

GERALD DE LACEY'S DAUGHTER

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE OF COLONIAL DAYS

BY ANNA T. SADLER CHAPTER IX

THE DRAWING OF LOVE

Evelyn de Lacey and Polly Van Cortlandt were waiting together in that solemn, tapestried room upstairs where Madam Van Cortlandt received her guests.

The sunset light was still beautifying the air of Manhattan. The atmosphere was all burnished gold, with here and there light flecks of pink, or green or violet.

The smell of the "lacylocks" was in the air, and floated in through the windows of that mansion where the festivities were on foot.

Near the window, looking out upon its orderly neatness, stood Polly and Evelyn, making their way to the terrace which always impressed the observer.

This was the picture that caught the eye of the two men who had walked thither from the Fort, coming together not for any love of each other's company.

Such an introduction had been eagerly sought by both men ever since their arrival in the country, and, it having seemed difficult to secure, Captain Prosser Williams had endeavored to forestall it, as has been seen, in a way which he now bitterly regretted.

Evelyn talked with the two men indifferently. But, when the strains of old Caesar's fiddle came invitingly up the broad stairs, she promised the first country dance to Captain Egbert Ferrers, who was prompt to seize the opportunity, and found all her dances engaged for Captain Williams until so late an hour in the evening that it amounted to a refusal.

Meanwhile, Captain Williams, reconsidering his first decision, made his bow and requested the honor of a dance with Miss Polly Van Cortlandt, the more especially as he saw her surrounded by a goodly

number of those whom he already knew to be the most eligible young men of the colony.

There was a soft glow of excitement on Evelyn's cheeks, a light of interest in her eyes, which made her face more charming; and the smile that she bestowed upon her partner as she passed close to where Williams was standing, made him once more curse his own stupidity.

As for the other member of His Excellency's staff, it was clear that he was frankly and entirely fascinated. He had never been a lady's man, and was held in fact to be quite impervious to feminine charms.

He liked the touch of the unusual about her, and the subtle charm arising from the poetry of her nature as well as from an uncommon power of sympathy.

Both seemed slightly disconcerted at the question, which Captain Ferrers lightly parried, indulging in a fine play of words with the lively and vivacious Polly.

"True lovers' knots," said Captain Ferrers, absently taking one of the cakes in his hand and gazing at it as though he were pondering some weighty problem.

"How far and how long do they bind those of your inconstant sex?" Captain Williams asked of Polly, though his eyes were really fixed upon Evelyn.

"If our sex be inconstant," said Evelyn, lightly taking up the challenge, "why should it not be so, since all things in life change?"

Then Williams distinctly heard Captain Ferrers say, though he had drawn back a little from the others and spoke in a whisper: "No you would never be inconstant. With you, believe me, love would be till death."

number of those whom he already knew to be the most eligible young men of the colony. He could catch now and again some bright or witty remark of Polly's, and hear her pleasant laugh sounding musically through the room.

In the course of conversation, Captain Prosser Williams managed to secure from Polly a good many bits of information about the elusive Evelyn, in whom, however, he tactfully avoided showing any special interest.

When supper was served, Captain Williams and his partner were in such a position that they could observe both Captain Ferrers and Evelyn, and even exchange scraps of conversation with them.

Both seemed slightly disconcerted at the question, which Captain Ferrers lightly parried, indulging in a fine play of words with the lively and vivacious Polly.

"True lovers' knots," said Captain Ferrers, absently taking one of the cakes in his hand and gazing at it as though he were pondering some weighty problem.

"How far and how long do they bind those of your inconstant sex?" Captain Williams asked of Polly, though his eyes were really fixed upon Evelyn.

"If our sex be inconstant," said Evelyn, lightly taking up the challenge, "why should it not be so, since all things in life change?"

Then Williams distinctly heard Captain Ferrers say, though he had drawn back a little from the others and spoke in a whisper: "No you would never be inconstant. With you, believe me, love would be till death."

Some of them were undoubtedly excellent. There was the resolution to make out a daily program of time portioning out the valuable minutes in such a way that at the close of the day all could be accounted for.

accuse her—for indeed, as her sense of justice told her, Evelyn was not to blame—she blamed rather these cavaliers from overseas, and especially her own partner, Captain Williams.

Polly was not sorry when, the supper having disappeared, they returned to the drawing-room where tables were set for cards.

While I was thus looking over the half forgotten resolutions taken a short year ago, and wondering whether I would write any new ones for the coming year, suddenly there came a tap at the door.

"Here, you, what do you want?" The old gentleman looked me over very coolly across a pair of steel rimmed specs well down on his nose, and waving his hand for silence, calmly helped himself to one of my Christmas cigars and sat down on the one good easy chair in my room which I reserve for guests and enjoy myself when particularly lazy.

"I tried to think where I saw him before. But I couldn't place him and he gave me no clue. After one or two puffs at the cigar he looked at it critically.

"Well, of all the cool—" I began indignantly, and again came that imperious gesture for silence. I sat looking at him. He was old and haggard, a veritable old man of the mountains and ancient mariner all rolled up in one.

"Yes, indeed," he answered ironically. "And now look at me, a mere battered hulk of a man, a wreck, one foot in the grave—indeed, I might say two feet."

"I guess not," I retorted. "I don't see why I should be afraid of you."

"No," he answered bitterly. "There's no reason why you should be. You never were in the past."

Nicotine, I would not banish her forever. But I would keep her in her place—a very ungalant resolution I'm sure.

And exercise—oh yes, a daily walk was on the reform program. Rain or shine, business or no business, I resolved to see that I got my daily exercise. Then worry, foolish worry—that, above all, was to be chased away out of my life forever.

"I started in surprise—who in the world could it be that tapped at my door at midnight. Instead of my accustomed yell, I modulated my voice to suit the unseemly hour and said: "Come in."

"I rose in my chair in amazement, rubbed my eyes to see if I was awake, and finally managed to gasp out: "Here, you, what do you want?"

"I tried to think where I saw him before. But I couldn't place him and he gave me no clue. After one or two puffs at the cigar he looked at it critically.

"Well, of all the cool—" I began indignantly, and again came that imperious gesture for silence. I sat looking at him. He was old and haggard, a veritable old man of the mountains and ancient mariner all rolled up in one.

"Yes, indeed," he answered ironically. "And now look at me, a mere battered hulk of a man, a wreck, one foot in the grave—indeed, I might say two feet."

"I guess not," I retorted. "I don't see why I should be afraid of you."

"No," he answered bitterly. "There's no reason why you should be. You never were in the past."

said, warming up in the subject, "I've seen mummies in Egypt five thousand years old that looked younger, fresher, fairer."

"The old man appeared to be depressed by this information. He put his hand to his heart, shook his head sorrowfully, but then he grew angry again after a moment, and leveling a long forefinger at me he cried:

"You, you are responsible for my decrepit appearance. You and you alone."

"I?" I cried, indignantly. "Why, my good fellow, I never saw you. What do you mean? Who are you? I've a mind to call the police."

"Never mind," he answered, and thereupon from his pocket he pulled a handful of glittering objects and threw them on the table beside him. They were precious stones. I gasped with surprise—there were rubies and diamonds and emeralds, and they shone and sparkled with a thousand iridescent rays under the electric lamp.

"I treasure," he said laughing, "a treasure, and you throw it away."

"I threw it away?" I asked puzzled. "Yes," he answered solemnly. "I have followed you around now for a year and all these precious stones lay in your path. You passed them by and I picked them up. You lost them—forever," and with this he carefully gathered up the glittering collection and transferred them back to the great pocket from which he had taken them.

"Old man," I said solemnly. "It is not good that a man of your years and seeming reverence should show such slight regard for truth. Those jewels came from Kimberly, the streets which I never walked, or else some wholesale jeweler, a place which with my slender salary I never visit. So that when you tell me I passed them by on my daily round I almost feel inclined to apply to you that short but ugly epithet which the doughty colonel reserves for those who disagree with him."

No words have ever given greater comfort to sorrowing humanity than these two, "Our Father."

Phone Main 6249. After Hours: Hillcrest 5313. Society of St. Vincent de Paul Bureau of Information

St. Jerome's College Founded 1864 KITCHENER, ONT.

FOY, KNOX & MONAHAN BARRISTERS, SOLICITORS, NOTARIES, Etc.

JOHN T. LOFTUS Barrister, Solicitor, Notary, Etc.

REILLY, LUNNEY & LANNAN Barristers, Solicitors, Notaries

DR. BRUCE E. RAID Room 5, Dominion Bank Chambers

Hotel St. Charles (FIRE-PROOF) Atlantic City, N. J.

Funeral Directors John Ferguson & Sons 180 KING ST.

E. C. Killingsworth FUNERAL DIRECTOR

WHOOPIING COUGH Vapo-Cresolene

Hotel Lenox NORTH ST. AT DELAWARE AVE. BUFFALO, N.Y.