



SIDNEY  
SHELDON  
A STRANGER  
IN THE  
MIRROR

# **A Stranger in the Mirror**

**By Sidney Sheldon**

 HarperCollins e-books

If you would seek to find yourself  
Look not in a mirror  
For there is but a shadow there,  
A stranger...

—SILENIUS, *Odes to Truth*

# Contents

[Epigraph](#)

[Note to the Reader](#)

[Prologue](#)

On a Saturday morning in November in 1969, a series...

[Book One](#)

[1](#)

In 1919, Detroit, Michigan, was the single most successful industrial...

[2](#)

In 1939, New York City was a mecca for the...

[3](#)

On Labor Day, the summer season in the Catskills was...

[4](#)

Vaudeville had flourished in America from 1881 until its final...

[5](#)

In the beginning, Toby Temple's war was a nightmare.

[6](#)

Hollywood, California, in 1946, was the film capital of the...

[7](#)

When Sam Winters returned from the war his job at...

[8](#)

Toby Temple had tried to reach Sam Winters half a...

[9](#)

Actors West was divided into two sections: the Showcase group,...

[10](#)

“I’ve gotten you a booking in Las Vegas,” Clifton Lawrence...

[11](#)

The wedding, a gala event, was held in the ballroom...

[12](#)

There were days when Sam Winters felt as though he...

[13](#)

In a strange way, it was Millie who was responsible...

[14](#)

August 14, 1952, was Josephine Czinski’s thirteenth birthday. She was...

[15](#)

It was one of Sam Winters’s good days. The rushes...

[16](#)

In the early 1950’s, Toby Temple’s success was growing. He...

[17](#)

At seventeen, Josephine Czinski was the most beautiful girl in...

[18](#)

The dusty Greyhound Odessa-El Paso-San Bernardino-Los Angeles bus pulled into...

## [Book Two](#)

[19](#)

Toby Temple became a superstar because of the unlikely juxtaposition...

[20](#)

Hollywood was more exciting than Jill Castle had ever dreamed.

[21](#)

It was a heady time for Toby Temple. He was...

[22](#)

It was November, 1963, and the autumn sunshine had given...

[23](#)

They had lied. Time was not a friend that healed...

[24](#)

Jill sat in front of her dressing table and studied...

[25](#)

Eddie Berrigan, the casting director for Toby's show, was a...

[26](#)

It was the most tremendous role in Jill's life.

[27](#)

Clifton Lawrence was in trouble. In a way, he supposed,...

[28](#)

It was a storybook honeymoon. Toby and Jill flew in...

### [Book Three](#)

[29](#)

There is a smell to failure. It is a stench...

[30](#)

Jill Castle Temple was the most exciting thing to hit...

[31](#)

When they finally allowed Jill into Toby's hospital room in...

[32](#)

Europe was a succession of triumphs.

[33](#)

Three nurses attended Toby around the clock in shifts. They...

[34](#)

When Dr. Kaplan finished his examination of Toby, he went to...

[35](#)

Toby Temple's death made newspaper headlines all over the world.

[36](#)

The funeral was standing room only. It was held at...

[37](#)

David's private jet plane flew Jill to New York, where...

[Acknowledgments](#)

[Other Books by Sidney Sheldon](#)

[Copyright](#)

[About the Publisher](#)

## **NOTE TO THE READER**

The art of making others laugh is surely a wondrous gift from the gods. I affectionately dedicate this book to the comedians, the men and women who have that gift and share it with us. And to one of them in particular: my daughter's godfather, Groucho.

## PROLOGUE

On a Saturday morning in November in 1969, a series of bizarre and inexplicable events occurred aboard the fifty-five-thousand-ton luxury liner *S.S. Bretagne* as it was preparing to sail from the Port of New York to Le Havre.

Claude Dessard, chief purser of the *Bretagne*, a capa-able and meticulous man, ran, as he was fond of saying, a “tight ship.” In the fifteen years Dessard had served aboard the *Bretagne*, he had never encountered a situation he had not been able to deal with efficiently and discreetly. Considering that the *S.S. Bretagne* was a French ship, this was high tribute, indeed. However, on this particular day it was as though a thousand devils were conspiring against him. It was of small consolation to his sensitive Gallic pride that the intensive investigations conducted afterward by the American and French branches of Interpol and the steamship line’s own security forces failed to turn up a single plausible explanation for the extraordinary happenings of that day.

Because of the fame of the persons involved, the story was told in headlines all over the world, but the mystery remained unsolved.

As for Claude Dessard, he retired from the Cie. Trans-atlantique and opened a bistro in Nice, where he never tired of reliving with his patrons that strange, unforgettable November day.

It had begun, Dessard recalled, with the delivery of flowers from the President of the United States.

One hour before sailing time, an official black limousine bearing government license plates had driven up to Pier 92 on the lower Hudson River. A man wearing a charcoal-gray suit had disembarked from the car, carrying a bouquet of thirty-six Sterling Silver roses. He had made his way to the foot of the gangplank and exchanged a few words with Alain Safford, the *Bretagne*’s officer on duty. The flowers were ceremoniously transferred

to Janin, a junior deck officer, who delivered them and then sought out Claude Dessard.

“I thought you might wish to know,” Janin reported. “Roses from the President to Mme. Temple.”

*Jill Temple.* In the last year, her photograph had appeared on the front pages of daily newspapers and on magazine covers from New York to Bangkok and Paris to Leningrad. Claude Dessard recalled reading that she had been number one in a recent poll of the world’s most admired women, and that a large number of newborn girls were being christened Jill. The United States of America had always had its heroines. Now, Jill Temple had become one. Her courage and the fantastic battle she had won and then so ironically lost had captured the imagination of the world. It was a great love story, but it was much more than that: it contained all the elements of classic Greek drama and tragedy.

Claude Dessard was not fond of Americans, but in this case he was delighted to make an exception. He had tremendous admiration for Mme. Temple. She was—and this was the highest accolade Dessard could tender—*galante*. He resolved to see to it that her voyage on his ship would be a memorable one.

The chief purser turned his thoughts away from Jill Temple and concentrated on a final check of the passenger list. There was the usual collection of what the Americans referred to as V.I.P.’s, an acronym Dessard detested, particularly since Americans had such barbaric ideas about what made a person important. He noted that the wife of a wealthy industrialist was traveling alone. Dessard smiled knowingly and scanned the passenger list for the name of Matt Ellis, a black football star. When he found it, he nodded to himself, satisfied. Dessard was also interested to note that in adjoining cabins were a prominent senator and Carlina Rocca, a South American stripper, whose names had been linked in recent news stories. His eye moved down the list.

David Kenyon. Money. An enormous amount of it. He had sailed on the *Bretagne* before. Dessard remembered David Kenyon as a good-looking, deeply tanned man with a lean, athletic body. A quiet, impressive man. Dessard put a C.T., for captain’s table, after David Kenyon’s name.

Clifton Lawrence. A last-minute booking. A small frown appeared on the chief purser’s face. Ah, here was a delicate problem. What did one do with Monsieur Lawrence? At one time the question would not even have