

CLEARING AUCTION SALE

HORSES, REG. AND ACCREDITED HOLSTEINS, PIGS, FEED AND IMPLEMENTS

The undersigned has been instructed by David Radcliffe to sell by public auction at Lot 18, 4th Line, Esquimaux, on **TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7th, 1941** at 1 o'clock Standard Time

HORSES—Belgian mare, 5 yrs.; Clyde mare, aged.
REG. AND FULLY ACCREDITED HOLSTEINS—Holstein heifer, 2 yrs., bred Jan. 15th; Holstein cow, 4 yrs., bred Jan. 21st; Holstein cow, 6 yrs., bred Feb. 28th; Holstein cow, 3 yrs., bred July 1st; Holstein cow, 6 yrs., bred Mar. 3rd; Holstein cow, 3 yrs., bred April 10th; Holstein cow, 4 yrs., bred Apr. 22nd; Holstein cow, 6 yrs., bred June 18th; Holstein heifer, 23 months, bred May 15th; Holstein heifer, 22 months, not bred; Holstein heifer, 13 months; Holstein heifer, 11 months; Holstein heifer, 3 months; Holstein bull, 5 months; Jersey cow, 8 yrs., bred June 18th.

This is an exceptionally high producing herd. The service dates are all to a King Bessie bull. Bloodiest privilege if desired.
PIGS—Young York sow, with 6 piglets, 6 weeks old; young York sow, due time of sale; young York sow, bred Aug. 30th; 10 pigs, 10 weeks old; 12 fat hogs, if not sold before sale.

FEED—Quantity of alfalfa and timothy hay; quantity of oat and wheat straw; about 800 bus. of oats; 2 kegs Min-o-Vite; 1 keg of Hog-Min.

IMPLEMENTS—McCormick-Deering binder, 7 ft. cut, used 4 seasons; Deere hay loader, good as new; Frost & Wood mower, good as new; Cock-shutt 13 disc, drill, good as new; 14-plate disc; springtooth cultivator; sloop sleighs, nearly new; Tiger hay rake; wagon and hay rack; 21 Verity plow; 4-section diamond harrow; 2000 lb. Chatham scales; Chatham fanning mill; top buggy; cutter; set short shovels, new; extension ladder; Vega cream separator, used 1 year; old Mc-Cormick-Deering separator; Dalsy churn.

HARNESS, ETC.—Set heavy team harness; single set heavy harness; 4 horse collars, nearly new; pile of well-rotted manure; whiffletrees; forks, shovels, chains and other small articles.

No reserve as the proprietor is giving up farming.
TERMS CASH.
Hume Currie, Auctioneer.
Frank Petch, Auctioneer.
Box 413, Georgetown, Telephone 391.



CHAPTER I

The bright disc of flashlight moved over the rough pine paneling of the door, found and illuminated the keyhole under the latch. Gabriella Graham, fitting the key into the lock, knew that her fingers were trembling.

"It works," she said with forced composure, then, expectancy in her voice and oddity, too, a muted note of reluctance, she added a little breathlessly, "Kate, we're here!"

"So I presumed." There was no expectancy in Kate Oliver's pleasantly characteristic humor, a casual acceptance of life's little surprises. "I agree with you, though," she continued. "It does, at the moment, appear to be a notable achievement. Like scaling the Alps, for instance. I feel as though I had scaled an Alp. I'm practically paralyzed all over."

"Poor Kate!" Gay said, but the words, absentmindedly, held more of personal preoccupation than sympathy for her companion. "Never mind," she added, still absentmindedly, in a tone of warm affection. "We'll have a fire and food pretty soon."

"I can use both," Kate said feelingly. "How are the beds?"

Kate was aware of her hesitancy. "Give me the flashlight," she said. "I'll go ahead."

Gay's glance turned quickly, resentfully.

"Why should you?" she asked a trifle sharply.

"No reason," Kate replied with unshaken good humor. "Just trying to be helpful. It's an irritating habit. I didn't mean to imply that you might be frightened."

"Of course you did." Gay's low, clear laugh was a plea for forgiveness. "I'm not, though," she added. She would not admit misgivings, not even to Kate, who, during this tiring trip to the cabin in Maine had been disarming in her resourcefulness, amusing, resourceful, amusing. People got at you if you let your defenses down. She pushed the door wide open and stepped inside. The temperature of the room was warmer than the air outside, as though there'd been a fire, she thought fleetingly and dismissed the idea as absurd. The cabin had been closed for three years, since Uncle John died. Not very securely closed, though. The pale rectangles in the wall were windows. Shouldn't there have been something—shutters, boarding, perhaps? A question, startling in implication, just touched the edge of her mind.

"Is that a wood-range?" Kate asked.

"Yes," Gay replied. "Do you think we can manage it?"

"Certainly," Kate said with confidence. "On second thought, though, who cuts the wood?"

"We'll buy it cut or have a boy out from the village."

"That relieves my mind. I'm not so good with an ax."

Kate pressed against Gay's shoulder to look into the room. "What's the apparatus for?" she asked in an interested voice.

The flashlight disclosed a table with a porcelain top on which were jars, test-tubes, an object which might be an alcohol stove, an assortment of bottles. The built-in bench was neatly spread with blankets. There were no other furnishings except a straight wooden chair.

"Strange odor," Kate said, sniffing. "Smells like a hospital or a chemist shop."

"Something Uncle John left, I suppose," Gay said entirely at random. "Fluids for developing films, perhaps," she added slowly. "He was interested in photography. He had a great many hobbies."

The explanation appeared to satisfy Kate. She made no further comment. It did not satisfy Gay though on the surface it was plausible. Uncle John had been interested in photography. But would the odor have remained in the room for three years? Wouldn't the fluids in the bottles insecurely covered with circles of gauze have evaporated during the time that the cabin had been closed? And what had test-tubes to do with kodak films? Again, and with greater insistence, the question starting in intimation forced its way into her mind.

"These are the living quarters," Gay turned the light through a second door opening from the kitchen at right angles to the first. The notion was absurd, she told herself steadily. The cabin was her personal property free from restrictions or reservations. "Compact and convenient. No elevators, no stairs to climb. Living-room, drawing-room, dining-room all in one," she concluded.

"What, no breakfast-nook?" Kate asked in mock-dismay.

plain. People got at you if you let your defenses down, she reminded herself again. In affected silence she ignited the shavings beneath the pyramid of wood.

"Our guardian angel has slipped up, though," Kate said still in a tone of skeptical amusement. "These boots certainly won't fit either you or me." Her voice altered. "Who is it, Gay?" she asked with a directness which could no longer be evaded.

"I don't know."

"Someone is living here."

"Obviously."

"Who is it?" Kate repeated.

"I told you I didn't know," Gay watched small active flames licking up against the logs.

Was she telling the truth? Kate watched Gay rise, swiftly, gracefully, from her kneeling position on the hearth. She had no reason to doubt her, she thought, backing up to the warmth of the fire. In the roster of Gay's short-comings, a disregard for the truth was not listed. Still—

"What are you going to do about it?" she asked more casually than she felt.

Gay paused in her progress across the room. "Do about it?" she asked.

"I just wondered," Kate rocked back and forth from her heels to her toes on the field-stone hearth. She was observing, irrelevantly, the unconscious air of assurance with which Gay carried herself, thinking how trim she looked, in spite of two days and a night on the road, in the dark tailored suit which emphasized the grace of her long slender legs, the breadth of her shoulders, the rounded slenderness of her body.



Gay's glance scorned so craven a suggestion.

Ah, youth! She, herself, probably looked like a scare-crow, a particularly attenuated and angular one. Not that it mattered. The inward sigh which followed the thought was philosophical rather than envious. "I don't necessarily insist that we get out of here pretty quick," she continued, still carefully casual. "It's an idea, though. To quote your Aunt Flora, it might be advisable, perhaps."

Gay's glance scorned so craven a suggestion. "We will not," she said with spirited emphasis. "This cabin belongs to me." She pulled off her hat, tossed it on the couch, ran her fingers through the flattened red-brown waves of her hair. "I've no intention of being dispossessed, if that's the phrase. You might as well take off your bonnet and shawl. We're going to stay."

"There'd be no accommodations in the village, I suppose," she said tentatively. "An inn or a tourist camp—just for tonight?"

"Northfield?" Gay laughed. "Heavens, no!"

"And it's a long way back to Machias."

"Twenty miles," Gay was lighting a second lamp on the table behind the couch. "Have you forgotten," she asked, "the condition of the road?"

Kate was a little abashed to feel a not unpleasant thrill of excitement tingling shamelessly up her spine. After a summer at "Dunedin," the Graham estate on the Hudson, anything in the nature of an "escapade" was enlightening.

"I shall never forget," Kate removed her hat. "When I'm eighty, I'll tell my grand-nieces and nephews, the reason your old auntie is an invalid, my dears, is because once upon a time she drove twenty miles along a road in the state of Maine. No, I couldn't," she concluded. "I'd rather face unknown terrors than journey over those twenty miles again tonight."

"Idiot!"

Gay was placing the fluted china shade on the lamp. She was lovely-looking, Kate thought, feeling as she frequently felt when she consciously considered Gay's features and coloring, a slight shock of surprise and wonder. The light from the lamp striking up into her face accentuated the high cheek-bones, the faint depressions beneath them, the line of her jaw and rounded chin, the curve of her brows above her long, very deep blue eyes. Certain endearing stills redeemed her face from the stiff perfection of authentic beauty, the straight thick lashes, the dusting of freckles across her nose, her wide, sweetly curved mouth, the way her eyes narrowed and crinkled when she smiled.

"Do you know what I think?" Kate said darkly.

"I'm breathless," Gay said through a mouthful of apple.

"Those jars and the smell in the room over there," Kate gestured. "I think he's a mad genius inventing a poison gas to annihilate the world."

"Can I depend on that?" Gay moved away from the table. "It would be a let-down to discover that the smell was moonshine brewing." She bit again into the apple. "Our cabin-mate reads," she observed.

"That's encouraging," Kate said as Gay picked up a book which lay face-down upon the couch. "Your home is known by the books you own. What is it?"

"Something about—hormones." Gay stood looking quizzically down at the book in her hand.

"Hormones!" Kate repeated, then lowering her voice dramatically, "Gay! He's planning the perfect murder. He's one of those educated criminals you read about with a keen analytical mind. A doctor, perhaps, who—"

"A doctor—?" Gay's altered voice arrested Kate's attention. She glanced quickly toward the couch at the far side of the hearth. Gay's eyes were lowered over the book. She was turning pages with a quick fluttering motion of her fingers through the leaves. Kate heard a sound like a quickly drawn breath, faint but authentic.

"No name?" she asked, as Gay lifted her eyes.

"Nothing." The sound had been authentic, Kate thought. Gay had made a discovery.

Gay's eyes were, presently, aware of Kate. They dropped self-consciously before Kate's questioning glance. She placed the book on the couch, tossed the remains of the apple into the fire.

"Let's investigate further," she said, after a moment. Her voice was only a little shaken but the peach-colored flush deepened and her eyes were very bright.

"That's a sensible idea," Kate said serenely. "Leave no stone unturned. Here, I'll carry that," she added as Gay turned to take the lamp from the table.

Gay did not demur. She walked to one of the doors leading onto the porch, opened it, stepped out into darkness. Kate followed with the lamp. The screened porch which extended across the front of the cabin disclosed nothing of importance. There were built-in bunks at either end covered with blankets and towels. There were fiber rugs, a table, chairs. The glass windows above the bunks were lowered but the front of the porch stood open to the night. Kate followed Gay's heels, clicking with a muffled sound on the rugs, more sharply on the floor between, stopped when she stepped at the long table in the center of the porch.

"The rain is over," Gay said. "Nice weather tomorrow."

Kate looked out through the screening. The yellow glow of lamplight blurred her vision. She placed the lamp on the table and returned to stand beside Gay. Moonlight lay in the clearing in front of the cabin, marked the path sloping down a gentle grade to the edge of the lake. Beyond, the water stretched silver-gray, motionless, barely distinguishable from the land.

"I'm going to like this place," she said, breaking the silence.

"Of course you are," Gay's voice was hushed, as though the serenity of the scene before her had stilled her excitement. "I've never liked any place I've ever been as well."

Kate did not question her sincerity. It was curious, though, she reflected. She would not have supposed that Gay would find pleasure in the silence of the woods. Gay, she had thought, loved gaiety, nights, the theater, supper-clubs, dancing, moving from one scene of festivity to another with her smart, young intimates. Her visits at "Dunedin," her brief stays at her father's town house, were quite obviously motivated by duty and endured with boredom. She had given every indication of preferring to be with her mother and step-father on Long Island, at their apartment in the city, in Florida or Bermuda, now that cut dividends and deflated values had closed to them the playgrounds of Europe. She, Kate, had scarcely seen the child since her engagement had been announced at "Dunedin" late in June until three days ago when she had turned up here and had proposed this trip to Maine.

What had happened the summer she'd spent here, to make so lasting an impression upon Gay? Why after six years, should she have wanted to return just at this time? Kate's thought continued as Gay, standing beside her, remained silent. She spoke frequently, and with affection, of Dr. Lawrence whom she called "Uncle John," her god-father, her father's life-long friend, who had, at his death, left the cabin to her. Kate remembered him very well. He'd had a brilliant mind and great charm of manner. She knew that Gay's father had not understood why his friend should have been content to remain the Dean of a small college in his native state of Maine when wider and more remunerative opportunities were constantly being offered him. That was explained at his death. Dr. Lawrence had had a serious heart condition which had restricted his activities.

"It's the harvest moon, isn't it?" Gay stirred with a rousing motion at Kate's side.

"About half of it," Kate replied.

"It should be full toward the end of the week."

"I hadn't counted on that," Gay laughed and slipped her arm companionably through Kate's arm. "I wasn't thinking of moons. It's nice when the sun shines, too."

"I'm sure it is," Kate said. "Feeling as cool as I feel now was worth the trip."

"I thought you'd like it. You understand now, don't you, why I wanted to come?"

Kate was silent for a moment. Then, "Not entirely," she said.

She knew that the meaning behind the words was perfectly clear to Gay. The brief intimacy was shattered. Gay withdrew her arm. She was not resentful now, though, as she had been when Kate had first questioned her motives.

"Come along," she said, laughing, that shaken note of excitement trembling in her voice. "We have things to do. There are stones we have left unturned."

Gay walked directly to a closed door in the wall opposite the kitchen at the far end of the room.

"This is the master-bedroom," she said and opened the door.

Kate followed her into the room. It was considerably larger than the room off the kitchen and more comfortably furnished. The lamplight, bright where she stood, fading into shadows at the rim of the cone of light, disclosed a built-in bed at each end of the room. The mattress on each was covered with newspapers and upon it lay paper-wrapped bundles which might contain bedding. The other, beneath windows which overlooked the porch, was obviously prepared for use. Between the windows in the side wall on a square of scenic linoleum stood a small stove with a length of jointed pipe.

"That looks familiar," Kate said. "It's called a chunk-stove, in case you're interested. There's one in the rectory study at home."

Gay made no evidence of being interested in the stove. She stood looking down at the top of a low chest of drawers. Kate approached with the lamp.

"He shaves," she said, making note of a razor-case, a shaving brush, a wooden soap-bowl. "Do you suppose he dresses for dinner?"

Gay ignored the question. She turned the brushes arranged with precision on the pine top of the chest. There were no monograms.

"There's the closet," Kate suggested.

Gay turned from the mirror, walked quickly halfway across the room and opened a door. Kate, following, tipped the shade of the lamp so that the light shone directly into the closet. A brown tweed suit, a top-coat, two pairs of khaki trousers, two pajamas striped in wine-color,

and a wool dressing-gown which had seen service, a dark sweater with a letter stitched to the heavy ribbing, hung in a row from the hooks. A tan felt hat rested where it had been flung on the shelf above, and on the floor below a pair of brown oxfords stood beside brown leather moccasins laced with thongs. Nothing here, surely, Kate thought, and was about to voice the thought in words.

A sound held her silent, a quickly drawn breath audibly and slowly exhaled. Gay's hand touched the sweater. As Kate watched, her forefinger tipped with an almond-pink nail traced the letter stitched to the ribbing.

She turned after a moment.

"A completely anonymous person," she said and closed the door. But Kate was not deceived. The gesture of the finger with the pink-tipped nail had been very revealing. If she had not known before, Kate thought, again both concerned and amused, Gay knew now, at least, who was here.

(Continued next week)

"Back from your vacation at last, eh? Feel any changes?"

"No, not a cent."



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(Continued next week)

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