

FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS

By Laurie Allen

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CAST: JOAN and VERNA

JOAN: Mrs. Adams, I'm Joan Dooley. The director at Dooley Funeral Home.

VERNA: I know who you are.

JOAN: So, how may I help you, Mrs. Adams?

VERNA: I told you on the phone how you could help me.

JOAN: Uh, yes...You're interested in our pre-arranged funerals.

VERNA: No, I just want to buy some lots.

JOAN: Some lots...yes, a very wise decision. Planning ahead is our motto.

VERNA: Now Mrs. Dooley, I want to buy some lots for my family. I'd like them all together in one spot. No, wait! Let's have them scattered about the cemetery...just like my family.

JOAN: Scattered about?

VERNA: That's what I said. One here, one there...just like my family. All over the country, they are. Spread out from Alaska to South Carolina. Do they care about my happiness...about maintaining a close family relationship?

JOAN: Um...Yes, I understand. So, how many lots do you need?

VERNA: Now, I've already got a place for me next to Frank.

JOAN: Frank?

VERNA: My dead husband!

JOAN: Oh yes, of course!

VERNA: But I need a couple more next to us...on *my* side. Frank didn't do much for them in life. Don't see why he should get to be next to them in death.

JOAN: (**writing down the information**) Two lots next to Mrs. Verna Adams.

VERNA: One is for my granddaughter, Julie, and the other for her future husband. And if she never marries, then she can just give the lot away to whomever she wants to lie next to her. Hopefully it won't be some tramp or hobo that'll embarrass us all in the hereafter.

JOAN: So you'll be purchasing two lots. Is that correct?

VERNA: No!

JOAN: No?

VERNA: No!

JOAN: I'm sorry, but I thought you said you needed two additional lots next to yours and your husband's.

VERNA: I do!

JOAN: Mrs. Adams, I'm afraid I'm somewhat confused.

VERNA: You may call me Verna.

JOAN: All right...Verna. You don't want to purchase the two lots we discussed?

VERNA: Yes! I said I did, didn't I?

JOAN: Yes, but...

VERNA: But I need more than two! The others I want scattered all about the cemetery! Remember?

JOAN: Oh, yes. So how many lots will you need? Three?

VERNA: No, more than that.

JOAN: Four?

VERNA: More.

JOAN: Five?

VERNA: Higher, higher.

JOAN: Six?

VERNA: Higher! **(As JOAN continues to count, VERNA points her thumb up to indicate "higher.")**

JOAN: Six?...Seven?...Eight?...Nine?...Mrs. Adams?

VERNA: **(quickly)** Verna, call me Verna!

JOAN: Verna, how many?

VERNA: You stopped at nine.

JOAN: Ten?... Eleven?... Twelve?... Thirteen?... Fourteen?

VERNA: That's it! That's it!

JOAN: Fourteen?

VERNA: Ms. Dooley, I want to buy fourteen lots.

JOAN: Fourteen?

VERNA: Fourteen.

JOAN: Fourteen?

VERNA: Fourteen. That's what I said.

JOAN: **(writing)** All right. Fourteen lots. All spread out.

VERNA: That's right! All spread out!

JOAN: And that is fourteen?

VERNA: Yes! I want fourteen lots!

JOAN: Spread out all across the cemetery?

VERNA: Spread out all across the cemetery!

JOAN: Okay. Mrs. Adams?

VERNA: Call me Verna! Verna! Verna!

JOAN: Verna?

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