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54/07/28 Love Life Bared, Sue Glad It's Over

Cleveland Press

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Love Life Bared, Sue Glad It's Over

PRESS

7-28-54

Press Reporter Jim Vail was the only Cleveland newspaperman to fly to the West Coast with officials who sought information in the Sheppard murder investigation. Here is his account of Susan's flight back home.

By JIM VAIL

"I've told the truth. I never realized how good it is to get something like that off your chest. . . ."

The words were spoken with soft defiance by the pretty young woman in the plain print dress returning to Cleveland to bare the most intimate details of her personal life to aid a murder inquiry.

"I feel a lot better now since I've told the truth," said Susan Hayes.

"The only thing that bothers me is what's going to happen to my folks. I've had a long talk with myself, but I feel awfully sorry for them. They're the ones who are really going to suffer. . . ."

My interview with the "other woman" in the Sheppard murder mystery came as a commercial air liner sped her from California to Cleveland to face the greatest ordeal of her 24 years.

I had first met her in Los Angeles where she had "told the truth" of her intimate relationship with Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard.

"I hope my grandfather hasn't heard of this. I was always his favorite, and I know he'd be disappointed. . . ."

"Mother and Daddy have been asking me to come home for the past few months—but I don't think they wanted me to come home like this. . . . My attorney told me to expect the worst when I got back to Cleveland. . . ."

The troubled laboratory technician struggled hard to avoid discussing the subject which dominated her thoughts, but it kept cropping up in her conversation.

"If this wasn't such a serious matter," she smiled, "it would be more like a Hollywood movie than anything happening in real life."

The 2500-mile flight had all the dramatic elements of a movie script.

It started with the central figure, clutching her purse and a knitting basket, hustling onto the field at Los Angeles International Airport, flanked by unsmiling detectives.

She forced a wry grin for a photographer as other passengers aboard American Airlines non-stop Flight 40 for

Chicago buzzed with curiosity. "What movie star is that?" they asked.

A friendly stewardess passed the query along to Assistant Prosecutor Thomas Parrino, who seated himself beside the auburn-haired mystery woman.

"I'm sorry," he said, "but I can't discuss that right now."

Sue Hayes of Rocky River, O., on the passenger list as "Susan Hamilton" to shield her identity, fastened her seat belt. She stared tensely out the window as the giant sky-bird zoomed into the sunshine and hovered over the southern California palm trees and orange groves.

"I like the climate here," she mused. "I'd like to come back to live here when this is over. . . ."

When would that be? A sigh, a shrug.