

CARDOME

A ROMANCE OF KENTUCKY

BY ANNA C. MINOGUE CHAPTER XXIX

After reading the note that Virginia had written, General Morgan went to where Hal sat, and, laying his hand affectionately on the bowed young head, said: "My poor friend! I would give much to have spared you this!"

"For the greater than brotherly love Hal entertained for Clay Powell was known throughout Morgan's command. "But," went on the General, "something may have happened to delay the execution. Does not Major—Mr. Davidson live in the vicinity of Georgetown? If he is there, he will not allow that terrible crime to be committed, for I know that he has it in his power to prevent its accomplishment. Start immediately for Mr. Davidson's, and if you are in time, tell him that I said he must save Clay Powell. When Colonel Powell is free, come with him to Nashville, and wait there for me."

"The silence, for his heart was too full for words, Hal parted from his general, and the true-souled Captain Hines, and started for Willow-wild. The words of Morgan had not awakened hope in his heart, for too well he knew the relentless character of Howard Dallas; and as he recalled all the misery that man had brought to him and to those he loved, he again raised his hand toward heaven and swore to avenge it.

"The night was far advanced when he reached Willow-wild. "Come right in, Mistah Todd!" exclaimed the old negro, cordially, on recognizing his visitor. "Marse is gone to bed, but I'll call him up, an' den I'll look aftah yoh hoss."

"He led the way to the library and lighted a lamp. A few coils still glowed on the hearth, and when on these the old servant threw a basket of chips and pieces of wood, the red flames quickly leaped up; and standing there in the light and warmth, though scarcely conscious of either, Hal impatiently awaited the arrival of the man he had come to look upon as the good genius of Clay Powell's life.

"So you were one of the number!" he cried, reaching out his welcoming hand. "I'm glad, very glad. How many were you? I never heard of anything more clever than Morgan's escape! But then there was never such a clever man as John Morgan. Where is that man of men?"

"Under this fire of talk Hal instantly reached the conclusion that the worst son was that seeking to postpone its recital or draw his own thoughts from its horror.

"I left him in Ludlow," replied Hal, answering his host's last question.

"But he does not intend remaining there any length of time, I hope?" cried Mr. Davidson.

"When we parted this morning, it was his intention to start for the South immediately. By this time he ought to be out of Boone County," answered Hal.

"Who is with him?" "Captain Hines," replied Hal; and for the first time it occurred to his listener that those words and that voice were not what he expected from Hal Todd, after such a remarkable escape from prison. He drew near and scrutinized the pale face.

"Sit down, my boy!" he said kindly. "You look completely worn out." He turned and rang the bell. "Get some supper for us, Jack," he said, as the servant entered, adding, "And bring me my slippers. It's odd," he went on to Hal, "how effectively things get away from us when we're in a hurry. I could have sworn that I left my slippers by the side of the bed, and yet when Jack called me I couldn't find—"

But Hal had sprung from his chair, crying: "Mr. Davidson, I can't stand this! I'd rather know even the worst than endure this suspense."

Mr. Davidson looked upon the speaker, too surprised to answer him for a moment; then he said, for the words and manner of the boy had filled him with a vague fear: "Let us wait until you have had some refreshment. We can talk of those things afterward."

"I can not!" cried Hal; "if he is dead, tell me. Then get me a fresh horse. Morgan must not wait for me in Nashville."

Mr. Davidson was now convinced that the boy's highly pitched mind had given way under the excessive rigor of prison life, and supposing that the disordered brain was filled with imaginings of his father, he said, soothingly: "Oh, no! He's not dead. On the contrary, he is quite well and is back again at Cardome."

Hal looked on him, then broke into a harsh laugh. "I'm not mad, Mr. Davidson," he said calmly. "I was not asking about my father, but Clay Powell."

"Oh, h!" exclaimed Mr. Davidson. "How did you hear about his trouble? I see, Miss Castleton left word for you at Ludlow." Then he sprang to his feet, and going to the mantel, leaned an elbow on it and gazed darkly into the fire, as he said: "He is not dead. He will not die the death that Mrs. Powell prepared for him. He is to be saved to-morrow night. But the price paid for his life is awful. The next morning Virginia marries Howard Dallas."

Hal staggered back as if he had received a blow across the face. For a moment he gazed silently at the speaker; then he cried, bringing down his hand with violence on the back of the chair: "By God! She won't! I'll kill him first!" and as his listener looked upon the pale, set face, he realized that the words were not spoken for mere effect.

"The servant now entered with the slippers, and as he warmed them before offering them to his master, he asked: "Do yoh want de suppah in here, Marse, ur in de dinin' room? De fash' gons' down in de dinin' room, but I kin light it up in a jiffy."

"Bring the supper here, Jack," he said, and as the servant left the room, he turned to the young man and replied to his angry words: "Only his death, or hers, can prevent that marriage, for Virginia has given her promise. If she had not done so, or if she were to retract it now, nothing could prevent Clay Powell from being shot at the Park gate at sunrise the day after to-morrow."

"General Morgan said that you could, that you have it in your power to save Clay from death," interrupted Hal.

"General Morgan does not understand the present situation in Kentucky," replied Mr. Davidson. "The civil authority is entirely subservient to the military, and Howard Dallas is one of those who guide its operations. If I had only Mrs. Powell to reckon with, I might use the power General Morgan alluded to; but there is also Howard Dallas. No, only Virginia's sacrifice can save him, and she is making it gladly. Her period of endurance will not be long, I think, and his voice seemed to grow glad—for she looks like a dying woman. One more innocent sacrifice must be made to complete the series of crimes that Walter Powell unknowingly inaugurated when—"

but he paused abruptly. "I have never sought to draw the veil that was hung by my elders over the tragedy that was enacted here," said Hal; "but now I ask, believing that I have the right to do so, why has Mrs. Powell pursued Walter Powell so relentlessly?"

"Because he loved Mary Clay. Contrast your highest image of womanhood with Mrs. Powell, and then tell me if there is not an excuse for a man, half poet, wholly idealist, making the mistake he did—for I mistake it was, as he learned afterward to his bitter sorrow. That Mrs. Powell, then Angie Kertridge, loved Walter Powell she never denied. She proved it by saving him from death." Mr. Davidson walked across the floor, and when he came back to the hearthstone, he said, in a voice that sounded strange: "Those wooden hands she wears replace as beautiful a pair as were ever given by nature to woman, and she sacrificed them for the man she loved."

For a few minutes he gazed thoughtfully into the fire; then he continued: "Among the suitors for the hand of Angie Kertridge was an Englishman, Kentuckians had little love for Englishmen in those days, with the memory of Balmorhea maniac fresh in their minds, and this one made himself especially objectionable to Angie Kertridge and her friends by his persistent efforts to force himself on our society. One Christmas night there was a party at the Park, and though uninvited, the Englishman was there. I can believe that his persecution—for it had now come to that—made Angie Kertridge beside herself with anger and hate.

"Before the evening was half spent, she came into the little room of the library where a few of us were smoking and cried: 'O! the man who call themselves my friends is there not one who will relieve me of the presence of that hateful, insulting Englishman?' At the words, every man there sprang to his feet. But Walter Powell was at her side first. 'Where is he?' he asked, between his teeth. 'Here,' said the Englishman, who had followed her to the doorway.

"Powell went to where the Englishman stood, and said: 'You will apologize to this lady and leave this house immediately.' 'I will not!' returned he. 'Then I denounce you as a villain!' cried Powell. 'You lie!' hissed the Englishman; whereat Powell struck him across the face. The next morning, in that woodland pasture which divides Willow-wild from Cardome, those two stood face to face in deadly conflict. The Englishman had insisted upon swords. Walter Powell could have laid his adversary at the first shot with fine Englishman's weapon. Kentuckians seldom settle their disputes after the European method. Yet I doubt not he would have come from the conflict victor, were it not for an accident, insignificant in itself, but a potent factor in shaping the destiny of those who, invited and uninvited, were in the wood that morning. The day had come in with a misty rain, and the dampness had taken the slight stiffness out of Powell's linen cuffs, which, after the fowling of the day, lay back from the wrist over the coat sleeve. The cuff gradually crept down over his hand. We saw it was troubling him. His adversary saw it, too. Powell could not ask for time; to continue was to invite defeat; so he deliberately lifted his left hand to thrust the refractory piece of linen. A gentleman would have scorned to take advantage of the moment, but the Englishman was a cowardly cur. Quick as a flash, his sword was in the air, then, in a downward stroke straight for Walter Powell's heart.

"How she came there unobserved we never knew, but Angie Kertridge's beautiful white hands flashed between the sword and Walter Powell's breast. She aimed to catch the sword; instead—oh, my God!" and the speaker sprang to his feet and began to pace the floor—"the horror of it! When one of the girl's hands fell to the ground and the other lay on Powell's white shirt front, a mutilated mass of bleeding flesh!"

He came back and dropped into his chair, and Hal saw that his face was white as snow. "I have never been able to recall that morning, my young friend," he said, after a pause, "that all its dread does not break on me and overpower me. Your father sprang forward and took her in his arms, while the physician began to examine her hands. The duellists had dropped their swords and stood gazing at each other; then the Englishman turned and slunk out of the wood, while after him rang Angie Kertridge's voice, as she cried, 'Coward! coward! coward!' I have only to shut my eyes and listen, to hear that woman's voice as she uttered that word. It has rung in my mind all these years, and Lewis Castleton told me a short time before he died, that memory had the same trick of repeating it for him; and I doubt not your father and Walter Powell have heard it break unexpectedly across many an hour's silence. Her voice seemed to fill the whole wood, and when it ceased, as she fell into unconsciousness, it appeared ten thousand tongues took up the word, that every twig on the trees began to repeat it. We carried her home. One of the most skillful surgeons in the East was sent for, but nothing could be done for her, and the mutilated remains of her once beautiful hands were removed and wooden ones substituted. And with the taking on of those wooden hands, the whole nature of Angie Kertridge underwent a change. Society no longer went to the Park, and the father and daughter rarely left their home."

"But what of the Englishman?" interrupted Hal. "Did no one find him and give him the dog's death he deserved?"

"He disappeared," replied Mr. Davidson. "Years afterward he ventured back, and was challenged by Howard Dallas's father, who had loved Angie Kertridge, and whom she, perchance, would have married if she had not given her heart to Walter Powell. It was swords again—and well, Howard Dallas's mother was a widow that day. And here we have the reason for Mrs. Powell's fondness for young Dallas, and I firmly believe that she brought Miss Sears to the Park with the avowed intention of making her heiress to give Dallas an opportunity to come into the possession of her great wealth. But love of revenge is stronger in Howard Dallas's heart than love of money; so she will be defeated in her aims."

"With Lewis Castleton," continued Mr. Davidson, coming back to his story, "Walter Powell went the next summer on a visit to the home of Claude Clay, whose daughter afterward became Castleton's wife. It was there he met Mary Clay. She was the child of poor but respectable parents, whom she helped support by her needle. Related to this branch of the Clay family, she was given the place of daughter of the house, and was welcome to remain with them as such; but her independent spirit forbade her becoming the recipient of their charity, even if her affectionate heart would have permitted her to separate herself so completely from her aged parents. She was the most beautiful woman I ever saw; the best I ever knew. Many of the wealthiest planters of the Blue Grass would willingly have become her suitor, but with her fine pride she held herself aloof from every advance of theirs, until she saw Walter Powell. There was a perfect affinity of souls; but he felt that he was bound, in a manner, to Angie Kertridge, and Mary Clay bade him remember that the way honor points in the one a man must ever follow, even though it leads to the heart's death. But some evil tongue went before him to Angie Kertridge with the story of Mary Clay's beauty and Walter Powell's homage to it. When he returned and would have fulfilled his part of the agreement, she repudiated his claims upon her and immediately afterward married his father. And then—"

Walter Powell was a fool! he cried, stamping his foot on the broad hearth stone, "although he thought it was I who lacked sense, if he did not believe me a villain. I warned him not to marry Mary Clay. I told him that I saw an evil influence threatening him and her, but he—I could laugh at his dreams if I had not seen his sorrow, yes, I experienced it!—he thought Angie Kertridge's action was the outcome of a magnanimity that he had scarcely deemed possible in woman, and reversed her for it. One year of happiness she allowed him—'Boy,' he broke off, 'if it were not for the good women we have known and loved, which one of us who has experienced, or seen the cruelty of her sisters—and what man has not?—could ever look upon the face of a woman with a sentiment of respect?—After that year,' he continued, 'he saw the true nature of the woman he had deemed so noble and magnanimous!'"

Here the servant entered with the tray and silently the master watched him, as he drew the round table toward the fire and placed on it the white cloth and napkins and laid the dishes in their places, neatly, deftly, and noiselessly. But when the table

was ready the instinct of the gentlemanly host asserted itself with the paralysis that seemed to hold his brain, and he said, rising: "You must be almost famished, my young friend, after your long ride?" and he courteously drew up a chair and bade Hal be seated. The sight of the palatable food was not without its effect on the boy's healthy young appetite, and the viands Jack's wife had prepared were eaten with relish.

"I hope that the gratification of my appetite will never become even one of the objects of my life," said Hal, lifting to his host the first smile that had illumined the pale face that evening; "but to own up to a truth, there have been times when I felt that I'd do almost anything but take the oath of allegiance, for a meal such as we used to have at Cardome."

"I heard that the fare at Columbus was quite above the ordinary prison food," remarked Mr. Davidson.

"I am not able to set you right on that subject," said Hal, a little dryly, "as it was my only experience of prison diet. If there is worse, then I don't want to run across it. But I wasn't thinking of prison days alone. We've had it hard for the past two years. Some days we would have only three ears of green corn apiece, and Mrs. Vesta and one who fell there, you can readily see why we 'Rebs' do not look as if soldiering were a profitable occupation. Some days we wouldn't have even the corn."

"What would you do then?" "Hook our belts a little tighter and give thanks for our tobacco," he replied lightly. "Isn't it a marvel to you," he then asked, laying down his fork, "how our army has held out against such terrible odds and is not conquered?"

"It will never be conquered," remarked Mr. Davidson. "Defeated it is sure to be—nay, don't interrupt me, my boy, but eat your supper! I am Southern to the heart's core and would have been with you, if I could forget the doctrine of human rights, and were willing to die for that belief against an apparent fact. Yes, for all this bravery and loyalty and endurance, than which the world has never seen greater, the Confederate army will be defeated. Nothing gained, absolutely nothing, and all lost! Liberty and independence are making their last fight in the land where Washington enthroned them; and it will be a futile one; except to show to future ages that in the American nation were men whom greed and corruption could not contaminate, who believed in the fundamental principle of their God-inspired doctrine of human rights, and were willing to die for that belief rather than live without it. The North will be victorious. She will save the Union, and as time wears on the South may come to think that while defeat was not best, still there might be a worse fate than submission to the Federal Government. But this victory of the North will make the Republic take a backward step, and it is doubtful if she will ever regain her old position. We can now wrest the Canadas from England, if we are big enough, and force Mexico and the islands of the West Indies to acknowledge the supremacy of the Stars and Stripes; we can become an imperialistic nation, without the stability of monarchical government. The conquest of the South is the first step in that direction; the rest may logically follow. A not less terrible menace to the nation's future is in the very act for which the North claims she fights—the emancipation of the negro. Freedom and the franchise of the freedman are his, and they will be like fire-brands in the hands of a child."

"Never was a nation confronted by such a situation as is before ours. Countries have had slaves and have set them free, and they have lived there harmoniously afterward; but slaves and masters were of the same race, or not of those so hopelessly apart as the Caucasian and the African. In Mexico and the South American States and the Atlantic islands the Latins solve the race question by intermarriage with the natives. What is the result? At home the Spaniard fills the world with the glory of his genius in every realm of art; what has the offspring of Spaniard and Indian done for his native land except to plunge it into bloody revolutions? But such a union is rarely found between the Anglo-Saxon and an inferior race—it is absolutely impossible. In this country with the negro. That the African will ever be the intellectual equal of the race of his former master is improbable, and generations of education will be necessary to take him out of his childhood of the mind. And that his present mental inferiority is such let no man dare blame the South. If we helped bring him to slavery, let it be remembered that we brought him from savagery, cannibalism, and idolatry into civilization and Christianity. While his growth intellectually will be slow, numerically it will be rapid, and he will become a power to be reckoned with, but in such a manner as we would deal with a child, who has in his hands the means to destroy our dearest possessions. His disfranchisement by States is a direct violation of the law that madly trusts into his ignorant hands the freeman's right; but it will and must be done, if the white race would preserve itself in Southern localities. He will be strong enough as he has the right, to resent this; and then behold the horror of a race war! Think not that the North will then be with the black man. All history proves that in such a conflict, the white man of

the North will be by the side of the white man of the South; and extermination or banishment will come to the race that the North is now, as she has been for nearly four years, shedding the best blood and despoiling the fairest portion of the land to make the equal of the superior race, contrary to the decree of the Almighty God, Who declares in Holy Writ of Ham and his descendants, 'The servant of servants thou shalt be! And God's word is immutable. Oh, my unhappy country! and he lapsed into a silence which Hal did not break.

Afterward, when the servant had removed the dishes and Hal had lit his cigar, Mr. Davidson, without any introduction took up the previous conversation where he had dropped it at the entrance of the negro.

"After that year began her diabolical work. As the old man had discerned Walter for marrying Mary Clay, the young couple were poor enough. The husband taught school in Paris. But they were supremely happy, and when a son was born to them, their cup of joy overflowed. When the news of the child's birth reached Willow-wild, Angie despatched her own waiting-woman to Powell's, ostensibly to nurse the young mother; actually to poison her. My God!" the speaker paced the floor as he went on: "shall I ever forget the anguish of that hour when I reached that little home to find her in her death-agony! The face of the diabolical negress, beaming with joy, betrayed the dread cause; a biscuit, glittering with ground glass, which I found, confirmed it." He came back to his chair, and sinking into it wearily, gazed for a time into the fire in silence.

"In consequence of that—for I could have frustrated the diabolical plot if I had heeded, in time, the intuition or knowledge, or whatever you wish to call it, that warned me danger was threatening her—and events which followed, my life was blighted, ruined. I hid it in oblivion. I swore, while her death remained unavenged by man—for Angie Powell had one friend who did not feel that her and my justice, and he was more powerful with Walter Powell than I—I should hold no communication with men. The fulfillment of that vow saddened the lives of those who loved me, broke the holiest of ties, the dearest of friendships. My only son fought under me at Buena Vista, and not until I found him dying on the field did I reveal myself to him. My young daughter-in-law, since her widowhood, has had to bear the great weight of care that large estates entail, do work for which she is unequal—care and work both mine. I have a grandchild who has never looked upon me with a knowledge of our relationship. I am as one dead to society. Men call me a fool. But I can not live among them, when they let her murderer go unpunished. I have lived only because I knew that Angie Powell's revenge is not complete while Clay Powell lives to bless and cheer his father's life. Hitherto, because she fears me, the great question was which life would last longer, hers or mine. But the war gave her all the opportunities. She would have been victor again were it not for Virginia."

"The name brought Hal's thoughts back from the horror of the past to the misery of the present. He flung his cigar into the fire, as he said: "Virginia shall not do this. I will save her, I repeat, if I must kill him to prevent it! I could with less remorse look upon Howard Dallas dead by my hand than upon her as his—"

but his lips refused to frame the word. "Hal," began Mr. Davidson, "do nothing rash. All the evil that we cause ourselves and others comes because we act without forethought, permit ourselves to be carried on by the quickly expended violence of a passion. Would Virginia thank you for a release from her promise if it came through a murder done by your hands? Her few days will pass more serenely with the knowledge that her sacrifice brought life to her friend than they would in freedom from this promise, with the spectre of a crime, done for her, throwing its presence over her way. One must be sacrificed, and remember, she is willing."

"Tell me about it," said Hal. "A few days ago one of Mrs. Powell's servants was killed, and she demanded retaliation from General Burbridge, which he accorded her. As Howard Dallas is her assistant, one of the two Confederate soldiers that are to be shot because some one, a prowling negro probably, killed her servant, is Clay Powell. But she, shrewd as she is, does not know her ally, and Howard Dallas has not hesitated to betray her confidence in him to gain his own ends. He sent Virginia word that she could save Clay Powell by marrying him. As I said, she has accepted the condition, and Powell will be freed to-morrow night. The jailer will leave his cell unlocked and furnish him with the key to the outer door. Before the authorities are notified, the jailer will file away the bars of the window, to give the impression that the prisoner escaped in that way. Powell's horse will be waiting for him. With the boy, Job, he will go to Frankfort, where friends will get him off to the South. Job will return with a letter to Virginia, announcing his safety. I need not say to you that he knows nothing of the price paid for his freedom. He would die a thousand deaths rather than to permit her to save him at such a cost. He thinks his release is entirely due to Virginia's influence with the jailer."

Hal's head was bent in thought, but he now lifted it, a glad light in his eyes. "If some one else were to give Clay Powell freedom, would not that release Virginia from her promise?" he asked.

"Certainly," replied Mr. Davidson. "Then," cried Hal, rising, a bright smile on his young face, "Howard Dallas does not marry Virginia the day after to-morrow!"

THE WAY, AND THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE

Anna Rose in the Missionary "Kate," John Lorrimer said one morning to his invalid daughter, "it is Sunday; suppose we go to Church."

"Very well," she replied, "to which one shall we go?" "The Catholic Cathedral," he at once responded. "There will be High Mass to-day, and the ceremonies are most impressive. But first I must explain to you just what Catholics believe in regard to Mass, otherwise everything will be meaningless to you. I myself experience no difficulty in accepting the doctrine of the Real Presence, though other things in the Catholic Church I do not care for; and he clearly explained said doctrine.

Very slowly, for Kate walked with crutches, father and daughter then proceeded to the nearby Cathedral. Kate's beauty-loving soul was thrilled by the music, the ceremonies, the magnificence of the church itself, and she realized that it was all just a setting, as it were, for the Real Presence. It was then the desire came to her which, through the years of trial that followed, never faltered: she would like to be a Catholic.

Mr. Lorrimer was glad that Kate liked the service. Later he told her of a plan he had in mind for her—of placing her as a boarder in a convent-school. He was away so much, and Kate and her step-mother were not very congenial, so the girl readily accepted the idea. Before Mr. Lorrimer left C— again (as it was necessary for him to do in a short time) he had the satisfaction of seeing her happily settled at St. Mary's Convent.

From the first Kate was well pleased, and she realized that these people did not shrink from her on account of her affliction, while Father Long, pastor of the church across the street from the convent, went out of his way to show her kindness, and became her friend.

Remembering her father's explanation, it was with great devotion that Kate heard Mass; at first on Sunday—later on, as her beauty grew upon her—very day. But this could not satisfy her for long; she must be a real Catholic. Father Long, to whom she confided her desire, told her she must have her father's consent before he could give her any instruction. Kate knew she could better manage her father in a personal interview than by letter, so she must wait for his return from one of his long business trips. At last he arrived in C—, and on his first visit to her, Kate told him of her desire. A shadow crossed his face. "Kate, dear," he said slowly, "would it not come between us? There would be confession, and you know I do not like it. We have been very close to each other; nothing has come between us—but I am afraid this would."

"No," she answered quickly, "I promise you it never will." He considered the matter bravely. Without doubt Catholicity would be a source of happiness and consolation to his invalid daughter, at least, as long as her surroundings were Catholic. But should circumstances place her among his own relatives, she would not experience much joy in the practice of that religion. Yet such an event was only a possibility; as long as he himself lived, he would gladly help Kate to practice her Faith. He would probably live longer than she, he reasoned, inasmuch as he was strong, and still in the prime of life. Kate, on the other hand, was very delicate. So he gave his consent, and the instructions were begun. Three months passed.

One day Mr. Lorrimer came to Kate with bad news. His headquarters had been changed to the city of S—. She must be ready in a few days to accompany him. "I wonder," Kate sighed wistfully, when he had told her, "if Father Long would baptize me before we leave."

"I'd hardly advise it," her father replied. "You do not really know much about the Catholic religion as yet, and it's something, Kate, you can't pick up and then drop again, like Protestants do with different religions. If you become a Catholic you are supposed to remain one always."

To Kate's surprise Father Long was of Mr. Lorrimer's opinion, and despite her pleadings, refused to baptize her. "Doubtless at some future time you will resume your instructions," he told her.

"No," she responded despairingly. "I feel sure that unless you do so now, I never will be baptized."

"There are other priests in the world besides myself," Father Long assured her, but no answering smile was seen on her lips.

For some time after that Kate's life was unsettled. In S— they stayed at a hotel, and sometimes, when his trips were not too long Mr. Lorrimer took her with



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