

Zelda Dameron

By
MEREDITH NICHOLSON

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CHAPTER V.—(Continued.)

"Pardon me—" Zelda brought her horse to the curb—but I've lost my way. Can you tell me—"

The girl stepped to the curb and described the easiest way across town. She was small and trim of figure and had very blue eyes.

"Thank you," said Zelda, and Zane started forward.

"You are Miss Dameron," the teacher said, hesitatingly.

"Yes," Zelda turned toward her in surprise.

"It's been a long time since I saw you—as many as a dozen years." The girl smiled and Zelda smiled, too.

"I wish I could remember. I'm sorry, but won't you help me?"

"It was when you were a little girl—so was I, but I was older—and my mother took me to see your mother, and we played, and I, that is, in the yard, while our mothers talked. You wore a red dress and I thought you were very grand."

The blue eyes were looking into the dark ones. There was a moment of hesitation and scrutiny. Then Zelda put out her hand.

"You are my cousin, Olive—is it—Merriam?—please don't tell me that isn't right!"

"Yes; that is just right."

"I'm going to take you home, if you're ready to go, Cousin Olive. I'm badly lost and don't remember the way you told me to go. It's so exciting meeting a long-lost cousin!"

Olive Merriam debated an instant, in which she surveyed her new-found cousin doubtfully. She had started home when the battle at the school-house door gave her pause. There was no excuse for refusing, Zelda had gathered up the reins, and waited.

"Do come! Zane isn't dangerous—and neither am I."

"Thank you. I'll have to come now to show that I'm not afraid."

The boys lingered at a safe distance, and as Zelda drove past them at the corner, several of them snatched off their caps and grinned, and Olive Merriam called good-night to them.

As Zelda followed the route indicated by her cousin, she was busy trying to find a lost strand of family history that proved elusive. She did not at all remember her mother's brother, Thomas Merriam. She had never heard her aunt or uncle speak of the relationship, and she surmised, now that she thought of it, that there must be another of those breaks in the family connection that had already revealed ragged edges. It was growing late, and she put Zane to her best paces, until presently they came out upon a broad paved thoroughfare.

"That's better," said Zelda. "I'm sure I should never have found the way out alone. I don't believe I've ever done before. Please let me drive you home. I haven't the least idea where that is, so if I'm going wrong—"

"It's Harrison street," she described the route. "You're taking a lot of trouble about me."

"No. It's the other way around. I'd never have seen the court-house clock again if it hadn't been for you. And then—" they approached a cross street, and Zelda checked the flight of Zane and bent forward to see whether the coast was clear—"and then"—she loosened the reins and the animal sped forward again—"I've been looking awfully hard for a friend, Cousin Olive, and I want you!"

"You are kind—but you don't understand—a lot of things," said Olive Merriam. "You and I can't be friends. There are reasons—"

"I don't care for any reasons," said Zelda.

"But they're not my reasons—they're other people's! That's our house there, where the shades are up and a light is in the window."

"I don't care what other people say about anything"—and Zelda brought Zane to a stand at the curb in front of Olive's door.

"I'd ask you to stop—" began Olive.

"I'm going to stop," said Zelda—"to see you quite on your threshold. Zane stands without hitching, usually. I'll take my chances."

Harrison is only a street in miniature. A poet wrote a song about it that made it the most famous street in Mariona. The houses there are chiefly one-story-and-a-half cottages, and in one of these, which was saved from intrusive eyes in summer by a double line of hollyhocks, and which had at its back door a seasonal times a charming old-fashioned garden, lived Olive Merriam and her mother.

Olive threw open the door and Zelda stepped into a sitting-room—the house had no hall—where a coal fire burned cozily in a grate. The room ran the length of the house; the woodwork was white; the floor was pine, stained a dull red and covered with rugs made of old carpet. A student lamp with a green shade stood on a table in the center of the room. There were magazines and books on the table, and shelves in the corners held other books. An elderly woman looked up from the paper she had been reading as the door opened. A cane lay on the floor beside her and told the story of the lines of pain in her face.

"Mother, this is Zelda Dameron. She has brought me home," said Olive.

"She didn't want me to at all, but I made her let me," said Zelda, crossing the room and taking Mrs. Merriam's hand.

The woman bent her eyes—they were blue like Olive's—upon the girl with a grave questioning.

"You are Margaret's daughter—you are Ezra Dameron's daughter," she said.

"Yes; and I didn't know about you at all until I found Olive to-day. And I didn't know that any Merriams anywhere lived in a house like this. Why, it's a home. I'm going—but tell me that I may come back again."

There was something so sincere and

wistful in Zelda's tone as she spoke, standing between the firelight and the lamplight; something, too, in the glance of appeal she gave the little room, that broke down the antagonism in Mrs. Merriam's eyes. She put out her hand again.

"Yes; I hope you will come. We shall be glad to see you."

Olive followed Zelda to the steps, and saw the runaway turn in the narrow street and whirl away. She watched it until Zelda's erect figure passed like a flash under the electric light at the corner and disappeared into the dark beyond.

"What miracle is this?" asked Mrs. Merriam of Olive. "Nothing short of a miracle would account for it."

"I met her down at the school-house. She had lost her way and asked me how to find Jefferson street. I called her by name—she seemed to remember me, and then she insisted on bringing me home. She seemed rather pitiful; she said she was lonesome and wanted a friend."

Olive sat down on a stool at her mother's feet. She was afraid to show too much interest in this new-found cousin. Her mother was clearly puzzled and troubled; the moment was difficult; but she felt that it was important to determine their future relations with Zelda Dameron now.

"She is very like her mother. It gave me a shock to see her. Margaret had that same impulsive way. In any one else it would have seemed strained and theatrical, but no one ever thought of it in Margaret. Every one always said, when she did anything a little odd, that it was just like Margaret Dameron. Your father hadn't any of that; he wasn't like the rest of the Merriams. He tried to be on good terms with Ezra Dameron, though Ezra never appreciated it; and the rest of them dropped out for countenancing him. But Zelda—what do you think of her?"

"She didn't give me time to think. She charmed me! I never saw anybody like her in the world. She has such an air of mystery—that doesn't seem just the word, but I don't know what to call it. She's adorable!"

CHAPTER VI.

Rodney Merriam and Morris Leighton walked up High street to the Tippecanoe Club, which occupied a handsome old brick mansion that had been built by the Merriams who had afterward lost his money. Merriam usually went there late every afternoon to look over the newspapers, and to talk to the men who dropped in on their way home. He belonged also to the Hamilton, a much larger and gayer club that rose to the height of five stories in the circular plaza about the soldiers' monument at the heart of the city; but he never went there, for it was noisy and full of politics. Many young men fresh from college belonged to the Tippecanoe, and Merriam liked to talk to them. He was more constant to the club than Morris, though they often went there together.

A number of men were sitting about the fireplace in the lounge room. The lazy blazing logs furnished the only light. A chorus of good-evenings greeted the two men in unmistakable cordiality, and the best chair in the room was pushed toward Rodney Merriam.

"Mr. Merriam, Captain Pollock; and Mr. Leighton."

A young man rose and shook hands with the newcomers. Merriam did not know most of the group by name. He had reached the age at which it seems unnecessary to tax the memory with new burdens. It was, he held, good club manners to speak to all the men you meet in a club, whether you know them or not. The youngsters at the Tippecanoe were for the greater part college graduates, just starting out in the world and retaining a jealous hold of their youth through the ties of the club.

"Captain Pollock has been telling us about the Philippines," said one of the group. "We've been trying to find out whether he's an imperialist or how about it, but he won't tell."

"That shows his good judgment," said Merriam.

"It shows that I want to keep my job," declared Pollock, cheerfully. "And I'll be cashiered now for certain. If I don't get back to the Arsenal, Major Congrieve expects me for dinner."

Baker, who had brought Pollock to the club, shook himself out of his chair and the others rose.

"I'll see that you find your way back to the reservation," said Baker.

"That's very kind of you. And I'm glad to have met you, Mr. Merriam."

It was a soft voice, and as they went out into the hall, Merriam looked at the owner of it with interest. He was a slim young fellow, with friendly blue eyes, brown hair, and a slight mustache. His carriage was that of the drilled man. West Point does not give a degree in the usual academic sense; but she writes something upon her graduates that is much more useful for purposes of identification. Frank Pollock had been the shortest man in his class; but his scant inches were all soldierly. The young man with whom he had spent an hour at the Tippecanoe Club had been gathered up by Baker, who had met Pollock somewhere and taken a fancy to him. They all left the club together except Merriam and Leighton, who went to the newspaper room. But Merriam stared at the evening paper without reading it, and when he got up to go presently, he stopped at the club register which lay open on a desk in the hall. He put on his eye-glasses and scanned the page. The ink was fresh on the last signature:

"Frank Pollock, U. S. A."

Rodney Merriam then walked toward his own house, tapping the sidewalk abstractedly with his stick.

The next morning he called for his horse early. He kept only one horse, for he never drove; but he rode nervously

every day when it was fair. His route was usually out High street toward the country; but to-day he rode downtown through the monument plaza and then struck east over the asphalt of Jefferson street, where a handsome old gentleman of 60, riding a horse that was remembered with pride at Lexington, was not seen every day. Rodney Merriam was thinking deeply this morning, and the sharp rattle of his horse's hoofs on the hard pavement did not annoy him as it usually did.

Arsenal is a word that suggests dismal things, but the Arsenal that had been maintained through many peaceful years at Mariona, until the town in its growth leaped over the government stone walls and extended the urban lines beyond it, was really a pretty park. The residences of the officers and several massive storehouses were, at least, inoffensive to the eye. The native forest trees were aglow with autumn color, and laborers were collecting and carrying away dead leaves.

Merriam brought his horse to a walk as he neared the open gates. A private came out of the little guard-house and returned Merriam's salute. The man gazed admiringly after the military figure on the thoroughbred, though he had often seen rider and horse before, and he knew that Mr. Merriam was a friend of Major Congrieve, the commandant. The soldier continued to stare after Rodney Merriam, curious to see whether the visitor would bring his hand to his hat as he neared the flag that flapped high overhead. He was not disappointed; Rodney Merriam never failed to salute the colors, even when he was thinking hard; and he was intent upon an idea this morning.

The maid who answered the bell was not sure whether Major Congrieve was at home; he had been packing, she said; but the commandant appeared at once and greeted his caller cordially.

Major Congrieve was a trifle stout, but his gray civilian clothes made the best of a figure that was not what it had been. He was bald, and looked much better in a hat than without it.

"You'll pardon me for breaking in on your packing. I merely came to register a kick. I don't seem to know any of the local news any more until it's stale. I've just heard that the Arsenal has been sold and I want to say that it's an outrage to tear this place to pieces."

"It is too bad; but I don't see what you are going to do about it. I've already got my walking papers. The incident is closed as far as I am concerned here."

"To give us an active post in exchange for the Arsenal is not to do us a kindness. We've got used to you gentlemen of the ordnance. Your repose has been an inspiration to the community."

"No irony! The town has always been so good to me and mine that we've had no chance for repose."

"But the Spanish War passed over and never touched you. I don't believe the powers at Washington knew you were here."

"Oh, yes, they did. They wired me every few hours to count the old guns in the storehouse, until I knew every piece of that old scrap iron by heart. If we'd used those old guns in that war, the row with Spain would have been on a more equal basis."

"I suppose it would," said Merriam, who was thinking of something else. But I'm sorry you're going to leave. We never quite settled that little question about Shiloh; and I'm convinced that you're wrong about the Pitts-John Porter case."

"Well, posterity will settle those questions without us. And would you mind walking over to the office with me?"

"Bless me, I must be going! This was an unparadiseable hour for a call."

"Not in the least; only I've another caller over there—Pollock, of the quartermaster's department, who has been sent out to take charge of the new post site. He's a nice chap; you must know him."

"I'll be very glad, some other time," said Merriam. "Which way does he come from?"

"He's a Southern boy. Father was a Johnny Reb. Another sign that the war is over and the hatchet buried."

"Pollock, did you say? Tennessee family? I seem to remember the name."

"I think so. Yes, I'm sure. I looked him up in the register."

(To be continued.)

A Wonderful Snake.

Snakes on the pampas of South America have many enemies. Burrowing owls feed on them, and so do hawks and storks, which kill them with a blow of their pavilion beaks. The tyrant bird picks up the young snake by the tail and, flying to a branch or stone, uses the reptile as a flail until its life is battered out. The large lizard of the pampas, the iguana, is a famous snake killer. It smites the snake to death with its powerful tail. Mr. Hudson in his "Naturalist in La Plata" tells this story:

One day a friend of mine was riding out looking after his cattle. One end of his lasso was attached to his saddle, and the remainder of the forty foot line was allowed to trail on the ground. The rider noticed a large iguana lying apparently asleep, and although he rode within a few inches, it did not stir. But no sooner had the rider passed than the trailing lasso attracted the lizard's attention. It dashed after the slowly moving rope and dealt it a succession of violent blows with its tail. When the whole of the lasso, several yards of which had been pounded in vain, had passed by, the iguana, with uplifted head, gazed after it with astonishment. Never had such a wonderful snake crossed its path before.

Bill Too Material.

"Now," said Mrs. Dresser, "don't you think my new hat is a perfect dream?"

"Well, no," replied her husband; "to be a perfect dream the bill attached to it should also be merely a dream."

—Catholic Standard and Times.

Dates Back.

"Who built the first Dreadnought?" "Noah."—Kansas City Journal.

Never say die till you are dead—and then it's no use.—Spurgeon.

WHEN FACING DEATH

ST. LOUIS ARCHITECT'S HELPER TELLS HOW IT FEELS.

Odd Things Came to His Mind as He Thought He Would Surely Fall From Tall Building.

St. Louis, Mo.—Have you ever faced death?

Do you know what it means to be confronted by the grim destroyer, what great peril will do to your nervous system? Probably you have had some close calls in your day and know something of the emotions of a person who thinks his time has come. If not, the following incident related by George Bush of this city may give you an idea of the thrill of facing death:

"Being an architect's assistant, it was my duty to measure buildings which were to be altered or enlarged, and one windy day I went to see one of these, which was a three-story and basement brick house with the usual area and railings in front of it. Adjoining this was a little higher building and it was necessary for me to get the exact dimensions of the brick wall and chimney that projected above the roof of the house I was measuring."

"I found a very large and heavy skylight in the attic, which required all my strength to push up and out to open. It was held open by a pivoted stick of wood and by climbing through the opening I saw that I could stretch myself out on the roof and by holding fast to the edge of the skylight opening with my right hand I could reach out with my left and measure the gable wall with my six-foot folding rule."

"I was sprawled out in this manner, face down on the slate roof, with my left arm and the rule extended at full length, when I suddenly became conscious that the wind had shaken the skylight loose from the stick that held it open and that it was falling shut. If I did not withdraw my hand instantly it would catch and crush it. If I pulled my hand out I would fall."

"When I first noticed that the support had given way the skylight had already begun its descent and it had not more than four feet to fall. During the time that it fell those four feet I had ample time to review the consequences of losing my right hand if I held on and the result of falling three stories if I let go. There was nothing at the edge of the roof but a little half-round gutter held up by a few holists."

"It occurred to me that it might be possible to pull out my right hand and insert my left, as it would be better to lose my left hand than my right. I also discussed with myself the possibility of being able to hold my place if I withdrew two or three fingers and sacrificed the others; but I concluded that they would probably be cut clean off by the edge of such a heavy skylight and that I should slide down to the street anyway."

"This idea of the insufficiency of mangled fingers to support my weight on such a sloping roof suggested that it might be better to stick my arm into the opening and that perhaps the injury to it might not be so severe as to require amputation. I distinctly remembered trying to recall whether the muscles should be firm or relaxed, and thought it best to hold them firm."

"As well as I can remember, the outcome of my deliberations was a determination to change hands and to sacrifice the left instead of the right. I had no sooner come to this conclusion than it struck me that there would not be time to make the change and that I might lose my hold altogether. It seemed to me that I had already changed my opinion as to the respective merits of the two hands at least a dozen times."

"All this time, remember, the skylight was falling shut. As I look back at it it seems incredible that I did not spend at least half an hour thinking over the pros and cons of the situation, but it must have been less than a fifth of a second. My final resolve was a determination to hold on, as there was no time to change hands, and to trust to the shreds of my mangled fingers to hold me on the roof."

"But when the crash came and the skylight actually fell shut my hand was not in the opening. I was sliding down the roof on my way to the street below."

"The edge was at least ten feet below me and I was gaining speed at every foot."

"I distinctly remember the railing around the area and also the absence of any cornice on the eave of the roof—nothing but a rusty old drip gutter. The thing I could not remember, although I made desperate efforts to do so, was whether or not that area railing had spikes in it."

"I knew I should fall directly upon those railings and the spikes bothered me. The minuteness with which I recalled everything about the house—its number, the alterations that were made in it, the sketches we had prepared, the new ideas we had talked over—all these things were reviewed in the effort to recall in connection with one or other of them something that would answer the question, Were there spikes on that railing or not?"

"I suddenly became conscious that I was no longer sliding down the roof. It was exactly like waking out of a dream. I then realized that my toes, in dropping over the edge of the slates, had caught on the little half-round iron gutter."

"In another minute the skylight was pushed up by people who had heard the crash and came up to see what was the matter. They soon hauled me to a place of safety."

City Items in Terse Form

Metropolitan News of Interest to All Readers

Some Woes of Diet Treatment Victim



NEW YORK.—Three weeks on a limited diet in an endeavor to repair the internal damage done by a runaway appetite couldn't obliterate the memory of three-inch steaks and milk-fed clams and all the while that James McGowan sat in front of a mirror in the Memorial hospital at Orange watching his waistline assuming Polaire proportions his mind kept reverting to menu cards he had met. He talked constantly in his sleep, the burden of his oratory being "with mushrooms 20 cents extra," and "dishes marked X are ready."

Try as he would he could not erase recollections of times when he had compelled the cook to beg for mercy. He read whole reams of antifat fiction and did everything possible to discourage his appetite, but it wasn't any use. For breakfast, luncheon and dinner he has been allowed a walnut, a sprig of lettuce and ten drops of diluted water. He tried hard to convince himself that he was overeating and begged the hospital authorities to cut the menu to one course.

But his dreams were haunted with bits of beef, acres of French fried potatoes and showers of gravy. He stood it as long as he could, but yesterday morning at precisely a quarter of four o'clock, after the last of a regiment of savory squabs had marched directly under his nose, each squab carrying a julienne potato for a musket, he sat up in bed and in clarion tones demanded that the nurse bring him two yards of porterhouse steak, half a peck of French fried potatoes and such vegetable brick-a-brack as might be necessary to accompany the steak on its journey.

"Nothing doing in the steak line," said the nursing nurse. "Go back to bed and I'll give you another walnut."

"I'm done with walnuts," said Mr. McGowan. "I've eaten as many I'm beginning to feel like a squirrel. It's James for a little broiled cow and fixings."

The nurse assured him that it was against the rules to allow diet patients to break training. She left the room just then and her patient embraced the opportunity to take himself by the hand and make a dash for freedom and regular food.

Policemen McManus and Almond saw the white-robed figure and sneaked up behind it with drawn clubs. Believing it to be the ghost of some misguided commuter, they were getting ready to soak it on the head when Mr. McGowan saw them.

"Gentlemen," he pleaded, "have pity on me and get me something to eat."

"What you need is something to wear," said McManus. "What do you mean by frightening two honest policemen out of a night's rest with your night-shirt drill?"

Lawyer's Odd Plea Sets Negro Free



NEW YORK.—M. Bourke Cockran's eloquence won the acquittal in the court of general sessions of Victor Nelson, a negro, accused of the murder on March 28 last of Claude Humphreys, another negro. Cockran was assigned to defend Nelson by Judge Malone. The jury gave its verdict at 8:45 p. m. All its members requested Mr. Cockran to give them a copy of his address in defense of his client.

"I can scarcely expect you to treat this negro like a peer. Then treat him like a dog," said Cockran in his summing up of the case. "Yes, treat him like a dog, if you must. A dog that bites wantonly we kill, but a dog that bites in defense of his own master's home we protect. Men have given their lives in defense of such a dog. Give my client the same shift you would give such a dog."

The killing, according to Mr. Cockran, was the outgrowth of the social and economic conditions in this country. He said that his client, while a high school graduate, had tried to secure decent work in this country, but had finally found himself driven to accept work as a scullion, in the house where Humphreys was introduced to him.

"We accepted this one man with an avowed prejudice," said Mr. Cockran, "because we believed he was honest in his avowals that he would be fair in any case."

"But I am sure that you all feel a prejudice against a negro. I feel the same prejudice myself. I once stopped in a hotel, where there were private baths. I started to take a bath and found that a negro was using the tub. Do you think that I bathed in that tub afterward? I could not. It was prejudice that I could not rid myself of, and I do not feel that such prejudice can be avoided."

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Whereat the music counter girl whirled on her stool, dashed off a few chords on the piano and looked around just in time to catch the eye of an old gentleman who was studying a list attentively. Hesitatingly, he asked:

"I want to get a list of songs—here they are," he began. Then there ensued a long search for them. The songs were old ones and they weren't on hand, so the old gentleman asked if the lady would play over a dozen or so in order that he might "match 'em" as near as possible.

Large store managers realize that the people at the average music counter are busy, hard-worked individuals. There are so many things to contend with aside from the knowledge required of music lists, and the ability to play the piano. That is why the salesman and saleswoman in this department average higher wages than almost any others in the whole store.

Trials of Girl at the Music Counter



ST. LOUIS.—"Young woman," said a motherly individual, holding two small children in her weary arms, "will you play 'When the Roses Bloom Again' for me, please?"

The music counter young woman, perched on her stool, selected the piece mentioned among a heap of others and prepared to "reel" it off.

The shabby woman listened attentively until the last notes died out. She ogled the children in the meantime.

"Thank you very much," she said, and strolled slowly off.

"There," grumbled the girl behind the music counter, "that is only one of the things that we've got to put up with. There are a hundred others, and as soon as I can get in the ribbons I'm going to get out of the music, once and for all. The work is worth twice as

much as any other job in the store. People think that you are there to entertain the public instead of to sell goods. I feel safe in saying that fully 65 per cent. of the people who ask for a concert do not buy a single ten-cent song."

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Cubs' Mascot Tamed After Wild Chase



"Pretty good team we have, eh?" asked the Cub fan of the Sox sporter, who was brushing the dust from his clothes.

"Oh, I don't know."

"Well, that was our mascot. And the team is traveling about as fast as Bruno," added the Cub rooster.

"Then the team is going some," admitted the Sox fan as he turned and watched the bear mascot disappear in a cloud of dust.

Bruno, closely followed by the small army of pursuers, continued to fight everything that came his way, until, bleeding from a dozen flesh wounds, the animal fell exhausted at West Adams and Morgan streets.

The cub was penitent, and showed no desire to romp and play until one of the club officials had tied a red ribbon about his neck. Then Bruno brightened up, but did not try to escape again. The cub was to make its first public appearance at the West side ball grounds as mascot of the Cubs in the afternoon.

CHICAGO.—Bruno, a black cub bear late of Montana, mascot of the Cubs baseball team, was tamed a few days ago.

Bruno escaped from his cage home in the basement of the Monroe club, West Monroe and Green streets, and ran amuck on the West side, creating a panic among pedestrians and children, snapping at cats, growling at chickens, and attacking stray dogs.

Two baseball "fans" were in the midst of a heated argument over the merits of the Sox and Cubs when Bruno, running at full speed and pursued by a score of club members, pedestrians, policemen and children, rudely upset the Sox fan.