

Don't be surprised though", he was laughing now, " if he's traded in his white horse for a Police Cruiser."

" Oh, Tony", Angela said as her lips reach up to meet his.

PART II

CHAPTER 1

"Rinnnnng". It was the last bell before class started. The first day of school on any college campus is always confusing and this was no exception. Students were in small groups everywhere. Angela was sitting on the stairs looking over her schedule when she saw Janie pushing her way through the crowd. " Janie", she called out. " Where in the world have you been? I've been looking everywhere for you." Janie looked at her and grinned. " Oh Angela, I met the best looking guy." she said as they started for their first class. " His name is Mark. He has a twin sister and they just moved here from Chicago. His father was killed in the war and his mother brought them back here to live with his grandparents." Janie was out of breath, partially from climbing the stairs but mostly from talking. Angela looked at her and grinned, " you sure learned a lot about him", she kidded, " and how many freckles does he have?" Janie looked at her and she could tell she was embarrassed. "Oh Angela, cut it out, will you?" Then the two girls parted company as they took different paths at this point.

Several of their classmates had dropped out of school and quite a few of them had moved away. They had the usual number of new students that year. It turned out that this 'fantastic' person named "Mark" did have a twin sister indeed and she was in a few of Angela's classes. There was something about her though that Angela didn't like. She didn't exactly know what it was but her first impressions were usually pretty accurate.

Mark, it turned out, was just as Janie had described him. Very good looking and very sure of himself. Yes, Angela thought to herself. He seems the type that Janie would fall for. I just hope she doesn't get hurt.

For the next couple of months, Janie saw quite a bit of Mark. She became very chummy with Marsha, too. Angela didn't exactly approve of this relationship but thought it wasn't her place to say anything to Janie. Once she did remark to her that Marsha didn't seem to be her type of people and Janie accused her of being jealous - so, she didn't say anything again. It was also obvious that Janie had flipped over Mark and it was useless to say anything against him.

Helen and George had bought a new house and Angela now had a room of her own. She spent much time there alone with her thoughts. Her Uncle Ralph had been sentenced to prison and she wrote him very often. She told him that she didn't hold it against him for what had happened and hoped that he would someday be able to forgive himself.

She learned from her Uncle Ralph that her Aunt Joan had secured a divorce and had left for California to start a new life for herself. In spite of what happened, she hoped that Aunt Joan would find happiness.

Tony became a regular visitor at the house and they spent a lot of time watching television and playing cards. Once a week, they usually took in a movie. Angela often asked Janie to get Mark and accompany them but was always turned down.

Angela had decided to take a job after school to help defray the expense of college. She thought it would be nice if her and Janie would be able to find one together. Janie agreed to go with her and told her she would meet her at one o'clock in front of the park entrance.

The sun was trying to break through the rain clouds that were beginning to form in the afternoon sky. It was after three o'clock and Janie should have been there by now. Angela was starting to worry. "Why doesn't she hurry up?" Angela said out loud. "What could be keeping her?"

She waited until 3:30 and then started walking - heading for home. She'd have to hurry if she wanted to beat the rain. By the time she reached her front door it came down in torrents. If Janie does show up, it'll serve her right if she gets drenched, Angela thought to herself.

Brewer

"Angela, is that you?", it was Helen. " Thank goodness you got in before the storm hit", she went on as she hurriedly closed the windows. " I went to school to pick you up but you had already gone." " I left early, Helen", Angela said. " Sorry I didn't call you, but I was supposed to meet Janie at one o'clock this afternoon. We were going to see about a job after school. She didn't show up, so I came on home." Angela hung her coat up and sat on the sofa looking out the window. " I can't imagine why she wasn't there," Angela seemed to be lost in her own thoughts.

"Why don't you call her at home?", Helen interrupted her thoughts.

"Maybe she forgot about your appointment."

"No, she didn't forget because I reminded her," Angela replied. "Maybe I'll call her anyway and bawl her out. Ever since she got so chummy with Marsha, she's started to change." Angela couldn't hide the anger in her voice. The more she thought about it, the more upset she got. Before she could make up her mind to call Janie, the phone gave a loud ring, making her jump.

"I'll get it", Helen called out. " No, Janie isn't here, Mrs. Jackson", she was saying. " Just a minute, I'll get Angela to the phone."

By that time Angela had walked to the phone and took it from Helen.

"Hello, Mrs. Jackson, No, I haven't seen her all day. I was supposed to meet her at one today to go see about a job after school but she never did make it." Angela got over her mad spell when she noted the deep concern in Janie's mother's voice. After she hung up the phone, she began to worry, too.

Helen walked in from the kitchen drying a dish. "Well, did you find out anything about Janie?" she asked. " I feel a little uneasy, Helen", Angela replied. " Her mother said she went to a party at the beach house with Mark and Marsha last night. She told her mother she would be staying all night with me", Angela had a puzzled look on her face. " I didn't tell her mother, but I didn't even know about any party last night. When I talked to Janie before dinner last night, she didn't even mention it to me. I don't know what to make of it, Helen."

Her sister was as mixed up as she was and could offer no logical explanation. Angela again put on her coat and started for the door. "I'm going down to the Beach House, Helen", she said as she started for the front door. " I'll be back in a few hours."

" I would go with you", Helen was saying, but George is going to be home soon and I have to prepare dinner for him. " Angela turned and smiled at her. She really was a thoughtful person and she was lucky to have her for a sister.

" That's okay, Helen," she replied. " I just want to see if Janie is around there anywhere. Her mother is worried about her."

She didn't mention it to Helen but she was worried. Janie had been acting different lately. She tried to tell her to stay away from Marsha and that group but she wouldn't listen to her. She thought that Angela was just jealous of them - "Humpf" - when she did find her she would really bawl her out.

CHAPTER 2

It was beginning to get dark when she arrived at the Beach House. The kids themselves had built it last summer so that they would have a place to go. They spent a lot of enjoyable evenings there and it held a lot of happy memories. This evening was different, though. The rain was still coming down and Angela's long dark hair clung to her face. She trembled a little but she didn't know if it was from the cold or from fear. The Beach House which had always been so cheerful seemed eerie and forbidding.

For an instant, she hesitated as she started to open the door. Maybe I should call Tony first, she thought. Then she gave a slight grin, "How silly of me. Imagine being afraid to go in our Beach House." She started to whistle low and marched in. The room had a horrible odor in it and Angela went back and opened the door. She could hear low music coming from the back. "Janie," she called out - but got no answer. It was dark in there. She looked around for the lantern but without success. Then she heard a low moan from the corner. She turned, startled, "Janie, is that you?", again she received no reply. She moved slowly across the floor in the direction of the moan. Suddenly she stumbled on a form lying on the floor. She started to scream but someone put their hand over her mouth.

" Well, what have we here?", it was a male voice. Angela gave him a swift kick that sent him reeling.

"Okay, chick, if that's the way you want it", he said. She recognized him then. It was Joe, Marsha's boyfriend. Angela never did care much for his type. He always acted better than anyone else and thought he knew everything.

Angela's eyes had now become accustomed to the dark and she could distinguish a figure sitting in the corner. " Janie?" she whispered as she shook the girl sitting there. Then she realized that it was Marsha and not Janie. Marsha was either drunk or on drugs. She was mumbling something but it didn't make any sense. Angela headed for the back where the music was coming from. She opened the door and stuck her head in. The music was now louder. She called out to Janie in a loud voice. There was a mattress in the corner and she could tell there were two forms on it. Then, without warning, Mark jumped from the mattress and reached for his clothes on the floor. Then he started shaking Janie. " Wake up, we have company.", he said. Angela was too embarrassed to stay. She went outside in the fog and waited for them to come out. The cool misty rain felt good on her burning cheeks.

In a few minutes they emerged from the Beach House. " Angela, what in the world are you doing here?" Janie walked over to Angela and put her arm over her shoulder.

"Your mother is really worried about you, Janie," she said as she kept her head down avoiding meeting her eyes.

"Oh, so that's it. She found out I wasn't at your house. Well, I guess you'll be the first to know about it," Janie said, grinning from ear to ear. "Mark and I were married last night. We want to keep it a secret for awhile, so please don't say anything to Mother or anyone yet."

Angela looked at her and saw that she was telling the truth. "Gee, Janie, I'm real happy for you but why didn't you tell me?" she sounded hurt.

"We just decided last night", she went on. When she saw the disappointed look on Angela's face, she apologized. "I'm sorry we didn't call you, Angela, honest."

Angela looked at her and smiled. She looked so pathetic that she couldn't stay mad at her. Then she hugged her and tears filled her eyes. "You dumb kid. You ought to be spanked."

Both the girls, who had shared so much since their childhood, were now laughing and crying at the same time.

They could see a flashlight coming down the beach. "Hello there," it was Tony.

"Over here", Angela called out. "we're over here, Tony." she squeezed Janie's hand, " don't worry, I won't say anything if you don't want me to." She gave her an affectionate sisterly kiss on the cheek.

"Golly, you people sure pick an odd time to go swimming", Tony was saying. "Your sister told me I'd find you here, Angela. Thought you

might like to take in a movie tonight." Then he gave a quick glance at Janie. " I would offer to take you, too, but you'll have to get your own date."

Janie laughed nervously. " No thanks, Tony. I have to be getting home anyway."

Angela felt a little apprehensive about leaving Janie there but, after all, she was with her husband, wasn't she. She stopped on the way to the theatre and called her sister and told her where she was going and then phoned Janie's mother and told her she was all right. She wished that she could have really felt as confident as she was trying to sound to Janie's mother. For some reason, she felt uneasy about Janie. Maybe it was just that she didn't like her choice for a husband. All during the movie Angela was unusually quiet. On the way home, they stopped for something to eat.

"Why so quiet, Angela?" Tony asked. " Am I really that boring or is something bothering you?"

Angela managed to smile. " No, Tony, it isn't you. I guess I'm just tired. I do wind down sometimes, you know." He didn't believe her but didn't say any more.

When they reached the front of her house, Tony pulled up to the curb and turned the key off. " Okay, little one, let's have it. What's bothering you?"

Angela didn't answer for a minute and then she flared back, "Quit asking so many questions. I don't quiz you every time I see you,

so I?" Tony was surprised at her reaction. Then as quickly as she had been riled up, she was sorry. "Oh, it's not you, Tony. I'm sorry for the way I've been acting tonight. It's nothing, believe me." She brushed her lips on his and slipped out the door. "Call me tomorrow", she blew him a kiss as she rushed into the house. She had a strong urge to call Janie's house and see if she returned. Janie's mother answered the phone. Yes, Janie was home but she was in bed sleeping. Angela told her she didn't want to wake her, just to tell her that she had called. She felt a flow of relief as she readied herself for bed. Helen and George were watching the "late show" but Angela excused herself and retired. It had been a long strenuous day and climbing between the cool sheets was a welcome venture. She fell into a restless sleep, dreaming that she was hunting Janie and every time she found her she would disappear.

Chapter III

During the next few months, Janie tried to avoid Angela. Whenever an opportunity came up to talk with her alone, at school or otherwise, Janie always made some excuse to rush off. Angela noticed that she was starting to look bad. She was losing a lot of weight and she didn't have much color to her face anymore. The only explanation she ever got from her about the secrecy of their marriage is that Mark didn't want his family to find out about it yet. They wanted him to finish College before he got married, so he would have to break the news to them slowly. Angela asked her if she ever met his mother and

grandparents but she said "no". That seemed odd to Angela but she kept her mouth shut.

Angela had broken her promise to Janie and told Tony about their marriage. She felt that she owed him an explanation of her actions lately. He just laughed at her worried attitude and called her a "mother hen". He didn't know Janie as she did though. She just wasn't herself lately and Angela sensed that something was dreadrully wrong. If there wasn't, why was Janie suddenly avoiding her. After all, she did consider herself Janie's best friend and if she couldn't tell her about her troubles, there must be a strong reason. That's what was worrying Angela. What was that reason?

Mark hadn't been seen around school for about a week. Angela finally got her courage up to ask Janie what was wrong. " Oh, he's home sick, Angela," Janie answered. " Frankly, I'm really worried though. Marsha said he was under the doctor's care and would be home for awhile. She said he was too sick to write me and I can't call him because she said it would arouse suspicion at home." Janie looked as though she might break down and cry. " I don't know what to do, Angela." Then she started sobbing into her handkerchief. Angela's heart went out to her best friend.

"Gee, Honey, it will be all right," Angela said trying to cheer her up. " Why don't I take you over to my house now. I'll tell them at the office you became sick and I'm taking you home." She sat her down on the stairs and said "Wait here, Janie, I'll be right back."

Helen had gone shopping and George was at work, so they had the house to themselves. Angela fixed two cups of hot chocolate and they both sat down at the kitchen table. The hot chocolate seemed to revive Janie's spirits.

"You know," Angela said, " I've got an idea that just might work." Janie gave her her full attention. There was a gleam in Angela's eye as she started to explain.

Angela told her that tomorrow instead of going to classes they would both go to Mark's house and tell Mark's mother they thought they would stop out and see how he was feeling. She wouldn't think it odd that two classmates stopped in to see a sick friend, would she?

"Oh, Angela, you're a doll", Janie hugged her neck. "That's a terrific idea."

"Fine, then, that's what we'll do", Angela said. She phoned Janie's mother and told her Janie would be spending the night with her. The light burned late in Angela's room that night. Two old friends were enjoying each other's company and getting reacquainted. They rekindled their friendship with sparks of memories from their childhood and reminisced about their happy past experiences.

As they approached Mark's house, Janie seemed to be losing her nerve. "Maybe we better not go after all, Angela, " she said. "Mark might get mad at me."

"Nonsense", Angela answered. "If he's any kind of a man at all, he should be glad to see you. What man wouldn't want to see his new wife when he's sick?"

They stood quietly on the front porch and rang the bell. Neither one of them heard a sound and was getting ready to leave, when suddenly the door opened slowly, as if the wind comondeered it. Janie and Angela looked at one another for a minute and then Angela shrugged her shoulders and started into the hallway, with Janie on her heels. The door suddenly slammed shut and there was a low laugh. They turned to see Marsha's friend, Joe, staring them in the face.

" Well, if it isn't Mrs. Mark Woods", he said sarcastically. "Isn't it a shame that your husband isn't here to welcome you."

Janie looked at him with a puzzled look on her face. "Not here? What do you mean? Where is he? Janie kept slinging questions at him.

"Full of questions, aren't we?" he sneered back at her. "Well, your lover boy has flown the coop. He's gone. Didn't say when he would be back."

Janie was starting to cry again. " I don't understand", she said.

"Where is he? I'm his wife, I have a right to know." Joe just laughed.

"Come on, Janie", Angela said as she steadied Janie to keep her from fainting. " I think we better go."

Joe opened the door for them, " Yeah, you just do that. Go." He was no longer smiling but had a mean look on his face.

Angela wanted to get out of there and get out in a hurry. When they started down the steps from the proch they were looking in the barrel of a shotgun. At the other end of it was a man in his forties.

He didn't say anything for a minute and they were too scared to speak. "Sorry, girls," he said. " I'll have to ask you to stay." They were led back into the house and into the living room. It was well furnished. The furniture was starting to wear and looked quite worn but in spite of this fact, was still well preserved. There was a fire in the fireplace and the warmth of the fire could be felt all over the room. It would have been a cheerful scene under different circumstances. There was a picture on the wall of a small boy and girl sitting on a piano stool. It was Mark and Marsha when they were small. Seeing Mark's picture made Janie's heart skip. Where was he? For God's sake, what had happened to him?

Joe and the stranger were standing in the corner apparently arguing over them. Angela heard Joe say, " We can't kill them, Mark wouldn't like it." Angela saw that Janie was too wrapped up in her own thoughts to hear what they were saying.

"Thank God for that", Angela said half out loud. Her blood felt like ice running through her veins but she knew that she would have to be the strong one if they were ever going to get out of here. "Me and my bright ideas", she mumbled. " I sure got us in a pickle this time."

"I'm thirsty," Angela said. " Can we get a drink of water?"

"No, 'we' can't get a drink of water", Joe mimicked her. "If you'll be good little girls", he continued, "maybe I'll get you one." He told the other man to watch them and he went into the kitchen.

Angela knew that if they were ever going to get out of there, this was their chance - with only one of them to tangle with. She started edging her way to the door but the man with the gun caught her. "Get back over there and sit down.", he yelled. She turned slowly as if she were going to do as he commanded but then swiftly she changed her direction and made a lunge at the gun. For a second, they wrestled over the gun, then the big man hit her and sent her sprawling on the floor.

Joe appeared instantly on the scene and stood in the doorway laughing. "Tough Chick, huh? Guess we'll have to tame her down." Angela struggled to her feet and sat back down on the couch. Then Joe walked over and poured the glass of water on her. "Here's your water.", he said and he and the strange man both laughed.

Angela and Janie both knew it was useless to ask any more questions because they would get ridiculous answers. They both sat very still on the couch and watched the fire in the fireplace. It must be about 4:00 o'clock and Helen would be worried, Angela thought. If only they had told someone where they were going, but now no one knew. Wait a minute. Marsha! Of course, Marsha should be here shortly. She would help them.

Joe had fallen asleep in the chair and the other man was starting to nod his head. If only they'd go to sleep, Angela thought. Then they heard a car door slam. It was Marsha. I better try to signal her before she walks in on this, Angela thought. She slipped her shoe off and in one quick sweep sent it hurling through the front window. This woke up Joe

and the strange man. "What are you doing now, you dumb broad?", the stranger had her by the throat. Then he looked up and saw Marsha standing in the doorway.

"What in the - -", she looked dumbfounded. "I told you not to come here, Janie. Now you did it. You blew the whole thing. I tried to warn you, you screwy kid." Janie looked at Marsha like she was seeing her for the first time. Her words echoing in her head.

"Just what do you mean by that?", Janie said with trembling voice. "Where is Mark, Marsha?"

Marsha was laughing and went over and put her arms around Joe. "Did you ever see such a dumb broad in your whole life?, she said to him.

Angela was really frightened now. Marsha was in with them. In that case, where were her mother and grandparents? Marsha walked over to Janie and leaned down in her face. "Listen to me, Stupid. I tried to give you the brush off in a gentle way but you had to be nosy. Why didn't you leave well enough alone?" She started to say more but the phone started ringing.

"Hello", Marsh said in a sweet voice. Her voice changed amazingly.

"Oh, Hi, Mother.", she continued in her sweet manner. "Yes, we're fine." She lied. Apparently she was referring to herself and Mark. "We'll be okay. You and Grandma and Grandpa just enjoy yourselves while you're in Florida. We'll look for you in about ten days then. Bye." Marsha hung up the phone and returned to Joe's lap.

Well, at least that explained where they were but what about Mark? - thought Angela.

Marsha is speaking to Joe. " Well, what are we going to do about these two?" She nods toward Janie and Angela.

" I don't know, beautiful," Joe answered. "What do you thing we should do?"

Then the man with the shotgun stood up. " I know what we have to do with them. They know too much.." He started walking toward Janie and Angela. They froze in fear. Was he really going to kill them and what was he referring to by "knew too much". Angela was trying to sort out her thoughts but was drawing a blank. The man continued. " I think we had better tie them up and put them upstairs out of the way until we decide how." The stranger now pulled the cord from the living room drapes and started to tie them up. Janie was begging them to let them go but Angela was busy trying to analize their situation. She decided it was useless to try to escape right now. She would wait for the right opportunity. She was mentally reprimanding herself for not telling someone where they were going. She knew that they would be worrying now. She hoped that Helen would call Tony. Maybe he would piece it all together and come after them.

Angela and J_anie were carried upstairs and put in separate bedrooms and the door locked behind them. Shortly after they went downstairs, Marsha came up and brought them a sandwich and glass of milk, which both of the girls turned down.

Angela asked Marsha what was going on. Marsha gave her a cold stare and then started laughing. "You'd like to know, wouldn't you?" she said as she shut the door behind her. Angela could hear her opening the door next door. That must be where they put Janie. She scooted over to the wall where she could hear what was being said.

"Where is Mark?" It was Janie's voice. "I have a right to know, Marsha," she continued. "After all, I am his wife."

At that remark Marsha spun around and took Janie by the shoulders. "Oh, come on," she said. "Don't tell me you're that dumb. Did you really think he married you? That no Justice of the Peace you went to. We thought it was a funny joke. You really thought you were married, didn't you?" Marsha was laughing so hard she had to sit down. Angela could hear Janie sobbing and wished that she was with her to comfort her. Boy! she sure would like to get her hands on that Marsha. Imagine pulling a dirty trick like that on a good girl like Janie. If they got out of there alive, she'd see that they paid for doing that to her.

Marsha had gone back downstairs and the only sound was that of Janie sobbing. Angela banged on the wall to let her know that she was in there. In a matter of minutes, there came a rap back, meaning that she understood. Angela knew that this was the time she was waiting for. She had to free herself somehow and get out of there and go for help. She scooted around the room looking for something sharp to cut the cord that bound her. She spotted the register on the floor and made her way to it. She could hear voices coming from downstairs if she put her ear to it.

The strange man was talking. "Mark should be back from Mexico by now.", he was saying. "I hope he didn't get into any trouble down there."

Joe answered him.

"Oh fiddles," Marsha said. "You both worry too much. Mark has made the trip before and he knows how to take care of himself. He'll be here by tomorrow - I'm sure."

"He better be, girlie," the man said, "and he better have the stuff with him."

So that was it, Angela thought. Dope. Sure, it all fit now. Why had Janie ever gotten mixed up with this bunch anyway? Well, it was too late for regrets now. She kept working on the cord until it gave. Once she had her hands free, she untied her feet. She opened the window and looked out. There was a drain pipe running down the side of the house. If she was careful she could slide down it. She slipped off her other shoe, and quietly made her way out the window. She would have to jump a little because the pipe was just out of her reach. She said a silent prayer and jumped. She could feel the cold metal on her legs and arms as she slid down the drain pipe. Suddenly there was a loud scream. It was Angela. A hand had reached out of nowhere and grabbed her ankle. Angela was lying on the ground and was looking up at the face of Marsha. "Going somewhere?" Marsha asked as she pulled Angela to her feet. Remembering the words she heard her speak to Janie, Angela was so angry that she saw red.

"You little tramp!", Angela said, and without warning she struck Marsha very hard across the face with the palm of her hand. She caught Marsha off guard and she went reeling to the ground. Angela took advantage of the free moment and took off running down the path. She was out of breath as she reached the gate. But her freedom was short-lived. Just then a car pulled up and Mark jumped out. She tried to run away from him but her caught her.

"What are you doing here, Angela?", and before she could answer him - he asked where Janie was. "Janie is tied up inside.", Angela told him. "What?" he said as he broke into a run and pulled her after him. "They better not hurt her."

Angela could tell there was genuine concern in his voice. Maybe there was hope for them yet. They were all in the house when they got inside. Marsha's face was red and for a minute, Angela thought she might have a fight on her hands. The man with the gun was surprised to see her free and he looked at Marsha and guessed what had happened. Mark went racing upstairs and brought Janie back down. They sat Angela and Janie down on the couch and the small group went into a conference. The man with the gun turned and walked over to them. He was smiling, but not very kindly, at them. "Let's go for a ride, girls.", he said and grabbed Janie by the arm.

"No!" Mark said. "I won't let you kill them." Then he looked at Janie. Tears were in his eyes. "I'm sorry I hurt, Janie. I was going to tell you the truth - that we weren't really married, but I couldn't get up the

nerve. I want to marry you now though, Janie, - if you'll have me. I love you, Janie, please believe me."

Janie looked at him uncertainly - and then she smiled. "I believe you, Mark."

"Aw - now isn't that sweet?" the strange man pulls Mark away from her. Mark turns to the strange man and Joe and pleads - "If you'll let us go, you can have my share, too." Joe and the man grin at each other. "You gotta be kidding, Mark." Joe said. "Not for that dumb broad." The man with the gun has Janie by the shoulders, pulling her up off the couch.

"Leave her alone!" Mark screams. Then he makes a lunge at the man and they start fighting. There is a loud sound of gunfire and everyone stands with a look of horror on their faces as Mark falls to the floor.

In the distance can be heard the sound of sirens. It is coming closer. The man grabs the package Mark brought with him and makes a run for the door. "I'm getting out of here." he said. Marsha and Joe were close behind him. Janie was bent over Mark on the floor, crying her eyes out. "I did love him, Angela." she says between muffled sobs, "And he loved me. He died for me. Oh, Mark, Mark - -." Angela didn't know what to say - so she just put her arms around her let her weep.

In a few minutes the door opens and there stands Tony. Angela runs to him - crying herself now. "Tony! How did you find us?" she asks.

"It was easy. I was here waiting for you." He answers.
She looks at him, not understanding what he means. "Huh? -- how did --"
"You see," he explains, "we've been watching these people for awhile now. We knew about their involvement in the dope ring but couldn't prove it. We knew Mark went for a pick up - but we wanted the big guy. We had hoped to follow the other guy to get a lead on him. When we heard the gun go off - we couldn't wait. I radioed for more patrol cars and came running. I caught these people trying to make a get-a-way. We didn't know you were in danger until we saw you sliding down the drain pipe. That's when we realized that we had better start closing in. We saw you come in. I thought that Janie was just waiting for Mark and you were waiting with her." Tony looks out the window and sees that the other police cars are pulling up out front. He tells one of the patrolman to radio for an ambulance. "Better tell them to send the coroner, too."

Tony took Angela and Janie home. Janie seems to be in shock. "I better keep her at my house tonight." Angela says. "By the way, I still don't understand. If you were watching the house, didn't you see me throw my shoe through the window - or see that man make us come inside with the gun?"

"No, we didn't. he answers. "We weren't close enough. We were hiding in the brush. We didn't want to get too close and take a chance on spilling our hand. We've been waiting a long time to nail them. "

He squeezes her hand. " I'm sorry, Angela, if I'd known that you were in danger, I would have called the whole thing off and come in after you. Honest."

During the rest of the ride home she explains to Tony everything that happened.

When they arrive at Angela's house, Helen is standing on the front porch and runs out to meet them when she sees the car pull up. They take Janie inside and put her to bed. Angela phones her mother and tells her the whole sad story - as best she can. Her mother agrees to leave her there with Angela for the night but says to call her if they need her. Angela feels a stab of pity for Janie's mother. She knows that she must be in terrible mental agony. They give Janie a sleeping pill and she is soon fast asleep. Angela has too much on her mind to go to sleep. Helen and George sit up with her until the early hours of the morning.

The next few days are like living in a dream world. Angela missed seeing Janie at school but she knows that it will take some time for her to recover. Everyone at school is talking about Mark and Marsha. Angela is thankful that they don't know the whole story - that she and Janie were in on the final episode. As far as they knew, Janie had just taken ill and was unable to attend classes. Angela wasn't about to tell them any different.

CHAPTER 3

It had turned cold but and the snow was beginning to fall like giant powder puffs piling up on the ground. Angela sat at her bedroom window watching Mother Nature spread a blanket of white over her beautiful earth. She was thinking of the events of the past week and wondering if Janie would ever get over them when the phone rang. She could hear Helen's footsteps as she hurried to answer it.

"Angela, it's for you," she called upstairs, "It's Janie and she sounds upset." Angela raced to the phone. "Hello, Janie?" she said anxiously. "What? I can't make heads or tails out of what you're saying. Just calm down until I get there. I'll be right over." Angela dressed hurriedly, not bothering to take the time to even brush her long silky black hair. In a very short time, she was on her way to Janie's house.

Janie's mother opened the door for Angela. "Thank goodness you're here." she said. "Maybe you can do something with her. I can't." Angela noted that Janie's mother looked as though she could use some help herself and made her sit down. Through choked back sobs, her mother continued. "She's gone all to pieces again. Do you think I should call a doctor for her?"

"Let me talk to her first." Angela answers. She went upstairs and after tapping lightly on the door, entered Janie's bedroom. Janie was sobbing into her pillow. When she heard Angela behind her, she

sat up in bed and tried to dry her swollen red eyes. "What's wrong, Angela?"

"I don't know. Suppose you tell me. What's this all about, funny face?" Angela was trying to sound humorous but she also had tears in her eyes.

"Oh, Angela," Janie said, "I don't know what I'm going to do. I just want to give up. I don't want to go on without Mark. I loved him so much."

Angela tried to reason with her but she couldn't listen to her. "I think we had better call a doctor for you, Janie." Angela said. This seemed to calm her down.

"No, Angela, it isn't necessary. I'll be all right." she said. "Maybe we could go for a drive. Would you take me?"

Angela smiled at her and replied. "Sure, Janie, it might do you good." They had a long serious talk while they drove around town. Against Angela's judgement, she drove Janie down to the Beach House, where Janie seemed to be more peaceful. "You know, I have a lot of beautiful memories here, Angela," she said.

"I know you have, honey, I'm sure you have." Angela tried to comfort her. "But you have to forget, Janie. You can't live in the past." Janie sighed. "I know that - but I want to hang on to what we had for just a while longer."

It was getting dark when they arrived at Janie's door. "Why don't you stay all night?" Janie asked Angela. "The snow is getting bad and I'd feel better if you did."

Angela told her that she would love to but she had to get Helen's car back to her. She promised to come over tomorrow night - which would be Friday - and spend the week-end with her. She then drove off, not knowing that she would regret her decision for the rest of her life. Janie waved and she waved back. Janie looked so pitiful standing alone in her doorway.

Because of the snow, it took Angela longer than usual to drive home. Helen was still up when she arrived. "Tony called for you," she said. "He said to tell you he'd see you tomorrow evening."

Angela took off her boots and sat down. "Well, I'll have to call him and tell him I won't be here," she said. "I promised Janie I'd spend the week-end with her. She's really mixed up, Helen. I'm worried about her." Looking around the room, she said "Where's George?"

"Oh, he's already gone to bed. He has an early run in the morning." Suppressing a yawn, Angela replies, "That's what I better do. Good night. I'll see you in the morning, Helen."

There was a thin veil of light in the room and Angela knew that it must be very early in the morning. She could still hear the phone ringing. She shook her head to chase away the drowsiness that still held her captive.

George was up and had already answered the phone. "Sure, I'll get her for you right away, Mrs. Jackson," he was saying. Before he had a chance to call her, Angela was at the phone.

"Oh, no!" she said. "Are you sure she's nowhere in the house?" Angela's voice was full of alarm. "You stay right there and I'll be right over."

"What's the trouble?" George asked.

"It's Janie," she answered. "Her mother said she went in to check on her and she was gone. Her coat and boots are missing but no other clothing."

George stood shaking his head. "Come on," he said, "I'll run you over there."

Angela told Helen what had happened and asked her to wait there in case Janie showed up at their house. Helen assured Angela that if she did she would call Janie's home right away.

When Angela got to Janie's house, she called Tony. He told her that he would get dressed and be right over. It seemed hours before he got there but actually it was only a short time. Angela was pacing the floor. Janie's mother was in tears. "I looked in on her before I went to bed and she seemed content - almost happy," she said. "Where could she have gone?"

Angela jumped up as if lightning struck her. "I think I know, Mrs. Jackson. You wait here. Come on, Tony, let's go." She grabbed her coat and raced for the door. Tony was right behind her. They were soon on their way to the Beach House.

Brewer

The sun was now fully out and the glare of the bright rays on the shimmering snow burned their eyes. When they reached the beach, Angela jumped from the car and starting running for the Beach House. She was right. There were fresh footprints in the snow leading to the door and only one set - which meant that she must still be there.

Angela went flying up the stairs - calling "Janie?", but she received no reply. In her mind, she seems to be reacting a scene. Once before she had been here looking for Janie. Tony had caught up to her and he led the way into the Beach House. It looked the same as it did, only now it seemed so lonely. She heard Tony in the back room. "Oh, my God!" - and that's all he said. Angela rushed to her friend's side. An empty sleeping pill bottle was lying on the floor and there was a note beside it. "Mother - please forgive me - but I can't face anyone anymore. I'm pregnant with Mark's baby. I can't have it and I can't give it up. At least I won't be alone when I face God. Tell Angela that I love her and this is not her fault - knowing her - she'll blame herself for this. I love you, too, Mother. I don't want to hurt you but, being a mother, maybe you can understand why - - -."

Tony looked at Angela and knew that Janie had been right. Angela was blaming herself for Janie's death. "Janie, why did you do it?" she was sobbing. "I should have stayed with you. I should have stayed with you." Tony took her by the arm and led her through the glistening snow back to the car.

Angela had three more months of school left. It took a lot of courage but she managed to get through them. Many times she would see Janie rushing through the school corridors - or hear her calling out to her to wait up. There were just too many happy memories to blot out. Tony tried to cheer her up but no one could replace the emptiness left in Angela by Janie's death. Death had again robbed her of someone she loved very much. First her father and now Janie, and both of them in a terrible, tragic death.

A week before school was out, Angela announced her decision to everyone. She had the offer of a job in New York and decided to take it. Helen and George finally agreed that it would be best for her. Tony was much harder to convince.

"But, Tony," Angela tried to explain. "It's only about a six hour drive. I wouldn't even go because I'll miss seeing you all the time - but try to understand - I have to get away to straighten out my thinking. Please say you understand. You know how I feel about you - but I'm not ready to settle down yet. If I stay here, Janie will haunt me for the rest of my life. I have to get her out of my system and I can't do it here."

Tony finally gave in after she promised him that she would come home every week-end.

The lonesome sound of the train whistle echoed through the hills as the train came around the bend and pulled into the station. One of the passengers boarding her was very remissful.

Helen and George stood with their heads down, not knowing what to say. Angela tried to sound non-cholant - but her voice cracks - "Good by, Helen," she whispers as she kisses her sister on the cheek. Helen hugs her.

Angela is waving to them as she makes her way to the boarding zone. Suddenly Tony was beside her. "I'll miss you, Angel," he said.

"Oh, Tony," she says as she throws herself in his arms. "I'll miss you, too. And I told you before - don't call me "Angel" - I can't live up to that name." Her misty eyes gaze longingly into his as he tightens his embrace. For a minute she is lost in the blissfulness of his kiss but is brought back to reality by the conductor's voice calling out - "All Aboard!"

She reluctantly pushes away. "I have to go," she says as she breaks loose and starts running for the train.

Tony's voice trails after her, "You'll always be my Angel. Hurry back." Angela blew him a kiss as she steps on the slow moving train. "See you in two weeks."

The black smoke leaves a trail as Tony stands on the track until the train is out of sight.

PART III

CHAPTER I

The rhythmic sound of the train almost put Angela to sleep. It was a long way to New York City but Angela's trip would end in one-half hour. She had never intended to go to New York. She lied to Tony and her family. She knew that this was the only way she could break from them and be completely free for awhile.

She got off the train at the next stop and boarded another one headed for Chicago. There was only one seat left in the coach and Angela made a rush for it. She put her coat on the seat while she put her two suitcases on the top rack. The girl in the next seat appeared to be about her own age and was staring out the window - lost in her own thoughts. Angela was trying not to disturb her, but when she started to sit down, the train started with a jerk and she fell against her.

"Oh, I'm sorry," Angela said. The girl looked at her and smiled.

"That's okay." she replied. "You have to expect a few knocks on these train rides." Angela was now seated comfortably.

"You sound like you ride them quite a bit." Angela replied to her new companion.

The girl looked at her with a deep sadness reflecting in her gray-blue eyes, and although she appeared reluctant to talk, she answered her.

"Yes, I do. More than I'd like. I go home every two weeks to see my baby."

Home, Angela learned - was New York City. They struck up a conversation and Angela soon learned a lot more about her. Her name was Mitzi and she worked as a model in Chicago. Her husband had left her when their little girl was only a year old. That was over a year ago. Since that time, her mother kept her little girl while she continued her work in Chicago.

Angela found herself liking this personable - but sad girl right off. In spite of the fact that they had just met, she seemed like a good friend. She was still talking about how she wished her mother would move down to Chicago with her so that they could all be together. Angela sat transfixed, engrossed in this strange girl's life story. She was glad to have something to think about instead of her own problems. Mitzi looked at Angela and started laughing. " You know, I've been talking for an hour and a half. Why didn't you shut me up? I'm not usually ~~that~~ that gabby." The girl lowered her head in embarrassment. Angela assured her that she was glad to have someone to talk to and asked her not to feel that she had imposed on her. The two girls became close friends during their trip and when the train pulled into Chicago, Mitzi had convinced Angela that the best thing for her to do when they got into town was to move in with her for awhile until she found out what she wanted to do. She told her she had a few 'connections' and could help her get a job.

"Gee, it's really big of you to take me in like this. You don't even know anything about me." Angela said as they tugged their suitcases

through the crowded lobby of the train station. "Think nothing of it," Mitzi answered. "Anyone that can put up with my talking for that long of a time, has to be okay."

Both girls were laughing and talking as they climbed into a taxi. In a short ime they arrived at Mitzi's apartment. Angela was surprised when she saw how luxuriously it was furnished. She sat her luggage down and was drinking it all in. "Nice, huh?" Mitzi said. " I did have a room-mate but she moved out two weeks ago." She started into her bedroom, pointing down the hall to a closed door. "you can put your things in the other bedroom", she continued. Angela strolled slowly down the hall, the fatigue of the trip finally taking its toll on her. The room was beautiful and quite feminine. It was done in pink and white. From the window she had a view of the city lights. Having an apartment on the fourth floor does have some advantage, she thought.

Angela had taken off her traveling clothes and put on a robe. There was a slight tapping on the door. " How about a late snack, Angela?" It was Mitzi. "Sounds good", Angela replied. " Be with you in a minute." The two girls made a small talk while munching on sandwiches and drinking cold milk.

"I guess I better turn in." Mitzi said as she glanced at her watch. "I have to get up early and get to work." She made Angela feel welcome and Angela thought she was very lucky to have found such a good friend. Even the full moon in the clear night sky seemed to be smiling down at her good fortune. In spite of a twinge of homesickness, Angela slept very soundly that night.

Angela awoke to the sound of dishes clattering. She blinked her eyes and looked around. It took her a few minutes to remember where she was. Then, she slipped out of bed and dressed. When she walked in the kitchen, Mitzi was just pouring her coffee. "Good morning", she said as she suppressed a yawn.

"Get a cup of coffee." Mitzi said as she pointed to the cabinet. "The cups are up there. You didn't have to get up so early. Why don't you sleep late?"

Angela poured a cup of coffee and sat down. "Oh, I can't do that. I'm anxious to get started. I have limited funds and have to find a job right away." Mitzi gave her a knowing grin. "I thought so." she said. "A run away, aren't you? I had you pegged right away. What was it? Heavy parents bit?"

Angela looked up, shaking her head no. "Oh, no, Mitzi, it's nothing like that. I just had reasons to get away from home for while. They all saw me off at the station. Speaking of home - can I use your phone this evening and call them. They're probably worried about me."

Mitzi was hurrying through the door with her coffee in her hand. "Sure, honey, be my guest," she called back. "I probably won't be home until late, so make yourself at home."

Angela called Helen that afternoon and told her that she had arrived in New York safe and sound. She told her that she would call Tony that evening after he got in from work. She spent the rest of the day cleaning the apartment and putting her things away. At least, she thought, being here - I won't have much time to think about Janie. This thought started her tears to flowing.

After a time, she composed herself and prepared dinner for herself and Mitzi. Maybe I better call Tony now, she thought, before Mitzi gets here. "Tony, it's me." She said when he answered the phone. "I finally made it to the big city. New York is just what you said it was. I have a lot to do. Yes, Tony, I miss you, too." It was good to hear his voice. She did miss him. More than she cared to admit. "I'll try to look up your parents here. New York is a big place though so it may take me a while."

Angela hadn't heard the door and didn't notice Mitzi come in. "Sure, Tony, I'll call you later in the week." Angela smacked her lips into the phone and then hung up the receiver. The sound of Mitzi's voice startled her. "Yes, New York is a big place." she said. "And who is this 'Tony'? I have a feeling you're hiding something. What's wrong, Angela, are you in some kind of trouble. If you are, I'll help you." Angela was touched by her compassion.

Angela felt she owed Mitzi an explanation so she explained the whole story to her. Her Dad's death, the death of her best friend, right up to where she left on a train for New York and ended up in Chicago with her. Mitzi just listened and gave an occasional nod. "Gee! Angela", she finally said. "I'm sorry that your friend died like that but you can't go on blaming yourself. Believe me, even if you had stayed that night with her, she would have done it another time."

Angela felt better after she talked to Mitzi. Everyone had told her the same thing that Mitzi had - but somehow coming from a stranger and an out-sider, it sank in better.

Angela went to work in the office of the firm that Mitzi modeled for. She decided to stay on with Mitzi and help with expenses. The next week-end she went home to see Helen and George - and, of course, Tony. She told them all about Mitzi, except for the fact that she lived in Chicago. They were all glad that she found someone to stay with. Tony was skeptical though and wanted her to come back home and marry him. If she would have followed her heart, she would have said "yes" and became Mrs. Marshall. Instead she followed through with what she had started and on Sunday evening, she left for Chicago, the same way she did the first time. Only this time, there was no Mitzi to talk to on the train and she became very lonely.

When she got to Chicago, she was mentally whipped. It would be good to see Mitzi. As she fumbled for her keys in her purse, she could hear voices coming from Mitzi's apartment. She listened closer. A man's voice was saying, "I'm warning you, Mitzi, either you give me the money or there's going to be trouble. We don't want that, do we?" Mitzi sounded like she was crying. "I told you I don't have it. Please leave me alone." Then Angela heard a loud slap. Angela started banging on the door. "Mitzi?" she called out, "I forgot my key." Angela could hear the man say, "If you open your mouth, you'll be sorry." Then she heard the kitchen window open onto the fire escape. It took Mitzi a few minutes to open the door. Angela rushed in and rushed to the kitchen window, but it was too late. He had already made his get-a-way.

"What are you going?" Mitzi tried to sound calm. "What are you looking out the window for?"

Angela turned and answered her with a question. "Who was he?" Mitzi's face reddened. "'Who? - what are you talking about?" She was trying to cover it over but she was shaking all over. Then she gave a defeated sigh and sat down and sobbed. " I can't take any more of this." she said. She told Angela that she had lied. Her husband had not left her. She never had any. The father of her baby was a married man and the character that just left had found out about it and was blackmailing them. The married man paid for her apartment and helped her with money for their baby daughter. She explained that he was a politician and if anyone found out about them it would ruin his career. He had been giving her money to pay the blackmailer but she missed seeing him last week and didn't get the money.

Angela was quite shocked by this new discovery. She felt so sorry for Mitzi that she felt like crying for her. "Look, Mitzi, my boyfriend, Tony - he's a good policeman. I know that he would help you." Mitzi looked at her with a frightened look. " No! No police. If he ever found out, he'd kill me - or worse even - he might harm my baby." Mitzi looked like a little girl that was lost. "That's why I leave her with my mother because I'm frightened for her."

Angela told her there had to be some way to get rid of this monster - but she assured her friend that she wouldn't tell Tony anything about her problem.

It had been a month since Angela had been home and was planning on going this week. She had been calling periodically pretending to be in New York. So far, they hadn't caught on. She had a wonderful visit with all of them. Several times - she was tempted to tell Tony

about Mitzi but kept her promise. She had missed the first train out and had to catch the later one. This put her into Chicago early in the morning. During her trip, she had come up with an idea. She wanted to talk to Mitzi about it. She felt sure that if they both moved to New York, the blackmailer would have a hard time finding her. That way she could be by her baby and she wouldn't be lying to her family anymore. Besides, Tony was talking about coming up to see her and she didn't know how long she could put him off. She had given them the address of Mitzi's mother. Tony had no reason to write to her there because she called him every other night.

She rushed into the apartment. "Mitzi," Her voice echoed through the apartment. "Get up, it's time to go to work." There was no answer. Angela knocked on her door. Still no answer. She opened it a crack and could see that the bed was made. She went in and found all of Mitzi's clothes gone. Angela was frantic. Where could she have gone? She looked everywhere for a note but none was found.

After much deliberation, she phoned Mitzi's mother in New York. No, she hadn't seen Mitzi or heard from her but said there was a young man there looking for her. She told him that there was a girl named Angela staying with her daughter in Chicago and gave him the address. Angela's heart skipped a beat. "Was his name - Tony?" she asked. "Yes, her mother replied. " I believe it was." Angela told her mother she would have Mitzi call as soon as she came in. She hadn't told her that all of her clothes was gone, too.

Brewer

Angela didn't go to work that day. She was too upset. She did, however, find out that Mitzi didn't show up for work either. Where could she be? Before she had time to answer her own thoughts, a knock came at the door. Maybe that's her and ran to the door.

"Tony!" Angela shouted. She was surprised to see him. "How did you get here so fast?"

Tony looked angry. "I dropped in out of the sky. Planes move faster than trains, you know." He followed her in the living room and they both sat down. "Never mind that -" he continued. "What are you doing here? I mean here in Chicago. You were supposed to be living in "New York" - remember? What kind of a game are you playing, Angela?"

From his expression, Angela could see that Tony was really mad. She explained to him the best she could and told him everything that happened. By the time she finished, he had calmed down.

"I still don't understand why you couldn't trust me enough to tell me the truth." he said with a hurt look on his face. Instead of talking to him, Angela just grabbed him and kissed him. Even if he was mad at her, she was so glad to see him. "Come on," he said as he pulled away from her. "I'm taking you home right now."

Angela just looked at him wide-eyed. "I can't leave now, Tony. I have to find Mitzi. She may need help."

"That - young lady," Tony replied, "is a job for the local police. We'll call them and give them the whole story. Besides, she probably just went off with this married she was telling you about."

Tony sounded cruel and inhuman to Angela's way of thinking. "I can't just - - just walk out on her." Angela protested. "Please, Tony,

please help me find her." Tony finally gave in. "Okay - where do we start?"

Mitzi had mentioned the politician's name once and Angela had written it down. Maybe her intuition was working - for she had a feeling, she may need that name sometime. Only now she couldn't remember where she put it. She rummaged through her purse. Sure enough, there it was - wadded up in her wallet. A quick look through the phone book and they came up with his phone number. In a few minutes, Tony had him on the phone. He told Tony he couldn't talk there at home and would call him back. In approximately one half hour, the phone rang. It was him calling back. No, he didn't know what had happened to Mitzi. He wanted to know how we got his number - but Tony told him nothing. He told Tony that he had not seen her in over two weeks. "I wish there was more I could tell you," the voice at the other end of the line said, "but I don't know what she's up to."

Tony convinced Angela that they would have to report her missing. The local police took the missing person's report. "They sure seem unconcerned." Angela said as they were leaving the police station. Tony just looked at her and smiled. Angela was glad that he wasn't mad at her anymore.

They went back to the apartment and searched it thoroughly, hoping to find some trace of where Mitzi went. Their search proved fruitless. Tony was convinced that she had just blown the coop. "Look, Angela, the girl probably went home to her mother's." Angela, however, had a terrible feeling that something had happened to her. Her instinct told her that Mitzi was in trouble - or some kind of danger.

Tony got a room in a hotel nearby and told Angela to phone him there if she heard anything before morning. "I don't know if I should leave you out of my sight again -" she said reproachfully. "You may disappear again on me."

Angela gave him a peck on the cheek and pushed him out the door. "Good-night, Tony, thanks for being such a doll."

-CHAPTER 2-

For two days, they followed up every lead they could think of and each one of them led to a dead-end street. Tony had been doing some investigating on his own, however, that Angela didn't know about.

"I have a plan, Angela," Tony advised her. "But I'll need your help."

"Anything," she told him. "I'll do anything to find Mitzi, Tony. I'm really worried."

Tony told her his plan and they immediately went into action. Angela picked up the phone and called the married politician again. She told him that Mitzi had returned and for him not to worry about her. He seemed rather anxious to know where she had been. "I don't know," she told him, "she's running a high fever and talking out of her head - but don't worry about her, I'll see that she's taken care of." He thanked her for calling and they hung up the phones.

Tony told Angela that he was proud of her. "We'll make a detective out of you yet," he said with a grin on his face. "Now" he went on, as his face took on a more serious tone, "now comes the hard part. "The trap is set - but you'll have to be the bait. Are you sure you want to go through with this?"

Angela nodded her head. She did not know exactly what she was in for.

Tony had stationed himself in the closet in Mitzi's room. They had a long wait but finally near three a.m., in the predawn hours, their wait was rewarded. They heard a rustling on the fire escape - outside the kitchen window. They left the window unlocked intentionally. The window made a slight squeek as it opened. The plan was working. The sound of feet tip-toeing across the floor could barely be heard. They were coming down the hall. Angela and Tony held their breath. They were coming down the hall. Angela and Tony held their breath. The bedroom door slowly opened. Through the crack in the closet door, Tony could make out the figure of a tall man. He was slowly edging toward the bed. Before Tony could get to him, he pulled a knife and stabbed the "figure" in the bed. The light flashed on and Angela stood in the door white-faced. Tony had the would-be attacker in handcuffs.

"Good thing we decided not to put you in that bed." Tony stated as he nodded toward the knife in the pile of covers they had arranged to look like someone lying in bed. Angela still didn't know what was going on. She looked at Tony with a puzzled look on her face."

"Tony, where is Mitzi? I don't understand - -" Tony interrupted her. "Neither do I, Angel, but our friend here does." He said as he pushed the man down in a chair. "Do you want to talk to me or do I call the police and let them ask you?"

" I refuse to talk to anyone until I talk to my lawyer." he said in a confident tone. Angela recognized the voice. It was the same man that

had slapped Mitzi around. Before she could say anything though, Tony had the man by the hair and yelling at him. "Okay, Mister, if that's the way you want it, we'll just call the police here and have them pick up your boss."

This threat seemed to arouse some fear in the man. "Go ahead." He bluffed. Tony reached for the phone and started to dial. "Wait - wait," the man said. "she must still be at the old shack - about a mile out of town. He wanted me to kill her - but - I just couldn't. I felt sorry for her." The man's manner changed considerably. He continues to talk. "I tied her up and left her there until I decided what to do with her. He was giving her the money to give me - of course, I would then return it to him - - for a small fee, you understand. He wanted to scare her and hoped she would leave him alone. When he saw that it wasn't going to work, he decided to have her killed. But - I just couldn't kill her." The man was crying now. He looked up at them with a look of genuine fear on his face. "He called me awhile ago and wanted to know why I didn't take care of her yet - he said you had phoned " - he nodded toward Angela- " and said she had come back home and was sick in bed. That's when he told me I had better get the job done tonight or he'd take care of me, too. He'll kill me when he finds out she's still alive." There was a pause in the conversation and silence hung heavy in the room.

The silence is broken as a strange voice from the direction of the front door speaks. No one heard it open. "That's right, he will." Three shots ring out.

Tony instinctively drew his gun and fired in the direction of the front door. But before he did, one of the bullets hit him in the arm. Angela was screaming as she watched the man that Tony had handcuffed slowly sink to the floor. Tony didn't take time to glance in that direction, however, for he was racing down the stairs after the man who had fired the shots. He lost track of him though and soon appeared back in the apartment. Angela was sitting on the floor crying. "Are you all right, Angela?" Tony said as he rushed to her side.

"Oh, Tony," she said as she put her arms around him. "I'm all right - but you've been shot." Angela phoned the police and told them what happened. They were on their way. Tony was bending over the man lying on the floor. "It's too late, Angel", he mumbled, "this man's dead."

Chapter 3

The police were searching for the murderer. An all points bulletin was issued for the arrest of the famous politician. Tony was taken to the hospital and taken to surgery. Angela blamed herself for this. If she hadn't been so stubborn, Tony wouldn't have been shot. Then the thought struck her that he might have been killed. "Oh, Tony" she whispered to herself. "I do love you. I know that now."

After Tony was settled comfortably in his hospital room, Angela crept in and kissed him on the forehead. The nurse told her that he would probably be out from the sedative most of the day and there wasn't much use in her hanging around there. Angela left word that if he should

come around before she got back - to tell him that she would be there soon. She pulled her coat around her as she walked into the brisk night air. She knew that she had to try to find Mitzi before the politician did. All she had to go on was "a shack" about a mile out of town. That could be anywhere, she thought with despair. She knew the police were looking, too, but what if this man found her first. She shuddered at the thought.

There is one chance - -. Angela has an idea. Maybe she can find something to go on - if she goes back to the apartment. She has a time hailing a cab but but after a short time, she is back at the apartment that she and Mitzi shared together. As she looked around the rooms, she almost expected Mitzi to come bursting through one of the doors.

There were blood stains on the floor in the living room. The police had taken the man's body away and apparently finished up in the apartment because there was no one around. Angela didn't know what to look for but didn't know where else to start. She looked through Mitzi's dresser. Nothing there. She walked over and sat in the chair trying to piece everything together. The man said that he had taken her clothes so that people would think that she had just decided to leave. But - then why - . Her thoughts were suddenly interrupted. "Ouch!" she exclaimed. A sharp object had struck her in the hip. Angela reached behind the pillow in the chair and pulled out a key and key chain. She turned it over and read the words "THE OLD SHACK". There was a number "3" on the key. Her face lit up, as she realized what she had just found. She ran to the telephone stand and started thumbing through the phone book. There it was. She jotted down the address and ran out the door.

If Angela would have been thinking clearly, she would have also phoned the police, but she was so excited with her discovery that she didn't think of it. A full moon lit up the starless night as Angela's cab made its way to "The Old Shack", which the cab driver said was about a mile out of town. It seemed hours before they finally pulled up in front of a fairly new Motel. The front of it was extremely modern and right beside it stood a Lounge - called "The Old Shack". Angela paid the driver and started running for the motel.

When she reached # 3, she could see that the door was part way open. She crept slowly up to the window and listened. "If you had only left me alone", it was the politician's voice. Angela knelt down where she could peep in under the curtain. She couldn't see Mitzi but she could see that the man was holding a gun. "I should have done the job myself in the first place." the man went on. "Your friends called me and told me you were home. I should have never sent that bungling idiot to do a man's job. It was good thing I went over to check him out. I heard him tell your friends that he had you here."

Angela could hear Mitzi sobbing. I have to call the police, she thought. If I go in, he'll kill us both. She crawled on her hands and knees past the door and ran breathlessly to the office. She gave the vital information to the police dispatcher and she and the motel manager started for room # 3.

As they neared the door, they could hear loud voices and sounds of scuffling. Then - a gun shot. "Oh, my God!" Angela screamed and

raced to the room. Mitzi was stumbling out the door, blood dripping from her hand. " I killed him." She repeated over and over.

From the brightly lit hospital room, Tony smiled up at Angela. The doctor told him that he could go home tomorrow.

He kissed her hand. "You know", he was saying, " I should be mad at you for taking off like you did. Don't you know that you could have been killed? Sometimes, Angel, you worry the life out of me. " Tony was trying hard to be mad at her and keep a stearn face - but there was a tantalizing gleam escaping from his eyes. " Honestly - keeping up with you is like - - like - well, it's like trying to follow the wind."

Angela silences hisreprimanding voice with a long kiss. Then she fills him in on what has transpired since she left the hospital. She tells him that the politician is dead but Mitzi is alive. She informs him that Mitzi is also a guest of the hospital. She was admitted in a state of shock. She told him that she had phoned Mitzi's mother and explained - as best she could- what had happened. Her mother was on the way after her. The police said she could go with her mother - but would have to appear for^a hearing in regard to the politician's death.

The morning paper carried a story of the politician's death. All it said was that he had died suddenly from a heart attack. Angela thought this was really stretching the truth - but passed it off with a shrug of her shoulders.

The next morning, Angela and Tony board a plane for home. "Hey!" Tony said looking at Angela. " I thought Angels could fly without planes." They both laughted.

"I told you I couldn't live up to that name." she replied. "You know, Tony," she continued. "it takes some people a long time to grow up - but I think I finally have. If you still want me to be your wife, the answer is yes, Darling."

Tony's eyes fill with tears. "You know that I want to marry you - more than anything in the world. I have for a long time. I think we have both grown up a bit in the last week. I love you, Angel."

The people in the plane smile at the two embracing figures.

Helen and George meet them at the airport. It was a long ride home and Angela was nearly exhausted from telling the whole story to them.

"Oh - yes," she smiles up at Tony. "I left the best part of the story for last, Helen. Tony and I are being married next week. Will you and George stand up for us?"

Helen hugs her sister. "Congratulations, Angela. I was afraid that you were going to let him get away from you." Helen and George are extremely delighted and approve whole-heartedly of their new brother-in-law.

The morning sun is shining bright. Angela doesn't know if it is the birds singing or her heart. She is a beautiful bride. Mr. and Mrs. Tony Marshall have just taken their wedding vows and are walking down the aisle of the church. A handful of people are scattered around. Tony whispers in her ear. "Well, Mrs. Marshall - just' try to get away from me now, When you get in trouble again - I'll be right at your side." Angela gives him a quick kiss as the church doors close behind them.

"What was that you said, Tony? - oh, yes - keeping up with me would be like following the wind." She pulls him after her. "Well, come on, Darling, - let's follow the wind." A quick breeze blows by as if to accent her words.

THE END.