

# Family Council

Ethel R. - I want to tell my boy friend.  
Mrs. M. R. - It would be a bombshell to his parents.

Ethel R. - I am 23 and about to be married to a wonderful guy. My only problem is a little secret which I have kept from my boy friend. My father died in prison. The crime was manslaughter. All this happened when I was a little girl. Shortly afterward we moved away from that area of the country and we lived under my mother's maiden name. We finally had our names legally changed. I feel that I should tell my boy friend about all this. Maybe there is one possibility in a million that he could find it out from someone else, but I wouldn't want to run that risk. My mother is against my telling.

Mrs. M. R. - There is so little possibility of anyone finding out about all that and relaying the information to this young man or his family that it is just ridiculous to think about it. Even if such a thing should happen Ethel could always explain why she didn't want to tell. Then she would be married and there would be nothing to worry about.

If she tells now, I'm afraid of the consequences. Ethel's fiance comes from a highly respected family in our community. They are very conservative and strict in their outlook. They love Ethel and have welcomed her into the family. This would be a bombshell to them.

The Council: Mrs. M. R. probably overestimates the significance of the secret information to her daughter's potential in-laws. Many staid, conservative individuals are quite understanding and sympathetic toward those who have done wrong.

In any case, the deed was not Ethel's. The prospective bridegroom and his parents would be well aware of that. We think it more than likely that they suspect there is something troublesome in Ethel's background with relation to her father. Our faces and manner of expressing certain things often say more for us than the actual words.

This family would probably be ready to admit that Mrs. M. R. has done a remarkable job in bringing up a fine young lady single-handed under very difficult circumstances. But we cannot give Mrs. M. R. a guarantee that things will work out for the best. We do believe, however, that if this family would be violently disturbed by such information it would be better for them to know it beforehand.

We are sympathetic to Ethel's desire to reveal this intimate and disturbing secret to her fiance. She probably wants to be sure he loves her despite this apparently black mark in her background. It would undoubtedly give her a great deal more ease and comfort in her marriage to know it.

If Ethel's fiance is mentally and emotionally mature, he may not find it necessary to share her secret with his family. As long as he is clear and sure of his attitude on the subject he can keep it to himself. If he feels any disturbing doubts he should question further, try to get the full story and then talk it over with the person he most respects. (Copyright 1959, General Features Corp.)

Leopoldville, capital of the Belgian Congo in Africa, has a population of 350,000 compared with 50,000 in 1950.

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