**EXCERPT**

**BEYOND FOREVER (Let Yourself Believe Series, Book 1)**

**By Rhonda Frankhouser**

I waited for a long time before I worked up the nerve to talk to him, thinking I must be some kind of nut to hope such a sophisticated guy would be interested in me. But what the hell, right. When I finally took the risk and asked him, he seemed a little shocked, but curious at the same time.

I still remember his exact response and how his brows pinched together in question. “You, ummm, wanna have a drink with *me*? Do you have any idea how old I am?”

He turned bright red when I laughed.

It was sweet and incredibly sexy the way he acted so nervous and shy. I think he was more surprised than I when he agreed.

When he spied my collection of vintage typewriters sitting around my nearly barren apartment, he immediately loosened his tie and slipped off his Italian loafers. That he was so comfortable made me feel amazing. We drank ice cold Coors Light from the can as *Stevie Ray Vaughan* shredded *Pride and Joy* through my cheap Kmart speakers.

After an hour of our who, what, where and whens, he got on the floor and thumbed through the stacks of books I’d piled against the wall. I’d read everyone from Descartes to Henry Miller to Anne Rice’s naughty Sleeping Beauty trilogy. When he read the back cover, his sweet, shy smile turned a little–let’s call it–hopeful.

I went with the old standard. A risky choice, looking back. I made him bologna and cheddar cheese sandwiches on white bread with a Kosher dill pickle on the side. It was a huge risk thinking someone like him would even eat my good old country favorite, but he loved it.

A cosmic match was made. I remember how the mayonnaise clung to the corners of his mouth and how, instead of embarrassing me by asking for a napkin, he wiped it off on the sleeve of his white dress shirt.

I was too poor to furnish napkins and too embarrassed to give him a paper towel. How tacky! So I sat there and watched as this beautiful man wiped greasy mayo all over his fifty dollar shirt.

I was such a kid, but something clicked between us when he leaned in and laid a gentle, non-threatening, non-expecting, kiss on my lips.

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