The Bree Bress Short Story

The Valentine Party Dress

MARGARET E. BANGSTER

shimmer of bright satin. At nineteen twenty dollars, twenty beautiful, whole dollars and eighty-five cents the sating dollars! as a sunget cloud, "I know it would be The twenty- dollars had evaporated just know it would! Pink, any shade of of the sun! pink, has always been my best color."

The dress seemed, at the moment, to dress in a shop window must have known

big price for a party frock!

five cents was just as inaccessible as party. nine hundred dollars and eighty-five cents would have been. It was an impossible sum, especially at this time.

This had been, in the first place, such an unusually hard week. Mother had suffered one of her sick spells and the medicine. Next Theodore's shoes had | 1 k - She had to kick at something chosen this week to break through at just then. It was that chance kick that the toes. They had broken through so changed the whole course of the day completely that there was not even the that drew her up short to attention alightest use of taking them to a cobbler she had kicked more than a stone. She for repairs! The shoes and the medi- had kicked a loose piece of fluttering cines had put such a dent in her already green paper that lay close beside the alim purse that a new dress was out stone. With a flerce ache in her eyes. of the question, even though Valerie with an agonized question in her heart, had been dreaming of one. Almost Valerie stooped to pick up that piece of counting on a new dress, in fact! It paper. After all, it might be only was late winter-Valentine Day-and her soap wrapper! only party dress was the organdle one that was left over, as a legacy from the scarcely stoop; her fingers were tremlong past summer, the organdic one that bling so that she could hardly pick up

a Valentine party that very night. It saying a wild little prayer of thankswas an important party the knew, be- giving. The green paper was a twentycause Roger had been so anxious over dollar bill, crumbled and dirty! the matter of her acceptance! She had might have been-tying there, on the agreed to go, of course, but she had not sidewalk in front of the shop window known at the time of the invitation, for hours. It might have been stepped

to crave nice clothes and to so seldom, friendly, guiding Hand. be able to own them. Valerie, at twenty, was the sole support of a widowed herself, "can't possibly be, identified mother and a little brother. The mere Nobody will come looking for it. ever. matter of rent and food was soul-tearing Ith not like money in a purse; it's just clothes. It was not that Valerie minded drop twenty dollars so carelessly must wearing shabby clothes usually; that is, have plenty of other money. Whyshe had not minded until she met Roger she had whirled toward the window Atherton. Valerie had never gone out again, "whys it, just the right amount!" very much until he came into her life. She had lived so quietly that she had the pink dress; and the pink dress was not needed festive gowns. It was only not laughing any more. It was beckonafter meeting Roger, only when he began ing! to be something of a habit with her. that she started to crave the little luxurles that so enhance a girl's prettiness. rather wildly, to the person who stood Roger, you see, was used to luxurious next to her. The person was a woman money. His luncheon invitations did not mean just hit or miss cafeteria meals. When Valerie was taken out to dine, she was always taken to a smart hotel. When Roger took her to a party, it was a real party ut which people wore beau-

was only a very young lawyer, a strug- what seemed to be a fragment of paper. gling one; he laughingly called himself. See-" the woman's hand was pointing He had an income bowever, and that wrhat's the man-" made all the difference in the world. Even though he might be struggling, that need not cut into his pleasures!

Valerie knew, without being told in so many words, that Roger was interested cloth. She ran after that figure, pushin her, interested in more than a casual ing her way through the crowd. way. It was his interest that made the matter of the proper clothes at the time seem very important, indeed. A im her hand she extended the green young man, she told herself, likes to have bill. the admiring eyes of other young men upon the girl whom he escorts. does not like to have the young waman ejaculated. . "What an honest child i of his choice seem shabby!

to the reflected glory of Roger's income. It had meant much newing at night after she had returned from a hard day at the office. She had always managed very well, however, by refusing his larger invitations. She had always muniaged, that is, until this especial time. This one she had not quite been able to handle. Roger had asked her to the party without her own volition, then, she turnwhole month ahead of time, so fur shead that she could not make a logical way. "It's mine! Roger will-" her

wather and mother will be there. In they'll think I'm pretty." fact." he had laughed, "the party is being given for them. They'll just be in town for a few days"-his family lived tn a far-away city-"and they won't be see," his voice had grown deadly serieus. "I've spoken to them about you."

That was all, but it, was enough to set Valerie's pulses nuttering to make ous, gay, and brilliant, that store, Rapid

the was hollow-eyed with the effort of floor on which one could have

HE dress looked back at her from, her thrift. Her thrift, however, had carthe window. It was almost ried its own reward. At the end of two brazenly beautiful, with its weeks she had managed to put away

may have been synthetic, who knows? Then had come her mother's illness To Valerle Sutherland it was as lovely and her little brother's broken shoes becoming," "she told herself sadly. "I dew evaporates under the scorching heat of some strange exotic flower. "It's one

. Standing in front of the shop window be allyo alive and laughing. Even a looking at the pin's glimmer of satin beyond the glass of the showcase that Valerie was speaking the truth | Valerie despised even the thought of that when she said that pink was her color! organdie drais! She had made it her-Valerie; you see, was one of those alim, self, ruffle on ruffle. It was quaint, thrown-eyed, brown-haired gir's who are Dicturesque and sweet, she admitted that; but it was not a real party dress "After all,' the dress' seemed to be No matter what you did to it, no matter saying, "ninefeen-eighty-five isn't such a how skillfully you pressed it, it was just Valerie had known at the beginning, was no help for it! No matter how she however, nineteen dollars and eighty-! felt she would have to wear it to the

> With a sigh, with her hands tightly clenched in her jacket pockets. Valerie turned sharply away from the window. She had to wink to keep back the tears that were rising in her brown eyes. Savagely she kicked at a little stone

doctor had ordered unusually expensive that lay in front of her on the alde-

She was shaking so that she could would just barely stand another wash- the green fragment, so that she could scarcely smooth out the rumpled folds. She needed a lovely frock to wear to! All at once, then, her whole soul was

that she would have to go in organdic. on by hundreds of feet, by the look of it, but Valerie felt that it had that It is tragic to be young and pretty, moment been placed in her path by a

"Money found on the street," she told some days, let alone the business of new anybody's money. The person who would Nineteen-eighty-five read the sign on

Despite 4th beckoning, her conscience was bothering Valerie. She turned "I-" Valerie spoke with a rush to the

woman, "I-Y just picked up a bill. might have been dropped hours ago Or-only a minute ago. Did you happen to notice-" she broke off, faltering The woman apoke. "Just as you were standing there looking in the window. Roger was new in his profession. He she said, "a man went by. He dropped

> Valerie did not pause. The woman's pointing finger; had shown her, almos half a block distant, a portly, elderly figure dressed in immaculate broad

"Oh sir," she gasped, as she came up to the mun's side, "did you drop this?"

The elderly gentleman was regarding her benevolently. "Bless my soull" he k. Yes," he laughed, "I did drop it. Valerie had been put to it to live up hoped somebody who could use it would pick it up. It's an old-" his laughter grew, "custom of mine . Finders is keepers." Still chuckling, he turned sharply-away and stepped into a waiting shiny limolsine. In a moment he was whirled out of Valerie's sight-and life.

For a moment the girl stood gasping. It was like a fulry tule. Almos ed und was running back to the door cheeks flushed hotly at the word, "love "Ye had said, "You must come! My me in it. His parents-I wonder if

> Porgotten were the team that had glimmered in her eyes. Porgotten was the apprehension, her fear of shabblness. Forgotten was everything except the bill that she held tightly in her hand, and the dress that fluttered in a

rosy mist before her eyes. She entered the store. It was luxuri ly past the glove counter she went, past All through that month Valerie had the stocking counter and the one tha planned for the party. Bhe had done showed the slik under wour. At last without luncheon, without bus fare, with- she was going past the perfume counte out even such minor matters as tele- that stood in front of the elevator, the phone calls. She had economized until plevator that would which her to the

and glamor in the shape of rosy satin. Past the perfume counter she sped. Just as she was pessing, she heard a crash and turned sharply to see a thin, white-

faced little cash girl wringing her hands above the wreck of a cut-glass bottle that lay on the floor of the aisle. "Oh, my landul" the little cash girl was sobbing hysterically. "Oh, what'll

I do? I broke it. . . . And I can never make up for it!"

you couldn't help doing." The little, cash girl, however, was wringing her hands, while all about her in a wave, rose the sharply sweet scent of the most expensive numbers," she sobbed. "It costs more than two weeks' salary. To-day's pay day and it'll mean that. I won't have any money to take home, and there ain't hardly a thing

Joy had burst charply, as sharply as the with screen to prevent the entrance of cut-glass perfume bottle had burst. There any insects and the other was left enwas not time to ask the cash girl for threly open. At the end of the season the details of the accident. There was the enclosed patch yielded five shrivnot even time to say a word of com- eled seeds as compared to the 50,000 fort, for a tightly marcelled woman in a black taffeta gown was bearing down

threateningly upon the small culprit. In her wake came a tall, serious man. "It's the buyer," gasped the cash girl, and turned if possible, whiter than ever. "Oh, God!" she sobbed, and her words were not profane, either.

upon them. A little crowd had gather- States. ed, swiftly, a curious little crowd of shoppers. The man, who was evidently a floor manager, nervously fingered the lapel of his cost.

The woman in taffeta spoke, and her voice was as still as her marcel. guess I don't have to tell you," she said

cash girl was a stranger. Somehow it was alive at the time of his inaugural was as though "comething inside of her and so was Mrs Susanna Adams, moththere was hardly anything to eat in the James Polk.

"You mustn't blame her." she said swiftly to the taffeta-gowned buyer: "It' wasn't her fault. I might have knocked against it when I was passing. Of course," her brown eyes held the gaze of the angry woman, "I'll make good. How much was the perfume?""

. The floor manager, still fingering the crowd of shoppers began to evaporate. The little cash girl, with eyes as bewildered and incredulous as the even lost dog who has found a friend staring at Valerie. The perfume buver was shrugging as she stooped above the broken bottle. "It ki one of our finest perfumes," she sald whortly to Valerle. "The cost of it is just twenty dollars."

Mechanically Valerie unchasped the tightened fingers of her hand. In that hand lay the crumpled twenty-dollar she was a kind, pleasant woman, her bill. Mechanically she handed the bill to the buyer. "I'd like a receipt," who the stack of the court and earned her said aloud. In her heart she said, "After all, it wasn't my money. It was just and means "without constraint." sort of loaned to me."

Somehow, as she walked back down the aisles of the store, with the empty receipt as tightly clutched as the mone had been, she found that she was laughing, laughing aloud. It did not sound like her own voice that was doing the laughing, either. It was only as she went past the window, in which the pink satin dress still flaunted by arroyant price tag, that her laughter turned

After the supper dishes had criand had been comfortably settled in bed, after Theodore, the little brother, had finished his home work and listened to his bedtime story, Roger arrived He was very grand in his dinner jacket very immaculate and very successful

looking. As the went into the tiny living room to meet him. Valerie was very consolous of the fact that she did not look either grand or successful. She was immaculate enough, for since she had come home from the office she had washed and pressed the white organdle dress, and cleaned her white summer shoes. and had shampooed her hair. For all that, she was aware of the fact that the upotless shoes were just summer shoes masqueruding, "and "that "there" badly worn places under some of the organdic ruffles. - the wanted to cry out to Roger: "Oh, let me stay home, please Don't insist on my going to the party don't want to meet your father and

mother hi this dowdy dress." She wanted to burst into swift, hysterical tears. All thoughts of tears Weekly. vanished, however, after she met the look in Roger's eyes.

"Say, but you're lovely," said Roger tes he stared at her. "I never saw you

Valerie was flushing. The flush deepned until it reached all the way her flurry hair as she heard Roger'reseating himself. "Why." he was saying, "I never in all my life saw anyone look so so just right. Do you know," he laughed boykhly. "I almost called you up to-day at your onice, to ask you wear that especial dress, too. I've al

ways been craxy about it. It must be

Busy Bees Gather Pollen,

. Sip Sweets at Same Time Among pature's many unique ways of doing different things is her method . f . feeting the pollimation of different plants. Some plants, it is true, carry out this process without any outside ald whatever, others use the winds as their agent, while still others are completely powerless to help themselves even with the aid of the wind. Prob frightened gray onca. "Won't they our being aware of it. Having omitunderstand," said Valerie, then, "that I ted from the structure of this plant was an accident? They'll surely not any means by which it can cross polblame you for doing something that limite its owlf blicking anture provides a faithful agent. Most of such work is chriled on by the bee. The blooms, having a substance which the bee desires for food, attract the bee to them. In the course of getting his food he performs the required service for the plant, Coming in contact with the stantens of one bloom small grains of pollen adhere to his body and are then carried to other blooms.

In tests to determine what amount to eat in the house. Maybe I'll lose my of this work was done-by insects two equal-sized patches of white clover In just a second the bubble of Valerie's were chosen. One was surrounded

Some Presidents Served

While Parents Survived Four fathers and eight mothers had the singular pleasure of seeing their The woman in taffeta had swept down . sons serve as Presidents of the United

> Jesse Grant served us postmaster under his son. U. S. Grant, and his mother lived for fourteen years after his Presidency and died two years be-

his outh of office by his father, John Coolidge. 'Zachary Taylor's father was to the trembling cash girl, "what this living when he went to the White House, us was John Quincy Adams' Valerie did not know just what father, the former President, John prompted her to speak. After all, the Adams. George Washington's mother spoke. - Suddenly even the pink-dress er of John Adams. Mrs. Nelly Madibeen in her voice when the girl had said und Mrs. Jane Polk outlived her son.

and William Mckinley attended the Mrs. James Roosevelt on March 4

Sans souch is from the French and army from camp to camp. Fame and fortune came the couple's way and

Founding the Epworth League The Epworth league was founded in Cleveland, Ohio, May 15, 1889, by a group of five societies of Methodist young people. No particular individual seems especially identified with the founding. The league takes its name for Epworth parish in England, where John Wesley, founder of Methodism, was born. It has grown rapidly, is represented in both the Methodist

Part of Roman Empire. The countries now known as Great Britain, Belgium, Netherlands, France, Austria, Hungary, Switzerland, Lux-Albania, Czechoglovakia, Yugoslavia, Mongco, Italy, Bulgarla, Greece, Turkey, Syria, Mesopotamia, Palestine. legypt, the borderlands of northern cluded in the Roman empire at the height of its power.

Homeslekness- somotimes to intense that the sufferer not only loses all desire to eat and sleep but develops a melancholla which leads to insanity and death. In fact, army medical officers recognize it, in extreme eases, as a disability which warrants a furlough, or even a discharge, in order to serve a soldier's life.-Collier's

Number Thirteen

Various theories of the origin of the superstition surrounding the number thirteen are advanced, but brobably the one most widely circulated is that prose from the fact that thirteen ith Christ, just before the betrava

News! SALANAT

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"You can't stop stoking a steam engine" said Wrigley

Interviewed, and asked to what he attributed his phenomenal success, the late Mr. Wrigley, of chewing gum fame, replied "To the consistent advertising of a good product."

"But," asked the reporter, "having captured practically the entire market, why continue to spend vast sums annually on advertising?"

Wrigley's reply was illuminating.

"Once having raised steam in an engine," he stated, "it requires continuous stoking to keep it up. Advertising stokes up business and keeps it running on a full head of steam."

This applies to your business, too. Don't make a secret of your product. Tell people all about it. Tell them what it does. Tell them its advantages. Tell them where to get it. Tell them through the press and keep on telling them.

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