

Minding My Own Business
by Janice Thompson

Chapter Ten

Deanna put together an email, telling friends and family members about Vita-Magic, her new business. Already she'd sold a bundle—to her parents, in-laws, and neighbors. But if she wanted her business to grow, she had to learn to market via the Internet.

The sound of the children's voices in the next room drew her attention. Shelly Jo must have arrived with the girls. Deanna signed off-line and prepared herself for the day ahead. Surely it would be much like the days prior.

The past couple of weeks had been filled with delightful trips to the park, as well as a trip to the children's museum and swimming pool. Keeping track of five rowdy children was tough, but fun. And now that she'd been on the vitamins for a while, she felt stronger. Most of the time, anyway. Sometimes they made her a little queasy, but that was to be expected, right?

"How are you girls?" she asked, entering the kitchen.

"We're good!" Lucy and Maddy shouted in unison. "Can we go to the park?"

"Of course!"

Deanna spent nearly two hours at the neighborhood park with the children. They had a wonderful time. She arrived home, breathless and feeling a bit woozy. Probably too much activity. She heard the phone ring as she came in the door, but she missed the call. The machine kicked in. She recognized the voice right away. Katie Mullins—three houses down.

"Deanna, we need to talk. Those vitamins you sold me. . . Well, we need to talk."

The call ended, but a sick feeling came over Deanna. What now?

She noticed another message, this one from her mother. She listened to it with dread settling in.

"Dee, this is Mom. Daddy and I have been taking those vitamins, but we're both really sick at our stomachs. And Daddy's been so jittery. Oh, I have to let you go. He's not feeling well. Says his heart is racing. Call me back."

Deanna's hands trembled. She'd noticed some of the same symptoms but had thought they would pass. Surely the vitamins were safe. Right?

She put the children down for their naps, then signed onto the Internet to do a little research. Half an hour later, she had all of the information she needed. Hundreds of people across the country had experienced serious problems with Vita-Magic products. Some had even been hospitalized.

Deanna immediately called all of her customers, offering a full refund. She couldn't help but wonder what Jared would say.

Jared! Her thoughts shifted at once to her wonderful husband. She'd insisted he take the vitamins, and he'd willingly agreed. The familiar scripture from Proverbs 31 rang out loud and clear in her mind, "*She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life.*"

Oh no! What in the world had she done!

Jared worked the assembly line all afternoon, though he felt strangely nauseous and light-headed. "What's wrong with you, man?" his coworker Stuart asked. "You look a little green around the gills."

"I don't know. Hope it's not the flu. Or food poisoning." Jared shook his head, trying to shake off the nagging feelings that suddenly gripped him. "I've been trying to take better care of myself. Even been taking vitamins and other supplements. Deanna has me on a strict routine. . . ."

He never got to finish the conversation. A mad dash to the bathroom ended it.

Minutes later, Stuart knocked on the door. "Deanna's on the phone. Says it's urgent."

Jared leaned his head against the toilet seat and muttered, "I'll have to call her back." He couldn't shake the feeling that something had gone terribly, terribly wrong.

