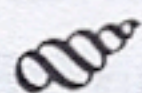


## Prologue

The cover read, "One Moment in Time: What if you could relive it?" The magazine article was about defining moments, turning points, good and bad in life. Another attempt by pop psychologists to grate on the human race's guilt or entitlement issues. I wasn't really interested in the topic, but since sitting in airports was my least favorite thing to do, I was tempted to buy the magazine and read the article out of boredom. Fortunately, my flight was called before I had the chance.

Once on the plane, however, I did ask myself the question: which moment would I relive if I could? I knew. I wouldn't relive it because of all its sweet memories, but because it changed me forever. My one moment had to be the one in 1969, the day I met Malcolm.



# Chapter One



**T**urning thirteen wasn't as bad as I had thought. I had long imagined that on that fateful day, I would get my period, zits, and armpit hair at the same moment, perhaps at 2:37 P.M., the precise minute I had been born. But on April 25th, I only got presents and cake from my parents and a card from Mimi and Papa with a fifty-dollar bill in it. It was six weeks later when some of the dreaded symptoms of adolescence would not only begin to seize my body, but my attitude as well.

I knew something was up. Two days before summer vacation, the air was tense, more than usual, like someone had a secret they were dying to share. But my mother's moods were precarious at best and so it was impossible ever to tell what was coming next. My father, who was rarely home when she was there, was no more or less distant than usual, but I noticed that my parents' paths had so evaded each other by that time that they had fallen into sort of a vaudevillian pattern. As my father walked in the front door, my mother was conveniently going out to her art studio. When she returned, he was in his home office doing some kind of business. Though all my life my parents' connection with each other had been a little imprecise, I began to notice it more in those two days than ever before. Something was definitely about to happen.

"Kat, how would you like to go on a trip?" My mother greeted me in her usual way, curling up next to me in my bed. I opened an eye and saw that the clock read 6:15.

"Now?"

"No, silly. In a couple of days when school's out."

I was awake enough to notice there was a familiar lilt in her voice, but one I hadn't heard from her in a few months. "Where?"

I knew by then that it didn't matter where or whether I protested, I