

### *The Angry Customer*

Bill and Nadine Crawford had been planning and saving for two years for a trip with the kids to Disney World. Bill works construction and Nadine is a nurse. With four kids you have to stretch every dollar, and a vacation for six people requires lots of planning and saving. Bill and Nadine both went to the travel agency to make the reservations. They booked a four night stay at a moderately expensive hotel, and they made their airplane reservations. The travel agent told them that since their stay included Christmas Eve and Christmas Day they would get a 20% discount on their room charge at the hotel. With their planning, and by looking for bargains wherever they could, they figured they saved enough money to stay one more day. When they checked out of the hotel at the end of their stay, they found out that their 20% discount was for one night only—Christmas Eve. Bill and Nadine complained to the hotel but were told there was nothing they could do; they had to take it up with their travel agent. Bill and Nadine were both furious. The travel agent had told them a 20% discount for the entire stay—they were both certain of that. The additional \$150 they paid for their hotel accommodations put considerable strain on their vacation budget and on their relationship.

The flight home was, to say the least, stressful. The vacation had been great and relaxing, but the hotel bill problem had thrown everything into chaos. Bill and Nadine hardly spoke on the plane. Things really boiled over after they arrived at home. While they were unpacking, Nadine commented that she wished they had clarified the hotel rate when they were with the travel agent. Bill snapped at Nadine: "Yeah, you were there, why didn't you ask what the 20% meant." To which Nadine responded "You were there too, I can't do everything, and I did most of the planning for this trip." Bill responded "Do you have a plan to come up with the extra \$150?" That drew a quick, loud, "Oh shut up" from Nadine. Bill went downstairs, got a beer, and went to the basement to watch TV. Gail, at sixteen the oldest of the four children, went into her parent's bedroom to see what was the matter. Nadine then told Gail of the unexpected cost of the hotel and proceeded to inform Gail of all of her father's deficiencies and inadequacies, including the fact that "any other man would have just straightened out the hotel mess right then and there, but oh no, not your father. I will probably end up fixing this; he always does this to me." Gail left upset. She hated it when her parents fought and put down one another.

Moments later Gail wanted to use the bathroom and go to bed. Her younger sister Arlene was in there and, Gail thought, was "as usual just taking her time to annoy me." Gail pounded on the door and shouted at Arlene, "Hurry up, it's my turn." Arlene replied "You are going to have to wait." The two youngest children, Robbie age 7 and Kurt age 9, who shared a bedroom, heard the commotion in the hall. Before long they too were fighting. Kurt threw a toy at Robbie who picked it up and threw it back and hit Kurt in the head. Kurt started to cry. Nadine came in and screamed at them and told them to "Be quiet and go to sleep or someone will get spanked." Downstairs Bill could tell what was going on upstairs and wondered how a fun vacation could end like this. Nadine crawled into bed and thought for a moment: "Money, we always fight over money. I knew we were gonna fight over this the minute Bill told me, but I just couldn't stop it."