

# THERE'S ONLY ONE

By SOPHIE KERR

CHAPTER XIV—Continued

Everywhere they went Rachel could not fail to see how well Curt got on with all types and levels of people, how they invariably accepted him and liked him. He could get by any barrier, pass any watchman, however crabbed, and every one—taximen, beggars, waiters, policemen, grand old ladies in limousines, clerks, smart young men strolling out of the Racquet club, youngsters roller skating in the parks, street cleaners—all responded to any personal word from him, often with overwhelming confidence. Rachel decided it was because he looked so interested and always listened while anyone talked to him.

Pink told Rachel she didn't believe a word of the stories she brought back about places, it was all, she insisted, made up by Curt. So now and then they would take Pink with them on their explorings. But usually they went alone.

They had so much to talk about, Rachel and Curt. Little by little Curt told the story of the Midwest city where he had always lived except for his school and university years. Rachel could see the mansard brick house, horse chestnut and sycamore trees with myrtle beneath them in the front yard, big untidy garden at the back, the rooms, high-ceilinged, spacious, filled with the furnishings of earlier generations. His grandfather had lived there, and his father, and the older man had started a newspaper which the son had inherited along with the house and the black walnut tables and chests. But Curt's father had died when Curt was only ten.

He had never told her much about his parents and Rachel did not ask questions, but this mention of his father's death made her wonder about what had gone on in the family after that. They had gone to walk in the park on a Saturday afternoon when he began to tell the story of how his father had started the plan for a park in his home city, but that he had not lived to see it carried out. It made Rachel think of Anne and Harry Vincent.

"What did your mother do—after your father died?" she said.

"My mother carried on. There wasn't anything but the house and the newspaper, so we lived in the house and she ran the paper. Night after night she'd go down there and work and I'd go with her. I studied my lessons in her little office. She'd be checking over the ads or maybe writing something for the editorial page, or phoning for some special social item nobody but she could get, like the news of an engagement, or a list of wedding presents—the people in our town like it when Mrs. Elton herself calls up—or maybe she'd be auditing the books, or talking to the foreman of the pressroom or one of the printers. Our shop's very personal, my mother and I know every man, woman and child who works there and all about them, and they all come in to her when they want anything special. She's the boss and the banker and the adviser and ever-present help in trouble to all of them. Just as I've got to be when I go back and anchor in again."

"What does your mother look like, Curt?" asked Rachel. "Haven't you her picture?"

"She's never had one taken that I know of, not even snapshots. She looks—well, my mother looks like—a nice little quiet homebody who doesn't know a thing outside of a sewing needle and a cookbook. She's plump and her hair's gray and she's wrinkled around the eyes and she wears mostly rather plain dark blue dresses with a white ruffle somewhere and she puts on horn-rimmed glasses when she reads or writes and she giggles—she has a perfectly enchanting giggle—when she's amused. And her voice is rather

low with a flat Midwest twang in it, and she's got tiny little feet that she's very vain of, and she's afraid of mice, but that's the only thing in the world she is afraid of. She'll bawl out a corrupt local politician or a soldering printer like nobody's business. And she knows everything there is to know about running a little city newspaper. Sometimes I think she knows everything there is to know about everything else. She's uncanny, that woman."

"She sounds sweet."

"She isn't sweet. She can be as nippy as an Airedale pup. Everybody comes and tells her their troubles because she can sympathize and understand without being slushy and she can give good advice without getting sore when it isn't followed—which it usually isn't. She's got a cayenne temper. And she's awfully obstinate when she gets set on anything. When I was a kid, after those evenings at the office I'd trot alongside her all the way home after midnight and there



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was always a pitched battle because she wanted me to drink a glass of milk. I hate milk, always have hated it, but she said it was good for me, and I had to drink it."

"Who won?"

"I did for a while because I cheated. I'd go out to the icebox, get the milk and pour it quietly down the sink. Finally she got onto me and there was hell to pay! After that she got the milk herself and watched me until the last drop was gone."

"She must miss you," said Rachel, thinking of Anne.

"Rachel, I've held out on you," said Curt. "I've never told you the real reason I'm taking this year off. Damn it, my mother wants to get married again and it made me so mad I couldn't stand it! It's not that she's old, she's only forty-six and the man's a perfect corker, he's a grand chap, I've known him all my life, he's been in love with her for years, but when she told me about it I was so jealous I acted like a perfect fool. And she said, and she was perfectly right, that if I'd come to depend on her like that it was high time I went off somewhere and got over it, and when I had I should come home again and go to her wedding and take over the paper. She said she was dead tired of working and I'd get married, and she wanted me to, but she didn't mean to be nothing but a mother-in-law on the side lines, she intended to have a home of her own and somebody her own age to live with."

"But, Curt, she sounds wonderful!"

"She is wonderful. But it was just a trifle too sane and sensible for me all at once. I went off in an elegant gloomy rage. Of course I'm completely over it now and I am going back and do exactly what she wants. Because now I want it, too."

"Curt, don't you think the most of us are all wrong about our mothers? We don't think of them as separate human beings, they seem part of us, we feel as if they ought to consider us before they consider themselves at all."

"Oh Lord, yes, the world's made up of mothers grabbing at their children, never wanting to admit they're grown up, and children grabbing at their mothers, denying their own existence outside of their role of motherhood. It's tough, either way."

Rachel thought of Anne and then of Elinor. "It's all twisted either way," she said. Then, slowly, "When you said you were going back—did you mean soon?"

"I can't stay here much longer, you know. It's not right. I've got to get at my real work."

Rachel turned silent with dismay. She could feel the coming loneliness as if it had already begun.

"I suppose," said Curt, "you'll be going over to France to your mother, you spoke about that once a long time ago. I mean, I suppose you think you're going over to France to your mother unless she comes home. Well, I'll tell you something. D'you want to hear it?"

"Yes, of course."

"You're not going to do anything of the sort. Or at least, if I do let you go—no, I don't believe I could do it. I can't have you gallivanting over there with fifty million Frenchmen making a play for you. I'd have to go along to keep them off or I'd go crazy. So you see, Rachel, there's only one thing for us to do and that is get married. What do you think? I'm only asking your opinion as a matter of form, darling. I don't intend to pay the least attention to any argument you may start."

They walked along very quietly for a few steps and then Rachel said: "I'm not going to start an argument, Curt. I want to go with you. There—for heaven's sake—don't shout like that—don't jump—this park's full of people—"

"They ought to be glad to see somebody happy these days," said Curt, and hung his arms around her. "Let 'em look—do 'em good!" He held her and kissed her half a dozen times before he would let her go. "My dear, my darling girl—would you mind if I ran round up and down this path and threw my hat in the air and yelled a couple of Comanche whoops—?"

"War-whoops?" laughed Rachel, pushing her hat back into place.

"Love-and-war whoops! Oh Rachel, you are the most beautiful and darling creature—listen, do you love me—honest and true?"

"I must love you, I felt so lost and forlorn when you said you were going away."

"That's what I've been working for, to make myself indispensable, essential, necessary, sine qua non and so forth and so forth. Darling, to think I've succeeded! You mean it, don't you? No fooling, you're going to marry me?"

"No fooling, I certainly am."

"Very well, when? Couldn't we—"

He looked at his watch—"no, it's too late to go to City hall today. How about tomorrow morning? Then we'd take an airplane and along about teatime we could walk in on my mother and say: 'Here we are. Now go your wanton way, we'll take over the house and the paper and—'"

"Nothing doing with this mad rush stuff. You're forgetting about my mother. I wouldn't be married without her, I couldn't, Curt."

"No, I suppose not." He drooped pathetically.

"And I ought to finish up a lot more work for you. And I certainly want some new clothes."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

## WHAT'S WHAT ABOUT SOCIAL SECURITY

Question: What are the conditions upon which lump-sum payments of old-age insurance are made? Who gets that money?

Answer: There are two types of lump-sum payments that can be made any time after January 1, 1937. One is a payment which an eligible worker may receive after he reaches the age of 65. These claimants are men and women who have earned wages in a factory, shop, mill, mine, store, hotel, filling station, or some other line of industry or business, included under the law, and who have attained the age of 65 since January 1, 1937.

The Federal Government, under old-age insurance provisions of the Social Security Act, is also paying benefits to relatives (or estates) of workers who have died and whose wage-earnings since 1936 in employment, as mentioned above, entitled them to benefits.

Question: Is it necessary for an employee who has reached the age of 65 to quit work in order to get a lump-sum payment of old-age insurance?

Answer: No. It is not necessary to retire from work at the age of 65, in order to receive a lump-sum payment under the old-age insurance program of the Social Security Act. Lump-sum benefits are paid to workers who reach the age of 65, and who have worked some time since 1936, in an employment covered by the old-age insurance provisions of the Social Security Act.

Question: If a young person who had been employed in a job that is covered by the law should die could the family collect old-age insurance benefits on that account?

Answer: The fact that the deceased worker was young has nothing whatever to do with the claim for his old-age insurance benefits. Whether he was 16 or 60 makes no difference. During the time that he was employed in a job covered under the Social Security Act, benefits were accruing to his account; and his estate is entitled to that money. If, for instance, his record shows that the youth had received \$900 in wages or salary, his relatives should receive death payment amounting to 3 1/2 percent of \$900 which is \$31.50.

## N. C. Farmers Need More Certified Seed

The production of certified seed is one of the steps essential to improving the quality and yields of North Carolina crops.

Last year, North Carolina farmers produced more certified corn, cotton, tobacco, and watermelon seed than ever before, but this amount was still far short of being enough to supply the State's needs.

Certified seed are produced by grower members of the N. C. Crop Improvement Association, said A. D. Stuart, extension seed specialist at State College who is working with the association.

Growers who wish to grow seed that can be certified as pure, of a good variety, and free from noxious weeds and diseases may join the association and secure approved seed from the N. C. Agricultural Experiment Station at State College or from other credited breeders.

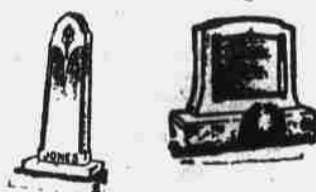
Mrs. Grover Brinkley and family were among the guests in the home of Mr. and Mrs. N. E. Jordan on Sunday.

Miss Addie Jordan spent the week-end with Miss Avis Ward, near Sign Pine.

Mrs. Herbert Lane, Mrs. Vernon Jordan and children were in Edenton shopping Saturday evening.

A number of Mrs. Roy Parks' friends have visited her at Lake View Hospital this week.

Your cemetery lot should reflect your affection for those who have departed... how does it appear?



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Adults.....40c

## CROSS ROADS

Herbert Hollowell, Jr., from Green Hall, spent Sunday with Carysle Hollowell.

Mr. and Mrs. Raleigh Hobbs and children, of Hobbsville; Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Hollowell and daughter, and Mrs. Ernest Privott and son visited Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Hollowell Sunday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Hollowell and son visited Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Leary, Sr., in Rocky Hook, Sunday evening.

Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Hollowell and son visited Mr. and Mrs. Johnnie Aabell Friday evening.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred White and children, and Mr. and Mrs. Gussie Perry and child, of Gates County, visited Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Jordan, Sr., Sunday afternoon.

Miss Alma Winslow, of the Chicod School faculty, spent the week-end with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Winslow.

Eugene Perry spent the week-end with his parents at Colerain.

Mrs. Lena Aabell and family spent Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey Evans.

I. D. Perry and A. T. Belch, of Colerain, visited Mr. and Mrs. E. N. Elliott on Sunday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. E. H. Bivins and a friend from Washington, spent the week-end with Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey

## RYLAND

Mr. and Mrs. Tommie King and children of Gates County, spent Sunday with Mrs. King's sister, Mrs. W. W. Henigar, and Mr. Henigar.

Mrs. H. N. Ward is spending the week in Edenton with her son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Ward.

Mrs. Herbert Lane has returned

from Suffolk, Va., where she has been at the bedside of her sister-in-law, Mrs. Roy Parks.

Mrs. Harriett Parks, Miss Addie Jordan, Mr. and Mrs. Carson Davis spent Wednesday in the R. S. Ward home.

Mrs. Louise Ward's children and grandchildren visited her Sunday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. Jim Ward, Mr. and

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