

or something the "next" time he met her, for at least the last twenty times they'd met!

"I'd see her across the sidewalk or somewhere about school and I'd go over specially to ask her out. But I'd only ever get as far as 'Hi, Reba', in my prepared speech and then I'd retreat into something like 'How did your maths class go?', or I'd talk about the weather or something equally unromantic!"

But somehow it seemed different with the school dance as a ready-made excuse. . . . She'd be expecting *somebody* to ask her and David suddenly realised that, if he didn't act fast, there'd be quite a few other boys ahead of him in the queue.

### Whispered Request

That sense of competition decided the issue. Without even giving himself the time to rehearse his speech (which probably would have been fatal), David set out in search for Reba, found her in the school library and whispered his request. (He *had* to whisper because of the library regulations!)

It seemed like the most wonderful moment of his life when she nodded, smiled, and murmured that she'd love to go with him!

But he'll always remember that dance as his very first experience of romance. He did the whole thing in style. . . . In true school dance tradition, he wore a smart suit. . . . He spent time in front of the mirror trying to tame his hair into something approaching sleekness. . . . and he even went so far as to clean his shoes for the occasion! (That was when his Mom knew for certain that something was up!)

He was so worried about being late that he set out far too early and ended up walking round the block several times before it was time to call for Reba at her home. He gave her the bunch of flowers he had bought for her, and he still remembers the thrill when she took out one of the very prettiest blooms and reached up to put it in his buttonhole.

The evening seemed to pass like a

dream, till it was time for him to walk Reba home. Then, on her front porch, he kissed her goodnight.

David took Reba out several times after that, but he wouldn't say that he ever "went steady" with her. In fact, David would question whether he has ever really "gone steady" with anyone. Up to now he's been much too interested in girls in general to voluntarily confine himself to one!

David had never been the genius of the class, but this had never worried Evelyn because he always seemed to do okay.

Anyway, until the ninth grade David's school results had always been comfortably average. But then came the time to switch from Junior High School to High School proper, and David was very upset because most of his pals, including Sam Hyman, were down to go to University High School in Westwood, while it turned out that David himself didn't live in the catchment area.

Evelyn sorted that problem out for him, however, by explaining the situation to the education authorities and the heads of the schools concerned. She finally succeeded in getting special permission for David to go to University High as well.

You'd think that that would mean the end of all problems, at least for a while.

But it turned out to be far from the case. In fact, that seemed to be where the big problems really got started. Evelyn was blissfully unaware that anything was going wrong for quite a while, until one day the school notified her that they had to insist that David attended school regularly, or they would have to expel him.

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