



To Be Opened In The Event Of My Death: Ralph Haueners, M. D. Rutler, Vt.

Dr. Carl Vender, Jenk's Maternity Hospital, Jenksville, Mass.

My dear Carl:

I have decided to carry certain facts with me to the grave, unless circumstances convince me of the advisability of revealing them. But it has occurred to me that those circumstances might arise after my death and that those facts should therefore be in the possession of somebody else, with discretionary power to use them.

Possibly you followed the hearings in connection with the hammer slaying of Elizabeth Perry Watts, whose husband, Tom Watts, was for a long time under suspicion. But the police were never able to establish the fact that he had been in Rutler that night. Also, no motive was found sufficiently strong to indicate murder.

I had known Elizabeth Per-

This Is The Story Of A "Good" Woman Who Got What She Deserved

By Viola Brothers Shore

ry since her sixteenth year, when her father died, leaving her the house on Larch Street and the care of Franklin, then a boy of ten. That duty she faithfully discharged, renting out rooms, taking in boarders and giving the boy a mother's care. Franklin worked his way through school in order to lighten the burden on Elizabeth. And although I advised against it, he prepared himself for medical school because Elizabeth had set her heart on it. The bond between them was a very strong—and I was inclined to feel—an unfortunate one for Franklin.

I saw a great deal of Franklin during the years when Elizabeth believed he was pursuing his medical studies in my library. But he was spending little time among my books. Jeanie

Pearson, my wife's niece was living with us. Jeanie had had a most unfortunate childhood in a semi-orphanage. She was a shy, grave little girl, who did not seem to make friends with other young people. I was pleased when she and Franklin found things in common and the haunted look began to leave her eyes. They were such babes in the woods and so in love that I could not refuse to help them. I broke the news of their marriage to Elizabeth, who was always a little afraid of me.

Franklin at once dropped medical school and found himself a job in the bank, for which he was better suited. Jeanie's very youth and helplessness seemed to bring out all the latent manhood in the boy. And I felt that in time she would be able to break Elizabeth's hold over him. I advised them to go house-keeping. But Elizabeth was having trouble with her mortgage and her roomers and Franklin hadn't the heart to walk out on her.

I think for the first time, he saw Elizabeth. He took a little four-room cottage on the other side of the town.

I believe it was pride which made Elizabeth decide to marry Tom Watts, one of her roomers. Tom Watts had been in and out of a dozen entanglements to my knowledge. But Elizabeth never took my advice. I was not surprised, a few months later, to hear gossip about Tom and a certain Mollie Day who boarded at Elizabeth's. Elizabeth eventually heard it too, and Mollie Day and her husband moved to another part of town.

I was called out one day to treat Elizabeth for severe contusions and bruises. She said she had fallen down the cellar steps. I did not believe her. I had passed the expressman carrying out a trunk initialed T. W. Tom and Elizabeth were reconciled in time. But Mollie Day had left town. And I heard that she had a hard time of it in New York before she finally jumped from the window of a cheap hotel. I mention this because it has a bearing on

(Continued on page 49)



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For three years Jeanie lived in the shadow of Elizabeth. Jeanie never complained—even to me. But I knew, from the look in her eyes, that she was back in the bleakness of her childhood and that her love for Franklin was being undermined because he was too blind to see that Elizabeth hated her.

I had been feeling for some time that a baby was their only hope, when Jeanie came to see me. I was happy, knowing how much she wanted something that would be her own. The house was Elizabeth's and the garden was Elizabeth's—and even Franklin was more Elizabeth's than hers. All the love in her went out to that baby.

I made it clear to Franklin what it would mean to Jeanie now, and to him, too, to live alone. I did not mince words.

DUTY

(Continued from page 14)

what comes later.

No baby was ever more eagerly awaited than the one I brought into the world in the little four-room cottage. Jeanie had refused to go to a hospital. Institutions terrified her. She wanted her baby born in her own home. It was a delicate little thing, and Jeanie herself did not rally very well from the effort of giving birth to it. For a time I doubted whether she would survive. My own nurse, Mary Kelly, pulled her through. But even Mary Kelly could not save the baby—and on the third day it died. Jeanie was in no condition to be told.

We managed to make her believe the baby was sleeping—or feeding—or that Mary Kelly had him outdoors in the sun. But that night, when I came into the room, Jeanie looked up at me and said, "Uncle Ralph... my baby... is... dead...." I tried to comfort her, to lie to her, until I realized that she was not hearing what I said. We worked over her all that night, Mary Kelly and I, but you know how it is when you feel them slipping through your fingers.....

Franklin followed me into the living room. I was never more sorry for anyone in my life. "Jeanie's going to die," he said, "I know it. She doesn't want to live without her baby."

Elizabeth tried to console him. Franklin in trouble was once more her little boy. But I doubt whether he was even aware of her—or of Tom Watts or of any of us. "What am I going to do?" he demanded over and over. "Doctor, we've got to do something for Jeanie." I tried to tell him there was nothing he or any of us could do. But he was not listening. "There must be something...."

Towards morning he suddenly stopped pacing the floor. "I'm going to find a baby for Jeanie," he said. "There must be babies that people don't want."

That was when I called



Pictures taken at the celebration of the success of the last Manila Girls' Week. Upper photo: Chairmen of committees with some members of the NFWC Board.

you and you told me about a baby just born. And we drove out to Jenksville and we carried it back and put it in Jeanie's arms. And nobody knew that it was not Jeanie's own baby that brought her back to life.

When Franklin was transferred to Manchester, I agreed that it might be wiser to wait until Jeanie was stronger, before telling her the truth. Jeanie wrote me every week—she was well, and Franklin was doing nicely—but the burden of her letters was always little Ralph. I felt that she was very happy.

Elizabeth was not. I learned from Tom Watts that she was full of bitterness against Jeanie, feeling that she had deliberately robbed her of Franklin. The next Sunday I drove over to Manchester. The baby was a fine little fellow. Jeanie still looked delicate but it was a new Jeanie—a proud, sure, happy Jeanie who said: "Isn't it wonderful, Uncle Ralph? At last I've got someone who's my own—my own family! Sometimes I can't believe it. I know I'm a fool, Uncle Ralph, but aren't people

always afraid when they've been too lucky."

"Why should I tell her?" Franklin demanded, when we were alone. "Why does she have to know?"

I pointed out that the truth was always best—for everybody. But he shook his head stubbornly. "You don't know how much that baby means to Jeanie."

"But you won't be depriving her of the baby," I argued. "You'll just be telling her the truth."

"I'd rather take a knife and stab her. This is the only real happiness she's ever known."

"But lies always lead to trouble," I insisted. "Learning it from strangers will be worse."

"Nobody knows except Tom and Elizabeth and Mary Kelly and Dr. Vender and you."

"Are you sure of Tom?" I asked. "He's drinking a lot."

"Tom's not bad at heart," Franklin said. "Only Elizabeth brings out the worst in people. I can see it, now that I'm away from her. You've been right about everything, doctor, but you're wrong

about this. I know what I'm doing. She's my wife, and I'll take the responsibility. Please keep out."

And so, of course, I kept out.....

Tom Watts claimed to have spent the night in Manchester with Franklin. And Franklin swore they had been together at dinner—and all evening. But they were both lying.

Elizabeth's house showed signs of a violent quarrel... And Elizabeth would hardly have opened her door, in her nightgown, to admit a stranger. Elizabeth was killed between ten o'clock and twelve.

At eight o'clock I had passed Tom Watt's car parked on a side road, gotten out and taken a half empty bottle away from him.

"I'm on my way to Manchester," he told me. "I've got to see Franklin."

"You go home," I advised him.

"I can't. You don't know what she wants to do."

"Elizabeth is a good woman," I began. But he broke in violently:

"She is not! She's bad. You don't now how bad—she killed Mollie Day. Even after we promised it was all over and Molly got her husband to move to another part of town, Elizabeth wouldn't leave Molly alone. She told me duty demanded that she tell everything to Luther. I begged Elizabeth on my knees not to—Mollie was a good kid and it was all my fault—but Elizabeth wouldn't listen to me. She kept saying it was her duty—her duty. I had never hit a woman in my life—but I couldn't keep her quiet. She told Molly's husband and ruined their marriage and then Molly killed herself.

"And now she's starting in again. It's her duty to tell Jeanie they've deceived her about the baby. Her duty. I like those kids and I've got to get to Manchester to warn Franklin...."

But I persuaded him to turn around and go back to Larch Street.

End