

That afternoon at home Caitlin was in a new mode. A happy mode. Unusually happy.

Her mother was quick to notice it. 'What's wrong with you?' she said as Caitlin came into the kitchen, humming.

'You mean because I'm humming? Is that so unusual?'

'As a matter of fact, it is. But it's not just the humming, it's – it's the look!'

Caitlin got herself a cold drink and turned to face her mother. 'Look?' she said, as if she had no idea what her mother was talking about.

Her mother shook her head and laughed softly. 'You're shining,' she said finally. 'Have you met a boy?'

Caitlin had to laugh. Her mom knew her better than she knew herself. 'Yeah. His name is Trevor Lambert.'

'Lambert? The Lamberts? Did you know that Mr. Lambert is the new Chief Executive Director of the hospital. They moved here from Florida. Have you seen their house? It's got a huge swimming pool.' Without waiting for Caitlin's answer, she asked, 'What's Trevor like? Is he a nice boy?'

Again, Caitlin had to laugh. Her mother was always so impressed by people with money. 'I don't know him that well. He's new at school. He's in my Spanish class, one of the 'silent six'.'

'Silent six?'

Caitlin smiled. 'Six boys who sit at the back and don't say anything. He'd heard that I'm a runner and he asked to run with me. He told me that his doctor had advised him to get some exercise because of his blood pressure.'

'Blood pressure? He's got a blood pressure problem? At his age?' she said with a laugh.

Caitlin gave her mother a knowing look. 'It's possible, isn't it? I know a couple of kids in my class with high blood pressure.'

'Sure. Anything's possible. Of course, it could be just an excuse to be with you. You've thought of that, I suppose.'

'I have.'

'And - ?'

A little smile crossed Caitlin's face. 'It's a good excuse, if you ask me.'

Caitlin's mother nodded. 'Yeah, very original,' she laughed.