SUMMER OF LOVE by Paul Martin
EXCERPT

Chapter One

Berkeley, California, May 1967

People said that Jack and Bobby Doyle were as alike as…well, those two proverbial peas in that familiar old pod. Even their friends had trouble telling the twenty-two-year-old identical twins apart. The "Doyle boys" were both six feet four inches tall, with the well-toned physiques of Greco-Roman wrestlers, which was no coincidence, since they both excelled at the sport. They had piercing hazel eyes and thick chestnut hair, which any number of young ladies had either run their hands through or were dying to do.

Besides being good-looking and popular, Jack and Bobby were intimidatingly brainy. They were the sort of fellows that ordinary guys hated, while secretly wishing they could trade places with them. Conversations occasionally faltered when one of the twins walked into a room and flashed his dazzling smile.

When they were younger, the twins sometimes played tricks on the unsuspecting by switching identities, a ruse that occasionally fooled even their relatives at family gatherings in their Beverly Hills home. They never fooled their parents, of course, or anyone who truly knew them, for Jack and Bobby Doyle's similarity ended with their physical appearance. In terms of personality, they were as different as chalk and cheese, as the quaint British saying put it.

Jack Doyle—John Hardy Doyle, according to the name inscribed on the bachelor's degree he'd just been handed by the chancellor of the University of California, Berkeley—was the older of the twins by seventeen minutes. It was an inconsequential interval, but it seemed to set the pattern for the relationship between the two boys. Jack was always the one who took the lead, as in his frequent campaigns to support worthy causes. It had been Jack who'd decided to venture north to UC Berkeley rather than attend UCLA, which was only a few miles from their house. At Cal, he'd majored in political science, the first step toward his goal of attending law school. After that, he planned either to

join his parents' Los Angeles law firm or dive into the shark-infested waters of politics. The sky was the limit for smart, handsome, ambitious Jack Doyle.

Bobby—Robert Lorenzo Doyle—had always been content to ease along in his brother's tailwind. He'd never felt the need to be the center of attention, to seek out honors, or run for every office that came along. And while he'd earned top marks in all of his classes, Bobby didn't really care if anyone knew how smart or accomplished he was. The fact that he was seldom beaten at chess and was a wizard on the classical guitar were private pleasures for him, not something to add to a list of accomplishments for others to admire.

When Jack first touted Berkeley, Bobby simply said sure, why not. He'd heard good things about the highbrow school in the liberal town just north of blue-collar Oakland. For his first two years, Bobby had taken random classes he found interesting. It wasn't until his advisor pointed out the need to declare a major that he'd settle on English, a choice prompted by his love of literature. He'd gradually moved in the direction of writing, which led to a stint on the *Daily Californian,* Berkeley's independent student-run newspaper. He and his fellow reporters covered every issue roiling the campus, from the Free Speech Movement to antiwar protests and draft counseling. He'd also connected with the East Bay music scene, writing about the local bands and making several friends in the process.

As Bobby strode to the podium to receive his diploma, he glanced out at the thousands of parents and relatives packed into Memorial Stadium, home of the Golden Bears. The outdoor setting was a relief from the cramped old auditorium in Wheeler Hall, the fifty-year-old building where Bobby had attended most of his English classes, alternately sweltering or freezing, depending on the season. The steely blue waters of the Bay glittered in the distance above the rim of the stadium. Even if Berkeley hadn't been one of the top schools in the country, the campus views alone would have been enough to warrant coming here.

Bobby even loved the fogs that shrouded the Bay, both the dense, drizzly clouds of winter and summer's billowy drifts, which often seemed thick enough to walk on. He'd always wondered why those famous summer fogs appeared so regularly. It turned out to be simple physics. When warm air rose inland, it created a low-pressure area that pulled cool, moisture-laden air from the Pacific through the Golden Gate, like giant lungs breathing in. The Bay really was a living organism, something you could study all your life.

Bobby had no chance of spotting his father and mother in the crowd. In a smaller setting, Donovan Duncan Doyle and Maria Ricci Doyle would have stood out. In their late forties, they could pass for thirty-five, a prototypical power couple with the smart wardrobes and polished mannerisms of top-tier attorneys. The two had met in law school at Stanford and married soon after graduation. Maria's father, a honcho at Columbia Pictures, had paved the way for their connection with the movie industry. Now, Donovan and Maria spent their time hammering out contracts between the studio and representatives of the stars.

In the Doyle household, dinner conversations were often laced with references to "greedy bastards," "prima donnas," and "delusional fools"—attributes applied to agents and actors alike. By the time Jack and Bobby were in high school, Hollywood had lost much of its mystique.

After the members of the Class of '67 received their diplomas, everyone settled in for a half-hour of platitudes courtesy of acting University of California president Harry Wellman. Wellman had recently replaced the dynamic, popular Clark Kerr, a man too lenient with student protestors to suit the state's newly elected "gubnor," Ronald Reagan—the former actor whose very name tended to make Berkeley liberals turn blue in the face. One of Reagan's campaign promises had been to "clean up the mess at Berkeley," a school he regarded as a hotbed of "beatniks, radicals and filthy speech advocates."

The new graduates assumed a look of polite attention as Harry Wellman spoke about their admirable academic achievements and bright futures, although their thoughts were far away. The anxious young folks had their minds on job searches, returning home, avoiding the draft, or continuing their educations. They were also thinking about how they'd be celebrating in a few hours, after the obligatory photo sessions with family members were over. There'd definitely be an abnormal amount of drunkenness and fornication in the East Bay on this cool spring night.

The spectacle of his sons' graduation led Donovan Doyle to recall his own undergraduate years. The tall, handsome attorney had attended the University of San Francisco, a private Jesuit school where he was fondly known as "3D" by his friends, not only because of initials but also because he seemed to stand out from the crowd, just as his sons did now. USF didn't have the cachet of UC Berkeley, but as far as Donovan was concerned, it was on the proper side of the Bay. Donovan was a dedicated San Francisco enthusiast, had been ever since he was a kid growing up in nearby San Mateo. Donovan's connection with the city was forged by his Irish ancestor Hardy Doyle, who landed in San Francisco in 1849 after the discovery of gold on the American River at Sutter's Mill.

Donovan had studied the history of his beloved city at USF. He enjoyed reading about the heroes and rogues of the old days, men like Joshua Norton, an immigrant commodities trader and real estate speculator who made and lost a fortune during the years of the California Gold Rush. Norton not only lost his money, he apparently lost his senses as well. In 1859, he proclaimed himself Emperor of the United States. In 1863, he tacked on the title Protector of Mexico. San Franciscans winked and went along, and from then until his death in 1880, the zany Emperor Norton roamed the streets of San Francisco decked out in a plumed top hat and military uniform with fringed epaulets, issuing proclamations and handing out worthless promissory notes to pay for the free meals and drinks he cadged.

Then there was Sam Brannan, California's first millionaire. Brannan ran a general store in the Sierra foothills near Sutter's Mill. He was the one who trumpeted the news that set off the Gold Rush, and he made a fortune selling supplies to the resulting flood of prospectors. For the next two decades, Brannan lived the high life, gallivanting around San Francisco, opening banks and a flurry of companies, buying up huge chunks of land, and creating the Calistoga hot springs resort. But booze, a bad temper, and lawsuits did him in, and he died a pauper, buried in an unmarked grave. For Donovan Doyle, old Sam Brannan embodied the San Francisco spirit, a rakish attitude of make a million, spend a million—and have a grand time doing it.

One of the city's heroes Donovan remembered reading about was Jonathan Letterman, the Union Army surgeon who revolutionized battlefield casualty management during the Civil War, saving thousands of soldiers who might otherwise have died of their wounds. After the war, Major Letterman settled in San Francisco, where he practiced medicine and was elected city coroner. The army hospital at the Presidio was named in his honor. The Letterman Army Hospital treated tens of thousands of sick or wounded soldiers during the Spanish-American War and World War II. Even now, American boys injured in Vietnam were being treated there.

Donovan also recalled the tragic figure of Ishi, the last surviving member of California's indigenous Yana tribe. In 1911, Ishi wandered onto the grounds of a slaughterhouse near Oroville. The half-starved Indian had been living by himself for years in the surrounding foothills after all the other remaining members of his tribe perished. Anthropologists from UC Berkeley rescued Ishi and escorted him to the Hearst Museum of Anthropology in San Francisco, where he lived out his days in comfort, teaching museum staff about his vanished way of life—the last Stone Age man in America.

For Maria Doyle, this afternoon's ceremony evoked a different set of memories. The statuesque brunette with the Sophia Loren cheekbones and voluptuous lips was thinking of her sons' childhoods. Jack and Bobby's Irish-Italian heritage had blessed them with extended families of loving relatives who gushed over their every accomplishment. Their aunts and older female cousins never failed to pinch their cheeks and tell them what special little boys they were. Maria often thought about how proud her immigrant grandfather Lorenzo would have been to see his American great-grandsons, but the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic took care of that. Her parents, Frank and Gina Ricci, had made up for any lack of attention, showering the twins with presents and praise. It was a blessing that the boys emerged as sensible adults with their egos in check.

Maria reflected on how the different temperaments of her sons had played out at Berkeley. Jack had joined the ROTC, not a very popular organization given the school's polarized political environment. His decision may have been an extension of his Boy Scout days, when he advanced to the rank of Eagle and earned more merit badges than any other boy in his troop. Jack had joined Berkeley's debate team, and he'd captained the four straight-A students who appeared on TV's *College Bowl,* a squad that retired undefeated after five games. Jack had also won NCAA Division 1 All-American honors in wrestling. It was an impressive resume he'd put together, one that would no doubt help him on his seemingly inevitable march to the top.

Bobby, on the other hand, had seemed more interested in having a good time than buffing his credentials. He'd connected with clever individuals instead of networking with members of official campus organizations. Maria smiled to herself as she contemplated Bobby's scalawag personality. While Jack was busy organizing worthwhile projects as a boy, Bobby was usually involved in adolescent hijinks, such as the time he tried to sign up their neighbors in the "UFO Welcoming Committee," a group he started after reading about the flying saucer controversy in Roswell, New Mexico. That was Bobby through and through. Truth be known, though, Bobby had probably made more lasting friends at Berkeley than Jack had, even though Jack's associates were all destined for success.

"Thank God that's over," Donovan whispered in Maria's ear as Harry Wellman wound up his address with a rhetorical flourish. "Let's get a picture of Jack and Bobby in their caps and gowns, and then we can all take a break before we get together for dinner."

~

Ernie's was one of San Francisco's top restaurants, a satin-and-pearls eatery where the martini-swilling gent at the next table might be British playwright Noel Coward or the free-spending Maharaja of Baroda. Director Alfred Hitchcock kept a private stock of wine at Ernie's while he was in town filming his 1958 movie classic *Vertigo*. Hitchcock filmed scenes all over the city, from the Mission Dolores cemetery to the Legion of Honor museum in Lincoln Park, although he created a soundstage version of Ernie's plush red interior. That was where Kim Novak swanned through the crowded dining room as Jimmy Stewart ogled her from the bar.

The real-life restaurant was located downtown on Montgomery, a street named for Capt. John B. Montgomery, the officer who raised the Stars and Stripes over the village of Yerba Buena on July 9, 1846, staking America's claim to the fledgling port. Captain Montgomery would probably keel over if he could see his namesake street, with its swarm of pedestrians, honking autos, and ranks of sun-blocking skyscrapers. Since Montgomery's time, the city had spread westward across the seven-mile-wide peninsula, taking in a similar swath north to south—a rumpled patch of land with a diverse population of dreamers, schemers, and average Joes, Josés, and Jiangs. Locked in by water on three sides, the compact forty-nine-square-mile city had avoided the urban sprawl of Los Angeles.

Donovan and Maria Doyle's Yellow Cab navigated the heavy evening traffic and pulled up in front of Ernie's at 7:55 p.m. Donovan climbed out and offered his hand to Maria, who emerged into the soft spring night dressed in a severely elegant black-and-white Geoffrey Beene design. She looked more glamorous than some of the stars she dealt with at Columbia Pictures.

Inside the restaurant, the tuxedo-clad maître d' greeted the Doyles effusively. He wagged a finger at them. "It's been far too long since you paid us a visit."

"Hello, George," Donovan replied. "It's good to be back. The old place looks the same, thank heaven."

The maître d' waved to the head waiter. "Pierre, please show Mr. and Mrs. Doyle to their usual table."

"I'm sorry," Donovan told the waiter, "but first we've got to find our boys. They said they'd meet us here at eight on the dot."

"I think you'll find the two young gentlemen over at the bar." The waiter nodded in that direction.

As they walked past the bar on the way to their table, Donovan slipped up behind his sons and laid a hand on each of their shoulders. “Aha. Gotcha.”

“Hey, Pop,” Bobby said with a grin, brushing his long, dark hair out of his eyes. “Who’s the good-looking chick you’ve got there?”

Maria Doyle snorted and poked her son in the chest. “I know what you’re up to, buster. Trying to score some brownie points, huh?”

Bobby leaned over and kissed his mother on the cheek.

“And what about you, young fellow-me-lad?” Donovan said to Jack. “What have you got to say for yourself?”

“Evening, Dad, Mom. Thanks for inviting us. This place is something else. That’s Orson Welles sitting over there, and we saw Mayor Shelley earlier.”

Donovan glanced around the room. “Jack Shelley? Where? He’s a fellow USF alum.”

“He left just as we arrived,” Jack said. Unlike his brother, Jack wore his hair short. He looked like one of the Kingston Trio, the clean-cut folksingers who got their start here in the city at the Purple Onion, the tiny Beat-era hangout in North Beach.

The waiter led the Doyles to their quiet corner table. Donovan ordered a bottle of champagne, and after it arrived, he proposed a toast. “To the two of you. You don’t know how proud you’ve made your mother and me. And we want to hear all about your plans now that you’ve got those sheepskins tucked away.”

The twins exchanged glances. “Why don’t you go first,” Jack said.

Bobby toyed with the silverware for a moment. “I’m thinking of pursuing my writing,” he said. “You know that I’ve always dreamed of becoming a novelist, and I enjoyed working on the campus newspaper. I’ve made a few contacts here in the city. I’m hoping I can latch on with one of the smaller papers and work my way up. I’d like to write about the music scene. There’s a lot going on around the Bay these days. It would be fun. I know there’s not much money in journalism, but it would help me develop as a writer. Maybe someday I really could take on a novel, or even give screenwriting a try.”

Maria laid her hand on Bobby’s. “I think you’ll make a terrific writer. You’ve always been good with words. I remember the poems you used to write in grade school. Some of them were amazing, especially for someone that age.”

"Thanks, Mom." Bobby glanced at his father. "What about you, Pop? Do I have your blessing?"

"Good Lord yes, son. You'll only be successful if you do something you love, and we all know how much you love literature. I remember you read *Crime and Punishment* when you were just a kid. Heck, I could barely plow my way through that tome in college."

Donovan hesitated for a moment. "Of course, there's another factor at play. What about the draft?"

Bobby and Jack again exchanged glances.

"Yeah," Bobby said. "The bloody draft."

Maria tsk-tsked.

"Sorry, Mom, but just thinking about the draft gets me going."

Jack leaned forward with an intense look. "Like I keep telling you, you've been hanging out with too many campus radicals."

Bobby rolled his eyes. "Oh boy, here we go again."

"I might as well lay it all out right now," Jack snapped. "I don't care what the naysayers think about the war in Vietnam. As far as I'm concerned, if your country asks you to serve, then it's your duty to do it. That's why I enrolled in ROTC, and that's why I've applied for my army commission. I'm going on active duty next month."

Maria gasped. "Oh, Jackie. Please tell me you won't be going off to that awful war. What's the point of it all?"

Donovan took his wife's hand. "I'm sorry, dear, but if that's Jack's decision, then we should support him. I'm afraid I don't agree with this war either, but I'm certainly not going to try to talk anyone out of it if their conscience tells them they should go."

"Thanks, Dad," Jack said soberly. "Actually, there's no way of knowing if I'll be sent overseas. I could end up at an army base right here in the States."

Maria sighed. "At least that's something to hope for."

"That still leaves my question to Bobby about the draft," Donovan said. "Any notion of where you stand, son?"

"I've been thinking about enrolling in graduate school at USF. They've got strong writing and communications programs. I believe I could handle school while working as a stringer on one of the local papers, especially if I take the minimum course load for a full-time student. That would put off

the draft for another year or two. Maybe this lousy war will be over by then. And don't look at me like that, Jack. Not everyone thinks that getting embroiled in a conflict in a miniscule country hardly anyone had ever heard of is vital to our national interests. Besides, I agree with what Muhammad Ali said—'I ain't got no quarrel with them Vietcong.'"

Jack started to say something, but Donovan headed him off, knowing a full-blown argument was in the offing. "If you're interested in writing for San Francisco papers, that fellow over there could give you some advice."

Donovan pointed toward the bar, where *San Francisco Chronicle* columnist Herb Caen had just taken a seat. Caen was a dapper man with a ready smile. He'd been the virtual spokesman for San Francisco ever since he started writing about the city in 1938, churning out daily columns filled with witty insights into goings-on around town. He could also be serious or scathingly critical when the subject called for it, but even his barbs revealed a concern for humanity. He roamed the city of seven hundred thousand by day and by night, gathering anecdotes like a fisherman hauling in his net, and no fish was too small to capture his interest. He wrote about everyone from bigwigs to bootblacks, visiting starlets to local harlots. And always, his love of the multifaceted, multicultural city—his Baghdad-by-the-Bay—shone through. "San Francisco, the gorgeous mess," he called it.

Donovan had read Caen's columns for years. He still subscribed to the *Chronicle,* along with the *Los Angeles Times,* the *Chicago Tribune,* and the *New York Times.* Donovan had beamed with pride the first time Caen mentioned him in the *Chronicle.* He'd been in San Francisco to confer with Lloyd Bridges and his agent, and Caen had spotted them having lunch at the Old Clam House, the oldest restaurant in the city.

Donovan agreed with nearly everything Caen wrote, except for the man's campaign against calling the city "Frisco." Donovan had never understood the widespread distaste for the nickname among locals. For him, it called to mind the city's bawdy past, when ships from around the world docked along the Embarcadero and slumming gentry rubbed elbows with riffraff in the saloons and bordellos of the Barbary Coast. He could just imagine Dashiell Hammett's cynical shamus Sam Spade tossing out "Frisco" while roughing up a two-bit hood in a gin joint down in the Tenderloin or grilling a gum-chewing floozy in a greasy spoon where people ate with their elbows on the table. Caen could object to the nickname all he wanted, but what did it matter? He was from Sacramento, where the most colorful characters had always been the sleazy white-collar crooks in the state government.

"C'mon," Donovan said to Bobby. "I'll introduce you before we order dinner. It couldn't hurt to know the most famous journalist in San Francisco."

Donovan led the way over to the bar. The ever-alert Caen spotted the pair before they were halfway across the room. "If it isn't Mr. Tinseltown, himself," he said as they walked up. "Long time no see, Don. Your old stomping grounds not good enough anymore?"

Donovan shook the man's outstretched hand. "Hello, Herb. You're right. We don't get up here as often as we'd like." He laid a hand on Bobby's shoulder. "You remember Bobby. He and his brother Jack just graduated from Berkeley."

"Ah, good old Berserkly," Caen remarked with a mischievous twinkle. He swirled his drink and eyed Bobby. "Been in any exciting demonstrations lately?"

"Only to cover them for the *Daily Californian,* although I'm more interested in music than politics."

"Yeah, that's a lot safer. I'd stick with it if I were you."

"Bobby's considering going into journalism," Donovan said. "I thought maybe you could give him a few pointers."

Caen finished his drink and smacked the glass on the bar. "Rule Number One. Don't go into journalism unless you can't find a job on a fishing trawler. The pay's better on those boats, the scenery's superb, you won't get mugged, and you'll never go hungry—unless you happen to hate seafood."

Caen glanced over at the Doyle's table. "I see you brought along the Mrs. If you're busy while you're in town, I'd be happy to squire her around. Show her the sights, you know." He eyed Maria like a lecherous Groucho Marx.

Donovan chuckled. "We're heading home in the morning. Besides, I'm not sure she'd be up to it. She still talks about the place you took us to the last time we got together."

"Hey, I thought that was a sedate nightclub. How was I to know the waitresses would be half naked?"

Caen fished a business card out of his pocket and handed it to Bobby. "If you're serious about this journalism thing, gimme a call. I'll show you around the office, introduce you to a few of my fellow ink-stained wretches."

Chapter Two

Marin County, California, June 1967

Eddie "The Rat" Ratner liked what he saw. The crowd gathered for the two-day Fantasy Fair and Magic Mountain Music Festival on Mount Tamalpais was ripe for the plucking. To the Rat, the tens of thousands of mellowed-out rock fans, nature lovers, face painters, and kite fliers were just a bunch of chumps looking to get high and get laid. He could accommodate their first wish. He had enough merchandise in his beat-up canvas shoulder bag to get the entire 49ers football team stoned—pot and acid for the candy-asses and coke, speed, and horse for the hardcore.

The slump-shouldered dope dealer with the orange fright-wig hairdo and high-heeled Beatle boots could always spot a prospective mark. He simply looked for anyone with darting eyes, like a drunk searching for his next shot of rotgut. If a pusher couldn't make a good living here in the Bay Area, the Rat said to himself, he ought to consider another line of work. The man's pointy face puckered into an obscene smile, revealing his prominent yellow teeth. He looked like he could gnaw his way through a tin can, just like a voracious rodent.

Eddie Ratner definitely made a good living at his trade, although you couldn't tell it by his appearance. From the condition of his navy surplus bell-bottom dungarees, anyone might think he'd spent the night sleeping in an alley. Despite the wads of cash the Rat had stashed away in his fleabag Haight-Ashbury apartment, he constantly worried about keeping his customers. The competition was tough. The last guy who tried to push the Rat aside ended up in a ditch on a lonely stretch of road in the Santa Cruz Mountains south of San Francisco. The hulking Hells Angel the Rat hired to help him take care of the problem had cut off the interloper's right hand before he tossed his body. Some sort of message, the Rat supposed, or maybe the biker just liked cutting off body parts.

Yeah, the Rat knew how to protect what was his. As he said to the fellow who asked him if he minded his unflattering nickname, "Rats are survivors, baby. Rats and alligators. When humans finally wipe themselves off the face of the planet, the rats and the alligators will still be here. If I was from Louisiana, I'd wanna be called Gator."

~

Raul Pitman was far from his usual beat. A reporter for the *Berkeley Barb,* the East Bay's two-year-old underground newspaper, Pitman normally wrote about heavyweight subjects that appealed to the emerging counterculture—antiwar marches, civil rights demonstrations, Free Speech rallies, and the like. His crusading newspaper was filled with psychedelic art, nudity, profanity, and antiestablishment cartoons. The staff delighted in outraging the straights, and they did it with insightful aplomb. Their mission was simple. They wanted to change the world, and if you didn't agree with them, get out of the way.

Pitman was an authentic intellectual, with the requisite Van Dyke beard, black beret, and black leather sport coat. He was so cool you could almost get a chill standing next to him. He'd decided to cover the fair and music festival after hearing about the stellar lineup of bands. They included a long list of Bay Area groups, headlined by Jefferson Airplane, Country Joe & the Fish, and the Steve Miller Blues Band. Several groups from Los Angeles had made the trek north, including the Byrds, Canned Heat, the Grass Roots, and the Doors. The festival was sponsored by San Francisco's KFRC radio station, and at two dollars a head, the admission was a bargain, with all the proceeds going to a local child care center.

Pitman had a feeling the gathering would be something special—the first big outdoor rock festival—and he wanted to be part of history. Getting here, however, had been an adventure. After driving from Berkeley across the Bay Bridge, traversing the busy streets of San Francisco, and crossing the Golden Gate Bridge to Marin County, he then had to abandon his car and take a yellow school bus up Mount Tamalpais. A fleet of buses had been chartered to haul musicians and fairgoers up the narrow scenic road leading to the Cushing Amphitheatre, an open-air performance space high on the 2,500-foot-high mountain's southern slope.

The trip was turning out to be well worth it. As Pitman looked around, he saw couples strolling through tawny sunlit meadows set off by the intense greens of the surrounding woods. Youngsters and grownups swayed in tree swings and slid down a grassy hillside on sheets of cardboard. Long-haired, bearded artisans from nearby Sausalito were selling handmade rugs, pottery, jewelry, and other craft items. Food stalls were doing a brisk business. A giant inflatable Buddha and a geodesic dome light

chamber provided touches of the offbeat. The overall atmosphere was that of a happy, peaceful Renaissance fair.

The organizers of the festival were lucky to have such a beautiful day. The fair was originally scheduled for the previous weekend but had to be put off because of bad weather. That was the Bay Area—sunny and warm one minute and foggy and chilly the next. The region really only had two seasons—winter and summer. The cool, rainy winters lasted roughly from November to March, with April through October being warmer and drier. The cold California Current that flowed offshore usually kept San Francisco below seventy degrees even in summer.

To add to the uncertainty, the weather in different locations around the Bay could vary wildly on any given day, thanks to the region's diverse topography. Even within San Francisco, it could feel like winter in one part of town and summer in another on the same afternoon. Today, the glittering waters of the Bay and the Pacific Ocean vied with the cloudless sky for the purest shades of blue. The clear air bore the fresh, spicy scents of oaks, firs, and madrones. Raul Pitman had lived in the area for five years since moving here from the somnolent Midwest, but he'd seldom experienced a finer day. And there was music and pot to boot.

~

Sonny Anders was pissed. He was supposed to be chaperoning the Charlatans, and now the boozy, druggy gang of renegades had disappeared again. This wasn't going to get Anders in tight with his boss, Bill Graham. The impresario of San Francisco's Fillmore Auditorium, Graham was the city's biggest rock promoter and agent. A man known for his tantrums, Graham was liable to toss Anders from a stage—just as he'd once done to the Charlatans when they failed to show up on time for a benefit concert. One of the Bay Area's first psychedelic cult bands, the Charlatans had plenty of talent, but their unpredictable streak was making it harder and harder for them to land gigs. Anders had tried to motivate the band, but they seemed bent on self-destruction. If they don't show up before long, Anders said to himself, they could go to hell as far as he was concerned.

Anders chewed on the ends of his droopy mustache, a sure sign he was agitated. A lanky man with unruly blond hair, he had plans for making it big in the music business, and he had no patience with anyone who held him back. He was one of the earliest to recognize what was happening in the

San Francisco music scene. Bands that had once performed for modest crowds in the city's clubs were being elevated to national prominence. Jerry Garcia and his gang of rowdies had helped build their fan base with free jam sessions in Haight-Ashbury. Now, the Grateful Dead, Jefferson Airplane, Big Brother & the Holding Company, and other local bands were being courted by major record labels. Serious money was being tossed around, and Sonny Anders intended to grab his share.

~

Bobby Doyle worked his way through the amphitheater's crowded seating area until he was as close to the stage as he could get. He looked up at the intimidating figure of Bob "The Bear" Hite, lead singer of Canned Heat, the L.A. blues group that took its name from a song by early blues great Tommy Johnson. "Canned heat" referred to Sterno, which desperate alcoholics guzzled when they couldn't lay their hands on anything better. The hulking, bearded Hite was belting out the Robert Johnson–Elmore James classic "Dust My Broom," one of the songs the group had just recorded for their debut album. Driven by Henry Vestine on lead guitar, the song rolled along like a runaway freight train. With a backdrop of trees and psychedelic banners, the setting was like nothing anyone had seen before. A rock show amid nature, a new combination.

Bobby tried to scribble a few notes, but after being constantly jostled by the dancing, flailing, head-bobbing crowd, he gave up and decided to enjoy the show and trust his memory when he got back home to write up his account. This was his first outing as a stringer for the *San Francisco Chronicle,* thanks to his visit to Herb Caen's office in the newspaper's venerable gray building on the corner of Fifth and Mission Streets. The columnist had kindly introduced him to Ralph J. Gleason, the *Chronicle*'s music critic. When Gleason learned that Bobby wanted to write about music, he grilled him on his knowledge of every genre from classical to jazz. Bobby must have passed the test, because he came away with a promise that Gleason would take a look at his writing. It was Gleason who suggested that he cover the Marin County festival, so here he was.

After Canned Heat rumbled through a few more blues classics, a procession of other acts followed. Pop singer Dionne Warwick wowed the crowd with her stylish, compelling vocals, although her songs seemed at odds with most of the rock numbers. Eventually, the Doors, another Los Angeles group, took the stage. The Doors had released their self-titled debut album in January, and the LP

took off when “Light My Fire” was released as a single. Despite having a hit song, this was the group’s first large live show.

Besides “Light My Fire,” the Doors performed “Break On Through” and other songs from their album. Bobby was impressed by the band, except for Jim Morrison staggering around the stage like a drunkard. During instrumental breaks, Morrison kept writhing and carrying on to keep the focus on himself. The handsome lead singer gave the impression of being a self-infatuated exhibitionist, someone who stared at himself in the mirror to perfect his bad-boy glower. But you had to give the guy credit. He could put on a memorable performance, even though he was only a so-so singer in Bobby’s opinion.

Bobby was exhausted by the time the last of over a dozen groups finished its set. As he made his way toward the parking lot to hop on one of the school buses for the trip back down the mountain, he spotted Raul Pitman up ahead. Bobby had often crossed paths with Pitman when they were both student reporters at UC Berkeley, and he liked the fellow, theatrical getup and all. He knew that beneath the hipster exterior was a friendly, down-to-earth guy who grew up on a Kansas wheat farm. He also knew that Pitman’s first name was actually Paul. He’d started calling himself Raul after he arrived at Berkeley, grew a beard, and bought himself a beret.

Bobby caught up with Pitman and grabbed the sleeve of his leather coat. “Hey man, where’re you headed in such a hurry? Off to someplace immensely important as usual?”

Pitman high-fived him and flashed a sheepish grin. “You always manage to poke a hole in my image, Doyle,” Pitman replied. “I may have to start smoking a pipe to add to my aura. To answer your question, I’m on my way back home to write up the show. How about you?”

“Same thing, although I’m living in San Francisco now. I’m stringing for the *Chronicle,* and I’ve enrolled in grad school at USF.”

“Bravo on both counts. Nice way to hone your writing chops and thumb your nose at Uncle Sam. Lucky for me, I’m 4-F. Weak eyes.” He adjusted his rimless glasses and pretended to be feeling his way along.

The two acquaintances continued toward the parking lot, discussing the various performances they’d witnessed. After they’d clambered onto one of the buses and found their seats, Bobby asked if Pitman was coming back for the second day of the festival.

"You bet, man. Jefferson Airplane, Steve Miller, the Byrds, the Grass Roots. Wouldn't want to miss that lineup."

~

Jefferson Airplane had already reached cruising altitude by the time the band walked onto the stage on Mount Tamalpais. Their first album, *Jefferson Airplane Takes Off,* had debuted the previous August, but Signe Anderson, their female singer, quit the band shortly afterward to stay home with her new baby. Marty Balin, the band's mastermind, recruited singer Grace Slick as her replacement. Slick brought a new energy to the band, which was on full display when she performed "Somebody to Love" and "White Rabbit," two of the songs that had made the group's second album, *Surrealistic Pillow,* a hit, lifting Jefferson Airplane to international acclaim. "White Rabbit," written by Slick, epitomized the drug-fueled essence of psychedelic rock.

The popular Bay Area band Country Joe & the Fish added notes of strangeness and whimsy to the show before Steve Miller, backed by his old pal Boz Scaggs, shook up the audience with the pulsating "Mercury Blues." The sets by the Byrds and the Grass Roots demonstrated the wide spectrum that rock encompassed, from the Byrds' mind-bending "Eight Miles High," with its jangly Jim McGuinn guitar solos on his twelve-string Rickenbacker, to the Grass Roots' recent hit "Let's Live for Today," a poignant love song that fit the uncertain times. None of the groups imparted greater joy than the 5th Dimension. Their buoyant new song "Up, Up and Away" lifted the crowd along with it. Even the puffy newsboy caps the gorgeous Marilyn McCoo and Florence LaRue both wore added a lighthearted note.

Late in the day, Jefferson Airplane returned for a second set. While they were performing their mellow folk-rock ballad "Today," Bobby noticed a pretty girl dancing by herself off to one side of the amphitheater. Sunlight illuminated the girl's long russet hair and the garland of yellow flowers she wore. The girl spun slowly in time with the music, waving a filmy shawl over her head. Her diaphanous dress floated around her as she moved. She looked like a woodland nymph. It was the most indelible image Bobby would take away from the festival.

A couple of the things that Bobby didn't see would have soured his day. In the staging area behind the amphitheater, Sonny Anders vented his frustration on the hopped-up members of the

Charlatans, while in a shadowy, out of the way spot in the woods, the skulking Eddie Ratner plied his trade. With today's crowd, the Rat's hottest sellers were tabs of acid and nickel bags of weed. The sunshine kids at the festival weren't into the hard stuff, to the Rat's disappointment, since he made a greater profit on the coke and heroin he could cut with baking soda or laundry detergent. Most marks didn't know the difference, unless they were dead-enders who failed to get their usual buzz. In that case, the Rat simply blamed the bad dope on his suppliers. "Hey, what can you do?" he would say with a weaselly smile.

Bobby had no time for dope peddlers. It wasn't that he was a prude, but when it came to getting high, he usually stuck with a couple of cold bottles of Dos Equis or a shot or two of pungent Barbancourt rum. He had smoked pot on occasion, and he'd even tried LSD, although he didn't like the experience. He didn't think it was worth surrendering control over his mind just to see blurry colored lights or people's faces melting. And reading about kids on acid leaping to their deaths from buildings because they thought they could fly didn't enhance the drug's appeal. No, what he hated were the scumbags who ruined people's lives with hard drugs.

After the last notes of the day's final song echoed away over the hillsides, one of the festival organizers made an announcement over the PA system. "We'd like to thank all of you for coming out to share in this beautiful event. Bless you, and have a safe trip home. As you make your way down to the parking lot, we ask that you deposit your trash in the receptacles around the grounds. We want to leave this place as pristine as we found it. Peace and love." Surprisingly, the festival-goers did put their trash in the bins, making this not only the first outdoor rock music festival in history but also the tidiest.

Bobby Doyle tried to order his thoughts as he shuffled down the hillside. The two-day barrage of music made it difficult to summarize the festival, although to his mind, the most lasting impression was the sheer variety of musical styles. There was psychedelic intensity of Jefferson Airplane and the straight-ahead rock of the Grass Roots, the foot-stomping blues of Canned Heat and the lilting pop sounds of Dionne Warwick and the 5th Dimension. He'd have to sharpen his pencil to capture it all in his piece for the *Chronicle.* He was beginning to glimpse how different—and subjective—this new role of music journalist was going to be compared to the unglamorous news reporting he'd done for the *Daily Californian.* It was definitely a challenge, one he was sure he'd enjoy.

Another part of the story was the variety of people who'd attended. Bobby had seen mothers with babies and guys in loincloths, uniformed cops nodding to the music and blissed-out flower children blowing soap bubbles. There were slick Berkeley hipsters like Raul Pitman and scruffy, sandal-wearing artists from San Francisco and Marin. Nowhere among them was there the slightest display of animosity. The festival had been an enchanted island of goodwill. There was a spirit of sharing, of being surrounded by friendly souls who all cared about the same things. Even the rock stars mingled with the crowd, enjoying the show as much as anyone. The fair's organizers had expected twenty thousand people, but probably twice that many showed up.

Bobby thought of the russet-haired girl he'd seen dancing by herself. "The Girl on the Hill," he decided to call her, as if he were naming a painting. He pictured the jubilant, ingenuous smile on the girl's face as she swirled about in the brilliant sunshine. He hoped she'd be able to retain that unaffected joy for as long as possible.