

# Getaway

*by* Joe Bardin

When Danny got back to his apartment, the phone's chime sounded alarmingly loud in the emptiness.

"Danny. It's great news, isn't it, about the war. I don't know if I'm happy or just really relieved."

"Bonnie?"

"Are you ok? You sound good."

"So do you," he said automatically, but heard her confidence swell.

"I just wanted to see how you were doing."

"Doing good," Danny managed.

"I've actually got good news. I won #1 sales person for the quarter. Well, one big deal really made it for me. I lucked into it. The prize is a trip to Hawaii."

A pause thickened like a fog on the line between New York and Tel Aviv.

"No kidding."

"I know it sounds weird, but you inspired me."

He'd done nothing but ignore her for months. "Bonnie. . ."

"You might not have even meant to, but you did. What do they drink there, Mai Tais?"

"I'm not sure."

"C'mon, you're the bartender." He could hear her smile. "I was thinking we'd do it soon. A spring getaway. Can you get off work?"

"I don't know."

"Do you want to check and let me know?"

They both knew she would call him, probably within a week.

"This is going to be really good for us, Danny. We need some time together. Just you and me."

Elation quivered in her voice as she said goodbye and Danny knew she'd been fooled by time and distance and bleak New York City dating. He was in such a state that he was almost fooled too.

She'd picked him up at a party freshman year, calling him Danny. Until then he had always been Daniel. He'd said nothing and his name was changed. One day in Bonnie's dorm room, drunk on the distance suddenly gained from his upbringing, Danny described with ecstatic certainty the exit he envisioned from family dysfunction. The music blaring from the quad, early REM, before their lyrics made sense, formed the perfect backdrop, like there was a new language coming to name a new life. For the rest of their freshman year, they could sit for hours without talking. They could kiss without making love. They could laugh without explaining.

But second year wasn't the same. The excitement of change dwindled, and the routine of classes, cafeteria food and cheap beer came to the forefront. Bonnie didn't notice the difference. He should have ended it then and there. But they were both marked, as if by some celestial event, and neither could get over it. They settled into a campus marriage of convenience, separating and reuniting so often they stopped explaining it to their friends. This continued after graduation when they both moved to New York City. They met for maintenance sex, then stayed apart for weeks. Then they'd show up at the same party, and they both knew: she still loved him, and he still needed her too.

