

BADGERS ATTENDING FUNERAL IN RALEIGH

Lt. Col. Thomas Badger, of Washington, and Mrs. Badger, of Henderson, have gone to Raleigh to attend the funeral of the colorist's father, Thomas Badger, who died Thursday afternoon at his home at 520 North Street.

Religious Movie Be Shown Sunday By Presbyterians

"The Blind Beggar of Jerusalem," a moving picture, will be shown at the Sunday evening service at the First Presbyterian church and will take the place of the 5 o'clock service, it was announced today.

TIMBER RIGHTS IN KITTRELL ARE SOLD

Timber rights to a tract in Kittrell township were transferred by L. E. Barnes and wife to G. M. Sparks for \$100 and other considerations in a deed filed at the register of deeds office yesterday.

AROUND TOWN MARRIAGE LICENSE

George Lee Daniel, of South Hill, Va., and Myrtle Mae Carter, of Boynton, Va., white, obtained a marriage license at the register of deeds office yesterday.

Up To The Hilt—By Anne Rowe

CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHT

MY QUARREL with Neal only ended when Jones rushed in, imploring her idolized mistress to think of her coming performance, and carried her off by main force almost, with a glance of utter contempt at me.

The glance hadn't the desired effect, though. It didn't squelch me. I only heaved a sigh of relief and went to my room to dress.

But I was, by then, in such a state of jitters, I found even that a hard task. My hair wouldn't go up right. I broke a nail. My lipstick smeared. And when, by a miracle, I managed to be ready in time in spite of all these small mishaps—

Hunt was later. He hadn't sent me a wire and so I had, of course, taken it for granted he would come. But at quarter past eight I started to worry, and began pacing the living room. And by half past I gave up, grabbed my evening wrap and rushed toward the door.

However, just as I was pulling it open the bell rang, and I found Hunt standing outside, scowling at me as angrily as I was glaring at him.

"Sorry to have kept you waiting," he announced, in a tone that said he was angry but definitely not sorry. "But every last thing I could do wrong, first the plane was held up for some bigwig, and then there weren't any taxis at the airport."

"It doesn't matter," I assured him. Also in a tone that meant the reverse of the words. "We can still make it. Unless we run up against 'no taxis' here also."

But there was no danger of that. Hunt had kept his cab waiting at the door, and presently we were rolling uptown. Each sitting silently in a corner. Each in a less than festive mood. Each quite obviously at odds with the world.

In short, the evening, so far, was one of those things! Once we were in our seats, however—just in the nick of time—and the curtain had gone up, I forgot all the grievances of the day.

Neal's play, in which she played what she herself called "a high-born hussy," was perhaps not the most outstanding of its popular author, but it was an ideal vehicle for her, and she held her audience from the instant she stepped on the stage.

She even held me. Higher praise there is none, under the circumstances. I became so absorbed in the joys and sorrows, sins and punishments, repentances and backslidings of the entrancing hussy up there on the boards that nothing else seemed real. Not even the murders that had harassed me for almost two weeks.

And I only came back to earth when the curtain went down on the first act and Hunt pushed a way for us through the crowded aisle

to the lobby, and from there out to the street.

The evening was mild, and so the entire audience milled around on the sidewalk during the intermission. Smart, glittering, highstrung and shrill as only a New York first-night audience can be; filling the night with noisy approval of the show and Neal, shouting and beckoning to friends.

Inspector Barry, very good looking in a natty blue suit, had managed to get out ahead of us and was the first of our group to find Hunt and me. Deane and Tomio were next—coming from different directions: Tomio glowing with quiet pride, Deane rather loud in his "professional" approval of Neal.

A little later Claire, very much the great lady in looks and Broadway in speech, presented her escort and voiced a grudging tribute to Neal by telling the world: "The gal's a pain in the neck, but, boy! can she act!" And at the last of all Dick joined our growing circle—alone.

"Where's the blond lovely you've promised me?" he asked in lieu of greeting. "Your friend Brenda's beside me in a yawning hole, the only one in the whole house. Makes me look as though I had the measles or something."

I told him I didn't know or understand why Brenda hadn't shown up and, more puzzled than I cared to admit, turned around to see how Hunt and Inspector Barry were taking the news.

But they had disappeared, and I discovered them only after a lengthy search with my eyes, standing a good ten feet away, deep in a discussion that didn't look as if it concerned Neal's acting.

Inspector Barry was doing most of the talking. I noticed, while Hunt contented himself with an occasional brief remark, or nod.

He looked terribly tired, and even more annoyed than when he'd come for me—as if he wished he were anywhere but at this opening—and he seemed to have a bad headache, judging by the way he kept digging his fingers into the corners of his eyes.

But, no matter how intent they were on their talk, or how cross Hunt looked and acted, I felt they ought to know about Brenda and began pushing my way through to them.

However, the bell rang before I could reach them, and I was drawn into the human mill race streaming back into the theater. And, I'm ashamed to admit, once the curtain was up again I forgot Brenda's absence, even when Hunt sat down beside me with a murmured apology.

The rest of the evening, up to midnight, is registered in my memory as a series of pictures.

The curtain dropping and rising—dropping and rising. The audience cheering and clapping and pushing toward the stage. The ac-

tors bowing and smiling. Now a whole string of them, now a small group, now Neal alone. Mostly Neal alone. Ten, 15, 20 times Neal alone.

The overpowering scent of flowers in a dressing room crammed with them. People laughing and jostling each other and gushing compliments.

Neal, radiantly beautiful, her hair a flame, her skin translucent above the bright green sheath she'd worn in the last act, relishing her triumph. And Tomio's emerald sparkling on her engagement finger—so huge and green no one suspected it of being anything but part of her costume.

Then I was home again, escorted by Dick and Hunt. Just one jump ahead of the mob. We'd scarcely stepped out of the elevator when it began its incessant trips down and up, disgorging more people than I'd thought it could hold each time it stopped on our floor.

I had meant to go straight to Brenda's apartment to find out why she hadn't been at the theater. But I was swamped by my duties as hostess—doubly strenuous because Claire, honest in her dislike of Neal, had firmly refused to attend—and actually forgot Brenda until Inspector Barry brought her back to my mind by asking, "Where's your friend Brenda? Didn't you ask her to your party?"

"Of course I did," I told him defensively. "And I gave her a ticket to the play. But she didn't use it. I think I'd better go see why she didn't, and drag her over here if she's still up."

The inspector said first: "I see," and then: "That's right, you should," and went with me as far as the outer hall, where he stopped near the elevator to watch my approach to Brenda's door.

It gaped the tiniest, most inconspicuous slit. I noticed, as I touched my finger to the bell, and so I dropped my hand again, pushed it open—not quite liking the fact it wasn't closed—and walked through the dark foyer, calling: "Brenda—Brenda?" questioningly.

There was no answer, and the living room I entered was empty! Dark, too, except for one veiled lamp and a shaft of light falling into it from the bedroom side, where the sliding walls stood a little apart in the middle.

My first thought was that Brenda had been too tired to come and was sound asleep, but I discarded it promptly—she couldn't be, with the light blazing in her room. And so I moved toward the bright gap, calling her name again.

By a mere chance my glance dropped to the floor and I stopped, frozen to the spot.

A slim white hand reached around the edge of the movable wall at one side. A hand that held a small, pearl-handled revolver, and lay very still.

(To Be Continued)

CHAPTER THIRTY-NINE

SOMEONE screamed—piercingly. I didn't know until much later that it was I.

Then people were talking all around me.

A horrified oath in Inspector Barry's voice was followed by an excited jumble of questions and answers. "What's wrong?" . . . "Who screamed?" . . . "What's on here?" . . . "A suicide." . . . "There on the floor." . . . "A woman killed herself."

"She didn't. She was murdered," I told him dully. And then, aching with the thought that I should have been able to prevent her murder, I pushed the walls wider apart and knelt down beside the dead Brenda, who was lying face down, both arms flung forward; turned her around and lifted her head into my lap.

Her hair had come loose and fell back in a soft mass. Her dead eyes glanced at me from between half open lids as though she were trying to tell me something. And on the front of her pale gray dinner dress was a big dark stain—

Presently hands reached out and took her from me, laying her back on the floor, with a pillow under her head. Then the same hands pulled me to my feet, and suddenly I was sitting in a chair and heard Hunt tell someone: "Please go back to Miss Tarrant's apartment. This suicide is most unfortunate, but you mustn't let it spoil Miss Tarrant's great evening."

It was, of course, sheer diplomacy, but the mere fact that he dared call Brenda's murder a suicide made me so furious I came out of the fog in which I was groping abruptly.

"Not suicide. Murder!" I corrected him angrily. And, just to make sure he heard me I repeated the word, louder and louder: "Murder—murder—murder!" until the thud of Brenda's front door put a period to my protestations.

The next moment Inspector Barry said kindly: "Steady, Jane, steady!" pressing my shoulder in a kind of warning. And Hunt, his hand on my other shoulder, told me in a harsh whisper: "For Lord's sake, shut up, Jane! Keep your head! You don't know what you're doing!"

I shook their hands off. "I am keeping my head, and I do know what I'm doing—and saying," I assured Hunt loudly. "Brenda was murdered. By the same fiend who killed Margot and Polly."

Hunt said: "Sh! Not so loud!" and then acknowledged under his breath: "Of course she was. But don't yell it from the houseposts!"

And the inspector added, also in a low key: "It isn't always wise to tell all you know, Jane." Adding to Hunt in a normal tone of voice: "Ring headquarters, Berwick, and get the medical examiner. He's all we need—for a suicide. But ask for three or four men to help handle the mob in the front apartment. And while you're at it, get Bywater here from downstairs and—who was on duty in the afternoon and early evening?"

"Mike," I said mechanically.

"Mike O'Brian."

"Okay! Then get O'Brian," the inspector told Hunt. "Get the whole bunch that's detailed to this house."

Hunt didn't answer. But I heard him dial a number—close beside me, by the sound of it. And presently he was talking into the phone.

I didn't care what he said. I was too busy asking the inspector questions with my eyes.

He answered them, after a while of listening to Hunt.

"You want her to go from here to a nice, dignified funeral parlor, don't you?" he asked gently, with a nod toward Brenda's body. "Well, if I call it murder I'll have to let them take her to the morgue."

"Oh, no! Not the morgue!" I gasped out.

"All right, then, help us call it suicide," he said dryly. And Hunt, who had finished his telephone chore, added quietly: "It's the best way, Jane. Please do as the inspector says. Let the murderer think he fooled the police by putting the gun in her hand. It may make him careless and help us catch him."

"You'll never catch him. He's too clever. He—he isn't human!" I prophesied hysterically. "He'll go on killing, and killing, and killing—"

The ringing of the doorbell cut into my outburst. The inspector said: "Go see who it is, Berwick. And for the love of Pete keep that party mob out." A moment later the medical examiner walked in—the same Dr. Rosen who'd officiated at Margot's murder.

A loud buzzing came in with him. "The outer hall is packed. The whole crowd's leaving," Hunt reported.

Inspector Barry said fervently: "Thank heaven!" and, "This way, Doctor. We're calling it suicide for a change." Presently they both knelt beside Brenda, and Hunt slid the partition shut behind them.

I hated him at that moment for the calm efficiency with which he handled the situation. And when he turned back from his task I got up from my chair, crying with grief and anger, and started to accuse myself, and him.

"It's my fault—and yours," I told him miserably. "If you hadn't been late I wouldn't have had the jitters. I'd have run over to see how Brenda was getting along. And maybe I'd have been in time to scare the murderer away. Maybe she'd be alive now and—"

"And maybe you'd be dead, too," Hunt interrupted me brusquely. "You don't seem to get it. Recognizing this man means death! Furthermore, my dear girl, please remember that Brenda committed suicide, will you? Make yourself think it, or you won't be able to put it across. You'll cause an unnecessary scandal, hinder the police, and endanger your own life if you keep on yelling murder."

"All right, I'll call it suicide—in public," I flared up. "But to you and Inspector Barry I won't. And it'll do no good, besides. Honestly, I don't see how you can make your fairy tale stick when everything

points to murder, gun in her hand or no. The open door, for one thing. Or can you explain that?"

"I didn't even know it was open," Hunt told me, plainly surprised.

"Well, it was," I assured him. "And try to make the press believe in suicide with that to chew on! Or—are you going to tell them Brenda's ghost let me in?"

"The press won't hear about it unless you tell 'em—which you won't." Inspector Barry had come back from the bedroom and was standing right behind me with Dr. Rosen, who held the fateful revolver in his handkerchief. "And speaking of the door, I confess it's puzzled me, too."

"Oh, it has?" I broke out excitedly. "You don't remember it was the same after Margot's murder—that Polly found MY door open a slit?"

The inspector looked blank for a second and then said: "Why, yes. Yes, I do. But—"

I didn't let him finish. "But you can't explain it. It doesn't make sense to you," I jeered. "Because none of you would listen to what I said then. None of you even heard me, I think, when I told you that all the hall doors in this house thud and bang, no matter how gently you close them. My aunt tried everything she could think of to stop it, and couldn't. It's something in the construction. And the murderer knew it! That's why he didn't quite close Brenda's door. For fear someone in my apartment might hear the thud and come out, thinking it was Brenda!"

The inspector said slowly: "I see," and then changed the subject temporarily by telling Hunt: "Dr. Rosen is leaving—and—er—I think he'd like a word with you before he goes, about—er—"

I didn't understand the why of all this hesitancy and I'm sure Dr. Rosen didn't either. At any rate, he didn't have the same reluctance to talk right out.

"Oh, it isn't important," he said brightly. "I just wondered how you were bearing up under all this, and if I could do anything for you. After all, your cousin—"

Something made him stop in mid-word. A glance from the inspector, perhaps, or the forced laugh that preceded Hunt's answer: "I'm fine, Doctor, believe it or not! It seems, a good shot of adrenaline is indicated at this stage."

It sounded like double talk. But before I could make a nuisance of myself by asking what it meant, a furious ringing and hammering at the door, and Neal's voice screamed through it: "Open! Open this door at once! Let me in! I want to know what this is all about!"

"Keep her out. Please keep her out!" I begged.

But the inspector paid no attention to me. "Okay. Let her in. Might as well get the row over with," he decided. And the next instant Neal rushed in, wild-eyed and beside herself, but gorgeous looking just the same, in an extremely low-cut yellow gown with green accents into which she had changed at the theater.

(To Be Continued)

Advertisement for Seven-Up featuring a woman holding a glass and the text "Fresh with Seven-Up! YOU LIKE IT, IT LIKES YOU."

For your listening pleasure "The Fresh-Up Show" over Mutual chain 8:30 Wednesday nights. The 7-Up Co. Littleton, N. C.

Advertisement for Aircraft Workers featuring an illustration of a plane and the text "AIRCRAFT WORKERS HERE ARE GOOD JOBS FOR YOU. Good pay, opportunities for advancement by enlisting in U. S. Army Air Forces. Important new enlistment privileges and many other advantages. Family allowances for dependents. 30 days' vacation every year. Retire after 20 years with life income. Great training for a fine future. GET ALL the facts. No obligation. Apply U. S. ARMY RECRUITING STATION."

AT THE POST OFFICE — ROOM No. 10 HENDERSON, N. C. This Ad Sponsored By HENDERSON FURNITURE CO.

Advertisement for Oscar Currin Jeweler featuring a woman's portrait, jewelry items, and the text "Don't Forget Mother, May 12th— Jewelry from Currin's is the Perfect Gift! BEAUTIFUL WATCHES 7-Jewels - - - \$27.50 17-Jewels - - - \$33.50 By Garland. Offer in several styles. CAMOS AND LOCKETS from \$7.38 up PARKER & SHEAFFER FOUNTAIN PENS Parker Pens, from \$3.75 Sheaffer Pens, from \$19.00 Bracelets, \$5.50 up Sterling, Link, Solid and Stretch bracelets. All designs. A lovely gift for Mother. Lapel Pins, \$4.50 up A large selection! So pretty and attractive! Ear Rings, \$1.50 up Silver, Pearls and Gold. COMPACTS, \$4.50 up A Large Selection GARDIAN DIAMONDS \$32.50 up And Many Other Gifts for Mother. OSCAR CURRIN - JEWELER -"

McPHERSON BROTHERS BEVERAGE CO. of Littleton, N. C. and South Hill, Va. Presents— For Your Listening Pleasure MUSIC FOR SUNDAY Over WHNC Henderson, N. C. Sunday Afternoons 2:30 to 3:00. H & B RADIO RAPID REAL RELIABLE RADIO REPAIRING SALES & SERVICE

TAXI CALL 366 LOUGHLIN CITY TAXI. THERE'S ONLY ONE CAROLINA MOTOR CLUB — And Henderson Now Has Its Complete Service. Official License and Title Service. Up-To-Date Travel Information. Nation-wide AAA Affiliation. Unsurpassed Protective and Service Features for Members. LOOK FOR THIS FAMILIAR SIGN AT OUR NEW OFFICE. FOR PLEASANT, PROTECTED MOTORING. JOIN THE CAROLINA MOTOR CLUB.

ONLY 3 MORE DAYS To Bring Baby's Shoes In! We must mail them by May 13 to insure their return by Father's Day. BABY'S First SHOES PRESERVED FOREVER Original BRONZSHOE Solid Metal Process. Father's Day . . . the day to give the finest Dad in the world . . . the finest gift in the world . . . his baby's own shoes beautifully preserved in sparkling bronze, silver, or gold . . . by the famous BRONZ-SHOE Solid Metal Process . . . back after 4 long years. ORDER EARLY. Metal Bookends, pair \$9.95, \$10.95. Portrait Frame (8x10) 7.95. Onyx Desk Set with 14 karat Gold Point Pen 15.00. Onyx Ashtray 12.50. Onyx Paperweight 7.50. Unmounted \$6.00 pr. \$3.50 single. Style 84 Ashtray \$6.95. Copyright 1946, Bronz-Shoe Co. CRADLE Shops Boys to 6 Girls to 12