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CNORRIS

THE STORY SO FAR: Charlotte (Cherry) Rawlings, an orphan at Saint Dorothea's convent school since she was seven, knows almost nothing of her early history. Judge Judson Marshbanks and Emma Haskell are her guardians and when she is twenty, Emma gets her a secretarial job with Mrs. Porter in San Francisco, for whom Emma is house keeper. At the Marshbanks mansion she meets the judge's dictatorial old mother; Amy, rich debutante daughter of his dead brother, Fred; and Fran, his gay young second wife. Emma tells Cherry that her unmarried sister Charlotte was Cherry's mother and she learns from the judge that Amy's father was also her father. Kelly Coates, a young artist, takes Cherry along so Fran will visit his studio. Cherry can see he is very much in love with Fran and is jealous. Mrs. Porter dies and Cherry goes to Stanford University, living with the Pringles at Palo Alto. Fran tells Cherry she has decided to do the honorable thing and see Kelly no more. Soon afterward he asks Cherry to marry him, although Fran will always be the "unattainable woman." Her answer is no; she wants no Fran in the background. Emma tells Cherry that she is not Charlotte Rawlings but Amy Marshbanks, her sister

having secretly exchanged the babies. Judge Marshbanks confirms this, saying he has a statement Fred swore to on his deathbed. His mother, unobserved in a deep chair, overhears this, seizes the papers and throws them into the grate fire. Amy, twenty-one in a few days, is going to marry Count Gogo Constantino. Kelly calls to see Cherry and conher hands and spine and brow. What gratulates her on being Amy Marsh-banks. Cherry is happy when Kelly "Help!" says he hasn't seen Fran in weeks.

Now continue with the story.

CHAPTER XIV

over the stairs. Amy was at the "I never guessed it because it switch, pallid with fright; stout, isn't true," Amy answered, in proud distaste.

sturdy Molly, with May and some of the other maids behind her. was "It is true, my child. Your father running down from the upper floor. was a fascinating man. Women Fran, clinging to the banister, was

were drawn to him." "Cherry and I are the same age." Amy protested. "He was married. I don't-of course, I don't believe it!"

"Cherry was born two months too soon. Her mother was Charlotte Rawlings, the younger sister of Emma Haskell, who was your grandfather's nurse for years-my housekeeper after that

"You are not hurting me," Cherry said steadily, interrupting. "You are talking of Amy's mother."

Amy turned to Cherry, pathetic and bewildered. "What is all this, Cherry? What's she talking about? I think my grandmother's losing her mind. What's it all about?"

"I saw Emma a few weeks ago, up in the mountains," Cherry began, speaking in a voice suddenly hoarse and weak. "She told me that-that there had been a mistake in-in you and me-in our identities, Amy, when we were just newborn babies . "Of which there is absolutely no proof!" put in the old lady harshly. "There was proof. Judge Marshbanks will tell Amy so if she asks



When Cherry reached the door, Martin was on his knees, and the body his master shot through the heart was resting against his shoulder.

Someone was in danger. A hoarse | guess seemed as reasonable as that voice called out, "Help, help, help!" of everyone else's. "Cherry, you must have a the-Cherry sat up in bed, terrified at darkness, sweat suddenly cold on

ory." Kelly said one day when they were climbing the hill at Sausalito was it? Somebody had called behind Topcote. "I have about four," she answered

A shout came from the floor bejudicially. "And Amy would add low, and then the sound of a revolver one to that. She has strong suspishot clove the darkness sharply. cions of you." Cherry was at the door now. The

"Interesting," commented Kelly. "But after all, she may have no more than four," pursued Cherry, "for one of my four is Amy herself. Oh, I don't really think she had anything to do with it!" she interrupted his quick, surprised look. "But she had a motive. She knew that Uncle Jud was the only person who could really do anything about this question of her identity and mine. She was frightenedabout the shame of it, and the money, of course, and above all, about Gogo. Amy knew in her heart that Gogo would leave her flat if anything like that came out."-

"Do Amy," Kelly said, in a mildly pleased tone, "suspects me?"

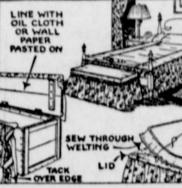
"I don't say she suspects you. But she knows you liked Fran, and that you were there that night, and she asked me the other day if I thought by any chance you and Uncle Jud could have had a quarrel." "Ha! I wonder if she suspects Gogo?"

"She was in perfect terror until he'd been cleared."

"Amy acts like a person completely innocent."

"She does, but at the same time she and I and the old lady are hiding what did actually go on that





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WHAT thou wilt, thou rather shalt enforce it with thy smile, than hew to it with thy sword.-Shakespeare.

Education makes a people easy to lead, but difficult to drive; easy to govern, but impossible to enslave. - Lord Brougham.

Let us then be up and doing.

-Henry W. Longfellow.

With a heart for any fate; Still achieving, still pursuing, Learn to labor and to wait.

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pheeling good all over, and showing it principally in one spot.-Josh Billings.



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hall lights rushed up and the light

"What was that?" Fran said, in

a quick quiet voice. "Let's not lose

They all ran downstairs after

Fran. Old Martin, the butler, was

in the lead and they saw him pause

at the library door. "They've got

When Cherry reached the door,

Martin was on his knees, and

the body of his master, shot

through the heart, was resting

Days went by There was a dread-

ful silence in the house; a feeling of

emptiness, even though it was filled

with people. Old Mrs Marshbanks

murmuring to Fran in Fran's room;

Amy tearful and frightened in hers:

Cherry coming and going with a col-

orless, shocked face; Gregory

Marshbanks, tall and good-looking

and serious, home from college;

Molly and May, the two upstairs

limply against his shoulder.

our heads. It was nothing."

him!" he said brokenly

on the stairs.

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him," Cherry was beginning, when Amy interrupted again in her turn: "You mean I'm not Amy Marshbanks, and my father's and mother's child and Grandfather Wellington's grandchild? But that's so idiotic."

"You are right, Amy," said Mrs. Marshbanks, more quietly than she had yet spoken. "You are absolutely right, my darling, and I am proud of you. And now, girls, no more of it. It's late, and I am going to bed. Good night, Amy."

"What do you suppose got her?" Amy asked in a whisper when they were in the hall. "She gets the most crack-brained ideas! Come into my room, Cherry. No, come on in a minute. Is any of that true? Was my father really your father, too?" "Emma says so," Cherry admit-ted, sick of the whole thing.

"Uncle say so?"

"Yes. Yes. He told me long ago. When I was here after Mrs. Porter died."

"Honest?" Amy asked, between a smile and a frown. And Cherry could see that she was not wholly displeased with the idea. "So Emma and my father-" mused Amy, a deep dimple appearing in her flawless little cheek.

"Not Emma. Emma's younger sister, Charlotte. She was only nineteen. She was just out of boarding school."

"That makes us cousins, doesn't it?" Amy asked, still marveling at the strangeness of it. "No, it doesn't," she corrected it quickly, 'it makes us half sisters!"

Cherry was standing looking at the other girl steadily. "I think I'll go to bed, Amy. I'm terribly tired." She went to her room and began

slowly to undress. Before she fell asleep she heard Fran and the judge come in, and Amy's voice in the hall: "Uncle Jud,

could I speak to you a minute?" "Tonight?" said the judge's pleasant voice in answer.

"If I could, Uncle!"

"All right, trot down to the library, there's a fire there," Cherry heard him say, and then Fran's voice, "If it's that comic-opera count, Jud, be firm with her!"

He followed Amy down, and there was silence abovestairs. Cherry nervously excited, got into bed intending to wait until Amy came up, and to gather, if she could from Amy's gone. But she was too sleepy. Long most appalling details. before the light in the hall went out she was deep in dreams. They were troubled dreams.

servants. Helene the maid, the Chinese cook and his helper. Martin the butler. Rousseau the chauffeur. these were all there.

And besides these were officers of the law who had opened doors and blocked boxes, taken their posts gravely and regularly at the entrances, checking everyone who went out and in.

Judge Marshbanks had fallen back across his own chair, had slipped to the floor; it had been his voice they had first heard, shouting for help; Cherry recognized it as she remembered that dreadful sound in the silent night.

Since then the place had been in full possession of the authorities. The family, the servants were being eternally summoned for questions.

Fran had repeated to everyone's satisfaction her simple story. She had come home from a Burlingame party with her husband at about midnight. She had felt restless and headachy that evening, and Judge Marshbanks, who always was glad to get home at a reasonable hour, had been delighted to bring her back before the party was well under way.

The judge, her story went on, had gone into the library for a talk with his niece, Amy Marshbanks, and Fran had gone to bed. She had heard nothing until his dreadful cry of "Help!" had rung through the house.

Amy was a poor witness in her own behalf, crying bitterly, and breaking out with frightened selfdefense with every word. She had asked Uncle Jud to talk to her that night-no, she wouldn't say about what-no, he hadn't gotten angry at her nor she at him-yes, it had agitated her a good deal-she had cried-yes, she had said, "Then I'll kill myself!" as Martin testified. But Martin, going about to put out the lights, knew that she had gone upstairs before he spoke to Uncle. before Uncle said to him, "I've a little business to finish here, Martin. I'll put out the lights!"

"Had the announcement of your prospective marriage anything to do with this conversation, Miss Marshbanks?" Amy had been asked. She had hesitated, had answered, "Not exactly." Amy was twenty-one now, and society had been duly notified, through the press, of her intention to become the third Countess Constantino.

On the other hand, the murdered man's mother had proved an incomparable witness. She had answered questions thoughtfully, evenmanner how the conference had ly, not wincing away from even the

"Who killed Judson Marshbanks?" headlined the newspapers. Everyone speculated, and everyone's

night, what the discussions and quarrels were about, and I marvel sometimes that they, the police, don't smell a rat!"

"There's Fran," Kelly said thoughtfully, stuffing his pipe.

"Oh, she wouldn't! Who was she telephoning to that night, Kelly?"

"Any one of a dozen men. Men fall for her the way soft coal goes into basements." A few moments later, they re-

turned to the house. Cherry pulled on her hat and handed Kelly her coat to hold for her. "I hate to go back!" she said.

Kelly adjusted the collar in back, square her about with his big hands on her shoulders and carefully buttoned her coat.

"You don't have to go back, you know," he said, after a moment in which he had cleared his throat. "It would be so good," she said, her raised face close to his, "to belong here. Just peaceful days and meals and digging in the garden and climbing the hill!"

"Why don't you do it, Cherry?" "Because from the very beginning. Kelly, from the time I first knew you, I've known you didn't love me. And if I ever came here," Cherry said, "I'd want you to be so mad about me that you could hardly bear it. I'd want you to feel that marriage-marriage between us-was a miracle, and that if ever we had a child it would be a miracle to you, too, just as it would be to me!"

"And suppose I said that it was that way with me, Cherry," the man answered, catching her lightly by the upper arms with both big hands, holding her face to face with him. "Suppose I told you, on my sacred oath, that for weeks, months, I didn't know what was the matter with me, and that after you went away this summer it came to me suddenly that it was you-that it's been you for a long time. What would you say then, Marchioness?" "I'd say-" she stammered, "don't -don't fool me, Kelly."

"Cherry," he asked, and now she was crushed so tight against his heart that she could not find breath to answer, "will you marry me, darling? Will you change my whole life for me, and make it the most wonderful life that any man ever had in this world? Will you, Marchioness?"

After a while he had to take her home. For even with the most expeditious plans in the world, they had to wait until such time as they could drive to San Rafael for a marriage license, and Cherry had to obtain permission from the authori ties to leave the Marshbanks house. (TO BE CONTINUED)

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