

0. DEATH OF A DREAM - Story Preface

1. WHO WAS SHE?

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3. DEATH OF A DREAM

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This image depicts Robert ("Red") Manley. He was one of the last people to see Elizabeth Short alive. Image online via the Los Angeles Public Library.

After Elizabeth Short returned to California, in mid-1946, she continued to write home. Her upbeat letters, however, did not reveal what was really happening in her life.

Without meaningful employment, she had no dependable income. She found rooms with other girls like Ann Toth and Lynn Martin (whose real name was Lynn Myer). They apparently called her "Beth."

Lynn told a reporter from the *Herald Express* how the girls met each other:

Hollywood is a lonely place when you come into it without home ties or friends and very little money. There are few places for a lonely girl to go except into a bar.

Girls ... start rooming together like old friends. It doesn't matter if they don't know anything about each other. It's somebody to talk to and share the rent with - like Beth and Marjorie and I. ... You're always lonely in Hollywood, even when you're out with people. They don't belong to you - those people. None of them really care what happens to you. ... Lots of times the girls talk to each other about getting out of Hollywood and starting all over again. They're going back home, or they're going to get married to someone. Down in the heart of all of them is sort of a hazy dream about a husband and a house and a baby.

They talk about it, and they dream about it, but somehow they almost never do it. This life is like a drug. You can't give it up. ... And if they have family back home, they never want their families to know what kind of life they're leading - so if they write home, they make up stuff. (Lynn Martin, quoted in *The Black Dahlia Files*, by Donald H. Wolfe, pages 137-138.)

Leaving Los Angeles on the 8th of December, Elizabeth took a bus to San Diego. Before she left, according to people who knew her—like Mark Hansen (whose home she had stayed in and who was, for a time, a suspect in her murder)—she was worried about something.

Hansen was questioned (on December 16, 1949) by investigator Frank Jemison:

Q: While she was living at the Chancellor Apartments, she came back to your house and got mail?

A: I didn't see her but she was sitting there one night when I came home, with Ann about 5:30, 6:00 o'clock - sitting and crying and saying she had to get out of there. She was crying about being scared - one thing and another, I don't know. (Testimony quoted in *The Black Dahlia Files*, by Donald H. Wolfe, page 127.)

Arriving in San Diego, Short found other kind folks who gave her a place to stay: Dorothy French and her mother, Elvera. But after a month, or so, she left.

Robert ("Red") Manley, whom Short had befriended in San Diego, gave her a ride back to Los Angeles. He was one of the last people to see her alive.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/DEATH-OF-A-DREAM-Black-Dahlia>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/DEATH-OF-A-DREAM-Black-Dahlia>



Elizabeth (Betty) Short

Image online, courtesy LA Public Library.

PD

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Elizabeth-Betty-Short->



Lynn Martin - Friend of "The Black Dahlia"

Image online, courtesy the Los Angeles Public Library.

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Lynn Martin: Thoughts on Tinsel Town

Image online, courtesy the Los Angeles Public Library. PD

Lynn Martin's quote from [The Black Dahlia Files](#), by Donald H. Wolfe, pages 137-138.

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Robert (Red) Manley

Image online, courtesy the Los Angeles Public Library.

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Elizabeth Short: A Lively Smile

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