

A JODY, A JILT, AND A JEWEL

"Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies." Proverbs 31:10

Thankfully, I was single during the Vietnam War. Like a lot of dumb guys, I rashly went out and purchased an engagement ring for my high school sweetheart before shipping overseas. We fought the North Vietnamese Army and the Viet Cong, but our main skirmishes were with psychological warfare. Most of us were fighting homesickness and we spent much of our free time boasting about our girlfriends, as we passed around the photographs of those who were waiting for us on the front porch, back in Podunk, Arkansas. As my girlfriend's picture circulated among our squad, the grunts told me about a guy named 'Jody' who was taking care of business on our behalf, while we were 'humping a field pack' through the rice paddies of Vietnam.

In the Marine Corps, a 'Jody' is a generalized term meaning: "Any man who stays home while everyone else goes to war." He gets to enjoy all the things the Marines are missing, more specifically their girlfriends, while the Marines are away. The reason that they're called Jody dates back to black soldiers in WWII. They took a character from old blues songs named, Joe the Grinder (or Joe D. Grinder), who would steal the ladies of inmates and soldiers, and clipped his name to Jody. **That's why** they say, **Jody's back home** taking care of your girlfriend. Edited from Urban Dictionary.

Sure enough, while I was away, Jody came calling disguised as a Tulsa Police Officer. The thing about being jilted is that your pride is severely wounded, and your ego is totally crushed. How could she run out on me? Well, some things are just not meant to be. Little did I know that I would enter foreign missionary service, and that would require thirty-five more years of life abroad. This could only be accomplished with the support of a virtuous woman.

The word 'virtuous' is used in the sense of devotion. A virtuous woman is faithful and dependable, and she can be counted on in every situation. Capable, energetic, with a high sense of dignity and importance in the administration **of the home and the raising of her children. She can't be found by shopping at Zales** Diamond Store, and her worth far exceeds their priceless inventory. She is a jewel that is far more precious than rubies. In such a wife the heart of the husband may safely confide, for he finds in her love and unselfish affection, a treasure so vast that, let circumstances be as they may, he can never be in poverty. Her influence is for good and not evil all the days of her life. This is a lovely picture of the mutual relationship of the Lord and the Church: the latter owning Him as Head and delighting to love and serve Him; while He finds His joy in her and beholds in her an inheritance of untold value!

Where can you find a girl like that? Who would be willing to spend most of her adult life in Africa? Who would put her small children on a plane bound for the unknown, and determine to stay overseas for five-year terms, without returning to her homeland to see her family? That was a tall order, but the Lord had someone in mind!

God sent a girl who was born at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, and she had the faithfulness, spunk, and the determination of her United States Marine Corps father. One look at this raving beauty and I was ready to make another trip to Zales. Could I actually win her? She was Executive Secretary for the Norfolk Chamber of Commerce, a model for a prominent agency, photographed in wedding gowns for **J. C. Penny's Catalogues**, and was a **Miss Virginia** Pageant finalist. We chaperoned the international princesses from NATO member countries during the crowning of the International Azalea Queen, accompanied by their escorts from the United States Naval Academy. We were often the guests of the dean of Old Dominion University and his wife at special events, and entertained in their home.

Wow, she is not only beautiful and of pristine character, but she is enjoying a measure of success and popularity. **I've got nothing to offer her. Would she marry** a guy with a borrowed credit card for the honeymoon, and live on the second floor of an old lady's house, furnished with a loaner bed, a couch that was actually a bus seat, and an entertainment center of stacked bricks spanned by a pine board? The only thing I could offer was the lyrics from a song that says, "There's a battle ahead, many battles are lost; but you'll never reach the end of the road, while **you're travelling with me!**" We have been travelling on the road together for forty-seven years. The road was winding and had steep hills and copious potholes, but she was always gung-ho on this lonely, health robbing, and oftentimes dangerous journey. **This Marine's daughter** has been a jewel, always faithful, whose price has been far above rubies.
Semper Fi

Chaplain Ron

