

The Amy Concerto

By:

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To the reader

All people have been programmed to love.

In what form that love develops in the object of our love is how we live.

To be raised in an environment of love is to be most blessed.

To be shown tenderness, when the world is tough.

To be shown to give, when the world is taking.

To be shown to care, when the world seems callous.

To be shown to respect, midst a world of disdain.

To be shown to be honest, midst a world of deception.

To be shown to forgive, in a world of condemnation.

Our future is governed by our history
which we write in our present.

Life is a dance to which we must learn the steps lest we stumble.

Life is a continuum of surprise:
our attitude of acceptance defines our character.

The Amy Concerto

David's blackberry vibrates, he pulls the phone from his pocket and glances at the screen. His lawyer is calling him. "Excuse me, I have to answer this."

"Yeh, it's David." "Why can't you just tell me over the phone." "We can be at your office at two."

Concern and worry wash over his face. He returns to the table.

"Sorry guys, something important has come up, I gotta go."

"Obviously a problem, you OK."

In his office, he looks out through the two-way mirror over-looking the dining room. This was his first restaurant and he is now barely able to hold on to it.

"It's Over. Just not fair." David commiserates to himself out loud. "Dreams into nightmares."

Memories from his past revisit his mind, of his first year serving at The Concerto Restaurant and the conversation with two other waiters sitting at the very table David had just left.

"You screwed her, didn't you?" David is confronted by Tony.

"Yeah, I screwed her, she's an easy lay. All over me, man. She was begging for it."

"You figure women are that attracted to you. You can make-out with any babe you want?"

"No problem, I can. Women want me man. You're just jealous."

"Yeah right. One of these days some woman gonna take you down hard, Buddy. I can't wait to see that."

"Never happen, Tony. I'm the man. Make you a bet, Fifty bucks says I'll do every waitress in here by the end of summer."

"You may think your god's gift to women, Dave, not even you can get that strokin', Your on."

"But you can't say nothing about our bet, OK."

He recalls the type of man he used to be; as though through financial ruin, this is God's

punishment. He truly was a modern day casonova, how easy it was to win that bet, and through the years all the conquests that fell before him. How much easier his sexual mission became with every career advance, bar manager, restaurant manager and soon after, in only his eighth year, buying the establishment in partnership with Tony.

In both business and sexual prowess, the currents of opportunity and success seemed to torrent upon him. Two more restaurants and the seemingly endless queue of women who would flaunt themselves to be his next victory. David could write the book on seduction, although, since he became owner of The Concerto, David always obeyed the number one rule; 'Never ride your own stable, they will kick you where it hurts.' That was his guide, his golden rule .. that is .. until Amy. Amy, the oh-so-inocent and naive, somewhat country, waitress who would change his life forever.



Amy has only just walked in the door from seeing her and David's seven months old son at Children's Hospital, when the phone rings. She quickly hangs up her coat and hurriedly goes to the kitchen to answer it. 'Oh who could that be, if it's David, he's early. He normally won't call till after Two.'

"Hello. ..Mr Thompson, how are you. David should still be at the restaurant.You need to talk to me? .. Yes. and you want us both there. .. at Two O'clock. Yes, I am sure I can make it. .. Bye."

'I wonder what this is all about. David hasn't mentioned anything to me.' 'It must be about the restaurant. David has spent so much money on it, what with buying Tony out and now all these expenses over Davy Jr. Oh, I pray he can keep it going.' 'That must be it.' All these thoughts race through Amy's mind. 'I must call Jill.'

"Hi Jill, I'm troubled. Can you just pray with me for a minute, please. I am so concerned over David. His lawyer just called and wants to see us in his office. I don't know, but, you know how much we've been through lately with Davy Jr. We've spent so much money for specialists and trips and clinics. I'm afraid that we are in over our heads." Amy explains to her friend. "No, don't come over. on the phone, I'll start, ..Thank you." Amy takes a breath and tries to relax. "Heavenly Father. My Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, listen to my plea. I come to you with a heavy heart and troubled mind. I need you to calm my mind and settle my spirit. Please extend your hand over David this hour that he may see through the finances of the restaurant. If there be any solutions, may you show us the way. and Lord Jesus, Comforter and Healer, I ask that you lay your healing hand upon our son. Show the

being the odd girl out.

David couldn't keep his mind off Amy. She effected him greatly. Where-ever Amy was, David wanted to be. If he wasn't watching her from his office, he was on the floor getting in the way, just for a chance to be near her. It became annoying to most of the staff. A joke to many. Ever since she started working at The Concerto, his disposition changed more each day. He became somewhat moody and short tempered. Most often he could hide it all behind his affectionate smile, his outgoing nature and his pleasing ability to make everyone feel at ease and important. What was once his charm was becoming his facade. He was becoming forgetful of even important things. Appointments; supply contracts; even his mother's birthday.



"Marcie, I have an interview at The Concerto Restaurant at Eleven." Amy tells her friend Marcie as she prepares for school. "Yeah, They phoned yesterday and asked me to come in."

"That is great news, I hope it works out for you." Marcie replies.

"Oh, I don't think I'll get the job. I don't think it's my kind of place. Fancy shmancy, the waitresses walking about with their noses in the air. 'Oooo I couldn't do that, I might break a nail, and then I'll be wounded for life.', You know the type."

Marcie laughs, "You never know, they just might need a real waitress there" she encourages. "Use that magic charm you always use to get what you want."

"Marcie." Amy comes back. "I don't have no magic charm. It's just me. Anyway, I'll put some more resumés out, something will turn up."

"I hope so. I sure want you to stay. I feel so by myself here. I miss Calgary." Marcie grabs her back-pack and heads for the door. "See you later, Good luck. Bye. Oh, You'll need to put some gas in the car."

Amy is ushered in to an upstairs office.

"You're Amy Peterson. Please, have a seat. I'm David McGuire."

Amy is drawn immediately to this tall, dark haired man with the steely blue eyes. 'You are so good looking.', She thinks to herself. "Nice to meet you, Mr McGuire."

"No, no, don't call me mister, it's just David. We are not that formal here. Would you like a coffee? I'll have Franci bring you one. I'm having one. What do you take in it."

"No, thanks, I'm not really one for coffee. A water, if you have one would be nice."

David pushes a button on the desk phone. "Franci, could you bring me a coffee please. And a water."

He turns his attention back to Amy. He seems to be studying her as his eyes look her up and down. "I see that you have over three years of experience, very good. Then you know your way around a dining room."

"Yes, I have worked in two restaurants in Calgary. I needed a change. It's as though I am being drawn here to Vancouver. ..Nice city. I love it."

A tap on the door and Franci walks in. "Here's your coffee, David. Just how you like it; little sugar, cream. And your water."

"The water is for Amy. Amy meet Franci, she's our head hostess. This is Amy. Amy will be starting here on Tuesday."

'Starting on Tuesday? You've got the job. That didn't take much. Are they desperate?' Amy thinks to herself. She turns to Franci. "It will be a pleasure to work with you, I'm sure."

As Franci leaves, Amy looks at David, "You want me to start on Tuesday?"

"Yes, I called your former employer yesterday morning, he gave you a glowing recommendation, says you're a hard worker, a quick learner, and very well liked by all the customers. He said that he doesn't want to see you go." David goes on, "You seem just the girl I'm looking for."

"What time should I come in?"

"Stop Franci on your way out. She can fill you in on the details."

"Well, Thank you David. I think I will enjoy being your 'New Girl'." 'Oooo, I hope that wasn't a slip of the tongue.' she thinks to herself.

"And I'm sure I will enjoy you too." David replied as he sees her to the door.

Amy finds Franci at the bar. "Franci, Mr. McGuire told me to ask you what time I should start on Tuesday."

"Don't call him Mr. McGuire. He prefers to be called David; Not Dave, David. He says it's friendlier, more personal. That's what he wants this place to be. High class with a cordial atmosphere. That's the most important part of working here, being outgoing, sociable with the customers."

"I like that. Make it a fun place to work."

"Could you start about three-thirty, it will give me a little more time to show you around before we open at five?"

"I will be here. I see your busy with bar stock so I'll be off."

"Before you go, take this menu home with you, become familiar with what's on it, OK."

All week-end, Amy couldn't get her mind off the overly handsome, soft spoken man who gave her a job. 'He is so much like Daddy.' she thought, 'Don't call me Mister, call me David.' 'If there is ever a man I would give myself to, it will be David.' 'I hope he's not married. I will gladly be his New Girl.' 'I've never met a man I am so attracted to, ...he must be the reason why I came to Vancouver.'

Amy enters the restaurant on Tuesday, "Hi Franci."

"Hi Amy. Oh, I'm so glad you came in early. Come, sit down. I'll show you how we fold napkins while we talk. We have two hockey teams meeting here tonight. Their pre-season banquet so, we need lots. ...This is called a Diamond fold."

"That looks fairly easy, I just hope I keep the menu straight in my head."

It wasn't long before David came and sat beside Amy, lightly brushing her with his arm. The move was a little obvious, both Amy and Franci looked at each other and smiled.

"Hi Amy, glad to see your here. Franci, have we got all we need for tonight?"

"Yes, we should be fine. I'm just going over procedures with Amy while we fold napkins and then I'll show her how we set up tables. I see you already have the tables together. That was nice of you."

"Everything's good then, I'll check with you ladies later." David leaves and Franci smiles and shakes her head in amusement.

"What's funny?" asks Amy.

"David. Did you see the way he looked at you, then brushed your arm? He knows we have enough supplies for the night. It's like he needed an excuse to come over. If I didn't know him better, I'd say he has a crush on you."

Amy grins and ducks her head, "He is very good looking though, isn't he?"

"Vancouver's most eligible bachelor." Franci looks straight at Amy as though she could read her mind. "Don't even think it, girl. He won't ever ask you out. That's a rule they made here. No dating the staff. Besides, he's forty-five."

"It's not his age. It's his rules." Amy catches herself saying.

"Amy." Franci asks inquisitively, "You feelin' what I think your feelin'? That warm-n-fuzzy inside kinda..?"

"Oh, I dunno. Franci. .. I'm going to level with you. I couldn't stop thinking about David all weekend."

"You got it bad, girl. Trust me. You're just going to have to get over it. There's a long line up for that guy."



Flirtation, knowing when to turn it on and when to stop, was Amy's forté. No-where was this more regnant than with David, she had him wrapped, sealed and delivered. All the staff knew it, his friends knew it, yet, despite the several warnings, David succumbed like a fly in her web.

On that Friday night, three years ago, after the restaurant closed was Amy's fortuitous opening.

Two drinks after work, she turns to David, "I think I'm too drunk to drive home safely, will you give me a ride? Please."

He makes a quick glancing search of the room. There was no-one else left. With some hesitance, "Sure, no problem."

"Oh, thank you, you saved me. I've never should have had that double." Amy throws her arms around David's neck and kisses him.

He re-actively holds her close, too close, as she lays her head on his shoulder then raises her lips for another kiss, this time long and lingering.

David feels his knees grow weak as his libido climbs. He knows where this night is heading, and he can't help himself.

The drive to his condo apartment is filled with mostly silence. He parks the car.

"Your place or ..?" Amy whimsically asks. The question definitely rhetorical.

Giving no answer, David walks around and opens her door. Amy feigns some hesitation, then flashes her flirty smile and steps out.

The next day, with a quick stop at Amy's apartment for a change of clothes, David and Amy drive to the restaurant. It's well after four in the afternoon. Since noticing her car still in the lot and the two walking through the door together, the staff recognize instantly the liaison that has taken place. David feels a little uneasy and to avoid any disharmony or

embarrassment, he walks up the stairs to his office.

Amy attends to her usual routine as if nothing untoward has happened, all-be-it with an even cheerier disposition. She appears to be relishing in the watchful stares from the other employees knowing they are making comments to each other about her. David watches through the window as Amy has a brief exchange with Franci. They appear to titter like school girls as they complete the preparations. "What did she tell her?", David murmurs to himself.

A short knock, the door opens and David's partner, manager walks cautiously in.

"Dave, can we talk?"

"Of course, sit down." David points to the chair. "It's about Amy isn't it?"

"You broke your own rules, Bub, you went and fucked her, didn't you, I warned you about her!" He shakes his head. "She's wanted to climb your frame since the day she started here. Now you've gone and done it .. she's got you by the nuts, man."

"Hey!!" David interjects .. "I didn't fuck her." .. a long pause as he defends his actions .. He looks away, "I made love to her." He looks back at Tony, "We made love."

Tony is obviously perplexed. "If that's what you want to call it. It's not how it looks."

"You have always been my best friend, we started at this restaurant together. Hell, we built this place together. We're partners. .. How well do you know me?"

"I thought I knew you well enough to never put this place in jeopardy over a waitress. That's why we made the rules."

"I know, I know, ..I know what you're thinking and I'm sorry. I've been with many women, damn it, we've even competed over women. .. But, .. this is the first time I have ever actually made love. ..I think I'm in love with Amy. .. You fell in love with Trish. .. Perhaps, .. it's my turn."

Tony pauses a moment, "Are you sure? Have you thought out where this is going? She's half your age. You're forty-five, she's what, twenty-two. You've only known her three months. One night and you think your in love. Come on, man. I know you got the hots for her, that's obvious, but, love? How do you know she's not just playing you?"

"I don't. .. Least I don't think so. ..Hope not anyway!" David runs his hands through his hair, "How does anyone know for sure?"

"How far are you planning on taking this .. affair?"

David shrugs unknowingly.

"Everyone knows you got the make on him, now, make it or break it."

I'll talk with him, ..alone. I'll stay after work tonight, .. after we close. Tonight, it's over. I promise. ...What more can I do?"

"Thank you Amy. It's hard. I know."

"If we can't work it out, I'll just have to quit."

"I don't want you to do that."

"What else? I've had other job offers. I just hate to be the cause of a problem."

After work, Amy pours a coke from the bar and joins the group at the staff table. Within a few minutes the other staff depart, leaving Amy sitting alone with David. Amy doesn't know how to begin the conversation she so desperately needs to have with David. She finishes her drink and stands up, feigning to be a little tipsy.

"Oh, my. I shouldn't have had that double. How am I going to drive home?"

"Don't worry. I'll give you a ride. It's not far out of my way. Rather see you safe then have an accident."

"Oh, thank you, your so kind to me." Amy throws her arms around David's neck and kisses him a sweet thank you on the cheek.

She feels David's arms drawing her close, too close. She lays her head on his shoulder then raises her lips for his kiss, - long and lingering.

Amy feels a warm flush through her body. Her head feels giddy. 'I've never felt this way before. I don't think I can stand. ...I'll just let him hold me a bit longer'.

Talkative Amy has become speechless. On the drive over, she knows they are not headed to her apartment yet, she is unable to speak. David opens her car door.

"Your place ..." Amy finds herself in a predicament. Her body is telling her to go with David. Her mind is saying, 'Make him drive you home.' 'I got myself into this. I can't back away.' She looks up at David and smiles, then steps out of the car.

"What a nice apartment you have." Amy says, searching for small talk as David pours two glasses of wine and hands one to Amy. She can feel the tension build as a chill runs down her body. She's getting nervous. She takes a sip of wine. David places his hands on her shoulders and pulls her close. They kiss. Her eyes close and David takes the glass from her hand. His warm hands are caressing her back. She has lost, she knows she has surrendered to him completely. His hands feel so warm against her skin. She feels the tension release on her bra and she is unable to resist; unwilling to resist. A sensation of floating as David lifts

"There is no way I could rent this place on my own." She gently pushes him toward the couch. "Coat off, shoes off, relax. ...gimme two shakes."

'Yes, She is just trying to make me look the fool, using me. I'll have to watch my step.' David thinks as he settles on the couch. Doug Stone's "In A Different Light" was playing on the stereo. The words of the song burned into David's heart.

*"Let them all think what they want to
As for me when I look at you
I see You In a different light
Your hair falling down With love in your eyes
In my mind You're a beautiful sight
I see you in a different light
Just the way I saw you last night"*

Amy carries in a tray of natchos, "You like Doug Stone?, one of my favorites." She leaves then returns holding out a bottle of Cabernet Franc. "Tony let me take this", she laughs, "It's your favorite red." Amy hands him the bottle. "You open, I'll get the glasses."

David pours as Amy snuggles in beside him. He touches his glass to hers, "To getting to know you better."

"What ever you want to know, ask me anything."

"I'll be honest, I'm little scared." Obviously fumbling for words. "There's just to many reasons why this won't work."

"You're referring to our age difference. Doesn't bother me at all. My dad is nine years older than my mum. Well, actually she's not my mum, she's my step mum but, she's the only mother I've ever known."

"More than just our age difference. I saw you talking to Franci just before we opened today. You were both having quite a giggle. Whats'you say to her?"

The question takes Amy a little by surprise. "She knew we were together last night, everyone figured that out. I'm not ashamed of it, so, I told her the truth. I'm in love, for the very first time, I'm really in love." She draws a deep breath, "If it looked like we were laughing, it's because we were happy. I'm happy, I'm in love, she was happy for me. Girls are like that, didn't you know." She smiles as she takes David's hand and presses it to her heart. "Franci was more happy for you."

"Happy for me, how so?"

Amy gets down on her knees still holding David's hand, "Please believe me. Every person

working at Concerto's is family, a close family, they care for each other. And they care about you very much. They know when you're not your usual self and from what Franci told me, you haven't been yourself for some time. Everyone expected me to take you for a fool. I knew that. They could see that you had feelings for me, I could feel you had feelings for me too, but, (mm), you wouldn't ask me out. I know, ..rules, ...you couldn't ask me out." She expels her breath, "Am I the love you need?I so forever hope so.Franci hopes so too, that's why she's happy for you."

David becomes even more addled, "So.. , last night you tricked me into seducing you?"

"No! David No! Don't think of it as a trick, ple-e-e-e-ase. What else could I do?"

Amy waits for the answer she knows will never come. "If I didn't make a play for you I don't think I could stay working there." ..."My heart couldn't take it." ..."There's just too many rumours, too many stories. Like we had a secret romance. I don't want our love to be secret."

David is struck wordless as Amy continues. "..And it's not just the girls talking, the guys are even worse. Not just about me, I can take that, but, about you. That hurts me the most. Making up stories about you. Like I am your secret love child from some previous sexual fling. Franci would tell me everything. She's the only one I can confide in."

A short pause waiting for some response and Amy tries to explain further. "Either I was making a big mistake or,I'll be the happiest woman alive. Either way, I had to know." .. "I did what I had to do."

....."Besides, you didn't seduce me. ..We made love. ..There's a big difference."

Tears form in Amy's eyes, her words exploding in David's mind, '**We Made Love**'. The very explanation he gave Tony. '**We Made Love**'. Over and over the words echo in his head.

The prolonged silence becomes awkward. David's heart is beating out of his chest. He reaches out and drops to the floor to complete their embrace. As they kiss the music changes to 'Made For Loving You'.

As the song plays on, Amy joins in softly singing the lyrics "Call it fortune or just call it destiny, I have spent my life making my way to you, See the way we fit, I'm made for loving you."

They kiss again then Amy pulls back, "You didn't answer my question. Am I the love you need?"

"Oh Amy, I love you, I honestly love you." A feeling of relief flushes through David's body. Just saying those words he has wanted to say for so long brings him sensations of

happiness. He begins to understand why Amy and Franci were laughing. It is a joy to be in love.

For the best part of an hour they sit on the floor holding each other in silence.

No more words were needed. There were no more words to say.

David comes to realise that she has broken through his defence and he breaks the silence. "So why did you come to work at my restaurant?"

Amy's mouth falls open as if to say, 'You would ask me that question at a time such as this?' "I needed a job, silly." She responds.

"Yeah, but, why my restaurant?"

"I gave my resume to several places. You called me for an interview. You hired me. I didn't think you would," Amy shrugs. " ..then you told me I could start Tuesday." Amy pauses, "Why did you hire me?"

"The truth, .. I don't know. I'm glad I did. You are, without a doubt the best server The Concerto has ever had."

"That doesn't answer my question." Amy repeats with emphasis. "Why did you hire ..me?"

"You were qualified for the job; you had experience; I needed a waitress." David's reponse still didn't satisfy her.

David knew Amy was probing for reasons more personal as she rephrases her question. "There are lots of qualified women, with experience: Why .. ME?"

David was being put on the spot to reveal more of his soul. The one thing that has always been difficult for him to do. Open up to what is inner-most in his heart. The thought of leaving himself vulnerable frightens him to his core. Amy was asking him to admit to an infatuation for her from the start. That would be childish, puppy love, beneath him. David was a man; in control. He was always able to keep business separate from his personal life, especially where women were involved. He tried not to answer her.

She persisted, "You had a crush for me from the start, didn't you?" Amy asked playfully. "Didn't you." She giggles. "Huh, .. you can admit it. ..come on. ..tell me."

Amy tickles his ribs. "Davy's got a crush on me." she laughingly sings. "Davy's got a crush on me."

Some playful wrestling eases David's pent-up emotions. "OK, OK. I had a crush on you." A confession at last. .."From the very moment you walked in my office."

Amy looks deep into David's eyes as if to pierce through to his heart. "I love you, David McGuire."

They hold each other close as they lay back on the couch. Amy folds herself into his body. Never has any woman been able to make David open up the way Amy has. Fountains of thoughts fill his mind. 'This must be true love'. 'She's too young'. 'She understands my heart more than I do myself'. 'She's only a child'. 'No, I'm the child'. 'She is so mature for her age'. 'She knows far more about love than I do'. 'I've never felt like this before'. 'This is all too new for me'. 'She's just playing me'. 'Take it slow'. 'If you give her your heart, she'll break it'. 'No, she loves me'. 'She loves me'.

Not a word more is spoken. David can feel the warmth from Amy's body penetrate through to every fibre within him and comfort all his doubts.

"Hey, sleepy head, wake up. You gonna sleep all day?" Amy gently shakes his shoulder then kisses his forehead. "I made coffee, half sugar .. little cream."

"Yeah, Please. What time is it?" The morning has taken him a little unexpectedly.

"Past nine, ..Good Morning, My Love."

David sits up, runs his hands through his hair and stretches. "I must have fallen asleep."

Amy laughs out loud. "We both fell asleep."

"How long you been up?"

"About an hour, you looked so peaceful, ..and cute, I didn't want to disturb you." She kisses him again. "Never had a man sleep on my couch before." she giggles.

"I've finished in the bathroom, it's your turn. There's fresh towels on the counter."

"I got no time. I gotta go." David scrambles to collect his things.

"To be at Gordie's at ten?That's all taken care of."

"What do you mean, taken care of? How'd you know I had to be at Gordie's?" David snaps with a touch of rancor in his voice. "You read my appointment book?"

"No. Tony told me last night. Said you made plans to be at Gordie's by ten, I told him you weren't gonna make it. Tony said he'd take care of it. There, all done."

Amy moves close to him again. "We have the whole day to ourselves. No Gordie. No restaurant. Just you and me."

She gives him a slap on the bum. "Now get in there and get ready." "Oh", Turning to reach a shopping bag, "by the way, I stopped by Walmart on my way home last night. Here, these are for you."

David opens the bag. "I don't believe this, new boxers, new socks, razor.Where's my clean shirt?"

"Give me the one you got on. I'll freshen it up while you shower."

"You're an amazing woman, Amy. What other surprises you got?"

"If I told you then it wouldn't be a surprise now, would it?."

There were no more surprises that day. Just two lovers enjoying each others company. Brunch at Milestone's, and a long walk along the beach. Even the sun felt extra warm for September.



The following week went extraordinarily well, contrary to David's expectations of having to defend himself against a barrage of questions, insults, slurs, ineuendo or plain outright lies. David never volunteered any information and no-one even mentioned a word about his having an affair with Amy. It was as though he and Amy never had an affair at all, except that The Concerto was running smoother. Even the customers seemed happier.

Amy too was noticeably bubblier. There was an extra spring in her step. She was fitting in, becoming part of the gang. No longer the outsider, the misfit, she chatted and laughed with everyone. They still called her Amy-Lou: Monikers stick. David noticed that some of the other servers were beginning to emulate her style. Was The Concerto changing? Becoming a little bit country in ambiance?

A month has past and David's love for Amy is growing deeper. He needs more of her. Two or sometimes three dates each week is never half enough. Could he move this relationship further. It seems he is always following Amy's lead and she isn't giving any signs of taking their love for each other further than just a serious boyfriend, girlfriend relationship. It is getting increasingly difficult to treat Amy as just another employee.

It has always been restaurant policy that as each employee came to work they would greet the others cheerfully. With Amy, it is hard for David not to pull her aside and greet her with a kiss; most times they manage, sometimes ducking behind the back door. The staff pretends not to notice these clandestine encounters.

David is taken off guard the day Amy enters and walks directly up to him and kisses him, openly, in front for all to witness. "Guess what."

David flushed. His immediate thought is, 'you're not going tell me your pregnant'.

"My Dad is coming to Vancouver next weekend, I haven't seen him since Easter. Ooo, I can't wait to see him." Not waiting for any reaction, Amy says Hi to the others and sets to work.

David is left standing there bewildered and motionless with his mouth agape.

"David, Your flies open." a waitress titters.

"Uh," A sheepish grin gives his embarrassment away. "Show's over. Back to work everyone." David hurries to the office.

Tony is going over some files at his desk.

"Did you see that?" David asks.

"See what?"

"Nothing, .. nothing." Not wanting to get into explanations.

Just then there's a knock on the door.

"Come in." It's Franci and Jessica. David recognises immediately that they want to make some comment about what just took place.

"Tony, could you excuse us for a minute, I need to talk with these ladies."

Tony shrugs, "Sure." and leaves.

As soon as the door closes Jessica pipes, "So when are you going to ask her?"

"Ask her what?"

"Duh! To marry you!" Both respond in unison as though they had rehearsed.

David doesn't know what to say.

"It's time, Don't you think. How long you going to keep her waiting?" Franci has a tone of frustration in her voice.

"You , ..both think I should." David responds.

"You bought her ring yet?" Jessica asks.

"Yes, ...I carry it with me everywhere I go." David reaches for his coat pocket. "Here, see."

"I don't want to see it till it's on her finger." Franci cuts him short.

"But, I'm afraid towhat if she says, no."

"God, David." Franci responds shaking her head. "You blind. What else does a girl have to do?"

Jessica puts it to David directly. "She loves you. You love her. You already bought the ring."

"If you don't ask her to marry you, you'll lose her." Franci's words strike deep. "She's an old fashioned girl. She's not going to settle for just moving in with you, uh-uh, no way. No shack-up."

David is lost for words.

"We gotta go back to work." They both start for the door. "Ask her." "Soon."

David is left pondering. He opens the ring box and cries out, "Yeah!" Looks in his directory and phones the number. ..."Scott Bonner please." "Tell him David McGuire's calling." "Hi, Scott, ..good, real good, yourself, ..super. Team on fire, eh. Hey, I need six to eight extra tickets to Sunday's game. ..Together, can you arrange that for me. ..Your the man. One other favor, should I talk to you or Dave.Well I'm getting engaged.Thanks.Amy. I want to make it memorable. I want to propose on live TV at intermission." .. "I'll see you tomorrow."

David's smile is ear to ear. Gives a victory fist then leans smugly back in his chair.

"One more thing." He leaves his office to find Tony. "I gotta go check out the other restaurants, be back." Glances over at Franci and gives her a wink.

The next afternoon David enters the dining room. "Good afternoon everybody, listen up. I've got eight tickets to give away for the Giants hockey game on Sunday. Who wants to go." He holds up the tickets. "They're free, going fast."

The staff gather around David. "What's the deal?" "Something happenning?" "I'll take one."

"Because The Concerto donates to their charity, they asked me to give some kinda' presentationy thing during intermission. I said I would, so I got extra tickets."

Dave could tell by the grin on Franci's face she wasn't falling for any bluff about charities. Normally she would pass on a hockey game.

"Wouldn't miss this game." Franci commented as she took her ticket. "Come too, Jessica."

A little later David takes Franci aside and whispers, "Don't even dare to give so much as a

hint."

"You're safe. Don't sweat it." Franci walks off, looks back and does a little two-step. David just shakes his head.

The first intermission begins at Sunday's hockey game.

A camera man crouches in front. A mike boom hangs over David's head. The announcer blares out, "Hockey fans. Draw your attention to the monitor for a special presentation by our friend of the Vancouver Giants Organisation, ..Mr David McQuire." A cheer as David stands and acknowledges the crowd. He then turns and drops to one knee in front of Amy and the crowd falls silent. The arena monitor captures the whole event.

"Amy, I love you. I need you so very much." David opens the ring box. "Will you marry me?"

The seconds pass by as Amy's eyes swell with tears, her hands cover her mouth.

"Say yes!" Franci bursts.

Amy reaches out and throws her arms around David almost sending the pair of them tumbling. "Yes. Yes."

The crowd cheer and give them a standing ovation.

...."Amy and David, The Vancouver Giants, the Owners, management and players along with all the fans attending today's hockey game and those watching at home, wish you all the best. May your future be filled with happiness and good fortune."....

David sits Amy back on her seat, takes her hand and places the ring on her finger. She weeps, wipes tears from her face as Franci hands her a tissue.

Jessica gives David a hug, "That was the best."

David hands Tony a note.

"OK" Tony calls to the group. Reading from the note, "Leave your cars in the lot, there's two limousines waiting outside. All your shirts are coveredsorry, make that, all your shifts are covered. Let's go party!"

David waits with Amy to give her time to collect herself. "You all go ahead. We're coming."

Amy finishes wiping tears from her face. "Look at me, I'm a mess."

"You've never looked more beautiful." He takes her arm and they walk up the stairs to the

exit.

"I can barely walk, I'm shaking so hard."

As they reach the mezzanine, Amy turns to David. "I love you, David McGuire."

They kiss and relish in the moment.

Several people crowd over to where they are. "Hey. You're the couple who just got engaged." "Good luck." "Congratulations."

A buzz of best wishes rings cacophonously through their ears.

Two ladies ask to see the ring. "It's gorgeous."

The attention was getting a bit too much. "Sorry folks. We have to catch up to our party."
"Thank you all. ..Thank you."

The couple walk to David's car and get in.

David presses a button on the TuneCast and "Made For Loving You" begins to play. He looks over at Amy. "You have made me the happiest man in the world."

"Do we have to go to the party?" Amy pleads. "Right now, I want you all to myself."

"We have to at least make an appearance." "It's all been arranged, ..just for you."

"We'll have to stop by my apartment so I can get changed."

"If we stop at you're apartment, you know, we'll never leave." David gives a little laugh then pulls out his cellphone.

"Tony. Is Marcie riding with you? Good. Let me talk at her." He gives Amy a smile. "Hey Marcie, Amy says she can't go to the party cause she's a mess." David laughs at her answer. "Can you have Tony ask the driver to swing by her appartment and pick up a few things? Here, Talk to Amy."

David hands the phone to Amy. "It's you're roomie, tell her what you need."

"I need a shower. I need my hair done." Amy laughs. "No-one told me David was going to propose. Didn't tell me there was a party. .. You didn't know? .. No-one knew?"Amy turns to David. "You told Franci."

"No I didn't, Franci just figured it out. She's a smart girl."

"David says you're too smart. You could've told me." "Why. Did I look surprised?" "I'm still shaking. Gimme back to Marcie." She turns to David, "Your sneaky." Still on the phone, "The blouse and pants I wore to the concert two weeks ago, ..blue, ..you're a doll." Amy closes the phone and hands it back to David.

"You went to a concert?" He questions Amy.

"At Langara College. They had an arts festival do and we went to see this Japanese folk band play."

"You didn't say anything about that. ..Was it good?"

"Sort of. It was interesting. Marcie's boyfriend didn't want to go, so, she asked me. You were busy, so I went." "You're not upset with me, are you?"

"No. Not at all." David lied. "Just thought you would have told me. That's all."

"I'm sorry. .. Forgive me?"

"I forgive you."

David drives a little slower, trying to give time so as not to arrive first at the party. He stops at a florist shop and comes out with a bouquet of mostly red roses.

Amy gives him a kiss and starts crying again. "They're so beautiful, Thank you, Honey."

Amy sits silent with her head on David's shoulder, quietly sobbing, holding the flowers.

David thinks to himself, 'She hasn't read the card.' He lifts her face and tenderly asks, "You OK, ..Can we go."

"Yeah, I'm fine, ..let's just go." She re-fastens her seatbelt and holds the bouquet close, her face partially buried in the blooms.

David can still hear her gentle sobs as they drive in silence to the reception.

David parks and opens Amy's door. As he puts out his arm to help Amy out. "Please. Just give me a minute to compose myself."

He crouches down and takes Amy's hand. "I love you. ..Where's that smile?"

Amy smiles the best she could, "I'm fine. ...Let's go in."

As they enter the room several cameras flash. David holds up his hand. "Hold the photo's please. Give us minute to say hello."

Marcie arrives and hustles Amy off to the rest room still clutching her flowers.

In less then a minute, "Oh my god, Oh my god." Everyone hears as Amy rushes out. "Where's David,We're going to Whistler?" She cries out excitedly. "We're going to Whistler." She throws her arms around David and kisses him hard.

David says to himself out loud, "You finally read the card." as he watches Amy dance her

way back to the rest room.

The men each approach David congratulating and wishing him well. The Maitre'de ushers him to a table specially laid for the occasion.

The women are all filing into the restroom. The hum of talking and laughter almost drowning out the music.

A near half hour passes by.

"Maybe we should have the party in there. That's where it's all happening."

"Just girls being girls." Tony responds, "Let them have their fun."

Signs of the restroom emptying as the women come by to congratulate David and give him hugs.

David takes Franci's arm as she turns to leave. "Sit down a minute." She sits down. "On the way over here Amy couldn't stop crying. I have never seen her like that before. Then it dawned on me, I've invited all my friends, the employees. None of Amy's friends are here. ..Other than Marcie."

"You're learning, David." she leans forward and kisses him on the cheek. "Your learning. She's only lived in Vancouver for five months. All of her friends live in Calgary." Franci then smiles a beaming smile. "I took care of it for ya."

"How do you mean, took care of it."

"Wasn't easy. Thank God for MySpace and e-mail. She looks at her watch. Their plane landed at 2:45, they called about twenty minutes ago, they should be here in fifteen, twenty minutes."

"Does Amy know?"

"Not yet. This is my surprise."

"You got a big bonus coming. Tony, make note of that." Dave takes her hand, "Thank you. Franci, thank you."

An applause fills the room. Amy is approaching the Guest of Honor table. She is looking more radiant than David has ever noticed before. He stands and pulls out her chair. "You're looking beautiful." He takes his seat beside her and holds her hand.

As the waiter places fresh hor'deovres at their table, Tony stands to address the room. "Ladies and Gentlemen. Thank you all for coming on this most happy occasion. I would like to pr-....."

"Julie, Danae" Amy bounces from her chair and runs to greet the two women who just entered the room.

".....I think this will have to wait a few minutes." Tony sits down again.

"Just girls being girls." Dave reminds Tony "You know, I think we can dispense with all the formalities. It just ain't gonna happ'n."

"Yep, Ah suspects ya'll right, pardner." Tony delivers in a western drawl.

"We can still enjoy the champagne." David signals the waiter. "Andrew, Have them pour the champagne, please."

"You know, Tony. Other than walking over there to meet those two ladies; who interrupted your speech, I've got not much more to do. This afternoon belongs to Amy." ... "Excuse me."

For over an hour, Amy and her two Calgary friends have been chatting. They have sat at a different table and guests join them from time to time. Hugging and laughing and wishing her well. Just the radiance she emanates and the look of complete happiness tells David she's worth all he can give her.

"Catching up. They have a lot of catching up." David tells himself.

David walks over to where Franci and Jessica are sitting and joins them.

"I need to thank you ladies so much for that conversation we had on Tuesday. If it wasn't for you two, I would still be lost in only wishes and dreams."

"You don't need to thank us, it would have worked out somehow." Jessica responds.

"Amy is way too clever to let you go." Franci gets serious. "You have a wonderful women in Amy. ..Don't screw it up!"

"I gotta be honest with you. When it comes to matters of the heart, I'm just a jerk."

"Most men are." "That's why God made women." "Yeah, To look after men." They both laugh.

"By the way, Who made the decorations? And the banner, and flowers?" David asks.

"We did. You like them?"

"I like them a lot. Thank you. But, how did you know this was happening? I only told the limousine company where to take you all. It was supposed to be a secret, part of the surprise."

Franci looks at Jessica and grins. "That's why God made women." .. "To look after men."

"Everybody in Vancouver knows you." Franci explains, "Raymond, the maitre'de. Called

me Tuesday night."

"Your kiddin'." David reacts.

"The hotel in Whistler. .. Called me Thursday. The flower shop. Called me yesterday. How'd do you think the card got in there? Magic?"

"I was wondering about that, I thought I had just forgotten what I told them to put on the card."

Franci reminds him,"Did you order roses?" David nods a yes. ..."But, only roses. ...How boring is that."

David thinks for a moment. Shakes his head, "I don't believe this."

"It's all true."

"OK. ..If you're looking after me that well, how come you didn't arrange for a change of clothes for Amy?" David asks with a gotcha tone.

"When you phoned, we were already at her apartment."

A man dressed in a Giants jacket walks into the room. "A special delivery for Amy." Several hands point in Amy's direction.

Amy opens the envelope. "A CD." She reads the title. "Amy's Engagement." "You taped it!"

"I didn't. The production crew did." "David said He wanted to make it memorable. ..Now you've got it. On DVD."

Amy turns to her friends, "You Gotta see this." then looks around "Can we play this here?"

David has reached the table where Amy is sitting. "Thanks guys, and thank Scott for making this for us." He takes the DVD from Amy and hands it to the maitre'de. "Can you put this on for them, please?"

"Certainly."

Two plasma screens turn on and everyone takes a seat.

Amy's Engagement

David Proposes - October 23, 2005

Amy gives a running commentary for her friends. "There we are walking to the game."

"Showing our tickets. That's you Franci." "Now we're taking our seats." "The National Anthem? They gonna show the whole game?" "No, good, OK, Here's the part. The announcement. David standing." Amy falls quiet. "I waited that long to say yes?"

Franci interjects, "I was ready to slap you. Thought you went into coma." People laugh.

"Here we are leaving" "They even caught us kissing. The buggers." "I didn't see any cameras. How'd they do that?"

A few credits roll and the feature comes to an end.

Shortly after, Jessica calls Amy away leaving David with Amy's friends.

David turns to the two friends, "Where are you staying tonight, did you make any plans or reservations?"

"Figured Amy will be at your place, so, Marcie said we could stay with her. Then, Amy wants to meet us at Denny's in the morning before you take her off to Whistler."

"I see, So, everything is arranged. Good." .. "How long have you two known Amy?"

"Us three. We all grew up in the same neighborhood."

"I still live there, with my parents." Julie explains, "Just two doors down from Amy's parents."

"And Marcie, you moved to Vancouver?"

"I came here in February to take Dietetics at Langara College. Amy came for a visit in June, she decided she liked it here. You gave her a job. So we moved to a bigger apartment."

"You've all been keeping in touch? .. She ever mention me in any of your um,....communications?"

"You asking us to tell you her deep dark secrets? .. No, she hardly mentioned you at all. Never ..nope"

"Yeah, right. David did this and David did that. Oh, David is such a dreamboat. David, David, David.Oh, I'm so angry with David."

"She was angry with me? Why did she say that?"

"Because you wouldn't propose to her."

"We kept telling her, you've only known him for three months." "Give him time, Girl."
"He needs his space."

"Quit screwing him, He'll come around." was Julie's reply.

"You told her that?" David questioned.

There was no direct answer, just a few comments. "Men are from Mars,...." "How to make a man give you what you want."

David was feeling a bit uncomfortable. He was just given a further revelation into just how ignorant he was when it comes to modern day romance.

"You know, .. The more I think I know about Amy, the" David can't finish. "What I'm trying to say"

"Is Amy right for you?" Danae interjects.

"Well,yes. Or rather, ..Am I right for Amy?"

"Because your older?" Julie proceeds, "We talked about that. And then looking back, whenever us girls got together and talked about boys, Amy always talked about the older boys. In eight grade. She had a crush on this grade twelve boy, Brian. Never dated him. Amy never had a date all through high school. Graduation, My brother was her escort."

Marcie continued, "All the boys liked Amy, though. They'd do anything for her... Like, ..she had a spell on them or something. ..And she knew how to use it."

Those words struck home. *'Had a spell on them.'*

"Is Amy right for me?" David asked himself out loud.

"Are you under Amy's spell? .. No way! You're the first man in Amy's life who hasn't fallen under her spell." Danae's remark really had David confused.

Amy returns. "OK. You've had enough time to talk about me."

"Who's been talkin 'bout you?" "We weren't talking about you." In playful comebacks "No ones talking about you."

"Yeah, Right. As though I believe that." Amy stands behind David and puts her arms around his neck. "So. What do you think about .. 'My Man'."

"He's perfect." "Has he got a brother?" "Your right. He's a dream." They giggle making school girl comments. "If you don't want him, I'll"

"He's mine. I'm keeping him. I'm taking him home, right now!" She whispers in David's ear, "Can we go now?"

David stands. "Of course." "Ladies. It's been a pleasure meeting you. I'm sure we'll stay in touch."

The women exchange their good-byes, David collects their things and waves as they walk out the door.

Marcie calls out to Amy, "Amy wait." She hurries to the back of the reception room and re-appears carrying an overnight bag. "You almost forgot your suitcase I packed for you."

"Almost forgetting my mind." Amy gives her another hug. "You're such a good friend. See you tomorrow."

"That was thoughtful of her. Saves us a trip." David begins to wonder if this whole afternoon was as much of a surprise as he had hoped it would be.

On the drive to David's condo he asks, "Tell me, didn't you have any inkling of what was happening? Did you know I was going to ask you to marry me?"

"No. I was taken completely by surprise. At a hockey game. Not the way I was imagining you would propose."

"I hope I didn't spoil your dream."

"No way. I love it! and I got it on CD. I'll cherish this day forever."

"How did Marcie know to pack a suitcase for you?"

"I don't know. I'll bet Franci told her. Ooo the witch. Franci knew everything."

"Yeah, I'm just beginning to realize that myself." David muses, "I'm wondering what other surprises she has planned for us."

Amy and David settle in at his condo and David is taken by the way Amy has made herself at home, as though this was her place already. She had been to his condo several times before, even staying overnight, but, tonight she seems much more at ease. Was this a good sign?

David excogitates with Amy, "I was somewhat concerned about this evening. I didn't know whether to ask you to stay with me here or if you would prefer to go home. You and Marcie settled that question for me."

"You would rather I not stay the night?"

"Oh no. I want you to. It's just that I"

"It's just that you what? What's the problem?"

"It's, .. ah, .. Tell me; Who first suggested you stay here tonight? You or Marcie?"

Amy thinks for a few seconds, "Actually it was Franci who first brought it up. We were

talking about where Danae and Julie could stay and"

"That figures. No don't get me wrong. I love that your here with me tonight. I just want you to be comfortable being here, not feeling forced. I would rather it be your decision."

Amy puts her arms around him, "Honey, Wild horses couldn't keep me away from you tonight."

Amy meets with her friends the next morning. David picks her up at Denny's. He couldn't help but notice an even more girlish manner about her. The entire drive to Whistler, she was prattling on about who was doing what back in Calgary, what was changing. If she wasn't talking she was singing along with the music.



While enjoying a continental breakfast in their hotel room at Whistler, there is a knock on the door, David opens. "It's the bell hop with a large parcel". David tips him and brings the box into the room. "This is strange. Were you expecting anything?"

"No, but it's exciting. Open it, let's see what is."

David rips off the brown wrapping and opens the box. A card on top reads, 'From all the crew at The Concerto'. Two tickets fall to the floor. Inside the box is western wear. Two hats, two pairs of boots and two western shirts.

Amy picks up the tickets. "Blackcomb Trail Rides, Adventure Zone at Blackcomb Mountain." Amy beams with excitement, "This is fantastic. I love horses. I bet this was Franci's idea."

"Yeah. Franci's idea of a joke. I've never ridden a horse in my life."

"Oh, You'll do fine. There's nothing to it. It'll be fun."

"Do I have to wear the hat and boots?" David puts the hat on his head, "Get along little dogie, it's a long ride to Dodge."

Amy gives a little giggle and puts on the other hat. "Here try on the boots."

With much struggle, David gets one boot on. "I guess they fit. Sure is tight."

"There supposed to be tight. They'll break in." Amy assures him.

David beckons Amy, "Turn around. ...Now there's a sexy sight. ...Baby dolls and a cowboy hat." Amy offers a few poses. "Amy-Lou, lets hit that hay."

"No doo, Buckeroo. We are going to the village and buy me some jeans."

Amy heads off to the bathroom to get ready.

"Amy" David calls out. "I've got a problem."

Amy peeks round the door, "What's your problem?"

"I can't get dressed. These boots just won't come off."

She laughs at David's predicament. "That's why cowboys die with their boots on....Ain't no way they can get them off."

After some pulling, David manages to remove his boots.

"You know Amy," he calls out, "I never would have thought this day would come. First I'm listening to Country music, ..and starting to like it; now I'm going to go ride a horse. What's next?"

"Well, When we are married, will you buy me a pickup?"

David just stares at Amy as she emerges from the Bathroom.

"I learned to drive in a pickup truck. That's how we moved the horses.Don't look at me like that. In high school, I used to Barrel race.Don't race anymore but, I still prefer to drive a truck."

"Your an amazing lady, Amy-Lou."

"My name is Amy Jeanette." Amy snaps, then softens her tone, "I was Christened Hilda Jeanette after my grandmother, but my dad had it changed. He calls me Amy-Jean."

It was the first time David had heard Amy get a little testy. He didn't know how to respond. He recalls her telling him that her mother had died when she was only a baby. Which was bothering her? Him calling her Amy-Lou or never knowing her real mother.

David took her in his arms and held her close. After a minute she pulls back and smiles as if to re-assure him that she was fine now.



After their brief but, fun filled sojourn at Whistler, Amy's return to the restaurant turned in to a parade of well wishers, all wanting to see the young 'Filly' who has 'hog tied' one of Vancouver's most eligible bachelors. That was the way the column in the gossip section of one newspaper referred to their engagement. Amy played her part well, despite never before having this much attention from strangers bestowed upon her. They learned that a local sports reporter had re-played their 'Hockey scene' on his TV spot, prompting several calls from congratulating listeners. The spotlight was a little disruptive to the routine of the restaurant, but, thanks to a capable and enthusiastic staff, they managed to keep matters in control.

On Friday morning, by Nine o'clock, David has driven over to Amy's apartment.

"There's a few things we need to discuss." He reminds her.

"I know, Like my Dad is coming this afternoon and I'm totally not ready for him."

"Does he know about us? Our engagement?"

"He's totally fine with it. I talked to him last night. He really wants to meet you."

David detects some apprehension in Amy's voice. "It scares me a little. Meeting 'The Father'." He replies

"You both have so much in common, you'll get along with him just fine." Amy assures him. "I don't know where he expects to stay. Does he want to stay here, get a hotel. What?" She shrugs her shoulders.

"I've got an extra bed room, perhaps he could stay at my place." David offers.

"No way that's going to happen!" an immediate come back from Amy, much to David's relief.

"Well, perhaps Marcie can stay at my place and your dad stay here with you?"

"Could she? That would be perfect."

David suddenly realizes that this was the plan all along. 'She gets her way again', he thought to himself.

David changes the subject. "The other thing is wedding plans. In all the excitement, we haven't had time to discuss anything."

"I know it's our decision, but, I need to talk to my dad and mom before we make any plans."

"Of course, It's not something we need to decide on the spot. We got time."

Amy muses, "Every girl dreams of a big white wedding in a fancy church, a garden reception then whisked away on a romantic honeymoon."

"If that's what you want, then"

"I don't know, perhaps I'm past all those fairy tale dreams. We'll see."

Somewhat feeling as though he is being pushed out of the loop, David resigns himself to the notion of 'Weddings are for the bride. Let's just keep her happy.'

"What time is your Dad getting in?"

"His plane's supposed to land at 11:30."

"Are we picking him up? or are you picking him up? What's the arrangement?"

"We're picking him up."

David bites his tongue, not wanting to comment on last minute notification.

"Are you sure you want to work tonight? Wouldn't you rather be with your Dad, you haven't seen him in a while."

"Yes, I want to work tonight. We're going to be busy. It wouldn't be fair to the others."

"I could always call in Jennifer." David offers. "What about your Dad?"

"You can entertain Daddy. Besides, he's coming to see you. I want you to get to know him."

'There is a lot more to this visit than Amy is telling me.' David ponders.

Only a short wait at the airport reception and the passengers are disembarking. Amy hurries over to her father and gives him a hug as he walks down the ramp, then she leads him over to David.

First impressions mean a lot and David wanted to make the best impression he could.

"Daddy, This is David, my fiancé."

"Good to meet you Davie-Boy, just call me Wilf. Wilf Peterson." His booming, deep voice penetrated the air.

"Daddy, his name is David. Not Davie-Boy. Please." Amy was quick to correct him.

David offers out his hand. "It's my pleasure to meet you, Sir." 'Sir, Did I just call him Sir', David wonders if he made a mistake.

Amy's father was not at all what David had imagined. Here is a well muscled, solid block of a man; caloused hands, and wind worn face age him far beyond his years. Under fifty, yet already completely grey.

"Ah, That's all right, Amy-Jean. ..David, My daughter has told me a lot about you. Just had to come and see for myself."

'One thing, He is direct. This could be a treat. Has she told him we've had sex.' David's mind reels wondering what all Amy has told him.

"And I am glad you could come, Wilf. Hoping to get to know you too."

"I'm starved. Let me buy ya'all lunch."

"OK, How about the restaurant just around the corner from Amy's. My car is double parked in the passenger zone, I can't leave it there for long."

"You ride in the front with David, Daddy. I'll get in the back."

Over lunch, filled with mostly small talk between Amy and her father, David discovers that Amy's father is really very much the gentleman his pre-conceptions had envisioned. Beneath his stoney exterior was a soft heart and loving spirit. His get-up-and-go exuberance and happy disposition was reflected throughout Amy. Yes, this is definitely Amy's father. Something told him though, 'Don't ever cross this man.'

On the short walk back to Amy's apartment, David offers, "You take your Father up to your place, I'll go down and get his suit cases."

David's offer was more so he could have a moment to himself. He needed to assume some control.

As he enters Amy's suite, Marcie was already waiting, bags in hand, for David to take her to his place.

"Oh, I thought you would be still in school." David exclaims a little surprised.

"We have only a half day on Fridays, I didn't want to keep you waiting."

"OK, We should be off then. ..Nice meeting you Sir, uh, Wilf. Amy, I'll see you at the restaurant later."

Amy stops David before he leaves. Gives him a hug and kisses him. "Bye" Then whispers, "I love you."

On the drive over, Marcie exclaims, "So, now you've met Wilf."

"Amy's dad, yeah. Seems like a nice man."

"Everybody calls him Wilf." Marcie lowers her voice. "Wilf. That's my name. Call me Wilf."

David laughs. "I keep calling him 'Sir'."

"He has that effect on many people. But, he's such a great guy. He's like a second father to all the kids. 4H, baseball, hockey. We all love him. He'll help any body."

"Guess that's where Amy get's it from.What about Amy's Mom. What's she like."

"Amy's Mom. She's such a dear. Doesn't get out much though. She's really involved with her church. Teaches Sunday School, Bake sales, you know. If any of us girls had a problem, we could always go to Amy's Mom."

"Boy'o'Boy. There is so much more to Amy. I'm learning something new every day. Why didn't she tell me about her parents?"

"Amy doesn't talk about anybody. It's not her real mom, you know. Her real mom died."

"She told me that part. Is she OK with having a step mother?"

"I think so. She never really talks about it. I never thought to ask."

"My house is your house this week-end so, please feel free to come and go as you please. I think I have a spare key for you."

"Amy gave me her's just in case."

"OK. That settles that. Did you make any plans? I have to 'Entertain Daddy' tonight. Don't know what time I'll be back."

"Didn't they tell you? He's going curling with some old buddies of his."

"No. They didn't tell me. I just assumed it was up to me to, Whew, Thats a load off!"



As soon as Amy walks into the restaurant, she calls out to David. "You're off the hook this weekend."

David walks over to Amy, "About your Dad, yeah, Marcie told me. He's going curling tonight."

"Not just tonight. He's got an 'Ol'Boys' bonspiel all weekend."

"Why didn't you tell me earlier. You had me sweating, what am I going to do with this guy."

"I didn't know either till we walked in the apartment." Amy smiles at David. "At least he got to meet you. I think he really likes you. He said you were a 'polite young man'."

"He called me a young man. We're almost the same age."

"I know. But, you wear your age much better, .. and you kept calling him 'Sir'."

"So, I made the right impression?"

Amy wrinkles her nose in a sign of approval, "I love you, David McGuire."



"Hi Franci, It's so good of you to come." Amy greets Franci at her door. "Come in, I really need to talk with you."

"Sure, anything for a friend. what's up? .. Oh, Hi Marci."

"We made some tea. Would you like some?" Marci calls from the kitchen.

"I don't want David to know, that's why I asked you to come over. Amy begins. Well, I guess it's alright if he knows. I don't really like to keep secrets from him."

Marci butts in, "I keep secrets from him all the time."

"With you it's different. I would hate to get into the habit of keeping things from him."

"OK, What then don't you want to keep from him yet, tell him everything but, keep it a secret. Does that make sense?"

Amy laughs. "I didn't ask you here to make fun of me."

Marcie interjects, "She needs to talk to you about wedding plans."

"Wedding plans? You've only been engaged two weeks. When are you planning to get married? I would have thought you would wait till spring."

Amy tries to say what's on her mind. "I made a vow that I would remain a virgin until I was married. I feel bad that I have broken that vow, yet, I am so very happy that I did. .. But, ..now I need to make things right, as best I can. .. Does that make sense?"

"No. You can't take back your virginity, girl. Did they not teach you that in sex-ed?"

"Yes!" Amy retorts, "It's just ..That ..I can't wait that long to be married."

"Are you pregnant?" Franci responds with a look of surprise.

"No. I'm not pregnant. I'm not stupid, you know. We do take precautions. ...Other than our first time"

"Well then, what's your problem, girl?"

"I have anxiety issues. Whenever I am put under stress, or .. am overwhelmed, ..or .. things need to be planned out in advance, I, ..I panic. I just can't handle it. I start to shake. I start sweating. I start breathing too fast. I become ..You saw me when David proposed. ..It's like I just freeze. ...I can feel it starting right now."

"I don't know what to say. ..uh ...Have you seen a doctor?"

"Yeah, I've seen lots of doctors. They can't find what's wrong. They just give me pills. ...Don't tell David. He'll think I'm crazy! I'm not crazy!"

"I promise. I will not tell David. But, you're gonna have to tell him sooner or later. He's already worried about you, ..freezing up."

"Here's my problem. We have to get married, ...today. Well, as soon as possible. I would rather just fly to Reno and get married. I can't go on living with him like this. I enjoy having

sex with him, yet, I know I shouldn't have sex with him until after. We can't elope, that would destroy my parents. I don't know what to do. I'm stuck. ..and that brings on anxiety."

Franci and Marcie put their arms around Amy to console her. "It will all work out." "It's going to be OK. You'll see."

"That's why I told Amy she should talk to you. Maybe you can find out how David feels. You seem to know him best." Marcie explains.

"If anyone can know David best. He's not one to talk much about how he feels. He can be a bit private, most times. Although, Amy, you sure brought him out of his shell." Franci pulls back and looks directly at Amy. "Your the best thing that has ever happened to him, girl."

Amy reflects, "David needs to be pushed. He's brilliant when it comes to business, but, in love he needs.... to be pushed. I had to trick him to start our relationship. I had to drag it out of him to say he loves me. I had to ..well, you had to, force him to propose. I ..."

"I will talk to him. Try to find out what he's thinking. Other than that, I don't know what to tell you, girl."

"Thank you. I knew I could count on you."

"No promises. I'll just talk to him, That's all I can do. I'll just have to find the right time."



Wedding plans are important for a bride-to-be. It has been over three weeks since their engagement and Amy has yet to even mention wedding. David is becoming concerned. 'No prompting from Marcie. No prompting from Franci.'

David brings up the subject directly, "Amy, there's a couple of things we need to discuss."

Amy looks at David with some intensity but, answers not a word.

"Well, first, there's your job."

"I was wondering when you would bring that up. I've already got the message. No girlfriends or wives. It's a rule. You can't play favorites.But, ..I love working at The Concerto."

"I know you do. But, there is something much better."

The curiosity in Amy's eyes prompts David to go on.

"You are, with out any doubt, the best waitress in all of Vancouver. You know people, you have this ability to understand the customers, individually. That makes you special. You know service. You know dining room. From tables, to seating, to bar, to food, to just making each customer feel they are special. And you teach other servers to give the same attention.

You teach by example, it rubs off from you some how. My point is this. Several restaurant managers have asked me, 'Can we borrow Amy for a few weeks, I want to show my staff what service is all about.' So I thought, why not take advantage of this. Charge them forty bucks an hour. They'll pay it. They know your worth it."

Amy is showing a little embarrassment with all of David's flattery. "Oh, I don't know, David. I'll think about it. The problem is I would have to leave you. I enjoy working for you."

"Well, technically, you don't work for me. You work for The Concerto Restaurant Ltd. I am just the owner."

Amy puts her elbows on the table and rests her chin in her hands, "No, Honey." She gives a smile, "I work for you." She twitches her nose and throws open her hands. "And the restaurant pays me."

David is captivated by the charm of her response, "Your an amazing lady, Amy-Jean." He takes her hands. "I love you."

They both become lost in each others eyes, warmed by the exchange of their devoted love for each other."

Several minutes pass by. David softly breaks the silence, "There is something else we need to talk about. Our wedding."

"I know. I just don't know where to begin. I have a planner with hundreds of things to do, things not to do, who to invite, how many people, what kind of reception." Amy's voice quickens, " food, caterers, flowers, photographers. I don't know where to begin."

Amy's flustering changes to a bout of panic and she starts to shake.

"Amy." David brushes her cheek. "Honey, it's OK. It's OK. You don't have to do this alone."

Amy takes a few deep breaths, "Oh, I'm alright. I'm better now."

David can see that there is more than mild frustration taking play. The always in control Amy. This one is much too much for her. He moves closer and holds her lovingly. He feels her body is still trembling. David doesn't pursue the subject any further that day and takes her home shortly after.

Still concerned over Amy's panic attack, David phones Amy's parents that evening.

"Hello Mrs. Peterson, it's David McGuire. How are you? Oh I'm fine. Thank you.

I enjoyed meeting Wilf. This is the first time I have had a chance to talk to you, I wish this was more than a social call but, I'm deeply concerned about Amy.No, well, I wanted to discuss wedding plans with her this afternoon and she broke out in a panic attack. It has me worried. Is this usual with Amy? So, she's had these before? I know, it's just so not Amy. She always seems in control. I don't know how to handle it. I thought I should phone you. It's such a busy time at the restaurant. ..I'll just have to make time. ..I will arrange that and get back to you.Perhaps it's best if you not tell Amy I called.I do. I love her very much.and the all best to you too. and give my regards to Wilf, ..Bye."

'A weekend in Calgary to talk with her mother, How do I break it to Amy without letting her know the real reason for our visit?' David thinks to himself.

The next day, David buzzes the bar on the intercom. "Who's that? Peter. Have Franci bring me a coffee please."

"Franci, come in, have a seat." David invites her in and locks the door to his office. "This is totally confidential, just between you and me."

"I figured you wanted more than just a coffee. What's so important?"

David lets out a deep breath. "Amy has anxiety attacks. It's a huge concern to me. I brought up the issue of planning for our wedding yesterday. She just started shaking."

"You think she doesn't want to marry you?" Franci deduces, "You can put that notion to bed. She would marry you tomorrow. Jump on a plane, fly to Reno. Get it done."

"We couldn't do that! A wedding is much to important for her. What about her friends and her family. They're all to close for us just to elope. My God, her father would kill me."

"But, That's seems to be what she wants." Franci shrugs.

"But, it's every girls dream to have to have a big white wedding, ..you know, with all the flowers and"

"Not Amy's."

"Look, I asked for your help so I could to take her to Calgary to see her mother. To help her sort out this anxiety thing. I just don't want her to know the real reason we're going, that's all."

"Off hand, I don't know what to tell you, David. If I think of something, I'll let you know."

"Thank you. I have to think of some way to get her to Calgary, and I have to do it quick."

"We'll just get you settled in at the motel and then we're going to the club. Want you to meet the boys."

'There is no way I can say, no.' 'I don't want to say no' 'and he knows we've had sex.' 'Is this best?' 'I can't say no.' 'I hope Amy is OK.' 'This is all Franci's doing, I know it.' All these thoughts rushing through David's head as he is driven to the club. He hasn't taken in a word of Wilf's soliloquy.

They arrive at the curling club and make their way to a room overlooking the curling sheets. David is greeted by several of Wilf's 'boys' and Tony.

"Tony. What the f..," David catches himself, "Uh, what are you doing here?"

"You think I'd miss your wedding? I'm your best man. .. Trish and Franci are here too, they're over at Amy's house."

"My God, you guys." David throws his hands up in a posture of surrender, "OK, You got me. I'm completely fooled."

"I didn't tell you. The restaurant is closed tomorrow. Too many of the staff wanted to come to your wedding, nobody left to run the place. So, I just shut it down for a day. I arranged for an electrician to come in and install the new lights in the foyer. and Drayson Mechanical is going to check for that leak in the hot water."

"This is all Franci, am I right?" David asks knowingly.

"Yeah, Franci and Trish. They got talking with Amy and Amy's mum and decided to just go ahead and do it."

"So, Amy does know. You know, that Franci can work miracles. I don't know how she does it, but, if you need it done, ask Franci."

Wilf calls David over, "David, This is Pastor Michaels. Pastor. This is Amy's groom."

"Colin Michaels. I'm the Pastor at the Peterson's Church. It is so good to finally meet the man who has put the Church in turmoil for the past few days."

"Nice to meet you, I'm David McGuire, I guess I'm the groom. How do you mean, put the Church in turmoil?"

"Come, Lets sit down. I have some papers for you to sign. Gotta make it official. I have known Amy, well, the Peterson family for twelve years. When they asked me to let Amy and yourself be married in our Church, my immediate reply to them was, no, there are formalities that need to be followed. When they explained the situation, I aged to take the matter to council. I convened an emergency meeting and they at first said, no. Then after

numerous phone calls between Susan Peterson and myself and council members, back and forth, we agreed that this is probably best."

"Well, I guess I should thank you. Do I owe you anything. Aah, This is all a bit sudden for me." "Tell me Pastor Michaels, you refered to 'they explained the situation', what situation? How do you mean?"

"With Amy, She is a wonderful girl, don't get me wrong, but, she has never been one who could wait for things to develop. Very impulsive. Events can bring her much stress and she goes into panic attacks. When she was in school, study for a test, she would break down. You haven't noticed this in Amy?"

"Actually, I have. That is why we were coming here. I didn't realize how serious it was."

"It's not my place to talk about it. Any more, you will have to ask the Petersons. I just need you to sign these pre-nuptuals so I can get them over to Amy, She needs to sign too. I believe all this information is correct."

David reads over the papers and signs. He makes his way back to Wilf, "Now I'm worried. Why have you allowed our wedding to take place in such a rush?"

"Well, young man, I'll tell ya. Amy-Jean is such a Yee-Ho Way-We-Go girl she'd have you hog tied, runnin' off elopin' in no time flat. Now we can't let that happen now, could we? Good Christian gal 'n all."



"This has all been a blur. Since last night, I can't remember a thing. I didn't get any sleep. I don't remember renting this tux, or picking up the town car. I remember watching Amy with her Dad walking up the aisle. I remember saying, 'I do'. But other than that, .. until right now, it's all a blur." David is stumbling for words as he addresses the reception to toast the brides parents.

"I ask you to join me in a toast to the parents of my most lovely bride. They have done a most fabulous job to raise such a beautiful and charming daughter as Amy, or as you all know her, Amy-Jean. Mr and Mrs. Peterson, I promise to live up to the trust you have placed in me, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for granting me the honor to take Amy as my bride. Ladies and gentlemen, to Wilf and Susan, the Petersons."

One of David's biggest surprises is to see his own mother at the reception. "Mum. This is Amy. The girl I told you I was engaged to."

"Oh, I met Amy last night at the shower. Such a pretty girl." David's mother turns to Amy,

"I am so happy that David is finely going to settle down. He's my youngest you know. His brother and sister both have delightful families, with children of their own, but, David. Always too busy. Doesn't have time to get married is what he'd say. Now you make sure that you make him come to see me so we can have a proper visit."

Amy assures her, "I will Mrs. McGuire. I promise. David told me you live in Penticton. I have never been to Penticton. It will be the first place we visit."

"And one more thing, Deary, you make sure David calls me, he's always so forgetful."

"I will call you myself so he doesn't forget." Amy bussess her cheek, "I'm looking forward to our visit."

After the dinner and much of the formalities over, Franci takes David's arm, "It's time you danced with me, you don't mind, do you Amy." Amy nods her approval and Franci pulls David to the dance floor. "Are you happy?"

"Yes, I'm happy. I feel as though I've been caught up in a tornado, but, I am very happy. And I have you to thank, right."

"You called me into your office and asked for help, I just did what I had to do. I knew what Amy wanted. I knew what you wanted for Amy. So, I just put two and two together and here we are.

"Yeah, but, .. How did you arrange all this in what, .. four days?"

"You know, It might just be as Amy says. If God wants something done, God will get things done. ..Oh, almost forgot. One more thing. I booked you into the Hyatt for tonight."

"With out surprises. No mysterious packages?"

"No more surprises, I promise."

"Good, and thank you. But tell me Franci,Where have you planned for us to go on our honeymoon?"

"That is completely up to you. ..However, I hear Vancouver is a nice place to visit, and I know this fabulous restaurant. It's called, uh, some classical music type thing, concerto, that's it, The Concerto. .. And there's this cute, bubbly waitress there, ooo, you'll fall in love with her."

"Hmm, sounds good to me. Just might go check it out."

Dan Thompson continues, "Mr Grenwall has completed his investigations and has discovered some very unexpected findings. I would like to say, Do you want the good news or do you want the bad news. They are both the same story. I will let Charley tell you the details. Charley, If you would."

Charley opens the brief he is carrying and proceeds, "I was asked to investigate the hereditary backgrounds of both you, David, and you, Amy, to research for possible origins of your sons medical condition. These are my findings. Both Mr. Thompson and Mr. Shapiro have a copy and I have made a summary copy for each of you."

"I will start with you David. I was able to obtain the medical history of most members of your family going back three generations. Other than on your fathers side, there is nothing we found that would contribute to your son's condition. Your father had a heart condition which lead to his death at age 68, mainly brought upon by lifestyle."

"Now Amy. Owing to the death of your natural mother, it made the job somewhat more difficult. I had to research into personal matters between your father and your grand parents on your mother's side.

Your mother became pregnant with you before she and your father were married. Your grand parents, being Catholic, opposed the marriage. They married regardless, despite all their objections, which led to some intense animosity. On further investigation it was revealed that your mother attended UBC for two years to complete her Masters degree, dropping out of university in October of 1983 when she learned she was pregnant and went home to Saskatchewan to marry your father whom she had been dating since high school.

There is some possible hope for your son which shows in your DNA profiles.

This is your profile Amy.

Notice this marker. A doctor Morris Madison believes that this could point to a possible tiny short circuit in your brain stem which is only triggered under emotional stress. This could explain your anxiety attacks.

The real hope is here, in your sons DNA, the very same marker but which is repeated here. Dr. Madison speculates the combination, or double dose, so to speak, is the source of the violent shaking in your son. If so, there an excellent chance of remedy, being he is still just an infant."

Amy is filled with joy and excitement, "That means there's a cure."

"Possibly." Charley cautiously continues, "Dr. Madison can explore that avenue with you. I will show you another finding."

"These 16 markers I have circled in red on your profile, Amy, correspond directly in your sons DNA profile, These are called, STRs, Short Tandem Repeats, which shows proof that he is your son. Now. Looking at Davids DNA, these markers, or STRs, circled in blue, line up directly with the same markers in your son's DNA. which is proof that he is your son, David."

"We know that, there is no dispute over who our son's parents are, me and Amy." David inquisitively interjects.

Charley is somewhat hesitant, "Yes, that's true. But, these same STRs on your profile and the STRs on Amy's profile led us to do some further investigation. We further learned, through employment records, that Amy's birth mother worked, during the summer of 1983, at The Concerto Restaurant. David. You started working there that same year. Do you recall a waitress named, Monica LeMontangue?"

David turns pale and sinks in his seat.

"The DNA proof is positive." ..

"Amy. Meet your real father." ..

"David. Say hello to your daughter, Amy."

The Amy Concerto is
A Story of Love: Be it a Comedy or a Tragedy

This story may be fiction, yet, it is so very true. Our future is governed by our history which we write in our present.

This is David's and Amy's story. It begins and ends on Thursday afternoon, November 20,

2008, yet it takes a lifetime to unfold.

David McGuire is that man all to many young men aspire to be. Good looking, charming, sophisticated and smart. In business matters he is a master. In matters of personal relationships, though, as with most men, and many women, he is a klutz.

The youngest of the siblings by ten years, by an accidental pregnancy, doted upon by his mother, an inconvenience to his father, never being shown the values in a close knit family.

Amy Peterson was raised alone by her father through her most formative years. Daddy became the ideal of who a husband should be. In control and the dominant fixture in her life. Impetuous, yet, loving, kind and generous. Her husband would be just like her Daddy, even to taking a much younger wife.

Amy is a contrast. A girl maintaining her conservative values yet ably coping in a modern world. It is those very values, which the world disdains, that make Amy so appealing. She steadfastly refuses to give in to pressure yet, uses her charms to achieve what she wants.

Wilf Peterson, community minded, outgoing, hard working, with a heart as big as the prairie sky he was born under. A man who married his high school sweetheart to whom he was deeply committed. Her untimely death caused him to focus all his love and devotion on Amy who was the one remnant left to him of the woman he loved so dearly.

Amy's stepmother, Susan, who loves Amy very much, enriches the values instilled in Amy by her father.

Franci is the astute, discerning and devoted employee that every business would have and should have. Her perspicaciousness causes her to become involved and to take control. She is the glue that keeps the restaurant working together. An untiring work ethic with a need to have her hand in everything, yet an overwhelming desire to make others happy. Franci is the liaison. at 32 she understands the exuberance of youth yet, has the maturity that garners the trust of all others.

David's life has passed by so quickly and uncontrollably, it is to him, one huge surprise. How could he have let things get out of his command. He is, after all, the Boss.

The biggest surprise of all is Amy. Thank God he has Amy. The woman who has taught him more about life and love than all his previous years of experience. Amy; his love, his rock and his comfort. When all else has been taken away, David can still count on the possession most dear to his heart. Unwavering, true devotion from Amy.

But now?