

Zelda Dameron

By MEREDITH NICHOLSON

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CHAPTER XIII.—(Continued.)

He was a little fellow and he was angry; but he was a gentleman, too, and seeing that Rodney Merriam was really surprised, he related toward the old soldier, who had thrust his hands into the side pockets of his coat, looking as foolish as it is possible for a fine old gentleman to look.

"Captain Pollock," he blurted out, suddenly, "I haven't a doubt that you are telling the truth. I don't care whose son you are, I like you anyhow!" And then snatching his hands from his pockets he held them out to Pollock, demanding with a gruff kindness, "Will you shake hands with me?"

"Certainly, Mr. Merriam." A few hours later the usual crowd lounged in the smoking-room of the Tippecanoe Club. Pollock had just finished telling a story when Rodney Merriam appeared in the doorway. The old gentleman advanced upon the little group, returning their greetings and thanking them all for the proffer of their seats.

"Gentlemen," he said, standing by his chair, "I wish to make you an explanation. Owing to an unfortunate misunderstanding, due wholly to my own stupidity, I recently showed Captain Pollock a slight in this club. I wish to make the amicable possible explanation."

"This is wholly unnecessary," exclaimed Pollock, rising. "This is wholly unbecoming, Mr. Merriam." "I wish to say before all of you," Merriam continued, "that I was wholly in the wrong, and that Captain Pollock is a gentleman, who is an honor to his friends and to his profession."

And the next day, in the same spirit of scrupulous honor, Rodney Merriam sought his niece at The Beeches and made his peace with them.

CHAPTER XIV.

Leighton always hated himself for laughing at Balcomb, whose loquacity was so cheap it was pathetic. Everything Balcomb knew he used constantly. At the college to which he referred in terms of rallery or contempt he had picked the nearest and gaudiest flowers; but he wore them all in an amazing bouquet that did not fail to impress many of his acquaintances as the real bloom of learning. Leighton was not at all glad to see Balcomb on his friend's eternal freshness called upon him. But it did not occur to Balcomb that Leighton might not be delighted to have him for a traveling companion. He thought his conversation was shortening the distance for Leighton. Balcomb had been making social history fact. He had, in his own phrase, "batted in"; and since the performance of "Deceitful Ever" he had been included in most of the gatherings of the Dramatic Club circle.

"I say, old man," he began, abruptly, as the car skimmed through a strip of woodland, "just between old college friends, what's your game, anyhow?" "Which is it?" demanded Leighton, who had been enjoying a moment with his own thoughts, while Balcomb stared out upon the darkling landscape.

"Which girl, I mean? There are two out here." Leighton took off his hat and laughed. "I haven't decided yet," he said, presently, with an irony that was quite lost on Balcomb. "I'm a good fellow, though, and I'll take the one you leave."

"Miss Dameron's certainly a peach dumpling, all right. But say, the little cousin's a gem of purest ray serene. She ain't so stand-offish, some way, as her cousin; she is a real beauty."

"I think I've noticed that"—and the irony this time was meant for himself. "They say olives are a cultivated taste," persisted Balcomb; "but lawyer, I knew right away that girl was a good thing. And to think that she has to teach a lot of grimy little muckers how to cook."

"It is too bad, isn't it? But I don't think you need be sorry for her." "She's as proud as Lucifer. Here's our stop."

The two men jumped out into the highway and started for the Dameron farm.

"I think a man ought to marry early," Balcomb announced, as they tramped along the road. "There's nothing like a woman and a home to put snap into a man," he continued, nobly. "A man feels away a whole lot of money in his bachelor days. Doing social stunts is expensive. Have you any idea what my carriage bill was last March? Eighty-four dollars! I honestly believe it would pay me to own a hack. But, I say, the man who will drag a girl to the theater in a street car is fit for treason, stratagems and the stone pile. It ain't enough to put 'em on four wheels when it's snowing; no, I make a specialty of hacks under the starry hosts of heaven, and eke the pale and haughty moon. There's no better way than that to get solid with a girl. There are some that put their faith in bonbons and a new novel now and then; but there isn't a girl in Marlona to-night that wouldn't rather go to see a good show in comfort than do anything else under the sun. I say, about hacks, don't give it away, but I've just got a transfer company pass—Wilson, the president, and I are pretty thick, and I do a little quiet work for the company occasionally. I helped 'em beat the vehicle tax before the Council last winter, and I have an annual now that gives me power of life and death over all the company's rolling stock night and day. And you bet I won't use it or anything!"

Leighton's silence did not disturb Balcomb; he talked for the joy it gave him. They reached the Dameron gate and followed the winding path toward the veranda.

"Ahoy, O bower of beauty!" Balcomb called cheerily when they were within hailing distance of the veranda. "Friends draw near bringing tidings." On the veranda, as Balcomb's voice smote upon the air, two girls fell on

each other's necks in mock ecstasy of grief.

"They're there, all right," announced Balcomb.

"If you yell at them again, they'll undoubtedly bolt," said Leighton, whose eyes flashed since they had left the car had been far away from Balcomb's babble.

"If you're not afraid of the June-bugs, we'll stay here," said Zelda, when she and Olive had shaken hands with the men.

"There's nothing better; it's the center of the universe right here," Balcomb declared. "I brought some poison for the June-bugs with me. I will place it on yonder rail, lest we forget, lest we forget."

This was Balcomb's happy idea of minimizing the value of his gift. He was relieved to find that Pollock was not there, and as it was past the usual calling hour in the latitude and longitude of Marlona, the army officer was not likely to appear. Ever since the unpleasant incident on the stairway at the Athenaeum building, Balcomb had been in the undignified attitude of dodging Captain Pollock, though he had said, during Pollock's absence from town, exceedingly cruel things about the officer.

Mr. Dameron came out and shook hands with the young men, addressing a few words to each of them. He called upon him repeatedly in reference to the purchase of the tract of land on the creek, but without encouragement. Dameron had just been wondering how he could communicate with the promoter without seeking him directly, and this call gave him an opportunity.

"By the way, Mr. Balcomb," said the old man, pleasantly, "some time when you are passing, I'd be glad if you'd call at my office. There's a matter of mutual interest that I'd like to speak to you about. A beautiful night, gentlemen. Very much cooler here than in the city, as you may have noticed." And he went down the steps and out upon the highway for his usual evening walk.

"A remarkable man, your father, Miss Dameron. He's quite the ideal business man of the old school," said Balcomb. "We youngsters are quicker on the trigger, but our aim isn't so sure. No, siree; your father is an ideal business man."

He had spoken impressively. He would, in his own language, "make himself solid" when he had a chance. Leighton was talking to Olive, and Balcomb set about entertaining Zelda. He ran on monotonously. He was anxious to make an impression at once without relinquishing the floor.

"I suppose you and Miss Merriam do a lot of reading out here. What are the books one ought to talk about?" "We don't read much—except the cook-books," replied Zelda.

"Hah! That is rich—from the great Miss Dameron, too. I like that! I suppose as a matter of fact you really spend your morning with the classics."

"I'm sorry to disappoint you, but our mornings are spent with cook-books. My cousin is writing a cook-book and we're reading all the old ones to be sure hers is all new. It's delightfully exciting."

"Wouldn't that jar one? I say, I want to speak right now for an autograph copy of the first edition of that book."

"Olive will be delighted," said Zelda. "It's designed, you know, for the very young."

"There it goes again. Everybody has it in for me! Oh, well! My time will come!"

It came in an unexpected way. Captain Pollock was riding up the driveway. He was on very good terms at The Beeches, and had been told that while there were lights there was a hope of finding some one at home.

"Here comes another messenger bearing tidings," said Balcomb, in his most cheerful note. "I hope it isn't bad news."

"No, it's Captain Pollock. That horse of his is a beauty, isn't it? I wish he would trade with me," answered Zelda.

Leighton groaned inwardly at the sight of Pollock, whom he liked well enough ordinarily. He did not understand the reason for Balcomb's hurried flight, so that the humor of the situation did not strike him.

"You may have Mr. Balcomb's seat there by the railing, if you like," said Zelda to Pollock.

"You do me too much honor," said the officer, as he shook hands with Leighton.

"Oh, I don't know!" and Olive's imitation of Balcomb's intonation was so true to life that they all laughed.

"I don't see why any one should laugh," said Zelda.

"I'm sure I don't," declared Pollock. He put back his arm against the railing, knocking down the box of candy that Balcomb had left behind him.

"Ah, I beg everybody's pardon!" "Mr. Balcomb's feelings might be hurt if he came back," suggested Zelda.

"He won't come back; I'll wager another box he won't," replied the officer, blandly, as he fumbled with the string. "Miss Dameron, permit me—I'm sure they're delicious. Chocolates, I fancy, from the bonquet—and, Miss Merriam, you will not decline. Mr. Leighton, a little candy now and then is relished by the wisest men. I propose Mr. Balcomb's health, to be eaten sitting and in silence."

"It isn't polite to treat the gift of a parting guest in that way," protested Olive. "I'm surprised at you, Captain Pollock."

"When a man is in love, he becomes a master of harmless deceit and subtlety. Morris Leighton had sought Zelda Dameron to-night with a great hope in his heart. He did not intend to miss a chance to talk to her alone, if he could help it. He had taken her wrap from her, and purposely dropped it; and he seemed to have difficulty in finding it, although it was a white

thing that one could not miss in the moonlight, unless one were blind. But Zelda paused when they reached Pollock's horse, which whinnied and put out its nose to her in a friendly way.

As they reached the road, which lay white in the moonlight, Ezra Dameron came toward them, walking slowly, hat in hand, and the two watched him—his queer shuffling walk, his head bent, his gray hair touched with the silver of the moonlight.

"Won't you come with us, father?" said Zelda, as they met in the road.

"No! no, I thank you, Zee. I have had my little constitutional. Don't go too far—there may be malaria abroad."

Leighton looked furtively at Zelda. She had greeted her father kindly, happily; but there was something repellent in Ezra Dameron. Leighton never felt it more than to-night. That such a girl should have a father so wretched seemed impossible; but the thought quickened his love for her. There was something in her conduct toward her father; her unflinching gentleness and patience with him had impressed Leighton from the time of her homecoming. She made a point of speaking of him often and always with respect. Leighton was well aware that no one else, with the single exception of Michael Carr, ever spoke of Ezra Dameron in anything but derision. Rodney Merriam never mentioned him at all, which was doubtless the safer way. Farther along the road Pollock and Olive were tentatively singing a popular song of the hour.

"Sing it all—don't pick at it that way," called Zelda.

"Sing it yourself, if you don't like it," came back the answer from Olive.

"There is only one song that I should care to hear to-night," said Leighton, after a moment of silence. "It's the only song that ever meant a great deal to me."

"Oh, I know! One of Herr Schmidt's from his great operatic triumph of last winter. Your taste is only fair, then."

"It goes back a little farther than that. It's Träume—Tristan and Isolde, wasn't it? Do you remember?"

"I have heard it sung, beautifully, in Berlin," she said, evasively.

"I never did. But I heard you sing it once, and it has haunted me."

"Is that the one?" she asked. "Yes; it is about dreams."

"That is the one I meant. It is the most wonderful thing in the world! Yes, it's only about dreams—a dream; but it's the sweetest dream in the world, it means—"

"A dream!" and she laughed, but it was a mirthless little laugh.

He paused and looked out over the moonlit cornfield; his heart was beating fast. She felt for a moment that she must turn and fly from him; but she started forward again and she followed.

"It is more than a dream. I am building upon it as though it were a veritable rock."

"A dream—build the real upon? The architects of fate don't like that plan, do they?"

"But we must hold to our dreams," he said, soberly.

"I suppose we must, even though they are things of air that only lead us astray. I didn't think you were sentimental. I'm afraid I can't sympathize exactly, for sentiment was left out of me utterly; and she hated herself for the bravado with which she spoke."

"I can't believe that! Every one has it. I'm a thoroughly practical person, and yet I have my dreams—my dream!"

Olive and Pollock were singing again. They were far in advance and their voices stole softly upon the night. Zelda stopped to listen. Her heart was in a tumult of happiness and wonder. The splendor of the moonlight upon the fields about them, the gloomy shadow of the woodland beyond, the man beside her hesitating, yet ready to tell her his love, these stole across her spirit the tremulous awe of a girl to whom love has come for the first time as it can never come again. Leighton drew close to her.

"Zelda," he said, "Zelda!"

"No, Oh, no! You must not!" she cried.

"I love you, Zelda!" he said.

"No, you must not say it! And there was a sob that caught her throat.

"You are the dream. It is too sweet; I can not lose it—I must not."

"You have talked of dreams and love," she said, hurriedly, but with a lingering note of contempt on the last word that stung him as though she had struck him in the face. I wonder what love is!" and hastened away toward her cousin and Pollock, who waited, idly and trying their voices, and chaffing each other over their failure to carry a tune.

(To be continued.)

Characteristic National Meal. It is not only in Scotland that breakfast is the characteristic national meal. Travel where you may, the first meal of the day is the one that strikes the foreign note, luncheon and dinner having gradually absorbed cosmopolitan qualities that are not even confined to hotels. But you never feel so much of an Englishman, says a London paper, as when Switzerland gives you rolls and butter and honey, and nothing more, with your coffee; or when France makes this into one exquisite crumbling "croissant," with an inch or two from a yard-long loaf, or when Denmark adds cream instead of milk to the coffee and a dangerous piece of pastry to the black bread and round white roll. Yet the English breakfast became an institution only in the eighteenth century. Before that only royalty breakfasted off meat, bread and cheese and ale. The commoner, such as Peppy, took merely a morning draught of buttered ale.

Tonchy. "This paper says," observed the long, lanky passenger, "that Senator Blank is a wise, conservative statesman, who never slopes over." "Slops over"—where the dickens have I read that phrase before?"

"Not in Dickens, I am sure," said the passenger with the monocle and the mutton chop whiskers. "It probably emanated, sir, from some blawsted Yankee vagabond."

The small boy makes a home run when he hears his father calling him.

If cleanliness is next to godliness, most traps must be agnostics.

CAP and BELLS



COURTSHIP OF A DEAF MAN

Wonders Why Mabel Lowered Gas—Whether to Encourage or Stop His Fingering Proposal.

The Deaf Times prints a story of two men who were seen talking on their hands on the top of an omnibus. Their conversation ran thus:

"I want your advice."

"I shall be happy to oblige you."

"Well, you know, I'm in love with Mabel. At last I made up my mind to propose to her. Last night I made the attempt."

"And she refused you?"

"That is what I am coming to. I don't know whether she did or not. You see, I was somewhat embarrassed, and the words seemed to stick on my hands. And there she sat, as demure as a dove. Finally my fingers stuck together, and I could not say a word. Then Mabel got up and lowered the gas."

"Well, what is bothering me is this: why did Mabel lower the gas—to encourage me and relieve my embarrassment, or so that she could not see the talk and so stop my proposal?"

Unanswerable. Ethel had been visiting at a neighbor's.

"I hope you didn't take a second piece of cake, Ethel," said her mother.

"Yes, I did, mother," replied the child. "You told me never to contradict and the lady said I know you'll have another piece of cake; so what could I say?"—Yonkers Statesman.

His Eye for Business. Ashley—I see that Lawyer Black will accept no client who is not a merchant tailor.

Seymour—Isn't that a rather strange procedure?

Ashley—Not in reality. Black claims he gets the most business from merchant tailors because they have new suits to try every day.

The Usual Way. Gladys has jilted young Jorkins, yet when they were first engaged she used to say he was the star of her existence.

"Does he carry a pistol?"

"I don't know. Why?"

"Because if he does Gladys had better look out that he doesn't prove to be a shooting star."

WILL HE DO IT?

Private Muldoon—I was absent this mornin' at roll-call.

Sergeant Doolan—Well, me man, next toime you're absent at roll-call be sure and say you're absent when you hear your name called.

Handicapped. "Yes," said the man from St. Louis, "I am very fond of green peas, but I can't eat them."

"Why not?" queried the Chicago man who was dining at the same table.

"Because," explained the other, "I an't keep 'em on my knife."

"Come Across." "Do these Englishmen understand American slang?"

"Some of them do. Why?"

"My daughter is to be married in London and the duke has just cabled me to come across."

"Well?"

"Does he want me or my wad?"

Looking for Bargains. Patience—A municipal drug store has been established in St. Petersburg, where things are supplied at about 20 per cent. less than in the other pharmacies.

Patrice—I wish they'd have such stores in this country. I'd buy all my stamps there.—Yonkers Statesman.

CASSEROLE COOKING RECIPES

Fish Cooked in This Style Delicious—Beats All Kinds of Old Time Hashes and Stews.

Beef en casserole.—Take 2 pounds of skirt of beef and cut into neat pieces. Melt a small piece of butter in the casserole and fry in it two finely-sliced onions and one carrot and turnip cut into dice. Move the vegetables to one side and lay the pieces of meat in the butter and fry for a few minutes on both sides. Sprinkle with salt and, if liked, add a little chopped parsley. Put the cover on closely and place the casserole either on the stove or in the oven for about three hours. Skim well before serving.

Fish cooked en casserole is delicious. Take as many filets of plaice, haddock or whiting (in fact almost any kind of fish that is liked) as are required. Season with pepper and salt and spread each with some forcemeat. Roll each piece and place in the casserole, which must be well-buttered. Add half a pint of fish stock (made from the bones and trimmings), sprinkle with chopped parsley, cover closely and cook for about twenty minutes. Another method is to fry three tiny onions in the butter before putting the fish into the casserole. Then sprinkle with flour, pour in the stock and let it come to the boil. Draw the casserole from the fire and let the fish cook in the sauce for half an hour.

These are the recipes for homely casserole cooking. The addition of a few button mushrooms, some highly seasoned forcemeat balls, oysters, peas, etc., will transform a plain dish into one which may grace the table of a king; and when once the art of casserole cooking has been mastered, varieties of flavoring, etc., will suggest themselves to even the most ordinarily intelligent "general," and the insipid stews and hashes with which we were wont to be regaled become, happily, things of the past.



When ironing starched clothes, if the iron is dipped quickly into cold water each time when taken from the stove the starch will never stick and the clothes iron smooth and so quickly you hardly realize you're started before you're done.

Powdered boracic acid sprinkled on lace yoke or collar, then laid away for a day or two, then well shaken out, will remove the soil.

Fasten firmly at the center of back tape or ribbon, which is run through beading in underwear. This keeps it from being pulled half out or lost entirely in laundering.

Linen pieces should never be put through the wringer if you would avoid the little wrinkles that are so hard to press out. Small tucks will iron smoother and look better if ironed on the wrong side. If knit wear, bath towels, etc., when taken from the lines are smoothed with the hands and put on the bars to air, will be ready to put away by the time the bars are needed, for the ironed clothes. To avoid the unsightly fold so often seen on top of a sleeve of starched shirt waists, fold at the seam, iron the upper, then the lower side, not letting the iron within an inch or two of the edge; then open the sleeve, fold with the unironed part in the center of the sleeve and press carefully.

Delicious Dessert. Cut even slices of bread not less than one day old, butter and stack three or four high. Heat fruit juice left from canned fruit or melt a glass of jelly, adding enough water to cover the bread which has been placed in a dish deep enough that the liquid can cover the bread. Have the liquid hot and let it stand on bread until thoroughly soaked and then allowed to get cold. Turn bread out on plate and slice like layer ice cream. Serve with plain or whipped cream. When canning fruit it is a good plan to put any surplus juice in pint cans for this purpose.

Hungarian Goulash. Cut one pound of good round steak into inch cubes and add an equal quantity of thinly sliced onion. Put one-half cup butter into a large saucepan and when it bubbles put in the meat and onion. Let it brown slightly, then stew slowly for three hours, or until the meat is tender. Do not add water, as the juice from the meat and onion will make a gravy. One-half hour before it is done add salt, paprika, and a little stewed tomato. Be sure to add entire amount of onion. Is none too much.

Corn Pudding. Scrape half a dozen ears of corn, beat two eggs together, add half a teaspoonful of salt and a tablespoonful of sugar and mix with the corn kernels. Stir in one and a half cupfuls of milk and pour the whole into a pudding dish. Bake the mixture two hours and serve as a vegetable.

Water Sponge Cake. One egg, one-half cup sugar, one-half teaspoon lemon juice, three table-spoons cold water, two-thirds cup flour with one even teaspoon baking powder. Beat yolk, add sugar, and beat again; add lemon juice and water, then flour, lastly the white of egg beaten stiff.

The Wonders About us. Let not care and humdrum deaden us to the wonders and mysteries amid which we live, nor to the splendors and glories. We need not translate ourselves in imagination to some other sphere or state of being to find the marvelous, the divine, the transcendent; we need not postpone our day of wonder and appreciation to some future time and condition. The true inwardness of this gross visible world hanging like an apple on the bough of the great cosmic tree, and swelling with all the juices and potencies of life, transcends anything we have dreamed of superterrestrial abodes.—John Burroughs.

USE ALLEN'S FOOT-TABS Antiseptic Tablets. Instantly relieve smarting, swelling, sweating of the feet. Healing to sore spots. The curative properties of Allen's Foot-Ease (the antiseptic powder) are occasionally combined in Allen's Foot-Tabs for the Foot-Bath. Positive relief for hot, sweating, sore feet and quickly remove the odor of perspiration. "Foot-Tabs for Foot-Tabs." All Druggists 25c. Sample FREE. Allen S. Olmsted, Le Roy, N. Y.

How Matches Are Made. Certain kinds of matches are shaved with the grain from sawed blocks; others are cut both ways by saws. In still further varieties the blocks are boiled to make them cut easily. By some machines a boiled or steamed log is revolved on its own axis, and a shaver the thickness of a match is cut round and round. This shaving is at the same time cut into lengths and split into match sticks. It may be said that there is hardly a limit to the varieties of methods employed. Round matches are made by forcing them through dies.—Harper's Weekly.

CASTORIA

For Infants and Children. The Kind You Have Always Bought Bears the Signature of J. C. Fletch.

Grand Scenery in Arizona. Arizona has some of the grandest scenery in the world; the famous Grand Canyon of the Colorado and the wonderful Chaco Canyon forest, with trunks four feet thick, cracked into exquisitely colored blocks, being prominent.

Dog Forsook His Chum. Policemen were summoned by the loud howling of a dog to the rescue of another dog that had fallen into the river at Yarmouth, England. The second animal was saved, and the first then refused to leave the policeman, and spent the night at the station.

Where the Leap Came In. Fair Arrival—But why do they call this unpicturesque spot under a craggy tree "Lover's Leap?" Her friend—Probably because you can't sit here five minutes without a caterpillar dropping down your neck.

Red, Weak, Waxy, Watery Eyes. Relieved By Murine Eye Remedy. Try Murine For Your Eye Troubles. You Will Like Murine. It Soothes, Sore at Your Druggists. Write For Eye Books. Free. Murine Eye Remedy Co., Chicago.

On the Installation Plan. One day Robert said, "Uncle Bill, how much do you want for those pups?" "Oh, about \$2 apiece," was the reply. "But, Uncle Bill," said Robert, "what could I do with a piece of pup?"—The Delineator.

Certainly Not. "I see your heroine floats from room to room."

"Of course," said the author of the book. "Would you expect her to attempt to walk in these new gowns?"—Louisville Courier Journal.

One Writer's View of Life. The art of life consists in putting ourselves into the place of those who do not understand, as well as of those who do not understand us.—Ivan Pann.

MUNYON'S WITCH SOAP HAZEL SOAP Makes the skin soft as velvet. Improves any complexion. Best shampoo made. Cures most skin eruptions. Cleanses and softens the skin. Murine's Hair Investigator cures dandruff. Stops hair from falling. Makes hair grow. If you have dyspepsia, or any liver trouble, use Murine's Paw-Paw Pills. They cure Biliousness, Constipation, and drive all impurities from the blood.

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