

The elevator descended and opened into a rather expansive—and empty—lobby. They crossed the lobby, and went through the revolving door. Outside, Joe looked around. It wasn't just night. It was Advanced Night. The vast parking lot accommodated just two cars, not including a white limousine idling in front. A uniformed man stood beside the limo. "Here's our ride," Joe joked.

The man opened the back door. Angie got in. Then Bill. Joe stood by with a half-grin on his face, speechless. "Get in," Bill said. Joe got in. Angie sat on one side facing the front, and Bill sat on the other, facing the back. Joe slid in beside Angie. The man closed the door. Soon, the limo pulled away.

"How's your head?" Angie asked. She was concerned about Joe. He seemed disoriented. Unsure.

"It's feelin better," Joe answered. He looked out the window.

The limo passed several tall buildings then headed up the entrance ramp to the highway. The streets were vacant.

Joe looked at his bare wrist. "What time is it?" he asked Bill.

"About 2:40," Bill answered, studying him.

Joe blinked in surprise and looked back out the window. After a few minutes, he said, "It looks like we're in California."

Bill leaned forward. "Joe, do you know what day it is?"

"Um. Yeah, May 3rd. 1985."

Bill nodded. "Well, actually it's May 4th now, but you're essentially correct. Do you know your name?"

"Joe?" Joe guessed.

"You don't really know, do you?"

"I thought I did," Joe admitted, "but I dunno. Seems like I'm out-voted."

"What's my name?"

Joe frowned as he studied Bill. Bill was older than Angie, maybe in his 40s. He wore tortoise-shell glasses and an LA Dodgers cap. Then Joe smiled. "I know! You're Bill Myers! From X Band! You're the keyboardist." He turned and studied Angie. Then he turned back to Bill. "Am I right?"

"And how do you know that?" Bill asked.

"You're on the cover of 'Xenon'. And I saw you in concert, twice! Geez! Bill Myers!"

Angie asked, "Do you recognize me?"

Joe frowned again in concentration. Angie was young, maybe 22 or 3. She had brilliant red hair pulled back and sharp green eyes over a tiny nose and thin lips. Joe gave up and shook his head. "I'll bet I should, though, right?"

Angie looked at Bill. "He has amnesia!" she blurted. "From that fall?"

Bill shook his head slowly. "No, amnesia doesn't usually come from a blow to the head. Usually, it's caused by personal trauma. And the person who has it can remember facts, but nothing of their personal life. There was a guy who deduced he was Catholic from the fact that he knew all the Catholic mass responses. Joe, what do you know about X Band?"

"Their first album was 'Xylophone'. It was a good album. The big hit there was 'Tina', but 'See Me', 'Free Radical' and some others were good songs. Next was 'Xenon' with the hit single 'Let's Move'. Let's see, Joe Ecks does guitar and vocals. Bill Myers—you—plays keyboards, Ed Brettington plays drums, and Roger Novak plays bass. They—well, you, I guess—have a new album coming out soon, I hear."

The three rode in silence for a long minute. The only sound was the limo thumping over the lines on the highway.

Then Joe said, "Oh, hell, I'm Joe Ecks, aren't I?"