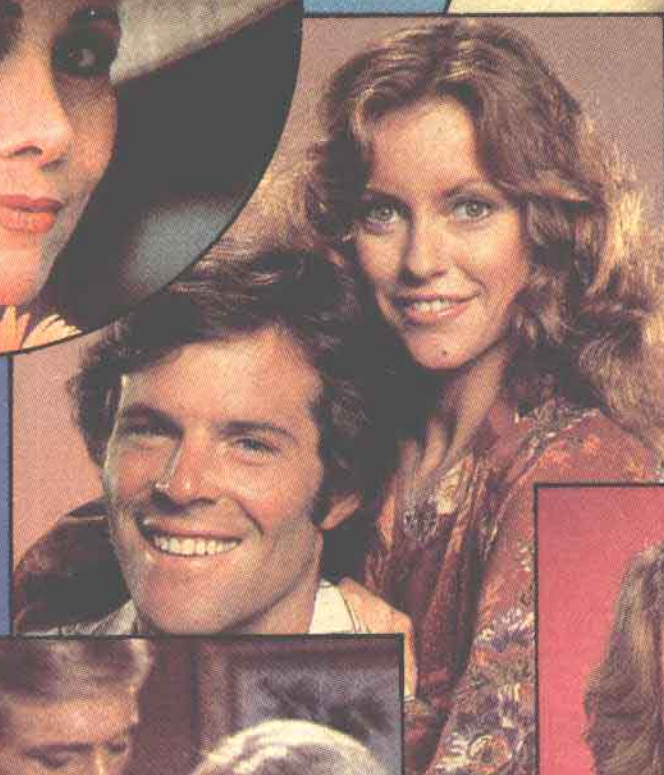
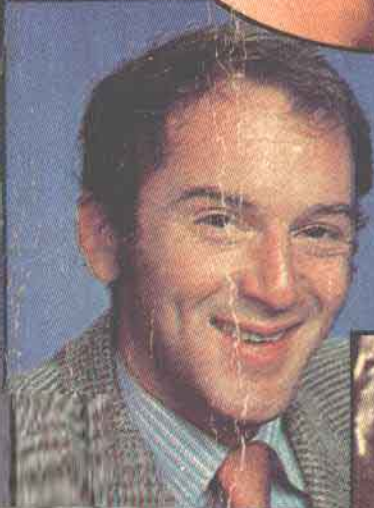


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## *Misguided Hearts*



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Series story Editor Mary **Ann Cooper** is Americas toremost soap operaexpert. She writes the naticnally syndicated column *Speaking of soaps* is a majorcontributor to leading soap opera magazines and has appeared asa guest on numerousradio and television talkshows

**Scott Cunningham**, author of *Misguided Hearts*, is an experienced screen writer who currently resides in California.

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Mary Ann Cooper

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# KNOTS LANDING<sup>TM</sup>

4

## *Misguided Hearts*

From the television series created by David Jacobs

*Soaps<sup>TM</sup>  
& Serials*

PIONEER COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK, INC.

## *Misguided Hearts*

From the television series KNOTS LANDING™ created by David Jacobs. This book is based on scripts written by Robert Gilmer and Clyde Ware.

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*Misguided  
Hearts*



## *Chapter One*

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### *Small Surprise*

Karen Fairgate sat poised on the cold chair in the doctor's waiting room, legs crossed, hands perched on her lap. She examined the badly painted seascape that hung over the vinyl couch opposite her.

How could I have gotten myself into this mess? She frowned. Did I forget something? Is this an act of God? How could this be happening to me, at *my age*?

A blonde, fleshy pregnant woman, whose belly pushed against her pink maternity blouse, fanned herself with an issue of Family Circle while shifting from side to side on the couch.

"Hot today," she said with a pleasant smile.

"Yes," Karen agreed, then turned away.

"It's always hot when you're pregnant," observed the woman.

A nurse's head appeared from behind a sliding pane of glass which separated the office from the waiting room. "Mrs. Klinger, Dr. Bender will see



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you now. Will you come this way, please?"

"It's about time," the pregnant woman groaned. She leaned forward, legs widely splayed, planted her feet on the floor, then, leading with her stomach, rose from the chair and shuffled through the door past a tight-skirted nurse.

When she was alone in the waiting room Karen sighed. This is all so ridiculous, she thought. What am I doing here? I must have been mistaken.

The front door to the offices of Dr. Louise Bender, OB/GYN, opened, momentarily shooting a slice of brilliant California sunshine into the room. A slim woman walked in, stopped in the doorway, then stepped forward.

"Karen! Hi, neighbor!" a familiar voice said.

"Hello, Ginger."

Ginger Ward, young, attractive, and wide-eyed, pecked Karen's cheek as she sat beside her. "I'm surprised to see you here," she said. "What's up? You and Sid planning something that you haven't told me about?"

"No," Karen answered quietly. "Just a checkup. How about you?"

Ginger paused, pursed her lips, then shrugged. "Same here."

Karen snapped her fingers, half-smiling. "I thought I might be the first one in the circle to hear the good news."

Ginger shook her head, sending her brown hair flying. "No. There's nothing to hear—darn it!"

Karen straightened in her chair. "I'm sorry to hear that, Ginger. Are you and Kenny trying?"

She looked at Karen frankly. "We are and we aren't. It's hard to explain."

"Oh, come on, Ginger," Karen said. "You're either trying to have a baby or you're not. Which is it?"

"I guess you could say that we are trying, frequently. That is, *I'm* trying."

"You are?"

"That's right. But Kenny doesn't know about it." Ginger held Karen's gaze.

"You mean you—"

Ginger nodded. "He hasn't found out yet." She exhaled loudly and slumped back into her chair.

"Does Kenny want children?" Karen asked.

Ginger narrowed her eyes. "I don't know. He keeps saying he's not ready. He's *never* ready, and I'm tired of waiting for him."

"I can't blame you, if you want a baby," Karen said.

"I do."

"So you . . . took steps?"

She nodded.

"But no luck so far?"

Ginger shook her head. "No. Dr. Bender says it's too soon to assume that there's anything wrong with Kenny or me. We've just had bad luck. I guess we'll have to keep trying."

Karen touched Ginger's arm. "Hey, at least it's fun trying."

Ginger grinned.

The nurse appeared again. "Mrs. Fairgate?"

Karen stood, steeling herself for the news. "Wish me luck," she said, then bit off the words.

Ginger's eyebrows lifted. "What are you

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talking about? I thought you were here for a checkup. Karen, something's not wrong with you, is it? You would have told me, right?" She gripped Karen's arm.

"I'm fine, really," Karen assured her.

"Mrs. Fairgate?" the nurse repeated.

"See you later, Ginger," Karen said. She slid out from the woman's grip and turned toward the nurse. Following her through the door and into Dr. Bender's office, Karen prepared herself. Please, she prayed to anyone who would hear—please let me have been mistaken.

"Hello, Mrs. Fairgate," Dr. Bender rose from her chair. The doctor was young, somewhat stocky, and appealingly open.

"Hello, Dr. Bender," Karen's voice was low as she walked into the panelled office.

"Please, sit down."

"Thank you."

"Your husband's not here?" she said, glancing around.

Karen smiled nervously. "He's at work. Dr. Bender, could you please just tell me the results?" she asked anxiously.

"Of course," Dr. Bender shuffled through Karen's files. "Lab work. Ah, here it is." She studied the paper for a moment, then glanced up at Karen. "Mrs. Fairgate, you're going to be a mother."

Oh no, Karen thought. Her throat tightened and she gripped the chair's arms, her fingers stiff. "Are you saying . . ."

"You're pregnant, Mrs. Fairgate. You're going to have a baby." Dr. Bender's expression was neutral.

Karen trembled as her nostrils flared from the tension. Don't think about it, don't think about it, she told herself. Relax.

Dr. Bender touched Karen's shoulder. Karen's body jerked at the contact.

"Mrs. Fairgate, I've seen women faint, scream, burst into tears or sit quietly smiling after I've told them the news, but you seem almost dazed. Are you okay?"

Karen looked up at the doctor, her cheeks tingling with red. "I'm sorry, Dr. Bender. This is such a shock."

"I take it you weren't planning this pregnancy."

"You take it right." She shook her head. "I was so sure I was wrong."

"Then it's a good thing you came in to take the test," Dr. Bender said. "Take some time to absorb this news, and remember that you can contact me with any questions you might have."

Karen looked up mutely at the doctor.

The doctor leaned forward in her chair. "Take some time," she repeated, her voice compassionate. "Meanwhile, we'll start you on prenatal care."

"Whatever you say," Karen replied in a toneless voice. She stared at the wall. How could it be? *How could it be?*

"Mrs. Fairgate?" the doctor questioned.

Karen roused herself. "I'm sorry—I'm being foolish. I'm in shock." Her smile was faint. "Thanks, Dr. Bender. I'll call to make an appointment."

"Fine. And call me if you need any information."



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Karen's eyes were moist as she turned from the doctor and walked into the waiting room. A quick glance told her that Ginger wasn't in sight. Grateful that she didn't have to face her friend, Karen slipped out of the office in a near-trance.

Outside, the lustrous California sunshine didn't lighten her mood as she mechanically walked to her station wagon, got in and turned the ignition. Her hands worked automatically as she backed out of the parking space and pulled onto the tree-lined street.

Karen opened the window, then leaned her head slightly toward the rush of cool air that billowed in through the opening. It isn't true, she told herself without conviction. I can't be pregnant. The lab must have made a mistake. Is it possible that now, in my thirty-seventh year, I'll bear a fourth child?

Karen shook her head. What would Sid say, and the kids? Her husband would probably welcome it, love the idea, but the kids . . . Diana, Eric and Michael were something else altogether.

The thought of her family began to melt her stony mood. The initial shock thinned out like fog in morning sun. A feeling of warmth and new possibilities engulfed her. Karen tingled as she drove.

I'm going to have a baby. Karen smiled as she thought it. In seven or eight months there'll be a new Fairgate in the house, bawling his head off all night, demanding more attention than anyone else, disrupting and changing our lives forever, like any child.

I'm going to have a baby. Karen dared to

believe the words. Her mind flashed back to earlier pregnancies, to the joys and pains of birthing and raising three children.

Karen stopped at a red light beside a flower stand. She glanced at the car next to her. A young woman sat behind the wheel, pulling her hair back with one hand while talking to the young child on the seat beside her. In the back a baby sat strapped inside a child seat.

Two children—at *her* age, Karen marveled. She couldn't be more than eighteen. I can't imagine having that much responsibility so young.

The light changed. As she drove Karen watched the people around her—there seemed to be a plethora of mothers and mothers-to-be in Knots Landing that morning. A pregnant woman walked into a baby furnishings store; another quickly pushed a stroller across a busy street, while a third helped her one-year old move along on his toddling feet.

Babies everywhere, Karen thought, and then looked down at her flat stomach. Could it be true? Could she be pregnant?

A sharp honk from behind her induced Karen to speed up slightly. She had dropped to below fifteen miles per hour. A willowy girl on a bicycle with a baby in the basket over the front wheel sailed past her car. A *young* woman, Karen noticed ruefully.

They were young, all of them. Every mother she'd seen. Young women were supposed to have babies. It was natural. The older a woman is, she remembered Dr. Bender telling her once, the more risks she takes with childbirth.

She thought of her husband again. Karen

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envisioned herself telling him the news by walking into the bedroom and casually saying, "Sid, what are you doing for the next eighteen years?"

Would he want another child? Karen's mind flooded with questions and doubts. What would Sid really say? What would her children think? And what did *she* think? How did *she* feel?

Karen flipped on the radio. Mellow music drifted from the speakers, but Karen couldn't drown her questions in the music. One question in particular wouldn't die: what would Sid think if she told him she didn't want another baby? What would he say to an abortion?

Five motorcycles wound along the ocean-front road, their huge engines screaming as they passed miles of rugged coastline. Firmly astride the largest machine, a big long-haired, gray-bearded biker glanced at his buddy. "Hey, Music!" he yelled over the engines' noise.

Music, clean-shaven, ruggedly handsome, with three-inch-long brown hair, smiled at his friend. "What, Alien?" he shouted back.

"Let's pull over." He gestured to the side of the road.

Music nodded and signaled the riders behind him. The two lead bikes slowly reduced their speed as they veered to the right and rolled onto the gravel shoulder. Alien squeezed his brakes and spun a 360-degree circle on the dirt.

"You're still crazy, Alien," Music laughed.

The other three bikers pulled up behind them.

"Hey Music, why're we stoppin'?" a rail-thin, sandy-blond man asked.



"Cause we are, Ross."

"All right, all right." Ross lit a cigarette and wandered off the road.

A strangely attractive woman, her hair dyed a little too black, climbed off a motorcycle, pushing up provocatively against the leather-clad back of its driver. She walked up to Music. "Got any beer?" she asked, flapping her eyelashes.

"Yeah." Music grabbed one from the pack on his bike and threw it to her. "Catch!" he said, laughing.

Mary grabbed it, grinned, and walked off.

"Hey man, when're we gettin' to Laguna?" Alien brushed off his hands as he sat on his bike.

"I don't know. Soon, I guess. The rest of them are already there, but I'm in no big hurry." He pulled a pack of cigarettes from his leather jacket, stuck one between his lips, and struck a light. He sucked in deeply. "Hey, look at that!" Music pointed.

Through the intermittent trees and brush alongside the road they saw Alison, their other female companion, walk up to where Ross was quietly sitting under a tree. He threw his cigarette down, grabbed her and pulled her to the ground.

Music snorted. "I had a feeling about those two."

"Alison and Ross?" Alien asked. "I can't see it."

Music sat perched on his bike as Alien broke out more of the nearly-cold beers. He threw one to Music who caught it and, in one clean motion, opened the can. Suds spurted out, splashing Music's face and leather jacket.



"First bath you've had in weeks, dude," Alien laughed. "No wonder Alison hooked up with Ross."

"Cut the crap, Alien." Music wasn't smiling. "Hey, I can get any woman I want. I got the style and the looks."

Alien guffawed.

"Shut up," Music snapped.

"Sure. Go ahead. The next foxy chick you see, grab her."

Music shook his head. "Man, I'm tired of all this road work. I wanna have some fun, man! This is too damn boring." He glanced at Alien, who now also sat on his bike. "What's the next town we hit?"

He mused, scratching his beard. "Knots Landing, I think. Why?"

"No reason," Music replied. "Just thought we could stir up some trouble there. Might break up the monotony."

"Sure," Alien said. "Why not?" He wandered off into the brush.

"Music!" a feminine voice called.

He turned and looked. He was alone. Ross, Allison, Alien and the other bikers were nowhere in sight. It must be Mary.

"I'm right here!" she said unseen.

"Damn it, Mary, quit playing games." He took a drag off his cigarette. What the hell did she want?

"Come here."

He followed the voice past a tree. Beyond it he found Mary stretched out on the dried leaves beneath a massive oak. Her tee-shirt clung to her from the heat. Mary's hand moved languidly in a