SYNOPSIS

Anna ("Silver") Grenoble, daughthe community, but known as a gambler, news of whose recent mur- blending, in the hollows below. der in Chicago has reached the town, comes to Heron River to live with Sophronia Willard, Jim Grenoble's ick and Jason. The Willards own only half of the farm on which they Melbank, shiftless youth, makes spare for anything like this." the eve of marriage to Corinne Meader, daughter of a failed banker. Silver says she wants to live on the farm, and has no intention of selling her half, which the Willards had feared. She meets Roddy that night. means all-of her relations with Gerald Lucas, gambler friend of her father. Roddy marries Corinne, and brings his bride home. Corinne has I'm sure she'll take to the idea." a maid, Paula, who seems to attract Jason. Silver again meets Gerald Lucas, who has established a gambling resort near town. She introduces him to Corinne Willard, much

CHAPTER VI-Continued

"Harry and his sister will come for me-if you won't take me," Corinne replied distantly,

"Corrie!" Her name, as he uttered it, was a vehement plea. But she did not answer. She had already left the room and gone into

the hall to telephone. Roddy sat for a minute where he was and listened to Corinne's voice as she talked to Harry Richter and made her own elaborate excuses for her husband. Then he got

up and went to the kitchen. He was sitting there a half hour later when Corinne came and stood

"Give my regards to Harry," he

home early." you could be so stubborn."

Roddy got up and put his arm about her. "It isn't stubbornness, dear," he said, quietly. "Lord, can't you tell when a man is dog-tired?"

"You're not too tired to go, if you really wanted to," she persistthe people who are going to be

"Well-they're not my idea of a steady diet, exactly," he admitted.

She drew her lips tight as she funny sometimes," she said coldly. "I simply can't understand you." "Don't try, kid," he said, and patted her on the shoulder. "Go

ahead and have a good time. I'll put in a couple of hours checking up on the new corn." "You're not too tired for that,"

she retorted.

"But that has to be done," he told her. "There's Harry now."

There was the sound of a car coming to a stop before the door. Corinne turned away immediately and was gone. Roddy went to the window and watched until the car was out of sight.

Silver gathered her tweed jacket about her and seated herself beside a clump of Juneberry bushes on the hill. It was quite late, but she had been unable to go to bed on such a night as this.

There was a sound of some one moving out of the brush to the left. Silver glanced up and saw Roddy standing a few feet away, looking down at her.

"Why, Roddy!" she exclaimed. "I thought you and Corinne had gone to the party."

For a moment he hesitated. "Corinne went," he told her. "The Richters came for her." He sat down near by. "I took a night off and spent it bringing some of my

records up to date." "I wish," said Silver wistfully, "that I had studied plant pathology and those things instead of languages. Every time I go into your laboratory I feel so darned inferior!"

He laughed indulgently.

"Well, you're certainly young enough to learn," he remarked, "if you're still bent on being a farmer. And it's beginning to look as though you are." He got his pipe from his overall pocket, packed and lighted it. "Except that you ought to be in bed at this hour. You worked pretty hard today, Phronie told me."

This is lots better than sleening," Silver said, and waved her were drifting low under the waning | way of apologizing to you for being

"And not such a waste of time," walking up here I was leaving the ing his eyes, experienced a fright- a basketful of yellow string beans

shop-I thought I'd sneak along and

get an eyeful of it for myself." They sat in silence watching the ter of "Gentleman Jim," formerly of thin wraiths blending, parting, attitude, smoking a cigarette, it corn at the fair. But it didn't

"You were over to see the Healy live, the other half being Anna Woodward? The Micheners told least thrill of Grenoble's, On Silver's arrival Duke me the Healys haven't a dollar to understanding.

"That's an idea, Silver," Roddy been wondering what we could do to help out. Old Doc Woodward won't be so hard to satisfy. I can Silver tells Sophronia ("Phronie," by probably fix that myself. But the in the party!" he announced, request) something-but by no family is up against it, and without the boy's wages, they'll be in a bad way. I'll speak to Corrie about it.

"It would be fun," Silver said. she thought with a pang. Except for the Flathes, a Norwegian family on the south, and the Micheners. frugal but free-spirited Germans up near the lake, she had so far made friends of none of the people in and around Heron River.

Roddy turned and looked at her suddenly. "You know-that's the kind of thing that makes you likeable, Silver.

"What kind of thing?" "You're always thinking about somebody else. The other day in the field, when you tore off your blouse-'

She was smiling at him. "I shall probably grow up to be a nice old maid-loved for my good deeds." Roddy laughed and put his arm about her shoulder.

"You're a great little kid!" he exin the kitchen doorway. She was claimed. "After old lady Folds, and dressed for the party. Roddy looked then-this bird Lucas cropping up -or I should say flying in-"

"Now, Roddy, please don't start said, "and tell him to bring you applauding me, or I may cry. Besides-I'll be twenty in November, Corinne frowned. "I didn't think so I haven't much credit coming to

> "You will? Well, well! And I suppose Phil Michener thinks you're just about the right age to settle down, eh?

"Oh, I don't know about that," Silver replied loftily. "I like his ed. "It's just that you don't like sister, and I like him. They are real people, Roddy. They more than make up for-women like Mrs. Folds. "And men like Gerald Lucas?"

There was a curious note in Rodreturned his look. "You are very dy's voice, half gentle, half embarrassed, the banter gone out of it.

Silver clasped her hands together before her. "Yes," she said. "Although Gerald isn't an evil as Mrs. Folds is, Roddy. He is an evil for me, that's all. Or he was, I should say. But you know by this time that I don't run away from-from that sort of thing-any more."

Roddy cleared his throat. "You you?" he asked abruptly.

For fully a half minute, Silver gazed down upon the wavering as though in surprise. shelves of mist.

ment," she said tonelessly. "For a week or so-while dad was away. Perhaps I was in love with him. I palm. But immediately, almost abdon't know. But now that I am here I know that it wasn't the right kind of love. I must have known that even then, because I wouldn't marry him. Gerald wanted to marry me. He was more decent than I was. He still is, in a way. He fascinated me, but I knew, all the time, underneath, that his life could never

At first, Roddy continued to turn the bowl of his pipe about in his hand. Then, slowly, his eyes moved

toward the girl beside him. "Does Phronie know this?"

asked quietly. "No. I have never told anyone but you. I-I didn't even tell dad the-whole truth. I don't know why I've told you this," she went on broodingly. "But it seems to me the land has something to do with it. It has been like telling it to the

It's hard to explain-" fidence," Roddy broke in with a pleasantly modulated. She glanced dance, neither of them noticed Duke short and ironic laugh, "My feel- from her window. In the moonlight, but generous, Silver.'

"I think I've understood them. though," she replied thoughtfully. "When you've worked a piece of land until you have your roots in hand toward the clouds of mist that stretched. "This is just my clumsy be. It simply could not!

a fool, Silver." She laid her hand on his and he he declared, "When I saw you drew her to her feet. Silver, meet- with two bushels of tomatoes and suddenly

Together they walked down into to be decorated for the event.

Harry Richter and his sister Eveof their advantages of money and easy winter for any of us." travel-just a pair of noisy and town of Maynard, and the family ing their grain for fuel." mansion there was the pride of the

were a little pathetic, even rustic. make out." boy today, weren't you?" Silver Corinne was coolly excited by the Sophronia Willard, Jim Grenoble's asked finally. "I was thinking realization that never before in her hands clasped before her, gazing her. Sophronia's household consists about him today. Couldn't we give her. Sophronia's household consists about him today. Couldn't we give her hands clasped before her, gazing straight ahead at the winding high-of her husband, and stepsons, Roder-about him today. Couldn't we give life had she met anyone so polished, straight ahead at the winding high-of her husband, and stepsons, Roder-about him today. Couldn't we give life had she met anyone so polished, straight ahead at the winding high-of her husband, and stepsons, Roder-about him today. Couldn't we give life had she met anyone so polished, straight ahead at the winding high-of her husband, and stepsons, Roder-about him today. lect enough money to pay Doctor Lucas. She felt, with merely the wanted to say, but the words Woodward? The Micheners told least thrill of danger, their mutual seemed too clumsy, too unutterably

from the city came from across exclaimed with enthusiasm. "I've the room with an enormous silver the gloamy and faraway radiance cocktail shaker in his hands.

> "One more little drink on the house-for the prettiest little girl "Thanks, no," she demurred. "I'm

> much too warm already. I think I'll stroll out for a little air." She had not turned, even a little

way, toward Gerald as she spoke, how to put it." And perhaps wretched for herself, but a few minutes afterward, when she sauntered slowly among the moonlit trees above the shore, she was not surprised that he met her right to help-and I want to. I there. She had known that he would have a little money left-plenty to follow her.

They stood together for a little while, in a piquant conspiracy of



Home Through Dissolving

silence, and looked out upon th shining lake.

Distances of Rain.

"I must be very stupid," Gerald said, in a puzzled voice. "Otherwise, I would be able to figure out

just how you come to be living on Corinne laughed and felt her heart

quicken. "It's very simple," she were in love with him, weren't said. "I fell in love with a farmer -and married him." "Did you?" Gerald looked at her

They laughed in unison. Every- next dance. "I went and stayed at his apart- thing seemed delightfully absurd. Gerald picked up her hand and bent dy and Corinne were standing to her little finger inward toward the sently, he let it go.

"Have a cigarette?" he suggest-

"Thanks," He held the match for well-kept fingers, thought suddenly I told him once that I didn't want of Rodney's hands, large and pow- him to come here. He probably erful and bronzed. All at once she took me at my word." be mine. That's all there is to it, felt uncomfortable and vaguely ashamed.

"Shall we go back?" she sug- that?" gested lightly.

"If you wish," Gerald agreed. "I think I shall ask Harry to Roddy put in. drive me home," she said as they

mounted the steps to the porch. drink to drive anyone home safely."

It was long past midnight when Silver, preparing for bed, heard a land-starting over again, honestly. car enter the driveway. She heard Phil, the eldest of the Michener a voice that was sharply familiar "I've hardly deserved your con- to her, although it was low and ings toward you have been anything the chromium trimmings of Gerald Lucas' car shone unmistakably.

"This is downright spying!" SIIver said to herself, and buried her face in her pillows. But a sudden fright took possesit-" He stopped suddenly, and bent sion of her. Corinne-and Gerald

toward her with his hand out- Lucas! Such a thing could never thin voice: "All join hands!"

Silver and Sophronia, in Roddy's car, were on their way to Maynard

ening contraction of her throat, they had gathered that day in the Roddy pressed his lips together and garden. The harvest dance was drew a deep breath, as though some but a week away now, and there profound unease had settled within were things to be bought and cooking to be done and the old barn

the yard, and their simple good "I suppose if we get a dollar night was taken coolly into the si- for this truck we ought to be thankful," Sophronia said. "Upon my soul, it's enough to discourage anyone-if it wasn't for the satislyn, Corinne reflected with a secret faction of seein' the things grow. fillip of contempt, were still-and And with Roddy talkin' of storin' perhaps always would be, in spite his grain it doesn't look like an

"It's hard to understand," Silver slightly vulgar cubs. But of course said, "with so many people going their father owned most of the hungry-and farmers talking of us-

"It's past me," Sophronia admitted, "I wouldn't be surprised if Rod-Corinne sat in a deep chair in dy gave up the whole business, one the shadowed corner of the sprawl- of these days and moved to the ing room, and as she gave a side- city. Though there wouldn't be long glance at the amused profile much sense in that, either.] of Gerald Lucas, who stood be thought he'd feel better the other side her in an indolent, provocative day when he got first prize for his seemed to her that Harry's friends change him any so far as I could

Silver had sat and listened, her crude. These people had become A rubicund young grain broker her people-the thought forming in her mind flowed on in a radianceof the legend of Ruth.

All at once she felt a tide of warmth move up over her throat and face.

"I wanted to say something last night-when Roddy was talking to you and Jason about things," she said. "But-I didn't know just

"What was that?" Sophronia

"It's just that I feel I have a do me for a year or even moreand I don't need the rent Roddy is paying for that east section. I don't see why I-"

"Land sakes, child!" Sophronia interrupted "Don't ever mention such a thing to Roddy. He'd take your head off. I'm glad you didn't say anything about it last night. No-he'll get along and pay his way -or he'll make a change of some kind. He already thinks you're doing far more than enough to pay your board, if it comes to that!"

Silver was silent for a long time. It was just as she had expected. Roddy's pride would never permit him to take any assistance she might have to offer him,

From Maynard, Sophronia and Silver, with the car windows up drove home through dissolving distances of rain. "Think of gettin' only ninety cents for all our work yesterday," Phronie mused aloud. 'not countin' the cost of seed and the bother of plantin'. Darn it! I could almost wish every city swell might starve to death!"

CHAPTER VII

THE mow of the new barn was I full of hay, so that it could not be used for the harvest dance. Consequently, the loft of the old barn below the hill, which had latterly been used for surplus storage, came into its own again.

Jason stood with Silver at one end of the loft, where the orchestra was getting ready to play for another square dance.

"I think I'll ask Paula for this one," Jason said.

"If some one isn't ahead of you," Silver said. "She seems to be very popular tonight. Paula is a handsome girl. She would make a fine model for some painter," but Jason hurried away as old Steve, acting master of ceremonies, called for the

Silver moved down to where Rod-

"I wonder what has happened to Gerald Lucas," Corinne said as Silver joined them. "I sent him a speed, and offered her his onyx and cial invitation urging him to come, and here it's midnight-"

Silver smiled. "He may be stay-Corinne, seeing his shapely, ing away on my account, Corinne.

Corinne made no effort to conceal her amazement. "You told him

"Silver may have her own reasons for not wanting him around,"

"I have," Silver said lightly. "Well-as I have said before-"My own opinion, if I were asked it's no affair of mine, after all," for it," Gerald said casually, "is Corinne observed pointedly. "But I that Harry has had too much to do think-when I take the trouble to invite someone specially-"

"Forget it, Corrie," Roddy interrupted. "There goes the next dance." He led her upon the floor as boys, came for Silver.

As they moved together into the Melbank and a companion stagger up from the top rung of the loft ladder and make their way into the crowd. Uppermost in Silver's mind was the thought that she was being received by the country people here as if she were one of them. Old Steve called out in his high Silver left Phil and joined the

girls who moved in a gay circle 34x7 H.D... 48.65 past the men. 40x8 H. D... 73.95 "All swing!" old Steve shouted / Other Sizes Proportionately Low

(TO BE CONTINUED)

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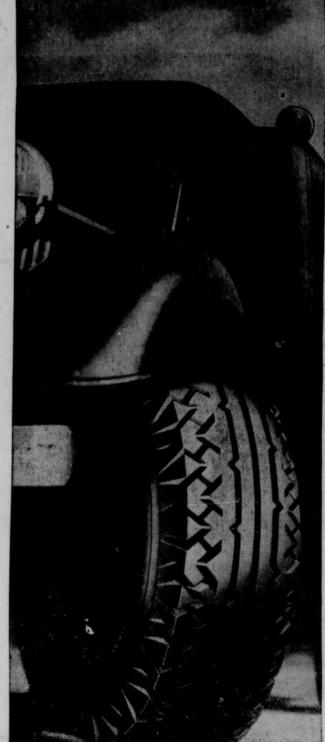
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