

= Valene Ewing =

Valene " Val " Ewing ( maiden name Clements , formerly Gibson , Waleska ) , portrayed by Joan Van Ark , is a fictional character in the CBS primetime soap opera Knots Landing , a spin @-@ off from the long @-@ running series Dallas , in which she also appeared . The character originated in 1978 on Dallas as the mother of Lucy Ewing and ex @-@ wife of Gary Ewing ( the second son of oil baron Jock and Miss Ellie Ewing ) . Van Ark made several guest appearances on Dallas before becoming one of the main stars of the spin @-@ off Knots Landing in December 1979 , though she continued to make small appearances in Dallas for the next couple of years . Van Ark played Valene in Knots Landing for thirteen of its fourteen seasons , which made her one of the show 's longest running stars . The character made her last television appearance in 1997 , when she appeared in the reunion miniseries Knots Landing : Back to the Cul @-@ de @-@ Sac . In 2013 , Van Ark reprised her character for the new , updated version of Dallas .

Valene 's storyline in her first two episodes on Dallas focuses on the rebuilding of her relationship with estranged ex @-@ husband Gary Ewing . When Valene arrives in Texas to find her daughter , Lucy Ewing , she is brought back into the drama of the Ewing family . Upon arrival , she is reunited with Gary with whom she slowly falls back in love . Once Dallas became a hit , series creator David Jacobs proceeded to launch a spin @-@ off series titled Knots Landing , which would feature Valene and Gary prominently . The actress had strong input on how they would create her character outline . She recalled , " I remember going to wardrobe and getting a peachy pink waitress uniform , and the shoes . And then I was trying to get that Texas sound , her all important accent . And so we created her layer by layer . "

Van Ark received positive reviews for her portrayal of Valene , and received two Soap Opera Digest award nominations in the category " Outstanding Actress in a Leading Role on a Prime Time Serial " . Greg Hernandez said , " Her character of Valene was a best @-@ selling author , but her personal life was always a mess . She had her husband , Gary , stolen by another woman , then got pregnant by him , her twin babies were kidnapped by a crooked doctor , she was given a drug overdose at gunpoint by her ex @-@ husband 's fiancée , and she racked up enough marriages to give Elizabeth Taylor a run for her money . But she and Gary Ewing ( Ted Shackelford ) made for one of television 's most beloved couples and the audience never stopped rooting for them to get back together . "

= = Development = =

= = = Casting and creation = = =

From the outset , Dallas was centered around the lives of the wealthy Ewing family who lived in Dallas , Texas . Once the show became a success after the initial run as a five @-@ episode miniseries , the producers decided to expand the roles of certain characters . They introduced the parents of Lucy Ewing ( Charlene Tilton ) , who had not been shown on @-@ screen until that point . Actress Joan Van Ark was contacted by series creator David Jacobs about joining the show . Her husband , John Marshall , convinced her to take the opportunity . In an interview for an episode of Celebrity Weddings , Van Ark said : " At the time Dallas came up , I was doing two different jobs . They offered me to join Dallas , which would be shot in Dallas , Texas at Southfork . I read the script and it was buzzed about already ... they were saying this was the hot new show . I said to myself , ' How can I be in Los Angeles doing this , down in Dallas , and then back in New York doing two days worth of Estée Lauder commercials ? ' He ( my husband ) read it and said , ' You 've got to . It 's a wonderful part . So , my husband talked me into a role that would become a fifteen @-@ year chapter in my life . "

When asked about the casting process , Van Ark explained : " It all happened so fast . They sent me a script for a [ Dallas ] two @-@ part guest shot , but I was supposed to be in New York recording commercials . My husband - much like Larry Hagman 's wife , Maj , talked him into playing

J.R. - basically talked me into playing Val . " She later added , " I thought the script was wonderful , and [ Valene ] was a great character . But we created her within those two episodes . I remember going to wardrobe and getting a peachy pink waitress uniform , and the shoes . And then I was trying to get that Texas sound , her all important accent . And so we created her layer by layer . " During the second season of Dallas , David Jacobs decided to create a spin @-@ off for the quickly growing franchise . He wanted to create a television show based on " family issues and examining relationships at the middle class level " . The production company , CBS , turned down this idea , as they wanted something more " glitzy " to put on the air , with wealthier characters , which would become Dallas .

After the success of Dallas , Jacobs ' presented his initial idea again and created Knots Landing , with some alterations of his original script . In an interview , Jacobs explained : " Well , that 's pretty good , but you know @-@ and then he pulled out the pages that we 'd left for them a few years ago on Knots Landing , or a year before on Knots , and he said , ' Is there any way we can make this a spin @-@ off ? ' I just took one of the couples and made it , you know , Val and Gary who had already been created on the parent series and putting them into the mix , but when you have four couples and you change one , you sort of have to change the dynamic all the way around . However , once I wrote the script , remarkably little changed from the script and the pilot as you would see it . " Gary Ewing was originally played by actor David Ackroyd , but Ackroyd was unable to sign on for the spin @-@ off , and Ted Shackelford assumed the role . Initially , it was presumed that Charlene Tilton would be joining Knots Landing as Gary and Val 's daughter , but the network decided to keep her on Dallas in order to keep the two shows separate . She did , however , make a guest appearance in the first season .

Van Ark appeared in Knots Landing for thirteen seasons of its fourteen season run before she left to pursue other interests . According to co @-@ star Michele Lee , Van Ark was apparently offered a role on an NBC sitcom after she left the show . The actress reprised her role for the series finale of Knots Landing , where Val is revealed to have been alive the whole time . When asked about her departure in an interview with the Los Angeles Times , she said :

" I could stay forever on the show and be safe . But three years ago I did Night of the Iguana in Williamstown [ Massachusetts ] , and I had a quote from Tennessee Williams taped on my mirror , taken from an essay he 'd written on success . It said , and I 'm paraphrasing here : ' Security is in the shape of a kidney @-@ shaped pool in Los Angeles , where you sit waiting for your residual checks . ' I was in a comfortable spot on Knots , and an artist should not be comfortable . I 'd forgotten that there was a character I 'd loved for 13 years . She was the seed of the show . I am the sole person to spin off from Dallas ( because actor David Ackroyd originated the role of Gary on that show ) . Valene gave Knots a note of spirituality . There was a heart that was Valene . I hope they treat her with respect , that she is seen out with a resolution she deserves . "

= = = Characterization and relationships = = =

Throughout the course of the show , Val was often played up as the good girl character . When asked about whether Val was a weak character , Van Ark said : " God , no . No she wasn't . For the very reason that she went through so much and landed on both feet . She was strong in a realistic kind of way . I do remember that TV Guide did a quote that the three of us can be compared to Earth , Wind and Fire . Michele was the Earth , I was the Wind and Donna was the Fire . I think that really captured it . " Van Ark was later asked about who she saw Val as today . She said , " Of course the dysfunctional elements would come out . Why even bother otherwise ? But of course they would persevere and still be together after all . I think Valene was headed to , and my sister ? s like this , after years of doing everything for her husband and her children , Valene was going to further her achievements in the professional world . I think if you saw Valene today she ? d be much more accomplished as a writer and would be very successful overall . " The actress also said :

Since Valene , I ? ve tried to do anything and everything but play a goody @-@ two @-@ shoes . I love Val , I adore her . But I spent a total of 15 years ? if you count the first year I played her on Dallas . That was quite an investment for me as an actress . If you were playing a goody @-@ two

@-@ shoes today , the tabloid media would be dying to catch you on a bad day . Look at what they ? ve done to Tiger Woods . Look at what they ? ve done to that man . My feeling is his father ? or the absence of his father in his life ? is ( the root of ) what ? s going on with Tiger and that marriage . But the media won ? t leave him alone . No matter who you are , ( the celebrity coverage ) is obsessive and constant . It ? s hurtful . For me , if they show my face in a bad photo , they latch into me hook , line and sinker . Even Entertainment Tonight now has blood on their hands . It 's brutal . I wonder what they ? ll do with Alec Baldwin now . He was my brother on Knots . They really threw him under a bus ( when endlessly publicizing his infamous voice @-@ mail rant against daughter Ireland , then 11 , in 2007 ) . He loves that child so much . "

Valene 's relationship with Gary is important to the understanding of her overall character . The Gary / Abby / Valene love triangle , which involved Gary cheating on Valene with Abby Cunningham ? the show 's main villain ? was a monumental storyline for all three characters . Van Ark described the storyline :

" There wasn ? t really anything I could think of , but I will mention that Ted and I went in way early , whenever Donna Mills came on the show , and told David Jacobs that it made total sense that Gary would fall for Abby . I can ? t believe I did that but it really provided me with some great stories . Because they were celebrating Donna Mills and she became the center but Gary and Val were supposed to be this enduring couple . Ted and I were saying Gary and Val should break up and Gary should go with Abby . It was a pretty big deal to break up the couple that the show began with . So ( the producers ) were going toward this , then they pulled away but eventually returned to it . David Jacobs was against it but we convinced him . And it was the longest running story on the show . It took a long time for them to get back together . Eight years . "

Ted Shackelford , who plays Gary , described the love story , " I can 't complain . I mean , Gary spent six or seven years being led down the primrose path by one stupid broad after another . So with Val ... You 'd think after 13 years , at the age they are [ Val is 44 , Gary is 46 ] and the amount of bullshit they 've been through , they would have learned something ! They 'd probably have a very comfortable life by now . But it makes for a dead story line . " When asked about working with Van Ark , he said : " I don 't know how it could get any better . She 's remarkable , and I 'm not blowing smoke up your ass . I 'd tell you if I thought she was a pain in the ass , although sometimes she is a pain in the ass . But my best work is done with Joan . " Van Ark also discussed Valene 's relationship with her daughter , Lucy Ewing . She said , " The spine or the beginning of the series was Gary and Val , coming over from Dallas , so maybe there should have been more Lucy . I do know that CBS and the producers of both shows wanted to keep the two shows separate but in the beginning you had Larry Hagman and others going over to Knots . "

= = Return = =

With the 2012 continuation of Dallas , there was talk of some Knots Landing characters returning to air . Rumors began surfacing that both Van Ark and Shackelford would reprise their roles as Valene and Gary . Ted Shackelford passed on the small role the producers offered him to reprise his role as Gary Ewing on the new series . Van Ark refuted the claims , saying : " Well , rumor has it ? I ? m having lunch with Ted tomorrow . They asked him to come down and be part of it . It was several months ago , and he ? s deeply into filming The Young and the Restless , the daytime soap for CBS . But if they asked Gary , maybe they ? ll ask [ for Val ] . " She would , however , love to be involved if the producers asked her , especially to torment fellow cast @-@ member Larry Hagman . " There is no doubt about it . This man I loved so much , Larry Hagman ? I was just at his birthday party several months ago ? I would kill , that if Val came back , if it was trouble for J.R . . Because they were always at odds . " However , Gary and Valene 's daughter , Lucy Ewing , along with Ray Krebbs have made appearances in the new series . Although both Shackelford and Van Ark appeared in the 1991 series finale of Dallas playing " alternative " versions of Gary and Valene ( the episode depicted a fantasy world in which J.R. had never been born ) , there have been no real crossovers of story or characters from Knots Landing to Dallas or vice versa since the 1985 @-@ 86 season of each show ( which , on Dallas , turned out to be a dream had by Pamela Ewing ) .

On October 17 , 2012 , TV Guide reported that Joan Van Ark and Ted Shackelford are set to return to Dallas , reprising their characters Valene and Gary Ewing for three episodes in the show 's second season , which is set to air in 2013 . According to Joan Van Ark , she will appear as Valene in one episode only .

= = Character Arc = =

= = = Dallas = = =

Valene Ewing first appears in Dallas in 1978 , as the mother of Lucy Ewing ( Charlene Tilton ) and the ex @-@ wife of Gary Ewing ( David Ackroyd , later played by Ted Shackelford ) , the middle son and the black sheep of the Ewing family . Valene and Gary Ewing were first married in their adolescence in 1961 , when Gary was 17 years old and Valene was 15 . When a pregnant Valene persuades Gary to take her to the Southfork Ranch in order to introduce her to his family , they settle down at Southfork , and Miss Ellie gave Gary a job as ranch foreman . However , Gary and Valene were soon pressured and manipulated by Gary 's older brother , J.R. Ewing ( Larry Hagman ) , who constantly tried to undermine and destroy their marriage . Meanwhile , Gary 's father , Jock Ewing , put pressure on Gary to stand up and face his responsibilities for becoming a teenage husband and father @-@ to @-@ be . When Valene gives birth to their daughter Lucy , J.R. makes it clear that the child is a Ewing and will be raised by the Ewings themselves . J.R. ' s constant interference causes Gary and Val 's marriage to collapse . Under the pressure , Gary fell victim to alcoholism , became violent in the process and walked out on Val and Lucy . With Gary gone , Valene is then driven off Southfork by J.R. , but she soon returns to get baby Lucy and flees to Virginia , and later to Tennessee , where she tries to get help from her mother , Lillie Mae Clements ( Julie Harris ) , to take them in , but they are turned away . At this point , Valene and Lucy had already been tracked down by heavies that were hired by J.R. and the heavies rip Lucy right out of Valene 's arms , and take Lucy back to Southfork to be raised by her paternal grandparents . When Valene later tried to take legal action to get Lucy back , J.R. warned Valene that he 'd kill her if she came back to the state of Texas . Valene is prevented from seeing her daughter again for many years as a result of this .

Valene 's bitterness over her mother 's indifference , and the subsequent loss of Lucy , is not resolved until 1979 when she and Gary move to Knots Landing . Much of this early backstory is told through flashbacks in episodes of Knots Landing , and is only briefly referenced in Dallas . While working in a diner in 1978 , Valene decided to wait for Lucy outside her school and they got to know each other . They stayed in contact with each other in secret for several months afterwards . In the fall of 1978 , Lucy arranges a reunion for her parents . Gary and Valene move back to Southfork for a short time , but their reunion is again undermined by J.R. , who arranged for Gary to take charge of a failing company , hoping that the pressure would drive Gary away . Gary realised that he would fall off the wagon unless he left Southfork , so he departed . J.R. then turned on Valene , trying to bribe her , before ordering her to leave . In December 1979 , Valene and Gary are reunited once more in Dallas , and get married for the second time . Gary 's parents , Jock Ewing ( Jim Davis ) and Miss Ellie Ewing ( Barbara Bel Geddes ) , as well as Gary 's brother , Bobby ( Patrick Duffy ) , and sister @-@ in @-@ law Pamela Barnes Ewing ( Victoria Principal ) , attend the wedding . Shortly afterwards , they move to California to live in a home that Miss Ellie had bought for them as a wedding gift . Valene also appears in the final episode of Dallas during J.R. ' s dream in which she meets Gary for the first time , highlighting the idea that they were destined to meet one way or another .

= = = Knots Landing = = =

After their remarriage , Valene and Gary Ewing move to Knots Landing , a coastal suburb of Los Angeles , California . Valene is initially skeptical of the move , and describes Knots Landing as " no

place to start over ". She is struck by her neighbors , the Fairgates , and particularly by Sid 's daughter , Annie , from Sid 's first marriage , who reminds Val of her own daughter , Lucy . Gary is determined to stay , and convinces Val to give Knots Landing a chance . Val becomes involved in Jimmy Carter 's 1980 re @-@ election effort , joining the local chapter of the Carter @-@ Mondale ' 80 campaign . She also signs up neighbor Karen Fairgate ( Michele Lee ) and the pair eventually become best friends , a relationship struck when Annie , on the run , turns to Val for help , and Val convinces her to return to her father and stepmother . Val remained a central character on the show from 1979 to 1992 . Gary and Val 's daughter , Lucy , visits her parents in Knots Landing , and appears in one episode in the show 's first season . Though largely uneducated , Valene discovers she has a talent for writing and writes a thinly @-@ veiled expose of the Ewings of Dallas called " Capricorn Crude " . Gary is extremely critical of the book , which affects their marriage . However , the book is published and Val becomes a best @-@ selling novelist and financially independent . Val leaves Gary after Gary 's affair with his neighbor and business partner , Abby Cunningham ( Donna Mills ) ; and Val keeps the house in Seaview Circle . Gary and Val 's second marriage ended in divorce nearly a year later . Val is subsequently married to Ben Gibson ( Doug Sheehan ) ( 1985 @-@ 1987 ) , and later briefly to Danny Waleska ( Sam Behrens ) ( 1990 ) .

One of Val 's most memorable storylines occurs during the 1984 @-@ 85 season when she is told that her infant twins are stillborn . Val senses that this could not be true as she clearly remembers hearing the babies cry . She suffers a nervous breakdown and disappears from Knots Landing for several months , and is later reunited with her babies , thanks largely to the investigations secretly undertaken by her neighbors Mack and Karen MacKenzie . In 1991 , over 8 years after their second divorce , Gary and Val got married for the third time ( Valene 's fifth marriage , and Gary 's fourth ) . While working on an assignment to write a biography about Greg Sumner ( William Devane ) in 1992 , Valene crosses paths with some mafioso type characters who are targeting Sumner . Fearing that she could expose them , they kidnap Val and she is later believed to have died in a car accident . Joan Van Ark had decided to leave the series in 1992 , at the end of Season 13 , which turned out to be the show 's penultimate season . However , Van Ark came back in the 2 @-@ part finale to the show 's final season in 1993 , when it was discovered that Val was never in the car . Having escaped her kidnappers , she later returns to the cul @-@ de @-@ sac . Valene is seen once again in the 1997 reunion mini @-@ series Knots Landing : Back to the Cul @-@ de @-@ Sac where she begins a new career as a screenwriter , and adapts her best @-@ selling novel " Hostage " , which tells the story of her kidnapping five years earlier , into a film .

= = = Dallas ( 2012 TV series ) = = =

In 2013 , It transpires Gary and Valene have separated again due to Gary falling off the wagon . Sue Ellen Ewing calls Val on behalf of Gary , to tell her that Gary misses her . Val shows up at Southfork with her daughter Lucy , where Gary coldly refuses to return home with her . Val realizes she has returned to Dallas under false pretenses and confronts Sue Ellen , who tells her to resume her relationship with Gary while she still has the chance .

= = Reception = =

For her portrayal of Valene , Van Ark received two Soap Opera Digest awards in the category " Outstanding Actress in a Leading Role on a Prime Time Serial " . Greg Hernandez said , " Before I go on , I have to confess that I was a die @-@ hard fan of Knots Landing , the series on which Joan played sweet Valene Ewing for 14 years . Her character of Valene was a best @-@ selling author but her personal life was always a mess . She had her husband , Gary , stolen by another woman then got pregnant by him , her twin babies were kidnapped by a crooked doctor , she was given a drug overdose at gunpoint by her ex @-@ husband 's fiancée , and she racked up enough marriages to give Elizabeth Taylor a run for her money . But she and Gary Ewing ( Ted Shackelford ) made for one of television 's most beloved couples and the audience never stopped rooting for them to get back together . Joan keeps in touch with Ted ( pictured with Joan , above at a " Knots "

reunion a few years back ) , Michelle Lee - who played her best friend Karen - and the great stage star Julie Harris who played her mother . " Knots Landing itself has experienced a tremendous fan following and dedication . Van Ark said of this , " It ? s amazing . It ? s like having friends everywhere in the United States . I heard that a group a fans from London were coming in just to see us at this ( autograph convention ) . We get a lot of fan mail from Europe ? France , Germany , Russia . Knots has a huge following , and I think fans of the show are loving and loyal . Not many shows last 14 years on prime @-@ time . That ? s a milestone , and I ? m very proud of it . "

The Chicago Sun @-@ Times said , " Valene Ewing Gibson would be the first to admit that the past seven years have been no day at the beach . She lost her first husband to a sultry siren who applies eyeliner with a trowel . She opened her heart and her home to a nagging mother who could drive Mother Teresa to slit her wrists . She discovered a long @-@ lost brother who just happened to be a psychotic TV evangelist . She even had a nervous breakdown that left her convinced her name was Verna , and was an ' I do ' away from tying the knot with a scheming sleazeball who was well aware of her family ties to the Ewings of Dallas even if she had forgotten . "