

April 1947 Arkay News

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FANCY with **erma** **FISTE**

"Let's give a going-away party for Dora," someone says and the whole department goes into fits of gaiety over the idea. Good old Dora . . . been with the department 105 years, has never been known to strike a customer, and is dearly loved by everyone on the floor.

I don't know how it happened . . . guess I was the only one in the group who knew how to use the dial telephone or write my name legibly, but somehow I found myself heading a one-woman committee to see that Dora was given a send-off with all the promptu of a Kaiser built vessel being launched at pier No. 5.

The next week I ran around with all the grace of a herd of Amazons. There were reservations to be made . . . "Hello, I'm calling from Rike's. We're having a little going away party for Dora. She's a gem . . . was issued with the building 105 years ago and . . . (coldly) oh yes, to be sure, the party. I'd like to make reservations for ten . . . no, not Ben, we don't have any men in the department . . . I'm NOT telling you my troubles . . . I'm simply trying to arrange a little party for Dora . . . That's right . . . yes, something simple served on expensive china so it looks good . . ."

Then there was the collection. Every day, I would appear mysteriously before a co-worker and talking out of the side of my mouth would explain the cost, stuff the contributions behind my cuff links and glancing about nervously, expecting Dora to emerge from the woodwork and discover my underground activities.

I visited the florist in person to find something suitable for the occasion . . . "It's a little gift from the girls in the department," I stammered . . . "Something not too fussy. . . ." The attendant whipped a box out of the cooler . . . "Maybe this plain old orchid," "Well . . . ah . . . no, I had something a little less gaudy in mind. . . ." She yawned and flashed a half dozen red roses in front of me. . . ." I moistened my lips . . . "No, that just doesn't fit Dora at all . . . I had in mind something like this." I felt like a peasant in the Waldorf as I walked out of the shop with my little pot of Ivy . . . ah well, it is the sentiment that counts.

The day arrived, and I was ready for it . . . I arranged the table with care, scrawled out place cards, herded the girls together, carried the gift to the head of the table, watered the ivy . . . told jokes during the meal when conversation lagged, paid the bill and took care of the tip, and all the other little oddities that contribute to insanity.

Yes, we lost Dora that day and another member of the department. You see, I had a relapse, and Dora and I left through the revolving door at the same time . . . to home, and peace.