

The Call

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“Grapes, the breakfast of champions.” Sharon popped a red seedless grape into her mouth and continued deleting emails. She’d been sent to email jail, yet again, and couldn’t receive or send emails until she cleaned out her folders. The phone rang, giving her a slight start. Only 8:45, she hadn’t expected any calls, especially on her cell phone.

“Hello, Sharon Armstrong speaking.”

“Good morning, Miss Armstrong...”

The sexy, low voice on the other end of the line took her away from the here and now. It wasn’t what he was saying, but the rich timbre, tenor and tone that had her heart racing and ear glued to the phone for more.

This is crazy, she thought as he finished explaining he was the regional manager of the dealership she’d purchased her car from. People didn’t fall for a voice like they did with love at first sight. Truth be told, she didn’t believe in love at first sight either, so this was impossible.

They completed discussing the detailed review she’d written on the dealership she’d purchased her car from, then ventured into other areas. Conversation flowed so easily she pinched herself to ensure she wasn’t dreaming.

“I see you have a Loop area code,” he said. “I was transferred from Chicago a year ago.”

“No way. I’m new down here also.” Though she lived in Dallas, she maintained her cell number from Chicago.

A million and one things ran through her mind simultaneously, the main one being could she ask him out? Since this was a “business” call, she knew he wouldn’t ask her out no matter how interested in her he was. So the ball was in her court. She’d never asked a man out before,

and this was someone she hadn't actually met. What if he were married or dating? What if she were imagining this attraction between them?

She didn't want the call to end, but it must. There was no way she could have fallen for this man so easily. That wasn't like her. "I guess I should let you get back to work. It was nice meeting you, Jerry." *Ask him out!* raged loudly in her mind, but she held fast. So what if he had the same outlook on life as her? So what if they shared the same dry sense of humor, love of books and travel? So what if every fiber of her being yelled, *He's the one! Don't let him slip away!* All that mattered was he was no more than a voice at the other end of the phone line.

"It was nice speaking with you, Sharon. If you need anything, you have my number."

Awkward silence filled the void in conversation as she fought her apprehension of asking him out. "Have a great day, Jerry." *You're such a chicken.*

After she disconnected, she examined every word he'd said over their hour conversation that should have taken three minutes—tops. The rest of the day, Sharon was no good. She had begun dialing his number several times but couldn't complete the call. A simple conversation shouldn't be affecting her this way. *Simple...not quite so simple.* Here it was half past six, and she was still in a state of shock.

"What's wrong with me?" she mumbled, watching the last of her work-a-holic coworkers leave for the day.

Tired of the see-saw she'd placed herself on, this time when she dialed Jerry's number she actually hit the last digit and allowed the call to be placed. In a way she hoped he'd already gone home for the evening.

"Hello, Sharon."

Was that cheer or her hopeful imagination she heard in his voice? Heart beating faster than a hummingbird's wings flap, she drew in a non-too-calming breath. "I know the end of the day has passed, but umm, would you like to catch a movie? I mean if you aren't married or dating or anything like that," she rambled.

Seconds passed. Too many seconds. Face heated with embarrassment, she stammered, "I'm sorry. I shouldn't have called. I—"

"I'm sorry," he interrupted. "I'm just in a little shock. I've been praying you'd call back all day, but didn't truly expect it to happen, then..." He chuckled. "I'm sorry. This has never happened to me before. I'd love to go out to a movie, but I missed my lunch. Hate to admit it, but I was hoping a certain young lady would call and didn't want to miss her. Would you like to grab a bite to eat first? My treat."

"Oh, believe me when I say I know exactly how you feel." Still in a state of this-is-not-happening, she answered. "I'd love to."

"Then it's a date."