# Sometimes, It's Simply a Nice Dress

*by* Steele Diamond

Clarissa kept bringing up a particular subject in counseling. It seems two years before her affair, she had accused Jon of being attracted to her friend Steph. The evidence that led Clarissa to this conclusion, started at an office Christmas party. Steph reached out and hugged Jon when he and Clarissa approached her. Jon said he was surprised at the move, since he really did not know Steph that well. But she had a couple of hours head start on the cocktails, so he didn't think much of it. After all, she hugged Clarissa as well. The problem was compounded though because Jon recognized the perfume Steph was wearing and and pleasantly commented that he liked it. How Clarissa often wore it too. Clarissa's radar apparently went berserk and though she remained calm, she filed that piece of information away.

Several weeks later, Valentine's to be exact, Clarissa and Jon ran in to Steph and her husband, Roger, having dinner at a nice place in town. Jon had met Roger before and had even been in the same bowling league one year. So he shook Roger's hand and Steph extended her hand to Jon. He shook her hand, as a man would shake a woman's hand, and commented on a very pretty dark blue dress she was wearing. Clarissa's radar again, pegged in the danger zone.

It did not help, the following Monday when Clarissa mentioned this to several co-workers, outside of Steph's work circle. All of the women immediately pointed out that she had better be careful. Jon could very well be on the prowl and be attracted to Steph. Her co-workers all became amateur psychologists, explaining the inner workings of all men's minds and what Roger was up to.

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By the time Clarissa got home, she was steaming. She confronted Jon and demanded to know what about Steph he found so attractive. Jon tried to explain that Steph was neither particularly attractive, or that he was even interested in her. Clarissa immediately mentioned the “dress incident.”

The counselor asked Jon why he paid the compliment to Steph.

Jon responded, “It was a pretty blue dress.”