



THE Secret OF THE MARSHBANKS

BY KATHLEEN NORRIS

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THE STORY SO FAR: An orphan, Charlotte (Cherry) Rawlings knows almost nothing of her early history when, according to the wishes of her guardians, Judge Jndson Marshbanks and Emma Haskell, she becomes the secretary to Mrs. Porteous Porter, wealthy San Franciscan invalid. Busy as she is, Cherry sees the judge from time to time and meets the members of his household; his dictatorial old mother; Amy Marshbanks, debutante daughter of his dead brother, Fred; and Fran, his gay young second wife. Shortly afterward Cherry learns, through Emma, that her mother (never married) had been Emma's sister, Charlotte; that her father had been the judge's brother, Fred—Amy's father—and that, shortly after Cherry and Amy were born, Cherry's mother had switched the two babies! Poor Cherry Rawlings is really the rich Amy Marshbanks. The judge confirms the amazing story, but to protect Amy his mother burns certain papers that would have proved it to be true. Meanwhile, Cherry had fallen in love with Kelly Coates, a young artist (who for a time had been infatuated with Fran Marshbanks); and Amy is determined to marry Count Mario (Gogo) Constantino. Cherry is jealous when Fran intimates she had lunch with Kelly at his Sausalito studio, but he tells her he hasn't seen Fran in weeks. Old Mrs. Marshbanks tells Cherry she resents her presence in the house. Judge Marshbanks is shot to death in his library and everybody in the house is under suspicion. Kelly finally convinces Cherry that he is over his infatuation for Fran and she agrees to marry him. Amy marries Count Gogo in Reno. Cherry discovers there are gunpowder marks on Fran's negligee. The police find love letters Kelly wrote to Fran.

Now continue with the story.

CHAPTER XVI

"This is the first I've heard of this," said the old woman, in a voice of desperate resignation.

"I only knew of it myself yesterday. I'd put them in a place that seemed absolutely safe. They ferreted them out."

Cherry had finished. She went to take the chair opposite the older Mrs. Marshbanks at the fire.

"Hello, everyone!" Kelly Coates stood in the doorway.

Cherry's heart gave a great spring, began to tremble with fear and pain. Oh, she did not want to see Kelly this morning, not after Fran's story of the letters, not after the wonderful day he and she had had together at Topocote!

She would have escaped, but there was no escape. He came in, greeting Fran and old Mrs. Marshbanks and Gregory, catching Cherry's hand as he stood beside her, but with no other look or greeting, and spoke at once of Amy's elopement.

"And what did you say?" Cherry asked, palling.

"I said that I loved you."

Her eyes filled again. Cherry could not speak.

"Then she said that I didn't know what might happen," the man pursued, still in the tone of one completely bewildered, "and I asked her what on earth she was afraid of. She said, 'You don't know, you don't know how they sound! You've not seen them for months.' It was the damndest thing I ever knew." But as for the police and the press exploiting them and landing me in jail, why, it's just silly.

"And you really don't think there's anything dangerous in those letters?" Cherry asked on a long sigh.

"I know there isn't. What gets me is that she thinks there is."

"It's clearing, Cherry. Get on your coat and rubbers and tie something over your head. We'll go for a walk."

"If I can keep my feet on the ground!" she said, adding in a long tone, "Oh, Kelly, it'll be so good to get out of this house some day and into the free, open air and to forget everything that's gone on here!"

"Don't you think sometimes of the fact that if things had gone just a little differently you might be a rich woman, Marchioness?" he asked, as they walked along the wet sidewalks, leaning against the wind.

"No; I never thought of it, really. I wouldn't want it. I'll feel so rich as your wife, Kelly," Cherry said, "that it would just be a bother to me. Just to be over there, alone with you," she continued, gesturing towards the far hills, "there's no money in the world that could tempt me to give up a minute of it!"

"It's going to be a great adventure," Kelly said.

"It's going to be heaven! I can't believe it yet."

They paced along together, facing the wind.

"Oh, I'd forgotten, what with Amy and everything," Cherry said suddenly. "Yesterday when I was in Fran's room, and she was showing me the overnight case that the police had broken open when they got your letters, she went into the bathroom to take a shower and while she was there the wind blew in through her closet—and I went in to close the window—and one of her dressing gowns blew against my hand, and Kelly—she'd wiped a pistol barrel on it! No mistake. Grease and gunpowder, and it was all pucked up."

She smiled up at him through tears.

"Oh, Kelly, but it makes it all so horrid!" she said, even though hope was dawning in her voice.

"Cherry, you just said that you knew I'd cared—or that at one time some months ago, I thought I was crazy about Fran. I never asked her to come to Sausalito and run me; I never thought of her doing any such thing."

"Didn't she tell you about the letters?"

"Of course she did."

"You—you comfort me by just s-saying anything!" Cherry said, laughing with wet lashes. She seated herself in a big fireside chair, and Kelly came to sit on the broad arm, holding tight to her hand.

"Let's have it. What about the letters?"



I had to tell them, Kelly she said breathlessly, apologetically.

"She had them, Kelly. And a day or so ago the police found them."

"So what?"

"So what?" she echoed dazedly. "Can't they use them, Kelly? Can't they make it seem that perhaps if you loved her . . . ?"

"Why," Kelly said, "what on earth do you suppose was in those letters, dear? Plans for murdering Jud Marshbanks?"

"You comfort me," Cherry whispered, her eyes shut. "You don't know how you rest me, Kelly."

He twisted about a little so that he could get an arm around her.

"What was in them?" she asked faintly.

"Well, I suppose the usual thing. That I was—oh lord—perhaps that I was happy in my new friendship for one of the most fascinating women I'd ever known," Kelly said, half amused and half impatient.

"There must have been more than that because she was so frightened."

"I'll be damned if I know what scared her," he said, in a genuinely puzzled tone. "She was beside herself. 'Kelly,' she said, 'it isn't for my sake but yours! Your career is ruined.' And she wanted me to take her away. 'Take me away and marry me!' she said over and over again."

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her if she'd picked up the gun."

"Not necessarily. We were all so frantic! But, Kelly," Cherry went on impressively, laying a gloved hand on his shoulder, "this is the strange thing. Fran did have that negligee on at first, but when the police and the doctor and all the others got there she didn't. She had on only her nightgown, for she was shivering with cold, and one of the maids went and got her an overcoat from the hall closet."

"Hal!" Kelly said, his brow knitted. "Sure of that?"

"I'm absolutely sure. The first thing I saw when I opened my door was that the halls were lighted, and May and Molly and Helene, the other maid, were coming down from the upper floor, and Fran halfway down the stairs saying it was nothing, that we mustn't get excited, and wearing that negligee. But when the doctor and the police got there, she didn't have it on."

"She could have run upstairs, hung it up, and gone down again without anyone's noticing?"

"Easily—it was a madhouse for a while. And nobody was watching or checking."

"She wiped that revolver on the first thing that came handy, a fold of her dressing gown," Kelly formulated it slowly. "And then it occurred to her that the stain would be a hard thing to get rid of. She couldn't count on anything she had to clean it with . . ."

"She grabbed that gun instinctively and cleaned it before she realized that if those smudges were discovered matters would be worse than ever," Kelly continued. "So she took the boldest course and as it turned out the safest one. We're not far from Fisherman's Wharf, Cherry; how about an oyster stew?"

"Oh, Kelly, I'm starving!" She laughed her old joyous laugh as he caught her arm tightly in his, and they went along together at a walk that was almost a run.

The restaurant was as plain as coarse linen and cheap chairs could make it, but the fragrance of the boiling crab kettles outside scented the place appetizingly.

"Honestly, Kelly, is there one chance in the world Fran did it?" the girl presently said.

"I don't think so. I'd swear she didn't have the nerve. But it strikes me—it's seemed to me all along—that her position is that of someone who knows something, or thinks she does; she's protecting someone. But who? Amy? The old lady? I don't know . . . Here are our oysters."

"It's just one o'clock," Cherry said, "and I think I'll telephone home that I'm not coming."

When she came back she sank into her chair, gripping the table, trying to speak.

"Cherry, what is it? What's the matter?" Kelly stammered, catching at her hands.

"It was Mullins," she whispered. "They want us to come straight home. She said—she said she and Jud had quarreled—over you. Fran has confessed!"

When they went out onto the wharf looking for a taxi, Cherry held Kelly's hand tightly.

"Fran's confessed, eh?" he said more than once. "I wonder what that means? Why does she drag me in? She knows darned well that whatever she's up to I'm not in it."

"But—she could say you were!"

"Yes, but that's not enough."

"Kelly," she said, when they had signaled a cruising taxi and were on their way, "promise me something."

"Anything," he said.

"Promise me that no matter what happens now, no matter how tangled things get, you and I are—forever and eternally—bound to each other!"

"Why, my darling, my darling," he said, "my life is your life now. Here we are!" he finished abruptly, as the cab drew up at the imposing Marshbanks doorway. "Now we'll try to see what all this is about."

There were four officers there now, instead of the usual one or two; Fran was there, too, silent, very pale, tragic-looking, with her white skin and raven-black hair.

"I had to tell them, Kelly," she said breathlessly, apologetically.

"I'm sorry. I thought for a while that we could hide it. But I had to tell."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

HOUSEHOLD MEMOS... by Lynn Chambers

Children Need Good, Wholesome Foods At Their Parties



Simple parties help make children at ease with their friends, do a lot toward laying the foundations for their social success. Watch them enjoy playing host and hostess as this little pair is doing.

How do you rate with your younger generation? Are you content when you keep them clean, get them off to school, and give them some extra tutoring when they need it in English or math?

Yes, that in itself is a big job, and you are doing a big job if you have that part in smooth, running order. Notice, I didn't say whole job, because unless you provide for healthy recreation and play, the child is not getting his rightful share and start in life.

Future Americans must be a social as well as business success to be wholesome and happy. To prepare the child for this, you must provide him with a social and recreational outlet—and that means an occasional party to which to invite younger friends so the child is at ease in his role as host or hostess.

There's a certain excitement at children's parties which easily upsets their tummies, and the best way to handle them is to have nourishing, wholesome food, rather than "partified" dishes which will upset them even more. You'll find co-operation from other mothers if you let them know you will do everything to make her children at ease.

Let your decoration be a bit fancy and party-ish, of course, but keep to the sensible on the food. Have table favors, of course, for this carries out the theme and the children adore it. It stimulates conversation and keeps things going smoothly.

Fresh salmon steaks may be used in making the flaked salmon called for in this recipe. Serve it on small toast rounds and the children will adore it:

***Salmon Timbales.** (Serves 8)

4 eggs, slightly beaten
2 cups milk
1 cup bread crumbs
½ teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons chopped pimento
1 pound salmon, flaked
1 teaspoon paprika
2 tablespoons shortening
1 teaspoon onion juice
8 toast rounds
Parsley

Add butter and bread crumbs to hot milk, then stir until all soaked. Add slightly beaten eggs, flaked salmon (steam fresh salmon 8 to 10 minutes, then flake), pimento, salt, paprika and onion juice. Pour into buttered timbale or greased

***Orange Sherbet.**
1½ cups sugar
1 cup water
2 egg whites stiffly beaten
2 cups orange juice
3 tablespoons lemon juice

Boil sugar and water together for 5 minutes. Beat egg whites slowly and add to fruit juices. Mix all ingredients and pour into freezing tray of mechanical refrigerator. Freeze stiff, then beat thoroughly. Return to freezing compartment and freeze until stiff.

***Peanut Butter Cookies.** (Makes 2 dozen)

1½ cups flour
½ teaspoon salt
½ cup honey
3 tablespoons corn syrup
¼ cup peanut butter
¼ cup shortening
Apple butter

Sift all dry ingredients together. Cream shortening, add to peanut butter, honey and corn syrup. Add flour and roll dough into size you prefer for finished cookies. Chill for 15 minutes. Cut into thin slices and top half of them with apple butter. Cover with a second slice of dough and seal as for a tart. Bake in a slow oven (325 degrees) for 25 minutes.

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Children's Party Menu

- *Salmon Timbales on Toast Rounds
- Celery Hearts
- Carrot Strips
- *Orange Juice with Orange Sherbet
- *Peanut Butter Cookies
- *Recipes Given

custard cups. Bake in a pan of hot water in a moderate oven (350 degrees) for 15 to 20 minutes. Unmold on toast rounds, garnish with parsley and serve.

Few children would pass up this delicious cheese 'n bread dish—it's delicious and good for them, too!

Cheese Fondue. (Serves 6)

- 3 eggs, separated
- 1 cup grated cheese
- 1 cup bread crumbs
- 1 cup milk
- 1 tablespoon butter
- ½ teaspoon salt

Beat egg yolks until lemon colored. Cook cheese, bread crumbs, milk, butter and salt over low heat, stirring constantly. Add beaten egg yolks. Fold in stiffly beaten whites. Pour into a well-greased casserole. Bake at 350 degrees for 35 minutes or until inserted knife comes out clean.

An afternoon party menu may consist of assorted sandwiches.

Deviled Egg and Cheese Sandwiches.

- 3 hard-cooked eggs
- 1 tablespoon dry mustard
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 6 slices buttered whole wheat bread
- 3 wafer-thin slices of Swiss-type cheese
- Watercress
- Dill pickles

Cut eggs, crosswise and into halves. Mash yolks and blend with mustard, salt and Worcestershire sauce, mixing well. Fill the whites. Cut eggs into thin slices and arrange on three slices of bread. Top egg slices with cheese and a second piece of bread. Cut in halves and garnish with watercress and dill pickles.

A citrus fruit drink is refreshing, fine for keeping up young spirits busy at play during party time.

Keep all the flavor in the orange juice plus valuable vitamin C by squeezing it only just before serving. To have chilled juice, chill whole oranges in refrigerator before extracting juice.

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