

Murder at Bridge

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by ANNE AUSTIN
author of
"THE BLACK PIGEON"
"THE AVENGING PARROT"
"MURDER BACKSTAIRS"

BAND OF SHEEP
SHIPPED SOUTH

Today In Klamath's Theatres

AT THE PELICAN

Includes Meryl Mercer, Nanci Price, Claude King, William V. Monk, Herbert Clark and David Scott.

AT THE PINE TREE

Primarily a love story with an unusual background, that of convict life, First National's "Numbered Men" at the Pine Tree theatre, proves a stick of dramatic dynamite when, through comedy and pathos, it comes to a really powerful climax.

Conrad Nagel, Bernice Claire and Raymond Hackett are featured, Nagel getting a very unusual part that is powerful, and yet has no love element. In the end he makes a tremendous sacrifice for the youngsters. That's high drama.

A stirring and realistic prison break and riot is packed with thrills. That's melodrama—and high drama, too.

Yet the dynamite hasn't been described to you yet. It is largely concentrated in the person of Ralph Ince, the heavy of the piece. Ince does some remarkable acting and dominates many scenes.

"Numbered Men" presented a complicated problem for the director because of its many elements of appeal. The entire background is one of convicts, and their lives, although not all of it is inside prison walls. Convict camps, road gangs and a ranch house where convicts call for food and where some of the highest drama of the picture takes place, are included in the varied locales.

The love story is vitally appealing and sweet, with Miss Claire and Hackett making the best of the excellent opportunities.

Nagel's characterization was complex, George Cooper and other excellent comedians were used to advantage and Tully Marshall, Ivan Linow and other cast members appear in both comedy and pathos.

As a result, Le Roy was divided between human interest, dramatic interest, interest in his striking prison backgrounds, his riot and jail break, and the love element of "Numbered Men." His work in weaving these together and deriving full value from them is outstanding.

Miss Claire deserves special mention. "Numbered Men" is her fourth motion picture, and the little girl who became "the young and grand opera prima donna" and a favorite of the musical comedy stage proves herself an excellent dramatic film actress. She does not slug in "Numbered Men," a fact that shows how good the producers thought she was to give her this big part.

To outline the story would be to spoil it, and give away some of its punches, for throughout its progress surprise is one of the most important elements of its entertainment value. Just a word to the wise, then: "You will be highly entertained by "Numbered Men" and it will be a long time before you forget this picture after you have seen it. It's a "different" movie in every respect.

At 15 he is disappointed in the world; at 25 he yearns to reform it; at 40 he despairs of it; at 60 he has learned to feel sorry for it.

No Substitute For True Love

In like manner, don't accept substitutes for Carter's Little Liver Pills. There is only one genuine Carter's Little Liver Pills that create free flow of bile and make you feel wonderful. Take Carter's for constipation and torpid liver. Ask for Carter's Little Liver Pills by name. Red bottles. Resent substitutes. Take Carter's—Adv.

BEGIN HERE TODAY
When "Bonnie" Dundee, former member of Hamilton's homicide squad, now attached to the district attorney's office, intrudes on Penny Crain, district attorney's secretary, he has no idea that he will remember later with keen interest everything she talks about. Penny informs him that she is going to the Saturday bridge-lunch of the Forsythe Alumnae Bridge club, which is being given by an honorary member, Juanita Selim.

Dundee learns from Penny the story of her father's unfortunate attempt to start a subdivision in Primrose Meadows addition, his failure, and subsequent flight. The house he had built is now rented by Nita from Judge Marshall. Dundee drives Penny out to the lunchroom, curious to see the "lovely Nita." When he meets her, she flirtatiously asks him for cocktails after bridge, but is frightened on hearing he is a detective. Dundee is interrupted in his work late that afternoon at the office by Penny, on the phone, who informs him that Nita Selim has been murdered at bridge.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY CHAPTER II.

As Special Investigator Dundee drove through the city of Hamilton at a speed of 60 miles an hour his way being cleared by traffic policemen warned by the shrill official siren which served him as a horn, he had little time to think connectedly of the fact that Nita Selim had been murdered during a bridge game in her rented home in Primrose Meadows.

Even after the broad streaks of Sheridan road stretched before him he could do little more than try to realize the shock which had numbed him. . . . "Lovely Nita," as the society editor of the Morning News had called her, was—dead! How, why, he did not know. He had asked no details of Penny Crain. . . . Funny, thought little Penny!

"Judge Marshall has telephoned police headquarters," she had told him breathlessly over the telephone, "but I made him let me call you as soon as he had hung up. I wanted our office to be in on this right from the first."

Beautiful, seductive Nita Selim, almost cuddling under his arm, within three minutes of meeting him—dead! A vision of her black eyes, so wide and luminous and wild as they had looked sideways and upward to his, pleading for him to join her after-bridge cocktail party nearly made him crash into a lumbering furniture van. Those eyes were luminous no longer, would never again snap the padlock of slave chains upon any man—as Penny had expressed it. . . . Dead! And she had been so warmly alive, even as she had retreated from him at his mention of the fact that he was attached to the office of the district attorney as a special investigator.

What had she feared that? Was her death a payment for some recent or long-standing crime? Or was she simply withdrawing from the contamination of a "flatfoot"? . . . No! She had been afraid—horribly afraid of some ulterior purpose behind his innocent courtesy in driving Penelope Crain to Broadway Inn. Well, speculation now was idle. He speeded again, but was soon forced to stop and ask his way to Primrose Meadows. The vague directions of a farmer's overalled son lost him nearly eight precious minutes, during which his friend, Captain Strawn, of the homicide squad, might be bungling things rather badly. But at last he found the ornate pillars spanned by the painted legend, "Primrose Meadows," and drove through them into what soon became a rutted lane. Almost a quarter of a mile from the entrance he found the isolated house, unmistakable because of the lineup of private cars parked before the short stretch of paved sidewalk, and the added presence of grim-looking police cars and motorcycles.

So Captain Strawn was out in full force! Dundee turned his own car into the driveway leading from the street along the right side of the house toward the two-car garage in the rear. Ahead of his roadster were two other cars, and a glance toward the open garage showed that a small coupe was housed there.

As he was descending, Captain Strawn's voice hailed him from an open window of the room nearest the garage.
"Hello, Bonnie! Been expecting you. . . . Damndest business you ever saw. . . . There's a doc from this room out on the porch. Hop up and come on in."

Dundee obeyed. In driving in he had noted that a wide porch, upheld by round white pillars, stretched across the front of the gabled brick house and extended half way along its right side, past a room which was obviously a solarium, with its continuous windows, gay awnings, and—visible through the glittering panes—orange-and-tan wicker furniture. It was easy to swing himself up to the floor of the porch. Strawn flung open the door which led into the back room, remarking with a grin:
"Don't be afraid I'm gumming up any fingerprints. Carraway has already been over the room. . . . The Selim woman's bedroom," he explained. "The room she was killed in."



"Funny thing, too," Strawn commented. "Nobody heard a shot."

nose, Bonnie Dundee advanced into the room. Although Mrs. Selim had taken the house furnished, it was obvious that this big bedroom of hers was not exactly as the Crain family had left it. A little too pretty, a little too aggressively feminine, with its chaise longue heaped with silk and lace pillows, its superfluity of big and little lamps, its bed draped with golden-yellow tulle, its dressing table—

But he could not let critical eyes linger on the tripple-mirror vanity dresser. For on the bench before it sat a tiny figure the head bowed so low upon the lace and gold silk covered top that some of the black curls had fallen into a large open bowl of powder. She was no longer wearing the short brown silk coat whose open front had given him a glimpse of pale yellow chiffon.

He saw the dress now, a low-cut, sleeveless, fluffy affair, but he really had eyes only for the brownish red hole on the left side of the back of the bodice, about halfway between shoulder and waist—a waist so small he could have spanned it with his two hands, including its band of fuchsia velvet ribbon. There also had been a bow of fuchsia velvet ribbon on the lace and straw hat she had swung so charmingly less than five hours ago. . . .

"Shot through the heart, I guess," Strawn commented. "It took a good marksman to find her heart, shooting her through the back. . . . Funny thing, too. Nobody heard a shot—leastwise none of that crowd penned up in the living room will admit they did. They'll all hang together, and lie like snot to keep us from finding out anything that might point to one of their precious bunch. But if a gun with a Maxim silencer was used, as it must have been if that whole crew isn't lying, the gunman musta been good, because you can't sight with a Maxim screwed onto a rod, you know."

"Have your men found the gun?" Dundee asked.
"Of course not, or I'd know whether it had a Maxim on it or not," Strawn retorted. "My theory is," he added impressively, "that somebody with a grudge against this little dame hired a gunman to hang around till he

got her dead to rights, then—plop!—and he initiated the soft thudding sound made by the discharge of a bullet from a gun equipped with a silencer.

"Doesn't it seem rather strange that a professional gunman should have chosen such a time—with men arriving in cars, and the house full of women who might wander into this room at any minute—to bump off his victim?" Dundee asked.

"Well, there ain't no other explanation," Captain Strawn contended, flushing. "Outside of the fact that my men have gone over the whole house and grounds without finding the gun. I've got other evidence it was an outside job. . . . Look!"

Dundee followed the chief of the homicide squad to one of the two windows that looked out upon the driveway. Both were open, since the May day was exceptionally warm, even for the Middle West. The window from which he obediently leaned was almost directly in line with the vanity dressing table across the room.

"Look! See how them vines have been torn," Strawn directed, pointing to a rambling rose which hugged the outside frame of the window. "And look hard enough at the flower bed down below and you'll see big footprints. . . . Of course, we've measured them and Cain, as you see, is guarding them till my men comes to make plaster casts of them. . . . Yes, sir; he hoisted himself up to the window ledge, aimed as best he could, then slipped down and beat it across the meadow."

"Then," Dundee began slowly, "I wonder why Mrs. Selim didn't see that figure crouched in the window, since she must have been powdering her face and looking into the middle of the three mirrors—the one which reflects this very window?"

"How do you know she was powdering her face, not looking for something in a drawer?" Strawn demanded, truculently.

"For three reasons," Dundee

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roasting HILLS

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STOP DREDGING FOR A FEW DAYS

PAULINE BURNETT
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