

Duck, Duck, Goose

First, you get oh-so-pretty for the party. Do whatever primping rites you do. Then, when you arrive, you must be fresh and cheerful and willing to play. Everybody forms constellations, and you don't want to be left out. It seems like it's a very long time before it's your turn. They go up and down and around and around. Over and over.

When you're finally It, the show is all yours. You keep the cocktail balanced while exchanging charming observations. You run fingers through someone's hair. *Is he the one? No.* You brush a bit of canapé off another's tie. *Is he the one? No.* You accept triple air kisses from another. *Is he the one? No.* Touch his shoulder, look in his eye, practice a smile. *No, no, no.*

And then, there's one who is of a different feather. He's charming. He thinks you're charming. He looks like that actor/singer/athlete/other that you had a crush on when you were fifteen. He's artistic enough to be interesting, but ambitious enough to be viable. And you're relieved to discover that he's not gay.

You tell your best cocktail party anecdote. His hand will touch yours when he brings you a fresh drink. Then, you will find some innocuous but necessary reason for him to talk to you again soon. To be certain, he will leave with your email address, mobile phone number, IM handle, land line, home and vacation addresses, and contact information at work.

Once you are home, you may drink a bit and text him pictures you take in the bathtub with your cell phone.

After that, he will want to spend some time with you.

When you are not going out with him, you will stalk him through his friends, your friends, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Google Alerts, and perhaps even genotype a strand of his hair to ensure that he's not interested in anyone else. Then, with all of the information you know

about him, you will be able to surprise him with all of the things that you happen to have in common.

You will cook him something wonderful, perhaps only wearing an apron. You will find the action figure he never got from Santa. You will be coiffed and lipsticked and never wear granny panties. You will smile and be obliging, even when the things he wants to do are so horribly lame.

And he will begin to like you for this. He may even love you for it. At which point, you will begin to find him terribly boring. You will unceremoniously dump him in the mush pot. Then, you will take your seat, cross your ankles, and wait.

If you are patient, you will be tapped on the shoulder. And the chase will begin again.