

SIDE 3 - Addie Mae, Kate

THE COVER OF LIFE

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because the angle was the wives - a woman's piece. A woman's piece. For me. I said, "Come on, Harry, I haven't been working the War for you, to do a piece of fluff for my first cover. He responded, "It'll be good for you." (Pause. Reflective) Well, Harry was right. (Upbeat and sardonic) He was always right. And always ... perfect. When Harry wore a white linen suit and carried the New York Times, he got white linen all over the New York Times. (Pause) Oh, let me emphasize one more time: I did not want to go. "Harry," I pleaded, "I don't even know how you get there. Trains don't go there, Harry. It's all swampland. The entire state is under water." Harry, ever the boss, said take it or leave it. I took it. So, I thought, let me get started. (Dejected) Correction, I thought let me get it over with. This was my general attitude as I made that first call. (Gets out a notebook, looks up a number and begins as operator comes on the line) Yes, operator, person to person to Addie Mae McGough Blackard, Sterlington, Louisiana, (Reacts to strange phone number as she says it) 2-7-5-9-J? (KATE does not want to make this call). Anything for the cover of Life. I had dodged bullets in Italy and taxis on Sixth Avenue, but there was no getting around Addie Mae ...

START (ADDIE MAE appears in curlers and bathrobe. There is a phone on a table by a chair.)

ADDIE MAE. (ADDIE MAE calls offstage in a loud, grating, but not mean, voice) I've got it Sonny! (Quick change into a genteel, businesslike tone) Hello. This is Addie Mae McGough Blackard. (Covers mouthpiece, loud again, shocked that she has received a person to person call) What? (Calls out to Sonny) Sonny, Lou says it's person to person!

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(Back to phone, annoyed at what the operator says) Yes, Lou, you know dem good and well it's me. (Pause) Hello?
KATE. Good afternoon.
ADDIE MAE. Afternoon? (Nervous giggle) It's six o'clock. Might near bedtime! You must be callin' from Mars! KATE. (Looks around) Sort of. Sorry to be calling so ... late. (Looks at her watch, not entertained.)
ADDIE MAE. May I ask whom is calling?
KATE. (Please! Hear the grammar?) This is Kate Miller. Of Life magazine.
ADDIE MAE. (Pause) I'm sorry. I thought you said Life magazine was calling. I must have a loose connection.
KATE. No doubt. Well, this is really Life magazine.
ADDIE MAE. Well, this is really Addie Mae.
KATE. (Hating this, but trying to be professional) I am so pleased to find you.
ADDIE MAE. (As she speaks she realizes her hair is in curlers) Find me? Was I lost and didn't nobody tell me? (Nervous laughter at her own joke. She tries to continue conversation as she fixes her hair.)
KATE. I obtained your number from the Times-Picayune people. Lovely article.
ADDIE MAE. Oh, my goodness, that was three months ago.
KATE. Didn't the people from the Times-Picayune call you and let you know that I would be contacting you?
ADDIE MAE. Well, yes, my husband said that I did get a call, but we thought somebody in town was pullin' my leg. Oh my god! Life magazine!
KATE. Well, Addie Mae - is it all right to call you Addie Mae?
ADDIE MAE. Honey, you can call me anything you want.

END