

Lizzie Takes Emma Halfway To Fairhaven

Whether or not, Emma knew of Lizzie's plot, her absence during the murders, must have been planned to insulate her from accusation. Several days before the murders, Lizzie and Emma embarked on a visit to Fair Haven. Lizzie turned back, at New Bedford, sending Emma, on, alone.

If Lizzie didn't need her help, she would rather not put Emma in the position of an accomplice, by letting her know what she had in mind. Lizzie means to protect her from the anxiety and guilt of planning her part in such a crime. Her sister was emotionally frail, and Lizzie would rather not gamble the whole endeavor on her nerve. She also had a more immediate motive than Lizzie. Under the pressure of suspicion, she might not be able to face down aggressive inquiries, without sounding guilty. Should she crack, she would have to use the father's crime as an excuse, but that wouldn't protect Lizzie or the inheritance. If Emma was above suspicion, and her conscience unencumbered by active participation, she could probably be relied on, to not blurt out the truth, upon learning of what had happened.

Barring some type of mental limitation, Lizzie's return should have been understood by Emma, as removing her from the scene of the impending crime, and the nature of it. Emma might have been in the dark, when they started out, for Fair Haven, but the light should have gone on when Lizzie turned back. Emma would naturally have probed a bit. Lizzie could have revealed her intention in a cryptic, detail free manner. Any excuse Lizzie could have given, would have sounded pretty thin, but, as long as Emma didn't corner her into explicitly admitting her intention, they could both honestly say, later, that Emma had no foreknowledge. If Emma probed too far, Lizzie might have despaired of fooling her. A statement like, 'Ask me no questions, I'll tell you no lies', is the same as an admission. If Lizzie did just lay it out for her, there is no reason that Emma should not comply. Lizzie would remind her 1} of the abuse, 2} which must have persisted for decades, 3} that her abuser was planning to leave her destitute because she had no children, 4} that his abuse was the only reason she had no children, because it had made her unsuited for marriage, 5} in a time when women were given no preparation for life, outside of marriage and 6} that his co-abuser's family was to get all of her despicable father's money. > Emma should not have had too much moral reservation about Lizzie's plan, and, anyway, she couldn't afford to. It's Lizzies way or a brief, miserable existence on the highway.

If taking Emma to Fair Haven, did not bolster her plan, it would destroy it. The step-mother must know of the plan for the visit. She has to know that Lizzie and Emma have left the house with some kind of luggage. Lizzie must assume that their hosts would react to any discrepancy between her stated plans and the arrival of Emma, alone, by wiring the parents. If Lizzie hadn't returned the same day or early the next, and the parents find out, she never got to Fair Haven, they might have more concern for their own safety, than for hers. If the cabbage-heads were not jolted into sentience by Lizzie' failure to reach Fair Haven, on a trip, so closely preceding the arrival of John, and given the purpose of his visit, her failure to get home, the same day or next, would, surely, 'Frankenstein' 'em.

Unless their hosts know exactly why Emma had arrived, alone, no explanation would seem sensible, but, they already have the explanation. Lizzie must have the complete complicity of their hosts in Fair Haven. If she doesn't, they would question Emma, which is dangerous, whether or not she knows what's about to happen. Emma's hosts are accomplices of one category or another; "Other Victims", "Other Perpetrators" or "Relatives of Victims & Perpetrators". Either, they have been cajoled into complicity, out of sympathy, or coerced with their own complicity in that type of crime. If Lizzie could entrust them with foreknowledge of her intent, she could also trust them to not return a telegram from the parents. With their support, Lizzie could have left Emma at New Bedford with a 'wink-and-a-promise' of a further explanation, once she arrived at Fair Haven. Whether Emma knew of Lizzie's plan, is not really resolved, but it's far more likely than not. If Lizzie had not spelled it out, their hosts might have been under instructions from Lizzie, to maintain Emma's technical innocence of the murders, by telling her nothing, but any attempt to withhold it, in answer to any question she might ask, would be as good as telling her. Unless she was retarded in some way, Emma would have to understand that she was being protected from knowing something grave.

After the murders, everyone should have realized that the trip to Fair Haven, was intended to manufacture an alibi for Emma, and they must also see that Lizzie could be the sole planner. If someone beside Emma, is implicated in removing her from the scene, that person might have talked her into leaving, on some pretense. Lizzie hoped that everyone would assume that she had deceived Emma into making the trip. She doesn't even hope to divert suspicion from herself. Her plan is to manipulate high society by explaining, through another person (certainly Emma) why she did do it.

Why Lizzie Rented A Room

When Lizzie returned to Fall River, she rented a room in a boarding house. If the purpose of the trip to Fairhaven, was to remove Emma from the area, until the murders were done, Lizzie had to return, first, but they left a week before the murders. She would expect her father and step-mother to ask why she was back, already, and why Emma wasn't with her. Even an ingenuous question can evoke a shaky answer, but you can't get tripped up, if you aren't asked any questions. Unless she wanted to field questions about why she had gone half-way, she would have to hide for a while. This doesn't solve the problem of what she might have said, when she did show up, at home, which would still have to include an excuse for not bringing Emma with her. She wants to give the parents as little time as possible to consider whatever reason she might give them. Because she didn't come all the way home, too soon to have ever gotten to Fair Haven, she could have just said that Emma felt like staying longer. No one could have checked on that explanation, except by telegram, and those could not be sent from home. The father's stinginess might have protected Lizzie from that threat, altogether, and her explanation would not have to sound too vague and fishy because she would tell the truth about the major fact of concern; Emma's location. Still, the less time it lingered in the air for any flaws to be sniffed out, the less time the parents would have, to make it to the telegraph office. If they were suspicious enough to send an inquiry that day, and even if Emma's hosts were not in Lizzie's camp (as I have supposed them to be) the same

urgency would not be at work on them, to return a telegram, soon enough to matter. Lizzie had to be at home, on the morning she intended to carry out her plan, but as long as she arrived at the house, too late for anyone to send a telegram and receive an answer, that same day, her story could not have been checked out by telegrams, until the next day. The uncle's arrival must serve Lizzie to distract the parents from her return, retarding any impulse, they might have, to send a telegram about Emma. They don't have the time to consider her explanation too carefully because they're pre-occupied with welcoming John. If they don't already have any suspicion that Lizzie might be planning anything [Part 2] John's arrival is the perfect foil for her arrival. Lizzie stayed away until her uncle arrived, then came home, too late for anyone to examine her story or send a telegram.

After the murders, it would have been obvious to everyone, that she had been hiding from the parents. It wouldn't concern her that such skulking would be seen as guilty behavior because she invited the accusation, but, if it had gotten back to the parents, that she was in town, the plan would be ruined. Why didn't she rent a room somewhere between Fall River and New Bedford, where she parted from Emma? The first step in her plan, the removal of Emma from the realm of suspicion, was skewed to Uncle John's expected arrival. For her plan to work, Lizzie must get home the day before her father and uncle go to the bank. If John is going to help the father make a will, the inheritance is not in danger until and unless he arrives. Lizzie cannot assume they will make their bank date, the next day. If they wait a day or two, there could be a telegram exchange, but, because she must have had the support of Emma's hosts, to send her, there, their hosts could stall. That would still weaken her because it gives suspicion time to percolate.

She must have a liaison inside the house, to know when Uncle John arrives, and what day he will help the father at the bank. It can't be a neighbor, no matter how familiar they might be, with the family. To be certain of getting what she needs to know, Lizzie needs someone within constant hearing range of the home's interior. That has to be Bridgit. If the uncle does not arrive until the day before the trip to the bank, there isn't much time for Lizzie to get home. He might arrive late in the day, as well. Her informant might have to move so fast, and Lizzie come home so fast, that her arrival might not beat bedtime. It shouldn't come to that because Lizzie's informant would overhear enough, in advance, to know when John is due to arrive. His arrival could not be withheld until hours before his arrival. No one would surprise their hosts that way, and his visit is linked to the plan he has with the father.