

Life Begins At 62½

By George B. Russ

Miss Madie finally climbed out of the cool, comfortable cab of Will Deal's sausage van, thanked him for bringing her home "out of the hot sun." This courtesy was offered with more fervor and loudness than was necessary; because, she wanted her "peeping Tom neighbors" to know she hadn't been off on a "slumber party." She was sure her little pantomime hadn't "cleared the air," but she had made it known that she knew how to kiss "n don't tell." After all said and done, it was her word against anything they might conjure up in their sick minds.

She waved a frantical good-bye to "Mister Will," then stood, momentarily, watching the gleaming truck wind its way down the curving highway. Now her nosy neighbors would be puzzled by her actions. If the man had only given her a lift out of the hot sun, why was she acting as though she had left her heart inside the truck with him? Winking her eye up her sleeve, she donned a watery smile, then walked slowly toward the screen door of Apartment 2-A. Pangs of fear gripped her heart strings when her hand clasped the door handle and she removed her fingers quickly as though she had been burned. And before she regained composure, the door was flung open and Emma Lou framed

the doorway, hands akimbo, lips pursed, nostril flaring, eyes rolling.

Miss Madie spoke up cheerfully, "well! 'fore my Lord, what have I did to deserve this visit from you?"

The restraining contraption of Emma Lou's pursed lips snapped and a barrage of words rushed forth; "that's neither here nor there, Madie Perkins—I had no dreams you didn't have more sense than to go off and leave my sick father alone for hours."

Miss Madie could not dodge the impact of the bawling out, so, she stood still and let the fat lady have her say. Miss Madie had, from time to time, had the occasion to brag that patience was one virtue that she was "broken out with," but, for some reason, unbeknownst to her, she was over shadowing Job's patience by a long, wide shot.

"Madie Perkins, you should be ashamed of yourself—my daddy could have fallen off the bed and busted his skull on that cement floor in his room. And you off galavanting around like a street-walker."

Miss Madie's muddled brain cleared suddenly and she spoke up with her usual briskness; "squat your deep concern for your sick father, honey, Mister Ben 'n me have an understanding about my fresh air walks. I'd go baty as a bat

if I didn't get out of this house for a few minutes every day. Your faw-ther may be good for your sore eyes, but, as for me, I'll wait around for fresh snow water. Nursing your faw-ther is like playing footsie with stinging nettles."

Emma Lou's hands left her hefty hips; "you should have realized that the job was no pie tasting contest when you accepted it." Emma Lou hissed.

Miss Madie ignored her sister-in-law's innuendo and might have walked pass her without a second thought, but she wasn't forgiving the good sister for "making her flesh crawl!" with those awful hissings; "you're looking at the champion of fools—and fools are known to tread where angels dare not. Anybody can look at me and know pie tasting is not pass time of mine—but, you'll have a hard time convincing a judge and jury that you ain't."

Emma Lou wanted to make a fast exit, but she decided against giving her assailant the pleasure of thinking she had dressed her down; "where is my father's insurance policies and bank books" she blurted out sardonically.

Miss Madie was hurrying toward "Mister Ben's" room when the implication in Emma Lou's message belted her already throbbing ears. Momentarily, she was dumbfounded but his reaction did not linger—quickly it faded into nothingness and Miss Madie was once more completely in control of her equanimity. She took several steps toward the pompous woman; "my advice to you is plain and simple as your face: get lost before I count to ten." Emma Lou quickly sensed

Bonds January-June Sales Set Record

Sales of Series E and H Savings Bonds in Durham County during June were \$263,133. January-June sales totaled \$1,789,564. This represents 50.4 percent of the County's goal of \$3,547,000 according to Norris L. Hodgkins, Jr., County Volunteer Chairman. June sales of E and H Bonds in North Carolina totaled \$8,074,579, highest for June since 1945, and 24.5 percent above June 1972. Sales of Series E Bonds were \$7,970,579 — 25.0 percent over last June. H-Bond sales totaled \$104,000. Sales for the first six months of 1973 came to \$47,235,806 — the best in 28 years, and 10.1 percent above the same period last year. This represents 54.2 percent of the state's 1973 dollar goal of \$87,100,000.

Nationally, during June there were new purchases of E and H Bonds amounting to a record \$556 million, 4.4 percent above 1972. Total cash sales of E and H Bonds for the first 6 months of 1973 amounted to \$3,523 million, 8.5 percent above a year earlier. Sales exceeded redemption, at cost price, for the 33rd consecutive month. Holdings of E and H Bonds reached a new peak of \$59.4 billion in June — a gain of \$286 million in the month.

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that she had not bullied her father's housekeeper into doing what she had hoped she would do: tell her where her daddy's valuables were hidden. Instead, she had aroused the woman's wrath. And by the time Miss Madie had counted to ten, she was standing on the side walk, wondering which way to go.—Continued.

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