The One Thing to Do Tonight

Free, from Volume III of the collection. It costs nothing and takes ten minutes.

I spent my working life at a preparation table in a small family funeral home in the Midwest. In all those years I found reading glasses in people's couches, car keys, a fair amount of loose change, and once, I am sorry to say, a set of dentures. I never found a will.

Here is the one thing in these three books that costs nothing, takes ten minutes, and matters more than most of what a family will spend money on that week.

Tell one person where the document is

If there is a document in your house that your family will need someday, tell one person where it is. The will, the deed, the insurance, the plan you wrote for your own service, the folder with the names and numbers. It does not have to be organized. It has to be findable by somebody who is not you, on a day when nobody is thinking clearly.

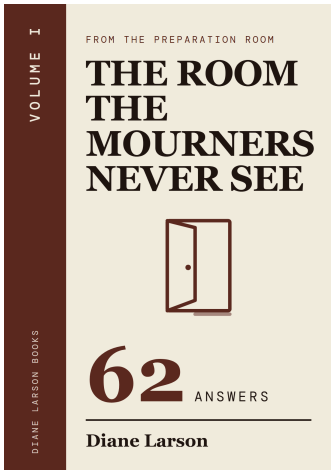
The part nobody knows: the families who struggled most in my office were almost never the ones grieving hardest. They were the ones who had to guess. Which hymn. Burial or cremation. Who carries. Who speaks. They argued about it in the hallway because nobody had ever asked him while he could still answer, and nobody knew where he had written it down, if he had written it down at all.

Go and do it. Tonight, pick the one person. Say the sentence out loud to them: "If anything happens to me, the papers are in the second drawer of the desk." Then put the papers in the second drawer of the desk. If there is a sheet of your wishes, put it with them. If there is not, the third book is forty-four questions with a line under each one, and a printable sheet to fill in at the kitchen table.

The honest limit. This is not a will, and I am not an attorney. What makes a will valid where you live is a question for one. This is only the habit that makes the will findable, and the couch is a poor filing cabinet.

This is general information from one woman's working life in a funeral home. It is not legal, medical or financial advice. Until then, look after your people.

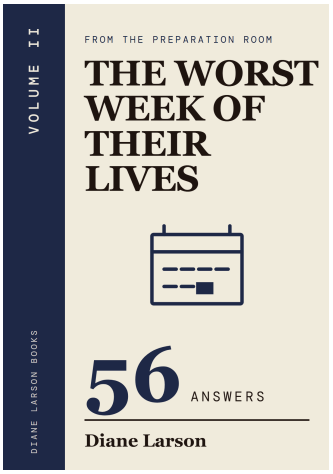
The three books



VOLUME I · 62 ANSWERS

The Room the Mourners Never See

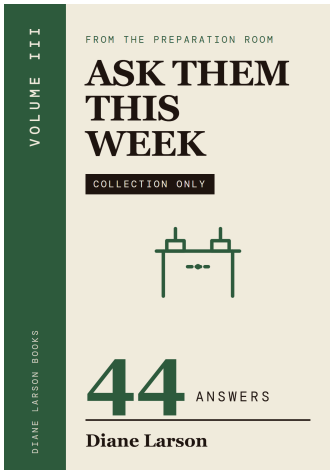
What actually happens between a death and the funeral, in the order it happens, explained by somebody who did the work. The first hour, what embalming is and is not, dressing, the casket and the gasket, moving a person, the paperwork.



VOLUME II · 56 ANSWERS

The Worst Week of Their Lives

The decisions a family gets handed that week, in the order they arrive, and what to ask before answering each one. The first call, the arrangement conference, open or closed, who carries, which clock is the real one.



VOLUME III · 44 ANSWERS · COLLECTION ONLY

Ask Them This Week

Your own arrangements, written down while you can still answer, so nobody has to guess for you. The questions nobody asked, pre-need without the pitch, the document, the people, the money conversation.

The collection · Look After Your People

All three books, plus the three printable sheets: The First Call (tape it by the telephone), Ask Them This Week (fill it in at the kitchen table), and The Bag (what to bring to the funeral home). Volume III and the sheets are only available in the collection.

Every answer has four parts: the claim, the part nobody knows, go and do it, and the honest limit. Every module ends on a one-page short list. Large type, one column, thirteen drawn figures. No prices inside, no rules stated, nothing that expires.

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Instant download after checkout. By Diane Larson, from the Mortician Explains channel on YouTube. General information from one woman's working life in a funeral home; not legal, medical or financial advice.