

## Forbidden Love

*by Suzy Hopkins*

One fateful day when I was 15, I stopped at the music store in my home town. The guy working there was tall (6'4"), handsome, humorous and enthusiastic about jazz. He introduced me to the work of Dave Brubeck and many other jazz greats. On Friday and Saturday nights he was a drummer in a jazz club in Boston, even though he was only 18. He also had a business mowing lawns, rode a Harley Davidson customized chopper, was thrown out of high school on a regular basis. Just my kind of guy.

Bebe and I became inseparable, but of course my parents didn't approve. Bebe's rebelliousness was not as appealing to them. One day, after a year of joyfully being with him some of each day, my parents sat us down on their living room couches. They said we were n-e-v-e-r to see each other again. It still hurts to remember that awful day. I felt my life had ended.

For the next two years Bebe climbed the tree that was under my bedroom window every night so we could talk, except when it rained or snowed; we left notes every single day in each of two red emergency fire alarm boxes which hung on telephone poles: one near his house, one near mine. We met in Boston every Friday night and any other free time we could arrange out of sight of anyone who knew us.

Bebe made a life-changing mistake. He got a girl pregnant. He was forced to marry her by her parents, his parents and social pressures. So, then my life really did end. He was now untouchable. Without his knowledge I quietly left our home town to go to college in Pennsylvania. One year later Bebe appeared at my college apartment's front door. Once again we had to say a painful 'forever' goodbye.

In 1967, I met my first husband Tony in Pennsylvania. Two years later we moved to Boston. Somehow Bebe discovered I had moved again and found me. He would meet me for lunch in Boston about once a month.

In 1973 Tony and I bought a house on a lake in New Hampshire, had our son and I quit work to be an at-home-mom. I didn't tell Bebe about the New Hampshire move but somehow he found me again. We used to talk for hours on the phone. Since my husband worked at night Bebe stayed late at the company he owned so we could talk.

Six years later, in 1979, when I got divorced, Bebe and I would meet on his yacht in Boston harbor.

A few years later I met and married my second husband. When we secretly moved to California it took Bebe 10 years to find me. He was still married but by that time I was single again. We would get together during his business trips to San Francisco in the 1990's.

I needed to put him out of my mind. Miserably, I changed my number and moved to northern California. However, he discovered my unlisted number in Sacramento in the Spring of 2012. He was still married. Once again goodbye, 'forever'.

Fifty-six years of a melancholy secret.

In the Fall of 2012 I moved to Denver. I wonder how long it will be until he finds me.