

The 1935 Chevy Pickup

by Jerry W. Petermann, 2012



“Unrequited Love, never satisfied, burns forever and ever...”

author unknown

Prologue

My name is James Edward Harris. Most people would call me an ordinary man. I've been married to the same good woman for forty two years, have three kids: John, Edward and Lora. Each is happily married, I might add. And, they have given us four great...really wonderful, grandchildren.

I've had the same job for the last 32 years and will soon retire.

So, why write this story?

Well, to be completely honest – it just had to be written...I could do no less. You see, I am a simple, practical man. I do not meditate, am not much on organized religion, though, I would say, I believe there is much more to this existence than we know. I have to believe this...now.

On that note, I would have to add...I have proof. This proof does, however, require just a bit of explaining before I get into the story – or, one should say, stories.

Late last week while at work, I noticed, out on the highway, just a hundred yards from my office window, an antique 1935 Chevy pickup. It had a beautiful blue paint job. Then, just as suddenly as I had noticed the vehicle pass by, I nodded off into a daydream – No! It was a recollection, clear and vivid as yesterday – a 47 year old scene from my junior year in college...with all the sights, sounds and smells one would experience actually being there: 1970.

This recollection did not just flash for a moment. It burst forth, roiling and thrashing for my attention. Again, all in living color, all in the senses of the moment – unrelenting. “Damn that blue ‘35 Chevy!” I cursed quietly to myself.

And, there I must leave it, or should I say, begin. However, for you to learn the proof, please, please, you must keep vigilant for it hinges on just one word: “Eternity”.

Johnny's World

This day was most extraordinary. This day, a single, solitary man had proven the moral bankruptcy of an entire nation. This day, Jessie Owens had outrun every Uberman (supposed Super Superior Man) the Fuhrer, Adolph Hitler could field for the 1936 Olympic Games in Munich, Germany. For this day, a single black man from America had finally embarrassed Hitler personally before the whole world...and the world was glad.

But, this day in 1936 was also the 16th birthday of one Edward John Harris, "Johnny" to everyone in the little town of Collinsville. Not a day though for idle pleasures – not for Johnny, for this day he would finally top off his passbook savings account at the Savings and Loan. He would finally reach a personal goal he had set when he was 10 years old...\$250 dollars.

The field stretched out for $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile with hundreds of new hay bales scattered about. As sun hung low in the west, the air was hot and muggy. A small dust devil whirled in the distance just to break this quiet scene.

"Toss me one more bale and we can call it a day – I'm not sixteen anymore like you Johnny," said Mr. Higgins as he neatly stacked his bales of hay in the bed of his 1932 Ford pickup. Johnny was always his choice for bringing in hay because he could somehow, all day long, toss the 75 pound bales high enough on the back of the truck to allow Mr. Higgins to remain in the bed stacking them securely...but, this meant that Johnny, single handedly, had loaded every hay bale in the field...all seven loads that day. It was work that Mr. Higgins could respect.

"See ya tomorrow after school?" he asked Johnny.

"No sir, I'll be here at seven in the morning before it gets hot so we can get all the hay in by tomorrow evening, if that's okay with you," said Johnny. "They say rain is coming in two days," he added.

"But, you've got school..."

"No sir, I quit today - need to work and the best education I can get is working with smart people and learning from them. Hard work is not smart work. You taught me that. Put your mind to a job before you do the job and you just might get the work done sooner."

“Well son, learning is important and it also seems you know how to get an education – seven o’clock it is...and, happy birthday. There’s an extra 50 cents in there for you to buy your girlfriend a shake down at the drug store”, smiled Mr. Higgins as he handed Johnny his well-deserved \$2.50.

“Thank you Mr. Higgins, but I don’t have one yet”, as he smiled and turned to ride away on his bicycle.

Edward John Harris arrived in Collinsville suddenly in mid school year when he was 10. Folks said something happened to his folks so he came to live with his Aunt Mini Harris at her old yellow boarding house on North Adams. She had made ends meet in this Depression by taking in ironing and by boarding three retired and widowed railroad men, now in their seventies.

But, it was also rumored, that sweet Aunt Mini had made Johnny pay for his room and board with odd jobs around town, from the very first day. Now, I say rumored, since Johnny never told anyone and had taken to work with an upright and determined spirit.

To her credit, Aunt Mini provided well for the boy and saw to it he received a decent Christian upbringing. They never missed a single Sunday. It might be said, Aunt Mini set “Fate” in motion for Johnny. At church, or rather “after church” in the parking lot as the grownups visited, was where he first began to notice Lori. The twig of a girl however, had already begun noticing “her Johnny” at least two years before.

Folks at the church say Lori had her heart set on Johnny from around 12 or 13. But, Johnny, a full two and a half years older, never noticed. Not until one day when he was about 16 ½, did he awaken from his proverbial slumber and “see” her for the first time...Lori. She was now 14. At 5 foot 4 inches, she was tall for her age with a cascade of chestnut curls that flowed over her shoulders. She was slender, with deep blue eyes and a sweet spirit.

Thereafter, no one ever saw them apart. She was in school, but Johnny would come by her house later and “just visit awhile” on the front porch. He didn’t care at all if her dad was in an old Adirondack chair a few feet away.

Lori's World

The one thing her dad would say to Lori occasionally; “.....that Johnny Harris is decent – if he loves you it don't show a lot but, I'll tell you this, he respects you and that's what really counts in the long run.”

Finally, the day came when Johnny turned 18. Lori was still 15 ½ so they had yet to go on an official date. Actually, Lori's dad said she was quite upset one evening when Johnny was over and they had spent over an hour in the porch swing, unchaperoned. “Daddy, I want some of that new Pepsident toothpaste the next time you go into town.”

“Why Honey?” he asked.

“It must be my breath – is that Johnny Harris ever going to kiss me?”

Her grandmother in the next room abruptly rose from her chair, glared at Lori and left the room in a huff muttering “These kids! Mumble, mumble, mumble....”

“It's not that Lori, the boy wants everything special – be patient.”

Two days later, Johnny drove up to Lori's house in his very own blue 1935 Chevy pickup. It had cost \$250 dollars used, exactly half the price of a new one and sported something no one had ever seen in a small pickup – a custom 6' x 9' custom flatbed.

Johnny intended to create a hauling business but, could not afford the \$750 dollars for a used 1 ½ ton flatbed truck. Being innovative, he removed the original bed and rear fenders, sold them as parts for \$35 dollars, then bought 2" x 12" x 9' oak planks and square steel tubing. He then had Mr. Ferguson at the garage weld the materials into his new 6' x 9' flatbed. When he was done with the project and it was mounted on his truck, he had \$1.35 left over.

Now, he was ready to ask Lori something important.

The evening was thick with the scent of jasmine and in the distance a large, full and deeply orange moon slipped up from the hills. A large owl hooted twice and flew directly into the glowing disk in the distance...or, so it seemed.

“In four months you turn 16 and I would like to know something...” he paused and drew in a long quiet breath. He tried to continue.

“Yes?” She hugged his muscular arm tightly and looked for what seemed forever into his deep blue eyes – “Yes, Johnny....more than anything in the world!”

He looked away for a moment, then, softly spoke, “I can’t afford an engagement ring but, you’ll have a really pretty wedding ring.”

“Johnny, all I need is you - when do you want to marry?” she asked softly.

“That’s up to you – you’ve got school and well – we could wait a couple of years...just tell me,” he said finally lifting his gaze from her eyes as he pondered their future.

“No!” she said determinedly. “I can’t wait...I won’t wait for you...when I turn 16, on my birthday....that’s when!”

“Your parents will never agree.”

“In this state, 16 is the age a girl can marry and they can’t stop her.”

“You would do that...elope, I mean?” He seemed a bit taken back.

“We’ve decided to marry Johnny Harris; I can’t wait forever.”

“Okay – but, I don’t think anybody will be surprised; but, you might wait till you’re almost 16 to let them know I asked you.”

“Okay,” she said after calming down just a little.

An old owl in the tree above the porch hooted and a lonely dove in the distance seemed to answer.

Although, they could not date, Lori’s dad let her go to Simpson’s Drugstore in town after school with Johnny once a week for a malt or soda. Then, about two

weeks before Lori turned 16, her dad told her she could go to the movie theater in town, but just for the Saturday afternoon matinee and she had to be home by five.

On Sunday's, Johnny would pick her up for church and afterward he was always invited by her dad for the noon meal at Lori's house. They always sat next to each other at the table and in the pickup; always. Everybody remembers, to this very day, they always sat next to each other.

A few days later:

The old console radio murmured in the front room. Amos and Andy had just aired and the family had left the room, one by one, leaving grandma in her rocker listening and knitting a new shawl. Out on the porch, the sound of bullfrogs in the creek filled the evening air adding a strange mix to the radio. Lori and her dad had just acquired the porch swing, having shooed away the family dog Finny.

Lori was uncommonly restless.

"Daddy, why did the news people tonight on the radio say there's a war brewing in Europe?"

"Don't worry yourself about it – it's just that Hitler in Germany who's too big for his own britches - I know he invaded Poland but, we will never get involved – nobody wants another war – I had enough the first time in France –NEVER again!" he said determined and a bit sad.

"I'm sorry," said Lori. "I didn't mean to bring back bad memories."

"It's okay – I just think there's no way we Americans can be so stupid again as a country...and...for what?" He put his head in his hands. He had lost several friends in the trenches of France back in '18.

"Yeah," said Lori quietly.

"Why you ask, Honey?"

"Well, last time they took all the young men and a lot never came back." Her voice trailed off.

“Don’t worry Lori, your Johnny will be safe – we won’t get into this one,” he reassured her. She rested her head on his shoulder and quietly prayed her daddy was right.

Finally, Lori’s day came; her birthday. But, it was almost 8:15 in the evening and Johnny had worked all day, not coming by her house for cake and ice cream. Everybody except Lori, thought that was a little odd, but for Johnny, putting aside money for their future came first...well, almost.

Lori noticed headlights down the hill and suddenly Johnny rolled up in the Chevy to find her at the edge of the road in front of her house...with her suitcase. He opened the door and she slid over the long bench seat to sit next to him. She clutched her old suitcase beside her.

“Hi”, he said softly.

“Hi,” she replied with a broad smile.

“Are you sure about this?” he quipped?

“I’m here – I think Mom knows –she was crying when I went to bed – she gave me the biggest hug ever. I left a really nice letter to everyone and asked them to bless us.”

“You did the right thing...that was nice....okay, let’s go.”

As they began the fifteen mile trip to the Justice of the Peace, Judge Witherspoon, the steering wheel, shook badly, then, settled down.

“Please remind me on Monday to go get new tires at the garage – if I buy two I can get them for only \$4.50 each, that’s a really good price for 6 ply tires.”

“What’s plies” she softly giggled.

“More layers – these are not good now; that’s why they shake the front end and the steering wheel.

“Got it – I’ll remind you,” she said confidently.

“By the way Honey, I signed a government contract for special hauling three times a week. I’ve been working on it for 4 months with The U.S. Army. The money is more than I ever thought I’d be making... We’d be making,” he corrected himself shyly.

She squeezed his arm and smiled. Her Johnny would wait till their wedding night to tell her their future would be secure. “A quiet man, determined and dedicated to our life,” she thought to herself, “and I love him.”

Johnny then related to Lori the following story for the remainder of the trip to the Witherspoon’s. She listened carefully and contentedly.

“Just shortly after I’d converted this ’35 pickup to a mini-flatbed truck, a stranger came to Collinsville. He stopped at the café for breakfast. This, in itself, was not something unheard of, but his dark blue suit and polite, professional manner in our little town got a bit of attention.”

“That morning, I’d met Mr. Rudolph at the café for coffee. He had a few things he expected to have me haul and the café was a good place to discuss the details. I got the job...\$4 dollars a load for 4 days straight – good pay when some men only get a dollar a day in wages.” He smiled at Lori. The good part was coming next.

As I walked to my truck, the stranger followed.

“Say, that truck for hire? Saw the sign on the back of the flatbed,” he asked me.

“Yes sir, my name’s Johnny, Johnny Harris and I had it built for light hauling. What do you need me to haul?” I asked.

“Can’t talk here...I’m Colonel Bradford Philips...let’s go back inside and I’ll explain it all to you.”

I said, “Sure”.

The Colonel took the table in the far rear, the one out of the way. I followed and sat down.

“I’m looking for someone who can do light hauling and keep quiet about it. Not tell anyone but maybe their spouse; what they are hauling...that you? He asked me sternly.

“Depends- is it legal or dangerous and ...is it worth my time?”

“Yes, it’s legal, not dangerous and you decide if it’s worth your time. It’s a U.S. Army Contract for 2 ½ years, three times a week. It’s a 200 mile round trip each of the three days and you get \$40 per load plus 5 cents a mile for gas, tires and oil.”

“But that’s over \$120 dollars a week for 3 days work – you pulling my leg? Besides, why me?” I had to know.

“No son, I’m serious. Okay, today is not a chance meeting. We’ve asked around for about 2 months and you were always the one recommended – they said around here you worked hard, were honest and always kept to whatever schedule people asked you to meet.” He smiled slightly.

I couldn’t help but say to him, “That’s a nice thing to say. But, what would I do really? Why so much money?”

“Critical Need – you would be trucking unmarked cartons to the new U.S. Army Air Base 100 miles east of the Army base near here. You’d be hauling on the new U.S. Highway – just think –smooth road, no potholes and you would not have to load or unload – all that’s done by the Army.” He seemed proud of the last part.

“What airfield?” I asked.

“Now that’s why I’m talking to you, Mr. Harris. Quietly. It’s not been announced yet. You would be trucking four palletted boxes weighing just 100 pounds each.”

“One hundred pounds? What could weigh so little – that’s just 400 pounds...I could use a Model T for that...” said Johnny. The Colonel laughed.

“You can average 50 miles per hour with no problem the whole way. It’s aluminum aircraft parts – very light but, very strong. Your truck is unique. It’s

light and able to be loaded and unloaded from the sides in less than five minutes – you interested?” He looked a bit concerned I might not take the offer.

“Yes Sir. When do I start – do I sign something?”

“In June and here is the contract – read the whole thing – every word –take your time – it’s six pages. Save your questions for the very end. Okay?”

“Okay,” so I started reading, slowly and carefully. It was very detailed and spelled out everything. Then I asked: “So, if I do not make the delivery time within 4 hours, three times in a row...I lose the contract?” I was concerned.

“Yes, unless there’s a catastrophic vehicle failure.”

“What’s that?” I asked.

“That’s if your motor blows – the rest is expected to be handled with quality scheduled maintenance. You need to keep a water pump, fuel pump, timing chain, radiator fluid and hoses, etc., on board. That’s in your truck at all times, plus you need 8 ply tires on the back and 6 on the front. Understand?” he asked seriously.

“I do most of that anyway.’ I let him know I’m prepared all the time.

“You will also need spare tires for all four wheels. I’ve noticed they would easily fit right under that flatbed of yours,” he added confidently.

“Yes sir, they will. I’ll be ready by June. Let me have your fountain pen to sign the contract and we have a deal.” I was excited but tried not to show it much.

“It will take about four months to work out all the details. Remember,” he added, “You will become the best paid man in the county but, you cannot show it – you have to save it and not draw attention to the job – or...we can cancel the contract for that...Item 7, line 4,” he warned quietly.

I told him: “I want to get married so this money will be what I need to buy a little farm outside of town – that’s it. Okay?” I asked him directly.

“And, that is why I know we’ve got the right man for this job.” Then, he got up, shook my hand, took the contract and walked away. “I’ll bring you a photocopy of this next week,” he gestured to the rolled up contract in his left hand. “Nice to meet you Mr. Harris.”

Nosey Susie the waitress wasted no time to ask, “Johnny, who was that?” I just fibbed and said: “An insurance man...can’t be too careful now-a-days.”

Then, I got to thinking: \$120 a week wages, \$30 dollars a week for gas, tires and oil... “That’s \$600 a month!” I said to myself outside in the truck. (with the windows rolled up!)

“And...that adds up to seven thousand a year!!! I can save \$5 after expenses every day; in two years I can build Lori a new house and pay off the farm. Thank you, thank you, thank you Lord!” Honey, I just couldn’t keep it in. He was smiling.

“I don’t know how I could be happier; I love you Johnny.” Lori stared off in the distance. It was now her time to weigh their future. She hadn’t cared about money in the past. It was just about Johnny. Nothing changed now in her mind.

He noticed she seemed lost in thought.

“Well, maybe getting to Judge. Witherspoon’s place would help....” He smiled again. “We’ll be there by 8:20!”

As they turned into the drive, the sign in front of the little cottage read: Justice of the Peace, Judge Jonathan Witherspoon, Elected in 1927, Marriage, Fines, Court.

“We’re here,” said Johnny and they both bounded from the truck.

Judge Witherspoon performed a very nice 15 minute service. Johnny gave Lori the ring he had saved up a whole year to buy and she almost melted on the spot. She looked at it for so long that old Witherspoon had to ask one more time, “You need to say **I Do** little lady”. He then pronounced them “Man and Wife”. For the next 20 minutes the old JP gave the young couple some homespun, down to earth advice for “Making It Last”. At last, it was done.

“Now, Mrs. Harris,” said Johnny as they drove away, “We go to our honeymoon suite in the motel over in Henshaw. I’ve called ahead yesterday and Mr. Miller, from our church...he’s the owner, has the Miller Courts. Is that okay? It’s the best room, and it’s only 15 minutes away!” He smiled at his new bride.

“Anything for you Mr. Harris. I’m in this with you forever...” She beamed.

At Miller's Courts:

"Bob – you still here?" asked Mr. Miller.

"Yes sir, Mr. Miller. Guess that Johnny Harris got cold feet."

"It's getting on near eleven o'clock and you've been on this porch for over 2 hours waiting – but, one thing is for sure, Johnny Harris would not get cold feet. That boy was meant for Lori – just like me and the Mrs. was, God rest her soul – 65 years ago."

"How do you know Johnny and Lori?"

"The Mrs's and I attended the same church in Collinsville – known Lori since she was born and Johnny since he came to town when he was about ten. Go home now Bob...I'll call old Witherspoon in the morning and see what happened to them...too late to call now." He shuffled away to go back inside.

"Okay, Good night Mr. Miller – You're sure about Johnny?"

Then Mr. Miller turned to add one final comment: "Son, if two people was ever supposed to be together it's those two...what they've got lasts an eternity."

My World – 47 Years Ago

My college years were during the Viet Nam War. There were protests, pro-war rallies and draft dodgers. Some young men voted their conscience with their feet and fled the country; some out of cowardice and some out of disgust for a pro-war, military industrial complex. Me? I just wanted an education. I was given a deferment for college with the intent of serving my country one day in the future as a commissioned officer. In college, my mind was consumed with the intensity of my education choices: chemistry and physics. There was little time for anything else. I did however, find time to become engaged and intended to marry just after college graduation.

I had never really been interested in anything but what could be seen or proven. I believed in God but, only as some "Big Guy" somewhere in the sky that was

behind everything...beyond that, “show me”. You might as well have thought I was from Missouri.

What transpired next, would be outside my “comfort zone” and well beyond what I recognized as Common Sense. One might say: “For there is more in Heaven and Earth than is ever dreamed of in your philosophies.....,” to quote Shakespeare loosely. I would not have dreamt of this event being recalled 47 year later as though it was just happening...no way. Never.

The lounge, large stuffed leather chairs and a (giant) 27” console television, was tucked away from the main part of the Student Union. It was a reprieve from the hustle and bustle of 1970 student life with hippies, tie-died tee shirts, long hair, beards and an occasional smoke. I was not one who could get into the “scene”, however. The lounge was a place for us “ordinary” students to be let one down gently...most of the time.

That afternoon, I rose from the couch, completely bored with the afternoon junk on the television. I’d had to kill 30 minutes between my junior year classes and my roommate Thomas Walsh had suggested getting a bite to eat at the Union. We did, then, we crashed in the TV lounge.

Now, as I started to leave again, I became a bit uncomfortable – body bags were shown on television...again. “DAMN Viet Nam war – why?” I asked myself.

Suddenly, a slender girl with long cascading chestnut hair and radiant blue eyes caught my attention across the room. I hadn’t noticed her before. Then, she noticed me. Our eyes met for a moment. Her face lit up and she turned to her high school aged brother and said, “It’s Johnny!” I heard her clearly and she meant me.

I **knew** this girl – somehow –I knew her *forever* ...but yet – where? When? She was extremely familiar, yet ...but, I couldn’t quite know or grasp any details.

She literally bolted across the room and there only a foot in front of me – she stood quietly gazing up into my eyes. I’ll admit...I fell down into those pools of still blue water – fell hard – then...flashes of a 1935 Chevy pickup...then, total and complete darkness. I was a bit startled. Guess I showed it a little.

She took my hands in hers, leaned forward and said very softly, “It’s been so long...”

Just as fast, she suddenly embraced me and without knowing why, I embraced her and pulled her close. She still gazed into my eyes. Slowly, she tiptoed and kissed me – a “Soldier Going Away To War” long kiss – respectful, solemn, but the most passionate kiss of my life – then again, flashes of the Chevy truck with two people sitting next to each other...then...darkness. Again, I hesitated.

She sensed something. Slowly she leaned back, “What is it? she asked.

“A 1935 Chevy pickup”, I said softly.

“Yes, blue.....I can’t be here – I can’t be with you,” she said hesitatingly. And, with that she let go, dropped her head and turned to leave. For a moment, just for a moment, she hesitated, tears gently rolling down her face – turned toward me and said: “I will always love you.”

As she made her way across the room, she took her brother’s arm and walked hurriedly out.

“Stevie? How do I know *his* name? But, what just happened?” I asked out loud.

“Say, why the wet eyes?” asked Thomas.

“What?”

I noticed my eyes were tearing up.

“Who was that? I thought you were engaged – that was serious!” he scoffed.

“My wife, ...I think – I mean, a long time ago,” I said quietly.

“What’s her name? asked Thomas.

I stammered..... “I a...I don’t know.”

“Okay, time out...(he made time-out motions with his hands) you’ve never been married – what you’re saying is crazy,” said Thomas.

“Yeah,” I said meekly. I noticed others in the room began to look away nervously.

“Well, you gonna just stand there? Let’s find her!” I then seemed to come out of a

trance and abruptly, “woke up”. We raced out of the room and searched the Union and the parking lot – no girl – no brother – anywhere.

We went back to the TV lounge and I asked two other friends what they saw. Each described the scene as I had just experienced it...crazy, just crazy.

But, it wasn't long until the whole event faded into memory. I never saw her or her brother again in college. I graduated, married, and experienced what one would call a good life – no girl – no brother and no flashes of a 1935 blue Chevy pickup with a flatbed.

Well, that is, until a week ago as I mentioned, in my office facing the highway. Now, one week after that strange, perplexing and a bit wondrous event in the office, and after several sleepless nights trying to figure it all out, I was having breakfast at a small café locally. I noticed a stooped and premature graying man heading my way. He asked me if he could sit down.

“Sure, I'm James and you are...?” I questioned in a friendly manner.

“Steve, Steve Foley – I don't mean to bother or even to frighten you but, I need to talk. You see my sister passed away a week ago,” he began.

“But, how do I know you? Who was your sister?” I asked, genuinely concerned.

“Well, you don't know me but, you met my sister...once – in college 47 years ago. She was the girl who came up to you, kissed you and you spoke with her of a 1935 Chevy pickup truck – remember?”

Remember?....my heart rose to my mouth and I struggled to catch a breath. I must have showed my stress because he added: “I'm sorry, I told her to go back to you that day but, she just wanted to run away – as far away as possible.”

“Why?” I finally managed to ask softly.

“Because, Mr. Harris, she believed you two had lived before and finally, near the end of her life, that idea drove her completely mad. I had to take care of her most of her life and completely toward the end...well, until she passed a week ago. I'm sorry – I've got to go.” He rose to leave and turned away solemnly.

“Please, wait...what was her name? I asked, almost pleading to him for relief from this scene.

“Lori, Lori Foley.” She believed she had once been married to Johnny. You see, Mr. Harris, she remembered way too much to live a normal life.

I drew in my breath and exhaled very, very slowly.

He added, “All she would ever say near the end was one word...Eternity.”

Epilogue

After he left, I sipped my coffee slowly. How did he know my last name or, for that matter, where to find me? Then, it occurred to me that he had always known where I was should she ever change her mind. I shuttered inside, but was comforted just a little. Still, I could not rationalize the “why” of it all.

I walked out of the café to the car to go home. As I turned the key, our local public radio station came on: “And, that was Glenn Miller’s String of Pearls recorded live in 1938. In a moment, we’ll listen to Benny Goodman.”

I began to feel odd. Something was happening.

Maybe it was 15 cent gas, a 5 cent soda pop or just an afternoon matinee with Jean Harlow at the movies for 25 cents...double feature. War? NO!!! Never, not again!

Then, I smiled to myself...Now, where was Simpson’s Drugstore... “I could use a malted”, I said quietly to myself.

I drove away slowly, searching.