

Preface

In 1964, the year I turned seventeen years old, I kept a diary. What had happened was this: At a convention of high school journalism students from around the state of Ohio, a teacher had recommended that the best way to make oneself a good reporter was to keep a daily journal. The teacher said that the discipline of making yourself write down exactly what happened to you every day, even when you didn't feel like writing, was good training.

So for that one year I did it. I would write the diary late at night, just before going to bed. I didn't tell any of my friends about it; there were probably millions of teen-age girls who were keeping diaries that same year, but for a boy to admit to his buddies that he was keeping a diary would be—to use the only appropriate term of the era—queer.

I wrote every night. The notations in the diary were pretty much in the style of the late Walter Winchell—quick observations, bits of dialogue, pithy descriptions of the people I met and the places I went. When 1964 was over I finished the last day of the diary, and that was that.

Years later, I found the diary in a drawer, and I read it again. It startled me. At the time I wrote it, I didn't think of it as much more than a sort of journalistic exercise—a high school student's way to train himself to observe things and record his thoughts. But when I looked at the diary after years had passed, I realized that what I had here was something money could not buy: time preserved. Most of us tend to look back on our teen-age years as if they were some pleasant, seamless movie made up of endless pleasure, bathed in a warm, unfocused glow of nostalgia. My 1964 diary gave me no such luxury. Yes, the great times were there, in generous quantity, but they were mixed with heartache and hurt, one set of emotions sometimes replacing the other within a twenty-four-hour period.

In short, I had—in the most stark, specific terms—that year available to me, as current as the days when I had first written about it. And that diary is what led to this book.

The closest I can come to explaining how I wrote the book you now hold in your hands is to say that it felt very much like restoring a cracked and faded old photograph. All of the characters and events and quotations were in the original 1964 diary, but they were not in narrative form. It was startling to me how the cryptic sentence fragments and disjointed conversations and hurriedly written descriptions of emotions in the diary brought back so vividly the days and nights when they had first happened. My job was to use the details in the diary as notes, and to build this book using those notes. I have done my best not to stray from the spirit and the sequence of events in the original diary. And most of all I have tried to retain the voice of the boy who kept that diary.

All of us, no matter when we were born, have years that touch us in a similar way to how 1964 touched me. But 1964 was a unique time. America still had one foot in the Fifties, while tentatively stepping into the Sixties. When most people hear about the Sixties today, they think about the decade in terms of stereotypes: the radical change in musical styles, the revolution in sexual attitudes, the urban race riots, the student activism on campuses, the pain of Vietnam.

It is easy to forget that at the beginning of 1964, all of that had yet to happen. The year was part of the Sixties, yes, but it was very much the ending of one era and the beginning of the next. Like most other things that happen in our society, it took place so gradually that we hardly noticed it at the time.

But this book is not about politics and it is not about cultural change. It is about one year in the life of one boy and his friends who were growing up in the middle of the country. There were important events happening in the outside world that year—events that journalists of the era were chronicling every day. As you will see, my friends and I paid little attention to those things. Probably most of us, teen-agers or not, are like that. The real truths of our lives don't make the six o'clock news or the morning paper.

A note about the setting of the book: Everything happens in Bexley, Ohio, a suburb of the city of Columbus. Once you drove over the Bexley line, you were in Columbus itself, so when Bexley people went "downtown," they were going to downtown Columbus. It was as if you lived in Bexley and Columbus at the same time; your home was in Bexley, but your frame of reference was Columbus. Bexley was—and is—a town of

approximately fifteen thousand people, virtually all of them white. It was the kind of suburb where teen-agers generally didn't have to worry about where their allowance money was coming from; by and large, Bexley, like so many suburbs of the Sixties, was composed of stable families where the fathers brought home "comfortable" paychecks every week. Bexley High School had a student population of eight hundred or so; everyone tended to know everyone else.

A word about technique: All of the people and places in this book are real, precisely as they appeared in the original diary. In several cases—where I felt that, even all these years later, the events depicted might prove embarrassing to a person—I have changed names. Some of the things that happen in the course of this book I am, in retrospect, not especially proud of. But my decision was not to censor myself, either in terms of events or emotions.

Working on this book has been as much fun for me as any writing project with which I have ever been involved. No matter what problems were going on in my 1980s daily life as I wrote the book, there was a time each day when I could pull the original diary out, go over the events of 1964, and then try to get them down on paper. It has been like stepping into a daily time machine; I have been able to walk away from the world I live in now, and walk into 1964.

That year was a very special time in my life. My greatest hope is that, in reading this book, you may be reminded of special times in your life, too.

BOB GREENE

January 2

I was snowing this morning when I woke up. The clock radio next to my bed went off, and I was hoping that the voices would say that the schools were all closed because of the weather. But they didn't; the news came on at five till seven and there was nothing at all about school closings, and then the music came back. "Louie, Louie" is number one in Columbus this week.

The reason that I was hoping for no school is that we were supposed to have a test in Schacht's Algebra class this morning, and I didn't study at all over Christmas vacation. Mr. Schacht is the hardest teacher in the school, and there was no way that I was going to pass the test. The rumor around the school is that he was written up in *Life* magazine about fifteen years ago for being one of the best teachers in America; they were supposed to have printed an "honor roll" of the country's finest educators, and Schacht was supposed to have made it, with a picture and everything. The only teacher from Bexley High School on the list.

He was standing by the blackboard in his brown suit when we came into class—he had chalk all over the sleeves, as usual. He was smiling, and he asked us if we'd had a good vacation. We all just sort of mumbled, and then he said he had a surprise for us—he was postponing the test. So the disaster will be delayed.

In study hall the next period Carol Lowenthal sat next to me; she's one of the very best-looking of the sophomore girls. She said that she heard that Chuck Shenk and I are great dancers; she said, "Next year is really going to be terrific."

Well, first of all I'm not that good a dancer at all. And second of all, I knew what she was getting at. She and her friends—Linda McClure and all the rest of them—are already thinking ahead to next year, when all of the seniors have gone off to college and all of us juniors become the oldest guys in the school. Notice that she didn't say anything about going out with Chuck or me this year; it's next year she has in mind.

Oh, well. It was nice to hear that she was interested, anyway.

After school we had paste-up for our pages in the *Torch* office. I was pasting up page 1—that's the page I'm editor of—and Judy Furman came over and said, "So, did you go out with Lindy New Year's Eve?"

I just looked at her.

I'm listening to "Hootenanny" on WBNS right now. Mom and Dad are in their room watching television; Debby is doing her homework and Timmy's on the phone with one of his friends. I think WBNS realizes that because it refuses to play any rock and roll, it's losing all of its younger listeners to WCOL. WBNS seems to figure that by having "Hootenanny" on the air every night it can get some of us back.

I don't know—I really like folk music, but it gets pretty boring after an hour or so.

TV Guide says that James Dean is on Channel 10 in *East of Eden* at eleven-thirty. If I pull my portable TV close to the bed so the light from the screen doesn't show under the bottom of my bedroom door, and if I keep the sound low enough, Mom and Dad won't know that I've got it on so late. I think I'll stay up and watch.

January 3

FRENCH quiz this afternoon. I may have flunked it.

Tonight there was a basketball game against Whitehall. All of us (ABCDJ) went to it together.

ABCDJ is what the five of us call each other. We've been best friends all during high school, and I would bet that we remain best friends for the rest of our lives. The letters stand for the first initials of each of our first names.

A is Allen Schulman. His parents' apartment is where the New Year's Eve party was. Besides being the only one of us who doesn't live in a house, Allen is the only one of us who doesn't go to Bexley. He goes to military school down in West Virginia, which is a drag—he's only home during the summer and during school vacations. He's been home for Christmas these last couple of weeks, but in a few days he's going back to his school. I like him as well as anybody in the world, but it's tough having one of your best friends not even be around more than half of the time. It's great when he's here, though—when ABCDJ walked into the school gym tonight, we really felt complete.

B, of course, is me.

C is Chuck Shenk. His father is a big-deal businessman, but the thing I like the most about Chuck is that he doesn't seem to care about anything. You could tell him that the world was going to end at midnight, and he'd probably just toss his head to one side and then say, "Let's go to the Toddle House for chesscutters and banana cream pie." A lot of the big athletes in the school don't particularly like Chuck, but I think that's because they don't really understand him. I think he has that problem a lot—my dad, for example, doesn't particularly get along with him, either. People think he's being a wisecass because he's always grinning at what they say, and not saying anything in return. I don't think he's trying to be wise; I just don't think he wastes a lot of time thinking about things one way or the other.

D is Danny Dick. Dan's one of the best tennis players in the state of Ohio—he was one of only three or four guys in our class, in any sport, to letter our freshman year. Sometimes he seems to be living in a world of his own—he talks about an imaginary frog named Reedeep Reeves—but watch him on that tennis court and you've never seen anything like it in your life. Some people rag him because he's short; I think they're just jealous because as big as they are, Dan was the one who was wearing a Bexley letter jacket way before they were. He'll get his revenge on them soon enough; his older brother Dicky Dick is a real big guy, and Dicky grew late, too, so Dan will be catching up. The Dick family has a great-looking gray '56 Thunderbird convertible, which Dan gets to drive all he wants. There's only room for one other person in it, so we can never take it out when we all want to cruise together, but boy, is it beautiful.

J is Jack Roth. He's my oldest friend in the world—we became best friends when we were five years old in kindergarten, which was eleven years ago. His house on Ardmore has a little hill on the street side of the backyard, and when we were kids we used to play Audie Murphy and charge up the hill with toy guns. In a way, Jack seems like the oldest of all of us, even though we're all the same age. His mom died last year, and he's the only one of us who doesn't have both parents alive. It's funny—Jack and I have always been able to talk about just about anything, but we've never talked about that. I've noticed it, though—Jack just seems older now, and I think that's what did it.

So anyway, ABCD) were all in the stands at the game tonight. We went out into the lobby at half time to get popcorn, and who do we bump into but Lindy and her friends. I immediately felt myself going into a daze; she said something that I couldn't hear, and Allen just walked up to her and told her to go away. That's why I think I like him so much; he knew that if it were up to me I'd stand there and try to talk to her and end up not being cool at all, so he was cool for me.

TODAY'S Saturday; at noon Dave Frasch and Tim Greiner and I went downtown to the Lazarus department store, and I bought a guitar. It has steel strings and it cost nineteen dollars.

I sat there in the musical instrument department of Lazarus and tried to play it; I have no idea how to play, but Dave already has one, and he said you could learn it pretty easily from a book. So I bought an instruction book; the front half shows you how to make the chords, and the back half has songs that you can play.

Dave and Tim aren't part of ABCD); Dave is the quarterback on the football team and Tim is the catcher on the baseball team, so they run with a different crowd—the big athletes. It's funny; I run with my friends, and it's a pretty self-contained group. They run with their friends, the star football and basketball and baseball players, and that's a pretty self-contained group, too. The only place that we overlap is with each other—it's like we're each others' only contact with two different parts of the Bexley universe. We sit together whenever we can in classes and pass notes back and forth, and let each other know what's going on with our different groups.

Dave has an idea—if we can all get good enough on our guitars, we'll get a hootenanny group up for the school talent show in the spring. The idea is, we'd be like the Bexley version of the New Christy Minstrels or the Kingston Trio.

We wore our letter jackets downtown. I always like that; when you're walking through Lazarus you see all the guys from the other schools around town—North, East, Arlington, Worthington—and you kind of check them out from the corner of your eye. Our jackets are dark blue, with a white "B" on the front. I lettered in tennis last year, when I was a sophomore; I'm the first to admit that, in the Bexley hierarchy, tennis doesn't rank nearly as high as football or basketball or baseball, but a letter's a letter. You're not supposed to show any emotion about things like that, but the day I got my letter was probably the best day of my life.

CHUCK Shank and I cruised all day, for a few hours this afternoon we watched the Browns and the Packers on TV, but most of the day we just drove around Bexley.

He did a great thing with his car. He got a portable record player, put it on the front seat and somehow ran a wire through the dashboard and connected it to the battery under the hood. We took a copy of "Little Deuce Coupe" with us and played it for four hours straight as we cruised. For the first time, we don't have to listen to what WCOL plays—we can listen to whatever we want to. There's a slight problem in that when Chuck drives fast, the needle skips over the record. But it really is terrific—you can cruise and be your own disc jockey at the same time.

While "Little Deuce Coupe" kept playing, I got silent all of a sudden. Chuck must have been talking to me and I must not have been listening, because finally he said, "Are you in your daze again?" Which meant: "Are you thinking about Lindy again?"

I guess I was. "Little Deuce Coupe" was one of the songs that was on the air all last summer, when Lindy and I were going together. I've got to snap out of this thing, but I can't seem to.

Lindy's three years younger than I am; when we first started going together last June, people thought that the age difference was too much. Me being sixteen, her being thirteen . . . everybody thought it would never work.

We met on the way back from the swimming pool. It was the end of the day, and we were all looking for a ride home, and Denise Blue had a car. Everybody piled in. I was in the back seat, holding my tennis racket. There were about eight of us in the car, and there really wasn't room, and she ended up sitting on my lap, Lindy Lemmon.

I had known her older brother, Pat—he's on the basketball team—and I guess I knew that Pat had a little sister. I couldn't believe my reaction as we rode in that car. I remember, that song "Harry the Hairy Ape" was playing on the car radio, and Lindy was laughing at it, and I just didn't want the ride to end. Allen Schulman was in the car, and we both got off at his parents' apartment building. The car drove away, and Allen said, "Cute girl." I didn't say anything.

Two nights later we were all hanging around Pong's front yard, and Lindy and a bunch of her friends came walking by. I would have been too shy to say anything, but she walked right up to me. We talked for about five minutes, and then she said that her parents had a rule—she had to be home by the time the streetlights went on. It was already dusk, so she had to hurry.

The next morning when I woke up, I felt happy. I didn't know what it was; I just felt happy and good and in a hurry for the day to begin. And when I thought about it for a minute, I realized that the reason I was happy was that now I knew Lindy Lemmon.

I guess I still wouldn't have done anything about it, but that night at the dinner table my sister Debby said, "I have a secret I'm not supposed to tell you." Debby is fourteen—two years younger than me but a year older than Lindy. I thought she was just messing around as usual, but then she said it again: "I have a secret."

"What is it?" I said.

"I know someone who has a crush on you," she said.

My mom said, "Who?"

Debby started grinning, and then she began to hum that Peter, Paul, and Mary song, "Lemon Tree." I got it right away, but no one else at the table did; I shot Debby a look that told her to shut up about it.

After dinner Debby and I walked outside and I asked her to tell me what she knew. She said that she and her friends had been over at John's Ice Cream Shop on Main Street, and that Lindy and her friends had been there too, and that Lindy had been asking all kinds of questions about me.

"She got all excited when she realized I was your sister," Debby said. The next time Lindy and I ran into each other on the street she said, "I talked to your sister the other day." I said, "So I heard," and she blushed, and we started hanging around together all the time.

I'd read things about what it's supposed to feel like when you fall in love for the first time, but I have to say, I wasn't prepared for it. I was just so . . . happy all the time. A combination of nervous and happy. We would mostly see each other in the daytime; we'd make arrangements to meet on the corner of Bexley Park and Roosevelt; she'd walk from her house and I'd walk from my house and we'd meet and then we'd walk down to this house on Gould, with a big hedge that ran along the street. We'd sit down on the grass next to the hedge, and I'd have my transistor radio, and we'd just sit there and talk all day. Sometimes, if it seemed that no one was around and there weren't any cars coming by, we'd hold hands.

And we'd go driving; I would borrow my mom's station wagon, and we would drive out to the Three-C Highway (it connects Cleveland, Columbus, and Cincinnati) and we'd drive around until dinner time. Even when we didn't talk, we felt close; that's the first time in my life I've ever had that feeling.

We told ourselves that it would just be for the summer; when the school year started, I'd be a junior at the high school and Lindy would still be going to the junior high school, in the building next door. We knew that wouldn't work. But then, in August, it started to seem not so impossible. For one thing, some of my friends started going out with some of Lindy's friends, girls in her class: Chuck Shenk was seeing Wendy Clowson, and Danny Dick was seeing Janie McKenney. So all of a sudden the age thing seemed to be okay.

Lindy and I would talk on the telephone late every night, after the rest of our families had gone to sleep. We'd say that no matter what happened after school started, we knew that someday we'd be married to each other. Sometimes now, when I'm feeling so bad, I think about those calls.

Anyway . . . school started, and for a few weeks we'd see each other on

weekends. At the football games I'd go with my friends, and she'd go with her friends, and we'd catch each other's eyes in the stands.

I can't come up with an exact date when it happened. The weather started to get cold, and summer seemed like it was a long time ago, and when I'd call her on the phone she seemed sort of distant, or she would say that she really couldn't stay on. Sometime in October I asked her if anything was wrong; she said it was too hard, us being in different schools, and she said that we probably would have been better off if we had just broken up at the end of the summer like we had planned.

I never cried. There's not very much about this for me to feel good about, but at least I never cried. I've never felt worse in my life, though. It was like the reverse side of all those mornings when I woke up so happy and ready to jump out of bed. After Lindy and I broke up, I would wake up, and before I even had a chance to think about it I would know that I felt lousy, and that there was no real reason to start the day. It wasn't long before I found out she was going with a boy in her own class, I would start to see them sitting together at football games, and for the first time I felt foolish for being three years older.

When I talk to my friends about it, they say that I'm stupid to still think about her. They say it's bad enough for me to have been dropped, but that for me to keep dwelling on it is really embarrassing. I don't think that any of them have ever been in love, though—I know they haven't, because we've talked about it—so they have no idea how this feels.

Last summer I used to carry a lemon bottle that I found. That's what I called it—a lemon bottle; it was really a little bottle of lemon extract, small enough to fit in my pocket. I dumped all of the juice out of it and carried it for good luck. One night in October, when it was obvious that we really were broken up, I took the lemon bottle and I threw it against the front of Pong's house. It smashed into dozens of pieces. My friends applauded.

But the next morning I walked back there and picked up some of the pieces. They're dark brown—dark brown glass. I still carry one of those broken pieces with me. It's not for luck anymore; I'm not sure what it's for, and no one else knows about it. But it's in my pocket every day, wherever I go.

January 10

WHEN my clock radio woke me up this morning, WCOL was playing a new song called "I Saw Her Standing There." It was by the Beatles, that group from England that got written up in *Time* magazine last year. This was the first I had ever heard them sing. The song sounds like it's going to be a hit.

Tonight there was a Bexley basketball game at Worthington. Chuck, Dan, Jack, and I drove up there to see it—Allen has gone back to military school.

When the game was over we drove back to Bexley and then went to Frisch's Big Boy for some food. Lindy's older sister, Libby Lemmon, was in there with some friends; she's in college now. She said hi to me and was real nice, and it put me right back in the daze. It made me realize that even on days when I'm not thinking about Lindy, I'm thinking about her anyway. If that makes any sense.

While we were at Frisch's Dan kept complaining that there's a lock on the gate to the school tennis courts over on Stanwood—the part of the high school grounds that are closest to his house. It makes him mad because it's really cold out these days, and when the gate is locked he can't cut through on his way to school. Going around the long way takes an extra five minutes.

January 11

It turns out that "I Saw Her Standing There" isn't even the good side of the Beatles record. The good side is called "I Want to Hold Your Hand," and WCOL has started to play it about once every hour. "I Saw Her Standing There" is the other side; when I heard it yesterday morning I assumed that it was supposed to be the big hit. This is really unusual—WCOL playing both sides of the same record.

Barry Goldwater came to Port Columbus this morning as part of his campaign for the presidential nomination. Since it's Saturday, and we didn't have anything else to do, Chuck and I drove out there to see him. We only got a glimpse, but at least we can say that we saw someone who's running for president. Not that many nationally famous people come through Columbus.

January 12

It's snowing like crazy; it has been all day. I should have studied Algebra and Chemistry, but a movie called *Beginning of the End*, about giant grasshoppers, was on TV, so I watched that instead. Then I went over to Pong's house and borrowed his plot summary of *The Scarlet Letter*. I don't know how anyone ever gets through the real books; my concentration starts to go before I can even make it through the Cliffs Notes.

January 13

No school today! They announced it on WCOL at six forty-five this morning. All the schools in the area are closed because of snow.

Around noon I went to Pong's. Chuck, Jack, Dave Frisch, Tom Wilhanson, Gary Hermal, and I were all playing our guitars. I don't know if the others are thinking the same thing I am—but with WCOL playing that Beatles record so often, all of a sudden it seems sort of old-fashioned to be sitting around with wooden guitars singing folk songs. Gary said he read somewhere that the Beatles use electric guitars.

At night I got a call from Judy Morse. I had no idea what she was calling about, but she asked me to Presidential, the big sorority dance on February 8. I hardly even know her, and I'm not very attracted to her, but I guess going with her is better than sitting home. I know it's the same thing that boys go through all the time—asking girls out and then being afraid of being shut down—but I always feel sorry for these girls when the time comes for the turnaround dances, where they have to do the asking. Judy sounded so nervous on the phone—while trying to be cool at the same time—that I just said yes.

I've got to start going out, anyway. I can't spend my whole life sitting around thinking about Lindy.

The snow has stopped. Being let out of school for a day is such a tease; it just makes you more depressed when you realize that in the morning it all starts over again, and that you'll be sitting in class, and that nothing has changed.

February 6

NANA, my grandmother, came home from a trip. She brought me a "surf shirt" and a madras cap. There's no way I'll wear that creepy stuff, but she'll be watching to see if I do. Grandmothers.

February 15

I'm awfully lucky to be around to write this tonight.

Today was one of those long Saturdays with nothing to do, so early in the afternoon we decided we'd drive to Dayton. Pong drove his car, Jack, Chuck, Dan, and I went along.

Pong and Dan told their parents they were going, but Jack, Chuck, and I didn't have permission. In Dayton we saw some guys we met last summer—Bart Weppen, Gary Snyder. Jack had gone out with a girl from Dayton, Joyce Burick, and we went to her house for a while. Then we cruised around Dayton—this hard-looking guy in a 409 started chasing us for no reason, but we lost him.

It was a pretty good day, and right after dinner time we started back for Columbus. About halfway there it started to snow, and it kept getting worse. The road was completely icy.

Pongi was driving, and I was next to him in the front seat. Jack and Chuck and Dan were in the back. Pongi's usually a fast driver, but he was being really careful this time; the road was totally slick, and you could hardly see out the front windshield because of the snow.

All of a sudden, on the highway about ten miles outside of Columbus, we hit a bad patch of ice. It was like it was happening in slow motion. First we swerved over into the lane of oncoming traffic. Pongi was fighting the wheel the best he could, and he got us to swerve back into our own lane. But all that did was make us swerve even more; I could see him trying to turn the wheel, but this time we slid even farther into the oncoming lane. Any car that was coming the other way would have slammed right into the front of ours.

Nobody was saying anything. "I Want to Hold Your Hand" was playing on the radio—that was the only sound in the car. We swerved a total of four times. It was like we were just waiting for a car going the other way to hit us. Finally we were swerving all the way across the other side of the road, and then all the way back. Pongi said, "Here we go."

We crashed through a guardrail and went flying over an embankment. I never thought about what it would feel like to die, but this was it. I just knew that these were going to be the last seconds I was alive. I was calm, but I felt sad. It was like being aware that your life was ending, and not being able to do anything about it.

We hit three times, each time harder. Finally we came to rest in a ditch. I knew I wasn't dead because "I Want to Hold Your Hand" was still playing. Pongi said, "Is everybody all right?" I looked around into the back seat, and Jack and Chuck and Dan were just sitting there. We climbed out of the car; it was still snowing hard.

A car behind us had stopped, and the driver got out to see if we were okay. A few minutes passed; someone in a nearby house must have called the operator, because within ten minutes there were two ambulances and a cop and a tow truck.

We just walked around in the snow. Pretty soon a Channel 10 car arrived; they must listen to the police radio or something. A guy with a camera got out and aimed it at us. That's all we needed—for our parents to see us on the eleven o'clock news. But Dan got a great idea. He gave the finger to the camera, and everywhere the cameraman went, Dan stood in front of him giving him the finger. There's no way they were going to be able to use any of it on the news.

The tow truck pulled Pongi's car out of the ditch; it was pretty banged up, but he was still able to drive it. We went the rest of the way into Columbus. I'm not going to tell my parents about it. Chuck and I finished the evening watching TV with Candy Grossman and Robyne Finke at Robyne's house.

February 17

SECOND period today I told Dianne Kushner about the accident. She was impressed. Everyone is.

The Beatles were on the cover of *Newsweek* today. Great article.

It's funny how, after you hear a song on TV, it keeps going through your head—much more than after you've heard it on the radio. All day long in school I kept thinking of "From Me to You," because the Beatles sang it on "Ed Sullivan" last night. Mr. Millard would be talking in History class, and all I could hear was that song.

Tonight Jack and I went to Bexley Records and we each bought the single of it. It's not on their album. "Please Please Me" is on the other side.

September 9

IT'S all over. This is the last day of summer. School starts tomorrow.

When I got up I called Jack, and he and I went over to Chuck's to read some plot summaries for our summer reading. I had to leave for a while to go to the printer's and pick up the finished copies of the *Torch*. The paper looks great. I took the bundles of them to school, where some other *Torch* people were waiting, and we went around to all of the home-rooms and dropped them off so they'll be waiting for everyone tomorrow morning.

It was weird, being back in school. It seems like a year has passed since last spring. It's hard to believe that tomorrow I'll be sitting in classrooms.

Chuck and Dan and Jack and I went to the Toddle House for one last late-night snack before the start of school. Allen is on his way back to military school; it's going to feel different without the A in ABCD). We've had quite a summer.

It's a new year tomorrow. I hope we're good seniors.

September 10

BACK to the grind. My radio alarm went off at six-thirty. "Tobacco Road" was playing on WCOL, but summer's gone.

I got to school at seven-thirty. It already feels different being a senior. We all have our lockers on senior hall on the first floor of the school. I was walking upstairs and Wendy Monroe said "Hi" to me in a real friendly way. I was shocked. She's one of the girls in the class below ours who never paid much attention to us last year. But now we're seniors, we're the oldest guys in the high school.

I made sideline passes for the football games, so our *Torch* reporters and photographers can cover the games from up close. I took them down to Coach DeJong's office so he could sign them, but he refused. He said he had to think about it.

Yvette Mimieux was on "Dr. Kildare" tonight in a rerun. Mmmmm. I guess I knew that being a senior would be a different feeling, but I didn't think it would hit me this soon.

September 11

I n homeroom today they made an announcement on the PA system that there would be a pep rally after school.

I said to the people in homeroom, "You don't have to go." What I meant is that the people who work on the *Torch* could stay and get their stories done.

Jim Nowacki, the captain of the football team, said, "Yes you do," and gave me a hard look.

The day went fine. I knew about three answers in Physics. I wrote a glowing editorial about the football team and school spirit, and I went to Coach DeJong's office again and showed it to him. He read it and then signed our sideline passes. You'd think he'd be embarrassed to fall for something as obvious as that. Yesterday he didn't want the *Torch* on the sidelines; today he reads the editorial and he does.

September 13

T HERE was a Cleveland Browns game on TV today. Jack came over and we watched it together. Then when it was over we went to Chuck's house and had a good time trying to kill some bees.

Chuck's older brother Bill said, "You guys are seniors now; why don't you try to get some of those good-looking girls?"

I was riding on the back of Dan's Honda about five-fifteen when I saw Lindy on the street. She said "Hi" in a stereotypical sorority manner. It's funny—we're finally going to school in the same building, but I haven't run into her at school yet.

I went to the Eastmoor to pick up dinner for Debby and Timmy. Then Jack and I went out to the TAT on Main Street and had poor boys. God, I just thought about Bev. And what it was like being with her. Most of the summer seems so far away already—open houses, the *Citizen-Journal*, Tina Flaker. But Bev stays in my mind as clear as the sharpest photograph you could ever imagine. I just *have* to see her again. Watched "The Rogues" on TV tonight. Really great show.

September 17

T HINGS might not be so bad after all. I got a B—on an English theme, and then Coach Weis asked me if I would be a hall monitor fourth period every day. So I was sitting in the hall monitor's chair, and Dianne Kushner came up. She said she had heard I asked Carol out; she laughed and said, "That's great."

Then after school I went to Jack's. He lives right across the street from Carol. Jack and I were sitting in his yard, and Lindy came walking by. It was the first time Lindy and I had really talked since the school year began. Right in the middle of our conversation, Carol crossed the street from her house and said, "Bobby? Hi." Lindy looked a little startled.

Then tonight Pongi said that Carol was telling people she was happy. I'd asked her out. When I got home, our Epsilons membership cards had been delivered to my house from the printing company where we'd ordered them.

September 18

B EXLEY football game tonight. I had one of the sideline passes that Coach DeJong gave us for the *Torch*. It felt cool, being down there next to the field, telling our photographer which pictures to try for.

Pat Lemmon, Lindy's older brother, came up to me at half time and

said, "Who's your date with this weekend, Greene?" I don't think that he and the other junior boys like the idea of us seniors taking out their girls.

Carol Lowenthal was at the game with Chris Harbold, one of Pat Lemmon's best friends. My guess is that she doesn't care about me one way or the other.

September 19

SATURDAY, the big day. Worked on the *Torch* all morning at school; Mrs. Amos told Judy Furman and me that we had to quit fighting with each other. Pissed me off no end.

Then Jack and I went to the Toddle House for lunch. I called Carol throughout the afternoon, and finally got her at five-fifteen. I told her I'd pick her up at seven-thirty.

Becket was great. It was a real long movie, with an intermission. During the first half of the movie we just watched it, and smiled at each other once in a while and said a few things. We went out for refreshments during intermission, and I decided in my head that I'd try to hold her hand during the second half.

It's funny; I think about Bev at Cedar Point, and I feel that I should never have to be nervous again about something like holding a girl's hand. But here I was, sitting next to Carol, and it took me about half of the second half of the movie to get up the nerve to try. We would look at each other and smile, and I would just about be ready to hold her hand, and then she would look back at the movie again, so I wouldn't do it. Finally I kept telling myself that I'd count up to ten and then hold her hand. I counted to 10 three times, and chickened out each time. The fourth time I did it—and she didn't seem to mind. I was afraid that she might pull her hand away, but she squeezed my hand back.

On the way out of the movie theater she held my arm. We drove to Hojo's East for something to eat; we held hands in the car. On the way back to her house, I put my arm around her shoulders.

I walked her to her door. She said, "That movie was really great. Well, I'll see you, Bobby . . . in school or something."

I think maybe I could have kissed her goodnight, but I didn't. What a nice night.

September 21

I couldn't sleep last night, so I got up and watched *High School Confidential* on the late movie. In school today I wrote an English theme in study hall, and finished up a Physics graph.

Dianne Kushner and I traded senior pictures: Jack and I were at his house after school, and Carol came out of her house across the street and invited us over. Jack and I sat with her on her porch; there was a couch and two single chairs, and I purposely sat on one of the chairs so there would be no symbolism of sitting next to her on the couch.

We were talking about juniors and seniors, and Carol said, "There's no difference between juniors and seniors," and smiled at me.

Tonight I could pick up KYW in Cleveland on the radio in my room. Jerry G. said that he had an advance copy of a new Beatles album. He played two songs from it—"I'll Be Back" and "I'll Follow the Sun." Even though I had never heard the songs before, they reminded me so much of summer and Cedar Point and Bev. It was the sound of Jerry G.'s voice introducing the Beatles that did it to me. I sat on the edge of my bed and thought.

September 22

THIS morning I went down to C. W. Jones' office and made an announcement on the loudspeaker about *Torch* subscriptions being for sale. It was corny—hearing my voice going into the microphone, and at the same time hearing it come out of every loudspeaker in every homeroom in the school—but I liked it.

After school Dan and I rode on his Honda, and at night we had an Epsilons meeting. When that was over, I went to Chuck's house and read his plot summary of *Tom Jones*.

When I got home, I called Carol. We talked for ten minutes; it was all me doing the talking. She was nice enough; she said, "Your announcement on the PA system was really good this morning." When I hung up, I didn't know how I felt.

So I started thinking about it. I guess what I'm really looking for is the feeling you have when you have a girlfriend—and not Carol in particular. She's great-looking, and she's nice, and she's one of the most popular girls in the junior class. It was good for my ego that we went out together.

But I wonder if I would be doing all this stuff if Lindy and I hadn't broken up last year. The more I think about it, those feelings I had with Lindy were all that I had ever wanted. The idea of waking up in the morning and thinking about someone and knowing that she was thinking about you, too; the anticipation of the phone calls; the jolt I would get when I would be walking down the street and see her approaching from the other direction . . . when that was going on with Lindy, I was completely happy.

Now it seems that I'm in this constant search for girls, and I'm finally beginning to realize that nothing is going to replace what I had with Lindy. She's not coming back; I know that now. But I miss the feeling so much that I'm always looking for some other girl to help give it to me. And I'm finally beginning to understand that no matter how hard I look, it's probably not going to happen.

September 26

SLEPT till eleven because it's Saturday. I went over to Jack's house, and there was a big commotion because his neighbors had gotten locked out of their house. The Bexley police were there and everything, but nobody had any idea how to get in.

Finally we saw a window that was open a crack. Jack put his hands together to give me a boost, and I pushed the window open, then crawled through it and into the house. I unlocked the doors from the inside and let the family in.

The people wanted to give me some money, but I said no. I felt like I was on "The Rogues" or something.

At night we drove over to the Whitehall Recreation Center, but there was no dance. When I got home I rang Lindy's number. She called me back, and said that Carol Lowenthal and Mike Luby had been seen running through the park behind the Jeffrey Mansion, holding hands. Great.