# SISTERS

# By KATHLEEN NORRIS

#### PETER'S RETURN.

Synopsis-Dector Strickland, retired, is living in Mill Valley, near San Francisco. His family consists of his daughters. Alix, 21, and Cherry, 18, and Anne, his nices, 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 woos Anne, Cherry comes home for Anne's wedding. Cherry realizes her nurwedding Cherry realizes her mar-riage is a failure. Peter tells Cher-ry of his "grand passion." without naming the girl. Martin comes for Cherry. Martin and Cherry drift

### CHAPTER IX.

In January, however, he came home one noon to find her hatted and wrapped to go.

"Oh, Mart-it's Daddy!" she said. "He's Ul-I've got to see him! He's awfully all."

"Telegram?" asked Martin, not particularly pleased, but not unsympa-

For answer she gave him the yellow paper that was wet with her tears. "Dad Ill," he read. "Don't worry. Come if you can. Alix."

"I'll bet it's a put-up job between you and Alix-" Martin said in indulgent suspicion.

Her indignant glance sobered him: he hastily arranged money matters and that night she got off the train in the dark wetness of the valley, and was met by a rush of cool and fragrant air. Cherry got a driver, rattled and jerked up to the house in a surrey, and jumped out, her heart almost suffocating her.

Alfx came flying to the door; the old lamplight and the odor of wood smoke poured through. There was no need for words; they burst into tears and clung together.

An hour later Cherry, feeling as if she was not the same woman who waked in Red Creek this same morning and got Martin's eggs and coffee ready, crept into her father's room. Alix had warned her to be quiet, but at the sight of the majestic old gray head and the fine old hands clasped together on the sheet, her self-control forsook her entirely and she fell to her knees and began to cry again.

The curse looked at her disapprovingly, but after all, it made little dif- but I shan't be happy unless things are ference. Dr. Strickland roused only arranged so that Alix shall be comonce again and that was many hours | fortable!" later. Cherry and Alix were still had been dozing; the nurse was resting on a couch in the next room,

Suddenly both daughters were wide awake at the sound of the hourse yet familiar voice. Ally fell on her knees and caught the cold and wandering

"What is it, darling?" The old, halfjoking maternal manner was all in

"Peter?" he said thickly.

"Peter's in China, dear. You rememher that Peter was to go around the world? You remember that, Dad?" "No-" he said musingly. They

thought he slept again, but he presently added: "Somewhere in Matthewno, in Mark-Mark is the human one -Mark was as human as his Mas-

"Shall I read you from Mark?" Alix asked, as his voice sank again. A shabby old Bible always stood at her father's bedside; she reached for it, and making a desperate effort to steady her voice, began to read. The place was marked by an old letter, and opened at the chapter he seemed to desire, for as she read he seemed to be drinking in the words. Once they heard him whisper, "Wonderful!" Cherry got up on the bed and took the splendid dying head in her arme; the murky winter dawn crept in and the lamp burned sickly in the daylight. Hong could be heard stirring. Alia closed the book and extinguished the

lamp. Cherry did not move. "Charity!" the old man said presently, in a simple, childish tone, Later, with bursts of tears, in all the utter ! desolation of the days that followed. ter, trembling, "I can't bear it. You Cherry loved to remember that his don't know how I feet. You and Dad last utterance was her name. But Alix knew, though she never said it, that it was to another Charity he spoke.

Subdued, looking younger and thinner in their new black, the sisters came downstairs, ten days later, for a business talk. Peter had been named I'll always keep the valley house open. as one executor; but l'eter was far away, and it was a pleasant family friend, a kindly old surgeon of Dr. Strickland's own age, or near it, and the lawyer. George Sewall, the other executor, who told them about their affairs. Anne, as co-heiress, was presem at this talk, with Justin sitting close beside her. Martin, too, who had come down for the funeral, was there.

The house went to the daughters; there were books and portraits for heart ache, Anne, a box or two in storage for Anne, and Anne was mentioned in the only will as equally inheriting with Alexandra and Charity. For some legal reason that the lawyer and Dr. ing going on composedly, although her of me. And I like you so much, Alix; Younger purde stear, Aune could not voice trembled now and then. "No, I like our music and cooking and

only a trifle less than her cousins',

Things had reached this point when Justin Little calmly and confidently claimed that Anne's share was to be based upon an old loan of Anne's father to his brother, a loan of three thousand dollars to float Lee Strickland's invention, with the understanding that Vincent Strickland be subsequently entitled to one-third of the returns. As the patent had been sold for nearly one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, one-third of it, with accumulative interest for ten years, of which no payment had ever been made Anne, was a large proportion of the entire estate, and the development of this claim, in Justin Little's assured. woodeny voice, caused every one to look grave.

The estate was not worth one hundred and fifty thousand dollars now. by any means: It had been reduced to little more than two-thirds of that sum, and Anne's bright concern that every one should be satisfied with what was right, and her ingenuous pleasure in Justin's cleverness in thinking of this possibility, were met with noticeable coldness.

If Anne was wrong, and the paper she held in her bind worthless, each girl would inherit a comfortable little fortune, but if Anne was right, Cherry and Alix would have only a few thousand dollars apiece, and the old home.

The business talk was over before any of them realized the enormity of Anne's contention, and Anne and Justin had departed. But both the old dector and the lawyer agreed with Martin that it looked as if Anne was right, and when the family was alone again, and had had the time to digest the matter, they felt as if a thunderbolt had fallen across their lives,

"That Anne could do it!" Alix said. over and over. Cherry seemed dazed, spoke not at all, and Martin had said

"People will do anything for money!" he observed once drily. He had met Justin sternly. "I'm not thinking of my wife's share-I didn't marry her for her money; never knew she had any! But I'm thinking of Alix."

"Yes-we must think of darling Alix!" Anne had said, nervously eager that there should be no quarrel. "If Uncle Lee intended me to have all this money, then I suppose I must take it.

"B-but the worst of it is, Alix!" keeping their vigil; Cherry, worn out, | Cherry stammered, suddenly, on the day before she and Martin were to return to Red Creek, "I-I counted on having enough-enough to live my own



For Answer She Gave Him the Yellow Paper That Was Wet With Tears.

life! Alix, I can't-I can't go back! "Why, my darling-" Alix exclaimed, as Cherry began to cry in her arms, "My darling, it is as bed as all that?"

"Oh, Alix," whispered the little siswere always here; now that's all gone -you're going to rent the house and try to teach singing-and I've nothing to look forward to-I've nobody!"

"Listen, dear," Alix soothed her, "If they advise it, and especially if Peter advises it when he gets back, we'll fight Anne. And then if we win our fight, And if we don't, why I'm going to visit you and Martin every year, and perhaps I'll have a little apartment some

day-I don't intend to board always-But she was crying, too, Everything seemed changed, cold and strange; she had suspected that Cherry's was not a successful marriage; she knew it now, and to resign the adored little sister to the unsympathetic atmosphere of Red Creek, and to miss all the old life and the old associations, made her

Cherry?" she asked after a while "With Martin? Oh, no," Cherry an-

"There's there's nothing, special,

fully inherit, but her share would be I it's just that I get bad moods," she said, bravely. "I was pretty young to

marry at all, I guess.' "Martin loves you," Alix suggested timidly.

"He takes me for granted," Cherry said, after a pause. "There doesn't seem to be anything alive in the feeling between us," she added, slowly, "If he says something to me, I make an effort to get his point of view before I answer. If I tell him some plan of mine. I can see that he thinks it sounds crazy! I don't seem very domesticthat's all. I-I try. Really, I do! But-" and Cherry seemed to brace herself in soul and body-"but that's marriage. I'll try again!"

She gave Allx a long kiss in parting,

the next day, and clung to her. "I'll write you about the case, and wire you if you're needed, and see you soon!" Alix said, cheerfully. Then she turned and went back into the empty house, keeping back her tears until the sound of the surrey had quite died away.

#### CHAPTER X.

Alexandra Strickland, coming down the stairway of the valley house on an April evening, glanced curiously at the door. Only eight o'clock, but the day had been so long and so quiet that she had fancied that the hour was much later, and had wondered who knocked

She crossed to the door and opened it to darkness and rain, and to a man in a raincoat who whipped off a spattered cap and stood smiling in the light of the lump she held. Instantly, with a sort of gasp of surprise and pleasure and some deeper emotion, she set down the lamp, and held out her hands gropingly and went into his arms. He laughed joyously as he kissed her, and for a minute they clung together.

"Peter!" she said. "You angelwhen did you arrive and what are you doing, and tell me all about it!"

"But Alix-you're thin!" Peter said, holding her at arm's length. "Andand-" He gently touched the black she wore, and fixed puzzled and troubled eyes upon her face. "Alix-" he asked, apprehensively.

For answer she tried to smile at him, but her lips trembled and her eyes brimmed. She had led the way into the old sitting room.

"You heard-about Dad?" Alix faltered, turning to face him at the man-

"But hadn't you heard, Peter?" "My dear-my dearest child. I'm just off the steamer. I got in at six o'clock. I'd been thinking of you all the time, and I suddenly decided to cross the bay and come straight on to the valley, before I even went to the club or got my mail! Tell me-your father-

She had knelt before the cold hearth, and he knelt beside her, and they busied themselves with logs and kindling in the old way. A bluze crept up about the logs and Alix accepted Peter's handkerchief and wiped a streak of soot from her wrist. quite as if she was a child again, as she settled herself in her chair,

Peter took the doctor's chair, keeping his concerned and sympathetic eyes upon her.

"He was well one day," she said, simply, "and the next-the next, he didn't come downstairs, and Hong waited and waited-and about nine o'clock I went up-and he had fallen he had fallen-

She was in tears again and Peter put his hand out and covered hers and held it.

"He must have been going to call some one," said Alix, after a while, "they said be never suffered at ail. This was January, the last day, and Cherry got here the same night. He knew us both toward morning. And that-that was all. Cherry was here for two weeks. Martin came and

"Where is Cherry now?" Peter in-

terrupted. "Back at Red Creek," - Alix wiped her eyes. "She hates it, but Martin had a good position there. Poor Cherry, it made her ill."

"Anne came?" "Anne and Justin, of course," Peter could not understand Alix's expression. She fell silent, still holding his

hand and looking at the fire. He looked at her with a great rush of admiration and affection. She was not only a pretty and a clever woman; but, in her plain black, with this new aspect of gravity and dignity, and with new notes of pathos and appeal in her exquisite voice, he realized that she was an extremely charming wom-

Before he said good-by to her, he had asked her to marry him. He well remembered her look of bright and interested surprise.

"D'you mean to tell me you have forgotten your lady love of the hoopskirts and ringlets?" she had de-

manded. "No." Peter had told her, frankly, "I shall always love her, in a way. swered, her eyes dried, and her pack- But she is married; she never thinks

tramps and reading-together. Isn't that a pretty good basis for mar-

"No!" Alix had answered, decidedly. Perhaps if I were madly in love with you I should say yes, and trust to little fingers to lead you gently, and

He remembered ending the conversation in one of his quick moods of irritation against her. If she couldn't take anybody or anything seriously-

he had said. Poor Alix-she was taking life seriously enough tonight, Peter thought, as he watched her.

"Tell me about Cherry," he said. "Cherry is well, but just a little thin and heartbroken now, of course. Martin never seems to stay at any one place very long, so I keep hoping-" "Doesn't make good!" Peter said,

shaking his head. "Doesn't seem to! It's partiy Cherry, I think," Alix said honestly. "She was too young, really. She never quite settles down, or takes life in earnest. But he's got a contract now for three years, and so she seems to be resigning herself, and she has a maid, I believe."

"She must love him," Peter submit-

ted. Alix looked surprised. "Why not?" she smiled. "I suppose when you've had ups and downs with a man, and been rich and poor, and sick and well, and have lived in halfa-dozen different places, you rather take him for granted!" she added. "Oh, you think it works that way?"

Peter asked, with a keen look. "Well, don't you think so? Aren't lots of marriages like that?"

"You false alarm. You quitter!" he answered. Alix laughed, a trifle guiltlly. Also she flushed, with a great wave of splendid young color that made her face look seventeen again. Your father left you-something, Alix?" Peter asked presently, with some hesitation.

"That," she answered frankly, "is where Anne comes in!"

"Anne?"

"Anne and Justin came straight over," Alix went on, "and they were really lovely. Doctor Younger and George Sewall were here every day; you and George were named as executors. I was so mixed up in policies and deeds and overdue taxes and interest and bonds-

"Poor old Alix, if I had only been here to help you!" the man said. And for a moment they looked a little consciously at each other.

"Well, anyway," the girl resumed hastily, "when it came to rending the will, Anne and Justin sprung a mine under us! It seems that ten years ago, when the Strickland patent fire extinguisher was put upon the market, my adorable father didn't have much money-he never did have, somehow. So Anne's father, my Uncle Vincent, went into it with him to the extent of about three thousand dollars-"

"Three thousand!" Peter, who had been leaning forward, earnestly attentive, echoed in relief.

"That was all. Dad had about hree hundred. Dad did all the work and put in his three hundred, and Un cle Vincent put in three thousandand the funny thing is," Alix broke off to say, musingly, "Uncle Vincent was perfectly splendid about it; I myself remember him saying, 'Don't worry, Lee. I'm speculating on my own responsibility, not yours,"

"Well?" Peter prompted, as she hes-

"Well. They had a written agreement then, giving Uncle Vincent a third interest in the patent, should it be sold or put on the market-"

"Ha!" Peter ejaculated, struck. "Which, of course, was only a little while before Uncle Vincent dled," Alix went on, with a grave nod. "The agreement lay in Dad's desk all these years-fancy how easily he might have burned it many's the time! But he didn't. George Sewall says that Anne is right. They've broken the

Peter, in the silence, whistied expressively.

"Gee-rusalem!" he exclaimed, "What does it come to?" At this Alix looked very sober,

gazed down at the fire and shook her

"All he had!" she answered, briefly, Peter was silent, looking at her in stupefaction.

"Almost, that is," Alix amended more cheerfully. "As it was-we should have had more than thirty thousand apiece. As it is, Anne gets it all, or if not quite all, nearly all."

"Gets!" he echoed, hotly. "How do

you mean?" "It seems to be perfectly just," the girl answered, rather lifelessly. But immediately she laughed. "Don't look so awful, Peter. In the first place, Cherry and I still have the house. In the second place, I am singing at St. Raphael's for five hundred a year, and singing other places now and then. Anyway, I'm glad you're home again, Peter!" she added.

"Home again," he answered, halfangrily. "I should hope I am-and high time, too! Has this-this money been turned over to Anne?"

"Not yet. Nobody gets anything until the estate is cleared-a year or more from now. There are some things to be thankful for," Alix added, dashing the sudden tears from her eyes, "and one is that Dad never knew

"Dear old Alix!" he said, putting his arm about her.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

The annual cost of maintaining one soldier in Germany is 25,000 marks (normally \$6,250).

# PARROT SAVES MAN FROM CELL

Finds Himself in Embarrassing Situation When Police Find Him Breaking Into Home.

## IDENTIFIED BY POLLY

"Hello, Ed, Whataya Got on Your Hip?" Is Greeting of Bird When Police Take Him In to Prove Assertion He Lived There,

Chicago,-"Arrawk! Rowk! Howsa boy? Howsa boy? Rawk!" It was the voice of the old green parrot in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Johnson at 2124 Bingham street.

The family upstairs took note. Someone went to the window, saw a man climbing into the window just below, and called the Shakespeare avenue police.

The intruder told Lieut, Joseph Palczynski a tale that was hard to believe.

Lost the Key, He Says.

"I'm a brother of Mrs. Johnson," he said. "She and Paul, her husband, went away over the holidays, and asked me to take care of the parrots and the canaries.

"Don't make me laugh," said the lleutenant cruelly, "it's too hot. Why didn't you open the door? Didn't they leave you the key?"

"Yes, but I lost it. And those birds have to have food and water."

"A lad as clever as you," said the big policeman, "has no business being a burgiar." "But I can prove it all," said the

man. "Prove it to the judge," said the other. "What's your name and address?"

"Edward Peterson, 2108 Western avenue. And say, give me a chance. I'll prove it by the parrot. I'll show you I'm right. Take me back to the

The lieutenant sat back and laughed. He laughed until it hurt. "Prove it by a parrot," he said. "Prove it by a bird that caused his



his arrest. Officer, throw this cuckoo downstairs. He's getting me over-

The Parrot Greets Them.

Peterson, however, pleaded so earnestly that the lieutenant finally consented. They went to the Johnson home in the patrol. The lleutenant got in first, then Peterson, then a couple of policemen.

"Rawk!" said the parrot to the hot lieutenant.

"Helly, Polly," said Peterson. "Hello, Ed," said the parrot. "Whattayagot on your hip?"

"You win," said Lieutenant Palczynski, albeit still a bit thoughtful. "The bird sure knows you. But maybe he'll call me 'Ed,' too." \*

"Try it," invited Peterson. "Hello, Polly," said Palczynski, 'Howsa Polly?"

Said the parrot: "Go to ---" And so Peterson will be allowed to climb through the Johnsons' window every day to feed and water the birds.

### BEES STING DOG TO DEATH

Animal Tied in Kennel Unable to Escape When Angry Insects Attack Him.

Medford, N. J .- Attacked by bees while tied to its kennel, from which it could not escape, a dog owned by Andrew Shoemaker was stung to death by the insects. Several persons who tried to rescue the dog were driven off by the infuriated bees.

The dog's kennel was near several bee hives, and when in some manner the insects were disturbed they turned upon the dog.

Shoemaker was absent at the time and when notified by telephone of the situation made a hurried trip home, but arrived too late to save his pet.

Divorced Couple Fight Over Pup. New York.-Custody of a Pekingese pup, little larger than a ball of yarn. is one of the issues in the marital woes of Daniel G. Reid, tin-plate. king. The Reids were divorced a few months ago. The banker made a cash settlement of \$200,000 on Mrs. Reid and agreed to pay her \$30,000 anaually. Now he wants the dog.

# DAIRY FACTS

FEED KEEPS UP MILK YIELD

Ordinary Rations Are Likely to Be Deficient in Principal Bone-Building Elements,

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

Feeding cows for several years, according to the commonly accepted standard with little or no additional pasture, reduced the milk yield much below the optimum, it was found by experiments at the government farm at Beltsville, Md. This condition may be corrected by giving the animal a dry period of two months, and feeding during that period a ration containing legume hay and grain with a high phosphorus content, with three or four times the amount of protein re-



Cows Thrive on Rich Pastures.

quired for maintenance, and two or three times the total nutriment. The milk yield in the subsequent lactation period may sometimes be doubled by this treatment. The results of the experiments are given in Bulletin 945. The Influence of Calcium and Phosphorus in the Food on the Milk Yield of Dairy Cows."

In the case of cows of which the milk yield has been reduced by several years' standard feeding, as followed at Beltsville, a greatly increased yield can be brought about by feeding "alternated rations with phosphate" during the dry period. This is taken to mean that the ordinary rations are more likely to be deficient in one of both of the principal bone-building elements than in any other constitu-

Bulletin 945, "The Influence of Calcium and Phosphorus in the Food on the Milk Yield of Dairy Cows," may be had upon application to the Division of Publications, United States Department of Agriculture.

HELP WAR ON TUBERCULOSIS

Farmers in Vicinity of Grove City, Pa., Sign Requests to Have Herds Tested.

The community at Grove City, Pa., where the dairy division of the United States Department of Agriculture Is carrying on community extension work, is active in tuberculosis eradication. The owners of several hundred berds signed requests to have their herds tested and accredited; in fact it appears that practically all the patrons of the Grove City creamery soon will have their animals tested. This work originated with the bull associations operating in that vicinity; but it now extends throughout the county, and

even to the two adjoining counties. An interesting feature of the situation is the springing up of the Grove-City Accredited-Dairy-Cattle Show and Sales association, composed of owners of accredited herds who wish to take advantage of the fact that all their herds are clean, to co-operate in improvement, and sell all their stock on that basis. One member who has a clean herd says that after his herd was tested he sold some cows for \$300 each, which, previously, he would have parted with for half that amount. He had actually offered them for \$150 prior to the test.

### MAKING FEED FROM SAWDUST

Wisconsin Cows Keeping Up Weight and Milk Yield and Show No III Effects From Diet.

Hydrollzed sawdust as a part of a ration for cows is apparently giving satisfactory results in Wisconsin. The forest service of the United States Department of Agriculture reports that cows at the agricultural college of that state are doing as well on a ration consisting of one-third sawdust as they did when their feed was only one-fourth wood meal. That is to say, they are keeping up their weight and their milk production and show no lil effects from the diet,

The bureau of animal industry is considering the proposal of the forest service laboratory to start feeding trials with dairy animals in which the wood product will form a part of the ration and the tests will extend for an entire year at least. The hyrolized-wood feed for these cows will be made at the laboratory. So far all the stock feed has been made from white-pine sawdust. Other soft woods, particularly the western species, will be tried in the future.