

Dead at 30

Debbie Steever



Eloquent Books

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Introduction

Friends come and go, but at some point in our lives, we find people that we trust with our inner most secrets, and trust in a different way than we trust our parents.

Parents love us unconditionally but we choose our friends. At first we find friends that like the same things we do. As our interests change, so do many of our friends. It is rare that a friend comes along and remains in your life forever. Those are the people we treasure and keep dear in our hearts.

There are friends that you have shared several years of your life with, and you are certain that you know like the back of your hand, but in reality, you might never recognize them, should you pass them on the street, after they have moved on to the next phase of their life.

This would probably describe the five friends that you will meet in this story.

Chapter One

If you are a female, you can all remember what it was like to attend high school and either watch the click of popular girls, or you were one of that click, of popular girls. Either way it wasn't all it was cracked up to be.

It was no different for the click of five girls from White River Junction High School. They were the "IT" girls and they knew it. They lived and enjoyed their lives in the small scenic community of White River Junction, Vermont where life was simple and refreshing.

White River was one of a cluster of five sleepy communities that were next to one another, and together they made up a scenic vacation spot, that was the pleasure of all who visited or lived in Vermont, but they were very much individual communities.

There was a group of five bright young ladies that called themselves the "Fab-Five", and they were inseparable. Let me introduce them to you, because you will need to get to know them as this story unfolds.

First I will introduce you to the ring leader of the group. Even though she doesn't recognize herself in that role, she truly was the one girl that the rest of the girls trusted their deep dark secrets with, yet none of them would openly admit that she was the glue that held the puzzle together.

Julie Brown was the bright ray of sunshine that stood out heads above all the other girls, but did it in a way that wouldn't draw any adverse attention to herself. She had grown up in the community her entire life.

Her family was the owner of one of the largest lake resorts in the thriving vacation community. Julie had been working in the resort industry with her family, for as far back as she could remember.

She would tell you that her mother would set her up on the kitchen counter, and hand her a dish towel to dry the dishes, even before she could walk. Now, her mother believes that might be a bit of an exaggeration on Julie's part.

Julie was one of those true blondes with an athletic figure and a golden tan that stayed with her year round. She loved playing volley ball with her four brothers, and she was their baby sister. They always made it clear to her boyfriends that they would hunt them down if they ever tried to hurt their little sister.

Next on the list was Jennifer Bailey. Jennifer had also grown up in the community. Her parents owned the mom and pop grocery store that supplied all the grocery needs for the entire community, and most of the resorts as well.

This was a dream of her parents, to live in a cozy little community and raise Jennifer around people who knew what it meant to put family first. Like Julie, Jennifer had known what it meant to help out in the family business, doing everything from sweeping the floors, to stocking shelves, and she was the cashier on the weekends.

Being an only child, she might have been a tiny bit spoiled. Jennifer had waist length, coal black hair and dark, almost black eyes that sparkle in the moonlight. Like Julie, she was in very good physical shape and belonged to the same volley ball team as Julie did.

Julie had the benefit of her brothers teaching her all the volleyball moves, so Julie was the captain of the volleyball team, but the rest of the girls kept up with her just fine.

Jennifer was as smart as Julie in the brains department. They both were something to deal with, especially on the school debating team. These two girls had won all the state debating championships, for all four years of their high school education.

Number three on our list of beauties was Dawn Henley. Again, she was also a native from White River and her family owned the local radio station.

Dawn was a very outgoing young lady, and her father gave

her a Saturday afternoon teen talk show, from 2:00p.m., until 4:00p.m., and she was the hit of the airways for miles around.

She had been talking about going into broadcasting ever since she was fourteen years old. She was quite the interviewer and could put many adults to shame, in the radio industry.

The biggest downfall happened to be the guests who hadn't felt the need to come to her show prepared, and she always did her homework, so no matter what the topic was, Dawn was always prepared to ask the hard questions, and she could cut them off at the knees, if they weren't ready with knowledgeable answers.

You wouldn't be asked back to Dawn's show a second time, if you hadn't come prepared for the interview, the first time. Dawn had two little sisters that would take over her show, and they were just like her. Broadcasting was in their blood, thanks to their parents.

Dawn was lean and counted calories, before putting a morsel of food into her body. She worked out probably more than the rest of the girls, but she would rather die than see an ounce of fat on her body.

Jessica Henson sort of slid under the radar, and became a part of this group because they needed another volleyball player, and she wasn't afraid to show them what she had.

Jessica had only been living in White River from July until September before they all entered high school, so she had to earn her spot in the group.

It was Julie who first noticed her talent for volleyball, and realized that she was a perfect fit for the group.

Jessica's family owned the local bowling alley, and they weren't quite up to the standard of living that the other girls enjoyed, but she was also an only child, and she kept up with the other girls, when it came to the current day fashion, or any other whim the girls might choose.

Last but not least was Vicki Dawson. Vicki was by far the most slender girl in the group. It came naturally from her family gene pool and the rest of the girls were always jealous of her slender body. They would never admit it out loud, but they envied her willowy look.

Modeling agencies had been after Vicki, since she was

twelve years old. Her parents were afraid she might do something stupid and run away, so at age fourteen, they signed her with the Triad Modeling Agency, of New York City, but they kept a very tight reign, on how much modeling she did and what kind of modeling she did. It was mostly runway gigs.

When she signed her contract at fourteen, she was already five feet ten inches and weighed eighty-eight pounds. It was in her contract that if she gained more than ten pounds, her contract would become null and void. As badly as Vicki wanted to be a model, I am sure it wasn't an issue for with her to keep her weight down.

Vicki was also an only child and a real hand full. I am sure that was why her parents never had any more children. They had all they could do to keep up with her.

Vicki's parents were a bit older than the other girls' parents, and they both worked very hard building their own insurance agency. It had provided them with a good living, as well as a flexible schedule, so Vicki's mom could travel with her, to all of her modeling shoots.

These five girls from White River came from the very nice middle to upper class families, with good Christian values. They were more than happy to lead the other kids in their school and community, with a spirit, that came across in a very harmonious way.

They were the class leaders. They also made up almost half of the cheerleading squad. Actually, they all five made the varsity cheerleading squad in tenth grade, and that was just not heard of before.

They all excelled in music, both vocal and instrumental, not to mention they all held positions as class officers during their four years at White River High. All of them were student council officers or representatives, all four years of high school.

There wasn't a drama production that they weren't involved in, either by having a leading role or one of them might be responsible for the stage production crew. Whatever involvement it took on their part, they never took a back seat to anyone.

To say that they were involved was to put it mildly. From homecoming to the prom, they managed to be the center of attention all four years that they attended high school.

They were like any other group of friends, sometimes they all got along beautifully and sometimes one or more of the click was on the outs, with the rest of the group. It didn't matter; they never stayed angry at one another for any length of time, because no one wanted to be on the outside looking in. Remember this was high school, so friends and clicks might change at a whim.

They also wanted to be the ones spreading the gossip and not the ones being gossiped about. All this sounded very shallow, but that was the way of a teenager in the nineteen eighty's.

These five beautiful young ladies were the bell of the ball from 1981 until they graduated on May 23, 1985.

That was when they suddenly realized, as they were standing on the high school stage, that life as they knew it was never going to be the same again after that night.

Sure they would see each other all summer long but come September, they would all be going off in different directions, and starting the process of getting their adult lives on track.

They stood on that stage holding on to each other and sobbing because they would not be the "Fab-Five" ever again after that evening. Their reign of being the most popular girls in their high school was over, and another group of girls would come along and take their place in the school, and in the community, as soon as the fall schedule began.

For now, they were slowly removing their caps and gowns and hanging them carefully on the hangers that had been provided for them. They stood in line along with their other classmates until they reached the table where the PTA committee was waiting to gather up their graduation attire. They received a receipt for the return of the gown, and they were allowed to keep their caps as a keepsake of that special night.

Who would have ever thought that those five girls could be so solemn and not have a word to say to each other? They hadn't noticed anything or anyone to gossip about for at least the last thirty minutes, and now they weren't very excited or happy about all the events of the evening.

The exhilaration of walking across that stage and having their names called as they tossed their tassels from one side to the other, making a statement to the audience that they had indeed graduated from high school in all their glory, had come to an end.

