TWO

AMBITION'S CONTEST

BY CHRISTINE FABER

CHAPTER III-CONTINUED

THE FIRST GLIMPSE OF THE STRANGE VISITOR

" Mamma, why these solemn commands? Surely my love for him would make me do all these things without the asking; but since you wish it, I promise to make any sacrifice, no matter how great, which may help him to become the good man you desire to see him.

"God bless you, my darling-my comforter!" The mother's hand rested in benediction on the fair, drooped head, and the mother's kiss sealed the sweet lips which would have promised further.

In the servants' hall that same evening a kind of parting carnival had been held, to honor the departure of O'Connor; and grim Anne Flanagan, Mrs. Courtney's maid, who was to accompany Miss Ellen, participated in the festivities.

O'Connor for thirty years had been a domestic in the Courtney Eighteen years before he family. had headed the phalanx of servants who were drawn up in the hall, to pay due deference to Allan Courtney's young bride, the present Mrs. Court ney, and from that time he seemed to exercise potent authority among his fellow help. The latter were wont to treat him with a respect second only to that which they paid his the mistress of the mansion; opinions were oracularly received, and his words quoted as information given by most reliable authority. To-night he occupied a chair at the head of the abundantly supplied board, and Anne Flanagan, as another of the highly honored in being selected to attend the travellers, sat at his right hand. Her tall, angular figure seemed to have its peculiarities thrust more into public notice by the primness of the attire she wore. A black satin dress, unrelieved by ruffle or button, which was evidently in the decline of its days, fitted tightly to her form ; her scanty black hair was arranged in some severely simple mode of her own, and like her dress was guiltless of ornament. Her saffron hued complexion, prominent cheek bones, and great blackeyes made her face a very peculiar, and at times almost a repulsive one. She had accompanied Mrs. Courtney. on the event of the latter's bridal, to the present mansion, and the same dignity and primness of appearance which she conducted herself with now, characterized hen movements As Mrs. Courtney's favored she occupied an important maid. position in the servants' household, the latter yielding to her almost the same deference with which they regarded O'Connor, but Miss Flanagan was severely reticent and cold in her manner. O'Connor, because of his approach

ing departure, was particularly complacent and communicative-several times during the evening turning deferentially to Miss Flanagan for corroboration of some opinion,-and the angular figure had bowed, and the prim mouth had relaxed faintly, but further the lady had not condescended.

Well as I was saving." said the old man, holding the tumbler up, that the light might shine on the ruby color of its contents, "I have been a long time in this house, and I am proud to say that I had the conce of its late masther, and now I am thrusted by its honored misthress. I have said that I did not like home, that they might at least cheer the looks of things for the last few I stick to that opinion

to speak; then endeavoring to reassume his wonted dignity, he rose a little unsteadily, pressing down his peculiarly combed fore-locks, as he tremulously replied :

'This to me! A fool! I who have been in the family for thirty years, while she has been here only eighteen.'

Long enough to teach me how to hold my tongue "-and Miss Flana gan, with a prim courtesy walked stiffly from the room.

The old head servant looked afther her, shook his head dolefully, and sank into his chair with a very woebegone expression of countenance. His fellow help sought to make him resume his wonted spirits, but in vain ; the conviviality of the ensuing nours was lost upon him, and when he retired he was heard to mutter as he ascended to his room :

"O'Connor is only an old fool afther all."

The next morning dawned with a heaviness in the atmosphere, which broke at length into heavy, pouring rain, and the chill unpleasantness of the day served to increase the gloom which oppressed the spirit of the Courtneys. A few privileged friends accompanied them to the steamer, and in their presence Mrs. Courtney refrained from betraying aught of the grief which was pressing about her heart like a vice. bowed again, in his former deferen-tial manner, drew the cloak, which But at length the ominous preparations for the removal of the gangway began, and she had only time to wring hurriedly the hands of O'Con nor and Anne Flanagan, to hastily kiss Ellen, who had thrown herself sobbing on a cushion in the cabin, and to press Howard passionately to lighted thoroughfare beyond. her bosom, when the utmost limit of her stay was reached, and she was obliged to hurry down the already loosened gangway. She retained her calmness, looking quietly from the pier where she stood, on the prepara tions, which, to her, seemed to proceed with undue haste, only shudder ing sometimes, as the creaking of

the timbers and the straining of the cordage sounded above the din of bustle on the wharf. Howard had left the cabin, and now stood on the deck amid a group

of men who waited to wave a farewell. His eyes sought that one figure, which stood in the half drooping th attitude on the very verge of dock, and the steady gaze of mother and son into each other's face con tinued, till a sob from a poor woman standing near, whose daughter was on board, caused Mrs. Courtney to withdraw her eyes. When looked up, the ship was moving majestically out; the hats of the group on deck were doffed—Howard's also ; but his head was bowed, and he did not look up until the vessel had glided far past the dock. But his mother looked with burning eyes which would fain have viewed the whole of that long ocean track, while upon her heart was being imprinted that parting scene, with one figure by standing out in startling distinctness -the boyish form with its bowed

head. The vessel disappeared from sight at last, and she was about to turn to the carriage in waiting, when a familiar voice whispered in her ear You have borne the parting

bravely. She turned, to behold the monastic cloak and low-crowned sombrero of Brother Fabian disappearing amid the crowd.

have accompanied Mrs. Courtney her loneliness for a time, but she gracefully waived their proffers, and shaped head, with its crisp, black curls, was fully displayed, while returned alone to the great house, Ellen, with her hand placed affecwhose rooms seemed as desolate as tionately upon his arm, had her though death had taken one of its ingentle face turned more to him than mates. In Howard's apartment, with at his elbow, in a stern sharp voice, her head leaning on the bed which which seemed to have the effect of his form had so lately pressed, she to the scene beyond, so that its delicate profile was visible to those standing in their rear. The crimson gave full vent to the anguish so long restrained. While she sobbed, with shawl reflected an unwonted glow upon her her hair hanging in disordered tresses upon the pillow, and her cheeks, and the happy sparkle in her dark eyes lent a gladsome expression cheeks flushed and tear-stained, a to the rest of her countenance. domestic came to the door. Receiv fair, so childish, so pure, she seemed ing no response to his knock, the as if she might be Howard's man turned the knob: Mrs. Courtguardian angel in earthly form. ney started at the sound, and, evi-Into the stern, repellent face of Mrs dently unconscious of her disordered appearance, at once admitted him. Courtney's maid, as the latter looked. at the young creatures, there crept The strange gentleman, ma'am, is waiting," he said, handing her a softening expression-a mistiness about the eyes, and a slight quiverwhite, embossed card, on which was ing of the firm set mouth ; written, in a peculiarly masculine dropped her head and muttered style of penmanship, one wordsoftly Morte

THE CATHOLIC RECORD

for a moment he seemed powerless | tals, and his grave, courtly demeanor was such as is usually ascribed to the eastern nabob. He bowed low, pressed his hand on his heart, and waited, in respectful silence, Mrs.

Courtney's commission. "Tell," she said tremulously, "that today has seen, in part, the com-pletion of the sacrifice to which I pledged myself—that my children have sailed for foreign shores, and I

have not accompanied them—that you have seen me distracted with grief, torn with apprehension for the unprotected future of my darlings, and broken-hearted because of the sorrow which has clouded my life. Tell faithfully and truly; omit not a circumstance, even of the outward surroundings; the rain, which made

the parting with my children more desolate the gloom of the dreary pier upon which I stood. Tell him of the sickening fear with which I must dwell for the coming twelve months or more-the fear of Howard

dying in those distant climes. Tell all, and ask if farther proof is required of my endeavor to fulfil the attestations of that solemn pledge." The stranger answered not. He

simply looked, with his expressive eyes, an intelligent assent to her desire, pressed his finger on his lips, to show that the silence which had maintained on his previous visits might not be broken now, bowed again, in his former deferen was fashioned in a foreign mode, closer about his shoulders, and signified his readiness to depart. She accompanied him to the door, wait ing on the covered stoop while he descended the steps, and hurried, with his peculiar gliding gait, to the

CHAPTER IV

THE FIRST OUTWARD TOKEN OF A WAVERING FAITH

Fair, childish-looking, Ellen Courtnev, with her pale, sweet face, grew be something longingly looked for on the deck of that ocean steamer. She was so gentle in her demeanor to all-used such kindly tones to the most menial person on board with whom she came in contact-that more than one of the passengers termed her an angel in mortal guise. Her unselfish devo-

peculiar remark. Howard himself often turned to her, when her loving little hands had carefully fastened his cloak or folded a shawl about his form with a low, earnestly-spoken-'Darling little sister !"

O'Connor and Anne Flanagan were each in their own way proud of the admiring notice with which their respective charges were favored, though between the two privileged servants the ill feeling which had been suddenly brought into existence on the night preceding the departure, maintained its first vehemence ; but it was evinced only the silence which each main tained when in the other's presence, when imperative occasion save

demanded speech. One evening, the very last of the Indian summer, when the sunset broke over the blue ocean with the rich tinted colors which lend to the crested waves such an indescribable beauty, Howard and Ellen stood on deck delightedly viewing the scene. Anne Flanagan, who was about to descend to her state-room, paused, as did others of the passengers, to Sympathizing friends would fain view the young brother and sister. The cloak had partially fallen from Howard's lithe, erect form, and his hat being doffed, his magnificently.

must intervene ere he could attain age, with his mother's face, save that the realization of his hopes, the the delicacy of feature was strengthacme of his ambitious desires, and ened by a manly contour, and with he was wont to pace the deck with much of his father's courtly reserve dreams of future greatness flushing his cheeks and sparkling in his eyes,

till Ellen grew fearful lest another hemorrhage might ensue. "I must make my manhood rong," he would reply to her

strong,' affectionate remonstrances; "and to do that I must listen to no puerile fears about my health. You speak with the weakness of your sex when you urge me upon this point ; but, I tell you, Ellen," speaking vehement ly. "I would willingly be laid in the ourtney vault to morrow, rather than live only to die in obscurity at last. I will, I must achieve a name. The pious girl would fain have replied in her gentle, religious strain, but he would have none of it, replied turning away impatiently when she began : so she sighed, put up tearful little prayers for him to Heaven. and tried to think that Heaven would be satisfied with such endeavors on her part.

It was night when the staunch ship floated into the Liverpool dock, and the darkness increased the con fusion of the hurry and bustle of landing; but the strange possessed weird interest for the prother and sister, though the latter's little timid heart throbbed anxiously as she clung to Howard's

Miss Flanagan had wrought herself into a state of excitement about securing the baggage, and her more than once sounded in shrill altercation with some official on board. In her breathless anxiety she thoughtlessly clutched O'Connor's arm, appealing to him for some intervention on his part; but the old man replied in his cool, sarcastic manner

"I wonder at you, ma'am, to ax me anything. You must be forgettin' that I'm a fool !"

The irate lady was speechless with rage for a moment. When she re-covered her voice, it was to scream into his ear in tones hoarse with passion :

"So you are; only more of a fool now than you ever were !" Well, I hope you'll not be forget-

tin' it again, ma'am !" and he turned away with imperturbable coolness quietly superintending all very tion to her brother was a subject of arrangements about the baggage, and making his Irish wit and forethought supply his lack of knowledge of the manner in which such business should be transacted. And that same Irish coolness and sagacity secured the desired ends of the party well and quickly as a keen knowl edge of such affairs accomplished like results for the other passengers. Even much-offended Miss Flanagan found herself at length comfortably lodged in a sumptuous hotel, with the tickets requisite for the delivery of her baggage in her careful pos-

> session. The "Grosvenor House," to which the children's English letter of intro duction was addressed, was situated in the aristocratic West End, Lon don, and hore upon its imposing front unmistakable evidence of the wealth and grandeur of its inmates. There was an air of the English baronetcy about the coat-of-arms which sur mounted the elaborately adorned portico : a reminder of the English court in the very domestic who conveved the Courtney name to the fair mistress of "Grosvenor House; while about the darkened reception-room, into which the brother and sister were ushered, was an oppressive air that might have been de rived from the massive grandeur of the furniture. Into this state apartment, with its courtly appurtenances, glided, in a few minutes, Lady Gros-

"Where, dear ?" asked Mother, pausing, as she tested a loaf of bread with a broom straw. "O, right 'round here somewhere, said Bobbie. "Say, I can't neve One would almost have inferred from

the grave demeanor which usually characterized his actions, that manhood's modicum of sense and thought had already enriched his youthful mind. On his introduction to the young strangers, he had bowed with his father's courtly grace, smiled his mother's rare, peculiarly beautiful smile, clasped their readily extended hands with an affectionate grasp, and allowed his fine eyes to rest an un-wonted time on the lovely, blashing

face of Ellen Courtney. It was not a difficult thing to win at once from each member of the

family the affectionate friendship which was eagerly bestowed, and the great state rooms were opened with brilliant eclat for the reception of those who might contribute to the pleasure of the youthful guests. The brother and sister enjoyed the novelty you of English modes and pastimes, and were charmed with the interesting and varied sights which they were

shown each day, though Howard's appreciative mind delighted more in scenes to which history has given a vivid and touching interest. Ellen was happy, because her watchful eves detected in her brother signs rapidly returning health of strength: the spiritual look was vanishing from his countenance; he no longer grew tired so soon when walked, and was already strong enough to spend part of the after-noon in the fine park attached to the mansion, engaged in some athletic game with Malverton. She wrote home glowing accounts of these joyful tokens-accounts that sent Mrs. Courtney to her knees, whence she offered such thanksgivings to God as made her tremulous with their

fervor. That loving little heart in courtly English home was not to be drawn from its promised allegiance by all the splendor which Lady Grosvenor gathered about her. English spoke of the beauty of the ociety vouthful American heiress as something which promised to be exquisite, of her masterly touch on the piano as extraordinary in one so young, of her pure, fresh voice as something which even connoisseurs pronounced marvellous, and the flattering comments reached Ellen Courtney's ears, but her very being was so enwrapped with that of her brother that regarded the complimentary speeches as things which were spoken of another than herself, and her naiv modesty lent a new and additional

You said you would put that blue ribbon in my hat and line it." charm to her winning demeanor. "I-I'm afraid I've been a little Lord and Lady Grosvenor were busy," strict and high church Protestants, you shall have it, Jerry, in time for but each Sabbath the costly family equipage conveyed the children of church." "Heavens, look at the clock," shouted Millie. "Please hurry their friend to the Roman Catholic place of worship. Mother, with my lunch, and where's my pocketbook ?" Mother went in

TO BE CONTINUED

MOTHER'S HOLIDAY

SHOWING HOW SELDOM CHILDREN

MOTHER

Bobbie got up and looked at the BEALIZE THAT THEY ARE ABLE TO hooks behind the kitchen door. "Where's my cap? My baseball MAKE SATURDAY A HOLIDAY FOR cap with the red and gray stripes on

it Say, Ma, where is it Geraldine Ames in Extension Magazine 'I don't know, child," said Mother. It was really a very lucky thing but arose from the table-she hadn't that Father broke his leg. We did taken a bite yet-and went into the not think so at the time, for we knew sitting.room, then out in the shed, back into the pantry, and finally it meant extra steps for Mother, and we were so anxious about Mother. found it behind the sewing machine. But when Father had improved so on the floor. that he could hobble out of bed and

all day, be back for dinner, though. sit in the big green leather bottomed chair, with his leg propped up on a Don't Don't forget my brown striped blouse," and Bobbie in his baseball enviable reputation for cuisine and unpillow, we made the discovery that it dragging his bat, and flourish obtrusive service. Twelve stories of ing his mitt, ran out of the house, solid comfort; ocean porch and sun parslamming the door as he went. Then Nellie came down. She's the baby, only six, and Mother started to comb her hair, but stopped to hunt up the oil-can for me as] wanted to oil my wheel. Then she

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situated directly on the ocean front, All ri,' I'm down in Smith's field with a superb view of beach and board walk, the St. Charles occupies an unique



'But, Jerry, this is a picnic and you don't want me to go with a dinner-I'll hunt up sométhing for you,'

'Say, I can't never

keep anything. Where is it, Ma ?"

Mother looked behind the kitchen

table and in the wood-box and finally

found it in the shed where Bobbie

had tossed it the night before, then

Bobbie sat down at the table and

kicked the chair impatiently. Millie also sat down and looked impatiently

at the clock, while Mother hurries

as best she could, and served the oat-

me Jerry—" say be a good kid and let me take your school lunch-box,

will you? Mine doesn't look fit to

take out to a picnic, anyway, I've

indignantly. "I'm going to take my lunch, too, to day, you heard me ask

Mother to get up my lunch, didn't

I didn't think." I protested.

"Shs, quarrelling children !" Mother

"And Mother," broke in Millie, would you have time to do up my

white waist this afternoon, I want

'I'll try, dear," was mother's reply

'And say, Ma. I haven't got a clean

Of course you have, Bobbie," said

"I meant the one with brown

"I'll wash it out and iron it for you

she cleared away the oatmeal dishes

and put on the eggs, bacon, and

'I can't go to church tomorrow,"

Mercy, why not, child ?" asked

"Because I haven't a decent het.

said Mother, flushing,

sitting room and found Millie's

pocketbook on the mantel, put the

sighed. Millie grabbed it and with

'goo'-by" dashed out of the house.

but

hurry

biscuits and poured the coffee.

stripes, I want to wear my brown

suit tomorrow because I'm going to

Eddie Well's after church for

blouse, have I, for Sunday ?" piped

it to wear to church tomorrow?

Say, Jerry "-Millie always calls

I should say not," I exclaimed,

"I'm going to take my

meal.

lost it.'

stairs

kitchen.

up Bobbie.

Mother.

dinner.

said

Mother.

pail, do you ?"

go to the attic to get it.

You never do.'

Nor you either."

much to bother with."

...

Mother said to me. She found a little pasteboard box, but she had to Aren't you ashamed, Jerry, to let Mother climb those two flights of

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DENTISTS

still. Being, as I am proud to state, almost one of the family, I may make bold to spake my mind.

er not," said Miss Flanagan, at his elbow, in a stern sharp voice startling all her hearers save O'Conhad heen fortified by previous imbibings from the glass held. He turned and looked at her with a slight glance of contempt. resuming

I have been thirty years in this house. I was a young man of twenty-five when old Mr. Alban Courtney, the father in-law of the present Mrs. Courtney, hired me as It was a different house then; there were gay parties of young folks often held, for the lady of the mansion was young as the misthress is now, and like the present misthress, was devoted to her children-two boys, as likely lads as ever stepped—and the happy times lasted till the boys became young men and went to college. Then the cholera carried off the old gintleman, and the misthress dropped dead of heart disease a week afther. Oh ! dear, but it was the sorrowful house then, with the two young gintlemen hall. grieving like girls, and everybody so sad-looking. Afther the funeral, we servants expected to be discharged, and were beginning our preparations to lave, when Mr. Alban Courtney, the eldest son, desired us all to stay, just as we were, saying we had been his father's servants, and we should remain his; and that he and his brother were going to travel, and would be away some years. They wor away five, years, and whin the came back, Mr. Alban brought his replied

bride wid him. Afther that -" he was interrupted by sthrange-Miss Flanagan suddenly rising and saying angrily : You are a doting old fool ! and

had better let matters alone that don't concern you.

Had a bomb-shell exploded among sion of ludicrous bewilderment, and and straight black hair of the Orien-

"Oh! that ever it might have Forgetful of the curious servant. eyes, which were eagerly noting the singularity of her appearance, she been.' O'Connor emerged from the comnanion way with a shawl on his arm pressed the card to her lips in an for his young master, and, passing ager, passionate way, that at once Anne Flanagan, glanced a little betrayed the existence of a mystery, which would form but too fruitful a curiously at her strange attitude. She lifted her head suddenly, and, theme of gossip for the servants' as if to remove whatever impression Waiting not to arrange her

dishevelled locks, nor remove the her unwonted manner might have tear stains from her flushed face, she created, said descended at once to the parlor, folthere's lowed by the domestic, who, as he passed, glanced sharply through the Wonderful, isn't it ?' open doorway, muttering to himself: It's always the same one that houldn't be asked." omes

He repeated to his fellow servants. when he went below, all that he had seen, upon which the cook, with a very knowing shake of the head,

It was thrue what the good man, O'Connor said, about the quare paple comin' to the house. May God shawl to Master Howard. It was a pleasant voyage, though defend the misthress, for she's a monotonous lady born and bred." incident : but it was replete with a

The misthress, little aware of the gossip of which she was the subject.

was receiving in the parlor a man, the company, they could scarcely have evinced greater consternation. O'Connor's face assumed an expres

the lovely mistress of "Gros-House." Her beauty was of venor, venor House.' that indescribable type which seems to derive little from the adornment

of dress, and though thirty five years had left slight traces of their care on loosely folded about her her brow, she still retained the lightness and delicate grace of early youth. Her white, jewelled fingers hurriedly unfolded the introductory missive, and her kindly eyes glanced over the brief contents, which touchingly referred to the friendship of by-gone days.

Oh." she said, on concluding the gracefully-written epistle, "the dearest one of my girlhood's friends trans-mits to me the care of her treasures," and placing an arm about Howard and Ellen, she drew them to her with almost as loving a pressure as their mother might have given.

- she

from its

boundless expanse of ocean seemed

lack

10

You are her counterpart," she said to Ellen, kissing again and again, the latter's white brow. Long ago we were dear and intimate friends ; your mother, who was Mary Ashland then, and I — yes, twenty years ago," transferring the which rested about Howard's arm, shoulders, to the closer support of Ellen's slight form, "your mother was but little older, and little taller "I'm marking the improvement grown than you. We have not met in Master Howard's health. since her marriage, but we have been faithful in writing to each other, and The old man replied sarcastically. now at last an opportunity has 'As I'm a fool, ma'am, me opinion arrived for the redemption on my

part of early friendship pledges." Miss Flanagan's saffron-colored Her tender, kindly words were but face slightly flushed, and her eyes sparkled angrily, but she restrained the retort which was evidently on the heralds of kindlier, more loving deeds, and Howard and Ellen Court ney soon found themselves as much the petted inmates of the English her lips and went hurriedly below,

while O'Connor, with virtuously as they had been the indignant steps, strode with the cherished darlings of their own Ameri-

can home. There were two other members of the Grosvenor familythe stern, haughty Lord Stanwix

strange delight to Ellen, and an Grosvenor, whose demeanor never for the Comets and I've got to hurry enthusiastic joy to Howard. The relaxed its stiffness save when in the presence of his wife, and the only son and heir to the Grosvenor title

to fill the boy's heart with an undefined feeling of wildness-to make and estate, Malverton Grosvenor. him impatient at the delay which The latter was a lad about Howard's broad sweep with his hand.

a fortunate accident

I was down stairs early last Saturday morning—and my sister Millie came down soon after. Of course, Mother had been downstairs for ages. was baking the bread and setting the Millie table when we got there. works in the box-factory in the village and she was primped up something unusual for Saturday. Mother, dear, put me up a nice

lunch with some hard-boiled eggs, will you ? We girls are going from the shop right down to the lake grove for a nicnic and some dancing in the pavilion for our half holiday.'

'Yes dear," said Mother, and she got out extra eggs and set them to boiling and began cutting thin slices of bread and slicing some cold meat for sandwiches. Then she made a little quick frosting to put on the sponge cake to make it look good. Being Saturday, of course, I didn't have to go to school, and I was plan ning to take my wheel and, with another girl in my class, go into the country for some botany specimens, so I naturally asked Mother to make two lunches while she was up about it.

When Bobbie came downstairs he sounded like a whole class letting out for recess. He was dragging his baseball bat thump-e-ty-thump on the stairs and shouting at the top of his voice. Mother rushed to the kitchen stairway and opened the door.

What is it, Bobbie ?" she asked, looking worried and flushed with her baking. She was trying to get break. fast in time for Millie to go to work. 'Is breakfast ready? Ma, is break

fast ready ?" Bobbie was calling. Just a minute, dear," Mother replied, and I noticed that Father had hitched his chair over rather

close to the sitting-room door. "The Comets is goin' to play double-header with the Bridge team, I'm catcher Bobbie informed us.

to practice. It's going to be a great Say, Ma, where's my mitt? I game. Say, Ma, where's my mitt? I left it right there," and he gave a

found some stouter string and tied up my lunch. She promised to iron my blue hair ribbons to match my hat. When I left she was lifting Nellie up to the table. Mother was very careless about eating, for she hadn't stopped to eat a thing. But I got out my wheel from the front hall, and went away for the day.

That was last Saturday week. Yesterday was Saturday, too. was awakened by Father shaking me. By this time he could get about very well on his crutches. "Hush," he, said, "dress and come downstairs right off and be quiet about it." He commanded Millie do likewise. I tell you we were scared. We got down into the kitchen and Bobbie was there, yawning and rubbing his eyes and complaining. commenced to cry because the first thing I thought was that Mother had

died in the night. There was no fire in the stove and the table wasn't set. I never before in my life came downstairs in the morning and found no fire nor the table set. "Where-where's Mother ?" asked

Millie, and she was very white. I guess she was scared, too.

"Mother's asleep," said Father firmly, sitting down in the kitchen rocker. We stared at him, then at each other, then looked at the clock. It was only half past five.

'O, she'll be right down," said Millie. "She's always down by half past five.

"No, she won't," said Father sternly. "I made her promise not to get out of her bed until seven o'olock this morning.'

"Goodness, I've got to be in the box-shop at half-past eight," said Millie.

"I wanted to get started for Flor rie's by seven," I said, "we were

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