

THE SAGA OF EARL WILLIAM KLEINSORGE AND EUDENE MAE PHILLIPS

BOOK 3 MARY ELIZABETH

December 6th, 1966 is a significant day in the lives of Earl and Eudene (hereafter called Dena) Kleinsorge.

Dena and Earl were at home on a ranch, 4 miles west of Bazazr, Ks. They leased this 877-Acre ranch, on Rock Creek, from Preston and Anna Hale, Topeka. They also leased 11 other small parcels of land that were scattered around the chase county area.

Dena had not been feeling well for several weeks. She awoke this morning to nausea and an overall feeling of extreme tiredness. Earl suggested that she go see Dr. McKee in Cottonwood Falls. He was concerned that her red blood count was low again. She had been thinking for 2 or three weeks now that her energy would return and this bout with the flu would be over. Something more must surely be wrong.

Dena was dubious. She reasoned, "It will just be a waste of money. He will just say your blood count is down. Here is a prescription for liver and iron pills. If you would prefer you buy some over the counter vitamins." Earl was insistent. "This seems different somehow. Please go and see Doc, we have to much to do this winter for you to get sick". It was against her better judgment, but she gave in and decided to go. It will ease Earl's Mind and he has enough to worry about.

She did up the breakfast dishes. Then she got out the crock-pot. She went to the freezer and selected a succulent arm roast. She went to the cellar and selected potatoes, carrots and onions. She washed the potatoes, quartered them and placed them in the pot. Next she washed and scraped the carrots, cut them in two and placed them in the pot. Picking up the roast she rubbed it with salt and generously peppered it then laid it on top Of the potatoes.

Since they raised their own beef, they always butchered a prime one for themselves. Then she sliced the large onion and placed the slices on top of meat added the bay leaf and garlic, put in two tablespoons of water adjusted the setting to fast cook and placed the lid on the pot. Now a delicious lunch will be ready when she returns home.

She picked up her purse and headed into the town of Cottonwood Falls. The Chrysler Newport hummed smoothly on the way. She crossed the Den Creek Bridge and was briefly on the George Yeager property. In less than a quarter of a mile she was back on their leased property. A small tenant house sat on the left side of the road. It was sheltered from the cold winds by a lovely grove of trees. Johnny and Marlene Studer rented this little home from them.

Then immediately there was pastureland with two ponds for water. They wintered cattle there in the winter. On the right was an alfalfa field, it had easy access to water on Rock Creek, and cattle roamed this patch also

. The next gate was on a slight rise in the land. Here the trench silo had been dug into the south side of the hill. There was another small stand of timber that afforded excellent.

winter protection for the cattle. It also separated the alfalfa field from the row crop along the creek. She drove slowly up the next hill, savoring the beauty of their herd. There was a gate at the top of this hill that went into the yellow clover field; in all there were 8 small plots cut out by fence lines. As she drove this 2-mile stretch of road it gave her pleasure and a feeling of pride to realize that these were their cattle. A little over 1,000 head spread over the hills. She was happy and content.

They had two children, Ilene the oldest, born in 1949, Bill their son, born in 1951. They had planned to have three children but had reconciled themselves to the fact that was not to be. After 6 years of trying to conceive they were thankful to be blessed with the two they had. Dena listened to the purr of the engine and her thoughts drifted to Christmas and the preparation that needed to be done.

Dena walked into Dr. McKee's office thinking what a nuisance to have to spend time waiting here all morning. The country doctor took patients on the first come first served basis. From the number of cars parked along the street she knew her wait would be a Long one.

She entered the waiting room and was greeted by several of her neighbors. Everyone present was an acquaintance, so she leaned back and enjoyed the conversation that flowed around her. Finally the receptionist called "Dena Kleinsorge come right in, the Dr. will see you now."

The usual pleasantries that are exchanged between a country doctor and his patients were observed. How are you? How are Earl, Ilene and Billy? Do you have many cattle to take care of this winter? Do you have help to do this or are you the extra cowhand? Now to the "nitty gritty" as we would say in those days. Please tell me why I am honored with this visit today

. Dena repeats her list of complaints about the nausea and tiredness. "I guess I am having a bout with the flu. I just cannot seem to shake it."

Dr. McKee directs her to get up on the examining table. "Open your mouth please. Say A-h-h-h. Lets take a look at those ears." He gives the tongue a good scrutiny. Takes out the thermometer and shakes it down and inserts it under her tongue. He snaps on the blood pressure sleeve and pumps it up. "h-m-m-m h-m-m-m" He removes the thermometer. "h-m-m-m"

"Do I have a temperature?" Dena asks.

"98.6 h-m-m-m, are your breasts tender? How long did you say that nausea lasts each day?"

"Oh, probably 2 or 3 hours" Dena replies. "H-m-m-m, when was your last menstrual cycle?" "Oh, I don't know, probably the first of September, you know they never are a regular thing for me." She replies.

"h-m-m-m, young lady, I believe you are pregnant."

"What!, how could that be?" she retorts.

"What do you mean? How can that be? Don't you and Earl have sexual relations?"

"No, I mean yes but we have used now protection for over 6 years. You, yourself said that I probably could never conceive again. We have given up and decided to adjust to having just two children."

"Well, I am afraid you are just going to have to readjust your thinking. You are too young to be in the change of life. You definitely do not have the flu. You seem to be in perfect health. We will want to keep close tabs on you though, we certainly do not want you having the same kind of problems you had last time. Do you remember how close you came to aborting Billy Earl? You must be very cautious. Now you run along and we will expect you back here 4 weeks from today."

Dena reentered the waiting room. She looked neither to the left nor to the right. Her expression was a mixture of shock and amazement. Her friends watched in concern as she walked out of the office and got into her car and drive away.

All of a sudden she was at the ranch house west of Bazar. She did not remember driving there. The men were waiting for their lunch. She put it on the table and excused herself, saying she still did not feel up to par and wanted to take a nap. As she was leaving the kitchen, Earl said, "What did Doc say?" "Oh, he said I would soon be feeling better." She replied.

Earl and Jim ate their lunch and went back outside to finish with the days work. This gave her time to think? What a Christmas gift!! Should she tell or earl or should she wait and make sure Doc had not been mistaken? Perhaps she had a tumor, maybe cancer, after all no tests had been taken to prove she was pregnant. She decided to wait and watch a bit. She went to the phone and called Doc's office and made an appointment on December 23rd, 2 days before Christmas.

Under the Christmas tree that year was a Christmas card addressed to Earl. Inside Dena had relayed the message that they were going to have another child. The child would be born in June the year of 1957. The spirit and wonderment of Christmas was renewed for both of them. Forever after, as long as they both lived they would share how that Christmas was made so very special. The look of joy and amazement on Earl's face will be a treasure that Dena will carry in her heart as long as she has the capacity to remember.

Now time rushes forward to the night of June 13th. 1957. Dena called Dr. McKee, and Says, "I believe I am having labor pains" "I am remembering how fast Billy Earl rushed into this world. I do not want to give birth here on the ranch." Dr. McKee answers, "You come on into the Stubenhofer Maternity Home, in Strong City. I will meet you there and
Check out this situation."

Dena, Earl, Ilene, and Billy Earl loaded into the pickup and drove into Strong City. Dr. McKee was waiting at the maternity clinic. Billy and Ilene were not allowed inside the clinic so Earl waited with them in the truck. Dena went into the Clinic; Dr. McKee completed his examination. He said, "I do not think the baby will be born for a few hours

yet." He came out to the truck and told Earl to go inside and tell Dena goodnight. He would wait with the children until he came back.

Earl went in and kissed Dena goodbye. She made him promise to take good care of Ilene and Billy Earl and not to leave them alone in the house when he was called to come back to the maternity home. He promised that Jim would stay with the children until someone could get there to look after them. He hurried out to the truck to relieve Doc of his babysitting duties.

Dena settled down in her room, secure in the knowledge that she was where she and the little one would be taken care of. By now it was a well-established fact that Earl was seldom on time. Always some unexpected emergency came up that he did not know how to handle. After all it was Dena's job to keep things running smoothly, time wise. Somehow he could not manage time. It was a character flaw that he could not overcome.

Dena was awakened with labor pains around 5:30 a.m. She took up the phone and called Earl. She told him she needed him to come as quickly as he could. She then called Doc and told him she was in serious labor. He assured her he would be there as soon as he could. She then called out to nurse Frances and asked her to come quickly into her.

Frances came bustling into her room "Now just calm down Honey. I will check this situation out and when I think it is time I will call Dr. McKee. You know he is a busy man and we do not want to put extra strain on him."

It was a well-known fact; in this little farming community that Frances thought she was better at delivering babies than any doctor. That is why Dena had went around her authority and made the phone call to the doctor and to Earl.

Frances examined Dena and said, "Just relax Honey, things are moving right along here. Don't you worry I will see that Doc gets here in time to deliver this baby. I will just go and brew you a cup of tea." "Frances, I believe you should call the Dr. my pain is constant." Dena moans. "Well, maybe I should call just let me hunt up the number." The time is 5:45a.m.

The door comes open and Dr. McKee strides across the room to Dena's bedside. He pulls on his rubber gloves and says, "hold on just a minute". Dena said, "I cannot" and at 5:50a.m. baby Mary Elizabeth Kleinsorge entered this world with a lusty cry of pleasure.

At 6:00a.m. Earl made his entrance into the maternity home. Frances was just placing the little 6lb. 4ounce Mary into Dena's arms. Earl came in and knelt down beside the bed. Together, he and Dena opened the blanket to see this lovely little girl. Her hair was black and hung to the bottom tip of her little pink ears. Her eyes were blue and her cheeks were rosy. Dena extended a finger and one of Mary's little hands closed around. Earl extended his little finger toward the other little hand and she grasped with all her might. At that moment they both knew that they had been blessed with their third miracle. Another child to love. Each one so very different, but each one so very special in their own individual way.