

## Jack Hodgins / MRS FENNEL IN WAGGA WAGGA

"You are flirting with the waiter again," said Mrs Fennel's son, though he'd barely glanced up from his chop.

Mrs Fennel laughed, and said loudly enough for the waiter to hear, "At eighty-three I'm glad of attention from *any* good-looking man."

She was sure that her son did not care enough to be properly scandalized. His head would be filled with Jackie Chestnut's sheep. She almost said, "*Must* you eat so fast? And with your elbow on the table!" But she didn't want the waiter to make a story out of her in the kitchen. Australians could be appallingly quick to jeer.

"A person mentions her age because she can't quite believe it," she explained. She bit into a cherry tomato and felt it explode in her mouth. "And because there is so little else to boast of."

"Yes," George said. "You're well past the age where people brag of their children."

Oh, George! She had never boasted about her only child. When mothers had exchanged competing anecdotes she'd remained silent. She had tried once to crow about the infant George, but had not liked feeling dishonest.

She worked at her salad, while George hacked off slices of lamb to chomp down. Because she had taken a dislike to the smell of sheep fat, she now confined her eating to fresh vegetables, and sometimes fish. In Wagga Wagga she would lose weight.

She was already slim, had always been a tall slim woman. She was still remarkably straight. Nothing about her had gone soft with age. Her long face, which had never been considered pretty, had become quite handsome in recent years. When she saw herself in a mirror she sometimes thought: You'd make a good-looking sixty-year-old man, if you threw away the pearls.

It was obvious she'd make a far better-looking man than her husband had been. Or her son George. Pale, pudgy George was in fact sixty. Or sixty-one, she supposed. (George's son, however, had

inherited her eyebrows, and long strong bones. A good-looking young man, who caused female heads of every age to turn for a second look. She had shocked a tour group in Florence by introducing him as her gigolo. He'd gone along with it, bless him. He'd even said, "We're thinking of marriage." So that everyone laughed and noticed how they looked so much alike.)

As soon as George had mopped up his plate with the remaining bread, he pushed back his chair (wiping sheep grease from his mouth with a linen serviette) and glanced at his watch. "Jackie will be by in five minutes, to pick me up."

"But you'll take the time for a cup of coffee?"

"His wife'll have the tea on." He folded the serviette and placed it on the table. "If you want dessert, then you must order yourself some dessert, Mother." He glanced around the dining room. "If your waiter friend hasn't lost interest."

"I can't imagine the attraction," she said. "Day after day."

"Jackie and I were friends as boys. There's much catching up to do."

"Have you discovered you have the soul of a farmer after all these years? Have you dreamed all your life of mucking out sheds?"

"You should glance over the dessert menu before the waiter arrives."

"Are you thinking you made a mistake, not following him? Are you planning to emigrate now, at your age? Perhaps you'll not return one evening and I'll have to fly home by myself, to explain to your children."

He had been this tight-lipped as a child. He had resisted learning to talk — she believed it was because he feared he might give something of himself away. "I think you should invite Jackie Chestnut to join us for coffee and pie. Before you run off to play at boys amongst the sheep."

He narrowed his pale eyes at her. "You've had a long day. I've driven you up and down every road around this countryside."

"Dust. Heat. Flies. Dead kangaroos flung to the side."

"And tomorrow, we can drive to Canberra."

"Canberra is hardly Rome. Canberra is not Stockholm. I have not paid for the two of us to fly seventeen hours through the sky only to sit



in a dull bush town a million miles from nowhere."

"What you mean is, you're bored. You want to poke at poor Jackie, to amuse yourself."

She ignored this. "I shall go out to the street when he arrives," she said, reaching for the walking stick which she carried in memory of a fall in San Francisco. "He cannot avoid me for ever."

Edna Fennel would prefer to be travelling with her husband, of course. But Martin Fennel had died eight years before — suddenly, in the middle of lunch. She'd eventually recovered from the shock, more or less, but did not like discovering that she was alone. Her parents had gone long ago. And her only brother. George lived half a continent away in Ottawa, and she seldom saw the grandchildren, who were already grown up and lived in the Ottawa Valley as well. Mrs Fennel stayed on in the small house she and her husband had bought when they'd retired to Vancouver Island.

She and Martin Fennel had travelled a great deal together after his retirement. London. Barcelona. Rome. After his death she wished to travel still, but would not do it alone. She would not attach herself to one of those tours, where artificial and temporary friendships sprang up on bus rides, followed by Christmas cards and vague invitations from people whose faces you could barely remember. She would not set out on her own — train schedules and foreign money confused her, customs officials frightened her so thoroughly that sense deserted. She recalled one old widower on a cruise to Alaska — the last trip she and Martin had taken before his death. Mr Whisker, his name was. He'd gone ashore with the rest of them in Ketchikan, but at the end of the day he'd somehow got on the wrong ship — heading home, while theirs was still travelling north. It had cost the poor old fellow a thousand dollars to have himself flown up from Vancouver to rejoin them. And he had looked so foolish — looked as though he *felt* so foolish. His wife, he'd said, had been the one to make arrangements. Without her, he turned in circles.

So she'd fallen upon the idea of treating her grandchildren to trips they could not afford themselves. George's children had gone nowhere in their lives. They were all in their twenties — Carola, Richard, Eleanor. She'd asked them in order, one a year. No one had

refused, though Eleanor had insisted on Scandinavia rather than Greece. Thus Mrs Fennel had discovered an effective manner of guaranteeing herself a familiar and patient companion. Being related, they were willing to tolerate her weaknesses. It did not hurt that they were also grateful.

She allowed them to choose from a list of possible destinations. Carola had been content with a cruise down the Saint Lawrence and up the Saguenay to hear beluga whales singing around the ship. Richard, however, had been more ambitious: architectural splendours of Italy. Eleanor managed to have their Scandinavian tour extended beyond Helsinki to Leningrad, Moscow, and Kiev. For her second trip, Carola had looked over the new list Mrs Fennel had prepared — New York, New Orleans, Edinburgh — and said that she had always wanted to visit Argentina. She was a married woman by this time, with a small child, but she would not mind leaving husband and daughter behind for Argentina — whereas, she could save New York for a time when she and Geoff might go there together.

But Mrs Fennel would not put herself in a position where she was forced to witness extreme poverty, or to listen to mothers speak of children who had disappeared in the time of the military dictatorship. She suggested Ireland instead. London. Even Tokyo.

It was while Carola hesitated that George Fennel, listening in, had said, "I would not turn down Ireland myself. Or London either, for that matter," and laughed awkwardly. Mrs Fennel was a guest in his house at the time, but had not responded. After all, imagine travelling with George! It had never occurred to her that he might want to leave his boring little box of a house in Ottawa, or his monotonous routine of bowling and wood carving. He was, she thought, content.

In Dublin with Carola, however, George occasionally nagged at her thoughts. Over breakfast at Mrs Fitzgerald's B and B one morning, she said, "I'm afraid I lay awake all night worrying about your father. I keep thinking I should have pushed him harder to go to university. He might have done more with his life. Instead of working day and night in that store."

Carola threw herself against the back of her chair. "I can't believe it! Still worrying — in your eighties! — about whether you've been a good enough parent."



"Well, naturally!" said Mrs Fennel. "One day your little girl will tell a lie about where she's spent the night and you'll wonder what difference you might have made if you'd turned down this one little trip. You will always be in the wrong."

"I'd rather hear you say it will end," Carola said. She pushed her fork into cooling scrambled egg. "I'd decided to give it seventeen, eighteen years."

Mrs Fennel said she suspected that was the reason marriage ceremonies were invented. And graduation exercises. So that parents could go home and tell themselves *There, it's over, they're on their own, I'm not going to think about anyone but myself from now on*. "Fifty years later they are still wondering if they'd be punished with fewer disappointments had they done a better job as a mother."

Carola regarded Mrs Fennel from beneath a frown. "Dad disappoints you?"

"I meant on their behalf. You go on wanting to give them the world." Mrs Fennel pushed the great chunks of deep-fried potato to the back of her plate. "Of course in your poor father's case — he has never striven to achieve much."

"We love him as he is," Carola said, smiling. "He's a good, kind man." She kept her eyes on her plate. She was not enjoying this. "You haven't spent any time with him to speak of since he was a boy."

"That is precisely what I've been thinking. Don't imagine I haven't noticed how hurt he is, that I've taken his children on my trips and never invited him."

"He has always said that he'd like to make one journey in his life — Australia."

Of course he would want the farthest. "I am too old for Australia."

"A childhood friend — someone who left when they'd barely grown, but has written ever since. He would like to visit Jackie Chestnut on his sheep station, he said. To catch up."

She'd supposed that it wouldn't kill her, this once, though plodding George would be hardly an ideal travelling companion. He would certainly not be so demonstratively grateful as her grandchildren. Nor would he be so capable as the children, when foreign currency confused, or customs officials became offensive, or tour guides were lost. He would consider her perfectly capable — his

mother, after all. He might even be confused by all of those things himself. She would have to train him to take over settling the bills, figuring out the confusing business of tips — but she would never be able to relax about it, as she did with the children. Still, she'd approached him about the matter, suggesting a week at the slot machines in Reno. "I know people who fly down twice a year."

He had not fallen for Reno. No doubt he suspected there would not be a second chance. The name of Jackie Chestnut was brought up. Yes, she remembered him, a scrawny redheaded kid. That big family — poor as mice — off the road to Ferguson Falls. The sheep station was not far from Canberra, he'd said, he was sure she would like Canberra, she could stay in town if she preferred and not even set foot on Jackie Chestnut's property.

"Good God!" she'd said. "What would I do in Canberra?"

*It is not even Canberra, she wrote to her eldest grandchild. It is beyond Canberra. A small hot town out in what they call the "bush" but which is actually brown rolling hills with only a few clumps of spindly trees.*

*She hadn't intended to offend anyone last night, she wrote. You know how mischievous I am inclined to become if I'm bored! I thought only that I would sit your father's friend down at our table and allow him to discover that I was not someone to be avoided. I wanted to see what had become of Nellie Chestnut's son. I wanted to discover why your father wished to spend so much time with a fellow I remember as not very interesting at all.*

*The waiter had requested that they lower their voices. How was I to remember that Nellie Chestnut shot herself when her son ran off to New South Wales? How was I to guess that he would be furious to hear me say that the only thing I remember about his mother was that she had been a little disturbed. In the head, I meant. I meant only that he should not blame himself. (She was a filthy housekeeper, too, I remember. Her shack smelled of chamber pots, with a minefield of rubber boots and toys to stumble through. I did not mention this, however, since it was entirely possible that he had married someone exactly like her.)*

Of course she was curious about this farm she had not been allowed to see. She was equally curious about his Mrs Chestnut, who had not yet shown her face in town. *You know that I never hesitate to ask questions. People are generally flattered to be asked about themselves. But Jackie*



*Chestnut seemed to think I was putting him through the third degree. Your father says it is because I adopt this silly approach that appears to be almost flirting, when I wish to make others believe that I am interested in them. Of course I didn't care two hoots what Jackie Chestnut thought (flirting at my age!) but apparently this was something his mother had objected to. She thought it was disgusting for a friend's mother to talk to a newly-grown boy as though she found him of interest. He could not come home from visiting George without enduring a cross-examination about my behaviour.*

*Of course I was horrified. I was only showing an interest, I explained. It was because George was so uncommunicative. It was because your father would not allow me to discover anything about himself, anything private or personal. He kept himself bland, so that he could hide from me. I imagined I might find a way to him through those friends who were allowed to see what I was not. Apparently my efforts were not appreciated.*

Afterwards, he'd told her that she was doing it still. "Put poor old Jackie under the spotlight." He mimicked her: "Has George demonstrated talent in the shearing shed, Jackie?' 'Are you sure George hasn't got his eye on your wife?' Couldn't you see how you were annoying him?"

"If what you say is true," she'd said, "you might save us all a great deal of trouble by being a little more communicative yourself. Then I wouldn't find myself wondering how much I have never known about my own son."

"There is nothing to know," he told her. "Be content with that. No amount of grilling will reveal that you've produced a human being who is any more remarkable than mud."

She told him that she no longer looked for signs of distinction in him, that she'd given that up half a century ago.

"Why did George get home so late last night, Jackie? You know he is useless at the store when he's been up most of the night. His father becomes impatient. A young man needs to pay attention to his work. Were you out as late as he was?"

"Oh yes, Mrs Fennel." His manner of speaking was so slow and absurdly serious you could shake him. "I was playing at a dance in Renfrew."

"George was with you, I imagine."

"For a while . . . yes . . . he was, yes."

"And afterwards I suppose you went somewhere nice, you and George and your dates. To chat. To have a sandwich and coffee. Does George drink an awful lot?"

"Not very much, Mrs Fennel. Just a little. But Mary-Lou likes her beer."

"Who is Mary-Lou?"

How else would she ever have learned anything? George would say "I dunno," or "Can't remember," making it clear that he did not consider it her business to know where he was or who he was with. He certainly did not consider it her business to know what he was thinking. Unfortunately, Jackie Chestnut was to become almost as bad.

"Now tell me, Jackie. What do you think George's chances are with that Wilson twin? Do you think they are serious, Jackie? Do you think they are in love? Of course he'll never tell me, I'll be the last to know, I would be the last to know if he'd got a promise of marriage out of Princess Margaret Rose. Do you think he will marry Janet Wilson?"

The scrawny, dirty, red-headed little boy had grown up to become an awkward lanky youth, the skin of his pale face always peeling, it seemed. The rims of his eyes always red. He'd found work in a lumber yard, stacking two-by-fours onto delivery trucks. He played an accordian at old-time dances, though not very well. Soon after they'd started working, George and Jackie had bought a '38 Chevrolet which they used to go out on double dates but sometimes arranged to have to themselves. Jackie liked to visit an uncle who lived on a farm near Kingston — a real farm, with fields and healthy stock, not a one-cow dump scratched out of the bush like his mother's, with rusted car bodies and washing machines along the lane.

"Do you think George likes working at the store? His father says his mind's not much on his work but we can't get him to tell us what he's thinking about. Does he talk, Jackie? When you're out on a date, does he say what's going through his head?"

"He talks, Mrs Fennel. He's always talking. Janet Wilson says if he doesn't stop talking about himself she will call it off."

"Call what off?"

"She'll start going out with other fellows, she meant."

"So what does he talk about, then, if he tells you all his business?"



Does he tell you what he *thinks*?"

"Oh my goodness, I don't know, Mrs Fennel. I never remember that sort of thing, I hardly even listen I guess."

"Well, you're not going until you give me an opinion of this dress. Do you think it's pretty? I ask George what he thinks but he won't say. He thinks I'm an ugly old hag. What do you think, Jackie? Do you like the dress? Do you think I'm an ugly old hag?"

"There is nothing to know," George had always insisted. But of course things could not be as simple as that. No human being was entirely grey. No one went so far out of the way to appear grey unless there were frightening splashes of brilliant colour to be hidden. In George's case, she could believe there were only pastels, but would not be content until she'd seen them.

The thought frightened her a little. She did not like to stumble upon too many surprises while she was travelling. And here she was about as far as she could be from home. She hadn't made a friend in Wagga Wagga. She hadn't attached herself to a tour. She'd depended upon George and George had been interested only in that sheep station, from which she had been excluded.

Well, she would not remain excluded. Two days after the exchange in the dining room, Edna Fennel decided that she was being made a fool of. She had paid for his fare between Ottawa and Vancouver and for both their airfares between Vancouver and Sydney, she had paid for two bus fares between Sydney and Wagga Wagga, she was paying for two hotel rooms and meals in a town where she had found nothing of interest. This was not what she had forked out good money for. This was not seeing the world. Her grandchildren had never treated her this way.

Eleanor would say, "Now Gran, you mustn't get yourself worked up." Dear Richard would laugh: "So forget the boring old fart and find yourself a man who'll show you around. There must be rich old coots in that town wondering if all the good-looking women have died." Carola would frown, and worry about her father. In fact Carola said, when Mrs Fennel called Ottawa, "It doesn't sound like Dad to be so inconsiderate." Edna Fennel took this to be as good as a suggestion that she investigate. She lifted the telephone receiver again and called for a cab.

"He spends very little time here, actually, Mrs Fennel." Jackie Chestnut did not seem surprised to see her. Nor did he send her away, as George had suggested he would. He'd been out in the dusty yard when she stepped from the taxi, in the faint light of a single bulb which shone down from a scraggy eucalyptus tree, but led her to the door of the house. Roosting hens complained, and went flying off the verandah to make room for them to pass through. If it hadn't been for the corrugated metal water tank up on rusted legs by the corner, or the unfamiliar brilliant flowers beside the post, you might say that Jackie Chestnut had created here a copy of his mother's farm.

"Then where is he? Where has he been all these evenings?"

"It is not for me to say."

He ushered her inside a large kitchen, which was perhaps the main room of the house. Certainly she was not invited into anything that looked like a living room. Jackie Chestnut pulled out a chair for her at the long wooden table. Salt and pepper shakers stood at the centre. When he removed his battered wide-brimmed hat and placed it on the table between them, he ran a hand back over his nearly bald head — little of his wild red hair had survived.

"You know he would never give away a private thought to me if it killed him."

Jackie Chestnut sat down across from her and leaned forward. "Now the trouble with you, Mrs Fennel, is that you think giving birth to someone means you have the right to know what he thinks." As if his solemn drone were not bad enough, he had taken on his crazy mother's blunt and highhanded manner of speaking.

The kitchen might be a country kitchen of fifty, sixty years ago, she thought. She might have been sitting in Dolores Chestnut's kitchen. Boots were piled behind the stove. Coats hung on the wall. Striped wallpaper had been torn away beneath a window, a great irregular patch of fuzzy grey. Paperback books were piled on the linoleum in leaning stacks.

"You believe you have the right to see your expectations fulfilled," he said, "but that isn't the way it works. A man like George has the right to your respect as he is. Plain as an old boot."

"If you have a telephone I will ask the taxi company to risk their shock absorbers a second time on that road."



Before she had risen from her chair, however, Jackie Chestnut's wife came in from outside. She was a broad red-faced woman in a striped low-necked blouse which exposed much of the crepey flesh of her bosom. She kicked off her boots at the door and padded across her kitchen in bare feet. "You'll not leave without a cup of tea," the woman said, and rubbed her large hand down her blue-jeaned hip before sticking it out for Mrs Fennel to shake. "Welcome." Then she lifted a kettle from the stove and held it beneath the water tap over the sink. "I've been out settin' traps," she said. "Something's gettin' me chooks."

"It may be that there is a widow he has decided to spend his evenings with," said Jackie Chestnut, ignoring his wife. "A neighbour of ours. A Mrs Darby."

"Amelia Darby," Mrs Chestnut said, setting the kettle back on the stove.

"Good lord! George?"

"Amelia Darby owns a beaut station just back of the hill," said Mrs Chestnut, settling herself in the chair at one end of the table. She spoke with a broad accent, as Jackie did not. *Beaut sty-shun jus' backa the heel*. "I reckon she's got the grandest house this side of Temora."

Jackie Chestnut shrugged. "Or, it may be that he has made a new mate who takes him drinking nights with the blokes at the servicemen's club. Kirby Masters, say."

"Amelia's hubby died at sea, poor thing. Off Queensland coast. Washed in half-eaten by sharks, he was. This was years ago now."

Mrs Fennel decided to ignore the woman. "I believe you are withholding something from me. He has been coming out here to shovel the manure for you, to fix fences or saw up pieces of meat or weed the turnips. Pretending that he had the nerve to emigrate when you did, and take his chances with the soil of a foreign country."

There were crumbs on the table, which Mrs Fennel found herself gathering into a cupped hand. Then, when she realized what she had done, there was the question of what to do with them. Jackie Chestnut and his wife both looked at the little collection in her palm.

"Or it may be that he is investigating a little business that is for sale in Gundagai after hours, when the present owner Donald Beston has the time to explain things."

"It's clear I won't hear the truth from your lips." Mrs Fennel turned over her hand and let the crumbs drop to the table, where she gathered them into a small neat pile and left them alone.

"You do not deserve to hear the truth, Mrs Fennel," said Jackie Chestnut. "To deserve the truth you would have to have been content with George just as he wanted to be. But you interfere. It may be that he has found a lady who has taken a fancy to him, a lady who is not exactly beautiful shall we say. A homely woman, of mixed race. It may be that he is in anguish about taking this crippled woman home to live in Canada with him."

Making a sort of grunt behind her closed lips, Mrs Chestnut nodded. A quick little chop with her head.

"George would not hesitate a moment, since my good opinion has never mattered to him."

"But you are not the only person who has an opinion to express, Mrs Fennel," said Jackie Chestnut. "You are not the only person with something to say about George's behaviour."

Mrs Chestnut leapt up, and went to the cupboard where she started setting down cups and saucers along the counter. "He is a parent, you seem to forget," she said, "like yourself." She tossed a handful of leaves into the tea pot. "His children will have their opinions. Carola, Richard, and — what is it? — Elizabeth? He may be disappointed that they have not become the sort of adults he might have wished for."

Mrs Fennel glared at the wide back of the woman, who ought to have known that this was none of her affair. "A person could not hope for better children," she said. "They're polite, considerate, and intelligent. And it is Eleanor. There are no Elizabeths in the family."

"Yes. Well," the woman said. "They grew up mostly without a mother, didn't they? They have had trouble settling down, he tells us. They have not been quick to find careers, or someone to love. Perhaps they do not feel lovable, he thinks. He thinks he has failed to let them know how he cares for them. He finds it difficult, you see, to show."

"Mavis." Jackie Chestnut seemed to be warning his wife against saying more. "He has not said any of that to us."

"He has said enough," the woman insisted. "I can read between



the lines, if no one else can."

Mrs Fennel addressed herself exclusively to George's childhood friend. "So you have introduced him to some woman, Jackie. Someone he's ashamed to bring out into the daylight where normal people can see. He wrote you that he is lonely, I suppose. Then you wrote to say that there is someone he might want to meet."

"That may be what happened, Mrs Fennel, but I'm not saying. Amelia Darby could be the one he is visiting at this moment, on Mullara Station. Or Kirby Master's drinking mates. Or Donald Beston's little business, for sale in Gundagai. A secret life, Mrs Fennel. Do you tell me that we don't have the right to a life that is entirely ours, however small it is?"

"I think you are as crazy as your mother was, if you must know the truth. I think transporting yourself across the globe has not been good for your brains. You can tell George, when he returns, that his mother is making arrangements to turn in her ticket for a more immediate date. He may wish to speak to me at breakfast about his own plans."

"You'll not go without your tea," Mavis Chestnut threatened. She held the kettle's handle from the underside, and poured into the pot. "You just sit where you are."

"Since there are lights coming up the track, you may not have to call for that cab," said Jackie Chestnut. Mrs Fennel could see for herself that headlights were making their way up the driveway. "He has borrowed my utility truck, you see. Once we've had a cup of tea, I will drive you both in to town."

George did not look like a man who had been secretly going over the books of a business for sale or visiting with a homely woman who'd taken a fancy to him. He looked as he'd always looked, grey and collected. Pudgy, pale, and calm. He was not even flustered to find her here. "Ah, Mother! Up well beyond bedtime. Could not stand another minute in that hotel, I take it. And Jackie has not run you off his property yet."

She could think of nothing to say to him. This man, her son, had kept himself a stranger for sixty years. And yet, there was something, some dark acid that rose within her to protest this, and everything. Could you say it was not love, this inability to bear the thought of being excluded? Could you say it was not love, that she wanted him to

make a little more effort on his own behalf?

"Mrs Fennel was interested in knowing where you have been," said Jackie Chestnut. "I needn't add that Mavis and I have been discreet."

As George Fennel sat down across the table from her, she saw that things were not about to change. His soft lips were set tightly together. If she pressed him, she would come off looking ridiculous. "I am no longer interested," said Mrs Fennel. "At least I am not interested in hearing it in this kitchen. If George wishes to tell me what he has been up to he can tell me when we are without an audience."

"There!" sang Mrs Chestnut, as though something had been accomplished here. She brought down a fourth cup and saucer out of her cupboard and carried them over to the table. Her bare feet squeaked on the floor.

If she had tried just a little harder when he was a boy might she have made a difference? Because it must not be pleasant to be someone who cannot speak his thoughts. A mother should be able to think of a way to make him trust the world enough.

"A nice cup of tea to warm our tummies before bed," said Mavis Chestnut, giving the pot a shake before pouring.

It seemed that while Mrs Chestnut poured tea George wished to study his mother's face from across the table. But when Mrs Fennel raised an eyebrow — she thought of it as an invitation — he looked away. She thought she'd seen a flash of sympathy in those pale eyes, she wasn't sure. She couldn't imagine what it might mean. She had never known what he was thinking, she didn't know what he was thinking now. He might have been the child of someone else — Dolores Chestnut. She could have decided right from the start not to take on any regret or blame for the disappointing fashion in which children grew up to disappoint. She might as well have decided to live her life for herself.