

DEADLINE LADY

By Georgia Craig

Chapter III
(Continued)

"Oh well," Ann comforted him lightly, "you're living up to the best traditions of Grade-B movie newspaper city editors—rough and tough and hardboiled—what would you be wanting with manners?"

"Something tells me," he said grimly, "that you were a spoiled brat who was never spanked enough when you were young."

"You're quite a girl," Tracy went on. "But I don't get it. Why a nice girl like you, born out of the top drawer and all the rest of it, should want to hang around a newspaper office—unless, of course, in the society department."

Ann counted to ten. And then she made her voice smooth and throaty and said gently, "Mr. Driscoll, let's get one little thing straight between us. I know you hate me; and to be perfectly frank, I could go for long months without so much as hearing your name, without suffering any pain whatever! But you're wasting your time trying to discourage me. I won't quit, and you can't fire me, until I flop! Shall we just leave it at that, for the present?"

"Let's!" he said frostily. For many years Sarah had cherished the custom of being "at home" to callers on Sunday afternoon.

It was a custom that dated back to years when people had observed a decent decorum on Sundays and an established routine; breakfast an hour later than on weekdays; church; a heavy midday dinner, usually at one o'clock or a little later. And the afternoon devoted either to making, or receiving, calls from friends who were "out strolling and dropped in for a cup of tea."

In recent years, the custom had almost ceased to exist among women of Sarah's own generation. The younger women, and more important, the husbands of the younger women, preferred a more stimulating method of getting through a Sunday. But there were still enough of Sarah's own generation to keep the custom alive.

Ann, as a young schoolgirl, had tried to rebel; but nothing had ever come of the rebellion; and by the present time, she was so much accustomed to a Sunday afternoon of pouring tea for Sarah's callers, that it did not occur to her to try to avoid it. Now Lyn dropped in between four and six on Sunday, passed little cakes and tiny bread and butter sandwiches, and chatted charmingly with old ladies.

On this particular afternoon, Ann had dressed with unusual care in one of the debutante "trousseau frocks," that Sarah's "little dressmakers," who made the two or three good frocks that Sarah allowed herself each year, had altered until they were very smart and up-to-date.

There was no particular reason, Ann tried to tell herself as she

pinned Lyn's invariable gardenias to the shoulder of her jade-green sheer wool frock and prepared to go downstairs, that she should be excited about today. There would be the usual old ladies, a few old gentlemen very spruce and archaic in their "courtly manners." There might be a few young people who dropped in to see Ann and Lyn through the ordeal; and there would be Tracy Driscoll. But seeing him every day of her life, there was surely no reason why now she should be the least bit excited. And of course she wasn't, she assured herself sternly as she went downstairs.

Andrew ushered in the first guests, old Mr. Harrelson, erect at seventy, spare, elegantly groomed, and his two gentle old maid twin sisters, as neat and trim as he; and only the good Lord knew how they managed it, on the tiny pitance left them after the destruction of the Harrelson estate when the Mid-City Bank crashed, at a time when banks all over the country were crashing like autumn leaves—except more loudly.

The other guests began to "drop in." Ann did not miss the fact that a few of them—like the Harrelsons, for instance—eyed the plates of little cakes, the thin bread and butter sandwiches, the tiny hot biscuits richly buttered and spread with Martha's home-made plum jam.

It was almost five when Andrew, being very stiff and very much the correct butler—"he's been going to the movies again," Ann told herself with a secret grin—stood in the doorway and announced firmly:

"Miss Marven, and Mistuh Driscoll."

As Sarah went forward graciously to greet them, Lyn bent above Ann and said low, "The bossman?"

"Who else?" answered Ann in the same tone.

"And I was going to nail his hide to the fence—and he keeps company with delectable bits like that! Who the heck is she, anyway?" murmured Lyn, in happy admiration.

Ann said curtly, "The girl who wants my job."

"Oho!" Lyn's eyebrows went up. "Then if I help her get it, and you get fired, you might be desperate enough to marry me! I see I shall have to cultivate the lady!"

"Do—and I'll drop arsenic weed-killer out of Andrew's tool-house into your next cup of tea!" Ann told him through her teeth.

Lyn's eyebrows went up a little and he laughed.

"It couldn't be that you're jealous, pet?"

But she was spared the necessity of an answer, for by now, Sarah was bringing Tracy and Lissa over to the tea table and demanding refreshments for them.

Lissa and Ann greeted each other politely, if without warmth, Lyn was presented and promptly brought Lissa a cup of fragrant tea, which she eyed with no delight.

"Tea?" she murmured incredulously. "But I thought—" Lyn grinned. "I know—but not in this house! When Sarah invites you to tea, it's tea—not cocktails!"

"Just an old southern custom!" said Lissa, and regarded Lyn with friendly, not to say admiring, interest.

"We have a great many of them," said Lyn cheerfully. "Some are absolutely fascinating—shall I tell you about some of them?"

"Oh, Doctor—pray do!" laughed Lissa, and Lyn promptly steered her away from the tea table and Ann watched them go, without realizing that her expres-

sion had betrayed her.

"Don't feel badly, Clayton," said Tracy, very low. "She'll return him, practically unharmed."

Ann looked up at him sharply and hated herself because her face grew warm with color, but her eyes flashed.

"There's no reason why she should return Lyn Frazier to me, unharmed or otherwise. He's a perfectly free agent!" she said curtly. "Will you have tea—or does the idea appall you, too? I'm sorry but I'm afraid there's no liquor—unless you'd care for blackberry cordial?"

It was a week or two later that Ann came into the office a little late and a friendly copy boy, passing her in the aisle, muttered under his breath, "Step on it, Miss Clayton—the boss has been yelling his head off for you."

Tracy looked up at that moment and his voice was sharp.

"Hi, Clayton, you're late!" His eyes were cold and unfriendly as she said hurriedly, "I'm sorry—I missed the bus." "Wasn't Grandmother's electric available?" he asked and before he could be answered, he rushed on, "Would Julie Barton talk to you?"

Puzzled, Ann asked, "About what, for instance?"

"About the—er—prowler who broke into her house and shot her husband," said Tracy curtly.

Ann caught her breath and stared at him.

"Dan Barton has been shot? And by a prowler?" she stammered and a little chill wind seemed to touch her suddenly.

"So his hysterical wife assured a couple of radio car policemen at four o'clock this morning," Tracy told her dryly.

Ann stared at him, puzzled and resentful. "And you don't believe her?" She answered his tone rather than his words.

"Do you?"

Ann's chin went up a little and her eyes matched his for chill. "I have no reason to doubt her—why should you?"

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Rites For Reedy Held Saturday

Succumbs In Lee Memorial Hospital After A Brief Illness

Funeral services for Pvt. Carson Dale Reedy, 30, son of Mr. and Mrs. Lenord C. Reedy, of Crumpler, and wife of the former Miss Hazel Walton, was held Saturday at 11 o'clock at the New River Baptist church. The Revs. Herbert Caldwell, Carl Sturgill and Paul Phipps were the officiating ministers and burial followed in the family cemetery.

Pvt. Reedy, who recently returned from serving overseas in the U. S. Army, died in the Lee Memorial hospital at Marion, Va., last Wednesday night, after a sudden and brief illness.

Survivors are, in addition to his wife and parents, two chil-

There were 7,851 fatal farm-work accidents in the United States in the three-year period, 1940-43.

MANY PROTEST SITE OF UNO HOME IN CONN.

Greenwich, Conn.—A growing storm of protest whirled through this highly residential community this week over the UNO site committee's recommendation that the world capital of the United Nations be erected in Connecticut.

dren, Lenord Bruce and Shirley; five brothers, Gilmer, Willard, Jack, Bobbie and Don Reedy; three sisters, Mrs. Virginia Trull, Mrs. Helen Grinstead and Miss Edith Reedy.

cut and Westchester County, N. Y. The recommendation, announced Saturday before the seven-man site committee returned to London to submit its report to the UNO General Assembly, surprised residents of this area—a favorite retreat for many wealthy New York businessmen.

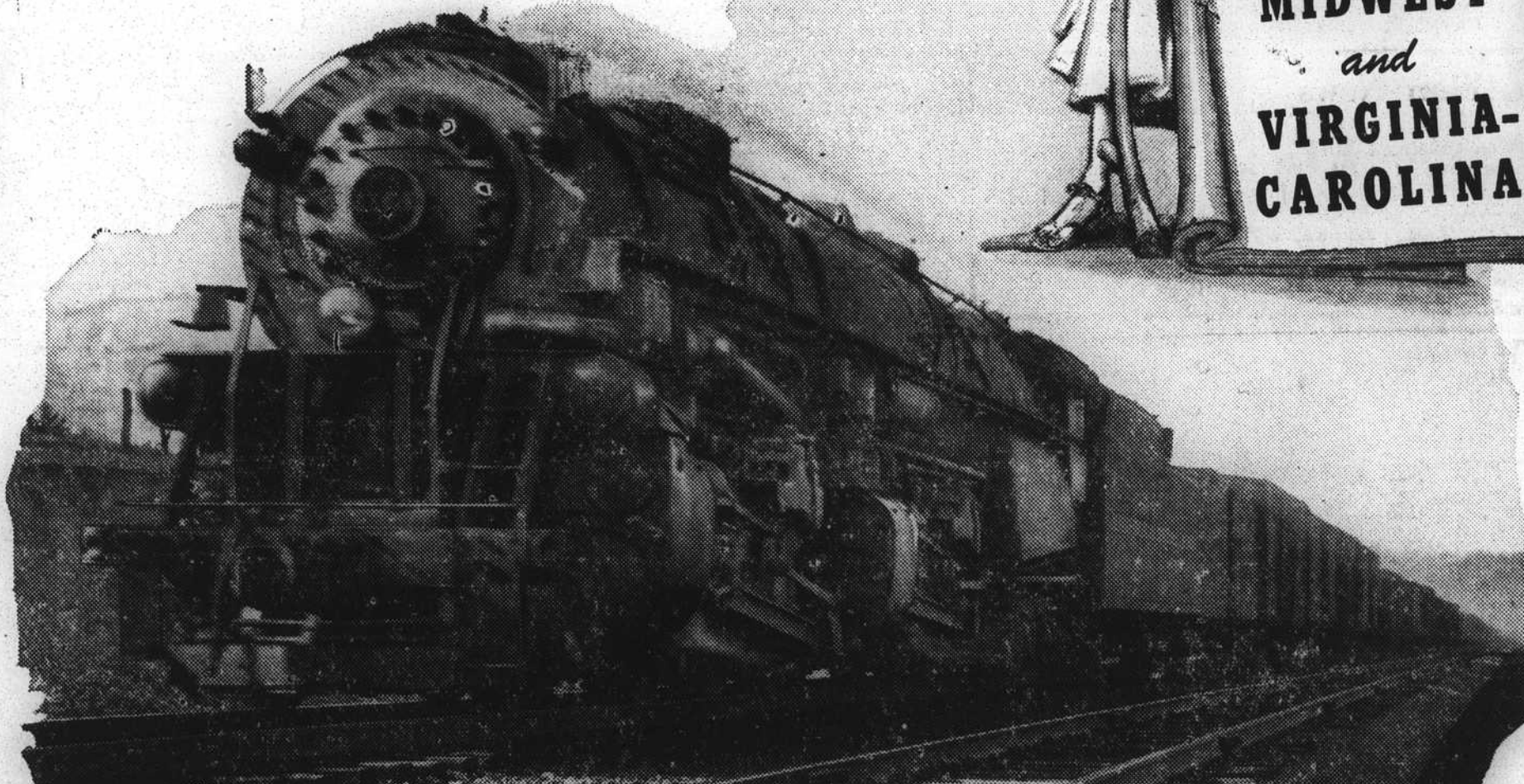
Throughout the afternoon, aroused owners of estates that would be swallowed up in the international zone, gathered in small groups at private homes to discuss what, if anything, they could do to forestall loss of their land and eventual eviction.

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