



JEFF HUNTER AND EMILY:



Emily is all alone again, in the house she shared with Jeff for two short months.

*They Never
Even Said
GOODBYE!*

A second Hollywood tragedy raises new questions about Jeff Hunter's mysterious death. He was so young, and still so unfulfilled.

• **THEY NEVER** hurt anyone.

It's true that Emily McLaughlin married Jeffrey Hunter, in Mexico, right after her Mexican divorce from Robert Lansing. It is absolutely not true, that the daytime T.V. leading lady left Robert for Jeffrey. Let there be no mistake here! Emily insists it was Robert who no longer wanted to be married (after 12 years and an 11-year-old son, Robert, Jr.). She met Jeff only after she and Bob had already separated. Bob gladly gave his permission for the "quickie" Mexican divorce.

Jeff himself had been married twice before. But he was divorced from his second wife, Dusty Bartlett, two years ago. He and Dusty had two sons, Todd and Scott, during their ten years of marriage. He also had a son, Christopher, by his first wife, Barbara Rush. Yet he adopted Steele, Dusty's son by a previous marriage.

We're not trying to say that Jeff was perfect. At the divorce hearing, Dusty said he occasionally drank too much

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Jeff is remembered by everyone in Hollywood as a truly nice guy.

JEFF HUNTER

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and became violent. Shortly after he married Emily, Dusty said he was so far behind on his child support payments, she'd probably have to go back to court. At the same time, she admitted he had spent Christmas Day with her three sons.

Jeff was engaged to Sally Ann Howes for several months, but that was before he met Emily. Dusty claims Jeff asked her to re-marry him, when he first broke up with the blond British star. So we can say—unequivocally and confidently—that no one else had to pay for these newlyweds' happiness.

That situation isn't really terribly common here. Our community's leading citizens include Elizabeth Taylor, Carol Burnett, France Nuyen and Ann-Margret — women whose marriages caused great heartbreak to other women.

They are all still happily married, though, to the men they took from other wives. Emily and Jeff—this blameless couple—had only two brief months together. When they were over—and how quickly they must have gone!—officials at Valley Receiving Hospital told Emily that her husband was dead.

They never even had a chance to say goodbye! A friend found Jeff unconscious, alone, with his right eye swollen, in their Van Nuys home. Emily was probably at work on her daytime T.V. series, **General Hospital**. Jeff was rushed in a fire department ambulance to Valley Receiving Hospital for emergency brain surgery. He died there the next morning, Los Angeles election day, at age 42.

The county medical examiner's office first announced that he'd probably been killed by a fall. They later decided that he fell down the stairs only after he'd already had the fatal

brain hemorrhage—probably caused by injuries he suffered while working on a movie in Spain.

Jeff's body was taken to Meyer and Mitchell Funeral Home, but another day passed before funeral plans could be made. Emily had collapsed, and been put under heavy sedation, when she heard the news. Jeff was buried here in Southern California, in Glen Haven Memorial Park, after services at St. Mark's Episcopal Church. The most impressive memorial was provided, quite accidentally, by 20th Century Fox. **The Longest Day**, which features Jeffrey Hunter, has just been re-released, to coincide with the 25th anniversary of D-Day.

Jeff was born in New Orleans, as Henry McKinnies, Jr., and his parents are still alive there, but it's fitting that he should have been buried here. When he got out of the Navy, in 1946, he came here to study drama at UCLA. In 1950, he was given an eight-year contract by 20th Century Fox. He worked for almost all the major studios in over 50 pictures, including **Fourteen Hours, Hell to Eternity, The Last Hurrah, The True Story of Jesse James, and The King Of Kings**. He also starred in a Western T.V. series, **Temple Houston**.

Despite his 19 years in the movies, Jeff was never really a major star. His worst problem, oddly enough, was caused by his greatest role. After he had appeared as Jesus in MGM's 1960 remake of **The King of Kings**, people refused to accept him in more earthy parts.

He'd been cast as Jesus largely because of his gentle, mild appearance. It really did reflect his basic nature, too. His office (Hunter Enterprises) and his barbershop (Little Joe's) are both in our building. Both agree that he was a very, very nice guy. A nice guy, who made a nice woman very happy, without hurting anyone else in the process.

Jeff and Emily Hunter were a nice couple. They finished last.

Or—did they?

The story of Jeffrey Hunter and Emily McLaughlin certainly is a grim and heartbreaking tragedy. But another tragedy took place—by dreadful coincidence—at the same time—and we should consider it carefully, before we decide that happened to the Hunters, was the worst possible thing.

The hero of his second tragedy was Tom Duggan, the wildly controversial T.V. and newspaper commentator. He died at age 63, very soon after Jeff.

Both men died of injuries which did not seem serious when they occurred. Tom did not seem at all badly hurt in his auto accident on Sunday. He was dead the following Wednesday, at Cedars of Lebanon Hospital.

No one could say Tom Duggan never hurt anyone, but no one could say he ever bored anyone. He made his newscasting debut in Chicago, claiming that the local police were supported by the local gangsters. A few more indiscreet remarks, about a well-known custody dispute, earned him a 10-day jail sentence. He fled the city, to reappear in California, as uproarious as ever. Here he promptly started pouring gasoline on our local fires, to the edification, exasperation, irritation and unflinching amusement of all concerned.

It's no wonder, that such a man was attractive to women even in his later years. When he died, he was engaged to Elaine Corrigan. They were to have been married in Hawaii later in the month. Instead, she stood grief-stricken beside his coffin, at the Catholic funeral. Elaine didn't have any memories of married life to look back on—not even two months' worth. She didn't even have the name which would have brought her special sympathy, attention, social position, and financial support. At least, Emily has the consolation of remembering that she was—and, in fact, still is—Mrs. Jeffrey Hunter.

(You can send your condolences to Emily c/o General Hospital Troupe, ABC TV, 4151 Prospect, Hollywood, Calif.)