

many pictures to take, and letters to write, and stories to tell. There were so many papers, books and pictures to sign. There were so many calls to make, and hands to shake, and cheeks to kiss.

**COULDN'T LET THEM DOWN**

Why was he thinking about dying? Why was he thinking about the past? His future was challenging, bright and inviting. This is what he should have been thinking about. Those fans could not really be called his past—they were part of his future now. How could he possibly let them down?

With that he began to think about the script he was working on for "The Partridge Family" before he got sick, and the young girl who won a big contest and was supposed to meet him that day. He knew she would be terribly disappointed. He knew that her dream day must only be postponed and not canceled forever.

"I will meet her," he thought to himself. "I only hope she doesn't mind having to wait just a little bit longer."

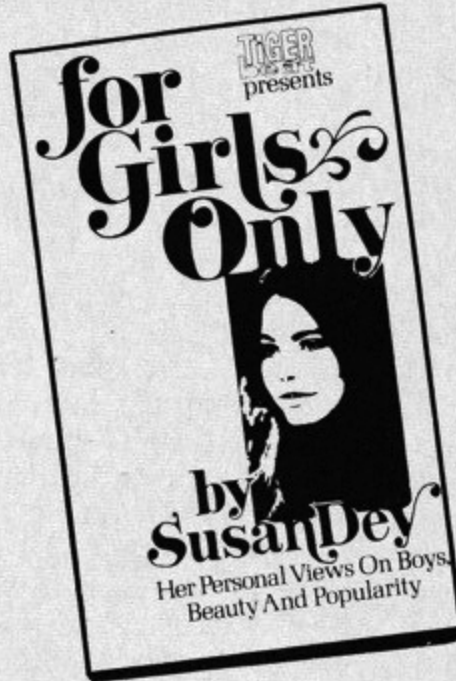
He didn't need that image of his fan's face in his mind to know that it would all work out.

The room was still dark and empty. He was still weak and motionless. The pain too was still there, but as far as David was concerned, it was as far away as that swing in New Jersey.



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