

 HarperCollins e-books



To Live  
&  
Die in Dixie

**Kathy Hogan Trocheck**



KATHY HOGAN  
TROCHECK

TO LIVE & DIE  
IN DIXIE

A CALLAHAN GARRITY MYSTERY



HarperCollins e-books

*Dedicated with love to my mother, Helen Hogan, and to the  
memory of her mother, Edna Rivers Waymire.  
Happy Birthday, Mom; miss you, Gram.*

# Contents

1	THE LUMP UNDER THE SHEET stirred, ever so slightly. I...	1
2	MAC LEFT SOON AFTER Neva Jean; trout season was in...	7
3	EAGLE'S KEEP IS AN ATLANTA landmark: a Victorian Gothic behemoth...	15
4	EDNA SPRAYED A HEAVY MIST of window cleaner on the...	24
5	THE DOORBELL RANG AGAIN. I looked around for someone to...	32
6	THE WELCOMING SCENT of bacon grease and hot biscuits wafted...	44
7	WHAT?" EDNA DEMANDED, as I put the receiver back on...	52
8		71

GEORGE KOTERAS WAS SHORT and stocky, with a shiny bald...	
9	
THE FAINTEST PROMISE of a breeze wafted down the street,...	85
10	
INSTEAD OF SLEEPING THE SLEEP of the righteous, I tossed...	94
11	
THE HIGH-PITCHED WHINE of our heavy-duty Electrolux coming from inside...	99
12	
THE COLD BOTTLES OF BEER made a welcome clinking noise...	105
13	
A BEAT-UP RED HYUNDAI was parked at the curb in...	112
14	
SHANE DUNSTAN, THE HEAD of Emory University's special collections, returned...	125
15	
I SAT IN THE VAN OUTSIDE the Rebel Yell offices...	135
16	
WHEN I GOT HOME MY OWN house was blast-furnace hot...	149
17	
JOCELYN DOUGHERTY AND Edna sat across the kitchen table from...	159

18	CALLAHAN, GOOD TO HEAR from you,” Jake Dahlberg said warmly.	167
19	JUST FOR THE HELL OF IT, I decided to cruise...	177
20	WHEN I WENT OUT TO GET in the van, Ping-Pong...	186
21	CALLAHAN,” A VOICE SAID softly. “Callahan. Wake uuuup, your dinner...	198
22	LOOSE ENDS, I THOUGHT, AS I drove back downtown, toward...	202
23	THURSDAY MORNING, RUBY’S blood pressure was up and Neva Jean...	210
24	I LEFT EDNA STANDING THERE, stalked to the back bedroom,...	222
25	ELLIOT LITTLEFIELD HADN’T mourned “my little Bridget” for long. Eagle’s...	230
26	I DON’T KNOW HOW LONG I crouched there in the...	239
27		245

WHEN I WOKE UP around ten the next morning,  
coffee...

28

I GOT MYSELF ALL SPRUCED UP for dinner at  
Jake... 253

29

FRIDAY MORNING I WAS UP and out early.  
We'd been... 262

30

I WAS JUST BASTING THE CHICKEN with  
Edna's secret barbecue... 274

31

WE FINALLY DID GET a new roof on the house,... 290

[Acknowledgments](#)

[About the Author](#)

[Praise](#)

[Other Books by Kathy Hogan Trocheck](#)

[Cover](#)

[Copyright](#)

[About the Publisher](#)

# 1

**T**HE LUMP UNDER THE SHEET stirred, ever so slightly. I poked it with my toe. No response. I poked again. Put my lips up to his ear.

“Give you a hundred dollars if you’ll get up and put the coffee on.”

The only response was an exaggerated snore.

“A hundred dollars and I’ll scratch your back for five minutes.”

He pulled the sheet up over his head and turned his back to me.

I sighed. “Okay. A hundred dollars, back scratching, plus...”

Before I could finish the offer he turned and put his arms around my neck, lazily running a finger down my bare spine.

I slapped his hand away.

“Forget it, MacAuliffe,” I said. “A hundred dollars, back scratching and first dibs on the shower. That’s my final offer.”

He groaned loudly but sat up, pulling half the covers with him. It was June, but we’d cranked up my air-conditioner the previous night and the room was chilly. I snatched the covers back.

“Deal,” he said, then padded, naked, toward the bathroom.

I dozed a few minutes, until the doorbell rang. “Get the door, Mac,” I called, but the shower was still running full blast.

“Damn,” I muttered, feeling around on the floor for my robe. “Who the hell’s here this early in the morning?”

By the time I’d groggily made my way through the hallway to the front door, the bell ringing had been replaced with a persistent knocking. I put one bleary eye to the front door peephole, took a look and tried to shake the cobwebs away.

I looked again, but she was still there. I shot the dead-bolt and opened the door a crack, leaving the chain on.

A Southern belle from hell stood on my doorstep. She’d poured her two-hundred-pound-plus self into a long hoop-skirted ball gown made of some kind of white-and-green flowered imitation satin. The sleeves had been pulled down over her shoulders, forcing the double-D bosom forward at a gravity-defying angle. A green velvet sash was wound tight around her waist, so tight that her chubby cheeks were stained an unnatural pink. Her head was wrapped turban style in a faded yellow towel. She fluttered a pair of half-inch-long fake eyelashes and smiled coquettishly at me.

“Hey, Callahan,” she said sweetly, trying to push the door open. “Tell your mama I’m here for my combout.”

I held the door steady. “Edna’s still in Swainsboro, at my cousin’s wedding, Neva Jean,” I said. “What the hell are you doing in that getup at the crack of dawn on a Saturday morning?”

She fluttered the eyelashes again. “Come on and let me in, Callahan,” she said plaintively. “It’s eighty-five