



Excerpt: Love Finds You in Holiday, Florida © 2009 Summerside Press

When she managed just those few steps without landing on any of his toes, a smile broke out across Cassie’s face as fast and furious as a champagne cork just popped. But her joy was short lived because, with the very next step, Richard cried out and so did she.

“Have you ever danced before in your life?” he asked her, his expression still contorted with pain.

“Of course I have,” she replied. And then, with a shrug, she leaned down and looked up at his clenched face as she added, “I can Twist, and do a better-than-average Pony ... Ooh, and I can Hustle!”

Richard stared at her for a long, uncomfortable and excruciating moment. Then, without a word, he spun around and headed off across the room away from her. He said something to Laura in a hushed voice which the lovely blonde questioned before finally turning toward a stack of albums on the table and picking through them. When she found what she was looking for, she removed the vinyl from its cover and placed it on the turntable before nodding at Richard.

“Ladies and gentlemen,” he announced. “Change of plans. Today ... we are going to learn The Hustle.”

The familiar “oooooooooh ooh ooh ooh ooh,” started to play, and Richard grinned at Cassie, making her heart do a mad flutter. Not because of the delightful smile trapped between those attractive parentheses ... but because she knew what was coming next.

“Do it.”

“Ms. Constantine. Let’s show them how it’s done.”

Doot doot doot da doo da doot doot.

The instant she heard it, Cassie’s doubts flew away on silent wings, along with the 30+ years between then and now. She might have been astonished if she’d taken time to think it through before vaulting toward Richard, eager to move up beside him.

Three steps back – bump! Three steps forward – bump!

By the first overhead clap, Richard had stepped into line beside her, and they danced side by side in perfect sync. After the rolling arms came the signature Travolta move, and all of the onlookers began to applaud. Before she knew it, every one of them hurried to form the lines on either side of her and Richard. Maureen Heaton nearly knocked a couple of them down trying to take the spot next to Richard. And then, as the rhythm of the music built, more than a dozen Floridians over 50, *many of them pushing 70 in fact!*, were disco dancing as if there was a glitter ball hanging overhead.

“I can’t believe this!” Cassie shouted to Richard over the music on a rolling fit of laughter. “You are insane.”

He pulled a contorted face and spun into the Travolta move just then, pointing at the ceiling and then at the floor. Cassie could hardly contain herself.

“You’re hysterical!”

Richard Dillon, hysterical. Who knew?!