

Who would've guessed that looking through old photo albums could get me into so much trouble?

It happened to be Friday—the day before the wedding. No, not mine! I'm only fourteen, and this is Louisiana, not New Hampshire.

I arrived on time at LeMoyne High School, via the Mom-mobile, wearing a skirt that made the best of summer's leftover tan. Baseball-player and heart-throbbing hunk David Griffin leaned against a tree on the front lawn.

Steps toward achieving girlfriend status:

1. *Meeting before school (Check.)*

We'd known each other since last year, but at the start of ninth grade our friendship expanded like a Cajun cornbread hushpuppy in hot oil.

"Hey, Wendy. TGIF," he shouted.

Man, his grin killed me. "TGI-uh-TD-uh-BTW," I countered. It was really hard to concentrate when he was all I could see.

He burst out laughing and ran a hand over his curly brown hair. "What?"

"Thank goodness it's the day before the wedding." Like always, heat crept into my cheeks as I drew near him. I smiled big to camouflage the reason.

"Yeah, and I'll be there with a tie and everything." His green eyes dazzled me.
"Unless you un-invite me."

"Not a chance. I need all the moral support I can get." I'd never tell him that Mom allowed me to invite no more than two friends, and he was one of them. If he only knew how much I looked forward to seeing him away from his jock buddies.

We started up the steps to the main entrance as the first leaves of autumn danced across our path in the warm breeze.

"Well, I might mess up somehow and make you mad today." He stuck an arm out and prevented someone who was coming down the steps from running into me.

"You won't wiggle out that easily."

We reached an intersection of halls and turned in opposite directions.

"See you later," he said over his shoulder.

It took every ounce of willpower not to look back at him as he walked away. But too many pairs of eyes watched, belonging to too many of his friends and teammates who'd poke and tease him.

We weren't a couple—at least not yet. Why invite ridicule or ruin my chances? LeMoyne was three times the size of Bellingrath Junior High, and to say there were a lot of pretty girls here was an understatement of gross proportions.