXX**

*“Erica too! Man he is racking them up isn’t he and you’re lucky that you aren’t dead now. Why are you looking at me like that?” Neal says.*

*“I can’t believe you told Steve that cock and bull story about the band rules.”*

*“Why? You saw what he’s like! Would you let him go out with your sister?”*

*“I don’t have a sister and if I did none of you knuckle heads would go out with her. You aren’t an angel yourself Neal.”*

*Before Neal has a chance to respond to that the phone rings and Neal gets up to answer it.*

*“Hello? Hey Steve.” Neal looks over at Gregg. “Yeah he’s here do you want to talk to him? Hang on.”*

*Neal holds the phone out to Gregg. “He wants to talk to you dear.”*

*“About what?” Gregg asks.*

*“Well hell I don’t know I didn’t ask and he didn’t say, he sounds excited though. Do you want to talk to him?”*

*“Yeah, yeah I’m coming.” Gregg says as he gets up from the table and Neal hands the phone off to him.*

*“Yeah Steve. You did? When? Really? You want us to come and see it? Oh sure, hang on let me get a piece of paper and a pen.” Gregg snaps his fingers in Neal’s direction. “Get me some paper and a pen.”*

*Neal finds a piece of paper and a pen and he hands them to Gregg. “Okay Steve go ahead. Yeah. That’s the address. Okay. Yeah sure I know where that’s at. See you in a few. Yeah man later.” Gregg hangs up the phone. “Well imagine that.”*

*“What? What did the boy wonder do now?” Neal asks.*

*“He bought a house.”*

*“He did? Well hey finally! That’s cool!” Neal says.*

*“He wants us to come out there and see it.” Gregg says.*

*“Why do you sound so sad? I thought you would be happy! Isn’t this what you wanted all along? For him to buy a house?”*

*“I know I did but I guess I got used to him being around. Life wasn’t boring when Steve was around, everyday was an adventure. I guess I’m going to miss him and don’t you tell him I said that!”*

*“No problem man. So where are we going?” Neal looks at the directions that Steve gave to Gregg. “Hey that isn’t very far from us. About 45 minutes or so. Let’s go man.” Neal says as he grabs his jacket and he tosses Gregg’s his.*

*What was supposed to have been a 45 minute drive became an hour and a half.*

*“Gregg did you not say that you knew where this was?” Neal asks as he holds up the directions.*

*“Well yeah man but once I got here I realized I had been thinking about some other place I knew. Okay here’s a road I missed before.” Gregg says as he turns up it.*

*“Man this road is narrow and look there’s the address.” Neal says as he points. “Hey Gregg did Steve buy a house or a garage?”*

*“I don’t see him anywhere, oh wait, the garage is opening.”*

*They both look to see Steve raising the garage door with a remote and when he sees them he waves.*

*“Hey guys! What took you so long?” Steve asks. “Look Gregg I got a garage door opener.”*

*“I see that.” Gregg says.*

*“Steve man you give piss poor directions! There is a house around here somewhere isn’t there?” Neal asks.*

*“Yeah sure. Just park in the garage. We can go in thru there.” Gregg parks the car in the garage next to Steve’s Mercedes and when Neal sees Steve’s car he whistles.*

*“Wow man that is a sweet ride!” Neal says just as he is about to reach out and touch it.*

*“Don’t touch it! I just had it waxed.” Steve says.*

*“Excuse me. So where is this house?” Neal asks.*

*“Follow me.” Steve says.*

*They follow Steve thru the garage and down to the house. The house was sitting low, surrounded by trees, and when they got to the house they entered thru the front door. The house was a split level with hardwood floors, a lot of windows, and a huge deck that went around the back of the house. After Steve gave them the tour they ended up at the deck.*

*“Wow there are a lot of trees. It’s so quiet here.” Neal says.*

*“Yeah Steve she is a beauty alright.”*

*“And it is all mine! Well that is after escrow closes that is.” Steve says.*

*“And uh when will that be?” Gregg asks.*

*“Oh sometime next week I think. Gregg do you think I could ask you a favor?” Steve says.*

*“I already know what you’re going to ask. You want to stay at my house until escrow closes, right?” Gregg says.*

*“Well yes and no.” Steve says.*

*“Yes and no?” Gregg says.*

*“Well yeah. Now that I found the perfect house and I have the perfect car I need to find the perfect furniture.”*

*Neal starts to laugh at the look on Gregg’s face.*

*“The perfect furniture? Steve I thought you told me that you had furniture stored at your folk’s house?” Gregg says.*

*“I don’t....I mean I did....I told my folks they could sell it and keep the money and of course if there was something they wanted to keep they could. Besides all my old furniture would just not do in this new house!”*

*“Oh no Gregg it just would not do!” Neal says as he continues to laugh.*

*“So I can’t live here without furniture so while it’s going through escrow I thought I could shop around and buy some furniture. That is if I could still stay with you?” Steve asks.*

*“So Steve this is going to be ready made furniture right? You aren’t having any custom made or anything like that, are you?” Gregg asks hopefully.*

*“Oh sure! That is if I can find what I have pictured in my mind if I can’t I’ll have it custom....hey where are you going?” Steve asks as Gregg starts to walk off.*

*“Steve you know I think Neal has a room you can stay in.” Gregg says.*

*“Wait one damn minute! No I don’t! Neal doesn’t have a room! Besides Steve Gregg said that he would miss you!”*

*Gregg stops.*

*“Ah Gregg man you said that?” Steve asks.*

*Gregg looks back over his shoulder at Neal. “Neal! You promised!”*

*“It just slipped out! Gregg he lived at your house for a month so what’s another month?” Neal says.*

*“Yeah Gregg I promised to be a good boy.” Steve says.*

*Gregg starts to walk off towards the garage with Neal close behind. “I don’t know....”*

*“Come on Gregg!” Steve says.*

*They followed Gregg thru the garage and then to his car where he and Neal get in then Gregg starts it up and he backs out of the garage.*

*“Gregg!” Steve yells.*

*“No!” Gregg says loudly.*

*“What am I suppose to do without furniture?” Steve asks.*

*“Welcome to home ownership Steve!” Neal says as he laughs.*

*“Yeah Steve it’s your own home sweet home!” Gregg says as he hits the gas and they take off up the street.*

