

## **Christine Adams: Lucky in Cards©**

**By**

**Murray Grossan**

**Christine is a Boston heiress; sought after for her Adams pedigree, her wealth and her beauty. All this is gone because of her gambling. Exiled to Dodge, she succeeds as a dealer in a disreputable saloon. Finally, she marries a rancher, and is happily pregnant. When her husband is murdered, her ranch is stolen from her. She goes to Monte Carlo to win money for the ranch, and becomes mistress of a Paris millionaire. She returns to her son, Wil and buys back the ranch.**

**Every opportunity for a normal life is defeated by her addiction to gambling.**

**1916**

**As she tried to get comfortable on the thin lumpy mattress, Christine realized that her addiction to gambling led her to this sorry state. Essentially she was dead. Certainly dead to her previous life as a Boston Socialite Heiress, sleeping on silk, wearing only the finest clothes, living in a magnificent Boston mansion and sought after by the most eligible bachelors, and especially by their mothers! What she missed most was her four poster bed with the softest mattress and silk pillows. And a regular bath! She hated it when she had to cover her body odor with cheap cologne. At least the cologne masked the room's musty unclean odor. Another dead rat? She had paid Alice two dollars to remove the last one.**

**Again she tried to get comfortable on the thin mattress, turning to avoid the metal spring that threatened to cut her foot.**

**Well everything here was a sharp contrast from her previous sheltered life. From a Beacon Hill Mansion to a cheap rooming house in Dodge City where noises through the thin walls told of pay for sex activities that were often quite strenuous! She grinned, her tale would make an interesting dime novel.**

**She was a bright girl; nice height, lustrous black hair – at least it was once before all the dust here – and admittedly nice round face and an admired figure. How did she become so blind when it came to gambling, blind enough to end her life? She and her friends had played cards throughout high school and finishing school. She recalled fondly the lazy afternoons when they would stretch out on her bed, munching cookies and comparing the looks and brawn of Bills, Jacks, Steves,**

and others without end; using the large picture book as a table to play card games. It had been fun to play with poker chips and imagine them valued at \$100 dollars each. Each girl would shriek when they had a winning hand and then tell tales of what they would do with the imaginary winnings. When Christine won eleven thousand dollars she imagined she would build an exotic gambling hall where only women could come to play cards.

She grinned as she recalled that their card games had been rudely interrupted when her four girl friends decided to copy what Betty had read in her brother's novel, about a poker game betting clothes instead of chips. When Mrs. White came to investigate the loud giggling and found the girls in various stages of undress, she was very upset, removed the cards and that ended those lazy afternoons playing cards in the bedrooms.

### 1913 June Monte Carlo

It was an accident that enabled Christine to learn expert card playing from the best dealers in the world.

Six well bred Boston heiresses had taken "the grand tour" in 1913. The tour had been heavily chaperoned, but when they arrived in Monte Carlo, at the fabulous L'Hotel Metropole Monaco, Betty White had become quite ill and their chaperone, Mrs. Margrave, had to attend to her. This left the girls alone and they had wandered into the casino next door.

Now here was real life! All those princesses and queens gambling away the night, richly dressed and attended to by handsome young men! So exciting! So magical! Each grande lady seemed to have an exotic scent that enveloped her. In 1913 the social whirl had been in full swing, as though some knew that this was to be the end of an era, an end to the world they knew. The girls heard these grand ladies addressed as Princess or Duchess. The men were addressed as Count or General or Duke. And the jewels! No one in Boston dressed like that or wore jewels in public like that – it would be a scandal. The clothes were breathtaking – seeing the fabulous women in those gowns in person, was more spectacular than looking at pictures in magazines.

The manager of the casino, Alphonse, asked the young ladies - Christine was 17 as was her best friend Susan Miller and the others – if they would like to have a lesson in playing cards. Indeed, yes! He took them to a heavily valveted private room lit by an electric chandelier with multicolored crystals, where he proceeded to teach them the rules of baccarat, poker and 21. The room was heavily carpeted in a soft blue so that any cries of, “I’ve won!” could remain in the room. The walls were bare of any pictures that might distract one from the cards.

The prisms of the chandelier played hypnotic colors about the room. Alphonse, who spoke quite good English, then handed the girls chips – real money – and for almost two hours they played various games of cards with real chips. What was most exciting was that Christine kept winning whichever game she played. The manager, whose name was Alphonse DuVal remarked that Christine showed definite talent for cards. He invited her to keep the chips she had won and to return tomorrow afternoon for another lesson.

Next afternoon, the other girls went on a tour, while for three hours Christine was initiated into the subtleties of gambling. Various croupiers and experts came to the velvet room to encourage and give her pointers. The colored crystals cast lights that made the afternoon experience both exciting and unreal. Under the spell of those twinkling colors, the instructions she received became embedded in her brain as though they has been planted by a surgeon. Then Alphonse invited her to come in the evening and she could use the casino’s chips she had won!

Those lessons stayed with her all her life:

NEVER double down. Those who do always lose.

Never play emotionally. Hope, prayer, a need to win NEVER helps.

When your luck remains bad all evening, it will remain so for the rest of the evening. Leave and return another time.

It is OK to follow the inner tingle, but only if you are playing unemotionally.

That evening was life altering to this seventeen year old beauty. With her long black curls, lightly darkened skin and her enthusiastic squeals when she won, soon she was the center of attraction in the crowded casino. Not only did she win,

but the excitement and attention she received from richly dressed women and men bedecked with medals was as thrilling as any event in her life, even more than when she exhibited at the horse events! She found out that she had that inner tingle when the pot was being raised and she held two fours and three 9's The tingle told her to quit. The pot got larger and larger and finally when called, the winner had two fives and three jacks.

On another occasion she had three 10's and the tingle told her to stay in. Finally one person had three nine's and an ace, and the other had two pairs! No, Alphonse insisted that she keep her winnings! How she longed to remain in Monte Carlo, but the next day their chaperone returned and they moved on to another city of museums and cathedrals.

#### 1913 September

When they had returned to Boston Christine was shocked to learn that Susan was out of money! A warning was sounded when Christopher had driven the two to the boat. Susan had admitted, with much embarrassment, to Christine that her older brother Horace had neglected to give her money for the trip--again. Christopher had been gallant, and loaned her one hundred dollars.

Now, when they had returned from the grand tour, Sally sobbed to Christine that Horace had been gambling both his and Susan's fortune and had lost most of it! He had done the one thing that Alphonse and the other experts had warned Christine against – he had foolishly doubled down each losing hand and unbelievably had lost 10 hands in a row until he no longer had credit in all of Boston. Worse, now he was in debt for more than 8,000 dollars! Her best friend, Susan was broke. Susan was doubly embarrassed at still owing Christine's brother \$100 that she couldn't possibly repay.

How could she help Susan? Of course, the private gambling parlor was no place for a proper young lady like Christine to go to; otherwise she might have tried to win money for Susan. Christine decided to try to teach the 22 year old Horace Miller all she knew; to coach him so he might win some of the money back.

She would visit Susan after school and for hours, until her coach came to take her home, she would drill Horace as the three played rounds of poker. After a month of this steady drill, Horace took the monthly allowance and went confidently to the gambling establishment where only men could enter. Praise be, he won! Not much, but enough to pay some bills. The coaching continued and his modest winnings continued as well. After 3 months there were enough funds to get out of debt and to get Susan into nursing school, now that she was no longer a rich heiress. But then, Susan left and there was no one to play cards with. Of course no well bred lady could enter a gambling club in Boston of 1913. All respectable—or otherwise—gambling clubs were for men only.

**1908 Age 12 She is Uprooted.**

Christine had been terribly hurt at the death of her mother in 1906, when she was only 10. But her wonderful father had taken the time to make it up to her. He had seen to it that her days were filled. He had arranged for a youthful teacher, Miss Mapleton, to substitute for her mother and this soothed Christine. He had cancelled his numerous evening meetings and had dined with his son and daughter. In addition he took Christine and Miss Mapleton with him whenever possible to accompany him on his trips to buy and sell railroads. While they would wait for him, Miss Mapleton would work on Christine's lessons. They both even tried to teach an unwilling father French.

But this idyllic life crashed suddenly when her beloved father died in a freak accident. As he was inspecting a new locomotive, the escape valve got stuck and the boiler exploded. Even worse for Christine, there was no body left to cry over. Normally, Christine might have been a rebellious teenager. The tragedy of now losing her father whom she loved, and then, being taken from the home she grew up in, with its pleasant memories, made her a rebellious teenager twice over. Fleetwood, her home, had been in a Boston Suburb with a favorite pond and sunny rooms, Moving to a dark and gloomy Boston City Mansion was especially difficult for Christine.

There had been a lot of discussion among all the relatives, as to what to do with Christine after her father's death. Uncle Moss, who took over the family affairs after her father's untimely death had argued that after all, Christopher was her brother and they should therefore be together. Furthermore, Christopher and Emily were childless and this would be an opportunity to be like parents. Moss's wife Millie had argued against this, saying that Emily had no experience with teenagers. Millie had raised four children and knew how to handle them. Besides, there was another problem.

Since she was 9, Christine had been in the habit of adding up restaurant checks and store bills and would find any errors. Her brother Christopher relied on her to check sums, as well as find errors in his letters. It was an embarrassment in the restaurant, when Christine would grab the bill, after Christopher had found it to be correct. Then she might find one or two errors that Christopher had missed.

By this time Christopher was married to Emily who, after several years, remained childless, without an heir.

Millie, the aunt, said, "I think Christine will be just be too smart for the both of them." Millie also remarked that Emily didn't seem that enthusiastic about taking in Christine. Millie had sensed that the marriage "had a problem."

Unfortunately for everyone, especially Christine, Uncle Moss prevailed and Christine, the rebellious teenager, moved in with her brother Christopher and his wife Emily.

Perhaps if Christopher had moved back into the Bradley Adams house--Fleetwood--where he and Christine grew up, with the pleasant memories it held for Christine, she might have rebelled less. That house had been modern with large windows for light and air. Instead, Christopher was established on Beacon Hill in the old family mansion with dark woods, heavily draped windows, high ceilings and enormous rooms. In 1910 the house was already 70 years old and was clearly an 1840 mansion. But this is what Emily loved and this is where they stayed. Why two people chose to reside in such a huge place was always a puzzlement to the other family members. Perhaps Emily chose this because it was, after all, the Adams mansion.

Christine hated the place. It resembled in every way all the haunted house stories she had read or heard about. She used to be frightened of the dark corridors extending for what seemed miles. She would always imagine goblins and ghosts at the end of those dark halls. Eventually she limited herself to her own spacious bedroom with its sitting room and private bath.

Her brother, 15 years her senior, was completely under the thumb of his wife. Christine, since she was thirteen, had sided with him and backed him up whenever there were disagreements. This made Emily, her sister-in-law unhappy enough to turn her into the “evil step-mother” of the fairy tales. Indeed Christine often thought of Emily in just that way, the evil step-mother whose only goal was to deny her any pleasure.

A typical incident had recently enraged Emily. She wanted Christopher to go with her to her opera Sunday afternoon. But Christopher had a meeting of the Museum Board that exact same hour. Christine put in her argument that the Adams family had supported the museum for 30 years; Christopher’s father had been one of the most important board members with a room named in his honor, and it was Christopher’s solemn duty as a son to attend. At her defeat, if looks could kill, that surely would have been the end of Christine’s life. Despite what Emily could do to thwart her, Christine managed to have her way and studied outwitting strategies.

### Mrs. Emily Adams

Emily had her own personal disappointments. She had been groomed to marry into Boston Society. She landed the top catch of them all, an Adams descendent with money, a very rich grandfather, and a rich father. Her life was pre-programmed to bear children and raise them to fit the Boston Society mold. But there were no children. Doctors, consultations all were of no avail. She even secretly went to the Gypsies to get charms. Nothing. So the presence of Christine, instead of giving her an outlet for motherhood, simply amplified her pain and distress of having failed in her life’s duty. Emily’s bitterness versus Christine’s stubbornness – now there was a match made in hell. Worse, Christopher simply ignored what was going on, “Leave me out of this,” he would mutter and return to his paper or leave

for his meetings. To make things worse, Christine recognized Christopher's weakness and always sided with him against Emily, even when Emily was in the right! Christine's talent lay in getting her way despite terrible obstacles.

Emily had not been devoid of suitors. She followed the Beacon Hill mold of proper finishing school, writing poetry and dancing well. Her father was an important City Councilman who, despite fine real estate holdings, busied himself in the exciting world of building trolley and electric networks. Her two brothers worked diligently with their father and celebrations would follow the completion of a trolley line to a suburb. These were exciting times of expansion, building and creating. Emily would glow with the knowledge that her family created new means of transportation.

Christopher's father was in the same mold and attended these celebrations with Christopher. So, when Christopher proposed, Emily accepted, in order to assume the role of the proper Boston matron with a go-getter who presumably followed his father, just like her brothers. Indeed, her father and brothers celebrated this fine union.

Her family had always praised Emily's recommendations when business was discussed. It was Emily who suggested a structure with a roof for persons to wait under for the trolley in case of bad weather. It was Emily who suggested that her family put food kiosks near the trolley stops to provide food in the early hours to the riders. Her suggestions were welcomed and appreciated. Emily looked forward to exciting business enterprises where she could participate, like she did with her family.

After the honeymoon, Emily became aware that Christopher spent an inordinate amount of time reading newspapers and attending board meetings of various charities. When she asked about "business" Christopher reminded her of the various investments he had inherited and he was "managing" them. She had dreamed of helping Christopher with business, of offering assistance and ideas to help his business ventures, but alas, there were no ventures for her to help with. After three years of failing to have children, Emily began to smart at the realization that Christopher did not fit the mold she had imagined for him. Indeed, at family

gatherings when her father or brother discussed new trolley routes, Christopher remained totally blank with no interest in possible profits or problems. An even bigger disappointment came when her older brother Bob, deliberately offered Christopher a position with a new venture - to get him out of the house. Christopher declined as being too busy with his museum and charitable foundations. Emily's asking him to consider this position was ignored.

In the fifth year of the childless marriage, Emily became embarrassed to meet with certain of her friends whose husbands were recognized and lauded as captains of industry; men who were building a greater Boston. She had married the wrong man! Unlike his talented father, he had no business, no real goals and no actual accomplishments. He was content to just be a "gentleman."

Her friend Charlotte called and apologized. "No, Emily I can't make our tea luncheon Friday. Jack is being presented some sort of award at a luncheon and I must be there."

Emily had already read the papers, that Jack Singleton was being promoted to Senior Vice President at Boston Bank, one of the youngest to receive this honor. The fact that Charlotte had withheld that information in order to spare Emily's feelings, made Emily feel even worse. When she attended Marilyn's reception to her new fashionable home, Emily smarted because she knew that Marilyn's husband had earned the money by working as a stock broker. That night, her headache was worse than usual.

She could well imagine the gossip. "Poor Emily. Her husband just sits around the house all day."

This was a scandal among the upper class Bostonians to whom some sort of public service was a duty. Uncle Moss guessed that rather than try to live up to his outstanding father, Christopher had simply withdrawn from the competition.

Christine had been frustrated as well. She remembered her father that everyone idolized. Her uncle spoke glowingly about how he had averted a disastrous strike in 1890. How he had saved the family's fortune in the 1897 depression. Her uncle often commented that Christine seemed to be the one that inherited Bradley Adams brains and skill, but not Christopher.

Emily's first three years of marriage were relatively happy as she and Christopher worked hard to bring forth a child. But after that had failed, sex was reduced to the obligatory twice a month encounter. Even that was unsatisfactory with her frequent headache "problems." Of course she was tired; fuming with anger at Christopher hanging about with his newspaper and going off to his meetings, not like her father, her brothers or the husbands of her friends. To Emily, her anger at Christopher was amplified by Christine's obvious intelligence and smarts, and her siding with her brother, no matter what the problem.

### The Proposal

One of Emily's goals was to try to get Christine married and out of the house. She would always bring up the subject of weddings and marriage. The house was filled with books and pictures about weddings. Emily would effuse about the desirability of the young men who called on Christine. Although Emily reminded Christine of the high qualities of these men – good family, good income, good house, secretly she would have encouraged marriage to almost anyone, even someone poor, and would have gladly supplied their living expenses as long as there was a wedding and riddance of this thorn. Christine's refusal of numerous proposals were often done out of spite to Emily.

Christine had marriage proposals; that was part of the problem, after so many, they were not a surprise nor did they generate the huge excitement one would expect. She was sought after because of her pedigree, her beauty, and her fortune. She had many choices. The choices were quite acceptable too.

Fred Harris was captain of the rowing team at Harvard. Fred was tall, full of humor, top of his class. He was manly looking too. They got along splendidly and both were anxiously looking forward to New Years Eve. His kisses were warm and exciting. Christine knew that her wealth was not what attracted Fred. His family was considerably wealthier than hers. His future was assured, both because of opportunities to enter his father's investment house, and because he was talented in his own right.

The New Year's dance was in the ballroom of the country club. Everyone was gowned in expensive and brand new outfits. Emily had invited Christine to wear a gold necklace, a family heirloom that Christine admired. Emily had fussed at her gown and hair. At midnight Fred kissed her warmly, after whispering "Happy New Year," in her ear, then said, "Christine, will you marry me?" He wondered if she would shriek or faint or throw her arms around him screaming "Yes." Instead, she looked away and said, "Fred, let me think about it."

That was the least answer that Fred had expected. He was disappointed and surprised at her refusal but figured she would "come around."

The following week, he didn't propose again. But the third week after the new year, he again looked at her earnestly and asked, "Christine, will you marry me?"

"Fred, I need a little time to consider your proposal."

Of course she liked him. She would have been stark raving insane not to. Why did she hesitate? Part of it may have been just to spite Emily. Emily fawned over Fred, as she did any eligible young man who might take Christine away. When Fred and Christine were in the parlor, Emily made sure they were suitably alone to carry on courting. Whatever Fred complimented on, Emily would answer, "Yes, Christine did most of that needlework. Yes, Christine helped bake that pie. Yes, Christine insisted I wear my hair this way; I am so glad you like it." She had probably proffered the gold necklace to have Christine more attractive to Fred. So, by habit of outwitting Emily, Christine now hesitated. But there was another deeper reason. She didn't feel that excitement she had felt in Monte Carlo. She didn't feel the tingle that told her when to bet on a hand of three tens.

Any normal girl with an evil stepmother would have grabbed the first wedding invitation in order to escape that monster. But Christine knew that she would be coming into her own fortune when she was 21, and vaguely had plans to head for Monte Carlo and all of Europe to enjoy her passion for gambling.

All through January Fred made various kinds of marriage proposals. There was a poem; there was a subtle visit to a jeweler, so Fred could advise his friend Hershel who sought a suitable engagement ring. There was candy, so he could

fatten her up, and get more of her. Still no breathless yes from Christine. On January 28, he stormed out of her house when she still wouldn't say yes.

After a whirlwind courtship, Mr. and Mrs. Alexander White announced the engagement of their daughter, Bette Sylvia White, to Fred Tarkington Harris, son of Mr. and Mrs. Farnsworth Harris. Wedding to take place June 2 at the All Saints Episcopal Church.

When Emily opened the invitation and read, "Fred Tarkington Harris," she nearly fainted. Then she shrieked, "Christine! Come here at once!" Emily was besides herself. She screamed, "How could you! How could you reject the most wonderful young man in Boston! What is wrong with you!" If Emily hadn't been programmed the proper Bostonian, she might have struck Christine. This time, Christine was frightened by Emily's rage. Emily took her rage out on Christopher too. "If you had been more of a father to her, you could have controlled her and convinced her to agree to this marriage. Instead you bury yourself in your paper and let your sister commit this dreadful mistake. It's time you did your share of controlling her, I wash my hands of her."

Her rage was almost uncontrollable and Christine and Christopher sneaked out of the house together, to await Emily's recovery. They walked to a soda shop and after a while, Christopher did ask Christine why she had not married Fred. Christine was startled. This was the very first time her brother had spoken to her directly about her feelings.

"Chris, I really don't know myself." I liked Fred a lot, really I did. But, I dunno, something, 'it' just wasn't there."

Chris thought a moment. "You mean, you didn't feel real love for Fred?" Now he sympathized with his sister. Love had been long gone in his own marriage.

What upset Emily the most, was the knowledge that there would be a great deal of gossip about how Christine had turned down the most eligible bachelor in Boston. Fred Harris and people would be wondering if there was some serious problem with the girl. Many a young man would be wondering if this girl was cuckoo. Emily listened carefully to learn what Fred Harris might have said to his

friends. Then, when almost a month went by with no suitors calling for Christine, Emily's heart sank.

Christine was having the same thoughts and when Stanley Perkins, who wasn't even from Harvard, asked her for a date, she eagerly accepted and was grateful.

### The Dress

That day she was in Hasting's dry goods store in Boston Square picking out material for a new dress for another winter ball. She held the pink satin crinkly material with the floral pattern over her and casually asked a fashionable well-dressed young lady how it looked. The lady shook her head and expressed forcibly, "No no, not a'tall," with a delightful French accent. She then reached over and removed a bolt of flaming red silk glistening brocade and draped it over Christine. "Dere, now that shows your wonderful beauty! Zat is what you should wear!" Flaming red brocade in staid somber Boston was something she never would have contemplated, but the lady was right, it did look stunning against her lightly dark skin and jet black hair. Fitted properly, with her figure she wouldn't need any corset with this material. Maybe – oh, but then what would her sister-in-law say?

Genevive introduced herself; yes she was from France. Christine Adams introduced herself and spoke to her in French to make her feel at home. Christine noticed that Genevive was quite richly dressed and asked her to have tea with her so she could practice her French and learn more about her. Genevive asked her if she were a descendent of the Adams Presidents? Yes, she answered, but only distantly related.

At a nearby tea room they settled down to tea and scones at a white round marble table atop spindly wire legs, and Genevive told her that she worked. That was a surprise, in 1915 Boston. Of course Christine didn't, none of her class of women, heiresses scheduled to inherit old Boston money, did. Genevive winked at her and said, "How would you like to make some money? Where I work there is card playing and I would pay you just to stand by and look beautiful. Men gamble recklessly when a beautiful woman is there to be admired."

Oh my goodness, thought Christine, a gambling place! In Boston! Stand by and look beautiful! This excited her. Besides she was bored with very formal teas, balls and the men that she had met, always worried that it was her wealth and her pedigree they were after. To stand and be admired, not for her wealth or social position would indeed be a thrill. She was aware that because of her future wealth she was attractive to some men. Because of her descent from the two President Adams she was always invited to balls, weekends, races, games – more so than others in her group. She always worried, without the wealth and the name, would she be attractive and sought after? Here was a chance to find out! Besides, here was an opportunity to be truly alive, the way she had felt in Monte Carlo.

She chafed at being restricted by Emily. Do I dare to do it one time, just to defy Emily? A chance to gamble! That was something she longed for, more than jewelry or even handsome men. Since she had been introduced to cards in Monte Carlo, she had wanted to go back there but knew she couldn't until her 21<sup>st</sup> birthday when she would inherit and be free of her sister-in-law and her restraints.

Genevive added, “and I would be pleased to get that material we just looked made up just for you. In that dress, the men will simply be looking at you and not at the cards. “She handed her the card of her dressmaker, and insisted that the beautiful red brocade would be at the dressmakers tomorrow morning and she could come for a fitting that afternoon.

Well, for just one time, Christine thought, her heart beating fast at the thought of something quite improper, and said “Yes!”

Women and men throughout the ages, and well into the present had felt as she did – intellectually she knew that what she was daring to do, wear a scandalous dress, attend an illegal card game, just pose and be beautiful, was strictly against society's rules and could jeopardize her and her orderly world. But, not since Monte Carlo had her heart beat so fast, her entire being felt so alive. Many a governor or statesman had felt the same at doing something with risk, just to feel that aliveness.

1915 was a time when proper young men with immaculate family and finances were listed almost daily as having flown an aeroplane which were all

known to be death traps – yet they did it for the thrill. These men were risking their lives; all Christine was planning was to wear a dress!

That night Christine could hardly keep from showing her excitement after saying good night to her brother and his beak-nosed wife, Emily. But, instead of going to bed, she took out her deck of cards and started a pretend poker game.

When Susan had left for nursing school in Maine, Christine had no one to play cards with and nowhere to play. When they had toured Europe, there were hundreds of women playing card games, gambling for high stakes. But here in Boston such a thing was unheard of, except for the small private card clubs that were exclusively for men.

After her meeting with Genevive she just knew she would love to watch a real card game. Maybe they would let her play like they did in Monte Carlo? The whole idea of a real adventure excited her. The idea that she could just stand there, be beautiful and dazzle men was as thrilling as the thought of gambling again. And these would be men who didn't know of her wealth and social standing. She still regretted that she had had only one night of gambling and then the biggest thrill of her life ended. Besides, she felt safe in Genevive's manner. That evening she chaffed at Emily's nagging of where had she been, what had she done, and of course no matter what she had done Emily would nag that this wasn't proper behavior for a young single girl. She had had enough of nagging and when she awoke that morning, she decided to go for the adventure of disobeying Emily and seeing real card playing again. Once she made that decision she felt more alive than in any past months.

That afternoon she came to Mrs. Dupree's dressmaking establishment and introduced herself. Mrs. Dupree had been expecting her and showed her several patterns. All were quite risqué, and flattering. Christine settled on one she liked – it would enhance her bosom and thin her waist; yet, she hesitated, she could never wear THAT style in public. But Mrs. Dupree finally convinced her that the style that showed her figure and bosom best was right for her, so she assented. She would return in three days for the final fitting at 2 o'clock.

At her return, she put on the dress and stared at the 3 way mirror. In every pose she did look stunning. Just then Genevive entered and admired Christine. “Oh my dear, you will surely turn heads.”

After Mrs. Dupree took the dress to her sewing machine to complete her masterpiece, Genevive asked if she could come tomorrow night about 10. She assured her of fun, watching these wealthy men play for high stakes, as well as for personal victory. Christine agreed, not knowing how she would get out of the watchful eye of Emily. But the spell that the dress had cast over her was now too strong. She must wear that dress, even if it meant being banished by Boston society! Although Emily watched her like a hawk, preventing her from any unladylike activities – translation, having fun, she had practiced the art of outwitting her sister-in-law to perfection.

As they waited for the final fitting, Genevieve explained, “You understand that in Boston there are few places where card games for money can be played without interference from police or religious groups. My husband and I operate a card game professionally, but it takes place in a place where women of your class don’t go or even know about. The gamblers are served the finest wines and liquors and we even have a violin playing softly in the background. The gambling is high class, but the place where it takes place is – shall we say – not respectable? These fine men would be insulted to have girls like that hanging about and speaking crudely. But I assure you, you will be perfectly safe. No one will touch you or insult you. There are two ex- boxers there to stop any sort of trouble. And we will pay you \$50 dollars a night, usually from 10 to 2 or 3. I ask that you come tomorrow night, I will send a cab for you, see that what I say is true and then you can decide if you want to return again. And you keep the beautiful dress and the 50 dollars!”

In 1915 that would be several months salary as a shop girl, for just one night’s work! Not that, as an heiress, she needed the money, but she had never earned money on her own before. Well, she felt adventurous and excited and said she would try it. But she would need to put on the dress at their place. Emily would never let her out of the house in that outfit.

She made an excuse of visiting her friend for the night and at 9:30 her cab arrived and took her to a residential street in a lower class part of South Boston. She had never been to this part of town but had heard about the trash thrown about the street in South Boston, with its unwashed stairs, and this repulsed her. She recalled the frequent references in the newspapers to the criminal activity of South Boston and was glad Genevive had assured her of her safety. When they pulled up to the two story brownstone with all the shades drawn, this was the only house that looked clean and neat. The driver held her hand as he ushered her quickly through the downstairs lobby. So, now she was actually in a whore house! Red velvet sofas, young girls in various stages of attire all staring at her. Her driver hurried her to the back of the house where Genevive met her and introduced her to her handsome husband, Stephan. He was tall, with eyes that seemed to devour whatever he looked at. He nodded his assent at Christine's appearance. He greeted her and welcomed her warmly.

Genevive admired, "Well you have passed the biggest hurdle of the evening, actually being in a place you have heard about all your life! See, nothing bad has happened to you. She then introduced her to Smithy, a monstrous looking man with huge hands and a bald head "Smithy is here to personally look after your comfort and safety. Come, lets get you dressed. The players will be here shortly."

Everything Genevive had spoken about was true. The room for the gaming was tastefully decorated, with the latest electric lighting. The side table was filled with the finest wines and liquors and the chairs were upholstered a lovely pale blue. Christine felt comfortable here. As the men entered Genevive and Stephan greeted them as old friends and she introduced Christine as Margaret, her American cousin. By 10:30 six well dressed men were playing poker and obviously having a good time. Some even looked at their card sometimes instead of looking at Christine. She, on the other hand enjoyed seeing a hand and observing the strategy in the poker play. She wasn't sure if the bets were higher with her there – but some of the pots were really very high, in the hundreds of dollars.

After some wine, Christine's mind took her back to her night in Monte Carlo. The glass prisms from the chandeliers reflected changing colors like she had experienced that wonderful night. No wonder her face glowed!

After the men had all left, she asked Genevive how they profited. "Oh, we provide the place for comfort and security so they pay us a percentage of the bets and wins.

"Did you collect more because of me?"

Genevive winked at her husband, "Yes we did. No one could take their eyes from you and simply kept on betting higher and higher. We have lots of room at our house near by. Would you like to sleep over?"

"Yes I must. My watch dog, my sister-in-law Emily doesn't expect me home till noon tomorrow. "

As they escorted Christine quickly through the foyer, she noted the women and men together in positions not allowed in polite society. But then, this was a whore house!

At Genevive's modest home she was made comfortable and given her own bedroom. She slept till 10 and then had breakfast with the two hosts.

Stephan said, "We would like you to come back and help us. Would you like to do that?"

Christine had already made up her mind that she would. The dress had been magical, the evening exciting beyond all expectation, matching the excitement of her night in Monte Carlo. And how she had glowed from the admiring glances of these men! After last night she just couldn't return to the dull teas and even duller balls. And she was secretly plotting some changes in the gambling routine. She had visions of her playing against these seasoned players, these pompous men of wealth. Yes. She told them she would return and they set a date.

Christine made up story about going to visit Susan in Maine, and took a furnished apartment near the house of her "employment." After her third night, one of the men had to leave early, and the other card players moaned. Christine asked if she might sit in, begging them to be easy on her. At first she did play like an amateur and the winners insisted on returning her stake. Then her luck turned and

she began to win some large pots! By 2 AM the men called it quits, and she had won more than a thousand dollars!

After the men left, Sam and Genevive confronted her, “Where did you learn to play like that? “ She told them honestly that she wasn’t aware of any special skills. She related the months spent coaching Horace and the lessons given her in Monte Carlo. They let her keep her winnings, just taking their cut.

Christine continued to stand pretty at the card game and sometimes play and gamble herself. On one level she certainly knew she was in the wrong part of Boston and that being found out in a whore house would certainly mean social ruination. But, like a tightrope walker, the danger added to her excitement. Nevertheless she had no real contact with the women of the house, not even with the Madam whom everyone called Lucretia. Neither did Genevive or her husband, except for business.

Christine was running out of excuses to explain her absence from home. She became careless, what with winning when the gentlemen let her play. At first she would have Christopher drive her to the train station with a suitcase for her visit to Susan in Maine. Later she simply left the house to go to Maine to visit Susan and spend time with her. Unbeknown to Christine, her plan had a fatal flaw. One day Susan had called to speak to Christine when Emily answered, she asked her to have Christine call her, and left her phone number. Emily had that number. Normally Christine told Susan if Emily called to say she was out and would be right back. That week she had neglected to warn Susan and when Emily called, she truthfully said she hadn’t seen Christine for a week.

Emily became suspicious. There were several private detective agencies in Boston, but she recalled that her brother had used Justin Gilbert for some union problem and had praised him. When they met at her house it was at a time when neither the servants nor her husband were at home. Justin followed Christine for three nights in a row. He reported that there could be no doubt. He had seen her go inside a known whore house in that red velvet dress, made to show her figure.

Emily was totally shocked of course, but she was also shrewd, and realized that now, not only could she get rid of Christine, she could also obtain Christine’s inheritance for Christopher. She didn’t tell Christopher what she had learned.

Christopher and Christine shared a sizeable inheritance equally from their wealthy grandfather who had owned fleets of merchant ships and prospered. The will clearly stated that the children and their offspring being of good Christian Character would inherit equally. Christopher and Christine were to inherit equally, despite Christine being female. Christopher had already inherited, but Christine couldn't until she was 21. But if she were no longer of good Christian character, Emily's husband could inherit the entire fortune!

Emily thought about what this information meant. With a simple stroke she would be rid of Christine at last. Not only that, but Christopher and she would get the entire fortune. For a moment, her upbringing made her consider simply getting Christine out of there and having her privately committed to a "nerve hospital." until she got her senses back. But then, that would suggest an insanity taint in the Adams family and besides, it wouldn't guarantee Christopher getting the money. She had overheard at the family reunions a discussion of the will of Bradley Adams. That the children be of good Christian character. They had laughed about that, since in "truth," it really didn't mean anything – just something added for decoration, like "In God We Trust." But this time, with a woman arrested as a whore, there was little question about someone's Christian character.

Emily make up her mind. She appraised Justin Gilbert carefully. He was about 40, probably a drinker, but he looked like he could perform if the price was right. Boldly she said, "I want you to work for me."

"But that's what I have been doing, Mrs. Adams."

"No, I mean do your duty, but precisely for me."

Confused, he said, "Why sure."

"I will pay you, and if you do this right, I will pay you more."

He nodded, waiting.

"I want you to raid the house and get my sister-in-law arrested and booked as a prostitute."

Justin was startled, not sure he had heard right. He had just assumed that he would probably kidnap the girl and bring her here or to a mental ward. This action never occurred to him.

Emily saw his hesitation and said, "I will pay you."

"That's not the point, Mrs. Adams. That house is protected. The police would never make that raid."

"No, but you could round up some, shall we say, off duty cops, borrow an arrest wagon and show up at the jail where the reporters are waiting. The other police wouldn't have to know about it. And since you aren't employed by the police, they can't fire you, can they?"

Justin hated to go against his friends, especially Captain McNamarra, who protected this house, but the money sounded too good. Beside, that money could buy him a house. He knew several policemen who were not being paid well for protection and they would be happy to do it.

They agreed on price and expenses and he selected a night when he knew there was an award celebration at Newton that the police chiefs here were sure to attend. Emily smiled to see how the mention of pay opened all doors. She smiled to herself too, she would have gladly paid Justin twice the thousand dollars they agreed on.

Justin, "One thing, Mrs. Adams. You realize that this will be a scandal on your family. What does your husband say to that?"

Emily was startled. She hadn't considered Christopher at all, nor did she intend to. With a resolve she never would have believed she had, she said, "As I said, you are working for me. Meet me at the Northern Bank tomorrow at 10 and I will give you half. The other half after its over and a bonus if Christine is photographed going to jail.

The detective nodded, and retrieved his hat. As he descended the stone steps of the fine Boston mansion he remarked to himself that this certainly was one cruel calculating bitch, despite her fine airs.

### The Reporters and Photographers

Two nights later, having followed Christine and observed her entering the house, he signaled his policemen and they raided the house. There were loud protests of, "Where is Captain McNamarra? What the hell am I paying you guys

for. You can't do this, " all to no avail. The private detective had carefully selected these men, and McNamarra and all the regular lieutenants on the take had been in Newton, miles from Boston, for an awards affair. When the police wagons arrived at the downtown jail, the news papers had been tipped off that a very proper Boston Heiress was among the whores going to jail. Justin made sure that the photographers were there with the latest night picture equipment. Christine was mobbed by the reporters and news photographers and was too confused to give a false name. The whores and the madam, as well as Genevive and her husband Stephen, were accustomed to these affairs and immediately posted bail and were released. But there was no one to help Christine so she remained in a filthy cell with two street whores and a woman accused of stabbing her husband. Christine was too numb to demand help from outside. She couldn't make any plans; she simply sat on a filthy bed staring into space.

Of course she did make the headlines with her scandalous dress and disheveled hair. Large headlines proclaimed the society heiress arrested as a common whore. Columns were devoted to the downfall of the prominent Adams family, the downfall of modern youth, the failure of society and so on.

They even had an interview with a psychiatrist who knew about Freud's theories and he explained that the early death of her father whom she loved drove her to seek love in this awful place. He explained that she couldn't love a fine boy, that would be like making love to her own father, so she had to go this terrible route. There were few Bostonians who weren't utterly shocked, especially Christopher, her brother. The phone began ringing at 6 AM and their home was besieged by reporters. The neighbors drew their curtains, but peeked anyway. Christopher remained in his dressing gown, unable to find energy to get dressed, actually unable to begin to comprehend the calamity – his sister, an Adams – a whore! His mind simply refused to function.

Emily refused to allow Christopher to go to the jail to help Christine. In actual fact he was too distressed to do so anyway. He did manage to sneak a call to his family's attorney however and begged him to do what he could.

Mr. Albert Samuels was shocked of course. He had been the Adams family attorney for 30 years and had known Christine and Christopher since they were children. His daughter Justine was one of Christine's friends from school. He hurried to the jail and paid whatever was asked for bail and fine. He had wisely brought his daughter's large cloak and hat, and hurried Christine out the side door of the jail through a trash laden alley, away to his home. He wisely wore a hat, coat, and scarf himself should the photographers appear.

At his home, Christine was adamant that she was not a whore, that she would fight the charge and explained to Mr. Samuels what her role had been. Mr Samuels shook his head, "But darling Christine, you did break the law, gambling is illegal in Boston." Christine insisted, how could this be so when Queens and Princesses did this same thing all over Europe!

Mr. Samuels, "Look, Christine, just because something is legal in one country has nothing to do with what the law covers here. Boston has a law and you broke it, whether it is fair or rational has no bearing."

Christine," I still intend to fight it. I am innocent and didn't do anything wrong."

Samuels thought, spoken like a teenager with spirit.

"Christine, you have had a very bad night. Why don't you take a long hot bath and I will put out some of Justine's clothing and see what fits well."

Christine was startled. Why here and not at home? Then she remembered the hordes of newspaper people that had pounced on her last night and were still waiting to scream at her at the police station, had they come out in front. Her conclusion that they were probably at her house was very correct.

He hurried to the mansion, managed to elbow through a throng of reporters and photographers. He found Christopher badly shaken, still in his bathrobe and slippers. He brought them up to date about what had happened. Emily did all the talking. No, the scandal was just too much for poor Christopher, he could barely think. The only possible solution was to get her as far from town as possible. Maybe with her out of town, the notoriety she had heaped on the Adams family name might die down.

Mr. Samuels mentioned that Christine wanted to fight the charges against her. Emily was horrified, that would only prolong and amplify the disgrace. No, Christine must be spirited out of town tonight! Emily hurried and secured a suitcase that she had already packed with clothes for Christine's trip. She had already prepared \$150 dollars to get her to the far west. Mr. Samuels quickly understood what was going on here. Emily was preparing to disinherit Christine of her fortune! Christine could stay and fight the charges and keep her inheritance, but out of town and away she would have no chance. What should Mr Samuels do?

If he advised Christine to stay and fight, he would be acting against his duty to Christopher. And if she did stay – without Christopher's support she would be banished from every Boston home; every friend would shun her. Why even her own dressmaker would refuse her business. Besides, it was obvious that Emily was clearly in charge here. Christine would certainly get no support from this quarter. He understood now that Emily had probably engineered the arrest and the newspaper reporters in order to get the inheritance for Christopher, else why would there have been reporters and camera men awaiting the arrival of the police vans, having been tipped off that a Boston Heiress was being arrested as a whore?

Already there were rumors that the entire raid had been a mistake, not even authorized by any superior police officer. Samuels wondered if Emily had hired the police for this raid herself. Later, when he saw the one thousand dollars paid to a Justin Gilbert he knew that Emily had "cooked" the whole thing! On the one hand he cursed her, but on the other he had to admire her guts.

If Christine did stay and fight, she would be fighting Emily in court for years and Emily definitely held all the advantages, as well as all the money. Christine had none. Any appeal Christine might make to Christopher would be blocked by Emily. Christopher was clearly the weak one. Samuels decided he would advise Christine to leave Boston.

When he returned to his home with Christine's clothes and the cash – the Judas pieces of eight he thought – he explained that leaving Boston quickly would allow things to cool off and die down and she could return later. He added 50 dollars to the 150 and personally took her to the train station.

He gave her a letter to his younger brother who was a judge in Dodge City. She could stay with him for a while and look for work as a tutor or teacher. He was pained to see the helpless look of this lovely girl who had just lost everything and had been tricked out of her just inheritance.

#### June 1915, Dodge City, Kansas

In 1915 it was a long four days journey to Dodge City, Kansas. Christine arrived exhausted. She met Judge Michael Samuels who turned out to be just as nice as his brother. He was tall, full head of gray hair, with a crippled right foot due to an mining accident. He owned one of the few automobiles in town and drove her to his home from the railroad station. He himself was a widower, had been so for 14 years, and thought wistfully how sad it was that he was much too old for this 19 year old beauty. He wisely recommended that she rest up for a week, and get used to the climate. With her exhausted state, she caught a bad cold on the train trip and it took her almost 10 days to get her health back.

Michael was also from Boston, had followed his older brother into Harvard law school, but instead of joining the proper Boston law practice, had been stirred by the tales of the wild west. He had even tried his hand at seeking gold, without success, and had settled down in Dodge City where there was an opening for a judge. There he had passed on chasing young pretty girls because of his injured right foot which made it difficult for him to ride a horse, much less dance. He had married Mary, a plain girl, nearly 30, the daughter of a wealthy rancher who had gone east to a fine school. Because of his injured foot, he figured he was never going to marry the Belle of the Ball anyway.

Mary's mother had died in childbirth, so she had been afraid of becoming pregnant. As a result, theirs had not been a happy fulfilled marriage. After 5 years, Mary finally became pregnant, but miscarried. She avoided sex as much as possible, became pregnant again and died during a miscarriage. Now at 59, he was still a widower; having had one unhappy marriage, he hadn't looked for another. He had a Mexican housekeeper that cooked and took good care of the house. He

spent at least 3 months of the year traveling to outlying areas to preside over serious cases, especially those involving murder and rape. He was often criticized as “favoring the damn Mexicans.” Occasionally he still invested in mine companies but his luck was as poor there as it had been when he was prospecting himself. He often mused, if not for the foot injury, he would have gone to Alaska and made his fortune there. Still, he was a pillar of the community, everyone tipped their hat to him in the street, so he had little to complain of. There was now a congenial group of lawyers in the area to meet with and enjoy arguing the finer points of law. Every now and then he was invited to dinner by some widow or father with a single daughter, but with his comfortable life style, traveling and other interests, he remained a widower. He relished his quiet evenings with his books: the classics, the law books, and periodicals.

He asked around if there was an opening for a teacher or governess. At the time there didn't seem to be anything available. When she had recovered her health, Christine found the gambling halls. Dodge City was still the wild west, and she felt that she was in for a penny, might as well be in for a dollar. She walked into the Texas Saloon and told Margaret she was there for a job as a card dealer.

The Texas Saloon was just at the end of Main Street. Texas Jack owned and ran it, inherited from his father. Growing up more or less in the saloon he had heard his mother cry and complain because his father preferred the whores to her. At 16 he couldn't stand the constant crying and fighting and had fled to Texas to work as a cowhand. He had been content to live this way, when his mother sent him a telegram to come home at once. His father had deteriorated, whether from alcohol or some other problem and had to be “put away.” He was the man in the family and had to take over the saloon, which he did. But he made a vow, he would never marry and cause the grief that his mother went through.

Christine entered the dark saloon with the bar of dark maple wood counter extending some 20 feet across the side. Much of the light came from the reflection of the large mirror that also extended the length of the bar. There were no stools at the bar, she imagined these drinkers were tough. The place, with about 10 round tables

and a corner piano, fairly reeked of spilled whiskey. She didn't hesitate, her life depended on this job.

When Jack Franklin was told that a girl wanted to see him, he groaned, another poor farm girl, destitute and without relatives, come to him as a last resort, to work in his saloon and give favors for a price upstairs. He was quite shocked when Christine walked in erect, clean, well spoken, dressed quite conservatively, and looking stunning, and said she wanted a job as a card dealer. He had been at a loss of words. To him, she looked like some sort of angel; he had never seen or spoken to someone like her before, except his own mother. Gathering his wits, he thought, boy, if she doesn't drink like Sam, his current dealer, she could be quite a draw.

Sam Salowitz was a good man, good at poker, but he drank. He was fine for two hours and then by the third hour he was making mistakes and had to be replaced. Usually Jack had to take over and frankly, he hated it.

As much as Jack was interested in Christine's appearance, she barely noticed him, except that he had hair and was essentially her own height.

Normally the girls Jack interviewed barely were glanced at. With Christine, he could barely take his eyes off of her and caught himself stammering like a school boy. The few customers in the bar, as well as the employees were also staring. None of the "girls" were awake yet. Recovering, Jack asked about her experience and she told him the truth. She had played in some private gambling places in Boston.

Jack had already decided, he would hire her no matter what. However, he said, "OK, let's see what you can do." He guided her to an afternoon game of some regular players and introduced her as Black Sally. He sat her down at the round oak table with more stains than clear surface. He awkwardly brushed the chair off before sitting her down. Then he asked the players to play poker with her.

Christine looked in dismay at the filthy cards. No way could she show her dexterity with these. "May I please ask for a fresh deck?" This was something else he had never heard of! But he brought her one. She opened it with a flourish, mixed the cards with a musical sound and dealt the cards with a bit of sing song, "you may have an ace, you may have a pair, looking good here. "

The players became awake and soon were making, for them, sizable bets. Jack asked to switch to Black Jack, which she did and again played well, actually very well. Texas Jack decided that she could be a draw and bring back the players who had departed because of Sam.

He hired her. Her name would be Black Sally.

Christine,” Why Black Sally? Because I have black hair?”

Jack, “Naw, it’s the name of a gal in a story I read. She dealt cards too. She came to town and was both kind and cruel.”

However, after a week Jack changed her name to “Fingers,” after seeing her skill at handling cards and making music with her rhythm.

The big Dodge City 300 mile motorcycle race was due in a month and they expected an influx of 20,000 people to ostensibly watch the race but actually spend time in the saloons drinking, gambling and other activities. He thought he could depend on Fingers to keep up. During the time leading up to July 4, Jack kept his distance from Christine, he didn’t want her upset and leaving because of his advances. She didn’t disappoint him those July 4<sup>th</sup> hectic days. Then when the Harley Davidson motorcycle won first place, he advertised Fresh Milwaukee Beer (Harley Davidson motorcycles were made there) and the place was filled with thirsty beer drinkers. She continued to gently but firmly resist all requests to “go upstairs.”

From a life of friends who quoted poetry and the classics, Christine was now friends with Margaret, who was the oldest “entertainer” at Jack’s saloon, and a bevy of uneducated poor girls, many of whom could barely write. However, this was her way of life, and she was careful to never put on airs. Although, occasionally, she was called upon to unravel a serious matter of how much money one of the girls had been cheated out of.

### Fingers and Revenge

Although Judge Michael Samuels knew of her past in Boston, he certainly didn’t spread any of this around. However Christine freely detailed her life story to him, not so much as to gossip, but to try to understand what had actually happened

to her. She still insisted that the highest society women in Europe gambled; not only was it accepted, but it was part of the social season.

Even though Dodge City was wild west, there was a sharp division of upper class and lower class women. If she wanted to be a teacher she would certainly have to avoid the gambling halls. Meantime she hadn't found a job as teacher or tutor. But, she was making a nice income.

As in Boston, she found she couldn't avoid the gambling. She was addicted. Here was excitement, being alive, a place where her wits and skills were out there where it counted in the game of money. So she became a full time dealer. She no longer was shackled with the handicap of wealth and pedigree, people liked her because of herself. Of course it was awkward, anyone in her position was assumed to be a whore, but Christine shrugged that off. She could no longer remain at Judge Michael's home and was really sad to leave there. Nor could she maintain open association with him, that might be cause for scandal. So, when he was nearby out of town sometimes they would meet for dinner. They even arranged a code so he could telegraph her to arrange for a meeting; it was important to avoid scandal. From a luxurious Boston mansion her home now was a small furnished bedroom in a disreputable rooming house, half of whose residents rented themselves by the hour. Days were fairly dull for her, but the nights as a dealer were what she lived for. It was exciting, but could she survive? Not only the customers, but Texas Jack still tried to take her to bed, and he even thought of offering her a part of the saloon. He was even beginning to lose his resolve never to marry. His mother had met Christine and even invited her for supper, but didn't encourage her son. Christine continued to say no to Jack, and because she was bringing in customers, actually customers with real money, he didn't push hard.

If she had previously entertained thoughts of sex and love in the saloon, these were soon dissipated when she spoke to the girls who were the "entertainment." Some had black eyes the next day or bruises. "What happened?" asked Fingers. Mildred assured her that this was part of being an entertainer. She was also disgusted by the various medications and lotions the girls had to use to prevent venereal disease.

She was privy to the talks among the girls. Sometimes she blushed to hear the expert advice on how to please men. The girls would compare notes that she couldn't help overhearing – methods of making them ejaculate early so that there was time for another customer, what to give the guys who gave big tips, how to moan and groan so the man thought the girl was enjoying it, how to lick a man's dick so he was especially pleased and other topics of workplace conversation. It was plain to Christine that none of this was particularly pleasurable to the girls. However she was never judgmental and the girls didn't tease her since she was a dealer and considered socially "superior" in rank.

She didn't entertain any thoughts of having sex with the men who propositioned her every night. They smelled, they were dirty, they had horrible teeth, they were uncouth. In her previous life she had never met socially anyone who wasn't clean, well dressed, cultured and often handsome. She had to admit that these rough miners and gamblers did not fit the mold of a Boston Blue Blood or a Harvard athlete.

### Lolita

If Christine had entertained any thoughts of Texas Jack being a nice person, these were now replaced with anger. Lolita, a petite 18 year old looked like a fresh, pert, blond 16 year old, with a rounded baby face, just like the popular dolls of that day. She had come to Jack because she had no place to go, no family, no funds, and no friends.

That night she begged Jack not to go upstairs with Mr "Smith." Every other girl had refused adamantly. Mr Smith looked like a mild mannered bank clerk. Lolita said he did terrible things to her, bit her in the privates till she screamed in pain. He had done this to her before and it had taken her days to recover. But Texas Jack had refused to hear her pleas and ordered her up with Mr "Smith" or he would turn her out. Because of her fear of being "out in the street," she reluctantly agreed to her fate. As long as she lived, Christine never forgot that look of pleading from Lolita before she climbed those stairs. When she was upstairs with Mr. Smith, Christine, Margaret, Susan and the others looked at each other when they could

hear her pleading and begging, “No, No!” There was a moment of silence. And then, it came.

The scream from the upstairs room was so loud that everyone in the saloon heard it. Bartender and drinkers alike stopped and looked up to the upstairs. Margaret looked at Christine and both decided to check upstairs, to heck with Jack’s orders to never interfere. As they rushed up the stairs Mr. Smith ran out the door, almost dressed, with blood staining his mouth. They found poor Lolita bleeding severely from her “box” where he had actually bitten a large piece from her! They called for Dr. Gibbons and when he saw the large piece of flesh missing from the vulva, he cursed aloud; he hesitated, unable to decide what to do. Any animal bite of the leg or arm was washed thoroughly with antiseptic and maybe cauterized with acid or even a hot iron. He knew this was a highly vascular area and would continue to bleed, but how on earth could he possibly cauterize such a sensitive area and how would it heal? He decided to try the antiseptic which he knew would hurt terribly – it did -- but the bleeding continued. He knew he couldn’t sew it up, that would make any infection much worse. He felt a chill knowing that a human bite was the worst possible source of infection and it was in a place where an infection could be fatal. Maybe the bleeding would wash away the infection, he hoped. He asked Margaret to keep sponging and washing the area with soap and water and then after an hour, placed a tight towel against the bleeding area. The bed was totally soaked in blood, worse than a miscarriage. The next morning a fever started, and Lolita was in worse pain. Dr. Gibbons gave her morphine. On the third day, as Christine sponged the feverish girl, she pleaded, “Please don’t let me die.” Even the customers joined the women in silent prayer. After three days of unbearable suffering, the poor girl was dead.

The girls were devastated. Even Jack was contrite. Margaret set about to find “Mr Smith” and learned that he ran a shipping company in downtown Dodge City. She also found his home address. Christine took one of the health department letters the girls received, went to the printer and had identical stationary made up. Then Christine used a typewriter, and made up a dummy letter from the Health Department which read:

Dear Mrs. Sylvia Tyler,

We regret to inform you that your husband has had multiple sexual relations with a prostitute who has died of a serious venereal disease. This disease is highly contagious, very easy to pass from husband to wife and can even pass to the children once the wife is infected. This sexually transmitted venereal disease is usually fatal to any woman.

It is absolutely necessary that you refrain from any intimate marital relations with Mr. Tyler in order to prevent your getting this sexual disease which is fatal to women and can be passed to children.

I do advise you to see your doctor to determine if the venereal disease from the prostitute has already been passed on to you by your husband.

Yours truly,  
Jack Smith, Dodge City Health Department.

The girls felt that at least a small degree of revenge could be gotten this way against this bastard.

Of course there were complications for Christine and the girls working in a saloon. Usually Black Joe, a six foot athletic negro, walked her and the girls home to their boarding house. This night Joe couldn't be found so the four girls and Fingers felt they would be safe walking home together. As they passed an alley, four men, whooping and brandishing guns leaped out from the dark and grabbed the girls, only one escaped and ran away. Now each man had a girl that he obviously planned to rape. Previously Francine had taught the girls that in a rape situation, pull out your hairpin and jab the penis or the inside of the nose. During leisure the girls had enjoyed practicing this and boasting about who would inflict the most pain. As a result, almost in unison, the girls stopped struggling as the men groped them and jabbed one or more long pins into the penis or the nose. There were immediate howls of pain. Fingers shouted, "There is poison in these needles. Unless you drink as much whiskey as you can, you will be dead in 30 minutes. Whiskey is the only antidote. Hurry, if you don't want to die." In the dark no one actually saw the men's faces clearly, but when they told the sheriff the story, he checked out the open

saloons and found the four guzzling whiskey as fast as they could, and nursing their wounds. In jail, the doctor quickly confirmed where the needles had pierced. They remained in jail a long time. After that Texas Jack forbade them to go home alone.

Now that it really counted, she found out that her gambling skills were sufficient for her to make a good living. She was playing against men who were gambling to win, not like the dilatant gentlemen in Boston, who had unlimited funds. Although she only kept a percentage of her winnings, she was now gambling against a more prosperous type of gambler who usually lost more money.

As weeks went by, and 1916 slowly passed, she did earn money and she caught land fever. Cattle were being shipped East for food, and shipped to the war in Europe, so cattle ranching was a good business. She also began to win some farms through her card games. Now she could afford a small house. By 1917 She was approaching her 21<sup>st</sup> birthday and wrote to Atty. Samuels about her inheritance, but was told nothing had been settled yet because she wasn't in Boston. She wondered how she could regain her inheritance. What bothered her most was knowing that if she lost it, Emily would have it!

#### 1917-- US Enters the War

One day, shortly after the United States had entered the war in Europe, the Ford County Marshall, Frank Jones, showed up for his monthly bribe. Everyone knew that the activities at the Texas Saloon were illegal, as were the others on Main Street, but as long as the Marshall was kept satisfied, he saw to it that the local police left the saloons alone. When he came in he wasn't wearing his uniform or badge. Jack recognized him at once and seated him comfortably, called over Janice, a pretty blond, to sit with Frank Jones and brought over the finest whiskey for him. He also handed him a crisp envelope that quickly found its way into Frank's inside pocket. However Frank ignored Janice and was obviously interested in Christine. He kept staring at her and when she looked up and saw his attention she gave a cursory smile.

Frank was fat – not heavy – fat. He no longer rode horseback and being at a desk or behind a car he got no exercise, yet he continued to eat as though he were

riding miles every day on horseback. His face was pockmarked and he looked like he smelled bad – which he did. He beckoned Jack to come to his table.

“What’s that girl’s name?”

“It’s Christine.”

“I think I will have her for tonight.”

Jack was in a dilemma. He expected Christine to refuse Frank’s request and besides, if he couldn’t have her, he certainly didn’t want this obnoxious slob to either. But if Frank were displeased, he might decide to close the saloon!

Fortunately he remembered that his mother had had Christine for supper several nights and signaled Joe to get his mother to come here as soon as possible. He explained the plan to Joe and Joe understood.

Frank had sent Janice and any other girl who sat down with him away. He was practically drooling looking at Christine.

Soon Jack’s mother, Bertha, came into the saloon and went straight to where Frank was sitting. She greeted him warmly as an old friend – not exactly a friend, but she herself had passed him envelopes when her husband was alive. She kept asking after his health, his family, and so on and when Christine arose for her break, she called her over and said, “Frank, I want you to meet Christine. She is my niece from New York. Isn’t she the prettiest thing you ever saw? She is staying with me till her husband, “Captain Adams” returns from France where he is bravely fighting for our country. Honey, do you have that picture of Captain Adams with you or is it back in the house? She will stay with us until the baby comes, but she does love to play cards, don’t you darling?” Christine, ever vigilant and guessing what all this was for, took up the story.

“Oh I am so proud of my husband, fighting over there for our country. And the officers at the fort here are so kind, looking after me because my husband is overseas. Between my loving aunt - she hugged and kissed her – and those nice officers at the Fort, always looking after me, why I feel so safe and comfortable here, I am hoping Captain and I can settle down in Dodge when he returns from the fighting.”

Her “Aunt” said, “Honey you look a bit tired and in your condition, it’s best for the baby if you go home and go to bed.”

Christine than turned to Frank and said, “Pleasure to meet you Mr. Jones. Goodnight.” And left with Jack’s mother.

When they got to Bertha’s house, they sat in the living room laughing hilariously. Bertha laughed so hard she had tears rolling down her cheeks, and then started to hiccup. Christine ran to get her water for this.

Christine said, “When did you become such an actress, Bertha? You were just marvelous. I don’t thing Sarah Bernhardt could have done a better job.”

“Well Frank had Sam run over and he told me the situation. As I rushed over I remembered a story I had read once where the evil duke tried to take the innocent girl away for evil purposes. They don’t come any more evil than that Frank Jones. I figured the pregnancy, being married to an army Captain, and knowing all the officers at the Fort would give him pause.”

“And being your niece?”

“Naw, that wouldn’t have stopped that bastard. But he knows that he has no jurisdiction over the fort people and they could come after him without any hesitation if they were angry.”

“Well I do appreciate you and Jack looking after me this way. I know it would have been dangerous for the saloon business if Frank had been angry.”

Christine kissed Bertha, refused tea, and hurried home with Joe who had escorted the women.

Bertha wondered if maybe her son shouldn’t marry this girl. She certainly was upper class, pretty and pleasant. She was never crude. But Bertha knew that Christine would have the kind of life she had had, fighting with her husband because he was sleeping with prostitutes, so she nixed the idea. She had suffered enough through her bad marriage for any two women.

No single night passed where Christine wasn’t propositioned and offered cash, gold or silver for a night or even an hour of pleasure. She refused, not so much for morality, but for the fact that many of these dirty men repulsed her. And after seeing the black eyes and bruises of the ‘entertainers’, no amount of money

could have enticed her. Often she would smile recalling how the mothers of the society men in Boston competed to try to get their sons to be accepted for marriage to this Adams heiress. Still, she avoided criticizing the other girls, most of whom had no education and no other means of surviving. She did spend time with these “entertainers” and they appreciated that she didn’t put on airs with them, even though her position as a card dealer made her one of the main sources of income for the saloon.

What saved Christine was that she was able to borrow books from Michael Samuel’s library. When they met out of town he usually had one or two books he had picked up for her. He was warmed by her gratitude and occasionally she would give him a friendly kiss in appreciation. Often he would dream of that kiss for days. She also managed to find some educated persons who agreed to trade books with her. Fortunately there was a part of Dodge City outside of the saloons that she could participate in, especially when she dressed modestly. Dodge city was just completing a public library, courtesy of the Carnegie railroad and steel baron – she could hardly wait for that. Although she was an excellent rider, she hated riding alone. The one time she tried it she became hopelessly lost.

#### September 1917

One night, in late fall of 1917, her luck with men changed.

Will Armstrong was 27, a successful rancher, who lived with his older sister, Annabelle, a bitter spinster. He happened into the Texas Saloon with his friends – to celebrate a successful purchase he had made. Unlike most of the saloon customers he was dressed neatly in a black suit, having just settled a business transaction. He was struck nearly dumb when he saw Christine. He left his companions at one table and sat simply staring at this woman. He listened to her speech – her phony Texas accent, her sing song “got an Ace, got a queen, got a spade” hiding a proper Boston one. When there was an opening at the table for another gambler, he joined the game but he most assuredly was no gambler. Christine noticed his good looks, felt sorry for him and wouldn’t allow him to make anything but small bets which he consistently lost. Finally she ordered him out of the game, and he sheepishly

withdrew. Then she took her break. He immediately approached her to offer her refreshment. She scolded him for joining the game. He laughed, "I wasn't gambling for money. I was looking for a chance to ask you for a date, to go riding with me tomorrow."

This was a new approach! Always there was an offer for money and a few moments in bed! A date! Where did this dude come from? As they talked, she realized this was no simple minded moron! And he was devastatingly handsome! Although dusty, he was otherwise clean looking. His hair was thick and curly and there was a great deal of it too. He smiled, good teeth. She boldly asked, "What about your wife? Won't she be jealous?" He answered, "I have worse than a wife. I have a sister that watches me like a hawk. She did raise me and to her, I am still a little child for her to look after." He smiled and she couldn't resist saying yes to the date.

The next afternoon he arrived in a buckboard at the small house she now owned. It was one of those fine days with sunshine and a nice breeze. She wore a traveling outfit, long plain skirt, faun colored jacket and carried a purple umbrella with fringes that one of the saloon girls had loaned her. As they rode outside of town Wil joked so about the umbrella that she didn't get to use it for sun protection as she had planned. His own ranch was too far away to visit so they rode along the railroad tracks and he told her the history of the Atcheson Topeko railroad and how it made the town so important and helped the ranchers. But Christine wanted to hear about Bat Masterson and the shootings. They visited Boot Hill Cemetery too.

Theirs had been a lovely afternoon. Neither had paused for breath and when he took her for supper at the hotel they were still talking at maximum speed.

She wanted to explain to him that she wasn't a whore, but didn't find an opening. Besides, he treated her like a lady and maybe he realized she wasn't one.

He asked to meet her in two days. They would leave early and she could visit his ranch. This also turned out to be a delightful time until she met his sister Annabelle. Annabelle shook her hand and instantly went to wash it while Will and Christine watched. Annabelle said little during supper. As Christine sat on the spacious porch of the large ranch house, she could hear Annabelle's voice clearly

saying, “But you know she is a whore. If you must sleep with her, please not in my house!”

When Wil joined her on the porch he said nothing about this. The moon was a lover’s moon, full, bright and cloudless. The next day as he drove her back to town he stopped the horse . He looked at her, was silent for a moment, and said, “Christine, I am sure I love you. I want you to love me. But it is impossible with you working in the saloon. Please, take a week off. Come to my ranch and stay at my home. Let’s get to know each other and then at the end of the week you can decide if you will marry me. You already know that I am a lousy gambler “ both smiled, “ but maybe as you see me taking care of my ranch you will find other qualities you can love.”

Christine agreed. She had begun to dream of Wil from the first night when he asked for a date. She had enjoyed every minute with him, and was almost disappointed that he hadn’t attempted to bed her that night at the ranch. She smiled, how could he with that witch Annabelle watching his every move. Another girl would have fled after meeting Annabelle, but she had lived her teens in Christopher’s home with the other witch, Emily, and felt she could handle the situation. Later she found out that this was why Wil had remained single – once the young ladies he was courting met his sister they were gone and never came back.

When she told Margaret and the other girls why she would be away for a week, they all screamed their approval. Then each took her aside to tell her how to please a man. Where to stroke him, how to “ride horsey” on him, how to prolong the sex act, and what to say afterwards. After all that instruction Christine wasn’t sure she could wait a week to marry Wil.

She remained at the ranch for a week and fell in love with Wil. The ranch house had been expanded to include a common room, a large dining room and two bedrooms each at opposite ends of the house. A business office had been added and a library where Wil and his friends could gather to drink and let their hair down. While she was there the weather cooperated.

In the morning Wil had breakfast with her. He had a cream colored pony for her. She laughed, “ Wil, you are insulting me. I graduated with honors from the

Boston Riding Academy.“ She started to say, “ Someday I will show you my ribbons,” but stopped when she remembered she no longer had a home in Boston with her own furniture and keepsakes. She proved to be an expert rider, and Will promised a ranch horse next day. She enjoyed riding here in wide open spaces, seeing Wil discuss cattle and fencing and water with his ranch hands. She especially enjoyed riding next to Wil, and stealing glances at him as they rode. From every angle, he was handsome. Occasionally they would race, and the winner got a kiss. Evenings they ate with Annabelle and the ranch foreman and his wife. While riding she couldn't protect her face from the sun with the purple parasol. She needed a hat, but rather than ask Annabelle to borrow one, purchased one from one of the helpers at the ranch.

The ranch was certainly a prosperous one. When they rode among the cattle, the numbers seemed endless. There were houses for the cowhands, cottages for the cooks and helpers and their families, a smitty, a large barn for the horses and a special room for saddles and tack. There were several barns for machinery, and carriages too. Christine had to admire that Annabelle kept all this together, seemed to manage it all quite well. Christine knew that a ranch like this one was worth a lot of money.

By the third night they were off for a moonlight ride where she eagerly returned his kisses. At the end of the week they had agreed to marry.

As a wedding gift to Wil, Christine signed over her two small ranches and her house to him and deposited her money into his bank account. She teased, “Now I know you married me for my money!” Unfortunately Judge Samuels was away and wouldn't return for a month. Wil's pal Jack was also away. Annabelle arranged things so that they were married by the local justice of the peace, Morgan. Annabelle was the only witness. None of the ranch hands or townspeople were invited; Christine could hardly invite any of the saloon girls.

Then they left for an extended honeymoon. The next six weeks were full of delicious memories, of laughter, of deep love. In San Francisco they attended theater and movies, but not the gambling halls. Neither thought of anything other than making each other happy. And an extra happiness was developing. She had

missed her period and her breasts were becoming full. She thought she was having morning sickness. Could she soon tell him that a son was on the way? She hoped so.

They didn't have a formal trip planned but would agree to see the Redwood Forest, or the shore. For a while they followed the King's Highway in California with its many churches. Christine only observed the gambling, she was too much in love to leave Wil to play. With Wil's loving her, she didn't need any extra excitement. Wherever they went, Wil was anxious to buy her clothes or some jewelery. She had a chance to see that despite his ranch life, he had nice manners and had no problem discussing politics or the war with the persons they met. One night on a Pullman car they passed a card game going on furiously in the lounge car. Christine watched, the players were pretty much amateurs. She asked Wil if he wanted her to spend the night gambling so she could buy him a gift. He declined the offer. Wil was fortunate in that Christine had been instructed on how to please a man by professionals and she had learned well. Once he knew for certain she was a virgin when he married her, Christine was free to show him some of the lessons she had learned from her saloon mates. Wil was an apt happy pupil.

They were in Albuquerque where Wil had some business to attend to. They were lazily in bed and Wil said he needed to go to the bank, as he was low on funds. He delighted in buying Christine gifts, and wanted cash so he could make another purchase for her.

Something buzzed in Christine's head. It remained there. As Wil put on his coat, she couldn't hold the feeling back.

"Wil, please don't go out. Stay here with me. I promise to make nice."

Wil, "You and making nice has me all tuckered out! Besides, I have spent all my money on you and I saw something down the street I'm thinking of getting you. You like presents, don't you?"

"Wil, please, I have enough presents. We will be in Dodge tomorrow and you can get cash there."

"Christine I will only be a minute, and then, when you see my money, you can make me nice. We'll have time before the train comes." Before she could make another

protest, he kissed her and was out the door. She shrugged, after all, it was only for a few minutes.

There had always been a suspicion of her “powers,” how she knew when to hold and when to fold, some sort of extra sense that had a lot to do with her winning so often. She was still in her night clothes. Their hotel room faced main street and she stood at the window so she could see Wil crossing the street, concerned that maybe some wild horse or rider could come by. One of the affectations they adopted on their honeymoon was to wave to each other when they went away. This had become a silly thing, when combined with funny hand signals, it caused a lot of laughter. Now Wil had crossed to the sidewalk to the bank. He held one of the double swinging doors partly open, and turned to wave at Christine. She waved back. Then he turned to enter the bank. He was almost knocked back when the door suddenly was flung open and a masked man ran out. Seeing Wil holding onto the door, he fired two shots at him and ran for his horse. Someone from the bank ran out and shot the robber dead.

Christine screamed and without thinking ran barefoot in her night gown down the stairs, through the gathering crowd. She knelt at Wil’s body and cradled him in her arms, his blood soaking her. Her cries and moans caused onlookers to shed tears. “Oh Wil, NO! NO! Oh Wil I love you so. Pleases Wil. Please!”

One lady gently tried to comfort her. A five year old boy who had slipped through the crowd asked his mother, “Mom, is the man going to wake up?”

Finally the sheriff appeared and gently removed her from the body into the arms of a heavy woman, and said, “Mam, I’m sorry. He is dead.” An elderly woman from the hotel came and led the numb Christine back to the hotel. She guided her to her room and gently tried to help the unseeing Christine. It was a struggle, but she managed to remove the blood soaked nightgown and wash some of the blood from Christine’s body. She helped her into a clean nightgown, then led Christine to the bed, which no longer held Wil. Christine refused. She sat at the window, occasionally making as if to wave to someone across the street. That night she sat there unmoving; and the next day she remained at the window, refusing

food offered to her, only leaving to send Annabelle the terrible news by telegram. In the main, her brain had shut down in order not to think of this tragedy.

When the sheriff came to ask about the funeral, he said he could release the body the next day. She told him she would take Wil back to his ranch so he could be buried there with his parents. She sent a telegram to Annabelle telling of the planned return with Wil's body. She signed it Christine Armstrong. She sobbed again as Wil's body was sealed in a coffin, and then the coffin was placed in a wooden shipping crate.

Annabelle did meet the train, and the plain crate was gently loaded onto the wagon. She was dressed in black with a black veil. Christine hadn't had time or strength to obtain widow's clothing. After the coffin and her luggage were loaded on the wagon she started to get up on the wagon. Annabelle held up her hand to block her. Christine didn't understand and tried again to get onto the wagon.

"You needn't return to the ranch. Your services are no longer needed. You can go back to the whore house."

Christine was too bewildered to understand at first. Then, remembering she carried Wil's baby and that, as Wil's wife the ranch was probably her property said, "You seem to forget that I am Wil's wife!"

Annabelle smirked, "Really? What proof do you have? Wil picked you up from the whore house to have a good time. Marry you! Don't be absurd!"

"Of course I am married. You were a witness when Justice of the Peace Morgan married us! "

"Morgan ? Morgan? Oh that drunkard that went to California? I wonder why he left town?" she gloated.

Christine, now very suspicious, "Then, if you don't mind, I will get my things from the house."

"No you won't. If you dare come near the house you will be shot as a trespasser, right Miguel? Miguel answered, "Si, Senora."

Christine became angry. There was a wedding certificate at the ranch if Annabelle hadn't already destroyed it. What evidence, without Morgan, did she have of the wedding? Wil was dead. Annabelle had been the only witness.

Undoubtedly Annabelle had paid Morgan off to leave town and not come back. Even if she could find him, he had been paid by Annabelle and undoubtedly would lie. Now, defeated she said, “I would like my husband to be buried next to his father at the ranch.”

“Of course.”

“May I come to the burial ceremony?”

“I told you, of course not. If you step foot on the ranch you will be considered trespassing.”

“When Wil’s son is born, I would like him to visit his father’s grave someday.”

Annabelle, somewhat startled, paused for just a moment, “If it’s one of your customers at the saloon you should do that, but of course we both know it’s not Wil’s.” With that she signaled Miguel to drive away. Christine sobbed and kissed the pine crate as they rode away.

She waited on Judge Michael Samuels’ side porch until he returned that night. Then told him the whole sordid story.

“I am not at all surprised at Morgan being bought off. Annabelle has probably burned the certificate and in our county the marriage isn’t otherwise registered. All I can think of is to get copies made of your hotel registers where you registered as man and wife. There are plenty to swear to Wil’s character. Then we would have to go to court and fight Annabelle to prove you’re the wife and the legal owner of the Three Does Ranch. It will take a lot of time and, frankly, a lot of money. How will you live? In the meantime, why don’t you bunk here for a while till you figure things out. Take your time.”

Even in her distressed condition, he was aware of her beauty. Now pregnant, she was brighter and her breasts were more prominent. Without makeup her skin had acquired a glow. He certainly didn’t want her returning to the saloon. If she remained at his home she couldn’t be at the saloon. But how could she simply remain here? He mulled possible solutions. We would write to his brother, but he doubted if that would help.

She couldn't return to Boston, she was still a marked woman there without friends and with a brother that was of no use. There wasn't a single girl friend who would associate with her.

Christine reviewed her options. She had no money. Actually she had had money that she made while gambling but, like the dutiful wife, had given it to Wil. To show her love, she had even handed over the house and small ranches to him, giggling, "See, I am a dutiful obedient wife." What a mistake that had been! She had been the one to insist on transferring her money and property to Wil's ownership! These had been her love gifts to him.

As the child was beginning to take shape Christine tried to think of some way to cope.

One thing was an absolute. She must regain the ranch for her child. It was rightfully his or hers. That was her single absolute goal.

Secondly she must take care of herself during her pregnancy. Wil was gone, this would be the only evidence of his having lived and loved.

Slowly as Michael showed her every kindness, a strange idea took shape. It was the only possible way out.

After supper, she sat in the parlor with him and said, "Michael I would like to make you a very strange proposition. "

"Oh? And what is that?"

"I want to be your wife for the next three years. I want my child to be born here, and I will take care of him or her for two years, and then I will leave you to try to gain a fortune so that my child can have the ranch he should have. In return for my being a good wife to you, I would want you to raise my child as your own. You are a fine man and would be a best influence on any child. I know its tragic that you never had any children of your own, I'm sorry, they would have been wonderful kids. "

Michael sat red faced for a while. He was very much aware that not only was Christine a beauty, but charming and intelligent as well. Any man would be happy to be married to her, even if it were for a short time.

"Of course you wouldn't be able to gamble then, not as the wife of a judge."

**“Of course not. No, I will be a wife. I have never baked or cooked, but I think I can learn enough not to give you indigestion. I will go to church and knit and sew like the women of the congregation. Unfortunately I will have to lie and say I am from New York, instead of from Boston.”**

**Michael thought, even at his age, he had stirrings for women. Since his wife’s death he had had some women but it had been “bad women” and not to his liking. Of course other men his age had “purchased” a young wife and now they walked with a light happy step. Having this beauty for 3 years seemed like a fair exchange.**

**“What will you do after the 3 years?” he asked.**

**“I want to go to Europe. I think I can regain enough money to get back the ranch for my child.”**

**Michael mused, “Well if that’s your goal, I think I can scrape together some money for you...”**

**“No, no I don’t want your money. You have already been too kind. And Michael, even though I can’t love you like I did Wil, you are kind and considerate and I love you for that.**

**“Will you then come back for your child, after you have enough to buy the ranch?” Christine knew he was really asking if she would be coming back to him.**

**“Of course. My goal is to get the ranch so that Wil’s baby will have it to grow up on and take over.” She didn’t answer his real question of whether she would return to be his wife. She frankly didn’t know herself at this point.**

**“Well, in that case,” smiled Michael, “let’s do it. But first, I must go to town and make an important purchase.”**

**“What’s that,” she asked puzzled.**

**Why I need to buy a three-year calendar! They both laughed.**

**A friend of Michael’s – an Episcopalian minister from the small St Cornelius Episcopal Church at First Avenue and Spruce Street did the ceremony. The church was too small for the many persons who showed up to congratulate the couple, so the reception was held at the hotel. Even though the church itself was small, Christine was thrilled with the attractive stonework, the symbolic religious windows and knowing that nearly everything in the church had been donated. She promised**

herself to help out with the church activities in the future. She thought, from a saloon and a fallen woman to a church marriage in a holy place... nice change. What if Wil's marriage to her had been sanctified this way, would he have escaped his tragic death? Most of the town's upper class showed up for the reception. Many an elder looked with jealousy at Christine. Annabelle was not there of course. One of the church men thought he recalled seeing Christine at the saloon but now that she was the judge's wife he kept it to himself.

Michael's head was in a whirl. Now, at 60 he was marrying a real woman! But not a marriage in the usual sense.

Therefore he didn't expect any wild sex with this marriage either, especially with the strange three year arrangement.

There was no honeymoon, neither had a "happy honeymoon" on their minds. Their first night in bed, Christine sought comfort as she sobbed at Wil's untimely death. Michael held her to comfort her, as a father would a child. After 5 nights her sobs grew shorter as she put herself in his arms for comforting. She would fall asleep head on his chest. On the 6<sup>th</sup> night she simply snuggled to him, without the sobs. Soon she found she couldn't sleep except in his arms. On the 7<sup>th</sup> night of their wedding she reminded herself that she was a wife, and invited Michael to make love to her. This actually pleased her and she relished the emotional release it gave her. When he wanted to make love a second time she encouraged him. From that time on, she needed to be in his arms just in order to fall asleep and the love making came naturally. At first Michael was a bit exhausted, but soon he hit a regular rhythm. He admitted to himself rather sheepishly that he had gotten quite a bargain – the most beautiful young woman in Dodge City who didn't have headaches or was never "not in the mood."

As the weeks passed, Christine became a fine housewife and busied herself cooking and learning to sew. She did volunteer work at the Episcopal church. Although they did have a Mexican maid, Christine insisted on cooking and preparing meals. This had a tragic consequence; soon the judge had put on weight and begged Christine to stop the delicious dishes. Christine had a life long habit of

eating little and so she gained only a few pounds. Christine admitted to herself that she enjoyed being treated like a queen. She was actually beginning to enjoy domesticity. She changed curtains, sewed pillow covers and enjoyed Michael's oohs and ahs of approval. Part of her satisfaction was having a father figure. She had been orphaned quite young and since age 12 had only had her brother as a male figure. Now, in a manner of speaking, she had a "father." She felt safe in this house and in Michael's arms.

Christine had heard all about the terrible Kansas tornadoes which were frequent and close by those years and really appreciated having a storm cellar in the house. Michael had the steps improved so she could get down quickly even if she were in advanced pregnancy.

She enjoyed making friends of the housewives in the area. One in particular was Mrs. Rachel Cohen. Rachel had two girls, 2 and 4, and often moaned about what to do to get a son. Her husband owned a store in town and they seemed a lovely family. She was Jewish, but Michael had no objection to Christine and Rachel being friends. Unfortunately Mr. Cohen worked all week, including Sunday. He had to work long hours to earn money for the family. And Michael was regularly out of town, so the two became close. Rachel was from Chicago and Christine had to lie that she was from New York, since she feared her reputation in Boston could harm her here. They managed to go out for meals and engage in "girl talk." Luckily Rachel, like Christine, was educated and she could talk about current books and higher learning. Rachel, having had two children, could advise Christine on pregnancy too. Christine was sorry that none of the women from her church were educated or interesting to be with. Still, she accepted the role of volunteer worker at the Episcopal church where she had been married. Being in the church where her marriage had been sanctified gave her a feeling of peace she hadn't known for many years.

One night a terrified Rachel knocked loudly on Michael's door at midnight. Rachel sobbed that her husband hadn't come home and she was worried. Some local hoodlums had been yelling "Dirty Jew" at him when he was closing up the store, and a week ago a window had been smashed. She wanted Christine to look

after the children while she searched for her husband. Michael said, no to this, he would go. He drove to the store but the store was locked and no sign of Mr. Cohen. Then he drove to the station and, as a Judge, insisted that the police force search for Mr. Cohen. About an hour later he was found badly beaten in an alley, almost unconscious. He was taken to the hospital and hospitalized with cuts, bruises and a concussion. Michael was furious at what had happened. He demanded that the police find these robbers. He also demanded that when they were caught, that they be brought to his court. He then called Christine to tell her the terrible news and sent a police car to bring Rachel to the hospital while Christine took care of the children.

The next day, Michael met with local Catholic, Protestant and Episcopalian leaders. He said that a few hooligans threatened to upset the peace and harmony of their town and bring disgrace and shame to Dodge. They agreed. He asked that they get their congregants to volunteer to guard Mr. Cohen's store. They were pleased to do so. Between the volunteers from the churches, and the police attention, soon Mr. Cohen was safer in his store than if he had been inside a church. With Michael's urging, all the ministers in the community combined to preach harmony and religious tolerance. After a while, the town was so nice to be in, that Jewish professionals moved in and enjoyed living in a city free of religious prejudice.

When the three hooligans were caught, Samuels offered them a choice of working for 2 years to beautify the city or spend two years in jail. The three quickly opted to spend time beautifying the city, but managed to avoid that sentence by simultaneously joining the army. Since they never returned to Dodge city, Michael hoped it was for the best.

During the first months of marriage Christine occasionally whispered Wil's name during sex. Michael heard it but didn't dismay. He felt this was a small price to pay for having Christine as his wife. His first wife had almost always pleaded headaches and tiredness and had seldom responded to stroking or even kisses. Gradually Christine no longer uttered Wil's name in climax.

But this idyll was shattered during her fourth month of pregnancy. Michael was walking down the pathway to the curb where his car was parked. Christine was standing at the doorway; she had just called to remind him of early supper and then a movie. He turned and smiling, waved to her. She shrieked, "Stop it! Stop that!" This was so loud and terrible that Mrs. Beasley doing her gardening next door dropped her shovel and quickly stood up to see who was hurting her neighbor. She saw the Judge hurry back to the house and Christine at the doorway sobbing, practically on her knees. Mrs. Beasley couldn't decide what to do, so she just stared.

When Michael reached her she sobbed, "I'm sorry Michael. I couldn't help it. That was what Wil did, he waved to me, and then he was shot, shot to death!" Michael stood there bewildered, he didn't want Christine to cry. Finally he said, "Christine, I understand. Please don't cry. He swore to himself he would never wave to her or anyone else again. That week very little was said between them. Now it was her 5<sup>th</sup> month and although Dr. Sternfeld had assured him that sex during pregnancy wouldn't harm the baby, he rarely asked for it now. As the day for delivery grew near, Michael became more solicitous. Because his wife had died in childbirth, he took to praying every day.

With a maid to help her, Christine had free time. She found that she enjoyed the books that Michael had in his library. All sorts of books on philosophy, history and arts. Soon they were playing games of "True or False;" 'the Bastille was a French palace.' She had always been a fast reader and with Michael as her willing teacher, enjoyed all that "book learning." Michael was doubly glad as, except for an occasional lawyer, he had rarely had anyone to discuss the classics with. When she went into labor they were discussing Gibbon's history of Rome.

Exactly nine months after her wedding to Wil she delivered a healthy 6 ½ pound boy. Michael fussed over him and it was apparent that he felt this was his son. To make matters easy, he was named Wil Robinson Samuels. Michael adored watching Christine nurse his son and insisted on doing diaper duty. He had never had a child and this was all terribly exciting to him. On the weeks he should have been on circuit he made short work of it, and quickly returned home to his wife and child.

The only thing that saddened him was Christine's insistence that they use birth control. But that had been part of the bargain so he assented, reluctantly.

Meanwhile Christine was happy with Wil's baby. Over time she referred to Wil as Michael's son and often said, "Michael, please take your son out for some sun." Indeed Michael enjoyed the complements he received when he pushed the heavy carriage down the street to the park.

Wil's first birthday was a big event! All the top townspeople came and there was a band and dancing too. Of course Michel was congratulated and many envied the old coot. After Wil's first birthday, he stopped doing circuit so he could be home with his family. He gave "arthritis" an excuse for canceling circuit duty. Besides, Christine would be leaving him in a year, so that every moment with her was precious. .

Meanwhile Christine began to receive newspapers from Europe. The war had finally ended and she was intent on learning about the high society of Europe, especially France. Should she assume another identity? Pretend to be a moneyed lady? She eagerly tested various women in the area to try to find a mother figure for Wil Samuels when she would be leaving. This was a very difficult task. Finally she found a mother with two children of her own, named Rosaria who obviously loved children and Wil took to her. She told her friend Rachel that she would be spending time in France and hinted why. Rachel gave her addresses of relatives in Paris to look up and begged her to visit them.

She wrote to attorney Albert Samuels in Boston, who was now her brother-in-law. She asked him to secure a loan from her brother for \$5,000. Otherwise she would come to Boston and start legal proceedings. With the 5,000 she would avoid Boston altogether. Now that she was Atty. Samuels sister-in-law, she could speak freely to him. He knew of the wedding of course and the child, but didn't know of the 3 year contract. But he strongly urged Christopher in private, away from his wife, to extend the loan and save his reputation. It was more than 3 years since Christine's arrest and Boston no longer buzzed of the Adams disgrace. He urged Christopher to keep it that way.

The \$5,000 was transferred to a New York bank. When Christine arrived in New York she took some of the funds for clothes for her Monte Carlo assault. She had studied the pictures of the high society ladies and had a pretty good idea of what to prepare. She had to laugh that these clothes would create a scandal in Dodge City. She imagined attending St. Cornelius in the purple outfit and laughed.

Two days before she was to leave, she met Albert Samuels in New York. He brought her up to date on what was happening in Boston. No, Christopher has not yet gotten full title to her inheritance. Albert had been delaying the transfer as long as possible, but Emily was growing suspicious of the delay and had hired her own lawyer to speed things up. Christine was eager to hear about all her ex-friends and who was married and who was dating whom. Mr. Samuels' daughter was married and living in Chicago. Now they were distantly related! She admitted to him confidentially that she was happy with her marriage to Michael. He had been as wonderful a husband as she might wish for. That it really wasn't a loveless marriage, despite what appeared on the surface. He certainly loved her and she actually loved Michael, though not with the wild passion she had had with Wil. He was a fine father and she had to stop him from over- spoiling his son. His devotion to Wil Samuels was totally that of loving father to a son.

Albert said, "Then why the trip alone to Monte Carlo? Why are you leaving your son for such a journey? Is the addiction to gambling more than your mother's love?"

Christine answered, "It is because of my love for Wil senior and Wil junior that I am doing this. The Three Does Ranch belongs to Wil and he should have it. This is the only way I know to get it back to its rightful owner."

Albert mused, "But Annabelle would never sell to you. "

Christine answered, "Oh I know that. But Wil told me how concerned he was because all his water came from two ranches west of his. The ranchers were always good buddies and thought nothing of letting the water that flowed down from the mountains leave their ranch and get to his. But what if someone else were to get those properties? They could hold back the water and she would be out of

business. I plan to get those ranches. When Annabelle has no water, she will have to sell. “

Albert thought, this is a mother lion protecting her cub.

He said, “ I am glad to hear you are happy with Michael. You know you are lovelier now after all these years than when you were 19. Motherhood and marriage certainly agree with your good looks.”

Christine was flattered and pleased and thanked him. He had one more suggestion.

“It will be easier for you to send me messages and money for Michael. “You can easily transfer funds to Boston, as well as telegrams and I can then pass them on to Michael for you.” She agreed. Then he warned her against losing all her money but made her promise not to do anything rash if she did lose it all.

She sailed from New York on the French liner so she could practice her high school French. She traveled first class in keeping with her “background” as a wealthy wife of a western rancher. She played lady like card games just to practice.

From the boat she went directly to Monte Carlo. It was best to book into the fabulous L'Hotel Metropole Monaco next to the casino, but she thought she could get away with just a room instead of a suite.

She became a steady fixture at the card games and did fairly well. At the end of a week she now had 6,400 dollars in capital. She quickly learned to convert dollars to francs and vice versa. She wisely took an account at a bank to keep the funds safe. She didn't play recklessly, knowing that if she lost it, there were no means of replacing her losses. On the nights when she lost steadily she would quit and retire. Then she would study to learn what she could have done to win. Fortunately there were more nights when she won steadily. During the day she felt lonely as she had no introduction to French or other society. This changed one evening.

When Christine entered the casino lady's lounge she heard cries of distress, some in Russian and some in French. The lounge maid was attempting to free the older woman's heavy gold necklace with the large Russian Double Eagle pendant that had become entangled in her dress and hair in back. She clearly heard a cry of pain as the woman's hair was pulled.

“Here maybe I can help.” Christine offered. Three years of domestic sewing and knitting had developed into a fine ability at untangling thread. She went to the woman and the maid gratefully stepped aside, saw the hopeless knots and tangle. Then she removed one of her hair pins and neatly undid the tangle; actually it was a lot easier than some of her initial knitting disasters! She told the woman that she would have to undo the necklace, and the woman gratefully assented.

“Here is the problem. The clasp has sprung and is sticking out. I don’t think you can wear this until it is fixed by a jeweler.” She prepared a clean towel and gently laid the priceless necklace on the table in front to the lady. Now the woman could move her head and adjust her gown. She turned to Christine and said, “Mademoiselle, I am so grateful to you for saving me. I am princess Natasha.” And she extended her hand. Christine was aware that many of the Russian nobility had fled to France after the revolution. She was actually meeting the top of the cream!

As she took her hand she said, “I am Christine Samuels from Dodge City in the United States. You will have to forgive my French.”

“Not at all. I know how the French laugh at my Russian pronunciation. Come you must join my little group while I tell them how you saved my life.” She gathered her necklace into her purse, applied too much lipstick and took Christine’s hand and led her to a private gambling area where the air reeked of perfume, jewels, ribbons and medals. The women were gowned beautifully. The men were bedecked in uniforms or tuxedos with medals and banners, but Christine could only guess at their meaning. Whenever a duke or count bowed at being introduced to her, the clanking of the medals would drown out the name. She was introduced as the Wild West girl that had saved the life of the princess. She was impressed that everyone she met had a title, duke, duchess, count, countess. But it was clear that all paid homage to the princess Natasha.

When they had settled down, Natasha insisted on hearing about the Wild West, did Christine know Billy the Kid, Bat Masterson, and Indians? Did she know Buffalo Bill?

Christine was impressed by their knowledge of the west. She knew that Buffalo Bill had performed in Europe, but was to learn that stories of the west were

quite popular among these exiled royalty. Natasha insisted that she join them for all their activities.

Now she traveled in the top society circles. Wherever they went French society ladies and men would come to meet the Princess and pay homage to her. They were delighted to meet Christine Samuels as well. What followed were invitations to parties, yachts, and fabulous villas. Soon she was on a first name basis with some of the pillars of French Society. Christine was amused to see that the French persons generally picked up the checks for the restaurant parties. The Russian crowd showed up at the villas and ate and drank well.

But Christine's goal was to make money and get that ranch. After some weeks of life with the Russian and French society persons, she excused herself at 11 PM to attend to the gambling.

After meeting French Society prominent persons, of whom she read about almost every day, she was disappointed that none of them seemed to know or care about making money. Therefore she was delighted when Natasha introduced her to Pierre Rochmont. Natasha explained that Pierre took good care of her fortune and that he was a financial genius. Christine learned he was one of the wealthiest men in France who made his fortune investing in stocks. She asked him how to invest in the stock market. He smiled, "Why don't you let me show you, my dear?" She agreed. She offered him money and he put up his hand, "Tut tut my dear, allow me to advance you 10,000 francs and you can pay me back later with your winnings.

The next day she found a telegram from a Paris brokerage –Duvallier Investments indicating that she now owned 2,000 shares of Algeria Gas and Electric. She wondered what that was. She also wondered how she would repay Mr Rochmont if she lost money. When she went to look for him she learned that he had returned to Paris. This bothered her.

She found a bank that bought and sold stocks and bonds to ask about Algeria Gas and Electric. The bank representative shook his head, "Madam, we only deal in safe French and British shares, not unknown foreign ones." She asked if there was any way to look this up? He shook his head, "I suppose you could go to Algeria."

She thought of visiting the embassy of Algeria but that was in Paris. That night she told the Princess that she must retire because of a bad headache, which she clearly had.

Several days later she received a telegram from the same Duvallier Investments indicting that she now owned 15,000 shares of Turin Shipping of Italy. She had purchased these with the profits from her sale of Algeria Gas! The value of these shares was 54,000 francs! She noted no charge for handling or commission.

Over the next two weeks there were several other transaction and eventually she received a note that she now didn't own any stock but had a cash position of 126,700 francs! She could claim the cash whenever she wished!

Christie sat in her room bewildered. What was happening? Was this some dishonest scheme? She was aware of stocks and knew that such winnings couldn't possibly take place. But Pierre had never asked her for any money. Indeed, she had never actually signed any papers. What then was the game. Was she in trouble? This week past she had been too nervous to go to cards or be with her Russian friends.

Then there was a knock on the door and a small package was delivered to her. She opened it. Inside a small box there was a lovely small locket on a delicate chain. There was a note on Hotel stationary that read: I hope you are not disappointed about your investments. If you will dine with me tomorrow night in my suite, I can explain.

Signed, Pierre Rochmont. How could she refuse?

The next night she knocked on his door and he opened it and showed his delight at seeing her. Of course she wore the locket he had sent her, and she thanked him for it. She entered the large elegant suite with carpets so thick she almost had to hold Pierre's hand to walk to the couch. A waiter was busy setting the table and food. Pierre said, "Let us start with the champagne to celebrate your financial success!" She agreed.

Seated comfortably on the couch, almost touching, they sipped their champagne while she waited for some explanation. Getting none she asked, "Pierre, I don't understand how you could run 10,000 francs to 126,000 in two weeks."

**“Oh, you don’t want to trouble your head about such trifles.”**

**“Trifles! You could buy a ranch in Dodge city with that kind of money! Please, tell me how you do it. “**

**“Well, you see, my dear, in my circle we are very close. I knew that Algeria would announce a major gas find in a day or two, I was also told that Turin Shipping was being sold to another company at a handsome price. So I quickly bought and sold before there are second thoughts about the sale. Basically we help each other in these matters and everyone profits. Come let us dine.”**

**Pierre was surprised to see how ravenously she ate. Most women merely nibbled what with the tight corset and the need to keep their figure. But Christine had been far too worried these past two weeks to eat. This was her first real meal in more than a week! As she ate, there was little conversation from her as her mouth was generally stuffed.**

**Pierre was French Society and married with children. She was well aware that one didn’t heap such a sum of money on a beautiful woman in order to become a friend. She carefully eyed him.**

**Pierre was about 45. Delicate hands – somewhat overweight but not severely so. This was no cowboy. At least he was taller than her and he had his own hair rather than a toupee like most of the Russians. With the excitement of “making” this money and Pierre’s obvious skill at what he did, and the champagne, and knowing about French social habits, she held no thoughts of leaving the suite.**

**After dinner she insisted on more details which he was proud to provide. Then he held her hand. Then he put his arm around her.**

**She knew he was married. Well, she was married too. But what if she could learn all he knew or be privy to this inside information! Her excitement stirred. This was better than gambling. Excitement and sexual arousal are similar. She went to bed with Pierre. He was gentle; he said nice things to her, was never rough or impolite. The entire sex act was more of a natural almost formal procedure than any wild emotional or passionate experience. To be truthful, her mind was too concerned about her winnings to have room for passion.**

In the morning she again asked for more details which he supplied. And what would her future “bets” be, she asked?

“Hold on my dear. This sort of information doesn’t come up every day. Most of the time you buy Government bonds and wait for the dividends. However, I would like you to join me in Paris, and there you can get a thorough education. There is a lovely apartment you can have, and I will fill it with books on investment and you can visit the Bourse to learn more.” He kissed her tenderly.

So this was it! Become a mistress to a very rich man and maybe get rich herself. Even very rich. Whatever hesitancy she had was overcome by the thrill she felt at this prospect. She teased.

“Oh and do you expect me to scrub floors in this apartment, and do laundry for the neighbors too, to pay the rent?” He laughed.

“You will have a proper French maid to improve your French. You will see real plays and museums to improve your mind. However there is nothing you need to improve your charm and loveliness. She was flattered enough to make love again, this time rather eagerly; now that she was committed, she went at the sex act for pleasure.

Actually her husband was elderly and had never been sexual; tender yes. But intercourse had been gentle and often swift. Because of his age, she had never encouraged wild passion in him and had remained passive.

But Pierre was FRENCH and could match her moves and clasp her buttocks so that she thought he might come out in back of her!. She encouraged him with long kisses. But they did much to prolong the intercourse – pausing at times to change positions. When she was on top of him she recalled what the saloon girls had said about making the man come sooner. She used that knowledge to prolong the act. By mid-morning, both were fairly well exhausted, breathless and in need of rest. They slept to noon. Pierre had to leave that afternoon and gave her full instructions of where to go. He also presented her with a first class ticket to Paris. She was a bit miffed that he had prepared this before they met last night! Oh, what the hell, she was in this and might as well go all the way. Pierre demanded that she take some loose change – 5,000 francs for traveling expenses. Over her protests he “Tut tut,

my dear, it is only loose change for tips and such.” Well she shrugged, this was certainly more than a prostitute was paid. But such thoughts were replaced by the anticipation of learning to invest and making the money for the ranch.

She said goodbye to her Russian friends and soon was settled in 34 Rue de Champion. They didn’t seem surprised that she was going to Paris as a “guest” of Rochmont. Indeed Natasha enthused what a fine man he was.

The apartment exceeded her expectations. It certainly was a lovely apartment with a fabulous French maid, Mimi. But the biggest surprise were the closets with dresses and gowns all with their original tags from the best shops in Paris. And all in good taste; obviously the exclusive shops had made the selections. The few times she needed alterations, she was treated royally. No wonder, there was always a suggestion for some accessories to go with the dress that she succumbed to. It was all so easy; the bills went to Rochmont! At least these were not second hand clothes from a former mistress. She was curious to know what had happened to a former mistress but Mimi swore she was new to the apartment.

She saw some wonderful plays; each time Pierre came, he brought another “little trinket. “ Soon all of Paris, including Pierre’s wife know she was his mistress. She had entrée to the best people as a close friend to Princess Natasha. No wonder she received very personal attention in the finest salons and jewelery stores. Wherever she dined, even alone, she was given immediate seating at the best table. She met many of the exiled Russian nobility. Between Rochmont and Natasha, she was invited to the top social events. One particularly handsome Duke made several attempts to spend bed time with her, but she knew that the rules were. As a society mistress, she must be faithful for the time being. Actually she did not crave more sex; her excitement was the stock trades and the pleasure when they were profitable. One time, when her stock suddenly shot up, she was excited and pleased just like on her honeymoon with Wil! Yes, she wanted more. Her need for Pierre was that of needing a tutor. She studied the books he brought thoroughly. She smiled as she recalled her childhood, embarrassing her brother because she could add fast and well. The twice weekly trysts with Pierre allowed her to apply the

sex tricks she had learned from the saloon girls; Pierre was delighted and the “trinkets” kept coming.

At one fine restaurant, she arrived for lunch at one o’clock. There were couples and singles ahead of her. The Maitre’d brushed aside those in line to escort her to a table. But she was too embarrassed to accept. “No thanks, she said, there are others ahead of me.” Someone in the line recognized her and all whispered and stared at her.

Frankly she was enjoying her “celebrity” status. This was 1923. The cafes were filled with American writers and artists and she joined them when she wasn’t expecting Pierre. She met the famous models of Picasso and other artists and enjoyed conversation with writers and artists!

Her daily routine included taking a cab to the Paris Brongniart, the Paris Stock Exchange where trading was done by shouts and waving of hands. She would meet members of the Compagnie des agents de Change, who were similar to the stock brokers back home. Several of them appeared to know her through Rochmont and some would lunch with her. She accepted these invitations eagerly in order to learn more about stocks. Her own account was nearby at a well lit marble floored office with richly dressed agents who always seemed to be on the telephone.

After a morning at the Paris Brongniart, listening to the volume of orders being taken and watching various “tote boards,” she would get a feel for where the action was going. She easily conversed with one of the floor brokers and would get further information. Then she would go to her investment company, where Rochmont had an office and she would buy or sell according to the information she had gathered. These were small bets however. The information that Rochmont gave her was where she made real profit. After weeks of this life, everything remained very exciting, more than when she held three aces.

The first time she went with Pierre to the opera, she could feel many persons staring at her and whispering and she felt embarrassed. Soon, however, she rather relished the attention! Although she received many invitations from men for lunch or to attend the races, she was amused that none of the wives invited her for lunch. Obviously they wanted to keep her away from their husbands. She made a mistake

in refusing certain artists requests to be a model. Such a painting would have become very valuable; however she couldn't spare the time to be away from the frantic action at the Bourse.

The Paris Brongniart building itself was magnificent with gigantic pillars in the Parthenon and French style, gilded ceilings with paintings, cornices filled with lights that reflected the gold; entering this place where many millions were made and lost each day was a thrill to Christine equal to any sexual pleasure.

Meanwhile nearly every tip Pierre gave her ended with a profit. "No, you don't want to hold on to the stock should it go higher; best to sell on the news and pocket the profit. She became a regular patron at the Bourse where she watched the frenetic activity and flattered some of the traders there to get exceptional advice from seasoned traders. Then she would go to Rochmont's office at the stock brokerage, and then to the bank where she would wire funds to Albert, who sent the money to Michael in order to buy the ranches that abutted the Three Does. By 1924 Michael wrote that the encirclement was complete and it was time for her to return. There was enough money in the account to buy the 3 Does Ranch.

She stared at the picture of little Wil on a horse. He was riding every day! She was missing his best years! He was now almost five. Michael reminded her that she had missed two birthdays, ages 3 and 4.

Although she was a diligent student of the books on stock investing, and would discuss these with Pierre, none of the tips he gave her seemed to be based on Trend Analysis or Statistical Analysis or measuring buy and sell patterns. When she pushed Rochmont to explain his stock choices he would shrug and laugh that he had a tingle just as she did. But he warned her not to bet too much of her new fortune on any one stock. To himself, he mused, usually the mistress only cares for the money he can give her. This one only wanted to learn how to make money! This way, she was less expensive than several of the others had been.

"Even the finest inside information can go wrong. You must always be cautious, never bet it all on one horse. Now, only bet what you can afford to lose.

When they did attend the fashionable horse races, she did consistently lose. She didn't do as much gambling either, her gambling was now the Paris stock market.

In each letter from Michael he reminded her that she had a son to raise and that he missed her.

His last letter included a photo of little Wil at 4. He did look exactly like his father – Wil Senior. She did miss him and debated her next course. Go back to the little town of Dodge City and be with her son or remain in the glamorous city of Paris living a life of excitement and wealth.

She mused, she did have almost half a million francs. She had sent enough money to Michael to easily buy the one ranch she wanted. But what if she remained in Paris until she had one million francs! She could build a mansion on the ranch and raise her son the way Wil would have wanted. In the end, her need to be with her son overcame her gambler's greed. Besides, glamour or no, she also missed Michael and domesticity. Should she leave the money in France? She doubted if Pierre would be interested in helping a departed mistress. She finally concluded that with this much money she could also invest in the United States stock market, and become even wealthier. She would transfer the 560,000 francs to Boston and open a brokerage account there. She purchased tickets for a first class passage in four days. She needed to buy trunks for all her clothes and trinkets and set about. First she would stop at Pierre's office to collect the 560,000 francs and then transfer that to Albert's bank.

When she got to Pierre's office at 29, Rue Bohémies to collect her money, she found the doors closed and padlocked, with a policeman at the door. He said he know nothing except no one was to enter the building. Christine's heart seemed to skip beats; she was worried. She went to the Paris Brongniart to see if Pierre was there. When she arrived in the visitor's gallery she found the entire place in turmoil. There was frantic trading going on. Indeed, they announced that the Bourse would be closed in 15 minutes – three hours before closing was due! All she could gather was that there was a terrible scandal and many persons were dumping stocks in panic, as a result nearly every stock was down and the traders couldn't process the many orders to sell as there was no one to buy. When she learned which

stocks had collapsed the most, she recognized several that she had owned and sold for a profit. She momentarily felt safer not owning any stocks that day, but could she get her cash? She hurried home to call Pierre.

As she headed for home, there were newsboys shouting news and persons were in line buying papers. She was shocked to learn of the terrible scandal at the Paris Bourse. The offices of Pierre Rochmont had been padlocked and all accounts frozen! Prominent investors including Pierre Rochmont were under investigation for illegal transactions including buying cheap shares, spreading false stories and then dumping the stock at higher prices. Then the stock price collapsed leaving hundreds with losses. Now, she realized that she could not get her money until the investigation was complete. The next day there were headlines of the criminal activities of the men who had manipulated so many shares and duped many investors. Soon the government stepped in. These criminals had soiled the reputation of the French people! Indirectly she learned that Pierre was in hiding! Lucky for her, she had sent her other winnings to the Judge. But she now found herself without any funds. She didn't even have francs to buy lunch! Before she had simply said to send the bill to Mr Rochmont. She doubted if that would work today! She decided that her jewelery would have little use in Dodge City and decided to sell some of it. Because she couldn't identify the source of the jewelry, she was reduced to selling to shady persons who gave her 1/10<sup>th</sup> the value of the jewelry. She exchanged her first class passage back to New York for a second-class cabin.

The government announced that it would be investigating all the investors who had profited by the manipulations and promised swift justice. Christine decided she had best be out of town for that. The more she read about the stock market scandal, the more she realized that so many of the high and mighty society swells she had met and admired were basically no better than the horse thieves back home. Still, she would have liked to have said goodbye to Pierre properly but couldn't see how to do this. As she read about the thieves that had profited by stock manipulation, she realized that they were speaking of her! When she read about how worthless stock had been manipulated, she realized now why none of the books

on investing had helped her. Stock manipulations don't follow the laws of 20 day averaging, chart ceilings and floors or multiplication of dividends.

She decided to move out of the apartment for fear that she, as one of the investors who had profited, might get ensnared and jailed. The papers said that anyone who had profited by Rochmont's stock manipulations would be forced to return their profits and the lists would be published soon.

What could she do? If she registered at a hotel, they would look at and hold her passport and she would easily be recognized as an American. She couldn't even sleep in the street – she might be arrested there! Then she remembered Rachel Cohen's invitation to visit her relatives for a place to stay in Paris. She called one of the relatives, a sister of Rachel's now married and living in Paris. She explained that she had promised Rachel to visit. There was a cordial warm welcome and when Christine said she needed to find a place to stay until her boat left, the family wouldn't hear of her not spending those nights with them. Rachel's sister turned out to be just as nice as Rachel had been. Besides they knew that it had been Christine's husband that had rescued Max, Rachel's husband and had encouraged the Christian community to accept the Jewish members. Christine purchased and read all the papers looking for her name in the list of criminals. Happily it wasn't there. But so many of her fine friends were listed, including many of the Russian Nobility, even Princess Natasha! It seems that the Dukes and Counts had been paid to tell stories about the stocks that were being illegally promoted in order to get persons to buy the stocks at high prices from Rochmont and his cronies who profited by the high prices they got for stock they had purchased for pennies, but weren't even worth a tenth of a franc. Now Christine decided to stay hidden until it was time to sail. She feared taking the train to the harbor because they checked passports. Instead she said she would hire a private car for the ride to the boat dock. Rachel's sister wouldn't hear of such a thing. Her son would drive Christine right to the dock. He was able to drive her right to the boarding area, bypassing the gendarmes that were checking at the port entrance. That had been most fortunate. The young man simply screamed curses at the gendarme that this lady had a first class ticket and was not to be annoyed by petty vermin! It worked!

When she arrived, she hurried aboard in hat and veil and feared any delay with her trunks so she abandoned them and just took her suitcases. She breathed a sigh of relief when the boat was free of the guiding tugboats.

The boat trip back was eventful. There were professional card players on the boat seeking easy prey. She pretended to be the innocent novice and managed to gather an extra 20,000 francs in winnings which she definitely needed. She worried that she must be getting old. She only had three invitations to a “private supper” during the crossing. She checked the mirror for facial lines.

She worried that she might never see her brother again; it had been 5 years since they had been together, so she arranged with Albert Samuels to bring him to New York on business.

Among the intellectuals she had met in Paris, was Dr. Dumont, prominent in the new fields of emotional healing. She had described her brother and his shyness and lack of ambition. She had described her constant quarrels with her sister-in-law Emily, how she would side with Christopher, even when he was wrong. Dr. Dumont, a leader in the field of psychology had explained that since Emily had no children of her own, it must have galled her when Christine moved in at age of 12, but instead of becoming the child Emily should have had, she was independent and obstructive. Christine had admitted that this is what had happened.

“But what about my brother, Christopher? He never accomplished anything and let his wife run all over him!” Dr. Dumont asked about her father. “Oh he had been a fabulous person, he bought and sold railroads, was head of several successful organizations, a leader in every way. My uncles always speak of his dynamic personality and his business ability. He was also a writer and was successful on that too. Everyone said how tragic it was that he died at such a young age, a year after my mother died.”

“And did Christopher continue those projects of your father’s?” asked Dr Dumont.

“No, he just drifted, going to the club, attending various committees – art museum, opera and so on.”

Dr. Dumont commented, “ We see this often. The father is so overwhelming that rather than try to compete with him, the son chooses another path. I suppose with a nice income, he just decided to live the life of a gentleman and so never had to show whether he was as good as his father or not.”

Christine realized now why Christopher had never attempted real business and why Emily was embittered at not having children to pass on the Adams name. Still, she did love her brother.

When they met in New York, for the first time in 5 years, they embraced, kissed and she told him of her marriages and adventures. He complained that she should have brought little Wil to be raised by him and his wife! He pointed out that he was entitled to see his only nephew! She promised to arrange a visit once she was settled. Indeed there was no reason why they couldn't get together and visit. He promised to visit her in Dodge City.

Christopher apologized for having taken her fortune. He sheepishly admitted that he was unable to talk his wife out of committing this injustice.

She left the next day for the long ride to Dodge City. Her prior trip had been one of fear and confusion, facing a terrible unknown situation. Now she was returning as an owner of hundreds of acres of ranchland with water, lots of water, that tumbled down from the mountains.

She tried to make up for her long absence with both Wil and Michael. With Michael it was easy, he wasn't sure if the marriage would extend past those three years and was grateful to have Christine back as his loving wife. Christine had said she would go to get the money to buy the ranch but she had never been clear whether she would return to him as his wife. Michael was especially pleased when Christine told him he no longer had to use birth control. If something happened, she wouldn't mind now that she had the means to get Wil's ranch for him.

Wil was a different matter. He barely remembered his mother of his first two years. His mother was basically Rosaria from two to four. So it was a stranger that came and hugged him and kissed him warmly. Despite Rosaria repeating, “Wil, this is your mother,” he hesitated. At the end of two weeks of shopping clothes and toys

and being read stories he finally warmed to her and after a month it was as though she never had left.

After her reunion with Wil and the judge, she went to the county land office to study the maps. Indeed except for a public road that passed the Three Does she did have the place completely surrounded.

She asked the supervisor to recommend a water engineer, he didn't know of one but suggested that she visit Styvers Civil Engineering.

She went there the next day with her maps and Mr. Styvers introduced her to Jonathan Blake, a handsome young man who seemed to be the youngest in the firm. He told her frankly that he had spent the past two years on roads and, with a wink, said he would love to do something different. After an hour of interview, Christine decided she could entrust her project to Mr. Blake. What seemed important was his eagerness to do the project and the fact that he had grown up in Ford County. Her ranches were making money so she could afford the dams and waterways this project would require.

1925 had been a dry year and water was fairly scarce in the surrounding area. Nevertheless her ranches had more than enough water and with the diversion and damming there was enough water to consider doing farming. She hired persons for that too. When Blake understood her goal of gaining the Three Does ranch, he made modifications so that future areas of that ranch could be better supplied, if and when she acquired it. Christine found it easy to tell Jonathan of her plans and he was able to offer insight as to what was best for her current ranches as well as the future one. As a result they spent a lot of time together and he often dined at her home with Wil and the Judge and turned out to be well read in literature and the classics. Michael joked, "But you're an engineer! Since when is an engineer allowed to read the classics!"

As July rolled around, workers from the Three Does went to the water sources to see why their wells were dry. Their cattle were thirsty. They hurried back to Annabelle to report that the water had been diverted or dammed. Annabelle didn't know yet that Christine owned these ranches. She went to the persons whom she thought were the owners to ask about opening the water supply and was told

that regrettably there was none they could spare. Then she offered to pay for the water. They all replied, firmly, that they couldn't spare any water.

Annabelle decided to sell her 2,000 head of cattle since they were starting to look thin and sickly. She only received ½ the usual price once the buyers looked at the thin cattle. Her grass was drying up and dying and even the few remaining heifers had very little to eat or drink.

She visited Judge Samuels at his office to ask if there were some legal steps she could take to get back the water. At this point he confessed that it was Christine behind this and why. Annabelle was shocked and ran out of the office. She stayed at the ranch for days seeking some solution. No, there had never been any agreement on providing water. No, past use of their water did not entitle her to water now.

Two days later, she returned to Judge Samuels and asked, "What does Christine want?"

"What she feels is rightfully hers. She wants that ranch for Wil's son."

"Never!" she screamed! "I would rather burn everything to the ground and poison the place than sell to her." But she knew she had to sell but how? By this time everyone knew about the water situation and no one was buying. Acres without water or grass might as well be considered a desert. One prospective buyer did visit, asked why the grass was dying, and she told him that it was the dry season. She said, "When the rains come, it will grow again." She attempted to have him sign and buy today, but he couldn't do so without his wife. They agreed to meet at 9 next day. Meantime his wife had boasted to a distant cousin that she was here to buy the 3 Does Ranch. The cousin told her what everyone in town knew. NO WATER. The next day, the buyer and his wife departed – no sale.

She contacted previous suitors for the ranch, but they wouldn't buy at any price whatsoever. Her mortgage was coming due, she owed her workers back wages. The money she had received for the cattle sale was diminishing. Now everyone knew that a determined woman was out to get that ranch and would do anything to get it. Annabelle's years of treating employees harshly and her devotion to getting the last ounce of flesh out of any transaction now came to haunt her.

There was no one to give her assistance or sympathy. As a last resort she even went to the saloon and explained to Jack that he could buy it cheap and then sell it to Christine at a higher price. But Jack had had enough dealings with Christine to know that she was too clever for him and he refused Annabelle's offer for a nice profit.

Finally, Annabelle was contacted by a land speculator who felt he could do something with that acreage and he bought it for one tenth its original value. Without water and a thriving cattle operation, this was now just empty acreage he was getting. After the sale, he was revisited by Christine who gave him a substantial sum as he transferred title to her.

Now Christine had her ranch at last! The first thing she did was take Wil to see his father's grave. Jonathan immediately drained the dammed water so that the acres of parched land would again provide grass and plants. He put in some improvements in the water distribution system too and in months the grass was growing again. She also has some areas fenced and fitted for farming. Pierre had taught her well that one should have several sources of income, not put all her money on one horse, hence she felt farming would be a wise choice. Wil delighted in riding the large farm machinery.

Wil was in school in town and Christine didn't want to upset his routine so she didn't move to the ranch house for some months.

In November she sent a note to Annabelle who had rented a house in town, asking if she could call on her with her son. She wrote, I would like Wil to meet his aunt. Annabelle sent an answer back, "yes, if you promise not to gloat." Over the past months, Annabelle had gotten over her fury at what Christine had done to her and even admitted to her minister that she had "deserved it." Part of this was that she had observed Christine's son and immediately recognized him as the son of her brother.

Christine visited Annabelle with little Wil. She introduced him to his aunt. Annabelle couldn't help but notice the very strong resemblance. She remarked that he had the same blond streak of hair on his left side that Wil had had at that age. She told Wil stories about his dad, how he had started the ranch and made it

successful and how much Wil should be proud of his father. She presented Wil with some pictures of his father. Christine cherished these as she hadn't had any before.

Over the next months, Christine encouraged the close relation with Annabelle. She knew that her husband was elderly and that he might pass on someday and she wanted at least one relative for Wil to relate to. Christopher did come – alone – to meet Wil, but he was entirely out of his element away from proper Boston. He listened to Wil as he spoke about horses and cattle and dutifully accompanied him to admire their extensive cattle holdings but it was all a pretense. The only interest he had in cattle was to order a fine steak.

Finally, in June, school was over for the summer. Christine had accumulated furniture and had it trucked in and set up. The ranch hands were appalled that the ranch had gotten a “woman's touch” with comfort and color. Wil was on horseback all day and helped with the cattle. By this time there was very little he didn't know about ranching. He resisted learning about farming, though Christine insisted that he learn.

One day at the large house of The Three Does, she was staring at an old cheap dusty chest of drawers and trying to decide whether to put it in the bunk house or give it away. Just as she decided to give it away, she felt a gentle tingle. Something nagged at her, some sort of familiarity, the feeling she had when she successfully bet on a poker hand that would win. She opened the drawers, quite dirty, and there were odds and ends of harness, and carpenter's things there. All pretty much junk to throw out. The last drawer was stuck and she debated bothering with it but a crowbar happened to be handy so she used it and nearly splintered the drawer getting it open. Inside were old filthy towels and cloths that she tossed in a bag she had prepared. At the bottom of the drawer she found a fancy paper that read,

*Marriage Certificate*

On this day November 4, 1918 William Jackson Robinson did marry Christine Louise Adams in a lawful wedding ceremony and are declared Man and Wife in the eyes of God and the law.

Signed,

**Mathew Morgan , Justice of the Peace**

**For nearly an hour she held this paper in her trembling hands. Then she remembered. She had clutched the wedding certificate, had started to pack it for the honeymoon, and decided it might get stolen. She looked for a safe place, but Wil was waiting for her and honking to hurry up. She noticed the chest of drawers in a room that was unused and hid the certificate there for later retrieval when she returned.**

**Now she was doubly angry that Annabelle had stolen the ranch from her. That monster Annabelle had done this to her! She trembled as she sat down and wrote:**

**Miss Annabelle Robinson,**

**Thank you for not destroying the wedding certificate of William Robinson and Christine Adams. I now have the original and will keep it safe.**

**After seeing that legal wedding certificate I realize how malicious and devious and devilish you are. Even worse, you turn out to be a common thief that stole my ranch from me.**

**I cannot forgive you for what you have done. But mostly I cannot forgive you for forbidding me to attend Wil's funeral.**

**I do not want my son contaminated by your venom . If you remain in Dodge City I will personally do all I can to make your stay here uncomfortable. I will buy the house you are currently renting so that I can evict you.**

**I will be starting legal proceedings against you for fraud and deceit. I will do my best to have you jailed and will do my best to get every penny you owe me from you.**

**Signed,  
Mrs Christine Robinson Samuels.**

**Within two days Annabelle was gone. Years later Christine heard she was living in a boarding house in St Louis.**

Domestic life at the Michael Samuels home, now at the three does ranch near Dodge City continued with Christine busy with the ranches she had acquired and Judge Samuels limiting himself to working in the city.

Now that she was settled, Christine contacted her old friend Margaret from the saloon. No, she no longer worked there, she scrubbed floors and did general cleaning. Christine offered her an easy job at the ranch – cook - with a nice room to stay in. One of the other girls had been fired from the saloon and was now homeless; Christine took her in too. Naturally there was commotion among the men at this but, being in a “respectable” job at a respectable ranch, these older women landed marriages! Over time, Christine did what she could for other “saloon” women including train fare so they could get home.

This activity didn’t disturb Michael as he was content with life. Actually Michael was more than content, he was happy. Now that Wil was reading, and with Christine actually interested, he made a point of speaking about the philosophers and famous writers that he had always enjoyed. The house was filled with books and he encouraged Christine to read them and they would discuss them for hours with Wil chiming in. They both made a point of translating the philosophers and writers so that Wil could understand about Socrates and Thoreau. When Will was interested in the revolutionary war, Michael and Christine told him tales of his forbearers in Boston, the tea party, and the minutemen. Wil was unaware the he was learning inside unpublished information and being spoon fed the Classics. For Wil there were books with pictures that he could relate to. Each day was celebrated as a special history day, Lee’s Surrender Day, Napoleon’s Death, and so on. Luckily Wil just assumed this was Mother and Dad talk, and didn’t speak of these to his playmates. For months, when Wil was 12, they dissected the battles of the Civil War and discussed details of the strategy. Wil was encouraged to give his opinion of how the battles should have been fought.

Since Christine was 27, it was plain that Michael was too old to father a child. Christine had been cooperating in having intercourse at the best times. Now that she was 32, it was plain that Michael, at 65 was not going to have a child of his own.

They had just had a delightful time with Wil discussing the Crusades and showing him pictures of the Knights and Old Jerusalem. Michael decided to broach a subject that had been on his mind for weeks. Christine was young, vibrant, bright – it would be sad if she only had one child. Michael said, “Chrisee you know I talk straight talk.”

“Yes Michael.”

“Your young and probably want another child. I can’t provide that for you. But there are other ways you can have a child and if you decide that, I won’t object and I will raise the other child as I did Wil, as my own.”

Christine was surprised. This idea had not occurred to her. She smiled, Michael was such a moral character, such a good Christian, that he should come up with such an idea! For one thing, living the life of a Parisian mistress had somewhat soured her on the whole idea of “wild sex.” Another thing was that she was darn sure Michael would be hurt. And besides, she hadn’t met anyone for whom she would be interested in anyway, except that engineer that had helped her with the water problem, but he had been far too young anyway. No, she decided, she was comfortable doing as she was doing now with Michael and Wil. I really don’t need to be more happy, she thought.

“Why thank you Michael, that is very sweet of you, but I am pretty well set where I am right now.”

As money came in from the ranching and farming, Christine renovated and expanded the original ranch house and made numerous improvements on her properties. She still had a fear of tornadoes and put in a large shelter that would house the entire large staff of the ranch. She also bought properties in town, remembering to diversify as Pierre had taught her.

Wil did spend some summers with Christopher. They went sailing and driving about the country. Christopher had his own sail boat and belonged to a sailing club. With Wil to help him, he entered some of the races and to Wil’s delight they won some. Wil got to keep the ribbons. His Uncle took him to visit Yale and Harvard and urged these schools on him with Christine’s blessing. As a VIP

graduate and contributor, he could dine with Wil in the fine faculty dining rooms. Wil overheard conversations and related to some of them.

Now Christopher would ignore any objections that his wife dared to voice. “If you say a single word to my nephew Wil while he is in Boston, even one word, I swear to you I will leave you.” This time Emily knew he was serious so she remained polite and cordial to Wil whenever he visited. Christopher was a sailor and Wil enjoyed that very much. He looked forward to the summers with Christopher and sailing about Boston and New England. He heard his uncle’s repeated urging that he attend these ivory league colleges, but paid little attention. Christopher kept trying to find a way to persuade the last male heir of the Adams family to get a proper education.

In July 1933 Michael had his first eye hemorrhage, which left him with little vision in his right eye. He couldn’t drive any more and his reading was limited. Christine and Wil took turns reading to him. He had to give up his Judge duties. In September he had a second hemorrhage and was completely blind in the right eye. His doctor worried about another hemorrhage in the left eye and demanded no strenuous activity and no sex. In December, as he was decorating the Christmas tree with Wil, he had a massive stroke and died. Christine felt she had lost a husband as well as a father. Wil had lost a father. In Michael’s will he left a small amount of money to Christine. Apparently he had been an honest judge, poor but honest!

Christine consulted with Albert Samuels and they decided to have the funeral in Boston, and that he should be buried in the family plot. This was the second time she was shipping her husband’s body by train. Before they left, there was a funeral ceremony in Dodge, attended by most of the prominent people of the city. Jonathan Blake was there and held Wil’s hand while Christine wept. Christine was glad to see how much Michael had been respected.

Three days before Christmas there was a ceremony at the large Episcopal church in Boston. There were many close and distant relatives attending and all praised Michael. Wil spoke a beautiful eulogy, explaining that Michael had actually been his step-father, but was the best father any son could have had. “But you know, he tricked me! He spoke of the classics and philosophy and I didn’t realize

that this was supposed to be dull and difficult stuff!” There were some 8 or 10 women at the service that neither Albert, Christopher nor Emily knew and Christine suspected they had just come, curious to view the heiress who became a whore in Boston.

In February, 1934, a respectable six weeks after the funeral, Jonathan Blake came calling and invited Wil to join a baseball group he was coaching. Soon he was calling for Wil to take him to practice and supping with Christine afterwards. One evening after Wil went to bed, he said, “Christine, I would like to spend more time with you, if you will allow it.”

At first Christine misunderstood his meaning – perhaps sleep over when he brought Wil home or come earlier to pick him up? But, when she looked at his handsome face, she realized he had other things in mind. She was, after all, still in mourning.

“Jonathan I am very flattered. But you know I am a widow, twice. I suspect you are younger than me, I ...”

“Christine, I took that water job just to be with you. I spent as much time as I could on your project just to be with you. I dreamed of you constantly the times we were together. I admire you for what you did, getting Wil’s ranch for him and how you outsmarted that Annabelle. I don’t know anyone who is lovelier than you. I love you.”

What a fool she had been. All those afternoons with him inspecting the water projects, yet enjoying his company, his sense of humor. She had been blind to anything but her goal for the ranch! Now she was a single woman again, and he was a handsome, though younger man. How old was he, 30? 31? Well, she wasn’t exactly senile, at 37 she still had her looks and figure.

“Jonathan, I know I like you. I know you are a fine person. I am afraid you are going to have to give me a little more time to get over my grief of losing Michael.”

Jonathan argued, "But he was much older than you, old enough to be your father. Wasn't yours a marriage of convenience because you were pregnant? Isn't it time you found real love in your life?"

Christine bristled, "Is that what everyone says, a marriage of convenience? Well actually it did start that way, but I can assure you that this was a marriage of real love and happiness."

"No I didn't mean anything like that. Look, I know you are grieving so let's put it this way. Let me visit and maybe one day I can take you to a movie and we can get to know each other better."

Christine laughed, "Poor Jonathan, did you plan to coach the baseball team just so you could have an excuse to see me?"

"Honestly I like Wil very much. I never had a younger brother and I enjoy being with him."

"Have you considered our age difference?"

"What age difference? I don't know what you are talking about, Christine, when I look at you all I see is a beautiful wonderful woman."

Christine felt that the situation was becoming too much for her and she asked him to leave but come to dinner on Saturday when he brought Wil home from the game.

The next days were a turmoil for Christine. Except for Wil, she had never had a truly passionate marriage, besides she had been very young then. Michael had been wonderful, but still elderly and more fatherly than lover. Pierre had not been for love, but really a dollar for sex relationship, hey not that much different from Margaret and others at the saloon. Just because you call it a "mistress" and it is fashionable in Paris, it was still for the money. Not that she regretted it; living the high society life in Paris had been a wonderful experience and in the end it was for her child that she had done this. And she had been able to get the ranch back for Wil.

She had to admit that living in Paris had been highly educational. She shuddered to think of what might have happened if she hadn't sent the money

ahead to Boston when she did. It never occurred to her that her stock profits had been made by cheating other investors. Later, she would realize this fact.

Now she had a chance for a real marriage with someone, though younger, who was still a suitable choice for marriage. Well educated, nice looking, she recalled that now he was a partner in his civil engineering firm so she needn't fear he was only after her money. He and Wil were good friends, he was a pleasure to be with. What was holding her back?

She knew she couldn't decide if she loved him so soon after Michael's death. But there was something she could do, and maybe that was the best approach? If she asked Jonathan to wait the full year, his fervor might end. She knew she couldn't give herself to love the way she had with Wil until her grieving time was over. For many women that lasted a year. But she could enjoy his affections until then!

That Saturday night she dismissed her cook and deliberately was late in serving Wil and Jonathan supper. Supper was finally over about 10:30 and she remarked how late it was as Wil went off to bed. After putting away the kitchen, she sat on the couch next to Jonathan and allowed him to put his arm around her, then snuggled closer to him as he eagerly ran his hands over her body. For almost a year, since Michael's first eye hemorrhage there hadn't been any such romance for her and she welcomed what naturally followed. Nearly undressed, she led him to her bedroom, far on the other side of the ranch house from where Wil slept and they made love in her bed.

The next morning the three rode horses out to a favorite picnic spot that overlooked much of her extensive holdings. While she prepared lunch, Jonathan explained to Wil how the height of the bluff affected water drainage. He then accused Christine of diverting him from his original career in roads to water works. "Now all I do is build drinking fountains," he laughed. "In my last school project no one could understand why there were 10 drinking fountains installed instead of the normal two!"

For some months theirs was a weekly tryst. Eventually Wil understood and didn't seem to voice any objection. By June she no longer used any sort of birth control and didn't ask him to either.

What concerned her now was that Jonathan seemed to really love children. He had been the youngest in a family of eight. Sundays they would visit his sister. The identical twin girls would hug and kiss him and then play all sorts of jokes on him as to which was Alice and which was Alicia. He would join the fun and prove the identity by who was the most ticklish.

Other Sundays they would visit his brother and their three boys. Though the boys were really monsters, fighting, screaming and constantly causing grief to their parents, Jonathan would get them into some game or other, running, tackling, racing so that in the end they were too tired to fight each other and Sunday dinner was peaceful and pleasant. His sister-in-law pleaded with Jonathan and Christine to come more often to give her a blessed moment of peace.

Christine decided she did want to marry Jonathan, but what if she couldn't have any more children? This was really brought home to her when Will's sister Anne casually mentioned that Jonathan sure did love children. "I wonder why he waited so long to have some of his own?" This was said as an aside, not directed at Christine but the message was clear. After all she was 38. By December she threw caution and gossip aside and tried to get pregnant with Jonathan. He was extremely pleased at her fervor and using every opportunity to have sex with him, even in the afternoon after they had ridden to the lake or picnic area. The days when they visited his nieces and nephews she almost forced him to have sex twice that night. Of course he didn't mind at all.

In December her period was late. But it didn't feel like pregnancy, then her period began 10 days later. She decided to visit a doctor in Cleveland.

After examining her and listening to her attempts at pregnancy, and being assured that Jonathan was more than capable, he told her that, "Some women start menopause earlier than others. Perhaps because you had little sex in the year before your husband died, or just your nature, your ovaries are shrunk and so is your uterus. I believe you have entered menopause."

**“I suppose that means no more pregnancy? “**

**“We can never be sure. There are always surprises, but as far as I can tell, no.“**

**“I have read about new treatments they use to bring on pregnancy in older women. Would any of that be possible for me?**

**“Perhaps. But you must understand it’s a field we know very little about in 1936. I read these articles advocating this drug and that for pregnancy, but all of them talk about side effects. There may be dangers we can’t predict. And to go through months of strange shots, strange reactions and maybe end up with a deformed child, I simply don’t feel it is worth the risk, to say nothing of the expense.”**

**Prior to her visit Christine had studied reports of older women going to Switzerland or Mexico and achieving pregnancy. But she also knew that many reports could be exaggerated. She didn’t feel like being experimented on.**

**If she and Jonathan were already married, she might consider those special “shots.” But they were not married.**

**When Jonathan met her on her return from Cleveland he asked if she were OK. She nodded. But back at the ranch house he could see her face was tear streaked.**

**“I don’t like it when you are crying and don’t tell me what’s up. C’mon what did they say in Cleveland? ”**

**Christine was unable to keep from crying when she said, “They said I am too old to have your children.“**

**Jonathan quickly said, “Well that’s OK. Its you I love.” He gently wiped her tears. But she said little that night. When he tried to make love to her that night she said she was tired.**

**The next two days she was snapping at Wil, “No you can’t leave till your room is cleaned and neat.” She was snapping at her housekeeper, “You haven’t cleaned the pots properly for years. Either do it right or get another job.” From the foreman to the ranch hands, all kept their distance from her.**

She continued her inner turmoil. She could have a handsome loving husband! She didn't care about the gossip that would ensue, "cradle robber," "young enough to be her son," "she tried an old coot, now she is trying a teenager." That really didn't bother her. What was blocking her was her true deep love of Jonathan.

Christine knew that Jonathan would do the honorable thing and marry her. Could she then do the honorable thing and refuse to marry him because she knew that he would be miserable later without his own children. She envisioned spending Sundays with his nieces or nephews, soon to be bitter that he couldn't have a child too. How soon would it take for that disappointment to turn to despair? How could his love for her survive that? And was it fair to him? If only she could be selfish, marry him and not worry about the future. But she found that she couldn't be selfish. Gradually she was spending less time with him. She schemed so that Wil and he no longer spent time together.

By March they were practically estranged. Jonathan stopped the car they were driving home in and said,

"Christine I know you have turned cold because you don't want to hurt me about the children. I swear to you, I love you and want to be your husband and I don't care about the children. Honestly, I swear!" Christine said, "I know you feel that way now, Jonathan, but you don't know the look that comes over you when you visit your nieces and nephews. I see it. So does your sister and brother. It is because I do love you that I must let you go now."

Jonathan's tears almost blinded him on the road home. When they arrived at the ranch, he wouldn't let her out of the car, he kept crying tears, "I love you. I love you, can't you believe me?" And she answered as she took his hand away, "I love you too, believe me, I really do. Goodby Jonathan." She closed the car door firmly, tears streaming down her face. She didn't look back as she closed the ranch door and turned off the outside lights.

Two week later she met his sister in the grocery store and learned that he had left for South America for an important job in Columbia and would be there for several years. She showed Christine the picture post cards he had sent to his

twin nieces, full of humor and love. Christine felt that she had done the right honorable thing, but how she missed Jonathan. Jonathan's sister didn't offer his address and she didn't ask for it either.

After Jonathan, she devoted herself more to the ranch. Her holdings were considerably larger now than the original Three Does. She awoke at dawn and supervised breakfast for the dozen ranch hands. At 9 she met with her primary manager and then was off on horseback or by truck to check on the ranch operation. Lunch was generally with one of the foremen. Depending on days, she would go into town in the afternoon and meet with her accountant or banker. Then pick up Wil from school and get supplies. Then to the ranch to unload supplies and do the mail and paperwork. Fortunately she didn't have to cook or clean house. By evening she was quite exhausted and slept well. Her upbringing on show horses helped prepare her for this life. There were many invitations from men from the various associations she belonged to but for some reason she had decided that she was "too old for that stuff," even though she plainly was not. Presumably her menopause was difficult for her, not just physically but emotionally as well.

### Courtship

Now that she was a wealthy widow and still attractive, there were men, quite eligible ones, coming to court her. Every ranch manager hinted at how nice it would be to have him "in the house." Through the cattleman's association she was meeting plenty of men who wined and dined her with honorable intentions. Frank Billings had been the one she might have married, but didn't.

Frank worked for the department of agriculture. He was about 50, divorced, and it was his job to examine and pass on her cattle's health and of course look for evidence of diseases. Foot and mouth was a serious disease and could easily wipe out her entire stock. She tried to prevent this by not allowing any other cattle on her property and would only bring in other cattle after isolation and careful inspection. Frank recommended that she cross breed her stock to improve their commercial value. He would call for her, drive her to a place where superior breeds were available and make good suggestions. He was a graduate veterinarian. Soon he was

taking her to movies and parties. She knew that eventually he would be popping the question.

**She thought:**

**He is nice looking, not even overweight**

**He is a real man; his baldness is manly.**

**He is educated**

**He is available –divorced.**

**He is respected by the community (although cursed by some of ranchers)**

**He has a significant job**

So what would be so bad? Was it because of her disappointment with Jonathan? Was she still hoping he would return and they could be married after all? Was she being selfish in not wanting to share her wealth? She admitted she was lonely especially when Wil was away in college. She continued to date but continued to decline the marriage proposals. Part of this must have been that all day she ordered men, supervised men, paid salaries to men, hired and fired men. Perhaps the chance that she might have to be beholden to a man influenced her too. Part of her attraction to Jonathan had been his not being a rancher: no competition. When Michael was alive he had had no hand in the ranch whatsoever except to sometimes renew contracts. Thus being her own boss of a considerable business stood in the way of matrimony. Maybe if she had met a doctor or lawyer. In the end, when Frank Billings wanted to kiss her, hold her, and bed her, she resisted, giving a lame excuse about still grieving for her husband. When Frank found an impenetrable barrier, he left her alone.

### **Doris Hornsby**

When Wil was 18 he stubbornly resisted going to college. He enjoyed ranching and this was his life and he was good at it.

Christine made a deal. If he would attend Agriculture college for two years, then he could leave college and return to the ranch. He agreed.

At the end of the second year of college, Wil began spending time in town. Christine hoped it wasn't for gambling. She was lonely when Wil was away and

sometimes asked if she could accompany him to town for a movie or dinner. Over the past few weeks he kept making excuses.

Through friends she learned that he was actually dating Doris Hornsby, daughter of a town merchant. She was certainly a respectable girl and quite lovely too. Christine tried to learn his intentions but he was shy about this.

Finally one day he sat down next to her after supper, his hair combed and wearing a clean shirt and jeans.

“Going into town to spoon tonight?” she asked.

“No, I am going into town to ask Mr Hornsby to marry his daughter.” Christine flushed; well, he was almost 21, why not? Besides if he married now he would be spared the “saloon life” so many of his friends had succumbed to.

“Wil, I am pleased and give you my blessing.”

She hadn’t been kissed by him this warmly since Wil’s 13<sup>th</sup> birthday! He drove away happily singing.

Wil didn’t return that night and he wasn’t at the ranch in the morning doing his chores. She took the truck and drove into town. Where to look for Wil? She decided to try Mr Hornsby’s store. He was very distant to her and declared he had no idea where Wil was. By his tone he obviously didn’t care either. He looked away as he spoke to her and abruptly turned his back on her to arrange some shelves. Christine felt that something had gone wrong. Then she felt that tingle.

Panicking she hurried to her truck and drove around asking whomever she could if they had seen Wil. When she passed the Texas saloon, she felt that tingle again, stopped and cautiously went into the dark interior. It hadn’t changed over the years, still reeked of cheap whiskey. She recognized her son by the white shirt he had worn when he left the ranch. He was slumped over the table with a nearly empty bottle of whiskey. There was spilled liquor over the table and he lay in that mess, asleep or passed out drunk. When she reached him and tried to sit him up, he aroused and looked at her.

“Get away from me! Don’t come near me! I don’t want you to touch me!” Christine was completely startled, hardly knew what to say or do.

“Wil, I think you have had enough to drink. Come on home.”

**“Why, isn’t this your home? Why shouldn’t it be my home too? Sit down and have a drink, it’ll be like old times for you.”**

**Christine feared the worse. There were several persons looking at them. Finally Jake the bartender who knew her from the days when she had run the card game, came over and said, “Sorry Christine, he’s been drinking like this all night. You go wait in your truck and I’ll bring him out.” She left and sat in the truck, her face scarlet and her hands trembling. Her heart was racing. In a few minutes Jake brought Wil out, dumped him in the back of the truck and said, “ I think he will be ok back there.”**

**She adjusted her mirror so she could keep an eye on him. She drove slowly back to the ranch, even though a new paved road allowed for a fast drive. She wondered how much of that road Jonathan had built. When she arrived at the ranch, one of the workers helped bring him into the house. Then, she put Wil to bed.**

**Next morning he was gone to one of the north ranch areas and apparently was bunking there. For a week she didn’t see him and worried. Finally she heard him going to his room.**

**“Your father taught you to face adversity squarely. Why are you hiding?”**

**“Father? Father? Did I have a father or am I some kind of bastard that nobody claims?”**

**“What are you talking about, “ she cried, Wil Robinson is your true father and Michael was your step father that raised you.”**

**Well at least you were married to Michael, I guess.“**

**“Wil, quit beating around the bush. Say what’s on your mind.”**

**“Well it’s a bit difficult knowing your own mother was a whore in the saloon and never married whoever my father was. And since I don’t know and presumably you don’t know, Mr Hornsby refuses to let his daughter marry a bastard.“**

**“Will, I don’t know who has been filling you with such nonsense though I am sure your dear Aunt Annabelle had a lot to do with it, but I swear to you that Wil Robinson and I were lawfully married and that he is your father. I swear to**

you that when we married Wil was the first and only person I had gone to bed with.” She thought about that marriage certificate.

“Mother I want to believe you but what about the Saloon? Mr Hornsby saw you there with his own eyes. He was afraid to say anything once you had married Michael.”

“Well I thank him for that. Wil, it is true that I am a gambler. I have been so since I was 16. When I came to Dodge I couldn’t find any other job except as a dealer. And I did gamble somewhat successfully. You know I went to Europe and gambled there and won enough to get you the ranch that belonged to you. But I swear to you I was never a whore.” She thought, what about being Pierre’s mistress? What do you call that?

Wil muttered, “Doesn’t matter. Doris has agreed to elope with me anyway.”

“Wil, please don’t do that. Let me speak to Mr. Hornsby and try to convince him of the truth of what I am saying. Damn it, what is it in this country about gambling? In all of Europe the best people gamble. I have seen Russian Princesses work as card dealers. Why is it so normal there and such a hypocrisy here? Wil your father taught you the importance of ethics. If you elope with Doris, it will be impossible to fix the harm it will cause. Besides, what Mr Hornsby is saying is a damn lie. Please, at least give me a week to try.

But Mr. Hornsby refused to open the door to let her into his house. She could see Doris in the upstairs window sobbing.

On Thursday evening Jack Simpson came to visit the Three Does Ranch. He sheepishly asked to speak to Christine alone.

Jack had been Wil’s best friend all through childhood and the teen years. They had, according to Wil, raised hell together. When they were 16 they had played a joke – mixing 3 herd of cattle all up. When they were caught, the angry ranchers wanted to hang them as cattle thieves. Will announced that they had secretly branded the cattle and only they knew who the right ones were for each of the ranchers, so if they died, there would probably be a terrible war deciding whose

cattle were whose. Of course there was no such secret but they managed to get the cattle back OK but of course were punished for this misdeed.

Jack admitted that when Wil told him of his intentions to marry that girl in the saloon, Jack objected. But Wil wouldn't listen to his objections.

Jack had been away when the wedding took place and barely knew that Wil was out of town on his honeymoon. When he returned and heard the horrible news, he rushed to Annabelle to console her. After the funeral, he retrieved a package that had been waiting at the station for him. He handed Christine a letter that accompanied that package, eyes downcast and a bit embarrassed.

She read it silently.

Dear Jack,

I am on my honeymoon with Christine, my bride. You simply can't appreciate how wonderful she is and how happy she has made me.

I know you were concerned about her being a loose woman. Recall I insisted you were wrong? Well, for your information she is or rather was a virgin and I am enclosing a bloody towel from the Ritz Hotel where we went for the first night of our honeymoon.

Christine teased me, because I did love her as she was, I got the bonus of marrying a virgin and getting to break the cherry.

I know you will be happy for me and I can't wait to get back to Dodge and we can really celebrate my marriage together.

Your Pal,

Wil

Jack, still embarrassed held a wrapped packet that he didn't want to open. "My daughter Millie and Doris are best friends and when Doris told her that her father refused the marriage and why, Millie told me and I remembered that letter. I think this proves that you and Wil were married and that you had no other man besides him. Besides, Wil junior is the spitting image of his father. He has the same devil in him. He also rides like Wil, a little leaning forward in the saddle. "

Christine looked at Jack wondering what to do. First she kissed him for bringing this wonderful letter. Then she decided her best course was to go with Jack to Mr Hornsby. He wouldn't dare refuse to let Jack come in.

She gave Jack more details, showed him the wedding certificate and Jack said, "I understand completely. Let me talk to Hornsby. I am sure I can knock some sense into his head. I have known you and both Wil's and I can't think of any young man more suitable for a fine girl to marry."

Hornsby was surprised when Jack knocked on his door of his home and asked to come in. He was suspicious, recalling that Jack and Wil had been friends.

"I'm busy. Come back another time."

"C'mon Spit, let's have a talk. On the other hand, if you are that busy maybe me and the entire Cattlemen's Association should do all our buying somewhere else, like Barnaby's place, if you are too busy for us."

"Keep your damn shirt on and quit making threats," said Spit Hornsby. He had acquired that nick name since age 8 and it had stuck. He led Jack into the empty parlor. The wife and Emily were clearing supper dishes.

"Now you know Wil and I were best of friends. I feel you have done little Wil a grave injustice. I know for a fact that Wil and Christine were legally married and were on their honeymoon when he was killed. And I know for a fact that when Wil started the honeymoon he was the first person to make love to that woman. That's a fact. "

Hornsby, still skeptical said, "How do you know? You were away when Wil was killed. "

"He wrote me from his honeymoon and boasted that his wife was a cherry. He wrote how his wife made him happy. I have kept that letter, and its absolute proof that they were married and that she wasn't sleeping with any other man. And I saw the wedding certificate, signed by Justice of the peace Morgan. "

"How come he wasn't around when she claimed to be Wil's wife? "

"Don't you know? That witch Annabelle gave him a thousand dollars to leave town and not come back, so she could keep the ranch from Wil's wife. And she

wouldn't let her come to the funeral for fear she might get hold of the wedding certificate while she was on the ranch. "

Hornsby, somewhat calmer now said, "But she did work in the saloon."

"Yes she did," admitted Jack. "But she needed money to live on when she got here and she just happens to be talented at cards. But that doesn't mean that Wil isn't a fine young man, does it? A girl can deal cards and still not be a whore, Wil saw that and boasted about it in that letter to me."

"Well things are a bit complicated now. I have insulted Wil and his mother. But Doris certainly wants to marry Wil and I am sure Wil wants to marry Doris."

Jack said, "I think Doris would be getting a very fine young man, I can vouch for that. Besides, he is also a wealthy rancher. Here is what I suggest. Let's all agree to come to my house Sunday at four and the women will prepare dinner and we will play ball and just have a nice quiet outdoor picnic. I am sure afterwards we can all forget the bad things and be friends, OK? "

Hornsby agreed, but brought his wife and daughter in to tell them the news. Doris was ecstatic, she hugged and kissed her father then Jack, then her mother, then her father again. Jack escaped before she could reach him again.

That Sunday they met at Jack's house and the picnic went well. Doris and Wil quietly sat together both looking expectantly at their respective parents. Wil looked especially nice with a clean shirt and clean city pants. Doris kept blushing whenever her father looked at her. Christine and Mrs Hornsby and Jack's wife Emma fussed with the food. Fortunately Jack's wife and daughter were there, so there wasn't any confrontation.

Emma was the smart one. While the women were together she casually remarked, "You know the Simpson wedding was at their ranch and I think it went rather well. Her daughter, on cue, chimed in, "Yes and they saved a lot of money. They didn't have to pay for a catered hotel wedding." Emma replied, "Yes a ranch wedding does save a bundle."

Mrs. Hornsby answered sternly, "For my daughter there is no need to think of saving money. She should have the wedding at the best hotel. We are not trying to penny pinch for our daughter. Jules, she shouted, don't you think the hotel is best?"

We are not interested in cheap, not when it comes to Doris's happiness, right Jules?" He assented. With that there was heated discussions of plans, dinners who would pay for what, wrangling over guest lists which went on for an hour while the happy couple sat there and took it all in. Soon there was friendly bidding, " Oh I'll pay for the wedding dress" said Christine.

"No you won't. The dress gets bought by the Mother," Said Mrs. Hornsby. Jack kept offering dinner, music all kinds of offerings but he was turned down by Mr. Hornsby, this was HIS daughter's wedding after all.

By evening the arrangements for the wedding had been formalized and everyone seemed satisfied. No one asked the bride -to- be her wishes and she was too terrified to say a word.

Christine had been outbid on everything she offered. At last she said, "If no one minds, I would like Doris and you," indicating Mrs Hornsby, "to come to the ranch and pick out a site for the new house. Then Doris and you can design the new home and it will be my pleasure to get it built. I hope no one minds?" she looked directly at the Hornsbys. They murmured assent. Finally Doris and Wil couldn't hold themselves back. Doris flew into Christine's arms and Wil kissed Mrs. Hornsby and shook Spit's hand. Mrs. Hornsby began to cry and then hugged Wil again.

A year after the wedding, the dream house was still under construction but Doris and her mother-in-law were getting along splendidly. Christine had enlarged the ranch house and Wil and his wife were in a separate wing and could make all the noise they wished without disturbing anyone. Christine was sorry that their wing hadn't been better insulated as to sound. Wil repeatedly asked Doris to be quieter during sex, but to no avail.

### The Phone Rings

The phone rang incessantly at 3 AM. Finally Christine sleepily said, "Hello?"

A sobbing Emily cried, " Oh Christine, oh God, Chris has had a stroke! He is so young! He can't talk! We just arrived at the hospital, he is in X ray now. Oh

Christine, he may not live. Oh please, hurry home, please. Oh Christine.” More sobs.

“What happened?”

“I was asleep about 11 and so was he. About 11:30 he starts kicking me. Oh the look of terror in his eyes when I turned on the light! He can’t talk! He can’t say anything! He’s so young!”

Christine managed to get details of the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital. and room number and woke Wil and Doris to tell them the news. Doris called for train schedules while Wil helped his mother pack and get ready. Fortunately there was a train at 6:30 and with connections she could be in Boston the next night.

At the hospital that evening she was met by Emily with her hair disheveled and her eyes tear streaked. Albert was there as was a distant uncle. There were no friends of Emily present.

“Can I see him,” asked Christine?

“Yes, just for a moment. He is in an oxygen tent and can’t recognize anyone. He can’t even talk!” Emily sobbed.

Carefully Christine opened the door to room 234 and was distressed to see the tent covering her brother’s head. She barely recognized him, his face was very pale, his muscles unmoving. An intravenous was in his left arm, so she held his right hand and spoke softly to him over the hiss of the oxygen. “Chris, its me Christine. I am here for you.” There was no response. She remained for 20 minutes then came out. In the hallway the doctor was talking to Emily . Emily introduced Christine, Christopher’s younger sister. Emily had tears. She turned to Christine and pleaded, “ The doctor says there is very little hope. He has had a massive stroke. They are trying to decide if they should operate to relieve some pressure, but they say he may die in surgery. They want me to decide! Oh Chrisee, help me.

Christine sensibly walked away with the doctor and asked for details. They were bad. A significant part of the brain was without oxygen and was dying. They had him drugged so as to reduce the brain metabolism. A good bit of blood had pooled in the lower part of the brain and the pressure would probably stop his breathing.

Christine had often had to face these decisions with animals with broken legs, large lacerations, various cow diseases. But this was her brother, her only living relative.

“If he lives, what will he be able to do?”

The doctor hesitated. “His wife asked me that and I hesitated to answer her. If he survives, he will be a vegetable. Now, no one can be absolutely sure, we never can predict these things for certain. There are always surprises.”

Christine scowled, “Come come Doctor, let’s not give false hopes..”

Doctor answered, “By the way he has already had two consultations by neurosurgeons and I have had discussions with Dr. Harvey Cushing as well, all give the same opinion. If the surgery to drain the extra blood is successful, the best we can hope for is a vegetative state. I am sorry. “

Christine realized this was a hopeless situation and thanked the doctor. When she returned to the waiting room there were more persons arrived including Atty. Frank Amatore, the new lawyer Emily and Christopher now used because Samuels was Christine’s brother-in law.

Emily tearfully asked, “What did the doctor tell you?” There was hope in her voice.

“Basically what he already told you. We need to wait and see what happens.” She didn’t offer the opinion about draining the blood.

Next day Wil arrived with Doris. They both took Emily home to try to get some rest while Christine stayed at her brother’s bedside.

Christopher lasted two more days and then died. Emily couldn’t be controlled. She continued to blame herself, she had denied him so many things, so many trips they should have taken, she had been a bad wife. She was truly in grief.

Wil and Albert did the funeral arrangements. There was to be a church service and then burial in the cemetery plot reserved for the Adams family. Emily asked Christine to please remain in Boston two days after the funeral for some important business.

Christine, back sleeping in the house she left 20 years ago felt awkward. Then she enjoyed recalling her years in the house, the pranks, the doll collections,

the clothes. Her old room that she lived in in her teen years was basically untouched. Her old scrap books where she collected fashion pictures was still in a shelf! She wondered if her teen age dairy was somewhere, but didn't find it. Still, she missed her ranch. Now she recalled the times with Christopher, how he had babied her before he was married and gone.

The day after the funeral a somber Emily asked Christine to accompany her to Bishop Greer's office at the church they had all attended. Christine hadn't met him except at the funeral. Was this some special ceremony to be performed over her brother's death?

At the heavily rugged dark office, paneled in mahogany, she was introduced to a somber Bishop Greer and then to a court reporter who sat on a stool with a stenotype machine open and an extra roll of paper beside him. Bishop Greer was dressed in a blue suit, not church vestments.

Emily was dressed widow's clothes, no makeup. Her hair had no color, her eyes were swollen, her face sagged, and her lips quivered as she spoke in a hushed voice. In a somber voice she said, "Begin please."

The reporter swore Emily to tell the truth. He reminded her that every word she said was being recorded and could be used in a court of law. He reminded her that he was a notary and with his stamp on the record there would be clear evidence of her statements. Emily answered that she understood her statements to have legal binding. Christine was bewildered. Greer avoided eye contact with either woman. The reporter repeated several times that she must speak up so he could hear her.

Emily said in a somber voice, "This is a true confession of a terrible crime committed by me and me alone against my sister-in-law Christine Adams, now Mrs Christine Robinson Samuels. " Christine gasped.

"I caused a police raid to take place at a home where Christine was innocently playing cards. I arranged for her to be arrested and charged with being a prostitute and for the newspapers to be at the jail to photograph her being arrested along with the prostitutes of that house, and to spread the news that Christine Adams was a whore, working in a whore house. I did this specifically in order to disinherit her of her money and in order to drive her out of Boston. "

Bishop Greer squirmed uncomfortably, continuing to avoid any eye contact with either woman. He continued to be busy rearranging his onyx letter opener. Christine could no longer breathe. She felt her ears redden.

Emily continued, “ Since I stole Christine’s inheritance and caused her grievous harm, financially and emotionally, I should be punished. First I must retribute the money I stole from her” – she glanced at a sheet of paper in her hand, “to a sum of 800,000 dollars, which with compounded interest at 5% comes to one million two hundred thousand dollars. I will arrange for that transfer immediately. All the accusations made against Mrs Samuels at that time were lies I made up and promulgated because of my greed and evil intent.” She didn’t add, but believed, that now she was being punished for what she had done to Christine.

“This confession is made of my own free will without any pressure from anyone. I only request is that Christine and I hope God will forgive me. The notary paused and asked in a flat voice, “Is that all Mrs Adams?”

Emily with downcast eyes answered yes, except copies were to be delivered to Bishop Greer so that he could tell Christine’s friends the truth of the whore accusation; copy to Albert Samuels, and a copy sent to Wil Samuels, and Christine.

Christine desperately needed a drink of water. Her throat was parched, she could only swallow with difficulty. She longed for a glass of water. She thought, “It’s a hell of a thing, now that I don’t need the damn money.” She was still bereaved about her brother’s death. All she could think of to say was, “Thank you Emily.”

Fortunately she had her suitcase in Emily’s car, but took a taxi to the train station, thus avoiding seeing Emily before her departure. No, she certainly had no intentions of suing Emily or going to the police – after all, the Adams name! Her mind was a blank on the train going home. When she arrived at the ranch she spent the day repeatedly taking a bath and lying in very hot water for much of the day. In truth, Wil with his summers with Christopher had probably had more contact with Christopher than she had! How she regretted their being so estranged.

Albert Samuels had come to Dodge with his daughter, Justine, and her family for several summer visits. Justine lived in Chicago, had two children, and

her husband earned a modest salary as a teacher. For the past 3 years, the family had spent 2-3 weeks at the ranch for their vacation, and Christine loved having them and renewing friendship with her childhood chum. This year, Justine, her husband and children along with Albert were a welcome sight to Christine, still distressed at her brother's early death.

During this visit, Albert waited till the entire family were all away to speak to Wil.

"I apologize for this. I want you to know I had nothing to do with any of this." Then he explained.

Christopher had left a strange document in a new will he had completed months before his death. If Wil attended two years of college at Harvard or Yale or comparable Ivy league school, he would receive \$500,000. For each additional year he completed he would receive an additional 100,000. If he got a degree from either one he would receive an additional \$200,000 upon graduation. All his education expenses would be paid for by the trust.

Wil was justifiably confused. He listened twice before he began to comprehend what he was hearing.

"Why would Uncle Christopher make such a strange gift? He knew I am a rancher. He knew I have had two years at agricultural college. He knew I was married too. I don't get it."

Albert shook his head. "I spoke to the attorney who drew this up and tried to find answers. As he explained it to me, Christopher and your mother come from a very distinguished family. There is even a distant relationship to two Adams presidents. He felt that as an Adams descendent you should have the same background and advantages as your ancestors – meaning Harvard or Yale."

"Yes, but he had that education and background and it certainly didn't make him any better, as far as I know. He never worked or had a job."

Albert interrupted, "But he did serve on important committees, Art, Education, Charities..."

"Yeah I attended one of those art meetings. Geez, no one spoke if the art was worth while or not, all they considered was that the donor was not worthy of

donating to their museum, he wasn't Old Boston Blue Blood! That really disgusted me."

"You have to understand, these same people, like your Uncle were responsible for making the education and cultural life of Boston second to none."

"I suppose so. He let that witch control him day and night. When we went sailing, I imagine he did it to escape her for a few hours. I often wondered if he ever had any happiness. I mean he was nice and friendly to me. I know he kept taking me to all the Harvard alumni clubs and we ate on campus as often as possible so I guess he was trying to influence me. But damn it, I am a married man. I have a ranch to run. Incidentally, that is a lot of money, did he intend to leave Emily poor?"

Albert smiled, "Indeed not. Fortunately he had the same people who manage the Harvard Endowment fund manage his money and as you know, that fund is run very very well." Still, Will looked doubtful about this news, shaking his head from side to side.

Wil, "I just don't see it."

Albert cautioned, "You had better consider this offer carefully. We are speaking of a lot of money. You could live very comfortably on the tuition money and two years isn't that long a time. There are plenty of married students living with their families on campus."

Wil moaned, "Doris could never live like that. This is the only life she knows. She would be a fish out of water. Most of those married student's wives are college girls. "

Albert suggested, "No reason why she couldn't go to school herself. There are plenty of colleges in the area that she might like."

Still struggling to comprehend this shocking offer, Wil said, "What makes you think they would accept me? I am not exactly a giant intellect. I mean, I did get good marks at the agriculture college, but that ain't Harvard. I don't know if they will even accept any of the courses for credit.

Albert paused, trying to find the words, "Well, let's put it this way. Your great-grandfather endowed quite a bit of money to Harvard and as his descendant,

there is a bit of, shall we say, asset to all that. Besides, you yourself admit you are only a rancher. Why not expand your horizon? Maybe you would benefit being exposed to another world. One thing you can't deny, you are an Adams. Besides I know that many families send their sons out west, after they finish college, to see the world and get a taste of natural living. So, why not you do the reverse, see college after living in the west. Tell you what, at least come to Boston and speak to the counselor and see what areas you might like to look into. You can meet the teachers and even look at houses or apartments.

Wil shook his head, "I just can't see Doris in that place. She has been so busy getting our new house fixed up, really that's all she lives for."

"Well, maybe a broader education will help her too." Albert felt badly about what he was recommending. He knew Doris was a sweet lovely person but he knew that the Harvard life would be the worst place for her. Almost daily she saw or spoke to her mother. At least once a week she got together with her many friends. Albert felt he was performing an act of betrayal. Yet, Wil was an Adams. The whole world was open to him. He could be governor or senator or definitely a leader. He could manage a big company – look how he managed the ranch. Albert felt sure that the two years would help him. Especially a Harvard Education.

When Wil and Albert told Christine about the bequest she too was astounded. First she said, "He just wants you to be a stuffed shirt like the other high society Bostonians." But when she calmed down she thought she understood what this was about. Christopher merely wanted to broaden Wil's world and his prospects. Ranching wasn't the only thing he could do. A lot of politicians had come from Boston Upper Class. The ranch was not a problem – this was 1938. A lot of good ranch hands were still struggling to make ends meet. She smiled, maybe she would spend time in Boston too. Since Emily's confession, she no longer had any reason to avoid visiting there.

Bishop Greer had done a fine job of contacting her old friends and quietly telling them about the terrible injustice and lies that had been done to Christine.

She first heard from Sara. Sara had graduated nurses training and was living and working in Waltham. She had two children and was married to a doctor, who was in research so they were living modestly.

Sara swore that she had been trying to find Christine's address all this time and had first gotten it when Greer began telling others about the crime against Christine.

She begged her to write. Christine did and invited the family to come to the ranch.

Other friends soon followed with letters of apologies and assurance that had they known her address they would have written to say they didn't believe what had been written in the screaming headlines about her. But Christine was sad, she knew that for any of these women, associating with her at that time would have been social suicide. In one sense Albert Samuels had given her the right advice, to leave Boston. It would surely have pained her to be rejected by all her old friends – and worse, to be rejected by her dressmaker!

Two weeks later Wil was in Boston without Doris. He already knew his way around the campus, after so many visits with Christopher. After speaking to the counselor at Harvard, Wil was excited about the prospects of attending there. He admitted that initially his rejection of Uncle Christopher's hinting of attending Harvard was due to his mother being rejected by Boston Society, but now that was no longer a problem. Indeed, if he attended Harvard, his mother could come to visit or stay and renew old friendships and possibly be happier. He realized that his mother had had the best of education and probably deliberately "dumbed down" in order to fit in with the wives of ranchers, most of them simple farm girls. And that 500,000 dollars looked better and better as he thought about it.

In 1931 times had been tough. There had been no market for cattle at any price. Cattle were being sold for far below the cost of feeding them. The only reason they had survived bankruptcy was that with the farming and excellent grass on the range, they could just break even. Wil was proud that his mother had contributed food to feed the poor. But, a bad year could come again and, like so many people he knew, they could go under too. But with \$ 500,000 that could never happen! And the courses in physiology, science and especially history did look interesting. He asked

the counselor when he could start and was told he could begin in January mid semester.

“Er, I mean, am I then accepted?” asked Wil hesitatingly. Matter of factly Mr. Joval said, “Yes of course. But remember, despite your grandfather’s endowment, if your grades fall below passing, you will be dismissed, endowment or not.”

When he explained to Doris about his plans, first she was pleased, then concerned, then frightened. Two years in Boston? Away from her family for two years! She didn’t know anyone in Boston. She only knew that everyone Wil would come in contact with would be upper class, well educated, and rich. Doris had come from a financially successful family but after all, her father was just a storekeeper. Now she realized how important it was that Wil was distantly related to two Presidents. She had married a rancher. She was going to be a rancher’s wife. Now who was she married to?

Doris saw that Wil had made up his mind on this. She told her mother she was disappointed that Wil hadn’t consulted her or even asked her opinion. No, she definitely didn’t want to move to Boston, but she didn’t see separating from Wil either. She became too nervous to eat.

Christine was pleased with Christopher’s ingenious idea to get him to Boston and Harvard. And she was looking forward to going back to Boston too. But what are we going to do with Doris? Without putting it into words, she knew what she would do.

She engaged Doris in their moving plans. She told her that the “home” that the Adams family had owned for over 75 years was available. Emily now lived in Florida. 10 years ago with the windfall when Christopher acquired Christine’s inheritance, she had rewired and plumbed the entire house so it was in up to date and in excellent condition. Emily wrote that she would be delighted to have them stay there.

Since it was vacant and in move in condition, what did Doris think of staying there for a while until they decided on other accommodations. Doris had no choice but to say yes.

Compared to Dodge, Boston was a big city indeed. Doris was totally unprepared for the Adams residence. She had been told the house had been in the family for 75 years, not that it was a huge mansion with 10 foot high ceilings, dark exotic woods, designed for a huge family and big dinners. When Doris saw the house, she was astonished. Her version of a house was a porch and 2 or at most 3 small bedrooms, hopefully with one bathroom . But this was a palace or at least, a mansion. The rooms were tremendous. Christine's old bedroom had consisted of an actual bed room to sleep in, a sitting room to read and lounge in, a dressing room to get dressed in and a bathroom too. But there were 4 additional such bedroom suites, all larger than Christine's! As for the master bedroom, Doris's entire house could fit in there! There were three flights, levels. There was also a full basement that had been converted to a billiard room when the house was converted out of coal to gas. The first floor had an entry, a parlor, a sitting room, a den, a living room, and a full library. Then there was the kitchen and breakfast room and an immense dining room! Doris kept getting lost looking for the kitchen or pantry. The bedrooms were on the second floor and the third floor was additional recreation, storage and suites for the servants. At least she had sense enough to refuse the main bedroom suite for a smaller one. As Doris took all this in she wondered how on earth did they keep this place clean? How on earth could she ever have time to shop or attend any kind of school with this monstrous house to take care of? There was more square foot of fine linen in the drapes of the house – God, how many windows were there – to outfit all of a small city. Actually the dark stained woods tended to depress her. She found one sunny room – the kitchen and spent most of her time there, even reading there.

Perhaps Christine would know how to do the upkeep of the house? Her mother-in-law of course had grown up here. Her husband had stayed here several summers. They didn't appear fazed.

Wil was away getting settled in school when Doris asked Christine where to begin in the house. Christine blandly answered that she didn't want to interfere in Doris's wife stuff. She didn't want to be a meddling mother-in-law and would keep

out of her way. She would just use her old bedroom and leave everything else to Doris. She then excused herself and left the house.

After Christine left, Doris cried. She felt worse than she had ever felt in her life. She was alone. No single soul to ask for help. The sight of the dark mahogany woods deepened her depression. She had no clue as to how to prepare supper for Wil.

The best thing to do would be to move to a regular apartment with one bedroom. She could suggest that to Wil, someplace closer to his school. That night she hinted at it. Wil answered, "Sure," then hurried to the mansion's library to hit the books. He had been warned that if he flunked out he would lose the 500,000 dollars. He remained there all evening and hurried away after breakfast to school.

Christine remained in her room or had quick snacks in the kitchen, but always cleaned up completely.

Finally Doris knocked on the bedroom door and asked where she should go for cleaning supplies and the house needs. Christine said, "Doris forgive me, I have been away more than 20 years. I haven't any idea as to what's around the neighborhood. However, if you need any cash, let me help you. Here is \$50."

Doris's letter to her mother were pathetic. "Mama, I don't know what to do! I don't know anybody and Wil and Christine are no help. Christine says she doesn't want to be an interfering mother-in-law but I really could use her help!

Her mother wrote back, "Find a taxi company in the phone book. Tell the driver to take you shopping. Your husband has money and he can afford to get you help. Ask at the Grocery store in the area for maid and houseman. Don't be bashful. You will have to enroll in some school so you can make friends. I am surprised that Christine hasn't been of more help.

That advice helped. Her taxi driver was a red faced fatherly Irishman who grew up in Boston, though not in this Beacon Hill area. He took her shopping and even advised her on what to buy, where the best butcher was, and what areas to be sure to avoid. He gave her his home phone number. He found a maid and houseman for her too. At least Doris wasn't so lonely now. When she asked for Christine's approval, the answer was the same, she didn't want to interfere in

Doris's domain. She asked if Doris preferred that Christine move out of the house so the two could be alone? Doris paled and quickly said, "Definitely not."

Wil began to bring his new friends from school home. They played pool. The wine cellar held many prizes that his friend Conrad recognized and Conrad asked if they could have a Sunday Brunch at the house with friends. Of course Wil said yes, eager for his wife to meet and make girl friends.

That didn't work. The girls were very nice, and polite. They danced in the living room – it was certainly big enough. But Doris had no idea what to say to them and primarily answered yes and no to questions about Dodge City and home. The conversation usually was about one professor or another or some recent article in a "college" magazine. Wil was comfortable with this. Doris wasn't.

When summer vacation approached, Wil announced he had been selected by one of his professors to do a research project for him. The professor said he would attach his name to the article when he submitted it for publication. The subject was, "Origins of the French Revolution" with emphasis on how that indirectly led to the First World War. Wil was in love with that period of history.

Doris was appalled. She had remained quiet these months only because she knew she would have two months back home with Wil to herself. She became a shrew and insisted he spend the months with her back home. He didn't have to do this project. All he had to do was to get a passing grade for two years in order to collect the 500,000. No, she was adamant, they would go home for 2 months, period.

Wil tried to compromise. One week at the ranch. Then two weeks. No, it had to be two months. He knew that wouldn't work, the materials were in the Harvard Library. This was really the first time he had paid any attention to how Doris felt. For two days he and Doris didn't speak and she rejected him in bed for the very first time since they were married. Distressed, he spoke to Christine.

"Mom, I got a problem. I have this great opportunity to do a research for Professor Willingsby. He said he would even put my name on the paper when it was published. But it means I must spend the summer here in Boston."

"What's wrong with that? There is a splendid pool on campus. You haven't practiced any of the sailing that your uncle taught you. We can rent a 40 footer with

a captain and he can supervise your navigation. I am sure some of your friends will be here over the summer and we can bring them along. I happen to know of a 42 footer with captain that has two staterooms and bunks 4 or 6 more. You know there is a big sailing club at Harvard and you can get involved there too. It should be a lot of fun.

“But Mom, its Doris. She wants me to spend the entire summer in Dodge. I can’t possibly do my research paper there.” Christine was silent. She was fishing for an answer that would do the most good. “I am sure Doris will be willing to stay here for your sake, Wil.”

“No, that’s the problem. She insists that I spend the entire summer with her at Dodge. No compromise. Not even two weeks there and the rest here. She is being 100% stubborn.”

“Wil, I have done my best not to be the bad mother-in-law. I have done my best to let Doris do as she wished, do the domestic chores without my interference...”

“Actually she complains that you never help her.”

“Well, I am not her mother. Besides, if I interfere and she should get mad, it might drive a wedge between us. This way we remain friends.” I don’t think it’s a good idea for me to advise you here.”

“Please mom. I am desperate. This is the first time Doris has cold shouldered me! I honestly don’t know what to do, and I miss her at night.”

“Since the paper is important, have Doris go down first and you will follow as soon as you finish the paper. With that goal I bet you could finish it very quickly.”

“Great idea.” Thanks mom. He kissed her. That idea didn’t go over either but both stubbornly refused to budge and finally Doris agreed, being assured he might finish even in two weeks.

He did arise before dawn, worked in his den/library at home, and went to the Harvard library as soon as it opened and remained there until it closed at 10.

Christine meanwhile made his meals, took care of his laundry, fired the maid and houseman and hired the couple that her friends had recommended. Unlike the

sloppy couple before them, they turned out to be completely competent. Christine stayed in touch with Wil's friends – stuck in Boston for the summer – and made sure they felt welcome to come to the house for billiards and fine wine. She was restocking the wine cellar too. She installed a refrigerator in the basement area and comfortable couches, a telephone line. There was a large radio for music as well as a new record player. She asked one of the girls to stock it with current records. The friends were always welcome and could bring their dates. Wil's friends soon enjoyed coming over, drinking the wine, enjoying the music and the food.

One evening Wil dragged himself home and found three couples eating and drinking in the dining room. He only knew one couple, the other two had “come along.” One of the girls was Angie Albright. Although she was Wil's age, she was already a senior at Boston College and quite good at billiards or pool. She challenged Wil to a game. He demurred, saying he had to work on his paper. She asked what it was about. When he described it, she made a deal. A half hour of pool and then she would give him an hour of help on his paper. She happened to be a history major herself and had experience in these subjects. As they played Wil was aware of her figure, her smell and her laughter. After ½ an hour when she barely lost the game – did she purposely let him win, he wondered, he took her to his library where a dozen books lay open on the floor and his desk was piled in disarray. While her date and the others remained downstairs to play pool, she read over his paper, The French Revolution and how it affected World War One. He only had four pages and so she read these quickly.

“I'm sorry Wil, you can't have four pages without any footnotes and references to your authority. Also you are beginning with Napoleon. Napoleon did not start the revolution and only entered when the public were thoroughly disenchanted with the Jacobites. When Murat was in power, he seized absolute power. He was supposed to use that to seek out the enemy. Instead he used that to get rid of any political enemy. It's a good thing he was murdered when he was, otherwise there wouldn't have been any good people left in France.

“May I suggest you start with the Monarchy just before the revolution started? Then, why it started and where it went wrong?”

Wil groaned. This was starting his third week with Doris away. No one had told him about footnotes. All his work had been wasted! But maybe he could get help?

“Angie, are you busy these days?” he asked hopefully.

“Well I volunteer some hours at the Children’s hospital.”

“ Could you help me with my paper? You seem to know a lot about history.”

“I had better, I have had four years of it and plan to get my PhD in it.”

He then explained that all his schooling had been in agriculture, and for some reason his teacher had asked him to do this research.

“That’s because he can get you for cheap. You’re new here and don’t know the ropes. He can dangle your getting published in front of you as bait.”

“I know that, but honestly its something I really want to do.”

“Your professor has done a terrible thing. He has turned you into an enthusiastic scholar. Now its downhill for you all the way” she laughed. “OK, I feel sorry for you being taken advantage of by the city slicker. I’ll meet you here tomorrow at 3 and go over this with you. However, everything comes with a price.”

“Which is?”

“Why you will have to buy a poor girl supper! “

After Angie was coming to the house almost daily, Christine learned that her father was Jonathan Albright, professor of philosophy at Harvard. He came from a long line of proper Bostonians. One evening she prepared supper for them both, and asked Angie why she hadn’t gone to Harvard. “Oh, I didn’t want to be getting any special favors just because my dad taught there. “

Christine answered, knowing how expensive tuition was at Brown, “But wouldn’t your family have saved money, with free tuition at Harvard with your dad a professor there?”

“I suppose, but I did get a full scholarship to Brown so it didn’t matter.”

With Angie there, Christine said, “Wil, Frank called. He has the boat this Saturday and asked if you and Angie could come with him. Angie, do you like sailing? “

“Um, yes. I was sailing before I was walking. Dad made me clean the sides of the boat instead of letting me play with dolls.”

Wil was distressed. He really owed Angie a lot as she was putting his paper into proper format and opening his eyes to how the academia did things. Maybe a day of resting his brain would do him good. “Angie, if you would like to go, I’ll tell Frank we are in.”

“Scrumptious,” she said.

Trying to be polite, Wil asked, “Mother would you like to come too?” She answered, “Sorry, got a date with 3 chums for a concert at 2.”

The sailing was delightful. Frank insisted on Wil showing his seamanship which turned out to be pretty good. Two other couples were seated in the cockpit while one couple were downstairs in the bunk, presumably being friendly. After Frank took the rudder, Wil sat close to Angie who said, “Damn, I knew I should have brought a windbreaker but it was so hot at the house I didn’t think I would need it.”

Frank started to offer a jacket, but when he saw Wil put his arm around Angie to protect her from the wind, he decided she might not need it.

Angie had been coming at three daily now for two weeks. Today she came at one o’clock, and joined Christine for coffee.

She cautiously began. “Mrs Samuels, I hope I can be honest and straightforward with you, and not beat around the bush.”

“Of course, Angie, and please call me Chrisee.” She took her hand and held it and looked into her face and smiled.

“Look, I know Wil is married. I know he is a rancher from way out west. I know his wife is away temporarily to see her folks. Wil has been completely honest with me. At first this helping him was just some sort of fun thing, to see what I could get away with. Frankly the girls have a bet on when he would kiss me. They have all lost. But now I find I want to be with him, I want him to hold me, I want ... she hesitated ... I want him! I am not a home wrecker. I would never date a married man, but Chrisee, I just can’t help myself now. The thought of him with another woman, my stomach turns. I need you to yell at me and tell me to stop this, leave

your son alone so he can be with his lawfully wedded wife. I need you to tell me to stop trying to break up a marriage.”

Christine hesitated, how much truth could she reveal? “Angie, I can’t do that. You are too nice a person for me to say that to. When Wil is with you, he is in the world he belongs in. You are the one who has guided him to a world that is right for him.”

Angie was astonished and terribly confused. “You realize that we are an inch from spending the night together? That will mean regrets on his part, feelings of guilt, and remorse. I don’t want to be just a summer fling for him, while his wife is out of town.”

Christine stared at the girl. Not only was she very pretty, but she had character as well. No wonder; she had inherited from her father a professor, her uncle a judge, her grandfather a popular doctor and so on. Should she tell Angie that this had been her plan all along, to drive Doris away, to split that marriage?

Oh it had been fine before. Wil a rancher and Doris a rancher’s wife. But this was Boston, where the Adams name meant something, as did the name of Albright. It was Christine’s secret plan to have Wil divorce Doris, or better yet, have Doris divorce him, and marry a Boston Blue Blood. She admitted this was happening quite a bit faster than she had planned, but ... what the heck. No, she must be very careful. Young persons didn’t want to be manipulated.

“Angie, I just can’t advise you one way or the other. Sometimes you just have to follow your heart. My concern, of course is that Wil be happy, to make as much of himself as he wants to, to accomplish what he is capable of.”

“That’s another thing, Mrs Samuels, er I mean Chrisee, we all put him down as a country hick who got into Harvard without brains or effort. But he did amazingly well in all his courses, even though he started mid term and had to make up for missed work. He is far more mature for his age than the other college kids.”

Christine interrupted, “Remember he was running a ranch with 3,000 head of cattle when he was 17.”

“I know. He understands all I am throwing at him in history, and remember I have had four years of it.” Then she took a deep breath, took Christine’s hand in

hers and said, “ I love him! I really do love him. I am going to fight for him.“ She quickly jerked her hand away.

Christine changed the subject and spoke of unimportant things. She also made sure that she was out of the house – as were the servants – when Angie came to help Wil with his paper.

He received a letter from Doris every other day. He was annoyed that she told him of the small disasters at the ranch that he knew nothing about. He cornered his mother and asked why she had never mentioned the epidemic that could have wiped them out, had cost them 400 cows – slaughtered and buried. She hadn’t mentioned the flood that ruined a section of the ranch. Christine shrugged and suggested, “Maybe I forgot.”

Wil panicked. There were only three weeks of vacation left. He simply had to finish and get to Dodge, to Doris. But how? The more he worked on the project, the more interesting it became. He now had the right theme, how absolute power corrupts. How the Kaiser had begun World War One because he had the absolute power to do so. And he had the military machine to do it with. And how the exact same thing was happening today with Hitler in absolute power and no one willing to deny him his will. If he could finish this paper he could demonstrate how the same thing was happening today as happened in 1796, 1914 and 1938. But he couldn’t finish, there was no time; there was Doris too!

He was looking forward each day to Angie’s visits. He could no longer afford the time to take walks with her in the park in the evening. Worse, now instead of dreaming of Doris at night, now he dreamed of Angie. In his dreams he was laughing with her and making love to her.

Today he sat as far from her as he could manage. It didn’t help. He could think of only one thing, his desire to hold her and make love to her. He must stop.

“Angie, I think I can stop our teaching sessions now. I think I have done enough on the paper that, thanks to your help, I can wind this up and turn it in in two days. I really really appreciate all you have done for me and don’t really know how to thank you.”

**“Hey, its been fun for me too.” She knew if she hesitated she would do something rash, so she quickly gathered her things and made a quick walk to the door, which had been partly closed.**

**“Hey you don’t have to run away so fast.”**

**“Actually I do. I am going to a concert later and need to change. “ I am sure I will see you again later. Bye now.’ She exited and went out the front door, her heart pounding. He sat there feeling the absence of her, feeling alone, feeling sad. But then he reminded himself that he must finish this paper and get home. He worked through the night, kept awake with black coffee, then dexadrine. He found lots of typing mistakes and there were pages he had to retype. He made reservations for the train trip back. He dropped off the manuscript when he knew Professor Willoughbee wouldn’t be in his office, to avoid having to stay and talk. He was awake that night, whether from the Dexedrine or the conflict he wasn’t sure. With so little sleep he decided to take a Pullman back to Dodge.**

**When he arrived Doris met him at the train. Her brother was driving – she had yet to pass the driver’s test. They stopped at her house to say hello to the family and went straight to their new home, now furnished and waiting for its occupants.**

**When they made love he used a condom. She worried about that. He became very busy checking out the ranch. He was really annoyed to find that there had been some genuine crises that his mother never told him about. That epidemic had been real bad and the flood had taken out almost 300 acres, with no one sure how to rehabilitate it. One of the workers had committed suicide in the bunk house. On and on he learned of the crises that he had missed and had never heard of.**

**He hadn’t been on a horse for half a year and was bone sore when he came home that evening. He dived right into the tub and soaked, too tired for the supper Doris had prepared. He fell asleep as soon as his head hit the pillow. Doris wanted to visit her friends and frankly show off her handsome husband, but he insisted that he had no time, or was too tired. Evenings he would spend with the foreman going over books. The one evening they had visited her parents and met another couple there he had been bored out of his mind.**

Doris wanted him to renew his old friends so she invited them for supper. His pals were there when he got home, bone weary and angry that he couldn't just relax one night. He had been too tired to rush and bathe and change and so spent the evening in his dirty clothes with his friends and their wives. But he had been bored.

Doris stopped him at breakfast. "Wil, we have to talk. You have been trying to do a year's work on the ranch in a week. No wonder you are so tired. Billy Bob is a good foreman. He tells me he estimates that the ranch cleared over 100,000 last year. If we stayed at the ranch, you could clear twice as much. We don't really need that "blood money" your uncle left you. Let's not go back. I am happy here. I want you to be happy. If you stay here you can do the work like any other rancher and come home at night for a peace and quiet evening. If you stay, I promise you, you won't have to go to my folks more than once a month!" She smiled.

This thought had never entered his mind. She was right, he was trying to cram weeks of work into a few days, and that was why he was tired. Or was it? Every night he had trouble falling asleep and he sometimes dreamed of Angie. He had made love to Doris the first two nights, but now days passed without any sex act. His classes started in one week. He was going to be late and had asked Christine to register him and pick up his books for him so he could stay till the last minute.

As he sat in his truck and drove to the north ranch he felt a cold shiver. Stop school? Just when it was getting so exciting. He loved poring over books, figuring out why things happened. He loved questioning his teachers who appreciated his maturity of view. And the evening bull sessions with his Boston friends, their insight into the events of the past and of today. He felt fully alive then. And there was Angie. He could see her again if he returned to school. They could go sailing – he had proven his seamanship.

If he stayed, he knew he would never aspire to learning again. How could he? Could he discuss Freud, plays, philosophers with his friends here? Or with his wife. He could with his mother though.

His mother. When he got to Harvard he was a bit surprised at how well he fit in. He had scored 94 on his vocabulary test. That was in the upper 3% of college applicants. How did that happen?

When he visited the old ranch house, he realized that the books there were all “advanced.” His father and mother had constantly spoken using big words and made sure he understood them. They had read to him from the classics, but always in a language appropriate for his age. Heck, he knew all about Homer, his being blind, the Illiad when he was 10. He remembered building a Trojan horse and putting lead soldiers inside – though they had been US Army soldiers. They had been feeding him “culture” all these years without his being aware of it. Of course his father, the judge was a Harvard graduate, and had delighted in discussing Greek writing with Wil. And at supper there had always been discussions of philosophers and famous writers. No wonder he already knew about Descartes, Hegel, Da Vinci, and so many others. No wonder he had fit in so easily to the Harvard crowd. He realized now that when his classmates had casually discussed existentialism he had fit right in.

In five days, now, he must decide his future. Gosh, he was only 21. Many students in his class were 26 or even older. Why shouldn't he have two more years in school, especially when he enjoyed it so. As he drove the dusty bumpy road he was reminded of sailing – that had been some ride, jibing and tacking, and getting the boat heeled over to pick up speed. And so clean! Clean sails, clean water, clean deck and his arm around Angie.

He had not cheated on his wife he reminded himself. Now that he could think clearly he realized that the opportunity had been there. The big house, all alone with her for hours. Her laughter. Her giggles.

He hadn't been aware of this before but he now realized how animated had been the conversation between Angie and his mother. Not about dresses and hats, but about philosophers and history. There had been that bet about which philosopher had to drink the hemlock, and his mother had won the bet! Or did Angie let her win?

With Doris the conversation was about drapes and hair style.

He wondered too, why had Christine been somewhat distant to Doris? She had insisted that she didn't want to interfere in married life. But she could have driven her around Boston, introduced her, taken her to church – she never did any of those things. Indeed she was usually out of the house when Doris was awake.

He realized now how unfair it had been to suddenly thrust a huge mansion on this inexperienced girl, and in a strange city too. How unfair that had been, really. And he had been much too blind to agree with Doris when she suggested a small apartment. He had simply ignored Doris's suggestions! He would like to confront his mother and demand to know if this had all been a deliberate plot to make Doris unhappy? Could Christine be so cruel? He had to face the fact that cattle did smell.

Plot or no plot, Doris was unhappy in Boston. If they returned he would certainly go for a small apartment. He fantasized that with a small apartment Doris could be happy, would have plenty of time to enroll in courses and catch up to him. They could both study together.

He told her of his plans – the small apartment. And asked her to start packing. Did she need another suitcase? Did she need any cash? Should they visit her parents and take them for supper? Should they take an apartment with an extra bedroom so her brother could visit?

Doris paled and left the supper table. She was in the bedroom sobbing when he sought her. "Honey what is it?"

She wailed, "Can't you see? Here we can be happy and have a wonderful life together. This is where you belong. We don't need that damn money. If we go back to Boston, even with a small apartment, I will be so miserable that we will definitely grow apart. If you go back to Boston you might as well go without me and we might as well split now and save the trouble. Wil, stay here and be happy, please." She looked pleadingly at him with tears. She was pleading for her life!

Doris was right. They might as well split now. He was entering a different world, a world where she couldn't follow. Doris was young. She was pretty. She could marry again and be happy in the kind of life she was meant for. He slept on the couch that night.

She cooked his breakfast, occasionally wiping her red eyes. Wil said, “Doris, I am sorry. I must go back. You said I belong here and could be happy here. Honest to God, if I was sure of that I wouldn’t go back. But in my heart, I am not sure I do belong here. Doris I am sorry, I truly am.” But he couldn’t look her in the eye when he said this. He took his coat and hat and left the house. He slept that night in the big house and in the morning the ranch boss drove him to the train station and he said goodbye. He didn’t know if he was saying good bye forever to Dodge City but he was sure he simply could not remain here. He arrived in Boston a full day before classes started.

“Mom, are you satisfied now? Doris and I are divorcing. Is that what you wanted?”

“Wil, I thought I was doing the right thing in not interfering. I stayed out of Doris’s way so she could be independent. What I did was not to interfere. “

“Yes, but to throw that young girl into a mansion without any experience and in a city where she knew no one, that wasn’t right.”

“Perhaps you are right. But a mature person would have taken advantage. She had money to spend. She could hire whatever she needed. There were plenty of ways she could have made friends. Hundreds of strangers come to the big city off of farms. They go to church, join a choir, strike up conversations on the bus. Doris did not grow up on some hick farm. She is still a city girl, even though compared to Boston it’s a small city, but city it is. I am sorry it didn’t work out but don’t blame me. When she suggested a small apartment the money was there for you to take one. If I recall you were too busy and too comfortable here, with the pool table, the library and the excellent service your wife provided. You came here and saw a new world, a world of opportunity to expand your horizon and abilities. “

“Yeah a world you and dad prepared me for, with your constant discussions of Greek philosophers and bed time stories from the classics.”

“Wil, I apologize. I should have stuck to Little Red Riding Hood and the Three Bears. Forgive me.”

Though she left in a huff, she had a smile on her face.

Wil was shocked when the divorce papers were served. Obviously Doris was out for revenge. She claimed loss of consort, grievous emotional distress, and asked for 500,000!

His first thought was to ignore the whole thing, but then he called the law firm of his uncle, who recommended Jackson Smitherton as the divorce lawyer to see.

He thought it best to see Mr. Smitherton alone. Smitherton was in his 40's, athletic in appearance, and spoke with an obvious Boston Accent. Prior to the meeting he had checked up on Kansas divorce law.

After Wil explained where the 500,000 dollar windfall came from he smiled because it was clearly obvious what Wil's uncle had done. Actually Doris was correct in concluding that the 500,000 had been the other woman that destroyed her marriage.

Instead of speaking to him across a large desk, Smitherton, taking his hand, led him to a red leather couch and sat next to him.

“ First of all you must avoid any hint of behaving outside of your current marital status. You are married and any liaison or even one night stand would mean she could also file for infidelity which would crush you. In reading between the lines, I suspect she may hire an investigator to follow you and get evidence of infidelity.”

“But if we are legally separated, can't I...”

“Normally yes, but here are the facts. Your potential future earnings can be pretty large. If you get the 500,000 and you are the sole heir to thousands of acres of rich ranchland you could be quite wealthy, to say nothing of future earnings as you finish college. If she gets the judgement to attach future earnings that can be a serious stone around your neck. She is a hometown girl. You are the farmer or rancher that abandoned her and your farm for big city life. Trying to explain that you did it for love of learning – you might as well say it in Greek. If you are before a hometown boy from Kansas, he will feel anger at your choices. If you are before a man who feels his religion deeply, he too will be angry at you. Both judges will assume you found someone else here and that is what its all about, even though it didn't happen that way. Therefore, you must be chaste as a monk. You must

assume that there are investigators reading your trash, tapping your phone and photographing you whenever you speak to a woman, even if she happens to be a nun. As I said, the strike we have against us is your being away from your ranch.”

“Its my mother’s ranch.”

He ignored this . “I will have to contact a local lawyer to work with me. It would be death for me show up with my Boston accent and pin stripe suit. In the meantime, please remember what I said about your being as pure as snow. But did you have plans to see someone?”

Wil hesitated, not from wanting to hide his thoughts but because he had pushed Angie out of his mind in all the turmoil of leaving Doris.

“ There is a girl I do want to see but I haven’t even told her the news of the divorce. We did see a lot of each other but it was always proper and we never did anything a married man shouldn’t do. She was helping me with a paper I was writing for my professor on history and she happens to be a history major. But, frankly, I do want to see her.”

“Wil, you are paying me big dollars for my advice. You should heed it. If you and that girl get together and are found out, your entire financial and other future can go down the drain, believe me. I have been in the divorce business for years. I have seen innocent flirtations blown up to terrible scandals. Please, just wait. I promise I will go as fast as I can to set you totally free. Once you are free you can do as you wish, but until then ...”

“Yeah, I know, I am being watched by private detectives.”

After his second week in Boston he called Angie from a pay phone. He was very polite as was she. He formally asked her to please go to the malt shop where he spilled ice cream on his shirt, at 6 P M two nights from now, and answer the phone there when it rings. She agreed.

He went to the malt shop and gave the owner 10 dollars explaining about the phone call.

When he heard her voice he felt warm again. He brought her up to date on his divorce and his lawsuit after telling her how much he had missed her. She missed him too. She wanted him to have another history paper to write so they could

work together. He told her the truth about why he couldn't see her personally; that he must follow his lawyer's orders. He was honest in saying he was calling from a friend's house and that there was a real possibility of his phone being tapped. They spoke for more than an hour.

Angie, "As long as we are being so secretive, couldn't we become spies or something and get paid?"

They arranged for a phone call in two days at another public phone. About twice a week they held these very private calls. Sometimes he would find her picture in the phone booth or she would find flowers in the phone booth. Soon there was an aching evident in their conversation. But they were cautious and changed public telephone booths in the best tradition of master spies.

Wil kept checking to see if anyone was following him. One night in a dark part of the campus he heard soft footsteps behind him. He decided to confront the "investigator" and discourage his actions. Prepared for a fight, he turned and hurried to the follower.

"Okay, what are you up to? Who sent you? " The intruder had a knife in his hand! He was a robber! The criminal was so startled he faintly croaked, "Give me your money or your life." But Wil was in a fighting mood and all the anger and anxiety of the divorce was flooding him with adrenalin. He easily grabbed the thief's knife hand, twisted it as he had done dozens of time in rough play with his buddies, and nearly broke the arm. The crook dropped the knife and fell to the ground in pain. Wil took out his mounting anger and frustration on the downed man, even pulling him up so he could beat him further. Finally he saw that the crook was defenseless and said, "This will teach you that you shouldn't rob people." and he left the thief slumped on the ground, but took the knife. Wil felt better as he walked home, but it was too bad this hadn't been the investigator, assuming there was one.

Meanwhile Christine stepped in. "Wil, I think we have to settle this matter as soon as possible. Money talks. I will lend you 100,000 dollars and you can issue a certified check to Doris through your Dodge lawyer. I think when she sees that sum in her hot hand she will drop the other requests and set you free."

Wil grumbled about why such a sum, Doris had had the best of everything during their short marriage, and he had never been unfaithful. Christine explained that sometimes you have to pay even though its unfair. Having met Mr. and Mrs. Hornsby, Doris's parents, she advised Wil to have his attorney insist that the parents be present when they met for discussion about the divorce.

Wisely Wil's Dodge city lawyer met with Doris's lawyer, Doris and her parents and argued that Wil could borrow 75,000 dollars and would give that to Doris now. Plus she could have all the furnishings of the house. But the house was Christine's and on Christine's land.

Her lawyer came back with a demand for 150,00 and gradually they finally agreed on 100,000 to be paid immediately upon the judge's approval of the divorce settlement. Doris wanted to hold out for more, but her father and the lawyer pointed out that getting this money immediately would buy her her own home, automobile, clothes, vacation, etc etc. and set her up for a real husband. She had been chaffing at not being able to date herself. So she agreed, but only if Wil paid her attorney's fees and expenses so she could have the entire sum. Wil's lawyer agreed. The judge granted the divorce for irreconcilable differences. The 100,000 dollars was handed over to the eager hands of the Hornsby's. Doris liked the idea of her own bank account and relished being a rich woman now. The next week was spent in dress shops.

When Jackson Smitherton saw the list of expenses and demands he couldn't wait to phone Wil. He arranged to make the call at Wil's friend's home.

"Mr Samuels, I am looking over the legal expenses of your late wife's lawyer. An interesting item is 1100 dollars from Ajax Security. I don't suppose you know who Ajax Security is?" Wil said he didn't know of it.

"Only the most crooked private detective outfit in town. They have been known to trick men into trysts that were photographed and recorded. Also they have faked evidence. I am having my investigator go to your home with a detective friend and look for an illegal wire tap first thing in the morning. Your ex- wife's lawyer is asking for 25,000 legal fee. I think I can whittle that down."

Next morning the telephone expert and the detective examined the house and did find a tap on the phone line. This was carefully recorded and photographed; a second detective was called in to verify the tap; the tap was removed and taken to evidence at the police station. A case for illegal wiretap was entered in the record.

Next Mr. Smitherton gleefully called Doris's lawyer. "Yes, I am calling about your bill, Mr Oakly."

Oakly, "Yes we would like that paid as soon as possible, as well as the other expenses which you agreed to."

Smitherton, "Oh I think we should delay until and if you get out of jail."

There was silence. Oakly, "Are you threatening me?"

Smitherton, "Of course not, but you see in Massachusetts we have some peculiar laws you may not have heard of in Dodge. One of them is that the person ordering an illegal phone tap is responsible and the jail terms are quite stiff. If you are lucky, you might get a kind judge who would only give you 5 years, if he were kind."

Oakly now sounded shaken. From a confident victorious tone he changed to a whining almost begging one. "Look I never ordered any wire tapping and I had no knowledge it was being done, I swear."

Smitherton, "Oh I think old Smillin Jack of the Ajax Security will be happy to plead guilty and claim he was only following orders. I wouldn't be surprised if he has recorded some conversations that ordered the tap. With his recordings of your order, I suggest you be very careful of what you swear to under oath. Do you like Mexican Food?"

Oakly, "What? Mexican food?"

"Oh I just thought that being in Mexico would sure beat 5 years in a Massachusetts jail."

Now Oakly was stuttering. "L L Look, can't we come to an understanding? Please. I have a wife and three kids. Please. I will do anything you ask, but please be reasonable, as one lawyer to another."

Smitherton was about to preach that he was disgracing the legal profession, etc but was getting tired of the game. "Tell you what, if you will mark all these bills

paid in full, I think I can be awfully busy, too busy to get to the district attorney's office here in Boston. Are we agreed then? "

A weak yes answered back.

Smitherton, "Nice talking to you . Bye now."

Smitherton felt good. He had saved his client 35, 000 dollars. More important he had bested a crooked shark, someone who brought shame to his profession.

He decided to enjoy his victory and brought Wil and Christine to the office to tell them the news. Of course they were delighted, and happy, and thanked him for all he had done. As he showed them to the door he said, "Mrs Samuels, I wonder if you might have dinner with me sometime?"

Christine was completely unprepared for this and could think of nothing else to say but, "Yes, of course. I'd be delighted. " She smiled, "Besides, I think your bill for this divorce might be able to pay for a dinner."

"Great. Is Saturday Night OK? Pick you up at 7 for dinner?"

"Yes, of course."

Christine was flattered and flustered. Never in her wildest dreams did she expect to be asked for a date, she had pretty much forgotten what dating was! Her last date had been in 1915 three weeks before that fateful day when she met Genevive in Hastings' store! No, she hadn't had a date at all in 19 years. Of course there was Paris, but that had definitely not been a date. Her romance with Jonathan hadn't exactly been dating either.

Jackson called for her at 7 sharp. He arrived in a limousine and chauffeur. Christine teased, " I hope you don't intend to blow Wil's entire payment on tonight!"

Jackson answered, "Frankly parking in Boston is so difficult it is really cheaper this way. I forgot to ask you, is French food OK?"

"Only if the waiters speak French. I lived in Paris a few months.

The ride in the limousine was rather quiet; Christine was too flooded with memories to speak. The head waiter greeted Mr. Smitherton and quickly escorted them to what probably was the best table. As they settled in at their table Christine felt light headed, even dizzy. This was her life 19 years ago, a handsome squire, the

best restaurant, a new dress, wined and dined. She smiled, back home she would be trying to get the cow droppings of her jeans and boots.”

“Tell me, Mr Smitherton...”

“Stop right there. Please call me Jack.”

“Fine, Jack, seriously why the interest in me? Are you worried about your bill? I thought all you successful lawyers dated only college girls. I’m just a poor little ranch girl, barely off a horse. “

“Well to be perfectly frank, I sort of studied you in Law School”

“What?”

“Well you see, your arrest – your inheritance and all – was quite the case and about all we talked about in law circles. What does being of good Christian character mean exactly, can that stipulation be held to legally? What if the person changes religion, does that invalidate the will? And being accused of, ahem, being in a house constitute a cause for breaking the inheritance? To tell the truth, in my second year we had a moot court, and, “ he laughed, “ I was the one who defended your right to claim your inheritance.”

“And did you win my case?”

“Actually no, the other side painted you as worse than evil and the judge ruled in their favor. If I had only known you personally I could have beaten them handily but I only knew what was in the arrest report and those scandalous newspaper articles. I was more than happy when I heard about Emily’s confession. That was a terrible thing she did to you.“

“So, then, you wanted to view me in the flesh?”

Jack smiled, “not exactly. In your pretty party dress will do. Tell me about your ranch.”

“As we explained, it is really Wil’s ranch. I was married to his father. His father was tragically shot during a bank robbery, and when I returned with his body, Annabelle, his evil sister, refused to accept my marriage and took away Wil’s inheritance. I was determined to get that ranch back as it rightfully belonged to Wil, Junior. “ She paused, gathering her thoughts, “ and I did get it back for him.”

“How do you feel about your brother’s strange will? “

“Oh I know what he was up to. In a way I am glad. There is no reason for Wil to have a narrow one sided view of the world. College here should broaden his horizon. If I say so myself, he is a bright young man.”

As they ordered, so much came back to Christine. To order a lady- like drink, not to order a heavy meal, to leave room for a fruit desert, to have the gentleman tell about himself. She even felt as she did at 19! After dinner, the limo took them to the commons where they strolled about for an hour. Jack told her how he had married in law school, but when he got his degree he was more interested in doing volunteer work for the indigent. His wife wanted money and prestige and when a wealthy broker came along she divorced him. She didn't ask for any money as she was marrying a spectacularly rich man.“

“So how did you gravitate to divorce. You have a reputation as the best in the city. “

“No, that's a lie. Its actually the best in the state. Seriously a dear friend of mine since boyhood, was in a dreadful divorce. Actually he was framed into a supposed infidelity and the judge and her lawyer left him \$50,000 in debt. Worse he was about to lose the business he had strived so hard to build. He would have committed suicide if I hadn't been there to assure him I could make things right. It was hard, but I managed to appeal and win him a reasonable settlement. When word got around at what I had done, the cases just flowed in.“

When he took her to her door, she was honest when she said, “This has been a very lovely evening and I really thank you for asking me out.”

Jack took her hands, and said, “ I enjoyed myself too. I want to see you again, may I?”

She smiled, “Most assuredly, Yes.” She waited and responded to his good night kiss.

Jack made a mistake in taking her to an affair of the Boston Legal Society. When word got around that the beautiful heiress who had been arrested as a whore was being squired by Jackson Smitherton, every attorney who knew of the case – which happened to be everyone present, crowded around to meet her. Much to her delight, there were very old friends from her youth there too.

One heavy set man, nearly bald, came up to her and said, "You kissed me passionately in 1915. After we left the movie theater..."

"Stanley! Stanley Perkins! Oh my God! She fell into his arms and he embraced her warmly. "Welcome back, darling Christine!" He then introduced his wife. "I dated Christine in 1915; she was a hot date too. But, "he looked at her thoughtfully, I never believed any of those terrible lies in the paper. I called your house a few days later to lend my support but was told you were no longer in town and that your sister-in-law didn't have your address. When the truth came out this year I told everyone, ' I told you so.' I think you should have had Emily put in jail, myself. "

"Thank you Stanley. Believe it or not, I did think of you and had been looking forward to another date with you." She turned to his wife, " Stanley did know how to kiss a girl so she begged for more!" His wife joked, " Now that you are back in town, I will see to it that every moment of his time is taken up! They showed pictures of their family to Christine.

Most of the evening was filled with renewing some old acquaintances. She kept borrowing Jack's pen to write her phone number.

As they drove home he said, " That's the last time I take you near another lawyer or his wife."

"Jack, I do apologize, but it was so nice renewing friends I haven't seen in 19-20 years. You are a dear. " She then kissed him and he held her until they arrived home.

Jack said, "I would like to get to know you better. Please come with me to Bermuda for a few days. "

She teased, " First I will have to ask Wil's permission. If he says yes, I'd love to be with you."

The flew to Bermuda. Jack had rented a house with 4 bedroom suites next door to the Mid Ocean Club and Golf Course. Rental of Morningside House came with temporary use of the Mid Ocean Club. Jack was not in Bermuda for golf and regretted not playing that famous course. Before they could have supper there, Jack had to shop in town for knee pants, required by the club for gentlemen, very British you know. Bicycles came with the house, nicely kept in their own cute

bicycle house. They rode and explored the island. They both got confused by the British pound and shillings and pence and were certain that they were being overcharged. The waters were warm and crystal clear. By the second day Jack was busy fishing off the dock that came with the house and since the fish were fresh and delicious, they took most of their meals at home. The maid that came with the house complained to her friends that these people seemed intent on saving money by eating only the fish they caught. They were invited to a party at the American Consul's home nearby. During the conversation Jack was saddened to learn that the Americans were negotiating to put an "observation" naval station on the island in anticipation of submarine warfare that might be coming. The consul admitted that with what was happening in Europe in early 1939, he thought a war was inevitable.

On their third day, Jack got a bad bruise when he brushed against the high wall of compacted coral that bordered the road as they road their bicycles. They changed to walking from then on.

Before Jack's injury, which scrapped most of his right arm, they had been practically honeymooners with neither one wanting to leave the bed. After his wound they were somewhat limited in their activities. Jack had to see the doctor daily for wound dressing and was instructed to rest the arm. Anyway it was too painful to do much moving about. Christine played nurse, and they settled with her administering massages to him – lovingly. At least he could fish. They cut short their visit because Jack's arm became too painful. He could no longer lift any luggage. Whenever they couldn't find a porter, Christine ended up carrying the luggage.

Immediately on arriving in Boston they took a taxi to the Peter Brent Emergency room. When he was seen in the emergency room he was taken immediately to the operating room where, under general anesthesia, the wound was cleansed of embedded pieces of coral. He was hospitalized for a week, his arm tied almost vertical for better drainage.

Chrstine teased, "I hope this doesn't turn you away from romance for the rest of your life."

“Actually I am so ashamed, we started off so beautifully. Please, let’s try again soon?”

“Well only if we do something safe like sky diving or Russian Roulette!”

She sat with him and held his left hand while he slept. She was grateful that she had insisted on returning for better medical care.

Meantime the calls to her home kept flooding in, so many of her old friends and acquaintances wanted to say that they had never believed the lies in the papers and wanted to renew old friendships. Christine suspected that many, like Jack, just wanted to see her in the flesh, after hearing of the beautiful Boston Society Heiress arrested as a whore.

### Angie

Now that Wil had his divorce finalized he agonized how to renew his relationship with Angie. Could he insist they immediately have the sex he had dreamed of? Actually they hadn’t seen each other physically for months. He decided to play it safe, and invited her to come with a friend to a party at a friend’s home. By phone, they both agreed to take things slowly. Now that there wasn’t a phone tap anymore, he could call her from his home.

But when he saw her come into the room, all restraint and hesitancy and doubt vanished for both of them. Ignoring the amused looks of their friends and strangers, they rushed into each other’s arms and kissed lovingly for minutes until their host, Franklin, jokingly tapped them and said, “Excuse me but this is a respectable Boston home and this sort of thing is simply not done!”

It was only then they became aware of their surroundings and shyly backed off, still holding hands. Now they simply stared at each other, taking in the beauty of the one they loved.

Wil, “Angie, I apologize. I said we would go slow but...”

Angie, “Will this is slow, compared to what I have had in mind.”

Wil, “I don’t want you feeling obligated or anything. I really think we should sort of date, or even just double date for a while until we can be entirely sensible here.”

**“If its marrying me you are worrying about, Wil Samuels, forget that. That part is not on the menu, nor is it necessary. I know you have had a rough divorce and maybe I was partly to blame. By the way, I did warn your mother that I was in love with you and she just shrugged and didn’t say to leave you alone. So, tell me, am I a History Major with a minor in home wrecking?”**

**Wil, thoughtfully, “ I am really not sure. You know I returned to the ranch, but after Boston, I found myself terribly bored with it all. I mean, all the talk about cattle and prices of feed and no one caring or knowing about the crisis in Europe. I had to drive out of town to get a copy of the New York Times to find any mention of Europe at all. “ He smiled, “Maybe the worst was, I could only get country music on the damn radio! The truth is, I just couldn’t stand not being back in Boston. But,“ he squeezed her hand, “you were part of it.”**

**“Darling, I am glad you thought of me, but seriously, will my breaking up your marriage be a burden between us?**

**“No, no. Don’t think that. It wasn’t you at all. Doris couldn’t fit in here, and I couldn’t fit in there any more either. Besides I did never cheat on her! What happened is that she couldn’t live here and I couldn’t live there.”**

**“But Wil, doesn’t your mother expect you to take charge of the ranch? And isn’t it quite valuable? “**

**“Look, I still have a year to go of school here. I propose we live one day at a time. There are many twists and turns in life – look at my poor mother. Can you imagine, married 6 weeks and seeing her husband shot to death in a senseless way? Then being disowned – twice – within three years, and pregnant with me too. How many women could have survived all that.”**

**“Wil, she told me what she did was to make sure you got what was rightfully yours, your father’s ranch.”**

**“Sure, but that doesn’t mean I can’t do other things. I think my mom is old fashioned – she just wants me to be happy.”**

**“That’s not old fashioned, Wil, that’s a mother’s wish for her son.“**

**They were both determined not to jump into bed at first meeting, and made a date for a dinner and movie in 5 days. But that didn’t work. Wil was on the phone**

almost by the hour every night. Finally they just gave up and agreed to go away that weekend to a cottage in Maine belonging to Angie's family. There they made passionate love, forgetting food or drink until hunger assailed both of them on Sunday. Unfortunately nearly every store was closed and they had no food until they found a greasy spoon with awful cheese sandwiches – the only thing that looked safe to eat and dreadful coffee. Their plans to remain in Maine over Sunday night were cancelled by the need to return to Boston for a decent meal.

The met Wednesday night and rented a motel room by the hour. Another weekend was at a rented cottage, but they brought food this time!

After a month, they were more relaxed and finally able to talk about their future.

Meantime, Jackson Smitherton complained to Christine that he hadn't taken out his real love, his 32 foot sloop because his arm was still too weak from the coral injuries. She suggested that they take Wil, since that was his passion these days. Soon, whenever the weather allowed, Jackson, Christine, Angie and Wil were sailing. Jack directed the handling of the sails and Wil easily could manage these single handed. When they returned to shore, usually Christine went home with Jack and Angie with Wil. Through silent assent, Wil could take Angie to his home while Christine went to Jack's.

Angie was completing her Masters in History at Boston College. All her job offers had been for out of town teaching. Wil was finishing his "blood money" second year. He was still uncertain where he would land and Angie didn't force him into any decision making. Besides, one bright prospect was that with 500,000 dollars – minus the 100,000 he owed Chrisee, they could travel and just have fun for a year or more!

1940 New Years Eve was bleak. The war in Europe was going badly for England. Every night there were the reports of the terrible bombings of London and Coventry. Dunkirk had been a disaster. Hitler could win the war and take over all of Europe and Russia! Alarming news of Hitler Death Camps and the efforts to exterminate the Jews of Europe made joviality difficult that night. The draft had started and colleges were beginning to empty as young men joined up either in US

or in Canada. When Wil and Angie met it was with an air of uncertainty that interfered with their happiness.

Wil: “ Angie, what happens if I decide to go back to the ranch permanently? Will you be able to survive in such a place?”

“Will you go back?”

“Honest to Pete, I swear I don’t know. One day I want to go on and get a PhD in history. Next day I want to go on to Law School like Michael. Next day I feel the excitement of herding cattle. And then I dream of sailing with you with the wind in your hair and the sails flapping.”

By June 1941 he had completed 18 months at Harvard. No degree, but the lawyers considered the with the draft and all, that he had completed two years at Harvard and that he qualified under his uncle’s will. Besides he had enough credits to sort of make two year of schooling. Smitherton with his legal ability convinced the trustees of Christopher’s will that the two years were completed.

In June 1941 Wil joined the navy and was scheduled for officer’s training. With his sailing he looked forward to a life at sea. That changed when he was exposed to Navy planes. He dreamed of the wind in his hair and flying faster than ever possible. In September 1941 he signed up for flight training. He excelled there and found flying more fun than ever. He became a fighter pilot. Guiding a military plane was no different than guiding a spirited horse, as far as he was concerned. He even gave his planes the nick names he had used for his horses.

Angie visited when she could. No one discussed a wedding. After Wil started flight training, Christine invited Angie for supper. As they put away the dishes, she nervously said, “Oh leave them for the maid tomorrow.” Angie was really surprised; Christine hadn’t done that before.

As they sat on the couch, Christine gently took hold of Angie’s hands, looked at her intently, and said, “Angie, I want you to have Wil’s baby.”

“ Oh I want to too, but our plans...”

“No, I don’t mean getting married and having his child. I mean, have his baby now.”

Angie became red and unable to think.

**“You see, when Wil’s father was murdered, I thought, Maybe six weeks of pure happiness is enough for one lifetime. Maybe I should quit now, maybe, “ she hesitated remembering, “ maybe even be in heaven with Wil. But then I thought, I’ll have Wil’s baby and that will make up for not having Wil to love me. And it did prevent me from further thoughts of suicide and the baby did bring me happiness. You’re a history buff, you know what the statistics are, how many bright young men never return.”**

**Angie interrupted. “I don’t want to force him into marriage.”**

**“Angie, I am not speaking of marriage. I am speaking of having Wil’s baby. If you are pregnant, you can pretend to visit some relative out west. You can register as Mrs Samuels. Once the baby is born, you can decide to let me adopt the baby or keep it or whatever is best for you. You can return to Boston and continue your career and should something happen to Wil you will be free to date and marry. “**

**Angie, “But would that be fair to Wil, not to tell him about this?”**

**“Yes, it would be fair. I certainly can’t suggest marriage. And as you say, you can’t force him. God willing, when he comes back, you can tell him it was a little accident, but tell him the truth, you didn’t want to force him into a shotgun marriage. Whether you keep the baby or Jack and I do, of course it is still yours and Wil’s.**

**Angie, I don’t want to insult you, but you do know that I am a wealthy woman. The child would have no financial concerns, ever. And I certainly would want you to be comfortable during your pregnancy and afterwards too. Please don’t be offended, but I would want to set aside \$100,000 for you, no strings, just so you have Wil’s baby.”**

**Angie,” No, I don’t want the 100,000, but do put it into a trust for the child.” But, Wil and I have been honest with each other...”**

**Christine, “ Look, if Wil finds out later, you can tell him you made a mistake and didn’t want to worry him and so you let Jack and I adopt the baby until he returned. “**

Angie, now aware of what was being discussed complained, “Oh this is so damn convoluted. I wanted to be a modern woman and so I never brought up marriage. Now, to do this...Actually I would want to have Wil’s baby.” Angie again refused to have \$100,000 set aside for her expenses, but agreed that this could be set up for the baby.

Now Wil was on the West Coast, and Angie made a point of visiting him just in time for her best ovulation time. She assured him that he didn’t need condoms and her “cream” and diaphragm were 100% safe. On December 2, 1941 she called Christee to tell her that she was pregnant.

The horror of December 7 came as Wil was in the middle of his Navy Pilot training program. The Navy decided to ship him and his trainees to Hawaii to finish their training there, as at least they were good enough to take off and stave off another enemy attack. They needed the experienced pilots from Hawaii elsewhere. There was no time to say goodbye to Angie or his mother, plus the movement was secret. He wrote to them instead. In his letters he told how he regretted not marrying Angie when he had the chance. When Angie and Christine discussed this, they both decided that Angie had done the right thing.

Angie located a small college in Montana where she could teach and carry on her studies. Christine went with her to get her settled. She insisted on a lovely apartment, and pre-paid 6 month’s rent. She bought Angie a used automobile – new ones were no longer available. They settled in Boise, Montana. Christee insisted on depositing 5,000 in a bank account for Angie. She remained with her during her first two months of pregnancy, then headed back to the ranch. With a war on there was a great deal that needed to be done. Before she left Angie, she took her in her arms, hugged her, and said, “Angie I will always love you and be there for you for giving me this wonderful gift.”

She had been away from Jack for 3 months and missed him terribly. With men going into the army she was faced with a serious problem. She must remain in Dodge to run the ranch and she must return to Boston to Jack. What to do?

On January 5, 1942 Jack called her to tell her he had landed a commission with the Navy. She hurried back to Boston.

“Look, I am not too old to serve in the Navy. I have had reserve training – I joined after my divorce – and I enjoyed playing at navy training. But with our young men going off to war every day, I feel like an idiot worrying about some stupid divorce. I’ve even told my last three cases to try to reconcile and be happy together, so if this keeps up I won’t have any clients anyway,” he laughed.

“When will you leave Boston, “ she asked?

“I have no idea. I have just gotten notice to put my affairs in order and to await further orders. Now don’t worry, I won’t be in active combat, I will just be doing administration. Probably in charge of some uniform supply detail. However, I do need to put my affairs in order and that affair is us. I want you to marry me.”

Christine was taken aback. This she had not expected. “But Jack, there is no need ...” she stammered, “ I will come to you wherever you are stationed.”

“No, that’s not it. I love you and I want the stability of a marriage to come back to. No one knows how long this damn war will last. I will feel much happier knowing that my wife is there waiting for me. Besides, we should have gotten married ages ago, instead of committing mortal sin.”

Christine mused. “You know when we first dated, it was like being 19 all over again, all that I had missed. Now I am to be a war bride, just like the other young women! Jack, I do love you and I would love to be your war bride.” She smiled, “ There is one slight complication. I had expected to adopt Angie’s baby. I still intend to, would you mind being the father too? Besides, this way I can get an allowance as your wife and the baby can get allowance as your child! Now that’s a good reason to get married, isn’t it?” That night they made love very tenderly and slept very close together. They married in a simple civil ceremony. In the days left to them they simply stayed together and held each other. There was no need for words.

In February he was called to duty at the Great Lakes station and in June he was on a destroyer doing patrol duty on the Atlantic. He wrote to Christine how he loved it and perhaps he might remain in the Navy after the war. He received word

in August that he was the adoptive father of a 6 pound 7 ounce boy. The boy was named Michael William Samuels, after his grandfather.

### Battle of Midway

Fortunately Christine didn't know that in May Wil was in his first battle, the battle of the Coral Sea. He had been looking forward to actual combat. He had grown up facing floods, stampedes, wolves, snakes and had learned to be calm and use his wits and skills no matter what the danger. This ability made him an ideal fighter pilot. Even in the thick of battle, seeing his friends shot apart, he reacted quickly and effectively. As a fighter pilot he flew to guard the bombers and PBY boats during the attacks on the Japanese fleet. He engaged in night combat too. Then, on June 5, he led his squad in the Battle of Midway. After fierce fighting, his plane was damaged and running low on fuel. He was leading his group in search of his carrier. He barely had enough fuel for a landing when suddenly searchlights came on and he was able to land safely at night on the Hornet. Later he joked that he might be court marshaled because he landed on the wrong carrier, his ship of origin had been the Enterprise. After he landed on the Hornet, he worried if his and his group of six planes would tax the space available on the Hornet. He needn't have worried, there was plenty of room for his planes because the attrition rate had been high and many planes didn't return. Instead of being reprimanded, he was promoted for finding his way back and landing the remains of his flight group safely at night, even though it happened to be the wrong ship. Wil's skill at finding the target and finding his way back to the carriers was noted and in short order he was ordered to Hawaii so he could aid in training the raw pilots just finishing crash courses in flying. Combat had been so mixed up that he never really knew how many enemy planes he had accounted for. However by the end of the Battle of Midway he became aware that he could be killed and wrote lengthy letters to his mother and Angie. Back in Hawaii he trained pilots for combat, but now he was required to flunk out the pilots he thought were not capable of fighter pilot action. Even though most of the pilots in training were his own age, he now made a point of avoiding them socially as much as possible and restricted himself to senior officers

clubs. He developed a reputation of being stiff and aloof and even stuck up by his advanced rank, but in truth he found it essential to avoid friendly contact or socializing because he must discipline or flunk these eager pilots.

Angie was impatient the first month of the baby's birth. Christine was with her full time in Montana, but begged her to come to the ranch for a while. Angie quickly ceased nursing and Christine was the one who fed and changed the baby at night while Angie slept. Angie finally explained that with the men going into the service she now had her pick of fabulous jobs. The one in Houston at Rice University interested her the most; she left Christine with the baby at 5 weeks and went for the interview. Two days later she called to apologize, the job was contingent on her starting immediately so she couldn't come back to Montana. Please send her clothes and things. Christine sadly complied; the adoption papers were complete so she returned to the ranch and decided to hire a wet nurse for the baby Michael. Now she took an active role in management of the ranch. There was a desperate need for meat and farm produce which she could supply, if she could get workers. Like everyone else, she brought Mexican ranch hands in to help. Soon the food at the bunkhouse was more beans and burritos. She was able to find Rosaria, who had taken care of Wil when she went to France, and Rosaria and her own daughter were comfortably placed in Wil's honeymoon home.

One day she met Doris at a store. They chatted and Doris asked, "How is the baby? Can I see him?" Without a thought, Christine said, "Sure, why not come out tomorrow?" Doris answered, "I will. Tell me about Wil, is he all right?" For a while they chatted and then Doris said, "See you then."

Christine realized that surely there must be gossip about her adopted son. Surely many had concluded that this was an adoption of some bastard child of her own son, to take care of some girl's problem after Wil knocked her up. Christine smiled, in a way they were right, but not the way they believed.

When Doris came the next afternoon, she simply sat and held the baby. Rosaria showed her how to change the diaper. Doris begged to be allowed to bathe him. To herself, she thought, this is the baby Wil and I should have had! Why hadn't she become pregnant?

Since the divorce Doris had worried about her not becoming pregnant with Wil, and deliberately put herself in danger of a pregnancy, any pregnancy, to see if she could become pregnant. Maybe it was Wil's fault; she had read where tight jeans and being in the saddle all day could make you sterile. But there hadn't been any tight jeans in Boston. Not that she was promiscuous, but she had had two affairs with no pregnancy. She thought about seeing a specialist but her mother pooh poohed the idea – she wasn't even married and she was very young. Her mother had tried for four years before the first pregnancy, and she had been married.

Although Doris was home in Dodge, she didn't really have a huge social life with the girls she had grown up with. In a sense, she had outgrown most of them. She had invested wisely, was working on her real estate license and now owned her own home and had a comfortable income from her properties. She had bought various properties before the war and these had become quite valuable. She could spend time with Michael if she wished, and so she did.

The following days and weeks, Doris kept coming to the ranch often to be with Michael and the love she showed that baby was remarkable. Soon there was a stiff competition between the four women – Christine, Rosaria, her daughter and Doris as to who would bathe, feed, change the baby. Actually the baby was beautiful with a very nice disposition, always smiling and gurgling. Doris didn't want to push her luck but once slipped and said, "He sure does look like Wil." Christine didn't comment.

Jack expected to get leave in New York in June of '43 and asked Christine to meet him in Boston. When she told Doris of the plan, Doris begged to take care of Michael.

"But I have Rosaria for that," she said.

"I really think its better for Michael for me to be with him. I mean Rosaria is nice and well meaning, and so is her daughter, but I think its better that he have a real mother my age, don't you think? Besides, I read that it is very important for the child's development that he be read and spoken to in order to develop his brain-language ability. Roasaria means well but let's face it, her vocabulary is limited."

Christine was truly flustered. She had been happy to have Doris come around to ooh and ah at the little baby, but she had wondered about the attachment. Where would it stop? Other ladies had come to visit and admire the baby too. Some had subtly criticized that he was being raised by a Mexican! Christine did spend almost the whole day away at ranch duties. In a sense, Doris was doing all the right things for Michael, playing with him, speaking to him, and he really did seem to love it. Actually he did seem to be attached to Doris and cried for her to hold him. This was going to be a problem, deciding how to divide this child between these 3 women when she went to Boston.

The other thing that startled Christine was her awareness that Doris seemed to have money. She certainly had the best clothes. One day they shopped together for shoes and she had casually purchased special tooled boots for \$125, then bought a very fancy pair of “city shoes” for over 50 dollars. Christine had never paid more than \$35 for shoes before, and she was the wealthy one. One day she asked Doris quite bluntly what was she doing? Was she working? Was her family supporting her?

Doris laughed. “This was all your doing! You’re the one who taught me about investing and all! “

Christine looked blankly at her.

“When I was in Boston, you would talk about diversifying in stocks and bonds and you invited me to read some of the books you had. I expected Wil to get that 500,000 and I wanted to be able to invest it wisely so I listened to your advice and studied those books. As Wil’s wife, I got in touch with the top financial brains in Boston who had managed Cristopher’s funds. You may recall that they were the same advisors that managed the Harvard Endowment funds. They advised me to look at real estate that I could invest in and manage too. I spent time with some sharp real estate wizards and it was then that I decided to get a broker’s license.”

“After I, ahem, got the settlement,“ she smiled,“ I studied even harder and decided to follow your advice. Instead of buying the new car that daddy wanted me to, I started to buy houses that I could rent out. Because of dad’s good credit, I bought these with almost no money down. I now own some 15 properties, stores,

warehouses and farms all paying monthly rents. I still have a tidy sum left over after paying the loans, and I use that to buy more property. My biggest expense is a bookkeeper to keep track of everything. I expect to be a licensed real estate broker next year so I can do more purchases and get to keep the commissions.“ Christine was impressed by Doris’s maturity.

Christine gradually felt Doris to be a real friend. At least, she could discuss girl talk to her. After all, most of the people at the ranch were men; the women were almost all Mexican and she had been forced to learn their language, rather than expect them to learn English.

Often, casually, Doris would ask about Wil. They were both excited to hear that Wil might be transferred from the Pacific to San Diego soon.

Christine realized, despite how strange the arrangement was, that Doris was a better influence on Michael than Rosaria, with her limited education and limited English. Doris spoke to him and explained things to him, took him to parks to play with other children and even took him to the pediatrician for needs. When he had a fever at age 14 months she was the one who stayed up with him and sponged him. She refused to give him aspirin because she had read that this could be harmful to a baby. Waiting in the doctor’s office with Michael, she often had to explain to mothers that no, she was only baby sitting; this wasn’t her child.

Christine stood helplessly by. Michael was hers by adoption, he was her grandson for real, but Doris was acting more and more like his mother! Could she ask her to leave him alone? She certainly didn’t mean any harm and Michael was speaking very well, without the Spanish accent, and obviously loved her as much as any child could love their own mother. People were all impressed with his advanced vocabulary. When Michael was 18 months old, the pediatrician estimated his vocabulary age to be at three years of age, in large part due to Doris’s efforts. But Christine wondered if his advanced vocabulary came from his mother, Angie.

Christine thought of one solution. “Doris, what’s happening to the men you date? I thought you and Herman were a hot item?”

Doris laughed, “Oh the men flock to me now that they know I am a property owner.” Christine thought, Wow, this was just like her when she worried that the men were attracted to her because she was an heiress!

Doris answered casually: “Herman is certainly very nice, but frankly, just not my type.”

“And what, pray tell, is your type?”

Doris didn’t answer and left the room. Actually Doris no longer could see herself with a carpenter or store clerk or car salesman. As a successful investor, these types were no longer interesting to her. Frankly, many men she dated bored her. After buying a store for 30,000 dollars, playing the role of a silly girl was difficult for her.

Christine was excited and looking forward to a reunion with Jack. As Mrs. Jackson Smitherton, she had many tasks to see to in Boston that would keep her busy until she heard from him. Who to leave in charge then? Doris or Rosaria? Doris made the decision. While Christine was back east, she would stay with Michael at the ranch and sleep with him. Rosaria could take care of the house. Christine was too busy with arrangements to put up an argument. Rosaria murmured threats of seeking another job. Her daughter had already left and was working making good money in a war factory.

June 1943 in Boston was warm and humid, but Christine was too busy to be bothered. She was disappointed when she visited the old Adams mansion, now pretty much run down. It had been rented out for years and few repairs had been done. Extension cords lay haphazardly all over the place and there was even an old notice from the fire department demanding a hearing about the house being a fire hazard. The real estate agent who was supposed to rent the house explained that renters turned it down because of its shabbiness and Emily refused to do anything about its condition. He asked Christine to please talk to Emily to either sell the house for some investor or tear it down for its lot value. Emily had steadfastly refused any sale offer.

After two days of tripping over extension cords, lights that needed bulbs, and a general gloomy atmosphere in the place (maybe ghosts?) , Christine decided she

couldn't stay there herself any longer and moved to a hotel. Jackson had sublet his apartment which was needed for the influx of wartime residents.

Jackson's law firm had brought in some new partners and was flourishing. One senior at the firm was a retired judge, Frank Wilson, that Christine took an immediate shine to, and he to her. They dined together some evenings and he delighted telling her of some of his wildest tales. His wildest:

He had gotten in the habit of hiding a gun behind his desk in court for fear of being attacked when he handed down a sentence that was unfavorable to one of the persons on trial. One day the gun had accidentally fallen to the floor and fired. He had reached down to try to prevent the gun from going off. Someone screamed, "the Judge has been shot!" and deputies drew guns, people fled into the halls screaming, "Murder! The judge has been murdered!" Police ran in with guns out, while people were trying to exit the room, one lady was badly hurt and bleeding, and when the police saw the blood they ordered the entire courthouse evacuated and called for back up. After 15 minutes of utter mayhem, Frank managed to get the deputies and police calmed down and explain what really happened. No one laughed. They laughed even less when 12 lawsuits for cuts, bruises, sprained back and mental anguish and stress were filed by some gleeful lawyers. At that point, Frank Wilson smiled, "I decided it was time for me to go fishing for a long long time. I still don't dare show up at the courthouse, I send someone else when the case is being heard there. I am definitely "persona non grata" there. "

Despite his age and sense of humor he gave Christine good advice regarding Jackson's property and legal rights. He explained, "As a primary partner in the law firm, he actually owns 50% of the firm and it is fairly valuable today. " Christine smiled, when she didn't need the money, it came to her!

When she answered the knock on her hotel door, she expected it was delivery of a dress she had purchased just for Jackson's arrival. Instead it was Doris! "What, what are you doing here? Oh God no! not Wil! Oh God no!" Doris entered and held her. She led her shaking body to a couch. "Chrisee, there is a telegram for you from the War Department. I guess you had better read it."

Christine stared at the unopened telegram. So many thousands of mothers had received these every day. Papers were full of stories of mothers fainting and refusing to open the dreadful notice, and how sad it was. All she could think of was her Wil, her beautiful Wil, her baby. Finally she tore the envelope open. She didn't see Will's name. She searched for Samuels but it wasn't there. Finally her eyes focused on

Dear Mrs Smitherton,

The war department regrets to inform you of the death of your husband, Navy Lieutenant Jackson Smitherton, on May 25. His ship was sunk and he was lost at sea.

We deeply regret the loss of this brave fighter for freedom.

Signed,

Admiral Joseph Blandon, commander of the Atlantic Fleet.

Christine handed the telegram to Doris, whose tear streaked face she now realized had no makeup. "Did you know?" she asked?

"Yes, you know Dodge is a pretty small town and the operator told me when I explained you were away. Chrisee I thought it best to get this terrible news to you this way, rather than a phone call or something else. Then the two women hugged and cried. Christine thought, here I am only 48 and I am widowed three times!

That evening she was to meet Wilson for supper and she decided to go with Doris, that this would be the best way to break the news to Boston. When he saw the two women approaching he arose from the table and said, "My goodness, two beautiful women all for me! This is my lucky day indeed." He was introduced to Doris and held the chairs and gallantly seated the women. Then he became aware of the somber mood. Finally Christine said, "Jackson was killed on May 25 when his boat was sunk. "

"Oh Christine, I am so sorry. Please what can I do?"

"I think I would like to drink with you and toast Jackson's memory." Wilson waved frantically for the waiter and all ordered whiskey and toasted Jackson's memory."

After several drinks, Christine asked Wilson to arrange a memorial service for Jackson and to give the information to his associates and alumnus.

Two days later at the memorial service, the church was filled! Christine knew that Jackson had been a popular member of the Boston Bar, but they had been living in sin and only married a short time so she hadn't really had a chance to meet all his old sailing and partying buddies. Christine realized how little of his life she had known!

One of his room mates from pre-law spoke of their time together and how he had become a role model for him. The most inspiring speaker was Tony Dante. He spoke how they had been buddies in high school. Although he was now fairly tall and broad, in high school he had been small and thin and an easy target for bullying. Also he was one of the few Italians in an upper class Boston school. But Jackson made it known that anyone bothering Tony would have to answer to him. They had remained best friends and Jackson had been his best man at his wedding. He made a success in his business but all that came to an end when he was divorced; he was framed by a crooked detective agency, and his wife took everything he had worked so hard for. He had nothing to live for. But Jackson came to him and forced him to put his life together. He even appealed the terrible divorce settlement, proved the fraud, and got his business back for him!

“By the way, that's what got Jackson to specialize in Divorce law!”  
Everyone laughed. “This good friend saved my life, he was a true friend.”

Of course everyone praised him going into the navy at a time of war.

Christine went to the podium, supported by Doris and Wilson. At first no one could hear her voice. Finally it cleared and they heard, “although I only knew Jackson for a short time, less time than many of you, especially Tony, my time with his was blessed. He was that rare combination of a real man, and yet a gentle generous soul. He was always considerate and above all he was always loving. I think it was his love that caused him to go to war, to protect that which he loved.”

As they were leaving the church, an attractive woman, appeared to be the same age as Christine, approached her and gently held her arm. “I want you to

know that I am Jackson's first wife, his ex-wife and I came here to honor him and to tell you that he really was a wonderful person. God bless you."

When Wilson came to her two days later he told her of the million dollar insurance policy that was due her. She quickly said she didn't want it, to give the money to his law school, but Wilson held up his hand and shushed her. There was a second policy that the law firm had on all their partners to indemnify themselves so that the firm could buy the practice from the heirs and avoid litigation. That would bring her another 1.5 million dollars. Again she said to give it to the school and again Wilson demurred and said to please wait. Doris had left to return to Dodge for Michael's sake. Christine felt abjectly lonely. Emily called almost daily to apologize for not coming to the memorial, but she was now too ill to travel. Christine insisted about the mansion – either repair it or sell it but Emily refused to sell.

When she was back at the ranch she wondered how she had ever imagined living again in Boston. Here she felt rooted to the earth, where she belonged, Wil's ranch. She visited his grave and spoke to him and told him all about her life with Jackson, what it had meant, how she had been in love and how he had made her happy.

Two months later they heard the glad news. Wil was now stationed in San Diego at the naval air station. He was part of a team of aircraft designers at Convair. He had flown the planes and knew what was missing and what to do to improve them.

The first item on Wil's agenda was why did the Germans have such effective dive bombers, better than ours. He felt that the planes should be modified to match the Germans that could descend from 15,000 feet so fast that the ground fire was ineffective and direct their bombs at small targets. "Our planes can't do that. All we can do is release torpedoes so far away that a hit is almost a miracle. At Midway if we could have had more effective dive bombers, none of the enemy would have survived. We lost a terrible number of ordinary bombers because we didn't have the kind of dive bombers we should have had." Wil was now the

equivalent of air force Major. He was well liked, even among the engineers who disagreed with him.

When he got his 8 days leave he asked Angie to meet him at the ranch. She wrote back her regrets and said her teaching schedule made it impossible. After Christine greeted him at the train, and asked when Angie was coming, he mumbled something about her tight schedule. Christine was aware of Angie's non-interest in her child but had expected that would all change when Wil returned. Now she wondered.

That first night there was a big party to welcome Wil. Friends, neighbors and buddies all showed up for the celebration. Christine was aware that Doris was feeding Wil drinks, that she did look stunning. Wil was definitely drunk and she was aware that Doris was taking him to his bed room. Christine was even more aware that he didn't come out of the bedroom that night.

The next morning Doris, in Wil's bathrobe, sat down at the kitchen table and looked directly at Christine and said, "Chrisee I want to have Wil's baby. No, not that he should marry me, I just want to have his baby. Actually I tried to get pregnant with two other men and failed. I have seen several specialists and they tell me the same thing, somehow my body knew it wasn't right and that's why it didn't work. But with Wil I know its right. I want you to help me."

For once Christine was totally at a loss for words. One reason she had accepted Doris's attachment to Michael was her thought that being a young woman, when Angie and Wil took the child, it would be easier for Michael to accept Angie for Doris. But now there would be no Angie. Finally she stuttered, "What do you want me to do?"

"I know Wil is only here for a week. Let me have time with him."

Doris and she were almost sisters now, or almost mother and daughter. Doris spent far more time with Christine than she did with her own parents. Actually Christine could hardly recall when Doris had seen them last. But this was all crazy. First she begs Angie to have Wil's baby and now Doris begs her to have his baby.

"What has Wil to say about all this?"

**“Oh Wil is like any other sailor on leave. I remind him of all the good times we had together and last night I challenged him to see if he still had lead in his pencil. He proved he had. Now I am challenging him to see if he can improve it when he is sober. He asked to drive me to the old ranch house this afternoon, unless you have definite plans. I know it means you will see less of him but please, I want this.”**

**Christine agreed but wondered, what happened to marriage? How could Doris so blatantly speak of having a child out of wedlock? What about the gossip, the stares, the social stigma? But then she realized that after all Doris was her own person. She had gone against the grain and become a successful investor. She had obtained a real estate license and was competing with others. She had simply moved in and taken over the care of Michael. She really was different from other young girls.**

**The rest of the week, Doris and Wil did spent time together and she slept with him at the ranch house except for one night when they slept at her own house.**

**Finally Wil said, “Doris, this has been a wonderful week, just like our old honeymoon but you know ...”**

**“Wil, you shut up. I told you, I didn’t expect anything from you. I just wanted to welcome home a hero. I do this with all the returning servicemen!”**

**Wil knew that wasn’t true but he had enjoyed his leave and had nothing to complain of. She had made no demands on him, had never reminded him of their former marriage and didn’t even ask him to write. He had been drunk that first night out of disappointment that Angie had failed to come to the ranch. He knew the romance with Angie was over. With her letters there had been an air of formality developing that he had refused to accept. But not coming to his homecoming had been too hard a blow to take and he had welcomed comfort and solace from Doris. Besides, they had been married before, so it was sort of OK for them to spend the night. After the first night it had just evolved into a week long party, and he had lived the dream of any sailor on his first week home from the war. The rest of the week there had been no more thought of Angie; he had been too busy with Doris.**

The ranch. He still couldn't decide what about the ranch. He had been away now for 5 years. He almost didn't recognize parts of it. He had asked where was Buzzard's point when the current foreman told him about the rustlers they had captured there. With meat rationing, cattle rustling had become a serious problem. The thieves would simply break the fence or cut it, drive their truck into the cattle's midst, and load them up in the truck. Every time they found a broken or cut fence they knew the rustlers were at work. One group broke the fence and stole on Monday. They came the very next day to steal again! That is how they were caught. Despite all efforts, the stealing continued because of meat rationing and the price of fresh meat.

Wil knew his mother had endured another tragedy. Doris had told him about the telegram and how she had expected it to be about Wil. He did his best to be with her, to cheer her up, but he had been weak and instead had enjoyed himself in Doris's arms.

Doris had changed. She was self assured. She off hand mentioned she owned some properties and he had gone with her to help her collect rent from one chronic late payer. She was just as beautiful as when they had married, but her love making had been more passionate than he remembered. At times he wasn't sure he could keep up with her or satisfy her enough. Boy, he was looking forward to some rest from women when he returned to San Diego. Best too he hadn't needed to wear a condom, she assured him she was using the latest method of birth control.

He hadn't taken any interest in the little two year old Michael. He knew about the adoption – his mother had written that it had been Jackson's desire to have a family this way. He wasn't a total idiot, could this have been his child? If so, it would have been Angie's and Angie would never have given such a child up for adoption. So he left the question unanswered.

In 1943 San Diego was the perfect sailor's town. Officer's clubs were the biggest and best. All the partying one could handle was there. Sailors were welcomed everywhere and citizens were forever inviting lonely service men to their homes. And in 1944 it now looked like we might win this war. But Wil had found a new life with aviation. Each day he thought of ways to improve the fighter planes.

The top executives recognized his talent and independent of the Navy, they were grooming him for an executive position when the war ended. He spent many weekends at the homes of the executives where he enjoyed learning more about running a factory that would produce the planes of the future.

He was dismayed when he was told to abandon his dive bomber work by the Navy. Some idiot brass had decided that it was more important to work on long range aircraft and utilize large masses of planes to destroy ships of the enemy. They must increase the range and flying time of both fighters and bombers. The war would be shifting to the Pacific and an air war with Japan was now the top priority.

Again Wil was in his element. He could maximize how to use winds at the back of the plane to help increase range, and how to change altitude to avoid fighting head winds that impeded that plane. The secret was in streamlining. He borrowed the designs of the 30's designers to get reduced friction and increased lift.

Doris wrote that she was going to be in San Diego visiting friends and could he meet her. He wrote back that he would be delighted and would meet her train. When she descended the train she was helped by a handsome army Captain whom she had met on the train. She did look attractive. She enjoyed the palm trees that encircled the Spanish style train station and the many flowers in the area. Wil took her to his off base apartment that the Convair group had loaned him since it was empty anyway. It overlooked Mission Bay and soon they were in bed together.

Afterwards Wil said, " Say, have you become some sort of wanton woman? What happened to the girl who wouldn't let me feel her up until we were married? "

"Wil, if I may be so bold, what the hell are you complaining about ? Would you prefer to get it from some whore across the border? I am here for you and that's all you need to know. Stop analyzing your good fortune."

When he took her to the officer's club that evening he introduced her as his friend, not as his ex- wife. She did make a fine date and he got plenty of jealous looks from his friends. He wasn't aware that the women stared at her expensive clothes.

She had been vague about visiting San Diego. He hadn't pried into her reasons for coming to San Diego as he did appreciate her being with him. She said

she was checking out real estate in California. Most experts expected Southern California to boom after the war.

When she wrote she was coming, now on a monthly basis, she wrote matter of factly, 'I will be arriving Tuesday at 5 and will take a cab to the apartment.' There was no darling, miss you, can't wait to see you. Wil realized that his responses were somewhat similar. But the sex was fabulous and he was looking forward to her visit. Dates, movies, dances were all fun too. Soon she was coming for 3-4 days on a regular monthly schedule.

But he wondered about her days in San Diego while he was at work; what was she doing? Why was she so vague about her activities? What about her expensive clothes?

His friends had joked about his "ruing them." "Just because your mother has a big ranch is no reason for you to buy your girl \$100 shoes and very expensive clothes. We're just poor sailors and our wives complain bitterly, 'look what Wil buys his girl friend, and the crap you buy me,' Wil you are spoiling it for the rest of us." Wil protested that honestly none of her clothes or jewelery were from him.

"So, who then is her sugar daddy?" asked Norman, his fellow engineer at Convair.

Wil became increasingly more curious. When he asked to see the real estate she was considering, she firmly said no. "I use my own judgment on what to invest in. Anytime I get someone else's opinion it's a disaster."

Finally he couldn't help it, he had to know what was going on. He went to a detective agency and bluntly told them that he was suspicious of his fiancée seeing another man. She was coming in September and he made arrangements to have her followed.

Several days later he got the report.  
Wednesday 10 AM left apartment and took taxi to Old San Diego. Shopped, bought a bathing suit. Took two hours to buy. Lunch at coffee shop. Shopped dresses for 3 hours. Didn't buy one. Bought pack of cigarettes. Back to apartment at 4.

Thursday: Left apartment at 10:15 Went by cab to zoo. Bought ice cream for a lost little girl and comforted her till her mother came. They spoke for ½ an hour. Left zoo at 3. Walked around park. Home to apartment at 5.

And so it went.

The monthly visits suddenly stopped in January. Wil called Christine and asked casually how Doris was. Christine said she hadn't been around and would ask her to call him if she saw her. February no word from Doris. Wil asked for and got leave to go to Dodge City.

When he arrived, after settling in with his mother, he checked out Doris's address. Her home had been rented to some students. Then her friends. Then finally went to the Hornsby's store and asked how Doris was. "Don't know. She hasn't been around lately since the Divorce."

This was too much of a mystery. Where had she disappeared to?

Meanwhile Rosaria, who had raised him since age one, was home now. She had been away for surgery at Wil's other visit and now she hugged and gushed over him. She effused how Michael was exactly like him at that age, the same mischief, the same bad words, the same seeking to touch her breasts. She showed him his baby pictures to show they were identical to Michael's. Slowly it began to dawn on Wil that something was strange. He really hadn't looked at Michael before and now he did. Of course he didn't know one child from another and certainly had little or no interest either but ... what was Rosaria telling him? Then he listened to her complaints about Doris being with Michael so much of the time spoiling him, teaching him bad things all the time. Because of Doris he might not grow up to be a fine gentleman like "My Wil."

When he confronted Christine she was, as usual, non-committal. "Of course he looks like you. Jack and I had our choice of several babies for adoption and chose the one that looked like you."

What about his habits that Rosaria says are exactly like me?

"Rosaria is old, she probably is making that all up. Besides all baby's reach for the breast." Christine was concerned, now that Angie obviously wasn't going to marry Wil, she didn't want to burden him with becoming a new father.

Wil said, “ You know, I can’t find Doris. No one seems to know where she is. Not even her parents. “

“Well, maybe she has run off with a sailor?”

Wil didn’t find that to be funny. He went to the tenant that they had visited, who was slow in paying, and asked where he paid his rent. He learned that there was a real estate office that Doris owned, and that this office was collecting rents and making repairs. He drove there, went in and introduced himself to a large woman with huge thick glasses working on ledgers, as a friend of Doris. “Have you heard from her?” “No, if there are any problems I have the authority to handle it.” When he asked if they were sending her money the bookkeeper scowled to indicate this was none of his business.

As the week drew to a close, Wil realized he had some decisions to make. There were lots of girls at the workplace to date. But with Doris’s monthly visits he hadn’t been interested. One young lady in particular was Jenny Aidar. She was one of the few engineers from Cal Tech and they both worked together comfortably. Although she didn’t exactly have a California bathing suit figure, she was nevertheless pretty and quite nice to be with. Working late, he often drove her home and sometimes they met for lunch or dinner at the plant cafeteria to go over work problems. She seemed to be popular, and active socially. One Monday she called in sick, but next day confessed to him that it had been a hangover. Sometimes she asked to be excused from work that night because of a date. His trysts with Doris had prevented him from trying to date her. There were other girls too. Should he give up on Doris altogether then? What if she had moved on with another guy? She owed him nothing, nothing at all. Hell, his \$100,000 divorce settlement is what set her up in the first place. Without realizing he was doing it, he called the investigator in San Diego and asked him to trace Doris from Dodge city. He figured that despite the cost, O’Rien knew what she looked like and some of her habits, like shopping in upscale stores. Wil had money, the \$500,000 he had received from his uncle had been invested and now was paying nice dividends, none of which he had used. Besides, he was too distracted wondering about Doris to get much studying done, now that he was taking courses for credit in engineering.

He met with O'Rien before he left for Dodge City and handed him the required \$500 deposit. The plan was for him to pose as a retired Navy man who was a friend of Wil's and was just getting over his military injuries. Wil thought he would recover faster being at the ranch for a week or so. He called his mother to make arrangement and asked her to have a car available for O'Rien. After learning about Doris's long visits to his mother and Michael, he thought O'Rien might gain insight by chatting with his mother and Rosaria.

A week later O'Rien returned, a few pounds heavier – Christine had fed him well to get his health back – and reported that he had her address. He had bribed the mail man to inspect the mail going to and from the real estate office and even steamed open one of the letters. She was in Butte, Montana, 86 North Main Street, Apartment 3 D . He even had her phone number. He handed Wil a bill for expenses that included bribing the mail man. He did gush over how lovely Wil's mother was.

Now what? It was June, the best time in San Diego for sailing and swimming and dating. He had been turning down invitations with the excuse of study or work. Wil found he couldn't concentrate. He must know what was going on. At least Angie had corresponded with him, even though it had turned cold. He requested a very long week end pass and headed for Butte. He was able to rent a car when he arrived. He parked outside the apartment house. It was a nice enough place; the wood shingles all seemed well painted and in place. The apartment building was definitely not shabby but not upscale either, but for Butte it might have been considered upscale. That afternoon she didn't emerge and it was getting quite hot in the car. By five o'clock he could wait no longer and climbed the stairs to apartment 3D. What should he say when she answered the knock? If he said "Its Wil" she might not let him in if she were with her guy. But what the hell, she didn't owe him anything, and vice versa! To himself, he hoped that she was not with another man. He found himself fervently hoping so. Besides, he had the right to worry about his ex- wife. He knocked. She opened the door and both stared at each other in astonishment. "Wil ?" she chocked. Both simply stared and after a minute, she said, "Come in Wil."

He offered pleasantries and lies, "Passing by and thought I would say hello. How are you? How are you feeling? "

Doris answered monosyllables "fine , OK, sure," but said nothing, although curious to know how he had found her. Finally after a long silence, Wil asked her to have supper with him.

"I don't know."

"Why not? Its only supper. I don't know the restaurants here and I need someone who has been here to show me where to go. Please."

He could see her mind racing, looking at him and then quickly away. He asked again and this time she said, "OK." When she rose from the chair he saw the bulge in her stomach for the first time. He flushed red all over. Then he noticed the fullness of her breasts and her weight gain. She was pregnant! He slumped in his chair, his heart beat rapidly increasing. Now he realized what those trips to visit him were all about. She had been trying to get pregnant! No thought that this was someone else's child entered his mind. When she returned, ready to go, he barely was able to get out of the overstuffed chair, she even reached to help him. As he replaced his officer's cap, she remarked, "Wil, you will be court marshaled if you wear your cap crooked like that, and reached to correct it. When she did he became aware of the bulge in her stomach touching him. He flushed again.

"I think we need someplace with air conditioning. You seem kind of warm."

"Yes, that would be fine," he stammered.

Aside from giving him driving directions there was little said. Indeed he had to concentrate hard on driving and once passed a stop sign as she gasped. Occasionally she would sneak a peek at him and recognized again how handsome he was in his navy officer's uniform.

The New Butte Cafe was air conditioned and a welcome respite from the heat. Neither ordered any alcohol; she ordered a light supper and he barely muttered "a burger," so that the waitress had to ask him to repeat. There was stony silence while they waited for their order.

Finally, Doris had recovered and began sarcastically, "What part of Montana will you be launching your battleship from?"

**“You’re pregnant!”**

**“Really? I didn’t think you noticed.”**

**“How?”**

**“You see the stork comes and drops the baby and then the baby comes.**

**Unless of course it’s an immaculate conception.”**

**“Doris please, I don’t understand what is going on. I realize you are hiding out here because of your pregnancy but I don’t understand why you never told me anything. I do know you didn’t come to San Diego to look at real estate. I do know you stopped coming, I guess, when you became pregnant. Were you afraid I would find out and make you get rid of it?”**

**Doris’s eyes flew open. She practically shrieked, “Get rid of it! Are you nuts? What the hell do you think I was doing all those times seducing you and letting you fuck your brains out? I was trying to get pregnant you stupid jerk. I kept visiting doctors to help me get pregnant, I even slipped some stuff into your food. “ People in the nearby tables were staring towards them.**

**Totally bewildered now, Wil blurted, “But why?”**

**“Because I wanted to have your baby, that’s why.” Now Wil was confused. Every girl, every story he read was that the girl got pregnant and now the poor fool had to marry her. Not a month went by when he didn’t hear of someone’s shotgun marriage. But then why keep it a secret?**

**“Why didn’t you tell me, ” he asked?**

**“Why should I? You don’t care for me. “**

**“That’s not true. I do care for you, very much. I really worried when I didn’t know where you were.” He was silent for a minute and then said, “But if its my child... The child should have a father. You should have told me for that. Why didn’t you? “**

**“Because I don’t want you to marry me unless you love me. I don’t want to force you to love me. But I do want your baby to love me if I can’t have you.” Now she was crying.**

**The waitress brought the food and stared at Wil with hostility. There was silence as they attempted to eat. Doris excused herself for the lady’s room to fix her**

face. Wil stared at the food. This was his baby. Whose baby was back at the ranch? Was it Doris's ? Wait that wasn't possible. Doris was hiding from him so he wouldn't be forced to marry her shotgun style. He heard her say she wanted his baby but it just didn't register.

When she returned, fresh makeup and all, he realized how really pretty she was. And she was certainly no longer the simple high school teen girl he had married and loved. She had evolved just as he had.

“Doris, please, marry me. I don't want you to live like this, away from your family and friends. What were you planning to do, anyway?”

“Oh, you know, what every other pregnant girl does, claim I married a soldier and he died.”

“Well not any more. I want you to call your friends and I want us to be married at home.”

“Wil, I don't want a shotgun wedding.”

“No its not. I want to marry you.”

“But you still don't know what you want. Remember you chose Boston to me.

“Doris, I want to be perfectly honest with you. I keep changing, rancher, student, pilot, engineer, teacher. I honestly don't know what the future is for me or my child. Just be patient. Let's see what evolves, please. Right now my only goal is to have you home, a married woman, having your husband's child proudly among your family and friends. “

“What if you don't love me after the child?”

Wil struggled, “Doris, please, give it a chance. I still haven't grasped that I am to be a father for the first time. “

“No, the second time.”

“What? You've been pregnant before? When?”

“ No, not me, stupid, what about Michael?”

Wil felt his throat tighten. He could barely speak. “Is Michael ...?”

“Oh course, you didn't know? Didn't they teach you anything at Harvard?”

“Who is the mother,” he croaked.

**“Why Angie of course” Then she told him how Christine had asked Angie to have his child, even offered her money, in case Wil didn’t return from the war. They were supposed to take the child when Wil returned and married Angie. Or Angie could keep the child and Christine would pay any expenses. But after the child Angie got busy and had never once come to see the child. The reason Doris had wanted so to have his child was her joy in being with Michael.**

**Wil waved to the waitress and ordered a whiskey.**

**They drove around some lake and neither one said much, except Wil weakly asking Doris to marry him. Doris finally agreed to marry him. When they got home, Wil called his superior officer and explained there was a serious emergency back home and to please give him 5 more days of leave. It was granted. Doris called Iris and Mable and asked them to arrange a simple wedding at the courthouse. Yes, she giggled, she was marrying Wil Samuels. Yes, the same one as before. Wil and Doris thought it best not to involve the parents. Wil was particularly angry at his mother and wanted to punish her for misleading him. It was past midnight when all the arrangements had been settled and Doris prepared to get to bed. Wil asked if he could sleep on the sofa for tonight, since they weren’t married. Doris was in too much of a turmoil to make other suggestions.**

**Was she doing the right thing? Without marrying Wil she could have the baby via a pretend deceased serviceman. Now, she would have to go through the scars of another divorce again some day. Was it worth it? Of course Wil was doing the honorable thing, but he said he wanted her to be happy and comfortable, he had never said it was for the sake of the baby. Did she do the wrong thing in telling him about Michael? She hadn’t intended to, it had just blurted out. Maybe it was time for him to know so Michael could have a real father? Then she dreamed of a home with Michael and their new child, a normal home of happy loved children. Then she worried, yes, he was doing the gentlemanly thing, and then 6 months later he would be gone to another Angie. Neither slept well that night.**

**The trip back to Dodge city was difficult, what with troop movement and delays. They arrived a day late and just barely made it to the registration office at**

5, closing time. Actually the office closed at 5, but when Iris explained to the clerk that a decorated war hero needed to marry his sweetheart before he was shipped overseas again, the clerk remained and they married way past closing time at 5:45 PM. Doris married in her traveling clothes, and Wil in his crumpled uniform. Fortunately Iris had brought flowers.

They spent the night in Doris's home and Wil left at 6 that morning to return to San Diego. The tone of his letters changed.

Darling Doris, Please come to San Diego to stay with me. There is so much to see and do here. Please come to stay.

Love,

Wil.

After two weeks Doris did arrive with suitcases and hat boxes. She immediately started to brighten up the apartment and cook suppers for Wil and his friends. She met the top executives of Convair and they made it very plain that Wil had a place in Convair as soon as he left the service. Doris was very busy with the officer's wives clubs as well as the wives of the Convair executives. There were constant invitations to the homes of the executives and the wives made it plain that Wil and Doris were welcomed.

Finally it was decided that Doris would have the baby in San Diego at the Navy facility. Wil had checked and the naval hospital obstetrics department was second to none. Doris liked the doctor who would be attending her. Wil insisted on her mother coming to stay with them. Part of that was to have Doris comfortable. Part of that was to cool the resentment the Hornsbys had about the past divorce. Doris would have preferred that Christine come instead, but Wil was still angry at his mother's deception. He was angrier still when he concluded that Christine had assisted Doris in her endeavor to have his baby. He realized how he had been unchaperoned at his first homecoming, how natural it had been for Doris to take him to bed without any comment from Christine.

When the baby came, the executive wives all came to assist, bringing gifts, and to croon over the little girl.

After a month Doris suggested Christine come and bring Michael.

Meanwhile, Mr. Brinham told Wil there was a furnished house that belonged to Convaire and he could rent it for \$75 a month. "It's just a simple house you understand."

The simple house had four bedrooms, two baths, a two car garage, workshop – equipped – and a dark room, also equipped. The furnishings were obviously of top quality. When they arrived at the house there were flowers in the rooms and the refrigerator and freezer were all stocked. Oh yes, there was an extra old jalopy for Mrs Samuels to use that they had no use for. Some old jalopy, a 1938 Oldsmobile with fluid drive. Of course the washer and dryer were used, but still, with a new baby, it was most welcomed.

Christine came with Michael. Michael ran to Doris and demanded to know where she had been and told how much he had missed her. He clung to her almost constantly. After a week, Wil came home for supper, ate with Michael while Doris attended to Hillary and Christine served and did the house. He got a bike for Michael and taught him how to ride. He taught him games and weekends they would rent horses and ride. He taught him tricks for the pony too. After a month, Christine announced she would be returning. It was time for Michael's school. Wil said no, Michael would be attending school here in San Diego.

Christine and Doris worried. It was now July 1945 and the US was getting ready to invade Japan. Wil was a major in the Air Force and an experienced fighter pilot. He had requested repeatedly to be transferred to the Pacific where he could employ his skills and experience. And since the war was drawing to a close, frankly the need for newer and better planes was not urgent. Indeed Congress had appropriated few funds for military air research. On August 1, 1945 Wil received the transfer he had asked for. Then came Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the war ended.

In the rush of the War Department to save money, Wil was one of the first to be discharged. He already had a distinguished service career with plenty of battle ribbons.

When Mr. Brinham told him what his starting salary at Convair would be, Wil nearly choked. He had expected a high salary of 18 or even 19 thousand, but 35,000 ! That was simply unheard of.

He and Doris now had to decide. The ranch. Dodge City. More school. What ?

“Doris you want to be in Dodge city with your friends and family.”

Wil didn't mention the ranch. She tossed aside the question and said, “Wil I have as many roots here now as I have in Dodge City. You are the husband, you decide.”

“That salary of \$35,000 is pretty spectacular. But I would probably make more money running Mom's ranch. And you have your properties too. “

“Actually I am studying for my real estate license in California. We live in a lovely neighborhood surrounded by lovely friends our own age. The Dodge properties can be sold or kept. That is not a problem. Wil, I once told you I want you to be happy. I still want that. Of course I am happy just as we are. Can I say just one thing though?

“Sure, please. “

“I think the future is in Aviation. I think Convair is a very fine company. I know they want you, and probably need you. Look what they have done for us, a free apartment, a fabulous house in a perfect neighborhood for raising kids, “ she giggled,” and the outrageous price of \$75/ month. I know real estate. They could easily get \$250 / month for this place. That \$75 just pays for the taxes and the gardener they provide. I think its nice to be wanted like that. Besides, your current job is just a beginning. I speak to the wives, they are grooming you for upper management, so, in a sense, the sky is the limit here. “

“Would you be happy staying here?”

“I am happy now. I don't need to be more happy.“

Once the decision to stay in San Diego was made there was another thing to consider. A honeymoon! He had money. He had once planned to blow a year just traveling and having fun. Traveling was out, there was gas rationing and he had had enough of traveling and seen enough of the world. And there was a family now.

He decided. They would rent a boat and simply sail around the coast. He could rent a boat in San Diego, go up the coast and stop at marinas and yacht clubs. They would just sail for a month. Doris seconded the idea.

Packing the kids for the trip was quite an experience in nerve management. Fortunately Christine reminded them she had lots of children's furniture. She and Doris's mother would easily take care of the children. After two days the kids were safely housed. Mr. Hornsby complained they should be at his house but he had to admit the ranch had more room. Besides Michael was now riding a pony.

The boat was spectacular, newly outfitted and in spotless condition for sailing. When they got under way, Wil delighted in sailing with his arm around Doris. It was as good or maybe better than it had been with Angie. They stopped at various yacht clubs as they sailed north. Many clubs were very exclusive but he had entered as the guest of the president of Convair Aviation. After a week, Wil said, "You know Doris I really didn't think of sailing as one reason to stay in San Diego. What an idiot not to have considered that. I love sailing and with the money we have I can have this or any other boat and have time to sail any time."

While they sailed Doris told him of her plans for Veteran Homes. "There will be a real need for homes for Veterans and their families and I plan to option some land near a main highway that I think can be used to make those homes. I think the government will help veterans buy homes too. I think I can make money doing this."

"I thought real estate people just sold homes. "

"No, we sell dreams."

They made love. Doris asked him if it would be OK to have another child. He smirked, " Well, at last I am being asked about getting pregnant. That's a change." He said yes.

When he thought about it, life was pretty good. He had a job he liked where he would be designing and creating the planes of the future. Doris got along very well with the wives of the Convair executives. He was vaguely aware that this was a considerable asset in moving up the ladder. Angie would not have accepted teas and social gatherings. She would have insisted on living where she could teach. Theirs

was supposed to be a 50/50 relationship, her needs as important as his. San Diego would have been possible only if she found the job she liked. What about her child, Michael. She had easily abandoned him. What kind of mother for his children would she have made? Was it better to have a mother who knew the history of the Crusades or one that loved her children fully and without reservation. And loved her husband and her home too.

Besides Doris had developed a nice maturity since their divorce. She certainly was no slouch or retard. She had built a small fortune back in Dodge City with that divorce settlement. She was planning housing developments and spoke wisely about the future of their adopted state. She was actually better looking now than she had been in 1939 and she was always advising her friends about fashions. On dates she always looked stunning. In restaurants not only the men, but the women too looked at her. They had docked at the most exclusive yacht clubs and she had always looked fantastic, dressed to make heads turn. Many persons came over to introduce themselves to the new couple. At some places they had little choice but to remain over and spend the day on some large yacht.

He appreciated that Doris had done a great job on the house, though you always tripped over some toys or baby things. The washing machine and dryer never stopped running! He must remember to buy that house from the corporation. Though they could afford a more expensive home they liked the neighborhood, the neighbors were their age and their friends. Best of all he enjoyed being a father.

As the wind filled his sails he enjoyed the wind in his hair and the smell of fresh air. Today they docked at Catalina. With the war on, this had been the number one place to sail to from Los Angeles. He gladly accepted an invitation to hunt for wild boar. He was an expert marksman from his ranching days.

When they returned sunburned and rested from the month long vacation, his first order of business was to buy Doris some jewelery. He had become conscious that he had never bought her any when they visited the exclusive yacht clubs and saw the rings and necklaces of the wealthy. He hesitated to ask her what happened to the ring he had given her when they first become engaged. With the second marriage he had just gone out and bought a wedding band for her.

That Saturday they had their next door neighbor baby sit and they shopped for an engagement ring for Doris. This was fun. Doris kept asking for a 10 carat, getting looks from the store clerks and finally she saw a 4 carat that she fell in love with. She would let him buy this on one condition. If he would let her buy him a wedding band. Yes, he loved her, loved the children, and so on; still, there were other she-wolves out there. Why take a chance?

### Management

By 1946, life became hard for Wil. He wasn't being paid 35,000 for his looks. As the war wound down, experienced executives with all kinds of degrees were showing up, some using management language he didn't understand. As soon as he finished supper he had to hit the books. He began bringing work home with him. He was determined to succeed. Office politics was very hard. The returning veterans were aware he was the fair haired son who had two or three years advantage over them. He had worked at the corporation learning the ropes and establishing friendships while they were dodging bullets. Occasionally they reminded themselves he had been a decorated officer, a combat fighter pilot. When Wil become aware of these political maneuvers he redid his office with pictures of his war exploits, frames of his commendations, medals and models of his fighter aircraft. He began to designate his rank, Commander US Navy Reserve. He was required to keep his reserve status and saw no reason not to. San Diego was a military town with officer's clubs, movies, post exchange stores and reunion activities. For the present he had to postpone the sail boat.

Maybe life on the ranch might not have been so bad he mused after a meeting in which some of his plans were shot down. He thought he had presented his ideas and reasons properly and had been sure of success. But the other method which he was against was accepted over his.

His fatigue was quite evident to Doris, and she worried. Wil was not accustomed to failure or not to have his ideas praised. What should she do?

She too was having difficulty. She was too busy with the children to go out and sell real estate directly. The plot of land she had tried to option had been sold

out from under her and she finally realized that when she found something worth while, the broker she was working with, would buy it himself or through an agent, figuring if Doris thought it was that good, he should invest his own money instead. She thought of killing the bastard, but hesitated because her children needed a mother.

Doris asked Christine to come to San Diego, it was important. It was now 1947. Doris had had a second child, a boy now nearly a year old. Christine was now a grandmother with three grandchildren and she loved to visit. When Christine arrived Wil had no time to go out to supper with them. Over the weekend he stayed in his room working.

Doris said, “Christine, see what is happening? Wil just isn’t cut out for management. He is working day and night non- stop. He is developing indigestion. He doesn’t sleep well either. One of the reasons for taking this job was so that we could go sailing every weekend. Since 46 we have sailed once. I know what I should do but I don’t have the courage to do it.

“What is that,” asked Christine .

“I want him get a different kind of job, one where he works 9 to 5 and comes home and spends evenings with his kids and me. I don’t think he is cut out for a desk job and moving up the corporate ladder. Heck, he doesn’t know corporate balance sheets, net profit or fundamental analysis. He is well liked and they want him to move to the higher levels of management, but he isn’t happy. He is struggling to keep up and I am afraid it may kill him. There are plenty of slots in the company – design, manufacturing, etc. He loves and understands planes, let him work there. I know he is afraid it will be a step down from his current salary, but who cares? I can easily make good money in real estate and he still has that 500,000 that is doing just fine. As a matter of fact, I could sell my Dodge properties and pocket half a million.

Christine knew Doris had analyzed the situation perfectly. She was aware of how little time he spent with the children. Doris was right.

That night she knocked on the library door where Wil worked. She was dismayed to see the pile of papers all over the desk, floor and the brief case bulging with more papers. Wil looked bleary eyed.

“Wil, I am your mother and I need to talk to you. You aren’t even 30 and you are working yourself to death. You aren’t enjoying life, your kids or your wife. Let’s do something about this. “

“Like what, retire and live off your handouts?”

‘No, but my second husband gave up the corporate ladder to do what he enjoyed doing. So did my third husband. Are you enjoying what you are doing? ‘

Will looked at his mass of papers and said, “No.”

“Then you need to switch to something you do enjoy. I happened to look at the help wanted column for Convair. There are pages and pages of job openings. Why don’t you try to find one that will make you happy. This way its no fun for you or your family.”

Will said with dejection, “And admit I am a failure?”

Christine shot back, “No, no it has nothing to do with success or failure. Just because you aren’t good as a baseball batter doesn’t mean you are a failure. Lots of athletes fall by the wayside from injuries or insufficient talent. Doesn’t mean they aren’t good people. I think the top brass at Convair set a goal for you and you are trying so hard not to disappoint them. But is that the means to a happy life?

He looked away. “I’ll think about it.”

She moved closer to him. “No, think about it now. When did you go sailing? Where is the boat you were going to buy? When did you play a game with Michael or Hillary? When did you last go out with the guys and just plain have fun? “

Wil tried to explain. “Mother you don’t understand. Climbing the corporate ladder takes work, maybe 19 hours a day.”

She punched in her words. “Fine if that is what you want out of life, a big desk and a big title and a big house. Or do you want fun, happy children and a happy home? C’mon Wil, admit it. You just don’t want to have failed at something and you don’t want to disappoint the brass here.”

Will did feel a failure when he said, “So I quit and settle for a lower standard of living? “

Christine kept a staccato going. “When is the last time you had friends over for a barbeque? I looked at your grill, I don’t think its ever been used.” She decided she had battled him enough. “Well, think about it.”

Wil knew that Christine was right. He was certainly not having fun. What was the point of slaving away, fearing failure, when he could be doing something fun and loving it? Besides all the self help books he had read said, you will succeed if you find a work you enjoy.

Do what? Be a poet? Not much pay there and certainly not much talent. Teach flying? There was a glut on the market of expert pilots looking to do that. He was only 30, with a family, why kill himself? He could always go back to the corporate world later. The goal now was to have fun. But how?

Christine decided that seduction was the best approach. There was a boat show in town and she insisted on going there with Wil. It was the first boat show since the War and the crowd was especially huge. They spotted a used 28 foot sail boat, with a nice indoor cabin where the kids could be safe. Christine pumped the salesman – and would the three kids be safe and amused in the cabin? Absolutely, he replied. The eating table can be folded to make room for toys and here is a storage place to keep toys and coloring books. The cabin can be divided so that the kids are in one area and the folks in the other and they can’t get out except through the parents cabin. Wil had wandered to another exhibit.

How much?

Only 9,000.

Can you get us a berth?

“ She is already berthed at Mission Bay so you just continue to keep it there.”

OK, I’ll take it. Let’s make out the papers.

“Wil, come here.” She handed him the keys. “Happy birthday. Its yours.”

“But, but I don’t have time for a boat. It’s beautiful and I appreciate what you are doing but...”

**“Wil, sometimes you have to adapt. You want to sail. You have a boat. Now, adapt to having fun with it. “**

**The salesman showed how to keep the children safely inside or even outside the cabin. They reviewed the sails, the rudder, and any new gadgets that might make sailing safer. Soon the bill had run to 11,000 and was climbing. Now Wil wouldn't leave the boat.**

**After they left the show, Wil said, “Mom you are an evil manipulator.“**

**‘So, sue me.’**

**“You know damn well I will change jobs just so I can sail.“**

**“Good for you. Look, you have a bit of seniority at the company, even with the air force you have been there almost 5 years. Why not take 3 months off, get the boat ship shape, and that will clear your mind. As soon as you are free, I will come here or Mrs. Hornsby will, and take the kids so you and Doris can take time on the boat.**

**When he told Doris of Christine's seduction, she was overjoyed. She was confident that Wil would find a proper niche that wouldn't require his working 18 hours a day.**

**Wil was surprised when the company easily agreed with Wil's plans and would pay him 2 months full pay of the 3 months hiatus.**

**He spent days with Michael cleaning and repainting the boat. He applied the same creative thinking he had used for improving airplanes to improving his boat. Doris and he could go for long sails because either of the Grandmothers were happy to baby sit.**

**The three months passed quickly and when he returned and reported for work, he was directed to a new department for experimental design. He was to be part of a team to look into radical new concepts of aviation – private corporate jets, narrow winged planes, retractable winged planes, and especially very short runway planes. New electronic devices were coming into production which had direct application to new aircraft and his team was to create uses for them. He loved his work.**

### 1946 Las Vegas

Christine had been aware that gambling had been legalized in Nevada and had been planning to visit. She went there alone in 46, and when she arrived, she went straight to the recently opened Flamingo before she even had a room.

Once she sat down at the poker table all thoughts of grandchildren, investing, cattle or even Wil left her. She even ignored it when a famous movie star passed by. She played non-stop for almost 6 hours but realized she was tired and needed to get a room to sleep in. But the Flamingo was full, and she asked the desk clerk for a recommendation. Just then a man dressed rather flashy approached and said, "Did I hear you wanted a room?"

"Yes, she said. Unfortunately this place is full."

"Nonsense. I would like you to stay here as my guest, room and meals on the house. The way you play poker is like watching a true artist working." He signaled the clerk and told him to open one of the suites reserved for Hollywood royalty. He handed her his card and said, "Just show this card for meals and drinks. Please have a nice time. "

She stared at the card, Benjamin Siegel, Flamingo Hotel.

As he walked away, she asked the clerk, "Who is that? "

"Oh,' answered the clerk," it's his hotel."

Later, the murder of Bugsy Siegel was the main topic of conversation for months in Las Vegas. The mayor and the council thanked the powers that be that the murder occurred in Beverly Hills, where it wouldn't soil the reputation of their fair city. Christine was saddened at the death of someone who had showed her every courtesy.

Christine tried to get to Vegas about once or twice a month. Since she had money, she primarily played for fun and to extend her skills. Besides there were plenty of nice men in Vegas – but some not so nice.

On her first night in November 47 at the Flamingo, she sat near a good looking man who looked to be in his late 40's. Whenever he lost a hand to Christine he would moan and groan about losing to a woman, but at least it's a pretty woman. After about an hour, he left his seat and came to her.

**“Look, you have won all my money and now I haven’t anything left to get supper with. You don’t suppose you would use some of your winnings to buy a poor man a bite to eat?”**

**She had been amused by his banter and so she jokingly agreed to buy him a peanut butter sandwich. They introduced themselves – he was Rudolph Sims, and he came to Vegas often.**

**“Oh thank you, thank you! I won’t have to go hungry tonight after all. Maybe they will let me have a bit of jelly with that? “**

**They got a table at the deluxe dining room, ordered champagne and steaks and had a delightful time. When the check came, Rudolph insisted on paying and simply signed the check. Apparently he was known. This made an impression on Christine.**

**Directly he asked if she would like to come to his room for a night cap. As she deflected this request with a light joke, she felt that tingle that told her to fold or leave, so she said she was sorry but she was meeting her daughter-in-law this evening and said good night and thanks for dinner. Tomorrow I will let you win to get back the cost of tonight’s meal.**

**The next night he did sit next to her and made the evening quite pleasant. This evening she wasn’t fully concentrating on her game but still managed to win. Surprisingly Rudolph won a fair amount of money.**

**He said, “See you have bought me luck and now I owe you dinner.” This time they took a taxi to one highly recommended restaurant. When they returned to her hotel, he asked to sit with her at a table in the lounge and ordered drinks – hers was a chilled martini and his a Black Russian.**

**As they settled comfortably he said, “Christine, I see you have a real feel for cards, but I don’t see you making real money. How would you like to make real money playing cards?”**

**This sounded interesting and she said, “How do I do that?”**

**“Did you notice there was a plainly dressed woman at our table and a really non-descript man on my left?**

**“No not really. “**

**“Right, that’s the point, you don’t notice them. They are part of my group. We simply signal each other what cards we each have and that tells me what the odds are of getting the cards I want. We were working tonight. Notice how much I won? \$14,300 isn’t bad for a few hours of fun. I would like you to join us. I will teach you the signals and the methods and you can easily make 5,000 an evening.”**

**Rudolph had picked the wrong person for his scheme. One thing Christine knew and that was cards. She knew that this scheme would be found out sooner or later. She knew that the more people involved in a scheme the sooner it would be found out. She further knew that Rudolph didn’t seem to be that bright. Then too, she realized that when Rudolph would be caught, the mob that ran the casino would not be polite about asking for their money back. Besides, she didn’t need to cheat in order to win.**

**“I am really flattered that you would ask me, but unfortunately I must return to my home to look after the grandkids, but I do thank you for thinking of me.” With that she arose and quickly departed. That night she worried that having been seen with Rudolph those two nights, they might think she was part of the plan when it was discovered. She cut her visit short and left next morning and didn’t return for a month. When she did, she didn’t see Rudolph or his associates. She hoped he was all right but wondered.**

**In February 1948 Doris called Christine all excited. She and Wil had been to Nellis Air Force Base on some sort of Air Force reunion and while there had visited the Flamingo Hotel. They had a ball there, and Wil seemed to have inherited some of Christine’s skill at gambling, as he won several thousand dollars. Doris was sure that the entire city of Las Vegas would boom because of the legalized gambling and its proximity to Los Angeles. She had seen several plots of dirt fronting the main highway and was sure this would be a fantastic investment. She wanted to meet her there to look at real estate. So, Christine came to Las Vegas to shop for dirt.**

**During the day she and Doris checked out empty lots for sale. None were cheap. After Doris went home, her real estate agent suggested buying one of the motels already built; she could rent it out, including the gambling part, and have an income while waiting for the lot to appreciate. She did find a one story hotel on a**

huge lot, complete with a casino. The place was somewhat dingy, she choked on the cigar smoke that clouded the air. To put it mildly, the place was run down, but was on a substantial lot and since it was on the same street as the Flamingo, was in a good location. There also happened to be an adjacent lot with an auto repair shop on it, that was littered with abandoned cars far to the rear. She had Doris fly in.

“Look, you have a real estate license and you can negotiate for the sale of the hotel and the auto repair lot. Then you can share in the commission or finders fee.” Doris protested that she wasn’t licensed in Nevada. “But this town is so loose, I doubt that matters.” Doris concluded the sale of both properties and split the commission with the agent.

The run down hotel did come with a gambling license. Doris and Wil and indeed the real estate agent had all assumed that Christine was buying the two lots and would rent the places out while awaiting for the lots to appreciate. Much to everyone’s dismay, Christine set about to have the casino license transferred to herself. Doris and Wil didn’t worry because they assumed she would never qualify because she was inexperienced and had no significant financial background. It was understood that a casino license was backed by many millions, not by cattle. Much to everyone’s astonishment, she sent in her application and it was accepted! In less than four weeks she received notice of the license transferred to her name! Apparently the gambling commission was only too happy to grant a license to someone “as pure as snow” as she was, after going through a minimal background check.

When she told Wil and Doris her plans to renovate and expand the casino they were aghast. “Mother, there are gangsters running that town and running the gambling. You can’t do this.”

“Nonsense. Just think, I can be a card dealer and not be called a whore. I can gamble day and night and not lose any social status or be embarrassed. I feel that I have prepared for this all my life. Besides, you know I usually win at poker.”

“But you will be competing with the Flamingo! “

“That’s right. I spent time there – all free – and I see what brings in the customers. Actually I plan to make my place even more luxurious.”

**“What about money for all this? “**

**“Actually I plan to cash in the ranch. This seems like a good time to do this. That plus the insurance from Jackson will provide a comfortable cushion.“**

**All night the arguments raged until Wil and Doris could think of no other reasons to discourage this venture.**

**Wil, “ You should have a partner in this.”**

**Christine: “Yes but the only partners I can find are the gangsters. There are several wealthy ranch owners I know I can hit for backing.”**

**“You don’t know anything about running a casino, a hotel, or an auto repair shop.”**

**“Oh there is no shortage of managers I can import from outside.”**

**The next morning Wil again argued in vain to convince Christine to change her plans. He used every skill he had learned in management, he had even prepared a chart that listed with bullets**

- You have never run a hotel.**
- You have never run a casino.**
- You have never had experience in even running a restaurant.**
- Las Vegas is controlled by crooks and mobsters.**
- In a single night of gambling you could lose every cent you own.**
- Everyone knows that any renovation, any repairs, can only be accomplished by bribes.**
- Even if your casino is 100% successful, you could still end up in a ditch if the criminals decide you are hurting their business.**
- In one night you could not only lose all the money you have, but end up in debt that you couldn’t pay and be bankrupt.**
- You DON’T NEED TO DO THIS.**

**It was all in vain. Wil worried. “She is running wild like a train without brakes going down a steep incline. I wish you or I could be there to help her. “**

**“Well, Chrisee is a smart woman. Look how she plotted and succeeded in getting the ranch. It is hers, after all, you don’t want it, so she really is free to spend her money and time as she wants to.” Wil was again annoyed that sometimes Doris**

sided with Christine. He wondered, how often does the mother-in-law become the wife's best friend?

Christine was fully aware that every argument Wil had made was true. She was doing the same thing she had done in Boston when the desire to take the risk, to feel fully alive, to flaunt society had overcome her. But, instead of being a social outcast in Boston, here in Las Vegas she could be murdered! She shrugged, she would accept the risk. Besides, getting the license transferred had been quite easy!

By November repairs and renovation were well on their way. She had visited managers at the Flamingo frequently and they had been generous in advising her on placement of poker tables, slot machines and roulette wheels. Surprisingly many persons were happy to advise her on supplies and hiring. The biggest surprise was how courteous and even helpful the various fire, building, sanitation and other inspectors were. When the drainage from the kitchen was proved to be inadequate, the inspector suggested an inexpensive pump device. When one structural wall was declared not strong enough, the inspector got some workers to come in and place metal bands around the poles for only \$100. The slot machine company, the gaming table companies, the kitchen equipment companies – even the rug companies were extremely liberal in extending credit with only a small down payment. Christine was beginning to suspect that all this was too easy. Even owning thousands of acres, no one had extended that kind of credit to her. Even the fencing materials had to be paid in advance before delivery. She avoided telling others of her success for fear they would find her a braggart.

One day an elderly gentleman, grey hair with trimmed mustache, distinguished looking, with a French accent joined her. He spoke to her in French and she answered confidently in that language.

“I see you are planning to outshine Monte Carlo?”

“Not quite, but close.”

“I wonder if you pay your debts?”

Christine was startled, flustered, and asked, “What do you mean?” She wondered if he might be some crazy, but he seemed polished and cleanly dressed.

“Well, you still own me 10,000 francs that you promised to repay.”

Her jaw dropped open. This was Pierre Rochmont, who had started her on her fortune! “Pierre! Its you!”

“I should hope so. Of course I didn’t recognize your name, but the other dealers remarked on your style of poker playing and I observed you during my break. No one plays quite as well as you, if I do say so myself.

“You work at the Flamingo?”

“Yes, as a lowly card dealer.”

“You are a long way from the Paris Stock Market.”

“I had better be. If I showed up there I would be shot.”

She hesitated. “I did try to call you but ....”

“Yes, I was in hiding for almost a year but finally gave myself up and served 4 years. Imagine my taste for wine and food and living on jail food. Somehow I didn’t die.“

“What happened after that?”

Pierre: “Of course my wife and children disowned me. I found little that I could do, no one of course would allow me to deal in stocks. So, after the war I came here and landed a job as a dealer at the Flamingo. They like me because of my fancy accent and because I don’t get drunk. These Americans, they don’t take wine, but they drink themselves into a stupor so that they can’t work. Strange.”

They chatted a while. Christine guessed his age to be more than 70, but he did have an erect bearing. No paunch either, she suspected it might be because he was poor. He asked to join her for lunch. He didn’t have a car so she called for him at one of the seedier motels and drove to a hotel downtown famous for its French cuisine.

Yes he missed Paris, the opera, plays, excitement but after jail without money, that part of his life was over. They spent a delightful afternoon reminiscing about Paris in the old days. He told stories about war time Paris. He told her that he had been secretly in the underground. He boasted, “ By the time the Americans came to Paris, all the red carpets were laid out for them.”

Well, she had been his mistress and he had treated her splendidly. She did owe him and so she offered him a job in her casino which he accepted. He got busy

supervising the remodeling work. He had excellent taste in decorating and did a fine job in working with the remodeling crew.

Christine had been concerned about the extensive remodeling. She had heard horror stories about the unions striking for better pay or bribes, but none of this had happened to her. Was it because of her personality or because Pierre knew how to handle these workers? Frankly she was accustomed to the electricians not showing up for days at the ranch, or the wood not being delivered for the fences. Here everything went smoothly. What was her secret when other hotel owners told sordid tales of grief? The various inspectors came and went, no problem. Oh there was one, the air conditioning was inspected and found improperly installed. But it was fixed right away by the company without any extra charge. Not to complain of course.

Her excitement grew as the day for opening the New Ranch Casino drew close, in time for the Christmas rush. Expenses she had never dreamed of kept cropping up. When she needed money she drove several short blocks to the Flamingo and gambled just enough to get the funds she needed.

Soon she was unwelcome by the new owners of the Flamingo. No more free drinks or food either. Even the parking attendant told her there wasn't any more room for her car.

Miffed at this, she contacted Phillip Silverman, one of the local reporters and promised him a story that would back up his frequent tirades about the gangster element taking over the town. He sat in her car as the parking was refused. He was with her when the floor manager rudely told her to please leave the premises. Phillip promised enthusiastically to write this up as an example of mob rule of the city.

Christine waited. Days and finally two weeks passed by, no story. She called and left messages for Silverman to call her, but he never did. Obviously he had been gotten to by the mobsters.

Finally the story did appear in a local throw away paper in a suburb of San Diego, written by a friend of Doris's – how the Flamingo Casino kept out persons

who might win at their games, but no one of any consequence followed up on the story.

### **An Offer You Can't Refuse**

**Joe and Mr. Jason Longdon showed up at 2 that fateful day, September 4, 1948, a week before opening of the New Ranch Casino and Hotel. They brusquely sat down where she was seated at a table with Pierre, without an invitation.**

**Joe was big, with big hands and a big head. Muscles bulged from his ill fitting suit. Mr. Longdon resembled the Edward G. Robinson Hollywood version of the sharp smooth talking attorney – which is exactly what he was.**

**“ Mrs Samuels I have here papers for you to become equal partners with Avenue Partners. Avenue Partners have provided special services to you including fast approval of your gambling license and free reign to build your casino. In return Avenue requires 51% of the casino and hotel. “ He paused as Joe casually struck his right clenched fist into his left palm and glared at her threateningly.**

**“And if I don't sign?”**

**Jason looked about and sighed, “ I can see, just by a casual inspection a dozen fire and safety violations that demand that your casino stay closed until inspectors are convinced of the safety of your patrons,” he paused, then looked at Joe, “ and yourself. “**

**Pierre whispered to her, “ I expected this. This is how business is done here. You better sign.” She glared at him, her mind racing. Now it was clear – the speedy license, the builders and workers efficiently working with no request for bribes or “considerations.” All this time they had been building her casino for the crooks to take over. She must stall for time. Again Pierre started to whisper to her but she turned to Mr. Longdon and said: “ Mr/ Longdon, may I ask what is your birth sign?“**

**For the first time Longdon no longer had that cool confident face. “What?” he said.**

**“You know, are you Leo or Aeries or ? I need to know this so I know how to answer you. When were you born?”**

Somewhat disarmed, thinking this woman was more stupid than he had been led to believe, he said, “ I was born December 17. “

“Ah, that explains it, “ she murmured. Well, in that case since it is September 4 today, we must wait 5 days before I can give you an answer. By that time your stars will be in alignment. You can leave your papers here for me to go over. “

“No that won’t do. You won’t be able to open September 18, you know, unless you do sign. “

“Will that be fire or building deficiency? “

Longdon gathered his papers and rose, and at the same time Joe came closer and towered over the 5 foot 9 lawyer. Longdon said to her, almost sympathetically, “Please, Mrs Samuels, this is really in your best interest, I assure you.“

Christine couldn’t stand Pierre’s constant urging her to sign now. He repeated: She would avoid trouble, she would make out just fine as a part owner, the mob treated persons who cooperated well, he didn’t want anything to happen to her. She left him and hurried to her apartment to think.

All her planning, her hopes and dreams. The New Ranch was just beautiful, something she had created, her baby. She couldn’t just give it away, but how could she fight this?

#### Taken for a ride.

Completely distressed, she suddenly remembered Barry Thomas, one of Wil’s neighbors she had met at a children’s birthday party, who was an FBI agent. She had enjoyed meeting him and had found him to be a delightful person. They had agreed on how to educate children. She recalled his name and put in a call through the hotel operator to the San Diego FBI. When she reached Barry Thomas, she explained what had happened, how the criminals wanted to take The New Ranch away from her, how she had been threatened, and could the FBI help her? Barry asked a few questions and said, “Look Mrs. Samuels, you must leave Vegas immediately. Frankly you are in real danger there. These mobsters don’t take no for an answer. Now listen carefully. You are to tell no one, and I mean no one anything. You must tell no one that you are taking the next plane to Los Angeles

and I will meet you there and bring you to Wil's house. I don't want you to even pack a suitcase, just take a purse. Take a cab straight to the airport and wait there. Take the first plane you can to get out of town. Tell me what you are wearing. She described a green dress, green shoes and carrying a grey linen jacket.

Take a large purse. What does yours look like?

She described a leather beige purse with a shoulder strap.

Please wear these from now on. Promise? She was distressed at leaving and wondered how much time she had, so she asked the operator to check on the next flight to Los Angeles and learned it would be in two hours.

As soon as Barry hung up he called the Vegas office of the FBI and rapidly related to Agent Jes Farrington his concern and asked him to rush to the hotel and make sure she did get to the airport. He recommended that he take a second along and to be well armed.

Pierre had given orders to the hotel operators to tell him about any phone calls and he learned about the call to FBI in San Diego. Then the desk told him about the plane to Los Angeles. Then he called Mr. Jones in Chicago for instructions.

As Christine exited the lobby she found Pierre apparently waiting for her. Pierre said, "Can I drop you somewhere?" She answered, "Yes, to the airport." He opened the passenger door to help her in and got into the drivers seat. "Sure is hot today, he said, with some strain to his voice. As the blue Ford pulled away, a black Chevrolet that had been modified for speed followed them.

As they headed west on the Strip she noticed Pierre was perspiring, despite the air conditioning. She would have asked if he was all right but her mind was in too much of a turmoil. Could she hold on to the New Ranch if the FBI helped her fight the crooks?

Pierre turned right onto a little used road. "Pierre, the airport is to the left you know."

In a somewhat choked voice, hard to hear, he said, "Yes, I hope you don't mind, I have to pick something up, it will only take a minute." Soon they were several miles into stark empty desert. Nothing could be seen for miles. Christine

began to worry. “Pierre, turn this car around right now, or I will be late for my plane. “

“Its just one minute more, I swear. Then she saw it – two black sedans parked off the road onto a trail leading nowhere. Realization struck her and she shouted, “ Pierre turn the car around and I will give you 100,000 cash. “ He murmured, “What good would it be to someone dead?”

Her blood turned cold, she reached over to turn the steering wheel but couldn't manage it. Despite her efforts, he jerked the wheel and steered the car between the two black sedans. In an instant both front doors were flung open and Joe climbed into the back seat and said, “I have something for you to sign and right now. She knew it would make little difference whether she signed or not she would be dead either way, but the gambler in her persisted. She said, “Look Joe, we both know you are going to kill me whether I sign or not, but if I sign your boss will be happier. What say we cut the cards. If you win, I sign, if I win, I do whatever it takes to keep from signing. She didn't know why but she felt it best to delay as much as possible.

“You got cards?” Joe asked in a puzzled voice. Pierre stared in puzzlement. The two other mobsters were looking at a fast approaching car.

“Of course,” she said as she reached to open the glove compartment. “Oh no you don't,” he yelled and grabbed her shoulders to prevent her from reaching for a possible gun.

Jes Farrington was viewing the area with powerful binoculars while Agent Hugh Barlow drove, “ Oh oh, they have taken her for a desert burial. Let's go and give her the siren. Immediately Hugh put the accelerator to the floor while Jes called county police for back up. With sirens and horns blaring the black Chevrolet speeded to the spot . Joe heard the sirens and jumped out of the back seat of Christine's car and into his and followed the two hoods as they sped away. Pierre stood petrified for a moment not daring to look at Christine, and then headed across the empty desert, barely able to walk, much less run in the soft sand. Jes shouted to Christine, “ Are you all right? “

She shook her head, barely able to talk where Joe had grabbed her neck and shoulders and nodded and croaked, "Sure."

Jes called the dispatcher at the county sheriff's office and suggested a roadblock ahead of the speeding sedans. But there was only a single car with two deputies available. They waited behind their car as the sedans approached and gunfire was exchanged. The driver of the first car was struck and he lost control and slammed into a telephone pole, killing both. Joe took advantage of the gunfire and managed to crash and move the patrol car out of the way and drive off with Jes behind, but the FBI men had to stop to give assistance to one of the sheriffs who had been wounded, and also to check if the two gangsters were still alive. They were not. Jes left his deputy Hugh Barlow there and sped back to Christine. He checked her bruise marks – neck and shoulders – and shuddered to realize he had almost been one minute too late. A short distance ahead, in the naked desert, he could see Pierre Rochmont struggling to make progress in the uneven sand. He decided to wait for help which came shortly and sent two police after the man. After 20 minutes of struggling in the sand, Pierre had given up and sat in the sand. When the police came his pulse was beating at about 140/minute and the police more or less assisted and half carried him back to the waiting police cars. Jes immediately gave him water and put him in the air conditioned car. He needed Pierre alive for information.

After consulting with Jes, the Las Vegas placed Pierrre under arrest for kidnapping and attempted murder.

When Christine finally got her voice back, she sadly said, "Pierre, how you have descended and become so low, from a stock thief to betray your friend and old mistress, how could you? This is the lowest thing any person could do, you are disgusting." She spat at his feet. Later she would find out she was wrong; he had done much worse than betray a mistress.

Later Jes arranged for an FBI plane to fly her directly to San Diego. But the reunion with her family was brief. Barry Thomas thought it best to hide her and so she was whisked away to a hidden location.

Pierre knew he was in trouble. If he told what little he knew, the gang would kill him. If he didn't tell anything, he might stay in jail indefinitely and be killed in jail. He decided to stay mum and see if the mob's famous lawyer could help him.

Next day when they went before Judge Christopher Wright, Pierre was represented by a lawyer, Phillip Cruthers, known to work hand in hand with the mob. He was requesting bail.

"Your honor, this man has no criminal record. He has no money, doesn't make more than a few hundred a month mostly on tips. Even if he wanted to leave Vegas he doesn't have the money to do so. And the evidence here is very slim, Despite what this agent, " he looked with scorn on agent Farrington," claims, the truth is that he got lost in the desert and stopped to ask directions and there was an attempted robbery. He ran away from this agent because he thought he was one of the robbers."

Before Farrington could object the judge said, "Since we have no witness here to say otherwise, I will grant bail at \$500. Phillip Cruthers expected to hear howls of protest from Farrington and was surprised when none came. He then smirked at Farrington and turned to Pierre to congratulate him.

Farrington rose quietly and said, "Your honor, I have here a warrant and demand for detention for Mr. Pierre Rochmont from the FBI.

Judge Wright looked in surprise. "On what charge?"

"Mr. Rochmont lied when he entered the US in 1945. He said he had no criminal record. He spent 4 years in prison in France for Stock Fraud. He is also wanted in France for the murder of Isabella Monte. During the trials of the Nazis it was learned that Mr. Rochmont was working for the Nazis. He infiltrated the resistance movement and was responsible for the deaths of at least 20 patriots he reported on to the Germans. In addition he personally murdered Isabella Monte who uncovered the truth and was about to turn him in as the informant. Actually there is more to the crimes for which he is wanted in France, but he must be kept in jail until such time as his transfer to France can be arranged. Pierre looked pale, his attorney muttered some objections, but even the judge, beholden to the mob as he was, couldn't come up with an excuse to set Pierre free.

Detective Constantine now stood up. “Your honor, this man is involved in an attempted mob killing. I have no doubt that the mob will try to kill him to shut him up. I request that he be placed in a solitary cell and protected from other inmates. The judge muttered, Yes, yes so ordered.” Judge Wright was almost relieved that Pierre would be jailed. He strongly regretted doing the Mob’s bidding, but what could he do, now that he was no longer the pure and honest judge of the past.

Months ago he was trying a petty crook for assault. It was a day after being told that he might need surgery for his enlarged prostate. He was only half listening to the prosecuting attorney who kept giving endless details of how this crook, Pete Mathews, was a tool of the mob, was tied into local gambling, his previous arrests. Then he said in a clear affirmative voice, “ Your honor, you MUST find him guilty. You MUST sentence him to the maximum allowed by law.”

He cursed, HE was the judge, he didn’t need some young attorney barely out of school telling him what he MUST do. In his anger he declared “I find this man guilty and sentence him to 3 months in jail.”

Nearly everyone in the courtroom was dumbstruck including Pete Mathews’ own defense attorney. The single news reporter here to cover an unimportant case, looked questioningly at Judge Wright, but he had already left the bench.

Two days later, there was a knock on his apartment door. When he opened it, there was this beautiful full bodied woman, named Mary Belle. She said, “Hello, I am here as your birthday present. Happy birthday!” she said as she came in and kissed him with her full body. Her expensive perfume, her warm ample body had an immediate effect. He was too sophisticated to complain that it wasn’t his birthday. His mind was in such a whirl that he probably couldn’t have said what his birthday was anyway. She took off her coat, revealing a fabulous figure. She murmured, “ I feel a little chill. Do you mind if I get comfortable? “ She half led him to his bedroom, and got under the covers. “I still feel chilly, could you help me?” With little thought he got into bed with her and experienced pleasures he had only read about.

Afterwards she said, "Honey that was real nice. Would you mind if I came back tomorrow night?"

He could only murmur, "Sure."

Her name was Mary Belle. Nothing was spoken about the true reason for her coming to him, but of course he knew it was for favors to the mob. He wasn't a crooked judge, he kept saying that, but the pleasures Mary Belle gave him were far too thrilling, too pleasurable to resist. He wondered what they would do if they learned the real reason he had given Pete Mathews a light sentence? Better still, his doctor had declared that his prostate was shrinking! He complemented him on doing something right and expressed approval of getting enough sex.

He fervently hoped that the light sentence he had given Rochmont would keep Mary Belle coming. When he had tried to give her cash she had firmly refused; so he was limited to forcing jewelry on her. He desperately wanted to keep Mary Belle coming on a cash basis, not as a mob obligation but couldn't budge her. He sighed, more than one woman had been found buried in the desert by the mob for disobedience to the mob. Of course he was aware that someday he would be found out, a disgrace to his children, maybe even jailed, but he couldn't give up on Mary Belle's visits. He would never have done this for money, but now, having tasted unbelievable pleasure, he could no longer resist and indeed would do anything to continue in the Mob's good graces. Anyway, he figured, it was good for his health too!

Christine had given full details of the visit to her of Joe and attorney Jason Longdon, the mob lawyer who had asked her to sign over the casino. She had also explained that it was Joe who was there to intimidate her and who had tried to kill her. They called Longdon in to charge his as an attempted murderer.

"All I did was present an offer to buy Mrs Samuel's property."

"No, you were there with Joe, and when she wouldn't sign, you ordered Joe to kill her." We have witnesses and of course will produce Mrs. Samuels at the trial. Unless you would like to give us some real facts? Otherwise you are looking to at least life in jail. "

Longdon sweated. He knew that Mrs. Samuels, widow of a war hero, mother of a war hero, would make a devastating witness against him. Of course it was true that he never ordered her to be killed, in truth he had only brought the contract for a real estate transaction. But Joe had been there and Joe had almost killed her. They had a good case. He decided if he could make a deal now, while the FBI were more interested in the mob than in him, he might avoid jail. He negotiated with the FBI; he would name names, tell about his mob duties if he could be out on minimal bail and stay hidden. The FBI were more interested in the higher ups so they agreed. So, he named names and many were real surprises. He had direct access to the gaming commission! He told which judges were in his pocket and how much they received.

Jes had been amazed that Mrs. Samuels had been granted the gambling license overnight. Now he understood why. After a brief investigation, almost half of the Gambling Commission members resigned.

Pierre remained stubborn. Finally, Farrington had one of the staff of the French Embassy fly to Vegas. . It was pre-arranged that he was supposed to take possession of Pierre Rochmont to bring him to France. They agreed to play good cop/bad cop. The Frenchman, Clause Saibon was there to take the traitor/ murderer back to France. In hand and foot shackles, Pierre could barely move down the hall to a limousine waiting to whisk him back to France and justice. He sweated profusely, shaking every step of the way. Claude Saibon, spoke to him in French, cursing and teasing him of how a traitor would be treated and how disappointed he was that this vermin had spent time in such a nice comfortable cell. He was not to expect such comfort from now on. He fell several times. No one bothered to try to pick him up or assist him. Indeed Claude cursed him and swore at him and threatened to kick him in the balls if he didn't get up.

When Pierre saw Farrington he screamed, "I know who ordered her killed! I am your witness. Don't let them take me. " Farrington, playing the good cop to Claude's bad cop said, "Can't you see this is an old man? Why do you have to handcuff him so he can't walk? Those shackles are too tight, they are hurting him. He then proceeded to unshackle and uncuff him. Claude protested, "This traitor

belongs to me. I will handle him my way, not like you American sissies.” They argued for a while, Farrington finally convincing Claude that Pierre must remain so they could convict a murderer. After they learned who had hired Pierre, whom he had called about Christine, and who had directed him to the desert spot, they felt they had wrung him dry. However he remained in an isolated cell so he would be alive for the trial. Farrington insisted on personally taking Clause Saibon to dinner and then to the airport and offered to write a recommendation for him as being a great actor.

Once the brief meeting with her family in San Diego was finished, she was placed in Protective Custody. Once more she was dead to her previous life. No longer could she visit Wil and his family or her friends or her old ranch. Of course she could never return to Las Vegas either. This time Christine wasn't in as bad a place as she had been her first months in Dodge City. At least it was a good bed and no springs cut into her foot. But she was in a small suburban home fairly isolated with a radio and some books. She was not allowed to speak to neighbors, go shopping and only once every two weeks could she go to a beauty parlor and it varied as to towns. Again her gambling addiction had brought her to another kind of death – away from her ranch, her family, her grandchildren, her life. Every two weeks she could call her family but couldn't see them. She felt more in jail than if she had actually been locked up. At least there they had visiting hours. At first she hoped that after the trial she could resume her life as before. But as the weeks without trial dragged on, and she learned that there was a considerable reward out for her to be killed, she gradually accepted that her old life was gone again, just like in 1916 in Boston. She knew that her gambling obsession had once again ruined her. This time she accepted her obsession with a clear vision and even refused to play solitaire to pass away the boring hours while she anxiously waited for 10 o'clock so she could go to her restless sleep. Since she had plenty of time, and there was at least one and sometimes two men with her at the house, she demanded and got cook books and tried to make interesting meals. She peeled and prepared everything by hand and after several weeks was complemented on her cooking. Mostly she missed the grandchildren.

Wil had wanted the grandparents involved with his children. There was usually either Christine or the Hornsby's in the house being grandparents. He himself had not had grandparents and he became aware of what he had missed when he saw these grandparents enjoying the children, and the children appreciating them. But with Christine being in protective custody that grandparent was denied to his children. Of course it was much worse for Christine. She would stare at the pictures and dream of hugging them and kissing them and then cry because this was denied her through her own stupid actions. About once every 3-4 months she did spend an afternoon with Wil but that didn't fill the void in her life.

Finally after much begging and pleading a visit with the Grandchildren and Christine was arranged under great secrecy. But when Doris prepared to leave for the rendezvous, Hillary began vomiting, Michael developed a high fever, and the little one developed a rash and fever. Doris had to cancel but had no means of notifying anyone. Christine spent a fearful afternoon waiting in a drafty lady's room at a four star hotel and worried if the mob had gotten Doris and the children. Only the next day did she find out what had happened. She felt utterly frustrated at not being able to simply pick up the phone to ask how everyone was! Christine reminded herself a dozen times a day that, but for her gambling obsession she wouldn't be in this terrible situation.

For weeks after Christine's near death, Doris cried and blamed herself for Christine's terrible situation. She wailed, "I just thought she would buy some land! I had no idea she would decide to open a casino! Oh Wil, how could I have been so stupid. Wil, will you ever forgive me?" Wil felt some anger and did not comfort her.

The mob were doing everything possible to delay the trial. Fortunately the trial would be in Federal Court where judges were not subject to mob influence. The defense attorneys insisted on deposing her. Farrington knew this was a plot to find her location, so he had the defense attorneys blindfolded and driven to a house with a court reporter and Christine gave testimony and answered many questions meant to trick her. Prior to the trial date the defense attorneys pointed out that the deposition was illegal because the location where it took place did not appear on the transcript; therefore the trial had to be delayed a year. The judge asked

Farrington if he could put in a location. Farrington replied, "Of course your honor. The deposition took place in the American Desert." The judge accepted that and would not allow further trial delays.

At the trial Christine hoped that her past, being a mistress to Pierre, wouldn't come out. But the defense attorneys did bring it out and emphasized that she was a mistress who had been discarded and now made up this story just to get revenge on Pierre. For almost six hours he brought out that she had been married at the time she lived the life of a wealthy mistress in Paris.

"Were you unfaithful to your husband, Judge Samuels when you were in Paris with Pierre?" When she tried to explain he shouted answer yes or no!

"Was it for love or for money that you were unfaithful to you marriage vows?"

"Did you ever return to France to face charges of stock fraud?"

"Did you ever return the money you made off of the victims of the stock fraud?"

However on cross examination by the prosecuting attorney, he brought out how Pierre's criminal actions in France, his betrayal of his country to the Nazi's and now his betrayal to Christine made him the most despicable of characters. Finally after a 3 week trial, the three mob bosses involved in planning her murder were found guilty and convicted.

Wil and Doris had attended the trial to be with Christine as much as possible. Wil said very little when his mother was painted as a paid whore to Pierre. Besides, at this time his only thoughts were for her safety and well being. In the three years of her hiding he and the children and missed her. Even the Hornsby's had missed her!

After a brief visit with her family at a resort, Christine was again whisked away to hiding. She at least had a chance to explain to Wil the truth of Paris and Pierre. What she had done was done for him. But she again emphasized that she had loved Michael Samuels.

When the Korean war began Wil knew he would be called. Wil was in the reserves, so he could be called up at any moment. He was torn between wanting to insist on being called for duty so he could fly combat again, and his need to take care of his wife and his three children. With his experience and rank, there was little question of his being called to duty after June 25. Once the UN resolution of support for South Korea passed, every possible unit was activated including Wil's. June 24 he was sailing with his family in Mission Bay. July 25 he was flying sorties out of Japan and blowing up ammunition dumps or anything that looked like a promising target. There were air battles usually individualized that Wil won. He immediately reported that the Lockheed Shooting Star planes he was flying were inferior to the Soviet MIG-15 and repeatedly asked for North American F-86. As a result of his information these were provided. He could tell when he was flying against the North Korean pilots or the Soviet "Volunteers."

Wil was devastated when he learned that some of the pilots were now prisoners in North Korea. He hounded intelligence to attempt rescue missions but there were too many priorities of battles and invasions. When the Chinese attacked, all thoughts of rescuing the captured American pilots had to be abandoned.

Once more the navy thought Wil would be of more use back home. Besides he had flown far above the normal number of missions and had been in many engagements. By the end of 1952 he was rotated back and when peace negotiations ended the war in 1953 he was among the first to be discharged as a colonel.

During this time Christine knew he was overseas and in combat and worried constantly at not being there for Doris and the children. This was her punishment for being a gambler, to know that any news of Wil would be weeks in getting to her. Only once in '51 did she actually meet Doris without the children. Doris showed pictures and told stories, and after that visit she was further depressed.

For years Doris had taken care of the Las Vegas property. There were endless legal bills which she managed to get postponed until the property could be sold. There was the problem of transferring title – which by this time was clouded – to Wil and then from him to Doris so she could manage the process. Finally this complex transaction was finished in 1953 with a legitimate buyer for an excellent

price, but after all the expenses and bills there was relatively little cash left. Many of the bills were suspect, but Doris just didn't have the time and energy to fight them. Besides, only Christine knew if the bills were authentic and she wasn't available. There was a sour bitterness to realize that the millions Christine received for the ranch, the insurance, even her inheritance were essentially down the drain.

### **Michael's Mother**

In 1954 Michael was approaching 11 and never knew any mother or father other than Wil and Doris. After he was in bed, there was a nightly discussion about what to tell him, if anything. Angie had never written to inquire about him. She had never mailed a card or asked about him. Would it be wrong to tell him who his real mother was? Most of the doctors they consulted said he should be told, but when and how? What if someday Angie should show up and claim him? Although he sort of knew he had been adopted, he also knew that Wil was his father and never questioned that Doris wasn't his mother. Doris decided that he should be told matter of factly the entire truth along with the facts about sex. But what to say when he is told his biological mother in effect abandoned him? Doris decided that one of them must visit Angie and learn the truth.

They knew she was a history teacher at Rice University. Doris flew there and called the school to make an appointment to see her; she gave her name as Doris Samuels.

In the office, Angie was dressed in jacket and skirt, and very formal. Doris was a bit nervous, this was the woman that had turned Wil's head. In person she still looked attractive, though her hair was not sprayed or favorably fixed.

Doris brought her up to date on Michael and frankly told her the reason for her visit. She needed to tell Michael why his real mother had never come to visit.

Angie was silent for a moment and then told her story.

"I was intrigued with Wil and of course loved him after your divorce. Until Christine brought up the matter of having Wil's baby so she could have a living piece of him if he didn't survive, I had never really ever thought about children.

When I went to a christening for one of my friends, I never actually looked at the baby, all I could think of was now she is stuck, no more career for her.”

Doris cringed, this was making her feel uncomfortable.

“ Frankly I never associated having children with marriage. Besides Wil and I didn’t discuss marriage at all.

When Christine asked me to have Wil’s baby, we could hide me and then if I chose she would take the baby, I thought to myself, gee this would be a perfect opportunity to see if I really was cut out for motherhood or not.

Turns out I hated being pregnant. When the baby came I let Christine have him all to herself and I couldn’t wait to get away. When I got the offer from Rice to teach, I left the next day and when I got to Rice, frankly I only thought of the baby in terms of drying up my milk. I have thought about the baby at some times and I know now that my whole ambition, my whole life was to be a Professor like my father. That’s what I planned on since I was a little girl.“

Doris, “ And did you become a professor?”

Angie looked around the tiny office with small window overlooking a parking lot and laughed. “That’s the joke. Here in Texas it’s a man’s world. At first I thought I was being passed by because I was a woman. I railed and complained. But now I realize I actually don’t have the skills and abilities after all for a professorship.”

Did you marry?

Angie, “Marry?” No, I thought that would keep me back. Oh I slept with all the professors that might have helped me get promoted and all that. I did get to an assistant professorship, but now...”

Do you want to see Michael? I have some pictures.

Angie shrugged, “Sure, let’s see.” She casually glanced at the photos and politely said, “He looks like a fine boy.”

Doris, “Well you should know I was a real mother to Michael. After the divorce I sort of hung around the ranch to visit with him and pretty much took over raising him, taught him kid stuff and nursed him when he had a fever. I really loved him and he grew up with a mother’s love. After we remarried, he just accepted me

as his real mom. Now we feel we have to tell him something and need to give him an answer that won't hurt him as to his biological mother's absence. "

Angie, " You could tell him I died at birth."

Doris, "No, no lies please."

"Then tell him I knew he was getting all the love he needed from you and I felt that if I came into the picture, it would spoil that relationship."

Doris, "That sounds OK for a 10 year old. May I have a picture of you, say, when you were 20? The picture is for him of course."

"I'll have to stop by my room for that. Say I know what, as long as we are agreed on this, why don't I write him a letter and explain all this and enclose the picture. But please, don't bring him to see me. If you do I might start to have regrets."

Speaking of regrets, tell Wil I did realize that not coming to his reunion would hurt him, but I had decided that my career, my professorship meant more to me than he or any man could. Tell him I am sorry if I hurt him. I suppose part of that was the thought of being a rancher's wife, that, I guess might have been part of it too. How is the ranch?"

"Oh, there is no ranch. Wil works in aviation designing aircraft. He never did go back to ranching."

Angie, "Oh."

Both women stood up, shook hands, and Doris left the office. As she exited she became aware of just how small and cramped that office had been, almost small enough to suffocate someone.

When the letter and picture came, Michael read it carefully and looked at the picture and commented, " Good looking babe. Way to go dad!" Then he casually turned to Doris and said, "Mom, OK if I have milk and cake now before supper?"

#### Christine's Next New Life

Christine was given a new identity, social security number and passport. She still had access to money – indirectly and so rented an upscale furnished home in a Texas town. After two weeks of reading library books and looking into volunteer

work, she adopted a dog from the animal shelter. He was a mut, mix of beagle and something else, but something had clicked – that damn tingle again- when she saw him and she took him from the shelter. But he was in poor health and she visited the Veterinary clinic, with Dr. Kurt Shipp often. In conversation with his nurse, she learned that he was seeking a veterinary assistant. She had had plenty of experience with sick animals on her ranch and she decided to apply. Although she admitted to not having real experience as a Vet assistant, Dr Shipp had already observed her with her own dog and guessed she would be great with animals. However he warned her that he treated cattle. She told him she had lived on a ranch and was comfortable with that.

In a month she was settled in her job. There was gossip about how she could afford her nice rental house, her expensive car on her salary. Most assumed she had funds from a divorced former well fixed husband or one deceased from his insurance policy. 1953 she was still a young 56.

In the fourth month of her arrival there began a movement to allow a gambling casino to be established on a nearby Indian reservation. Christine was immediately involved to stop the casino being built or granted a license. She worked tirelessly handing out posters and handbills. She even paid for full page advertisements in the local throw-away paper against the project. Thanks to her efforts the casino was defeated.

After the votes were counted and a victory against the casino was announced, all the workers and volunteers met at the local Veteran's Hall for a celebration. While sipping cold punch and eagerly talking to her friend, she was flinging her left arm out to demonstrate a point and struck the punch cup of a nearby large burly man. As she recoiled in horror at what she had done, somehow in trying to protect himself he knocked her punch from her hand and it fell all over his pants. Red liquid stained his crotch and pants leg, as well as drenched his former white J.C. Penny shirt.

“Now why would you want to go and do that for?” he teased.

Christine apologized and apologized, ran to get napkins, blotted his shirt, but hesitated at his crotch.

“Say, little lady, I believe the shirt will have to do. “ Both smiled. “ Since you have ruined me, my clothes and my reputation, the least you can do is tell me your name. “ She kept apologizing and gave him the name that the FBI had chosen for her – Mary C Smith.

The man continued to tease her, and finally got her address so he could bring his shirt over for her to launder. He warned her that if the pants couldn't be saved, she would have to go with him to the store to buy a new pair. She assured him she would be happy to do so. She also insisted that the sooner he got out of his clothes and get them soaked, then the better chance there was of removing the stain. However he made no move to leave and continued to ask about her and tell her about himself.

He was a rancher, a widower, after being married for 20 years. His name was Richard Crumb. He had grown up in this one horse town. He was surprised by Mary's questions about his cattle, his water supply and his branding methods. “ How do you know so much about types of cattle and their diets?”

“Remember I am a veterinary assistant,” she insisted. They arranged for him to bring his shirt tomorrow night at 7, and not only would she wash and iron his shirt, but would prepare his supper as punishment for her spilling his punch.

They had a very pleasant evening and arranged for her to visit his ranch. Christine worried, this was like Deja Vu. But she found Richard pleasant to be with and quite a lot of fun.

When she drove into the ranch her heart almost sang – there were so many similarities to the Three Does – a similar ranch house with a wide wooden front porch, with rooms added like a v shape, the stable was similar. The difference was that here, in Texas, the land was quite flat.

It was clear to her that Richard was lonely, as was she and they began an easy relationship. The more she was with him the more she liked him and the feelings were mutual. Soon she insisted on making meals and put her three years of cook book study to good use. Then she gave up her rented house, and moved in with him. She left her job and devoted herself to helping Ralph with the ranch.

Sometimes she smiled at fate –after all these years she was a rancher’s wife at last! Still she ached at not being able to grandmother her grandchildren.

When Ralph asked her to marry him she wanted to say yes. But she knew that this was impossible. So she laughed about it. He became annoyed and insistent. He was a pretty square kind of guy, moral, ethical and all that. Besides, his daughter was married to a minister.

Finally, after consulting with the FBI, she told him that she had an abusive husband and was hiding from him. When he pressed her for a divorce she told him she had tried but he had refused even when she had provided him with every kind of evidence for a divorce. “Look,” she explained, “its not like we are having children out of wedlock or anything, we love each other, that’s what counts. I just can’t go through the trauma of trying to get a divorce again, knowing that he will have a chance to abuse me further.” Despite dark looks from his daughter and her minister husband, life was happy for Christine and Ralph.

Two years later, another attempt was made to start an Indian gambling casino nearby. This time Ralph’s friend, Dirk Summers, the county commissioner was up for re-election and was having a difficult time. In past years he had run unopposed. This time it was obvious that someone had put up big money to get “their man” Angelo Atkins elected. No one knew much about Angelo; he was a rancher who had moved into town five years ago. All that was really known about him was that he paid his bills and was courteous to people. Suddenly he registered to be elected county commissioner and the entire county was plastered with signs and slogans supporting him. He happened to be a rather handsome man with a handsome family too, and these facts were prominently featured. He stood for progress. Dick Summers was accused of standing for stagnation. A great deal was made of the irrigation system that had failed in some areas, which the county had refused to spend money on.

Summers is Stagnation! With that motto there was a picture of an irrigation ditch now dried up and some flies buzzing around it.

Dick complained to Ralph and Christine that he knew that the casino money was behind this campaign. He had opposed the casino two years ago and apparently

the casino money was back again. But he had neither the funds or the will to fight Angelo. Several days later a check for \$9,000 arrived in his mail box from an unknown admirer.

Christine was very determined not to allow gambling into her area. She knew intimately the crime that could accompany gambling. She devised a series of fliers, handouts, showing Angelo next to a slot machine. On the back were “testimonials” of addicted gamblers who had gambled away their farms, the church money and other true stories.

She invited gamblers who had fallen, to come to church and tell their sad stories. She even arranged for a jailed embezzler to come to town and speak at several meetings of how he had had a perfect life before gambling, but had stolen his company’s money in order to gamble and now had no family, no wife, no home and no job.

Christine realized that as tragic as these stories were, her own was far worse, but she declined to elaborate on that.

They celebrated the night Dick Summers won the election by a very narrow margin at the Veteran’s Hall. Christine was careful to avoid getting her picture taken and spread outside of town, but when Dick’s 17 year old daughter asked her to pose with her father, she allowed this.

Dick’s daughter happened to be interested in journalism and ran the high school newspaper. She featured that picture and wrote a glowing story of how an ordinary housewife had kept gambling from her town. She also submitted the story to a Dallas paper and it was put on Associated Press and reprinted in many areas including Las Vegas.

The call from FBI agent Farrington was brief. He berated her for breaking all the rules about remaining in hiding. Her picture and her address were now in the Las Vegas, Chicago and New York papers for all to see. She needed to move NOW! He instructed her to leave within the hour and tell no one, absolutely no one. She was to drive to the bus station of nearby Austin, abandon her car and someone would meet her there and give her further instructions. No, she couldn’t take her dog and she couldn’t leave any kind of note for the man she loved.

How could she leave Ralph? How could she leave this life she loved and was happy with? Then she remembered Joe's hands on her neck pressing to take her life. She threw things into a large handbag, told Ralph she needed to go to town to get some items, hugged and kissed him, and then drove away, tears streaming down her face as she drove. No handkerchief, she wiped the tears with her sleeve.

As she drove into the bus parking lot she was approached by Sean Rockford who looked like a teenager, but identified himself properly as an FBI agent. He told her to leave the keys under the seat, but lock the car. She got into his Ford Sedan and they drove for almost two hours. Finally they reached a farmhouse where she was given lunch and asked to rest. She repeatedly asked if she could somehow call Ralph or explain and was told no, absolutely no.

For the next two years she lived a fugitive's life, shuttling from one safe house to another. She began to smoke, more out of boredom or nervousness. She would argue with her "supervisors" that she would rather go back to a normal life and take her chances of being killed, but they wouldn't hear of it. Soon, she was smoking several packs a day. Worse she was putting on weight. Sometimes she was allowed to take a job as a receptionist or doing bookkeeping. Even had she wanted to, she remained for too short a time in these locations to develop friendships. The few times she did have a "date," she was so hungry for companionship or love that she was the one who suggested sex before the surprised man had a chance to make his first move.

### **The Library**

This year they placed her in Phoenix. She enjoyed Phoenix. There were fabulous resorts and fabulous shops. In Scottsdale she could spend a whole day shopping for a dress, though she might have little use for it after all. The dazzling clothes inspired her to go back to her normal weight. She actually joined Smoke Enders in order to quit her smoking. It didn't work, but it reduced her loneliness.

At the public library there were exhibits and many more books to choose from. She had had her fill of trashy novels and was now into local history. One thing that had kept her sane was to study the regions she was hiding in. She smiled when she recalled

Ralph's astonishment when she recited the history of the Texas region he had lived in for 30 years, yet didn't know the battles fought there for Texas independence.

As she was exiting one of the book stacks of the library, carrying four rather large books, she was knocked down physically by a man rushing around the corner of the stack. As she staggered back, her books fell with a loud smack, she lost her balance and hit her head against the metal shelves. He quickly grabbed her, to keep her from falling, and held her left arm and with his right arm supported her in back to steady her.

"Are you all right?"

She didn't answer, what with the room spinning and bells ringing in her ears. She knew he was speaking to her but wasn't able to make out the words.

"Somebody please bring a chair over here," he shouted. Soon a young man who had looked up when the books crashed, ran over with a wooden chair and help her get seated.

The reckless walker, Franklin Blakesly, anxiously asked if she was all right, if she wanted water. After several minutes, she regained her senses, looked at the two men in front of her, one a kid of 18, and the other a nice looking man of about 50. She asked, "What happened?"

Franklin answered, "This is my fault. I am so sorry, I was rushing and didn't look where I was going. Are you all right?"

Now recovered, she teased, "Is this your way of picking up women in the public library?" Franklin's worried face relaxed at hearing her apparently recovered.

"Please, I am so sorry. Let me take you to the hospital."

She teased, "First I have to check to see if my insurance covers being run over inside a public library. Or should I call my accident lawyer first?"

Franklin wasn't quite sure about this intended joke and replied, "No, I will take you to the emergency room. I certainly will pay any medical expenses. Please, can you get up now or should I call an ambulance?"

Her head did hurt and she did feel a bit light headed but managed to answer, "But does your car have good air conditioning? You know, my mother taught me not to accept rides from strangers. "

"Hi. I'm Franklin Blakesly. Honestly I drive better than I can walk."

She thought a moment, who the hell was she today? Phoenix? Fortunately she had just filled out a request for a book in the stacks. "I'm Amelia Grey. But I am not pleased to meet you, I guess."

The two men walked her out of the library to the Mercedes in the parking lot. As she got into the car she pointed to her rental Buick and asked the young man to inform the library that she might not be back for the car right away and to please inform the police if that happened so that her car wouldn't be towed away.

As they drove to the emergency room her head cleared, the ringing stopped, and now, except for a mild headache she did feel much better.

"Mr. Blakesly, I think a far better medicine for me would be a drink. Would you mind stopping at a bar in a hotel, so I can make myself presentable and then, to atone for your crime, you can buy me a drink."

Franklin hesitated, still worried that she might really need medical attention. However he was not a doctor, and sitting with this nice lady in an air conditioned bar at the hotel did appeal to him. "O.K. if you are sure you're all right. He then headed for the Scottsdale Inn.

After some 15 minutes while he waited for her outside the lady's room, she reappeared with fresh makeup and hair tidy. He joked, "Hey, the medics did a swell job on you. You look great!"

As they sat comfortably in a booth in the bar, she was careful not to drink too much liquor, after all, she still might be recovering from a concussion, so she limited herself to rum and coke. He ordered the same. She did feel better after her first drink and ordered a second, as he did too.

Soon he was telling her about himself. He was a widower, semi-retired, though he still had two properties he owned – one was tire store, and the other a McDonald's franchise. He had been in the tire business all his life. Now his life revolved around the country club; she didn't associate the name- where he golfed and played tennis.

"Are you a golfer?"

No, my sport is horses and wrestling steers.

They joked and teased the afternoon away, and then she assured him she could drive her car home. He took her address and phone number so he could find out if she were all right.

The next day a dozen roses arrived in the morning and a request to take her to dinner. "That was sweet, she thought." She did like him and so she called and said yes. He would pick her up at 6:30 "And what shall I wear for dinner at McDonald's?"

"We will save McDonald's for when I know you better. Right now, I want to impress you so let's do dinner at the Phoenecian.

. After a few fun dates, she accepted his offer to view his etchings at his home. It was a nice 3 bedroom, 2 bath home, in a middle class area. He explained that the reason he wasn't rich like the other club members was that he was a poor businessman, always too shy to insist on payment on time and several times lost money out of reluctance to fire some bad apples. He was the only person who ever lost money on a McDonald franchise because he was too shy to fire the people who were stealing from him.

At his home that evening he plied her with wine and music and soft lights and she willingly went to bed with him. She had expected a poor performance because of his age and was pleasantly surprised that he was strong and eager. He suggested she move into his home and save money on her apartment and she accepted.

After 3 weeks of intimacy, and observing her to be sure there was no crudeness or behavior that might embarrass him, he suggested dinner at his country club.

As they passed the card room she noticed a sad look come over him. She looked and saw several tables of players and she could clearly hear the clicking of chips being thrown in or racked out.

Is this where you spend happy hours?

"Its more like unhappy hours." His face now looked sad. He wasn't making a joke.

"What happened?"

"It's the strangest thing. For years I more or less broke even. My biggest loss was 1200 dollars and my biggest gain was 1,000 dollars. Then about 2 months ago, I started losing badly.

She felt a tingle. Something wasn't right.

“What happened? “

“Suddenly I’m losing 9, 10 thousand at a time. For me, these losses have really hurt.”

Christine –now Amelia Grey was all too familiar with such a turn in fortune. .Nearly every crooked game method had passed through her in Dodge city. “Were these new players?”

“No, that’s what is so strange. It’s still the president of our club and all the golfers that have played here for years. I guess Brandon’s new glasses have changed his luck.”

Her tingle was informing her of possibilities.

“Is there something wrong with his vision?”

“Yes, his doctor says he needs to reduce the glare.”

“Glare from the sun or glare from the shiny cards?”

He smiled and ordered.

The second time they passed the busy card game, Franklin asked, “Say do you mind if I play a few rounds. Maybe you will bring me luck.”

“Okay. sure.”

Christine reminded herself of the days many many years and miles ago when she stood around the card table and looked beautiful back in Boston. Well, she certainly wouldn’t be turning any men’s heads with her figure and age now!

She looked at where Brandon was playing and recognized those glass as the one’s that allowed one to read a marked deck. But what could she do? She happened to be holding a full glass of red wine. She pretended to slip and spilled wine over the cards and Brandon’s pants. “Oh, I’m so sorry.” You better go get these sponged right away. “

As Franklin hurried to the men’s room, she sat down at his place and said, “I am so sorry. I didn’t mean to interrupt the game ! Maybe I can play a few hands for Franklin while he washes up.

There were looks and scowls from the other players, and she asked whose turn it was to deal? The game proceeded. When Franklin returned, he was surprised to see her playing and the stack of chips in front of her. “

“Maybe I can get some of your money back for you she announced” The table knew of his heavy losses. An hour later she had won over 2,000 dollars. Mr. Brandon announced that he had to leave for a meeting and the game broke up.

Franklin was delighted of course. How did you do that?

“By playing with an unmarked deck.”

“What do you mean?”

I pocketed some of the cards that I spilled on. Those glasses your Mr. Brandon was wearing have a special filter that allows him to read the cards.”

“That’s impossible! Brandon is president of the club, he...”

“I don’t care if he is Nelson Rockefeller, that is why you lost your 40,000. I’ll prove it to you. Who is your optician? Let’s go there tomorrow.” At ten they entered the Scottsdale Optometrists. Franklin greeted Dr. Owens introduced Amelia Grey and asked for a favor. “Amelia” showed the cards and asked him to view the backs with various filters. When he used UVray UVA280-300nm the markings showed up perfectly clear. He did so and showed Franklin and Angela the markings. Franklin was dumbfounded. He simply couldn’t believe what he was seeing. To him it was the same as finding out that your father or son was stealing from you.

“Angela” thanked Dr. Owens but first asked if he could supply the lens filter that he had used and he agreed.

Franklin was too shaken to drive, so “Angela” drove him to a McDonald’s for coffee and muffin.

“I don’t quite know what to do?”

She replied, “It’s simple. You go to Brandon at his home, show him the evidence, and demand the 40,000 back or else.”

“But, but that’s blackmail!”

“No, Franklin, that’s just justice.”

That night, she held Franklin in her arms to help him sleep. She didn’t make any attempt to arouse him. About 1 AM he finally fell asleep.

She didn’t say anything more to him. She was busy with her own thoughts. She was decided, she was going to go back to gambling. But how? Play at private clubs. That wasn’t possible, you had to be a member for that. By happenstance an advertisement for

the Cunard Cruise line – part of Franklin’s daily load of advertisements had arrived yesterday and she had noticed without comment a picture of the ship and the happy people gambling. Today she realized, most cruise ships had gambling. And, even if they didn’t, she could become one of the card sharks that preyed on innocent travelers. She could change her hair and clothes and easily pass for a harmless grandmother who was just learning the game.

Two days after the trip to the optician, Franklin said he had an appointment with Brandon at his home, in the best part of Scottsdale. He told Amelia Grey that the home was easily worth several million dollars so a paltry 40,000 should be of no consequence to him. Brandon was reputed to have inherited his wealth, and his wife was wealthy in her own right. He told Amelia he was going alone.

Franklin confronted Brandon alone in his sumptuous living room. As usual, Brandon greeted Franklin warmly, shook his hand firmly and spoke in his usual friend to friend tone of voice. He was dressed in white linen pants, immaculately clean, an open polo shirt of light cream color and a solid gold Rolex. Franklin quickly gave his rehearsed speech, assured Brandon of secrecy, only wanted his 40,000 dollars returned. He could see Brandon’s face turn ashen at his one minute speech. Then he took out the cards and the lens filter and invited Brandon to see for himself. He refused to look. He said in a much different voice, “I will need some time to get the cash together. I will call you and you can pick it up here.”

Franklin was relieved to leave quickly. This time there was no firm handshake on departure.

That evening was a quiet one for the two. Franklin wondered if the 40,000 dollars was worth the confrontation to someone he had known for years, played golf with and of course cards. All his life he had been reticent to collect debts or confront late payers. At 11:30 the phone rang. It was his golf buddy Peters who excitedly said, “Did you hear the news? Brandon shot himself this evening Tracy called me. Can you believe that? The guy had everything to live for. What could have possessed him? Did he have some disease? Do you have any idea what might have caused it? “

Franklin started to say he had just seen Brandon that morning when he felt his chest tighten. He croaked, “No, I have no idea. This is awful.”

Peter continued, “ Millie and Jenine are at the house now trying to console Betty and the kids. I thought you should know.”

“Yeah, I appreciate the call. It’s a terrible tragedy. We will all miss him.”

Franklin flatly thanked him for calling and hung up the phone slowly. He looked at Angela but didn’t say anything. He was incapable of speech.

Christine looked at Franklin’s bloodless face, slumped shoulders and wild eyes. “What is it?”

“Brandon killed himself after I asked for my money!” He then began to slowly cry, tears, not sobs. When Christine went to comfort him, he excused himself before she could reach him. He went to the bathroom and closed the door.

His mind was in turmoil. Even if it were proven that Brandon had cheated him and the other club members, if they found out that he had caused the suicide, he would be blamed for the loss of a good friend to all. Of course he could never hope to see that 40,000 again unless he sued the widow. If he did that, he would become a pariah and could never step foot in the club again. Then he became angry. Angela had caused this tragedy by uncovering the cheating and then forcing his to confront Brandon as he did. He could have sent an anonymous note warning Brandon to return his winnings. He could have brought that lens to the game and made a joke of inspecting the cards for imperfections. He could have simply asked Brandon to stop doing what he was doing. Fuck! The guy didn’t need the damn money, he was probably just doing it for the excitement! Why then the suicide? Was it like the Japanese who committed hari-kari when they lost face?

What about Angela? Would she keep the secret? He really knew so little about her. How did she know about marked cards? She had certainly been vague about her past. What if she decided to blackmail him now? Or if she had a grudge against him for some reason – he would have to pay her whatever she asked!

When he left the bathroom Angela asked if he was all right. He politely said, “Yes.” Anything she could do? “No,” he said without expression.

Christine could see how distraught he was and suggested that she leave so he could be alone with his grief. He didn’t look at her when he said, “Yes, that would be best.”

Her brief exposure to gambling had reignited her old insatiable passion. She remained in Phoenix and spent 3 miserable months there perfecting her skills. She had had a terrible shock. When she went to buy a dress she had asked for a size 10. Nothing that size fit her, she had to wear a size 12. Yes, she had to leave the protection program, better to die of a bullet than from obesity. There were no calls from Franklin and she didn't attend Brandon's funeral.

**Finally she decided, what the hell, she was a gambler. She contacted Agent Jeff Tennington and when he arrived, she fully had made up her mind. She asked the FBI for an identity – a social security card, a reasonable past and said she was leaving the protection program. They argued, but she explained, “Look, I am a gambler. This hiding is no kind of life for me. I will take my chances. I will move around. I can gamble on cruise ships. I can get a job or just hustle. I can do this even outside the U.S What can they do to me, kill me? Here I am dead. I will be doing what I am good at. I will gamble that I can beat the killers who are after me. If I lose, so what? Meantime I can be seeing exciting places, visiting foreign ports – I speak good Spanish and yet I have never even been to Mexico! I am looking at a ship that sails to Macao and when I get there, there are literally dozens of places to play poker. I will have a reason to dress up; with my winnings I can afford to buy pretty clothes and with pretty clothes and some cash, I know I can meet the kind of men who buy me jewelry.**

Agent Jeff Tennington pleaded, “But it's dangerous. There is still a price on your head.”

**“Jeff, you are right. But life is a gamble. Look at you; you may be shot tomorrow when the bad guys show up. I'm a gambler; I honestly feel if I actually go out there and gamble, I can win. I feel that tingle that tells me I have a winning hand. They should realize they won when they destroyed my reputation at the trial. Really there isn't much more they can do to me.”**

**“Will you go back to Richard Crumb and his ranch?”**

**“No, he loved a rancher's wife. I am going to be a senior citizen who is good at poker and is playing cards to win. He had a mate who did everything she could to**

stop the town from having gambling. They are too different people. He wouldn't like the gambler me."

Jeff, who knew full details of her history asked: "What if there had been a gambler's anonymous when you were 19. Do you think that might have saved you?" Christine thought for a moment and answered: "I think somehow my father's spirit was in my body. I couldn't buy and sell railroads, but I think I was born with his desire to "gamble" and use my skill for excitement. Today, I might have been a real estate developer, but developing sugar cane or coffee in Brazil. I said it was Monte Carlo at 17 that did it; but no, I think I was just born with Bradley Adams spirit , I don't know, call it zest for life."

Jeff: "So you think you simply were born this way? Not every child of alcoholic parents becomes an alcoholic. Some, never touch the stuff. " What about your brother?" How did he do with the Bradley Adams Spirit?" Christine was sad: "No, it was just the opposite. My brother was completely devoid of any spirit whatsoever. He never tried to do anything." She smiled. "Yes, he should have had the Bradley spirit, not me. It went to the wrong person. I spoke to a famous psychologist in Paris and he figured out that my brother's father was so advanced, so venturous, that he decided not to try anything because he could never match his father." Jeff: "And what did he say about you?" Christine smiled, what could anyone say about a Parisian Mistress in 1924? "He said I was adventurous."

Jeff said, "You realize you can be killed?"

"I was already killed that time in court and the months I was away from my Wil and my grandchildren. Honestly Jeff, they just can't do any more to me. Besides, here I have gained weight. If I stay with you guys I will die a fat old lady."

Jeff laughed. Secretly he had to admit that she was right. But he still had his duty. He said, "Once you leave us, you can't come back in."

**“Oh I realize that. But you may be surprised that with my gambler’s skill, I may still die of old age or be shot by a jealous wife.”**

**Jeff smiled, “That’s the way I want to go when I am ninety, breaking my neck jumping out the window to escape a jealous husband.”**

**The next day they hugged as she said goodbye. Mrs. Mary Hastings was off to San Francisco, where she had booked passage on the Hawaiian Princess cruise ship, which featured a heated swimming pool, a gym, a beauty parlor and games of chance. About every 4 months Wil received cards from places as diverse as Australia and Ireland, all arriving at the same time! Let those killers figure that out.**

**Every few weeks a picture postcard would appear from some foreign land, unsigned, addressed to one of the other of the Adams family. Hilary wondered who was sending them, and was told these were advertisements.**

**The postcards came from exotic sounding places. Singapore, Bucharest, Maui, Macao, Monaco, Fairbanks. It was easy to guess who the unsigned post cards that came every few months were from. Wil hadn’t tried to dissuade his mother from her plans. Heck, he had been a fighter pilot in two wars. You can’t be more of a gambler than that, can you?**

**Years later when the cards stopped coming, a lawyer whom they didn’t know, contacted them to say that there was an inheritance from someone who did not appear to be a relative. She had died onboard a ship months ago. Her name was Mrs. Mary Hastings. She had requested to be buried at sea. It was for 35,000 dollars to go to a Wil Samuels or his relatives. The lawyer asked if they even knew her? Wil said he might have met her somewhere.**

**Wil and Doris lived plainly, despite the nice nest egg Doris had built up through wise investments in California land. They had too many nice friends and**

neighbors where they lived in the San Diego suburb to want to move elsewhere. But when the kids were all out of the house, Wil wanted to make a move. He wanted to buy a ranch. Fortunately they did have the means for this and Doris agreed with his plans. He found a mid sized ranch they both liked in Texas. He purchased it, took early retirement, and they moved there. He almost had second thoughts when it came to selling his boat, but signed the bill of sale while telling himself a move was indicated.

In the new ranch they were 25 short miles from Abilene. The original three bedroom house was expanded to five to accommodate the 3 children and their expanding families. Then the dining area was expanded along with the outside patio. Wil enjoyed doing much of the work himself. Reluctantly the barn for the horses had to be moved because the children complained too much of the smell, which Wil and Doris were hardly aware of. Fearing the children, especially Hillary, might not visit otherwise, it was moved where the wind didn't bring the odor into the house.

The ranch flourished, Doris and Wil thought hard about expanding the ranch, buying more acreage, but decided to wait to see how the children would feel about this. Michael had been raised on a ranch and Wil thought maybe he would like that. The children did come to visit, enjoyed their vacations there, but all three were emphatic that they had no desire to be ranchers.

Will finally admitted to himself that Christine had wanted a "Boston" child, from a "Boston Blue Blood" girl like Angie. He grinned at her attempt to have a "super child. " Michael, child of Angie and Wil, was a fine person, but had little interest in school. Instead he was a sailor vagabond who crewed ships for sailing races; he and his sailing buddies ran a company that transported ships for their owners. Quite a few sailors sailed from the Pacific Coast and when they got to Hawaii or Tahiti left the boats there. Either they had lost the sailing bug or the wife refused to sail back or business called. Then Michael would be hired to bring the boat back to Los Angeles or other ports. Michael was the only child who had known his grandmother Christine. Doris wondered if viewing those cards coming from all over the world had somehow caused Michael to seek sailing to various ports in

hopes of meeting his grandmother again? She decided to let the psychologists figure that one out.

Doris's children on the other hand, Hilary and William, were students from the beginning. Hillary had been interested in science and eventually got her PhD in Physiology. William had competed with her and had chosen the field of Genetic Research, just to be ahead of her for his PhD. They continued to compete for years, each writing and publishing more advanced science papers, each claiming their research was "better" than the other's. Hilary teased, "William, when are you going to clone yourself?" The two had no memory of Christine, so the cards had little meaning.

The Hornsbys were there to be loving grandparents to their grandchildren; Mrs. Hornsby lived long enough to enjoy Hillary's wedding.

Doris teased, "Why don't you set up a trust like your uncle did, give \$500,000 to whomever is a rancher for five years?" Wil snorted, "I think we both admit that was not such a great idea." He took her in his arms, held her, and said, "Doris, I am sorry for the pain you had in the Boston experience and the divorce and all that."

"Yes but most marriages do have some sort of rocky course. I think in the end we were really more in love and had a better marriage as a result of our trials. And finally, I did get to be a rancher's wife, after all. "

There was a bit of excitement when some agent contacted them from Los Angeles. It seems they were making a World War Two flying film and needed Wil as a paid consultant. Doris had to remain on the ranch to take care of the livestock. But, itneh 4 months Wil was in Hollywood, she never worried about his being surrounded by starlets and movie starts. She was secure in the their love for each other. Indeed, the movie was a flop and Wil was never asked to consult on a film again.

The End



