

BARNETTE. Ah, you have reservations.

MEG. (*Relieved.*) Reservations. Yes, I have—reservations.

BARNETTE. Well, possibly it would help you to know that I graduated first in my class from Ole Miss Law School. I also spent three different summers taking advanced courses in criminal law at Harvard Law School. I made As in all the given courses. I was fascinated!

MEG. I'm sure.

BARNETTE. And even now, I've just completed one year working with Jackson's top criminal law firm, Manchester and Wayne. I was invaluable to them. Indispensable. They offered to double my percentage, if I'd stay on; but I refused. I wanted to return to Hazlehurst and open my own office. The reason being, and this is a key point, that I have a personal vendetta to settle with one Zackery F. Botrelle.

MEG. A personal vendetta?

BARNETTE. Yes, ma'am. You are correct. Indeed, I do.

MEG. Hmmm. A personal vendetta... I think I like that. So you have some sort of a personal vendetta to settle with Zackery?

BARNETTE. Precisely. Just between the two of us, I not only intend to keep that sorry S.O.B. from ever being reelected to the state senate by exposing his shady, criminal dealings; but I also intend to decimate his personal credibility by exposing him as a bully, a brute, and a red-neck thug!

MEG. Well; I can see that you're—fanatical about this.

BARNETTE. Yes; I am. I'm sorry, if I seem outspoken. But, for some reason, I feel I can talk to you...those songs you sang. Excuse me; I feel like a jackass.

MEG. It's all right. Relax. Relax, Barnette. Let me think this out a minute.

*She takes out a cigarette. He lights it for her.*

Now just exactly how do you intend to get Babe off? You know, keep her out of jail.

BARNETTE. It seems to me that we can get her off with a plea of self-defense, or possibly we could go with innocent by reason of temporary insanity. But basically, I intend to prove that Zackery Botrelle brutalized and tormented this poor woman to such an extent that she had no recourse but to defend herself in the only way she knew how!

MEG. I like that!

BARNETTE. Then, of course, I'm hoping this will break the ice and we'll be able to go on to prove that the man's a total criminal, as well as an abusive bully and contemptible slob!

MEG. That sounds good! To me that sounds very good!

BARNETTE. It's just our basic game plan.

MEG. But, now, how are you going to prove all this about Babe being brutalized? We don't want anyone perjured. I mean to commit perjury.

BARNETTE. Perjury? According to my sources, there'll be no need for perjury.

MEG. You mean it's the truth?

BARNETTE. This is a small town, Miss Magrath. The word gets out.