

DEADLINE LADY

By Georgia Craig

CHAPTER V

"As a matter of fact, I did," he told her and his voice was curt and unfriendly. "Too bad. I understand—it was an attempted burglary. Some prowler, perhaps—"

Ann sat very still for a moment and there was a drumming in her ears.

"Only," she said after a long moment, "there seems to be quite a bit of doubt now that it really was a prowler! Dan regained consciousness long enough to tell the ambulance men that he shot himself by accident, while cleaning his gun—at four in the morning."

Ann set her teeth and clenched her hands more tightly.

"And so," she answered him after a moment, "my city editor has sent me out to see what I can dig up in the way of a story about the shooting."

Startled, Lyn said sharply, "Oh, come now, Ann, you must not do that! Julie's a friend of yours—and as for me—" he bit down on his truant tongue, but it was too late.

Ann drew a long, hard breath and nodded. Her suspicions were confirmed. And she felt like weeping.

She had stood up and was looking at Lyn in a long, level stare. Her heart was pounding in her chest and her head throbbled as she desperately tried to get control of herself.

"So you were mixed up in it," she said evenly. "And it was Julie, not a burglar, who shot Dan! Oh, Lyn!"

"The whole thing was the rottenest damned luck you can imagine," said Lyn. "Old Mrs. Latham—you know the Lathams that live out on the Hardeeville Road? Well, the old lady had a heart attack! She's been a patient of mine for years; so naturally, they called me. When I got there, I found the Lathams had been having a bridge party—two or three tables, and Julie was there. Mrs. Latham had rather a bad time of it, and I stayed until she was quite comfortable. It was after two and the rest of the guests had gone home a good while before. But Julie knew I had to pass right by her place on my way home, and she took it for granted I would be glad to give her a lift and save any of the others from driving out of their way to bring her home. That's understandable, isn't it?"

"Quite understandable," Ann said curtly.

"This is going to be hard for you to believe, but it really happened," said Lyn grimly. "Five miles out I had a flat tire and the devil's own time getting it off the rim, and the spare in place. Julie was an awful good sport about it. Dan was out of town on a business trip and wouldn't be back until the next day, and of course, the nurse was with the baby, so she took the whole thing as a lark—for which, I might add, I was extremely grateful. When I got her home, at a little after three, Dan had cut his trip short and had got home a little after midnight. He'd called the Lathams just after we left—and

—well, he was a bit hard to get along with because we had taken so long on the road.

"Dan was pretty stuffy," Lyn went on. "He—well, he said some quite unpleasant things and I tried not to mind too much, because, after all, the situation did look a bit compromising. He—well, suddenly he threatened all sorts of things—so I had to take the revolver away from him—"

"And in the struggle it went off and — Lyn, was it you who shot him?" Ann gasped, stricken. "Hell, no!" snapped Lyn shortly. "That was only a few minutes after three. Dan wasn't shot until—four o'clock."

"How do you know the exact time when he was shot?" Ann asked carefully.

Lyn shot her an angry glance. "Because Julie told me, of course. The baby's nurse, knowing I was Julie's physician, called me. The police had already tried to question her, and she had flung them that damned yarn about being awakened by a prowler, her husband going down to investigate, and then the shot; I gave her a sedative and put her to bed, forbidding all callers, either in person or on the phone. While I was busy with her, the police ambulance had come and taken Dan away."

There was a taut little silence and then Lyn said very carefully, "The truth of the matter is, Ann, that—Dan shot himself—but it wasn't accidental."

Ann said under her breath, "Oh, poor Dan!"

"His—aim was bad. The wound is—more or less superficial."

Ann breathed a little heartfelt sigh of relief and comfort. She sat still for a moment, and Lyn stood leaning against his desk, studying her, his handsome brows drawn together in a little anxious frown, and suddenly he burst out, "Look, Precious, this is one most unholy mess! If my name gets mixed up in anything like this, I'm a dead pigeon! A doctor whose patients are ninety per cent of them women and children, can't afford a breath of scandal. And if it got out that I was bringing Julie home at three in the morning—even without the damning finish of Dan's attempted suicide—do you care enough for me—for the work I'm doing—to do something pretty big for me?" he asked her quietly, yet with an urgent intensity that made her blink a little.

"If I only could, Lyn!" she said simply, eagerness in her eyes.

"You can, Ann—and I hope it won't be too difficult for you," said Lyn quickly, his eyes aglow. "If you would let Sarah announce your engagement to me—"

Before Ann could marshal her scattered faculties to formulate any answer, or argument, Lyn rushed eagerly on, "It would be just a make-believe engagement, sweet. And any time you wanted to break it off, all you'd have to do would be give me the nod."

For a long moment she looked up at him steadily. And suddenly a little warm rush of tenderness flowed over her and to herself she said in a little gust of surprise, "Why, this is Lyn! My



HISASHI'S LOST SWORD . . . This sword belonged to Adm. Hisashi Nito, Imperial Japanese navy. It was made about 350 years ago by Tadahiro, one of the most skillful swordsmiths of ancient times. Lt. Gen. Robert Eichelberger, U. S. 8th army, has presented it to the U. S. coast guard academy in honor of the coast guard's contribution to defeat of Japan.

friend! My dearest friend! He couldn't possibly do anything—rotten or underhanded! Of course there's nothing—ugly between him and Julie!"

"All right, Lyn, I'll do it," she said quietly.

Ann reached the Courier office a little after two. But if she hoped to escape Tracy's eagle eye because of all the hurry and activity she was disappointed, for he had obviously been watching for her and now he yelled her name, and with a heart that sank a little in spite of her, she crossed to him.

"Well?" he demanded eagerly, his green eyes alive. "Where's the story?"

She said evenly, "There isn't any story."

Tracy's eyes blazed and he barked sharply, "What in blazes do you mean—there isn't any story?"

"It's just as Julie said," she told him quietly. She heard a noise, and Dan went to investigate, and—well, his gun went off."

Tracy leaned back and studied her curiously for a long moment, and there was anger and contempt in his eyes, and after a moment he said grimly, "So there wasn't any story! And you want to be a newspaper woman!"

"But I don't want to be a muck-raking, scandal-mongering 'tab' reporter, writing lies that just barely manage to evade the libel laws," she reminded him curtly.

He was silent for a long moment, and then he straightened his chair, whipped out a memo and said sharply, "There's a meeting of the Ladies' Aid of St. Barnaby's this afternoon. Suppose you cover it. That sort of story ought to be about your speed."

Tracy turned away from her to pick up a clamorous phone and Ann walked back to her desk, blind with tears of anger.

But when she came back into the office late in the afternoon, and found him temporarily free of other claims, she walked back to his desk, laid down the brief story about the Ladies' Aid meeting, and said quietly, "Will there be anything else, Mr. Driscoll?"

"After the way you flopped on the Barton case?" he snapped at her.

"Then I'll get my things together. I imagine the classified ads would be about my speed after all. Miss Marven can move up here—that is, if you think her health will permit," said Ann gently, despite the anger in her eyes and the taut line of her jaw. "I'll decide who moves up here and who stays in the classified ads," he snapped.

Sarah, looking handsome and almost regal in the severely simple black dinner gown that only Sarah and her "little dressmaker" knew had been made over several times, beamed at Ann and Lyn when they stood in the living room to receive her congratulations.

Ann, in a filmy yellow dinner frock with a callot of gardenias partly covering her pretty hair, looked lovely and useless; Lyn, in a white tuxedo, was very handsome. They were en route to dinner and dancing at the Driving Club, and Lyn had just put on Ann's finger the beautiful old ring that had been worn by three generations of Frazier fiancées.

"Well, Lyn, my dear," said Sarah, giving him both her hands and looking fondly up at him, "and so Ann has at last come to her senses and promised to marry you."

Lyn bent and kissed Sarah's cheek with a grace that had in it something almost a little old-fashioned and that Sarah liked and appreciated.

"Well, I'm not sure that promising to marry me proves she has come to her senses, or lost them completely," Lyn agreed lightly, his eyes very warm and blue. "But it certainly proves my colossal good luck! I don't deserve it, of course—but I'll try my very darndest to make her happy, Aunt Sarah!"

Later, outside, in Lyn's car he said soberly, "I'm sorry, Precious."

Ann looked at him, puzzled.

Mt. Zion News

with his mother, Mrs. Bell Blevins, of Topia.

Mr. and Mrs. George Pugh and P. C. Edwards visited Mr. and Mrs. W. F. Pugh, Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Smith and children, Edna Rae and Howard, who have been spending a few weeks at their home here, plan to leave tomorrow for Idaho to make their future home.

Mr. and Mrs. T. E. Pugh have moved back to their home in the community.

Mrs. Bonnie Pugh visited her brother, Pvt. Sidney Blevins, who is spending his furlough

WHY YOU SHOULD TRADE WITH ME

BLOW YOUR OWN HORN
In The Advertising Columns OF THIS NEWSPAPER

Everybody's Invited
to hear
Fiddling Buck
and his
Blue Ridge Mountaineers
Wednesday Night, Feb. 27

— AT —
Sparta Courthouse

Entertainment for the whole family . . . and by people you know . . . many have said that this show excels any they have witnessed for fun, laughs, and good mountain music.

EVERETT LUNDY, Mgr. EARL SMITH, Asst. Mgr.
Galax, Va. Baywood, Va.

Mountain Music - Songs
Comedians

Hear them over WAIR, Winston-Salem, every Wednesday and Saturday at 12:30 P. M.

Admission: 25c and 50c

—SPONSORED BY—
Sparta Lions Club

It pays to buy the best . . .

YOU CAN ALWAYS BE ASSURED THAT YOU ARE BUYING THE BEST QUALITY WHEN YOU BUY FROM FARMER'S HARDWARE AND IMPLEMENT COMPANY, LONG RECOGNIZED AS A FRIEND OF THE PEOPLE OF ALLEGHANY COUNTY.

It might cost a little more right now, but it's cheaper in the long run . . .

Farmer's Hdw. & Impl. Co.
SPARTA, N. C.

To The People Of Alleghany County:

In the past five years, a new industry has been developed in this part of the country and we are proud to be a party of this new business. We will be here as long as pipes are made from Ivy and Laurel burls.

It would be unfortunate, indeed, if any one concern would have the power to control this new industry. Thank God, we live in a country of free enterprises built on a fair competitive basis. The price you are getting today for your Ivy and Laurel stools is not due to the love that any individual manufacturer has for you, but is due to the competition of the various manufacturers of pipe blocks. Therefore, common sense will dictate that it is to the best interest of the individual farmer who digs the burls and to the best interest of the merchant who collects them, to sell these burls to any and all pipe block manufacturers who are willing to pay a legitimate market price. In doing this, you protect your interest of the new industry at large.

In conclusion, we ask you to remember us when you have burls to sell. Give us our share and keep competition alive. Write or call:-

CAROLINA BRIAR CORPORATION
West Jefferson, North Carolina
Telephone: 127, 129-W

TODD DRUG COMPANY
West Jefferson, North Carolina
Telephone: 100-B

and we will send our truck to haul the burls to our mill.

Carolina Briar Corporation
ROCCO CUTRI, President.

Announcement!

IN ADDITION TO REPAIRING YOUR SHOES FOR THE PAST 15 YEARS, WE HAVE NOW ADDED FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE, A LINE OF

Second Hand Clothing

Including:

Second Hand LADIES' SLIPPERS.	REPAIRED ARMY SHOES.
Second Hand FIELD JACKETS.	ARMY PANTS, Cotton and Yarn.
ARMY SHIRTS	OVERALL PANTS and JACKETS.
Cleaned and Repaired.	Men's Socks and Children's Anklets.
Some New Hats, Shirts and Pants.	

WHEN YOU CALL FOR YOUR SHOES, LET US SUPPLY YOUR OTHER CLOTHING NEEDS.

Sparta Shoe Shop
J. P. ABSHER, Owner and Manager
SPARTA, N. C.