

SHORT STORY SECTION

CINDERILLA—MY CINDERILLA.

(Edna Matthews.)

"I suppose a letter will soon come saying to mow the lawn, trim the hedge, plant the flowers and—there! I had almost forgotten there is a leak in the stables to fix. I hope they will have the same crew of servants this year minus that haughty French valet of Mr. Vandercross'." Thus spoke father as he, mother and I were sitting on the porch after supper, watching the last bits of snow fade from the top of Cross Peak. Little green buds were beginning to come on all of the trees. Standing on our porch you could see the shrubbery around the Vandercross summer home bursting into bloom.

You see dad, on account of his health, has to live up here, so he has a job keeping up the Vandercross home through the winter. In the spring, along about April, he always gets a letter from Mr. Vandercross saying to get the place ready. I always help plant the flowers for I like them very much.

The next day, coming home from a tramp through these dear old Blue Ridge mountains, I found dad with the letter he had been expecting. We three walked over to the place after supper and saw what was to be done. A few tears were in mother's eyes as we started home. I often wonder if she doesn't miss it all, for she came from a rich New Orleans family and every old society person

there knows of Cybil Bilkstein, who ran away with a butler from her parents' household staff of servants. Of course her father had disinherited her and even sent most of her belongings to her; that is what those large trunks in the attic hold. Father is still handsome, honest and kind so I can't blame mother one bit. I am only 19 and it just thrills me when I think of the romance of my dear, sweet mother.

The servants have arrived and the Vandercrosses are coming next week. Dad says he heard they are bringing a crowd of young guests and are going to have a large house-party. I'm just bubbling over with joy, 'cause maybe I'll get to see some of the girls and maybe—boys. I haven't many friends in the village because mother, being a graduate of Vassar, and dad being a college graduate also, they have taught me more than the average girl here knows and somehow I can't chum with them.

The guests arrived last night. I went to the top of Cross Peak early this morning on Betsy, and who should I meet on the way back but a crowd of horseback riders. I gave them most of the road, and all but one of them paid no attention to me. He was a tall, athletic, young man with coal black hair and eyes.

That night dad said there were many wealthy guests. One young man, heir of the late steel magnate, John Suthington, multi-millionaire, was among the number. I thought

probably he was that proud fellow with the small mustache and silk beaver who came that morning; but my knight of Cross Peak, no not he.

Mother and I cleaned the attic this morning and just did get through in time to prepare a little lunch before dad came. We were standing on our little front porch, which is shaded by cluster rose vines, when he came. He had been up on Lone Tree Mountain looking after some cattle. He took us both in his arms and kissed our cobwebby heads, then said, "I've got good news, girls, which is in the shape of four little calves. We can ride over tomorrow and see them if you care to." We both answered in the affirmative.

After dinner, when the dust had settled in the attic, we went back up there and mother opened two of those trunks to let the garments air. Oh! There were some of the most beautiful clothes; I know mother certainly was an eye-ful with them on, for she is still very pretty. There were three masquerade costumes among the garments. One was a Cinderilla costume. It was the one mother wore when she first met father, whose fortune was lost in some investment. He then took the butler position so as to be near her. A great desire arose in me at once, to wear the Cinderilla costume, but I managed to banish it as the impossible.

Dad came home at supper time saying he had more good news, and after supper he told us in this way:

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