



Taste Berries for Teens 3: Inspirational Short Stories and Encouragement on Life, Love and Friends-Including the One in the Mirror (Taste Berries Series)

By Jennifer Youngs, Bettie B. Youngs

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Bettie B. Youngs, Ph.D. and Jennifer Leigh Youngs have worked with hundreds of teens of various ages and backgrounds to get to the heart of real-life teen issues. This latest offering reflects what teens tell them is the staple of life-making, keeping and coping with friends finding someone special then dealing with makeups and breakups; and sorting through control issues with their parents. More and more, teens are concerned about friends facing a health crisis (such as AIDS or eating disorders), having a serious alcohol or drug problem, and how to help their parents with their problems. *Taste Berries for Teens 3* addresses these growing concerns through a combination of stories expressing teens' thoughts and the compassionate wisdom of Bettie and Jennifer Youngs.

Taste Berries for Teens 3 lightens things up with a new chapter chockful of little-known trivia that teens will find fascinating and fun and wraps up with a section called "Ask Dr. Youngs," where Bettie answers the most common questions she gets from teens in the areas of self-improvement, friendship, love and sex, grieving, rumors, harassment and parents. Her responses reveal her love for teens by providing real solutions and encouraging teens to talk to their parents or important adults.

This collection of stories and advice is inspiring, honest and compelling, and will support teens as they progress on their life journeys. *Taste Berries for Teens 3* is sure to be the next big success in this extraordinary teen series.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 9 Up-Like its predecessors, this title consists mainly of stories by teens, and the quality ranges from engaging to self-indulgent. The themes are universal, yet some of the pieces are rambling, moralistic, self-centered, or lacking in basic grammar and clarity. One section deals with teens' reactions to September 11, 2001. The last portion of the book, which includes trivia on science, astrology, and other subjects, was designed to give teens talking points; it is unnecessary. This volume will undoubtedly draw fans of the "Chicken Soup" books (Health Communications), but it is an optional purchase elsewhere.

Linda Beck, Indian Valley Public Library, Telford, PA

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About the Author

Bettie B. Youngs, Ph.D., Ed.D. and her daughter, Jennifer Leigh Youngs, coauthored four prior Taste Berries for Teens runaway best-sellers. Bettie has appeared frequently on CNN, NBC Nightly News and Oprah. Her acclaimed books include *Safeguarding Your Teenager from the Dragons of Life*; the Pulitzer Prize-nominated *Gifts of the Heart*; and the award-winning *Values from the Heartland*. Jennifer is a speaker and workshop presenter for teens and parents nationwide. She is also the author of *Feeling Great, Looking Hot and Loving Yourself!* and *Goal-Setting Skills for Young Adults*.

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"Would You Like to Dance?"

"Would you like to dance?" Those words just tickled my skin. The beautiful guy with jet-black hair, interesting dark eyes and a gracious, sly smile reached out for my hand. Obviously, it hadn't crossed his mind that I might say "No."

We danced. And danced. His name was Tyler Redding. He was funny and made easy conversation. And though a year younger than me, he was taller than me! By the fourth dance, I learned that Tyler Redding loved soccer, had two younger brothers, and we each knew a couple of the same kids at school. He told me he loved my blue eyes and my smile, that my hair smelled "good," and that even with the "zillions of people on the planet," finding me "was just a matter of time." And that's when it hit me: I really liked this guy. I kept looking down, making sure my feet were on the ground because it felt as though I were floating a foot off the floor. We were inseparable for the rest of the party, and the rest of the summer, too.

When the school year resumed, we took our fun and exciting relationship back to school with us. Though we had no classes together, we were with each other every chance we got. School is different when you have

someone in your life; it's so much better. Actually it's not just school that is better; your whole life is. My parents liked Tyler, so he hung out at my house a lot. Whether it was watching movies, Saturday bowling extravaganzas, dinner with my parents or taking a nap on my couch on Sunday afternoons, he was there. It felt as though we were one person.

One clear Saturday night while we were stargazing, I told him I loved him. He said he loved me, too. I already knew it, of course, but it felt life-changing to hear the words.

One month later, my life changed again. It was nearly five o'clock on a Saturday afternoon when Tyler called, talking at first about the baseball game he'd won that afternoon, and then explaining that he needed "a little space" not from me, but from dating. Because my parents were telling me I was spending a little too much time "being a couple," and they'd like a little more of me without Tyler present I thought easing up a bit would be okay at least for a little while. I just assumed he was getting the same message from his parents. But when the very next day, Monday, he wasn't waiting for me at my locker as he always did, I wondered why he wasn't there. And then, when I saw him in the hallway later and he turned and walked the other way, I knew something was wrong. All day long, he wasn't in any of the usual places we hung out. The moment I got home from school, I called his house. His mother answered, saying he was "tied up and couldn't come to the phone." So then I knew that something was seriously wrong; I just didn't know what.

The next day I didn't see him. And the very next, I saw him walking down the hallway hand in hand with a girl in our class.

Confused, furious and saddened to the point of being sick to my stomach, I cornered him in the hall and said, "I can't believe your feelings for me have changed. Let's kiss. If we kiss and you feel nothing, then I'll let you go without a fight. But if you still have feelings for me, then I'm going to fight for our love."

I kissed him.

He didn't kiss back.

That said it all.

Standing there, having just kissed him, and having him receive it like a mummy, was a stunning blow! Tyler had found someone new. The time and love that once belonged to me, to us, now was hers, theirs. That he didn't kiss me back took all my inner-fight away: Trying to win him back would be a waste of time.

Every day I see them in the hallways walking hand in hand. They eat lunch together, and I see them standing by the lockers kissing. It's really hard, and it really hurts. The two of them have a definite chemistry between them. And she has pretty blue eyes and a pretty smile, and probably her hair smells "good." Was it just a matter of time that out of the zillions of people on the planet, she'd be his next in line?

There is no happy ending to my "love story." Tyler didn't come running back to me, and there is no new boyfriend in my life. But life goes on. I've learned firsthand that eventually, you really do run out of tears, and your heart gets tired of aching. It's been a big lesson, and one that's changed my views on love. I'm no longer so naive to believe that there's one and only one love that's meant for you. I've not given up on love. I'm just more realistic. Truthfully, I'm still more than a little hurt from the whole experience. But I know I'll be okay, too. So for now, I slide my sunglasses on top of my head and face the world, knowing that there are zillions of people on the planet, and it's just a matter of time before, once again, there'll be someone special for me to love.

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Users Review

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