

SISTERS

Copyright by Kathleen Norris

By
**KATHLEEN
NORRIS**

MARTIN AND CHERRY.

Synopsis.—Doctor Strickland, retired, is living with his family at Mill Valley, just out of San Francisco. Anne, the doctor's niece, is twenty-four. Alix, the doctor's daughter, is twenty-one. Cherry, the other daughter, is eighteen. Their closest friend is Peter Joyce, an odd, lovable sort of recluse. He is secretly in love with beautiful Cherry. Martin Lloyd, a visiting mining engineer, pays court to Cherry and wins her promise to marry him. While the family are speculating about Cherry and Martin Peter realizes his love for Cherry. Martin and Cherry of course are eager for an early wedding.

(CHAPTER III—Continued.)

"Lord, don't ask me!" Peter said, gruffly. "I think she's too young to marry anyone—but the mischief's done now!"

"I think I'll talk to her," her father decided. "Anything is better than having her make a mistake. I think she'll listen to me!" And a day or two later he called her into the study. It was a quiet autumn morning, foggy yet warm, with a dewy, woody sweetness in the air.

"Before we decide this thing finally," the doctor said, smiling into her bright face, "before Martin writes his people that it's settled, I want to ask you to do something. It's something you won't like to do, my little girl. I want you to wait a while—wait a year!"

It was said. He watched the brightness fade from her glowing face. She lowered her eyes. The line of her mouth grew firm.

"Wait until you're twenty, dear. That's young enough. I only ask you to take a little time—to be sure, dear!" Silence. She shrugged faintly, blinked the downcast eyes as if tears stung them.

"Can't take your old father's word for it?" Dr. Strickland asked.

"It isn't that, Dad!" she protested eagerly and affectionately. "I'll wait—I have waited! I'll wait until Christmas, or April, if you say so! But it won't make any difference; nothing will. I love him and he loves me, and we always will."

"You don't know," Cherry went on, with suddenly watering eyes, "you don't know what this summer of separation has meant to us both! If we must wait longer, why, we will, of course, but it will mean that I am just living along somehow—oh, I won't cry!" she interrupted, smiling with wet lashes. "I'll try to bear it decently! But sometimes I feel as if I couldn't bear it!"

A rush of tears choked her. She groped for a handkerchief and felt, as she had felt so many times, her father's handkerchief pressed into her hand. The doctor sighed. There was nothing more to be said.

So he gave Cherry a wedding check that made her dance with joy, and there was no more seriousness. There were gowns, dinners, theater parties and presents; every day brought its



They Fastened Over Her Corn-Colored Hair Her Mother's Lace Veil.

new surprise and new delight to Cherry. She had her cream-colored rajah silk, but her sister and cousin persuaded her to be married in white, and it was their hands that dressed the first bride when the great day came, and fastened over her corn-colored hair her mother's lace veil.

It was a day of soft sweetness, not too brightly summery, but warm and still under the trees. Until ten o'clock the mountain and the tops of the redwoods were tangled in scarfs of white fog, then the mellow sunlight pierced it with sudden spectacular brightening and lifting.

At twelve o'clock Charity Strickland became Charity Lloyd and was kissed and toasted and congratulated until her lovely little face was buried with color and her blue eyes were

bewildered with fatigue. At two o'clock there were good-bys. Cherry had changed the wedding satin for the cream-colored rajah silk then and wore the extravagant hat. It would be many years before she would spend twenty-five dollars for a hat again, and never again would she see bronzed cocks' feathers against bronzed straw without remembering the clean little wood-smelling bedroom and the hour in which she had pinned her wedding hat over her fair hair, and had gone, demure and radiant and confident, to meet her husband in the old hallway.

She was confusedly kissed, passed from hand to hand, was conscious with a sort of strange aching at her heart that she was not only far from saying the usual heart-broken things in farewell, but was actually far from feeling them. She laughed at Alix's last nonsense, promised to write—wouldn't say good-by—would see them all soon—was coming, Martin—and so a last kiss for darling Dad and good-by and so many thanks and thanks to them all!

She was gone. With her the uncertain autumn sunshine vanished and a shadow fell on the forest. The mountain above the valley was blotted out with fog. The brown house seemed dark and empty when the last guests had loitered away and the last caterer had gathered up his possessions and had gone.

The doctor had changed his unwanted wedding finery for his shabby old smoking jacket, but Peter still looked unaturally well dressed. Alix stepped down to sit between them and her father's arm went about her. She snuggled against him in an unusual mood of tenderness and quiet.

"Be nice to me!" she said, whimsically. "I'm lonely!" "I'm!" her father said, significantly, tightening his arm. Peter moved up on the other side and locked his own arm in her free one. And so they sat, silent, depressed, their shoulders touching, their somber eyes fixed upon the shadowy depths of the forest into which an October fog was softly and noiselessly creeping.

CHAPTER IV.

Meanwhile the hot train sped on, and the drab autumn country flew by the windows, and still the bride sat wrapped in her dream, smiling, musing, rousing herself to notice the scenery.

When Martin asked her if she liked to be a married woman, traveling with her husband, she smiled and said that it seemed "funny." For the most part she was silent, pleased and interested, but not quite her usual unconcerned self. After dinner they had a long, murmured talk; she began to droop sleepily now, although even this long day had not paled her cheeks or visibly tired her.

At ten they stumbled out, cramped and overheated, and smitten on tired foreheads with a rush of icy mountain air.

"Is this the place?" yawned Cherry, clinging to his arm.

"This is the place, Baby Girl; El Nido, and not much of a place!" her husband told her. "That's the Hotel McKinley, over there where the lights are! We stay there tonight and drive out to the mine tomorrow. I'll manage the bags, but don't you stumble!" She was wide-awake now, looking alertly about her at the dark streets of the little town. Mud squelched beneath their feet, planks tilted. Beside Martin, Cherry entered the bright, cheerful lobby of a cheap hotel where men were smoking and spitting. She was beside him at the desk and saw him write on the register, "J. M. Lloyd and wife." The clerk pushed a key across the counter; Martin guided her to a rattling elevator.

She had a fleeting thought of home: of Dad reading before the fire, of the little brown room upstairs, with Alix, slender in her thin nightgown, yawning over her prayers. A rush of reluctance—of strangeness—of something like terror smote her. She fought the homesickness down resolutely; everything would seem brighter tomorrow, when the morning and the sunshine came again.

There was a brown and red carpet in the oblong of the room, and a brown bureau, and a wide iron bed with a limp spread, and a peeling brown washstand with a pitcher and basin. The boy lighted a flare of electric lights which made the chocolate and gold wallpaper look like one pattern in the light and another in the shadow. A man laughed in the adjoining room; the voice seemed very near.

Cherry had never been in a hotel of this sort before. It seemed to her cheap and horrible; she did not want to stay in this room, and Martin, tipping the boy and asking for ice-water, seemed somehow a part of this new strangeness and crudeness. She began to be afraid that he would think she was silly, presently, if she said her prayers as usual.

In the morning Martin hired a phaeton and they drove out to the mine. Cherry had had a good breakfast and was wearing a new gown; they stopped

another phaeton on the long, pleasant drive and Martin said to the fat man in it:

"Mr. Bates, I want to make you acquainted with my wife!" "Pleased to meet you, Mrs. Lloyd!" said the fat man, pleasantly. Martin told Cherry, when they passed him, that that was the superintendent of the mine, and seemed pleased at the encounter. Presently Martin put his arm about her and the bay horse dawdled along at his own sweet will, while Martin's deep voice told his wife over and over again how adorable and beautiful she was and how he loved her.

Cherry listened happily, and for a little while the old sense of pride and achievement came back—she was married; she was wearing a plain gold ring! But after a few days that feeling vanished forever and instead it began to seem strange to her that she had ever been anything else than Martin's wife.

For several days she and Martin laughed incessantly and praised each other incessantly, while they experimented with cooking and ate delicious gypsy meals.

By midwinter Cherry had settled down to the business of life, buying bacon and lard and sugar and matches at the store of the mine, cooking and cleaning, sweeping, and making beds. She still kissed Martin good-by every morning and met him with an affectionate rush at the door when he came home, and they played Five Hundred evening after evening after dinner, quarreling for points and laughing at each other, while rain sluiced down on the porch. But sometimes she wondered how it had all come about, wondered what had become of the violent emotions that had picked her out of the valley home and established her here, in this strange place, with this man she had never seen a year ago.

Of these emotions little was left. She still liked Martin, she told herself, and she still told him that she loved him. But she knew she did not love him, and in such an association as theirs there can be no liking. Her thoughts rarely rested on him; she was either thinking of the prunes that were soaking, the firewood that was running low, the towels that a wet breeze was blowing on the line; or she was far away, drifting in vague realms where feelings entirely strange to this bare little mining camp and this hungry, busy, commonplace man, held sway.

The first time that she quarreled with Martin she cried for an entire day, with the old childish feeling that somehow her crying mattered, somehow her abandonment would help to straighten affairs. The cause of the quarrel was a trifle; her father had sent her a Christmas check and she immediately sent to a San Francisco shop for a clock that had taken her fancy months before.

Martin, who had chanced to be pressed for money, although she did not know it, was thunderstruck upon discovering that she had actually disposed of fifty dollars so lightly. For several days a shadow hung over their intercourse, and when the clock came, as large as a banjo, gilded and quaint, he broke her heart afresh by pretending not to admire it.

But on Christmas eve he was delayed at the mine and Cherry, smitten suddenly with the bitterness of having their first Christmas spoiled in this way, sat up for him, huddled in her silk wrapper by the air-tight stove. She was awakened by feeling herself lowered tenderly into bed and raised warm arms to clasp his neck and they kissed each other.

The next day they laughed at the clock together, and after that peace reigned for several weeks. But it was inevitable that another quarrel should come and then another; Cherry was young and undisciplined, perhaps not more selfish than other girls of her age, but self-centered and unreasonable. She had to learn self-control and she hated to control herself. She had to economize when poverty possessed neither picturesqueness nor interest. They were always several weeks behind in the payment of domestic bills, and these recurring reminders of money stringency maddened Cherry. Sometimes she summed it up, with angry tears, reminding him that she was still wearing her trousseau dresses, and had no maid, and never went anywhere!

But she developed steadily. As she grew skilful in managing her little house, she also grew in the art of managing her husband and herself. She became clever at avoiding causes of disagreement; she listened, nodded, agreed, with a boiling heart, and had the satisfaction of having Martin's viewpoint veer the next day, or the next hour, to meet her own secret conviction. Martin seemed satisfied, and all their little world accepted her as a matter of course. But under it all Cherry knew that something young and irresponsible and confident in her had been killed. She never liked to think of the valley, of the fogs and the spokes of sunlight under the redwood aisles, of Alix and the dogs and the dreamy evenings by the fire. And especially she did not like to think of that eighteenth birthday, and herself

thrilling and ecstatic because the strange young man from Mrs. North's had stared at her, in her sticky apron, with so new and disturbing a smile in his eyes.

CHAPTER V.

So winter passed at the mine and at the brown house under the shoulder of Tamalpais. Alix still kept her bedroom windows open, but the rain tore in, and Anne protested at the ensuing stains on the pantry ceiling.

Cherry's wedding, once satisfactorily over, was a cause of great satisfaction to her sister and cousin. They had stepped back duly, to give her the center of the stage; they had admired and congratulated; had helped her in all hearty generosity. And now that she was gone they enjoyed their own lives again and cast over hers the glamor that novelty and distance never fail to give. Cherry, married and keeping house and managing affairs, was an object of romantic interest. The girls surmised that Cherry must be making friends; that everyone must admire her; that Martin would be rich some day, without doubt.

Cherry wrote regularly, now and then assuring them that she was the same old Cherry. She described her tiny house



"I Don't Imagine It's Serious," Her Father Said on an April Walk.

fight at the mine, and the long sheds of the plant, and the bare big building that was the men's boarding house. Martin's associates brought her trout and ducks, she wrote; she and Martin had driven three hundred miles in the superintendent's car; she was preparing for a card party.

"Think of little old Cherry going off on week-end trips with three men!" Alix would say proudly. "Think of Cherry giving a party!" Anne perhaps would make no comment, but she often felt a pang of envy. Cherry seemed to have everything.

Suddenly, without warning, there was a newcomer in the circle, a sleek-headed brown-haired little man known as Justin Little.

He had been introduced at some party to Anne and Alix; he called; he was presently taking Anne to a lecture. Anne now began to laugh at him and say that he was "too ridiculous," but she did not allow any one else to say so. On the contrary, she told Alix at various times that his mother had been one of the old Maryland Percies, and his great-grandfather was mentioned in a book by Sir Walter Scott, and that one had to respect the man, even if one didn't choose to marry him.

"Marry him!" Alix had echoed in simple amazement. Marry him—what was all this sudden change in the household when a man could no sooner appear than some girl began to talk of marriage? Stupefied, Alix watched the affair progress.

"I don't imagine it's serious!" her father said on an April walk. Peter, tramping beside them, was interested but silent.

"My dear father," the girl protested. "Have you listened to them? They've been contending for weeks that they were just remarkably good friends—that's why she calls him Frenny!" "Ah—I see!" the doctor said mildly, as Peter's wild laugh burst forth.

"But now," Alix pursued, "she's told him that as she cannot be what he wishes, they had better not meet!" "Poor Anne!" the old doctor commented.

"Poor nothing! She's having the time of her life," her cousin said unfeelingly. "She told me today that she was afraid that she had checked one of the most brilliant careers at the bar."

Then Cherry . . . was crying in the arms of Alix.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

ITALIAN MURDERS FORTUNE TELLER

Believed Spell Had Been Cast Over His Family by Woman— Commits Suicide.

New York.—Under the delusion that a spell had been cast over his household by the woman, Pietro Cerreseno, a salesman and father of four children, attacked with a razor and killed Mary E. Biancha, known as "queen of Mulberry street fortune tellers," and then shot himself dead.

The tragedy occurred in Mme. Biancha's "studio." The woman was found lying on the floor with her face and neck deeply slashed.

Cerreseno had been laboring for some time under the belief that the fortune teller had bewitched him and



Began Stabbing Viciously.

other members of the family several of whom have been ill of late.

He walked into the Biancha place, whipped out his razor, grabbed the woman and began stabbing viciously at her head. She struggled in his arms to a window and began screaming frantically for help. Policeman Fitzgerald rushed up and found her lying helpless under the window with the salesman standing above her prostrate form.

Fitzgerald arrested Cerreseno and then hurried down to summon an ambulance. When he returned he found Cerreseno's lifeless body stretched alongside that of the woman on the floor.

TOTS FIGHT HUGE OCTOPUS

Seizes Boy Whose Sisters Belabor It With Oars and Rescue Youth After Fierce Battle.

Eureka, Cal.—Word reached here that a 16-foot octopus was killed at Samoa, Humboldt county, after it had seized in its tentacles eight-year-old George Peterson, son of a tug captain.

According to the reports the boy was standing in shallow water at the beach when the octopus attacked him.

Two older sisters were paddling about in a boat.

His screams alarmed the girls and they beat the sea monster with their oars.

The octopus lashed out with other tentacles and wrenched an oar from the hands of the younger sister. The other girl, using her oar bayonet fashion, partly stunned the animal, which loosened its hold on the boy and crawled to nearby rocks, where it was beaten to death.

Catch Snake in Mouse Trap.

Middletown, Md.—John W. Sigler caught a copperhead snake in a mouse trap at his home in Locust Valley, southwest of Middletown.

The reptile measured between 2 1/2 and 3 feet in length. Mr. Sigler also killed a black snake near his home which measured 5 feet 9 inches in length.

Wakes Up, Finds Auto Hanging on Bed Post

Delaware, O.—How would you like to be suddenly awakened by a crash and find an automobile hanging on your bed post?

Such was the experience of Levi Nackel who resides three miles northwest of Ashley on the old Mansfield road.

Nackel was aroused by the noise of the automobile crashing through the wall of his residence and into his room loomed and glaring headlights of the automobile. The car collided with the bed upon which Nackel was sleeping and shoved it across the room to the opposite wall.

Nackel's house is located at the end of a short detour road from the state road to the Mansfield road. The men failed to make the turn at the end of the road and crashed through the wall of Nackel's house. No one was hurt.

YOUNG GIRL FINDS RELIEF

Wants to Tell Other Girls All About It

Evansville, Ind.—"I am eighteen years old and have been bothered for several months with irregular periods.

Every month my back would ache and I always had a cold and felt drowsy and sleepy. I work in a millinery shop and I went to work every day, but felt stupid and would have such cramps. I had seen Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound advertised and had heard several women talk of it, so mother got me some. This Vegetable Compound is wonderful and it helped me very much, so that during my periods I am not now sick or drowsy. I have told many girls about your medicine and would be glad to help anyone who is troubled with similar ailments. You may use my testimonial as you like."—STELLA LINXWILER, 6 Second St., Evansville, Indiana.

Some girls lead lives of luxury, while others toil for their livelihood, but all are subject to the same physical laws and suffer in proportion to their violation. When such symptoms develop as irregularities, headaches, backaches, bearing-down sensations and "the blues," girls should profit by Miss Linxwiler's experience and give Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound a trial.

Hens are exclusive. They like to stick to their own sets.

ASPIRIN

Name "Bayer" on Genuine



Beware! Unless you see the name "Bayer" on package or on tablets you are not getting genuine Aspirin prescribed by physicians for twenty-one years and proved safe by millions. Take Aspirin only as told in the Bayer package for Colds, Headache, Neuralgia, Rheumatism, Earache, Toothache, Lumbago, and for Pain. Handy tin boxes of twelve Bayer Tablets of Aspirin cost few cents. Druggists also sell larger packages. Aspirin is the trade mark of Bayer Manufacture of Monoaceticacidester of Salicylicacid.—Advertisement.

It's a mean man who will rejoice at finding a button off his coat when his wife hasn't time to sew it on.

Stop That Backache!

Those agonizing twinges, that dull, throbbing backache, may be warning of serious kidney weakness—serious if neglected, for it might easily lead to gravel, dropsy or fatal Bright's disease. If you are suffering with a bad back look for other proof of kidney trouble. If there are dizzy spells, headaches, tired feeling and disordered kidney action, get after the cause. Use Doan's Kidney Pills, the remedy that has helped thousands. Satisfied users recommend Doan's. Ask your neighbor!

A Nebraska Case

C. E. Smith, carpenter, Har vard, Neb., says: "My kidneys troubled me and I had pains across my back and I was sore and lame At times I could hardly stoop or bend and the trouble was always worse after I took cold. My kidneys acted irregularly, too. I used Doan's Kidney Pills as directed and they strengthened my back and put my kidneys in good shape."

Get Doan's at Any Store, 60c a Box
DOAN'S KIDNEY
FOSTER-MILBURN CO., BUFFALO, N. Y.

\$79 A WEEK GUARANTEED

for selling 4 average Cresco Raincoats a day. OUTFIT FREE. We Deliver and Collect. Improved Mfg. Co., Dept. 151, Ashland, O.

Agents Wanted—100% profit; goods can be sold in every home. 24c for sample. Burk Remedy Co., 1119 Clinton St., St. Louis, Mo.

Arrangements are still hoped for that will give Armenia a reasonable chance at self-determination.

From all indications there will be need of Uncle Sam floating some loans for American citizens before long.

Profiteers in Austria must be entirely different from the Yankee model if they get scared at mere threats.

France is going to have a satisfactory premier if it has to try out every politician in the French "Who's Who."

It has been the general experience of those who have encountered them that Japanese sentries are very cocky persons.

Hog island, having completed its last war contract for ships, may now discover that the war is practically over.

"Home meals" as a means of fighting high restaurant prices would mean more if more women knew how to cook.