

SISTERS

By KATHLEEN NORRIS

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HOME AGAIN.

Synopsis—Doctor Strickland, retired, is living in Mill Valley, near San Francisco. His family consists of his daughters, Alix, 21, and Cherry, 18, and Anne, his niece, 24. Their closest friend is Peter Joyce, a lovable sort of recluse. Martin Lloyd, a visiting mining engineer, wins Cherry, marries her and carries her off to El Nido, a mine town. Peter realizes that he loves Cherry. Justin Little wooed Anne.

CHAPTER V—Continued.

"I had no idea of all this!" the doctor confessed, amazed. "I've seen the young man—noticed him about. Well—well—well! Anne, too."

In June came the blissful hour in which Anne, all blushes and smiles, could come to her uncle with a dutiful message from the respectfully adoring Justin. Their friendship, said Anne, had ripened into something deeper.

"Justin wants to have a frank talk with you, uncle," Anne said, "and of course I'm not to go until you are sure you can spare me and unless you feel that you can trust him utterly!"

Anne's engagement cups were ranged on the table where Cherry's had stood, and where Cherry had talked of a coffee-colored rajah silk Anne discussed the merits of a "smart but handsome blue tailormade."

The wedding was to be in September not quite a year after Cherry's wedding. Alix wrote her sister pages about it, always ending with the emphatic declaration that Cherry must come down for the wedding.

Cherry was homesick. She dreamed continually of the cool, high valley, the scented aisles of the deep forest, the mountain rearing its rough summit to the pale blue of summer skies.

June passed; July passed; it was hot at the "Emmy Younger." August came in on a furnace breath; Cherry felt headachy, languid and half sick all the time. Martin had said that he could not possibly get away, even for the week of Anne's wedding, but Cherry began to wonder if he would let her go alone.

"If he doesn't, I shall be sick!" she fretted to herself, in a certain burning noontime, toward the middle of August. Martin, who had been playing poker the night before, was sleeping late this morning. Coming home at three o'clock dazed with close air and cigar smoke, he had awakened his wife to tell her that he would be "dead" in the morning, and Cherry had accordingly crept about her dressing noiselessly, had darkened the bedroom and eaten her own breakfast without the clatter of a dish. Now she was sitting by the window, panting in the noon heat. She was thinking, as it chanced, of the big forest at home and of a certain day—just one of their happy days!—only a year ago, when she had lain for a dreamy hour on the soft forest floor, staring up idly through the laced fanlike branches, and she thought of her father, with his mild voice and ready smile; and some emotion, almost like fear, came over her. For the first time she asked herself, in honest bewilderment, why she had married.

The heat deepened and strengthened and increased as the burning day wore on. Martin waked up, hot and headachy, and having further distressed himself with strong coffee and eggs, departed into the dusty, motionless furnace out-of-doors. The far brown hills shimmered and swam, the "Emmy Younger" looked its barest, its ugliest, its least attractive self.

There was a shadow in the doorway; she looked up surprised. For a minute the tall figure in striped linen and the smiling face under the flowery hat seemed those of a stranger. Then Cherry cried out and laughed, and in another instant was crying in Alix's arms.

Alix cried, too, but it was with a great rush of pity and tenderness for Cherry. Alix had not young love and novelty to soften the outlines of the "Emmy Younger" and she felt, as she frankly wrote later to her father, "at last convinced that there is a hell!" The heat and bareness and ugliness of the mine might have been overlooked, but this poor little house of Cherry's, this wood stove draining white ashes, this tin sink with its pump, and the bathroom with neither faucets nor drain, almost bewildered Alix with their discomfort.

Even more bewildering was the change in Cherry. There was a certain hardening that impressed Alix at once. There was a weary sort of patience, a disillusioned concession to the drabness of married life.

But she allowed the younger sister to see nothing of this. Indeed, Cherry so brightened under the stimulus of Alix's companionship that Martin told her that she was more like her old self than she had been for months. Joyously she divided her responsibilities with Alix, explaining the difficulties of marketing and housekeeping, and joyously Alix assumed them. Her vitality infected the whole household.

She gave them spirited accounts of Anne's affair. "He's a nice little academic fellow," she said of Justin Little. "If he had a fathron in each

hand he'd probably weigh close to a hundred pounds! He's a—well, a sort of damp-looking youth, if you know what I mean! I always want to take a crash towel and dry him off!"

"Fancy Anne with a shrimp like that!" Cherry said, with a proud look at her own man's fine height. "He sounds awful to me."

"He's not, really. Only it seems that he belongs to the oldest family in America, or something, and is the only descendant—"

"Money?" Cherry asked, interestedly.

"No, I don't think money, exactly. At least I know he is getting a hundred a month in his uncle's law office, and Dad thinks they ought to wait until they have a little more. She'll have something, you know," Alix added, after a moment's thought.

"Your cousin?" Martin asked.

"Well, her father went into the fire-extinguisher thing with Dad," Alix elucidated, "and evidently she and Justin have had deep, soulful thoughts about it. Anyway, the other day she said—you know her way, Cherry—'Tell me, Uncle, frankly and honestly, may Justin and I draw out my share for that little home that is going to mean so much to us—'"

"I can hear her!" giggled Cherry.

"Dad immediately said that she could, of course," Alix went on. "He was adorable about it. He said, 'It will do more than build you a little home, my dear!'"

"We'll get a slice of that some time," Cherry said thoughtfully, glancing at her husband. "I don't mean when Dad dies, either," she added, in quick affection. "I mean that he might build us a little home some day in Mill Valley."

"Gee, how he'd love it!" Alix said, enthusiastically.

"I married Cherry for her money," Martin confessed.

"As a matter of fact," Cherry contradicted him, vivaciously, animated even by the thought of a change and a home, "we have never even spoken of it before, have we, Mart?"

"I never heard of it before," he admitted, smiling, as he knocked the ashes from his pipe. "But it's pleasant to know that Cherry will come in for a nest-egg some day!"

Presently the visitor boldly suggested that she and Cherry should both go home together for the wedding, and Martin agreed good-naturedly.

"But, Mart, how'll you get along?" his wife asked anxiously. She had fumed and fussed and pattered and tolled over the care of these four rooms for so long that it seemed unbelievable that her place might be vacated even for a day.

"Oh, I'll get along fine!" he answered indifferently. So, on the last day of August, in the cream-colored silk and the expensive hat again, yet looking, Alix thought, strangely unlike the bride that had been Cherry, she and her sister happily departed for cooler regions. Martin took them to the train, kissed his sister-in-law gaily and then his wife affectionately.

"Be a good little girl, Babe," he said, "and write me!"

"Oh, I will—I will!" Cherry looked after him smilingly from the car window. "He really is an old dear!" she told Alix.

CHAPTER VI.

But when at the end of the long day they reached the valley, and when her father came innocently into the garden and stood staring vaguely at her for a moment—for her visit and the day of Alix's return had been kept



Late in the Afternoon She Came Down to Join Them.

a secret—her first act was to burst into tears. She dug to the fatherly shoulders as if she were a storm-battered bird safely home again, and although she immediately laughed at herself and told the sympathetically watching Peter and Alix that she didn't know what the matter with

her, it was only to interrupt the words with fresh tears.

Tears of joy, she told them, laughing at the moisture in her father's eyes. She had a special joyous word for Hong; she laughed and teased and questioned Anne, when Anne and Justin came back from an afternoon concert in the city, with an interest and enthusiasm most gratifying to both.

After dinner she had her old place on the arm of her father's porch chair; Alix, with Buck's smooth head in her lap, sat on the porch step beside Peter, and the lovers murmured from the darkness of the hammock under the shadow of the rose vine. It was happy talk in the sweet evening coolness; everybody seemed harmonious and in sympathy tonight.

"Bedtime!" said her father presently and she laughed in sheer pleasure.

"Daddy—that sounds so nice again!" "But you do look fagged and pale, little girl," he told her. "You're to stay in bed in the morning."

"Oh, I'll be down!" she assured him. But she did not come in the morning, none the less. She was tired in soul and body and glad to let them spoil her again, glad to rest and sleep in the heavenly peace and quiet of the old home.

Late in the afternoon, rested, fresh, and her old sweet self in the white ruffles, she came down to join them. They had settled themselves under the redwoods. Anne and Justin, Peter and Alix and Buck, the dog, all jumped up to greet her. Cherry very quietly subsided into a wicker chair, listened rather than talked, moved her lovely eyes affectionately from one to another.

Peter hardly moved his eyes from her, although he did not often address her directly; Justin was quite obviously overcome by the unexpected beauty of Anne's cousin; Anne herself, with an undefined pang, admitted in her soul that Cherry was prettier than ever; and even Alix was affected. With the lovely background of the forest, the shade of her thin white hat lightly shadowing her face, with the dew of her long sleep and recent bath enhancing the childish purity of her skin, and with her blue eyes full of content, Cherry was a picture of exquisite youth and grace and charm.

The evening was cooler, with sudden wind and a promise of storm. They grouped themselves about a fire in the old way; Anne and Justin sitting close together on the settle, as Martin and Cherry had done a year ago. Cherry sat next her father, with her hand linked in his; neither hand moved for a long, long time. Alix, sitting on the floor, with her lean cheeks painted by the fire, played with the dog and rallied Peter about some love affair, the details of which made him laugh vexedly in spite of himself. Cherry watched them, a little puzzled at the familiarity of Peter beside this fire; had he been so entirely one of the family a year ago? She could almost envy him, feeling herself removed by so long and strange a twelvemonth.

"Be that as it may, my dear," said Alix, "the fact remains that you taught this Fenton woman to drive your car, didn't you? And you told her that she was the best woman driver you ever knew, a better driver even than Miss Strickland; didn't you?"

"I did not," Peter said, unmovably smoking and watching the fire.

"Why, Peter, you did! She said you did!"

"Well, then, she said what is not true!"

"She distinctly told me," Alix remarked, "that dear Mr. Joyce had said that she was the best woman driver he ever saw."

"Well, I may have said something like that," Peter growled, frowning. Alix laughed exultingly. "I tell you I loathe her!" he added.

"Daddy, we have a lovely home!" Cherry said softly, her eyes moving from the shabby books and the shabby rugs to Alix's piano shining in the gloom of the far corner. It was all homelike and pleasant, and somehow the atmosphere was newly inspiring, to her; she had felt that the talk at dinner, the old eager controversy about books and singers and politics and science, was—well, not brilliant, perhaps, but worth while. She was beginning to think Peter extremely clever and only Alix's quick tongue a match for him, and to feel that her father knew every book and had seen every worthwhile play in the world.

Martin, whose deep dissatisfaction with conditions at the "Emmy Younger Mine" Cherry well knew, had entered into a correspondence some months before relative to a position at another mine that seemed better to him, and instead of coming down for a day or two at the time of Anne's wedding, as Cherry had hoped he might, wrote her that the authorities at the Red Creek plant had "jumped at him," and that he was closing up all his affairs at the "Emmy Younger" and had arranged to ship all their household effects direct to the new home. Martin told his wife generous-

ly that he hoped she would stay with her father until the move was accomplished, and Cherry, with a clear conscience, established herself in her old room. She wrote constantly to her husband and often spoke appreciatively of Mart's kindness.

Anne's marriage took place in mid-September. It was a much more formal and elaborate affair than Cherry's had been, because, as Anne explained, "Frenny's people have been so generous about giving him up, you know. After all, he's the last of the Littles; all the others are Folsoms and Randalls. And I want them to realize that he is marrying a gentlewoman!"

Cherry and Alix went upstairs after the ceremony, as Alix and Anne had done a year ago, but there was deep relief and amusement in their mood today, and it was with real pleasure in the closer intimacy that the little group gathered about the fire that night.

After that, life went on serenely, and it was only occasionally that the girls were reminded that Cherry was a married woman with a husband expecting her shortly to return to him. November passed, and Christmas came, and there was some talk of Martin's joining them for Christmas. But he did not come; he was extremely busy at the new mine and comfortable in a village boarding house.

It was in early March that Alix spoke to her father about it; spoke in her casual and vague fashion, but

gave him food for serious thought, nevertheless.

"Dad," said Alix suddenly at the lunch table one day when Cherry happened to be shopping in the city, "were you and mother ever separated when you were married?"

"No—" the doctor, remembering, shook his head. "Your mother never was happy away from her home!"

"Not even to visit her own family?" persisted Alix.

"Not ever," he answered. "We always planned a long visit in the East—but she never would go without me. She went to your Uncle Vincent's house in Palo Alto once, but she came home the next day—didn't feel comfortable away from home!"

"How long do you suppose Martin will let us have Cherry?" Alix asked. Her father looked quickly at her and a troubled expression crossed his face.

"The circumstances seem to make it wise to keep her here until he is sure that this new position is the right one!" he said.

"If I know anything about Martin," Alix said, "no position is ever going to be the right one for him. I mean," she added as her father gave her an alarmed look, "I simply mean that he is that sort of a man. And it seems to me—odd the way he and Cherry take their marriage! She doesn't seem like other married women. And the thing is, will she ever want to go back, if she isn't—rather coerced? Martin is odd, you know; he has a kind of stolid, stupid pride. He wrote her weeks ago and asked her to come, and she wrote back that if he would find her a cottage, she would; she couldn't go to his boarding house, she hated boarding! Martin answered that he would, some day, and she said to me, 'Oh, now he's cross!' Now, mind you," Alix broke off vehemently, "I'd change the entire institution of marriage, if it was me! I'd end all this—"

"The lady? She was unfortunately married before I had a chance to ask her," said Peter.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Turk as a "Goat Herder."

The famous goat herder of primitive countries who sells his milk by the jar or cup from the goat skin bag on his back has his modern prototype in the person of a chap who appeared on the Bowersy said the New York Sun.

Slung over his shoulder was a large white metal container similar in shape to the goat skin bag and from one end of which protruded a spigot. The top of the container was gaily festooned with flowers and flags and for three cents the peddler would take a small paper cup from his pocket and draw a glass of milk for the thirsty youngster, or passerby. The carrier of the metal container wore a bright red turban on his head. His trousers were broad-beamed of the same color and his moustache of the kind figured in lithographs of the ferocious Turk.

WOMAN SAVED BY LEGION MAN

Mississippi Lieutenant Awarded French Medal of Honor and Life Saving Emblem.

A woman caught in a jam of civilians fleeing a town in the war zone of France was forced over the parapet of a bridge, falling into a stream 70 feet below. Several French officers looked on in horror, but a young American officer without hesitation leaped after the submerged woman, bringing her to the surface and safely landing her on the shore.

The hero was George A. Dunagin who at the time was a lieutenant in the liaison service of the United States army. For his bravery he was awarded the French medal of honor and the Congressional life saving medal.

Today, Dunagin is in charge of the Shreveport (La.) sub-station of the United States Veterans' bureau in Paris and London, and was assigned by the American Legion to assist General Dawes in the investigation of the needs of disabled ex-service men.

Dunagin was born at Laurel, Miss., and was educated at the Mississippi A. & M. College. His military service, which, after an injury sustained in a machine gun accident, was in the diplomatic corps, took him to seventeen European countries.

"LEGIONAIRE" NAME OF TOWN

Arkansas Doughboys Settle on Adjoining Tracts in Oklahoma and Form 2,500-Acre Colony.

They are beating their swords into plowshares in the biblical way of saying that veterans of the World war are going back to the farm.

In Arkansas, on a 2,500-acre tract, a "colony" of sixteen former service men descended from Tulsa, Okla., and settled on adjoining quarter-sections of land. All of them were members of the Joe Carson post of the American Legion and they plan to establish a trading center and town under the name "Legionaire."

The doughboy colony is in Scott county. Most of the settlers will be able to call the land their own in seven months as the state allows two years of war service to count on the residence requirement.

Some of the men will spend the winter on their land, clearing timber, building, hunting and trapping. It is estimated that 100 service men of Tulsa ultimately will settle on government land.

WAR WORKER AIDS JOBLESS

Entertainer During Conflict Enlists to Help Unemployed Ex-Service Men in New York.

Miss Ellerbe Wood will be remembered by many ex-service men for her work as an entertainer of the Y. M. C. A. corps in France. With her own troupe of young women she spent a year cheering the doughboys in the overseas camps. Her service, however, did not end with the war. She has enlisted to help the unemployed ex-service men in New York.

When "The Man Without a Country," the film-version of Edward Everett Hale's historical story, was shown in New York under auspices of the American Legion, Miss Wood volunteered her services, and at each performance read the preamble to the constitution of the Legion and gave a patriotic reading. The proceeds from the show were used in the welfare work among jobless ex-service men.

MAKES CITIZENS OF ALIENS

Americanization Committee of Montana Post Successful in Preparing Applicants for Naturalization.

Training aliens for citizenship has been successfully carried out by the Americanization committee of the Great Falls, (Mont.) post of the American Legion. A class of 87 aliens has just finished preparation for naturalization under direction of the Legion committee, and 37 of them were admitted to citizenship. This was an unusually high percentage, according to the naturalization officer.

Another class of 100 foreigners is now in training for the citizenship test. They receive instructions from the Legion committee twice a week. Following the course of instruction they are subjected to preliminary examinations to determine their fitness for citizenship.

Many Graves are Unmarked.

Because of a shortage of government grave-markers and the failure of congress to appropriate funds for their purchase, the graves of thousands of Americans killed overseas are unmarked in this country, according to a report of the American Legion, filed at Washington. The Legion's legislative committee will petition the congress to set aside sufficient funds to allow the purchase of a marker for each grave, as required by law.

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Makes a Discovery.

A four-year-old boy visiting in Columbus last week had had but little experience in the country, having lived all of his life in a large city. His knowledge of plants was limited to those he had seen in parks and in the very small yards in city homes. He was driving in the country with relatives, and the machine passed a field overrun with foxtail, a tall grass with a brushlike tip. The youngster regarded the grass with bulging eyes, and finally he cried, excitedly, "Oh, mother, mother, here is the place where the woolly worms grow."—Indianapolis News.

Golf's Great Superior Point.

Golf has one point of superiority over baseball; it gives exercise to the spectators as well as to the players. —St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Don't think for a minute that all ministers preach what they practice.

Weak and Worn?

Has summer left you dull, tired, all worn out? Do you have constant backache, with headaches, dizzy spells, sharp, shooting pains, or annoying kidney irregularities? Influenza and grip epidemics have left thousands with weak kidneys and failing strength. Don't wait until serious kidney trouble develops. Help the weakened kidneys with Doan's Kidney Pills. Doan's have helped thousands and should help you. Ask your neighbor!

An Illinois Case

Mr. H. H. Pearson, 1809 Washington St., Cairo, Ill., says: "Pains caught me in the small of my back and at times I could hardly catch my breath. I ached in every joint and felt as stiff as an old woman. My kidneys were too free in action. I tried different remedies but got no relief until I used Doan's Kidney Pills. They relieved me of every symptom of kidney trouble."

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