

GERALD DE LACEY'S DAUGHTER AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE OF COLONIAL DAYS

BY ANNA T. SADLER CHAPTER IV JACOBITE AND CATHOLIC

The house which Evelyn de Lacey inhabited with her father stood upon Pearl Street, at that portion which was then known as "The Waterside." It was upon the corner of what was once Winckel Street, but was later named Whitehall after the famous residence which the great Governor Stuyvesant built there.

The garden of this ideal home was most absorbing to Evelyn. In addition to those flowers which grew in such abundance, and with a degree of disorder which to the mind of their owner constituted their chief charm, Evelyn had a corner reserved for vegetables to supply their daily needs, and a piece of ground devoted exclusively to the herbs and simples which she compounded into medicines with a skill acquired from an old and once famous physician, now dead.

When Evelyn returned from the pageant that afternoon she found her father in his study, and as it seemed to her, in an unusual mood of dejection. The broad casement of the room was thrown open, as if inviting in the tendrils of the vines upon which later honeysuckle, wisteria and rambling roses would cluster in luxuriant abundance.

Gerald de Lacey was still in the prime of life, but had travelled much and seen much active service, particularly in the Low Countries, as Major in one of the Hussar regiments. He had first come over to the colony with Governor Dongan, accompanied by his wife and young daughter. He had subsequently returned to England, whence the course of events, resulting in the accession of William of Orange, had again driven him forth. He was then a widower, and with his one daughter had come to New York and taken up his residence in a house which had been built for the Dutch minister and which Major de Lacey had improved to his taste.

Recognizing perhaps the incompleteness of such a life as his, he made every possible effort to keep Evelyn in the forefront of the city's social circles. He admired almost inordinately the qualities which he discerned in her, as well as the rare-

ness and fineness of her beauty, which recalled that of her dead mother and appealed to his fastidiousness. His means, though not large, were sufficient for their needs, and by a rigid personal economy, which he did not permit Evelyn to realize, he contrived to give her the modish and often expensive costumes which one side of the nature of the girl passionately loved.

Even had Evelyn been aware of the sacrifices which her father made to supply her with all she needed, she could not have offered any successful opposition. For that was one of the matters upon which Gerald de Lacey was inflexible. Rarely had his will run counter to that of his child; but, when it did so, it was as effective as finely tempered steel in the hands of a skillful swordsman. He always declared that she was to dress as he thought fitting, and according to the state in life to which she properly belonged.

The father had watched her from the window, as she alighted from the Van Cortlandt carriage in that gown of gold lustrous which had been so much admired, and the perfection of her appearance filled him with a pride which partly consoled him for the bitter reflections of the day. When Evelyn entered the study he was sitting at the table with the same volume of poetry open before him which had been unread all that afternoon.

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Entering the room in her yellow dress, Evelyn brought with her as it were a splendor of sunshine. Her young beauty concentrated all that remained of the sun that was setting and likewise, as it seemed to the observer, all that remained to him of life. She approached him softly and laid her hand ever so gently and caressingly on his shoulder. She was not given to effusive demonstrations, which indeed were rare between them. But, after one look at his face, she bent and kissed him. She realized, as in a flash, how much need he had of sympathy and tenderness. She felt conscience-stricken, too, that she had been absent from him when perhaps he had needed her. But there she was somewhat mistaken. He had had need also of solitude in which to fight his bitter battle, when he had sent her away a few days before to accompany Polly on a visit to relatives of the latter's in Morrisania. The father raised his head and met his daughter's glance. It was plain to see where she had got a portion at least of her beauty and charm, though the heartless man was just then reflecting that she had so strong a look of her mother.

"You did not go out to see—?" "The passing show," said her father, completing the sentence. "No, love, for in such an assemblage there could be no place for me. I could not raise a cheer, nor," he added more lightly, "even my hat to the representative of the usurper. So I would have been in all truth a marked man, and that would have been perilous for us both."

Evelyn sat down beside him with a countenance that was sober and thoughtful, putting aside her taffeta scarf which was of a deeper shade of gold than her dress. "Perhaps it was not meet that I should have gone," she said. Her father interrupted her quickly. "Most certainly you should have gone," he said emphatically. "Our cases, my dear daughter, are different indeed. My life is done, and yours but begun; I have sworn allegiance to one prince, and may not take such an oath to another. At least, that is my way of thinking, though, how the fact is accomplished, I shall meddle no more with public concerns, and there is no danger that I shall plot treason. Besides," he added, "you, as a young maid, were not obliged to give outward token of

loyalty." "No, no," cried Evelyn, "I never so much as bowed my head nor waved my handkerchief." The father smiled. "So that was the way of it," he said, "absent in spirit, though present in the body."

And he thought how like that little touch was to her mother. "It was a fine sight," Evelyn cried, warming to enthusiasm, "all save the Governor himself, who was odious." Mr. de Lacey laughed a pleasant, mellow-sounding laugh, that had something contagious in its melody. "Governors are not chosen for their personal attraction, I trow," he said, "but a matter more grave than his personal appearance is the stock of which he comes. He is of a family which the poet, Dante, would have described as 'an evil brood.' If we can estimate these colonies by Ireland, and the new Governor's policy by the proceedings of these Colonies in that country, then is there little hope for us Catholics."

There was silence for a brief interval in the study, of which the shadows had come early to take possession. Evelyn moved restlessly but did not speak. The expression of His Excellency's face had filled her with a pronounced hostility and a vague anxiety. Her father presently resumed: "But I would not do this man injustice. There are those who say that he is both honest and well-meaning, and hath in his head some ideas of good government. So that perchance the day that is dawning for these colonies may be fair, after all."

Evelyn, with an impulsive movement, laid her hand upon the finely formed one of her father, which lay flat on the table before him, and upon which shone a blood red garnet catching the last lingering gleams of light. "You will be prudent, father dearest," she cried. "Aye, I will be prudent," he answered, adding quickly, "unless honor should counsel otherwise."

He raised his head proudly as if the emergency had already arisen, and, rising to his feet, looked down on Evelyn, who had likewise stood up. "What would my little Evelyn counsel in that case?" he inquired. "That we should both die," she answered with sudden passion. "May God avert the occasion, at least from you!" the father said solemnly.

By the girl knew that he was pleased, and her heart had answered this other dear heart which had been her all during her years of childhood and of youth.

CHAPTER V. NEW FACES

On the next afternoon Evelyn de Lacey, wearing this time a sober costume of cloth which she herself had woven and dyed, accompanied her father on a walk which led them down past the Fort, where in bygone days he had occupied the room above the gate. He noted, with an involuntary contraction of the brows, the Orange flag waving, but he said nothing. Evelyn noted the expression that had crossed his face and understood its cause. He had never got accustomed to the sight. Probably the father's inclination would have been for a quiet walk through the fields or along the waterfront, but he knew that his daughter would naturally prefer to meet some of her friends, who were sure to be upon the parade, then the fashionable promenade.

As they passed the Bowling Green, a number of officers were playing bowls with the keenest zest, and with jests and laughter that rang out gaily in the silence of that spring afternoon. At intervals during their sport they paused to survey the passing groups of gaily dressed women and men, for in richness the men's attire almost surpassed that of their female competitors. Evelyn de Lacey was once more the cynosure of all those observers, who, in their careless or supercilious ignorance, believed these colonies to be barely on the verge of civilization and a place where there was little to admire and much to criticize. Scoffs and jeers were alike silenced by the face of the girl, to which corresponded a well-proportioned figure, her erect as a dart and supple as a willow. It was evident, too, to those who took the trouble to follow her movements, that she was a person of note in the community. Hats were continually being doffed to her, and there were smiles and cordial greetings alike from those in carriages and pedestrians.

There were two officers upon the Green, who, suspending their sport, had given a closer attention than all the rest, not only to this girl, but also to her companion. They took particular note of Gerald de Lacey. There was something in his tall, erect figure that betrayed the soldier, and something in the profile of that face, which was never once turned towards them, that marked him out from his fellows. He was unconscious of that gaze, which he might perhaps have found disturbing. Just at the moment, as if to give the observers a still better opportunity for their observations, Polly Van Cortlandt, attended only by her negro maid, intercepted her friends, and began an animated conversation. As they stood thus in the full sunlight of that April day, her brilliant beauty made as usual a foil for that other companion whose subtle charm was even more percep-

tibly felt by the two who stood still upon the Bowling Green.

The men on the Green offered an equally strong contrast to each other. One was a medium-sized, compactly-built man, with an eye that would be invaluable in the field, a lean and bronzed face that at once commanded attention and inspired confidence. It was that of a strong and resourceful man, who had had experience of life and its evils. He was, in fact, Captain Egbert Ferrers, who had already won distinction in active service. His companion was taller and paler, as if the sun had been unable to take effect upon a skin that was thick and a complexion that was dull. His hair was red and his eyes of a pale blue, with a trick of making themselves as expressionless as a mask. Lieutenant Prosser Williams, who bore by courtesy the title of captain, was counted by some a handsome man, and was quite willing to concede with that opinion. But to the close observer there was a suggestion of coldness, of craft, even of cruelty, which repelled. For the rest, with slightly stooping shoulders and an almost exaggerated slenderness, his general appearance was that of a man of fashion, rather than of a soldier.

"Where in the name of all the Gods of Greece," he said presently, "have I seen that face before?" "Do you refer," Captain Ferrers inquired, somewhat curtly, "to the beautiful face of the lady?" "For Captain Ferrers, reasoned as he was, had himself received from that exquisite face an impression so strong that it seemed to blot out all other features in the landscape. It had shaken, too, his pride and self-confidence, and that belief in his power to resist feminine charms which had become proverbial amongst his comrades.

"No," said Prosser Williams. I can take my oath that, save for a momentary glimpse of it at the carriage window yesterday, I have never seen that face before—no, nor one like it. I was speaking of her companion—a youthful father or an elderly husband, it matters little which."

The suggestion, no less than the other's tone, irritated Captain Ferrers. Nor would he admit to himself the idea of a husband. The next instant he smiled whimsically. "What a man of straw he was proving himself, after all!"

"I did not overmuch observe the lady's companion," he said quietly. "Eyes only for the fair," said Captain Williams, with the faintest perceptible sneer. "Yet even that perfection of beauty, which I did not dream these colonies could produce, did not blind me to the man. He is worth noting, and I could swear that I have seen him before and at no distant date."

His attention thus specially directed to the father, Captain Ferrers, perceiving that the two were still in sight, strolled away from his companion, and took up his position at a better point of observation on that smooth greensward, where so lately he had been strenuously engaged in rolling about the balls as if that endeavor were the sum total of his aspirations. Now something serious had happened, though it was only the second glimpse he had caught of the face of a girl, earnest, innocent and hauntingly beautiful. Her back was now turned towards him, so that he saw instead the radiant countenance of her friend, whose sparkling eyes of black, raven hair and damask cheeks did not in the least appeal to him. Moreover, he was curious to have another look at that man who had attracted Prosser Williams' attention, for something in the latter's remark had struck him. From where he stood, in such a position as to be unnoticed by those whom he wished to observe, his keen eyes had a very distinct view of Gerald de Lacey's face, lined and careworn in the strong light as he smiled down at his daughters' friend. Egbert Ferrers drew in his breath with a sharp exclamation:

"By heaven," he cried, "I too have seen him before, and I remember where." Then he added, with growing irritation: "If that sleuth-hound of a Williams has but got hold of a clue, there will be trouble, but I will be hanged, drawn and quartered, if I assist his memory."

Something in the alternative he had proposed for himself made him shiver slightly. There had been so much of such happenings within the memory of living men in England. At the moment he stepped forward unconsciously from his place of concealment, and his eyes met those of Gerald de Lacey, which had in them at first merely a look of careless inquiry, suddenly changing, as it appeared to Ferrers, into one of uneasiness. At the same instant, too, Evelyn, turning her head, looked full into his face. The double sensation he thus experienced so curiously upset him that, scarcely waiting to perceive that the tall man on the pavement was hurrying his daughter away, he walked swiftly across the lawn where a game was still in progress and eager bowlers called out to him as he passed. He walked on rapidly, hardly knowing whether he was going, till he found himself on the shore where rows of palisades had been erected against suspected inroads of the French. He was unnerved to a degree that neither he nor any of his friends would have believed possible. For these comes no doubt in every life moments when some great issue seems forcing itself to the front and forcing into the background all that has been previously of paramount importance.

He stood staring out at the water where miniature waves chased one another under the cool brightness of that sky, deeply blue though mottled with white clouds. The breath of the salt air coming up from the ocean was reviving. He was still warm from his game, and felt the need of such refreshment, as he watched with abstracted gaze the sails of the fisher-boats and some Indian canoes, which dotted the wide expanse of water before him. He had only one idea clear in his mind: to avoid any questioning from Williams, which might complicate matters, and to advise the father of this girl, whose very name was unknown to him, to leave that town at the earliest moment and to take with him his daughter (or his wife) out of reach of influences that might in some fashion be brought to bear upon them.

He began to argue too in his mind, as if the matter were of vital importance, that this girl could not possibly be the wife of the man whom he had just recognized. For he had perceived at the time that he was married, and had been married some years. Why, his wife would be nearing middle age! He drew a breath of relief, and then it flashed upon him with disturbing force that death might have intervened, and the man be married again to this young and charming girl. He suddenly felt a curious sense of desolation darkening his mind as that cloud was just then darkening the Bay. A sense of danger to come and a possible loss smote him, so sensitive is the human soul to weird impressions. If it was necessary that the tall man with the white face should remove to some distant place with his daughter (for so he persisted in calling her), he knew that he himself would miss something that gave color and interest to these landscapes and to the quaint Dutch town, the characteristics of which he had previously scarcely noted. He felt a strong desire to study that face and that character, and find out for himself what lay behind that beauty, which he assured himself with the power of experience could not be merely superficial. He wanted to know the meaning of the expression lurking behind those uncommon eyes, and he told himself with sudden resolution that he would do so at the earliest possible moment. He walked back again across the Bowling Green and through the stone courtyard to the Governor's residence where he had his quarters. The father and daughter, who had awakened such interest had gone; the gay groups on the pavement had thinned out, and the balls on the green had ceased to rattle. Prosser Williams was nowhere to be seen.

Meanwhile, Mr. de Lacey and his daughter had returned home, unaware that new influences had come into their lives. Evelyn lingered amongst the herbs and flowers in her garden, conscious of a new excitement, which she was young enough and impressionable enough fully to appreciate. Surely, those groups of bowlers on the Green, typical of life and energy had given a new interest to the sometimes monotonous existence of Manhattan. Nor had she been unmindful of the glances of interest and admiration she had caught on those two faces which had most impressed her. They seemed to have singled themselves from the others in her consciousness. Towards one she felt a half formed dislike or annoyance, which had its origin in something that was bold and insolent in his glance. And that man's hair was red and his eyes were pale blue. As for the other, she had got no farther in her impressions than that she would like to know his name, and perhaps to discover if he danced as well as he bowled, and if he were really as bright and full of interesting experiences as he seemed. But her father, having hurried into the house, sat with his head buried in his hands in deep and anxious meditation. So far removed are the preoccupations of one generation from those of another.

TO BE CONTINUED

REMEMBERING AUNT ANN

Some insistent sound had roused Ruth Vincent from refreshing slumber. Still only half awake, she thought impatiently that the family next door had begun their Friday cleaning at an unearthly hour. Opening her eyes, she stared at the rough board ceiling overhead, and then at the unbeam creeping through a knot hole in the opposite wall—and remembered with a happy chuckle that she was far from next door neighbors. She rose hastily and began to dress, for the days in camp were so precious that she did not wish to lose one moment of them.

Mrs. Graydon, her hostess, heard her stir and slipped a letter under the door. "Here's a letter for you, dear!" she called. "Jackson roved across the lake early this morning to get the mail." "Thank you!" Ruth answered. "I hope it's from the folk at home."

But when she stooped to pick up the letter, she frowned in disappointment. The letter had been forwarded from the home post office. "Aunt Ann! Why—she never writes except to thank me for Christmas and birthday gifts—"

As her mind ran back over the past month, she felt that it was quite natural that she should have forgotten the birthday of an aunt—especially a great aunt whom she did not remember distinctly. There had been the excitement of getting ready for the high school commencement, and then commencement week with all its gay hours filled to the limit. After that had come the invitation to spend two weeks at the Graydon's summer camp. The last ten days had been brimming over with the pure joy of living.

But why had Aunt Ann written? Surely not to upbraid her because she had failed to remember. Ruth had grown up with the impression that Aunt Ann was—well different. Opening the envelope, she drew out the note, written in a clear, precise hand; it read:—

Dear Niece, I am writing to express to you my thanks for your remembrance of my birthday. All three of the packages arrived on the morning of that day, and I wish to assure you that I greatly appreciate your thoughtfulness. Very sincerely,

Your great aunt, Ann Vincent. "My three packages! What in the world does she mean?" Then suddenly Ruth rolled on the bed in a paroxysm of hysterical laughter. The thin walls of the summer cottage could not shut in such a tumult of merriment try as she would, to muffle it, and immediately three girls in kimonos came rushing in and demanded to know at once what was causing such hilarity. "It's—it's—my Aunt Ann," Ruth gasped, "and mother—and Aunt Helen and Aunt Grace!"

"Well, you've known them all for some time. How did you happen to discover all at once that they were so very amusing?" Irma Graydon asked, shaking her guest soundly. "It's about Aunt Ann's birthday—I forgot it! But evidently the folks at home remembered in time, and to save me from disgrace each of them sent a present in my name, for Aunt Ann writes to thank me for her three gifts. I'm wondering whether it was three breakfast caps that they sent, or three handkerchiefs with tating on, or three pairs of bedroom slippers."

Her friends joined in the laughter, and Mrs. Graydon, who had entered in time to hear Ruth's explanation, laughed, too; then her face grew thoughtful.

"We'll hope that your Aunt Ann was not offended in any way," she said.

Everyone in the home town knew how little Mrs. Vincent and her two delicate maiden sisters had had to struggle to keep a home together and to keep boisterous, romping Ruth in clothes, shoes and books while she climbed steadily from the baby room, through the grades and through the high school. Occasional gifts from Aunt Ann, the one living relative on the Vincent side, had helped; but since the funeral of Ruth's father, whom Aunt Ann had reared, educated and loved in her own undemocratic way, that lady had never visited his family.

Early in June Ruth's mother had written to Aunt Ann and asked her to visit them during commencement week; she hoped that when Aunt Ann should hear about Ruth's wonderful achievement in the high school, and her longing to go on with her education, she would offer to lend the money for the college course. Aunt Ann had replied very briefly that she could not accept the invitation, because it was the busiest time on the farm. She had added that she hoped Ruth would go to work now, and waste no more time in school as she, for her part, did not believe in sending girls to college.

Mrs. Graydon knew Aunt Ann's views on the education of women very well, but nevertheless had hoped that this well-to-do relative would change her views and give Ruth the opportunity that she deserved. This episode, she feared, might make matters worse.

When they had all left the room, Ruth sat down in front of the mirror to rearrange her tumbled hair. She glanced squarely into the face reflected there, and suddenly all her laughter vanished.

"I—I'm ashamed of you, Ruth Vincent," she said soberly. "Seeing only the funny side of what must have seemed almost a tragedy to three of the dearest women in the world."

Their faces came to her very clearly. She could see the little worried wrinkle that had come between mother's eyebrows when she had realized that Ruth was too far away to be reminded in time of Aunt Ann's birthday. Then mother had taken down the baking powder can from the top of the kitchen cabinet, counted carefully the week's allowance, and slipped out enough to buy some little gift, which she had mailed without telling her sisters that thoughtless Ruth had left another burden on her mother's tired shoulders.

Then, as Aunt Helen had hurried down to the office, she had remembered, too. She had decided loyally to keep Ruth's forgetfulness from the others, and had also mailed a package to Aunt Ann.

Gentle Aunt Grace, working ceaselessly over her embroidery or crochet work, had remembered and, snatching time from some of the orders that gave her a small supply of pin money, had made some beautiful thing and, keeping her own counsel, had mailed it to Aunt Ann.

"How dear they are!" Ruth whispered contritely. "I'll try to make it all up to them, but I don't know

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