

# BROKEN HEARTS OF HOLLYWOOD

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### SYNOPSIS

Mutually attracted, Betsy Terwilliger and Hal Chastney arrive in Hollywood as prize winners of newspaper contests for movie try-outs. They are depressed by the number of people seeking work. Movie oldtimers see a mysterious resemblance in Betsy to someone they cannot remember. Hal flops miserably as a cowboy. Betsy, handed a scanty one-piece bathing suit, is shocked by the suggestion of the "bathing beauties." She witnesses the humiliation of Virginia Perry, erstwhile star, now a failure, and is strangely affected by her eyes.

### CHAPTER VII—Continued

Virginia's eyes reflected the quick recognition of a stranger, the instant kindling of an interest and liking, the swift forging of a bond of sympathy. Involuntarily, Betsy felt a smile softening the horror her expression betrayed; and there was a faint, wondering, answering smile upon the woman's face.

"Who is that?" Ned whispered to Clare when the woman had turned to continue her chatting with the subdued girls.

"That, honey, is a poor devil who's a sample of the other thing the movies can do—as well as make fine ladies like Pickford. She's Virginia Perry, once the most famous actress on the screen and the toast of Hollywood in the first years movies were made here."

Virginia Perry! Betsy, who for so long had been studying and admiring the screen and its people and its history, knew the name at once. She had encountered it many times in the "fan magazine" stories of old days and old players. Virginia Perry, indeed!—the screen's first and greatest woman star, whose light had gone out these many years ago, but whose

were now in their bathing at and putting the final touches to their make-up. "Shall we tell him we're not dressed yet—he can't come," whispered Clare intensely to Virginia.

Virginia shrugged philosophically. "I might as well take it now as later."

One by one the girls drew off in a group near the door as the assistant, a nervous but grim fat man in shirt sleeves and suspenders, stepped in and caught instant sight of Clare. He advanced upon her in the stillness:

"Trying to sneak one over on me, eh? You're a fine one, Virginia. Ginned up again?"

Virginia put down her make-up box wearily; for an instant she remained with bowed head, before swinging to face the assistant. Betsy, at the next table, wanted to cover her ears; wanted to run. But, instead, she remained glued to her place, fascinated by this raw tragedy of real life that was being unfolded before her astonished senses.

"I'm sorry, Ted—" began Virginia.

"Yes, the same old story," he cursed in disgust. "You swore up and down that if we gave you another chance you wouldn't hit the bottle again. And now look at you. We lost two hours—whole company held up—director, stars, salaries—everything lost—waiting for you. If we'd been able to find someone offhand to take your place you'd have been barred from the studio forever. As it is, you're cooked."

"Please, Ted. Just this once more—please. She was pleading in a pleading way that struck Betsy with its degradation even as it wrung pity from her.

"Can it, Virginia. I won't listen. We're looking for someone else for the part. You might as well beat it, and don't let the Boss see you, for he swore he'd have you thrown out."

"Ted, please—you must listen." Virginia, unmindful of parading her shame before the listening girls, clutched the fat assistant's perspiring hand. "Ted, I couldn't help it this time. Last night I came across something that just broke me up. Look, Ted—"

With shaking fingers she fished an old tintype from her frowsy handbag, and displayed it to the assistant. He glanced at it a moment, then threw it down upon the table where Betsy, her eyes attracted to it despite her wish not to look or listen, saw indistinctly that it was the old photograph of a man, a young woman, and a babe in arms.

Virginia was crying softly now, in a beaten way.

"I was raking through some old stuff that I thought I'd burned fifteen years ago, when I found this. It's the picture of my husband and baby and me before—oh, you know, Ted." She was talking in a low, tense voice now; inaudible to the girls at the far end of the room, and almost so to Betsy and Clare at hand. The assistant, despite his obvious grim determination to be inflexible, showed signs of being moved.

"I unlearned me, Ted—sort of stepped up out of the past and smashed me in the face. I went to pieces—and the only way I could find a bit of rest was in—the bottle. That's all there was to it, Ted—little enough, perhaps, but I just couldn't help it—"

The assistant was frowning now, and wavering. Virginia, rested trembling fingers on his forearm—fine, tapering fingers that were, all that was left of her former charm.

"I swear, Ted—I'll do better from now on. Somehow—I feel that in finding the picture, I've found something else. Something that's been missing all these years. Something I never expected to find again—and didn't care about. Now I do care, and I'll be a little different, I promise solemnly."

The assistant hid his compassion in throaty gruffness. "I can't promise, Virginia, but I'll see the Boss. I'll get McLain to speak up for you, too. He likes you, and what a star like McLain says around this joint cuts more than a summer's supply of ice. Get into your costume as quick as you can. And come down on the set. It'll help if you're all ready to work."

The fat assistant waddled out, shaking his head wretchedly, after ordering "Croom, you maids—down on the set."

While the girls began to troop out frolicking, Betsy noticed that none of them wore a thing over their meagre swimming suits. She felt hot and weak inside at this demonstration of the brazenness of life behind the screens, where girls could romp without thinking anything of it, through crowded halls, a thronged yard, and on the set before gaping workers and hangers-on in suits that would be considered positively too indecent and abbreviated for even the privacy of the Hoosac Girls' Club tank, where Betsy had learned to swim.

(To be continued)

Rev. Mr. Thompson Improving, Salisbury, June 17, Rev. Ed. Thompson, pastor of Main Street Methodist church, who fainted and fell while delivering a sermon at his church Sunday, has sufficiently recovered to be able to leave the Salisbury hospital and has gone to a daughter's in High Point to spend awhile in recuperating. He will also visit a daughter in Shelby before resuming his active work as pastor. Mr. Thompson is one of the oldest active ministers of the conference and has served a number of charges

and also as presiding elder of some of the districts of the Western North Carolina conference.

Viscount Willington, who is to become Governor-General of Canada, is closely related to Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson through the marriage of his son to the daughter of the famous actor.

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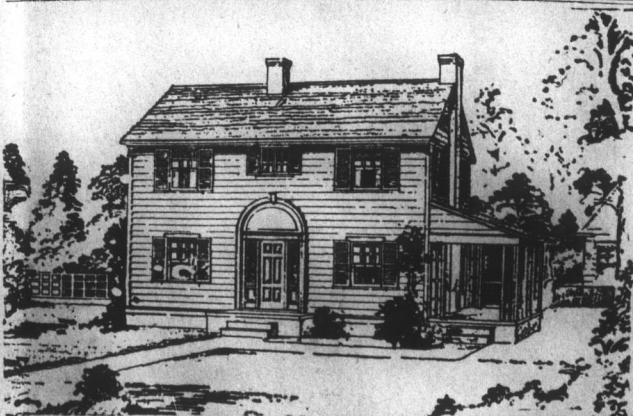
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In this home the central hall, a prominent feature of colonial days, has been omitted and instead an entry is used. The main stair to the second floor leads directly from this entry. To the right as one enters is a roomy alcove leading to the living room. Artistic French doors from the living room give access to the large, comfortable porch. The living room is well lighted with plenty of wall space for furniture and hangings, special care being used in the placing of the openings for this purpose.

The opposite end of the house is used for dining room and kitchen. The dining room is provided with two corner china closets of the colonial type.

The kitchen is roomy, with plenty of light and ample working space between the range, sink, cupboards, etc., which occupy the outside wall.

An entrance to the basement is provided from the kitchen. The second floor contains three bedrooms, bath, alcove, closets, wardrobes, linen cases, etc.

In the basement, which is the full size of the house, are located the laundry fuel, furnace, fruit and vegetable storage rooms.

# F. C. NIBLOCK