

ORCHIDS for Mother by PEGGY DERN

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN Greg went on quietly: "From the first moment I set eyes on you, I despised you— even before that, because everything I heard about you and your mother convinced me that you were a couple of selfish, grasping females. I thought of you as a spoiled and pampered brat. Until today, I thought I was right about you. But now, after watching you today, I have to admit that— you've got what it takes—and that maybe I was wrong about you, after all."

was wrong. You're regular." "Thanks," said Gail briefly. "Oh, don't get me wrong. I still don't like you any better than I did at the beginning." Greg told her curtly. "It's just that somewhere deep inside, I think maybe you've got the makings of a girl fit to be Uncle Charles' daughter."

happy that she was being of use. When the Saturday luncheon was over and they were all ready for the weekly trip to town, she was as excited as the others. As she and Norah came down the stairs dressed for town, Charles smiled warmly at Gail and said, "Saturday brings drink and ructions, and the farmers are off to town. Here's your pay, chick. Saturday's payday, too, you know."

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Greg, as though he read her thoughts, grinned, but at least there was no longer that bitter lashing of contempt in his look or in his tone. And she was startled to realize that suddenly she felt a little warm, pleased glow in her heart. Not until this moment had she realized how much Greg's dislike had hurt; but now that he admitted he had been wrong about her, now that he was willing to be friends, she felt suddenly like singing. Even though her body ached with weariness and her mind was exhausted.

The second day had been almost harder than the first. The backs of Gail's legs had ached like a toothache, and bending above the long rows had seemed to wrench her back in half. But by the third day her muscles were adapting themselves, and by the end of the week she was taking it in her stride, pleased and self-important, and

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had gone to her bank to be forwarded to her. She was a little uneasy about Lissa's reaction. Would she order Gail to return to her immediately? Gail was afraid she would, and she didn't want to leave; but she comforted herself with the thought that she was with her father and he wanted her, and so, with his backing, she would dare defy Lissa if such a command did arrive.

The weekend followed the pattern set by the last weekend, and again that Sunday night Gail heard Norah's soft, muffled sobbing. It worried her, and on Monday, as the two of them set out for the field, Gail said, impulsively, "Norah, what's worrying you?"

Norah, stopped still in the dew-wet path and stared at her, shocked, a little on the defensive. "Why, you silly child, what do you mean? Do I look like a gal all bowed down with worries?" she protested after a moment.

"It's just that—well, I've heard you crying in the night several times." Gail was sorry that she had mentioned it. Sorry that she had spoken at all. Norah stiffened and for a moment went white and cold. Anger trembled in her eyes and then she clenched her hands hard and tilted her chin a little and managed a grin.

"For Pete's sake, can't a lady emit a small, ladylike snore without being called to task for it?" She tried hard to make it a gay, flippant little speech, but the gaiety was missing.

Gail flushed and said awkwardly, "I'm sorry. I didn't mean to pry." "Then don't!" snapped Norah, her anger breaking its leash for a moment as she turned and stalked away.

Gail was acutely unhappy. She loved Norah, and was deeply grateful for the girl's warm friendliness; she had not meant to mention the weeping that had struck her as so pathetic and lonely. She had only wanted to offer whatever comfort there might be in her interest and her willingness, her anxiety, to share whatever trouble Norah was carrying alone.

Norah looked up and met Gail's eyes and said casually, "The nights are getting so warm I thought I'd shift my bed in the hope of more air."

"I see," said Gail quietly, and met Norah's eyes for a moment before she went on to her own room. Neither girl mentioned the incident again, but there was the tiniest possible barrier between them now; something impalpable as smoke, yet inescapable. The casual, light-hearted friendliness was still there on the surface, but beneath, apparent only to the girls themselves, there was a guarded something beyond which neither tried to go.

Time slid by and Gail was scarcely conscious of its passing. The days were crowded with work, because this was the busy planting season; the nights were given over to exhausted slumber, the weekends to the trip to the county seat. Saturday and Sundays were "date days," and both Gail and Norah had as many dates as they had time for. Greg was usually absent from home on Sunday, unless he was one of a party that included the two girls.

His and Norah's friends had welcomed Gail whole heartedly and she was happy and contented and beginning to feel that she had known no other life, when one late afternoon, an hour before sundown, Kate came across the field to her, looking a little excited.

(To Be Continued) CAROLINA MOTORS HOLDS OPEN HOUSE

To Feature Orchestra, Dance, Barbecue and Refreshments

WHITEVILLE, Sept. 7 — Friday, Sept. 12, was set today as the date for the opening of the new home of Carolina Motors.

Paul J. Williamson, who has just completed construction of an outstanding structure for his business, said that he had engaged Don Grimes and his orchestra to play for the grand opening dance which will be held in the 13,000-square feet of floor space in the service department.

The Grimes orchestra features the vocals of Elaine Powell, formerly with Guy Lombardo's Royal Canadians. Mr. Williamson said Grimes would bring his musicians here from Cavalier Hotel at Virginia Beach where they have just finished playing.

The Carolina Motors opening start with refreshments at 6:30, move into barbecue and local entertainment and continue with the dance from 9 p. m., to 1 o'clock.

With the general public invited to attend at no cost, Mr. Williamson said no special invitations would be mailed to anybody.

Whiteville Postoffice Receipts Surpasses Last Year's Revenue

WHITEVILLE, Sept. 7 — Maintaining a pace which has of late year, Whitesville Postoffice kept receipts running ahead of last year, Whiteville Post Office reported \$3,126.68 for the month of August.

In July and August Assistant Postmaster Arthur C. Meares reported total receipts of \$6994.05 against \$6,259.57.

Whiteville citizens are keeping close tab on the receipts because a \$40,000 minimum is required to maintain the first class status which the office obtained nearly two years ago. The office has been operating as first class for the past 14 months.

The receipts for the first eight months of the calendar year show \$24,722.64, making it necessary to maintain an average of approximately \$4,000 monthly to hit the \$40,000 mark for 1947.

As of Sept. 1, 1946, the office had receipts of \$23,381.72. Thus the office reports a gain of \$1,240.92 for the eight months of 1947 over the corresponding period last year.

Whiteville Rotarians Hold Roundtable At Their Weekly Meeting

WHITEVILLE, Sept. 7 — Whiteville Rotarians turned their weekly meeting into a round table of a sort and discussed program improvements, fellowship, and possible changes in club procedure.

The open forum was conducted by Ri Love, program chairman for September, who came up with some singing, jokes and other entertainment for Rotarians and guests.

Two new members were added to the club roster in the persons of Marion Martin, who immediately became the club's pianist, and J. Alden Rogers.

Birthday carnations were distributed by W. G. Burkhead to

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Charlie Herring, Charlie Love and George Smith. Visitors included Rotarian Leroy Rollins of Farmville, Grady Cliff Thompson, a guest of Ri Love, and Brown Woolard of New York, a guest of his brother, Cliff Woolard.

Singing led by Joe S. Mann, a joke by Lloyd Collier and several comments from Rotarians completed the program.

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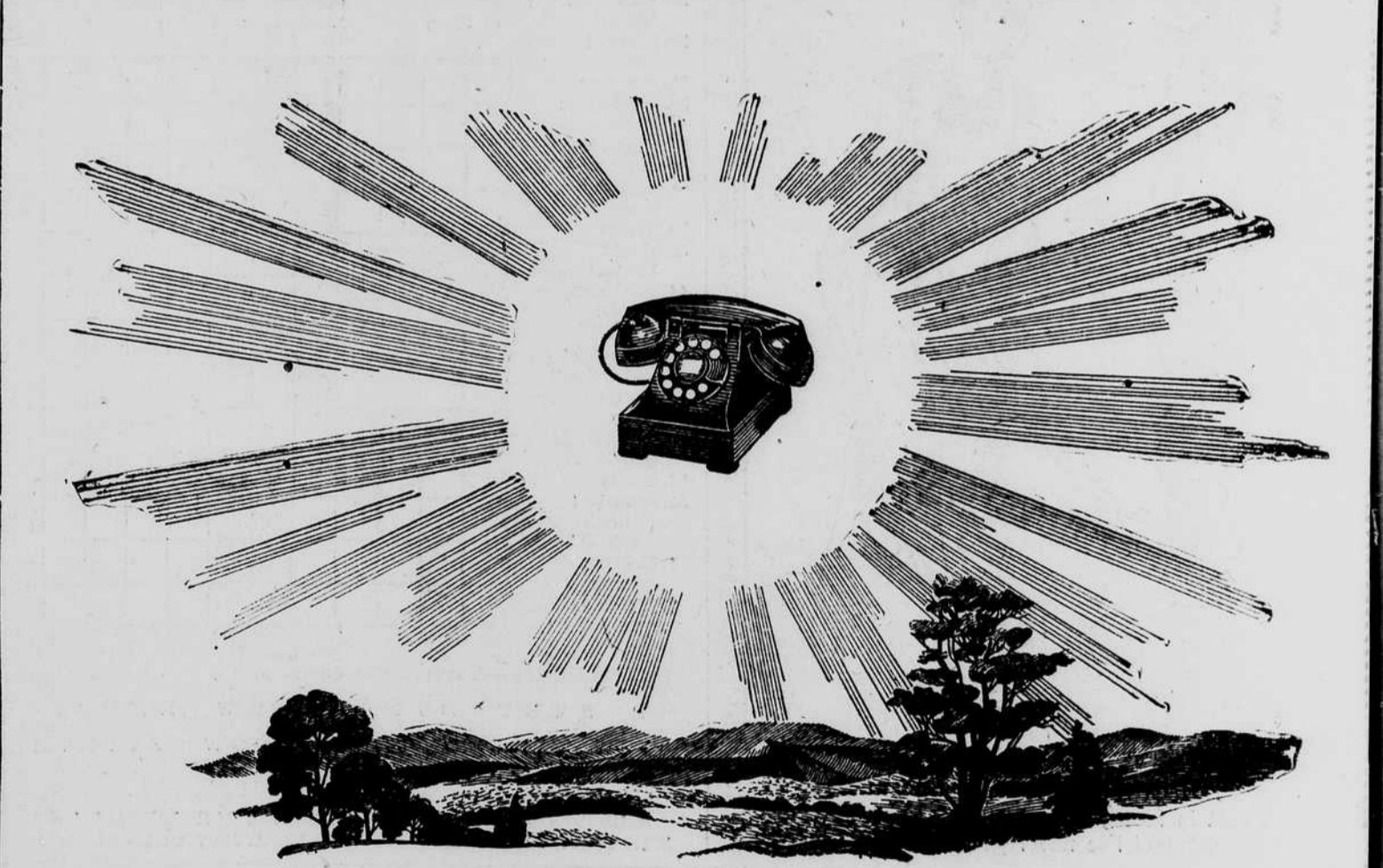
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