The Free Press' Short Story

THE TURN IN THE ROAD

MAY EMERY HALL

ORA BARRY stopped in amage- replied Lors. ment before the imposing front brick walk, she saw unmistakable signs of unusual activity. Doors and windows were opened wide, while a curling spiral of smoke from the main chimney hinted that the house was being dried out after elts chilly isolation of two years.

The Hartridges were coming back! That is the way Lora put it to herself, while all the time she meant, "Chester serving. Hartridge is coming back!" Her heart whether he came or stayed away. Even as she pretended unconcern, she knew his coming would make a world of dif-

that brief span can seem an eternity. Chester Hartridge's glance of blank especially if measured by disappointment amazement, his sister's flush of annoyed out her companion. "Whatever made from high school in the same class with had the reputation of being a rather desolate No Man's Land?" had had as alluring dreams as he or the she would cut Lora, dead. She hardly she recognized Lora. In fact, both comothers concerning the future. A general art course in New York, specialized train- company of those gay young outsiders, ing in interior decorating, after that-

Mr. Barry's unexpected breakdown had definitely put an end to all business con- any case, would it be fair to put him nections in the city. The doctor having to such an acid test? prescribed an outdoor life. Lora's father turned his attention to cultivating the was not too late to change her mind. ten acres he had bought at a ridicuously | Perhaps she had better go back, after it." low price at the time he took over the all . . . Three dollars a night. quaint stone cottage that had been a nights. Eighteen dollars in all. drug on the market. The land would brain busied itself again with mental yield a living, but no more. As it would writhmetic. The eighteen dollars won. not pay for art courses in addition; Lora, Her chin tilted a little higher than usual, assuming as brave a front as she coold, direction from the Hartridge house used up her last commutation ticket and f began concentrating on asparagus and greeted her ebusively that afternoon, "to had heard, too, and simple though he on yed sull ally tomatoes. With the assistance of a young boy, Tony Doro, taken from an orphanage, she relieved her father of the hardest work and also helped her mother in servant's door behind her, she felt like doors. Tony was somewhat below pur mentally, but repaid kindness and the comforts of a real home with a flerce

What had happened to Chester Hartridge in the two-year interval? An occasional souvenir postal or birthday card had made brief reference to the technical school in Boston where Chester - was studying civil engineering, that was all His father and mother, as fat as Lora knew, were still living at the New York hotel where they had moved upon closing the house in Monarcrest

"Closel morning." Lora's disjointed thoughts were interrupted by a kindly greeting. It came from a stranger about to turn into the Hartridge entrance, a middle-aged person of a comfortable, motherly plump-

"Are you acquainted with the Hartridges?" she went on

"We were chisamates "Is the family coming back" ventured

"I used to know Chester, replied Lorn

"For the winter," came the answer ". little later on. But first the young people are bringing out some friends for a house party Youth always does seem to come first these days," indulgently smiled the

By "young people" lara inferred that Chester and his sister Grace three years his funtor were meant. A slight frown replaced the twinkle in the stranger's young blue eyes.

ahe uttered Proptically "I wonder Lora wondered, too but waited pa-

tiently "I have a problem," at length confided her new acquaintance "and it just oc curred to me that possibly you could help me out. But there, I haven't even introduced myself. I'm Mrs. Reeves, a sort of fifth-cousin-chaperon-housekeeper combination."

"And I'm Lora Barry," returned Lora "It's like this," proceeded Mrs Reeves "The young folks are to arrive to-day Monday, and stay until Saturday night That means six dinners which, for eight theulthy vonue cuters, represents consider able work. I am supposed to hire some one to help in the kitchen and to serve Mrs Hartridge has in fact made an allowance of three dollars a night for

that purpose. Now could you suggest-Three dollars a night' Six nights Three times six were eighteen Eighteen - Torn failed to catch the rest. Through dollars in all and for part-time work for, a week Lara rapidly and dizzily made the mental calculations. Her head was

in a whirl "I'll take the job" she impulsively weakling She could not afford to be! A decided, trying not to appear too eager With money as scarce as it was in the | hastily. Barry home, the eighteen dollars loomed; pargr

"You're quite sure you want it?" ask-

ed Mrs. Recirs. "If you're quite sure you want me."

GOOD SHOES FOR YOUNG AND OLD

"Correctly Fitted" B. D. RACHLIN, Acton

"Want you?" came the relieved echo.

promise that woman she would do the lost itself at the edge of the woods a faintly.

A servant to the Hartridge crowd, that notch higher when, clad in the conventional black-and-white uniform of a The pair drew up by the hedge. maid, she would enter the dining room to serve the dinner she had assisted Two long years. When one is twenty, in preparing. Already she could picture Chester Hartridge, two years before, she haughty young lady. The chances were believed the same of him. Still, in the pletely ignored her as they attempted to

> ledge his old friend and classmate? In Lora paused, weighing the matter. It

"You're a good angel;" Mrs Reeves help me out at such short notice."

"Good to myself," returned Lora, with rudeness a wan little smile. As she closed the anything but an angel. Unless it were an intruding and disturbing angel. from the front of the house made the task before her seem even worse than

'You'll find the grapefruit over there on the dresser," directed the housekeeper and the fruit cups in the china closet in the dinting room "

"Yes Mrs Reeves," answered Lora,

make the salad. It's to be tomato with French dressing,' said the housekeeper, phantly aloft "Yes, Mrs Reeves" With fingers that trembled, Lora proceeded to cut up fruit, wash lettuce, slice tomatoes, make butter balls, thicken gravy and don a uniform that had belonged to a former maid With one eye on the clock, she mixed and stirred tasted and garnished until the dreaded hour was at hand

guests were finding their places they were scated. Now they were read! With tray in hand, Lora moved toward the dining room. She drew back sharply She could not! She simply could not but she did! The tinkle laughter continued. The merry joking went on Louder than the laughter, rising above the small talk, a pewildered your made itself heard Why Lota!

Cheste: Hartridge had risen and was holding out his hand. Well, this is a

fora ignored the hand not because she wanted to but because the tray made

'It's good to see you again. How are

fora never knew what she stammered She served the remaining courses like an automation, unthinking unfeeling, conscious of but one thing an atmosphere of suppressed amusement I came to a head when on one of her trips to the kitchen she distinctly heard a tensing question put to Chester Hartridge It came from a girl Lora later learned was one Julia Fenwick

"Since when, Ches," came the high pitched mocking voice, "has the maid been your partinclar girl friend"

An outburst of laughter ensued Chester did not answer, being foresfulled by his sister Orace "It's diagraceful, Chester," she scolded "the way you torget what's due your guests. Just because a girls happened jo be in the same class

with you at school is no reason blinding tears she groped for her hat and coat determined to rush home at once The next minute she pulled herself together She would not be such a voice at her elbow made her dry her eyes

"When you're ready, Lora, I'll drive you

She turned to face Chester Hartridge. "You won't have to." she replied, trying to steady her voice "I have my own car outside." She did not explain it was the truck her father used for carrying garden stuff.

"But, Lora-'. He stood in awtward embarrassment, as if on the point of saying something. Just then Mrs. Reeve gave Lors an order and he return

The second evening was no improve-

thing. Instead of the gay raillery, a scared. significant silence reigned whonever Lora entered the dining room. That Grace Hartridge was back of it all she was con-

Only the fact that she had six good the police." dollars to add to the family income, the housekeeper having paid her each night, saved the situation for Lors. From her father and mother she carefully concealed the fact that her temporary job was almost unendurable. She even forced vice." During the day, at least, there

To her dismay, however, she discover- explained. "He hasn't developed like gate of the Hartridge place. "My hinting has been so shamelessly ed on Wednesday morning that she had other boys. I can't understand his doing only come up-" Looking through the bars and up the obvious, I thought you'd see through it been overconfident on this point. At the what he did though for usually-" in as she turned homeward. Her bound- vegetable garden opposite, ran a narrow, two things either call the police or pay ing gait changed to a laggard pace that up-hill back road, which branched from for a new tire." all but took her back to the Hartridge the main highway about a quarter-mile place. Whatever had possessed her to below. Steep and rocky, the trail flually would the new tire cost?" she inquired imaging it was because—"

is what she had let herself in for. Dis- up. Coming into sight was a chocolate- more than her earnings for the past two terday." further explained Chester, "if tried to quiet the unruly heartbeats. What guise it as she might, she would be a colored roadster, driven by a scarlet- nights! Sadly Lora thought of the few business hadn't prevented." possible difference could it make to her menial kitchen helper promoted only one sweatered girl. A second girl sat beside neatly-folded bills put safely away in her "Business?" Lora was incredulous

> "Does this road lead anywhere?" imperiously called out the Fenwick girl. "I'm afraid not," answered Lora.

and struggle. When Lora had graduated embarrassment. In the old days Grace you want to risk your tires in this harshly. Neither girl gave any indication that

> turn the car about in the narrow space. would be have the courage to acknow- | Scraps of conversation floated to Lora. "The princess' retreat, upon my word!" to have stumbled uron it and upon her!" "What! Cinderella cutting a hedge?"

"Just wait!" came the reply. "We'll the bills to Julia Fenwick. have some fun with Ches about this." Lora, with flushed cheeks, resumed her annoyance work; but not so Tony. Missing the sound of his shears. Lora presently glanc- | iii. Julia shedding tears in secret, but outwardly she resolutely continued in the opposite of up to learn the cause. A black frown sceingdarkened his face and his fist doubled menacingly it was plain be. was, bad intuitively sensed the grils'

> "Tony!" called Lora sharply The boy did not hear her or if he did, rather have and have it over with. paid no attention. Quick as lightning only right hursted after him. He straightened up a spare I can put on?" his angry glare suddenly changed to an "No, she snapped expression of gleeful satisfaction. What

remained in Lora's mind, it would have bint, Julia " When you've finished that, please asappeareed at sight of the condemning

> "You you " An trate figure jumped away in stony allence from the car, her cheeks as red as the sweater she wore "You did it!" she "how frightfully sorry I am." stormlly accused Tony "I know you

prit openly acknowledged his guilt Till have you arrested!" flamed Julia

Fenwick "See If I don't!"

Grapes

Bananas

Potatoes

Nice Size, per dozen

SWEET

to iab people's tires?" "Don't waste another word on him Julia," advised her friend. "Just phone

"Please, oh please!" interposed Lora. "I'm dreadfully sorry, but-" "Dreadfully sorry!" Julia cut her short.

long before this. To-night, then, at five." time, she and Tony Doro were busy "I'm not in the least interested in his "Till be on hand," promised Lora. Al- trimming the hedge at the rear of the history," again interrupted the furious most immediately a panicky reaction set house. Between this green wall and the Julia. "But I will give you a choice of

The chugging of a car made Lora look . Ten dollars! The amount would take: "I would have made it Monday or yesdesk drawer. She could save them only at the expense of Tony; but that would be unjust, unfair. Wrong though the poor boy was, he had without doubt been impelled by a mistaken sense of loyalty. "I told you so. Julia!" petulantly broke Arrest would only make him the more vindictive. He must be dealt with less

"I'll get the money," decided Lora

Returning a few minutes later, she wa surprised to find a second car drawn up by the first. The surprise changed to mortification when she recognized the driver as Chester Hartridge! A single laughed Julia Fenwick. "How romantic glance revealed that he had been told "Good morning, Lora," he greeted her

returned Grace, scoffingly "I don't see She answered him shortly, then handed loke?

> "What's this?" Chester frowned his "Why_the price of a new tire," spoke

Why should I'm challenged Julia, but Well go mis that later" was the

ans wer "Please!" begred Lora "I'd much

he was on the other side of the hedge "Right nothing! Chester was adamant sound of fresh young voices and laughter; and stooping so low as to be completely. I'll see Julia that your tire is paid for "hidden from Lora Wonderingly, she he went on In the meanting have you

"Well leave the car here and I'll walk The next moment a sizzle of escaping. What a subtle way," broke in his air the flattening of a tire, told all too sister, "of binting that our company is plainly what it meant Had any doubt no longe; wanted' Shall we take the

Her trieff, with flaming checks was hedge shears which Tony held trium- already at the wheel of the proffered car 'Grace numbed in and the two chugged

"I can't tell you, Lora' began Chester,

"Of course he did!" chimed in Grace consolated when he stood there offering Hartridge, alighting from the car in turn, apologies for the other two when she Far from denying the charge, the cul- knew perfectly well he had started out

to overtake Julia Penwick "Don't let me keep you," said Lora in

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Chester looked hurt "That doesn't

"Well, being sorry, let me tell you, isn't get these silly girls, who are more going very far toward mending matters." thoughtless than intentionally cruel, and "Go in the house, Tony," commanded renew our friendship on the old footing?" herself to joke about "going out to ser- Lora, "and wait there till you hear from More than ever did Lora feel an almost The boy obediently complied, uncontrollable impulse to cry. She lookneed be no contact with "the Hartridge Heart-sick, Lora turned to the other two. ed at the outstretched hand, hesitated, "Tony's really not responsible," she guiped down her tears. "If-if-" she finally faltered, "you had

> "To see you?" he finished, guessing what she was trying to say. "Why, here But not to see me," she insisted

'Most decidedly to see you," came the Lora groaned inwardly. "How much emphatic contradition.\"You didn't

blame you for thinking anything. I don't

understand all of it, but enough to know

awful ordest these past two days. And

He held out his hand. 'Bhall we for-

you've been wonderful, simply wonderful.

Lora nodded dumbly, suddenly feeling "Ten dollars," came the crisp response, very much ashamed of herself.

Business?" she repated. He laughed at her amazement. "Oh, don't think," he rallied her, "that I intend to be a gentleman of leisure this winter. I've got a job on the State Park Commission and expect to get some good practical experience along with the theoretical engineering. Come here."

Wonderingly Lora accompanied him to the front of the house. From here a gentleslope led down to a picturesque-

"Behold a link in the new park system," went on Chester, "together with the stretch back there bordering the private road. About everything, in fact, exclusive of the house." Lora felt dizzy. Was this some clumsy

But the land's ours! ' she gasped. "Exactly," agreed Chester "But don't you think your father and mother might be induced to exchange it for well.

we'll say approximately fifteen thousand Fifteen theusand dollars! The words caused a loud ringing in Lora's cars. Only the beweleted gul did not think of the dollars as dollars, but as health for her lather, comforts for her mother, lack of worry for them both yes and the behated art course for herself

"Oh Chester she burst out, halflambing, half-crying 'it can't be true!" 'As a humble employee of the State Park Commuston, Miss Barry, he annonneed. I can assure you that it has every earmark of the truth. The thing

"You and I used to be such good friends people begin housekeeping. According to stop short of the house."

"So that gives you the right, does it, I can't bear to have you think- But plans, the new park road will make a there, after what's happened, I really can't lovely-sweep here."

ment on the first. It was worse, if any- defended himself, though looking rather sound like you, Lors," he answered. I especially like about the whole proposi- tion is that the new boundary line will

"But why do you want that saved?" asked Lora curiously.

Lora met his meaning look, flushed | "I've been thinking," was the rejoinder, and happy. The old road that had been | "that when I'm on my own, I might be that 'you must have been through an so straightly monotonous for such a long, interested in it. It's so like those quains long time, was taking a new turn at last! stone cottages in Brittany where young

Rose-Colored Glasses Halt Chicken Warfare



Warden Flord Hamme of the Elsey County Penttertiaty of Coldwell, and 1.4 t of the spectacled flock is shown at Top. Now it someone could only induce certain powers that be in Europe to don rose-colored glasses.

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