

# Zelda Dameron

By MEREDITH NICHOLSON

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## CHAPTER XXII.—(Continued.)

He repeated the words, "It feeds on itself," as though he found satisfaction in them. He was quite willing now to yield everything to Zelda's hands. The very way in which she asked questions was a relief to him.

"Mr. Balcomb gave you a thousand dollars to bind a bargain—is that what you call it—for the sale of the creek strip. I think I understand that. But are there debts—are there other things that must be paid? And if we still have two houses we can get money for them. We must face the whole matter now—please keep nothing back."

"I have told you everything. I have squandered your money in speculations—gambling is the name for it; but I have kept the farm and this house, untouched. Everything else has gone and I have given an option for the sale of that strip of ground on the creek. And I sold a block of lots belonging to you in an irregular way. I could not sell property without an order of court—that was required by your mother's will; but my necessities were great, and Balcomb arranged an abstract to suit himself—but I let him do it. I am the guilty one; it is my crime."

"Let us not use unpleasant words. It's my birthday. I'm quite grown up and you must let me help—or find help!"

"Yes; but not Rodney; not your uncle," he said, hurriedly. "He is violent, very violent. He would have no mercy on me. And I am an old man, and broken, very badly broken."

"I shall have to tell Uncle Rodney; but you need have no fear of him, I promise you that. Mr. Carr is your lawyer, isn't he?" she asked.

"Yes; but he has been away. I took advantage of his absence to do things he would never have countenanced."

"There is Mr. Leighton."

"No, no, not that man!" She had tried to avoid any reference to the interview of the night before, but the mention of Leighton's name brought the whole wretched scene clearly before her again. It was he, more than her uncle, that she relied on.

"I'm sorry you feel toward him as you do, father. I believe that we might trust him, I look upon him as a friend."

Exra Dameron was weak and the talk was wearying him. He closed his eyes and rested his head on the back of the chair, moving it from side to side restlessly. He was beaten and he was not heroic in defeat. He was stunned by the failure of his gambling operations. He had lived so entirely in dreams for a year that it was difficult for him to realize the broad daylight of a workaday world. Echoes of the harsh things that had passed between him and the child of his own blood but a few hours before still haunted him. She had summoned the apparition of her dead mother and had called him a liar, and he had insulted her in the harshest terms he knew; but he was now leaning upon her helplessly. He did not know, and he could not understand, the motives that were prompting her. He had thrown away her money, and she did not arraign him for it; she was even devising means of covering up his ill-doings; and the fact that one could overlook and pardon the loss of a fortune was utterly beyond his comprehension.

"Try to cheer up," she said, resting her hand on his shoulder for a moment. "Don't talk to anybody about business of any kind. I'm going down to uncle's; and you needn't be afraid of him, or of anybody."

Rodney Merriam greeted Zelda cheerily.

"Am I not the early bird?" she demanded, walking into the library. "I had hoped that you would congratulate me in genial and cheering words. It's my birthday, I would have you know."

"At my age—"

"You've said that frequently since we got acquainted."

"As I was saying, at my age, birthdays don't seem so important. But I congratulate you with all my heart," he added, sincerely, and with the touch of manner that was always charming in him. He drew out the drawer of his desk. "Of course I haven't any gift for you; but there's some rubbish here—hardly worth considering—that I wish you'd carry away with you."

He took out a little jeweler's box and handed it to her.

"I've rarely been so perturbed," she said. "May I open it now, or must I wait till I get home—as they used to tell me when I was younger."

"If you're interested in an old man's taste, you may open it. I'm prepared to see you disappointed, so you needn't pretend you like it."

She bent over the gift with the eagerness of a child, and pressed the catch. A string of pearls fell into her lap and she exclaimed over them joyously.

"Rubbish, did you say? Verily, I, that was poor, am rich!"

She threw the chain about her neck and ran it through her fingers hurriedly; then she brushed the white hair from Rodney Merriam's forehead and kissed him.

"You dear, you delicious old dear! I know you hate to be thanked."

"But I can stand being kissed. Put those things away now; and don't forget to take care of them. You can give them to your granddaughter on her wedding day."

"Can't imagine doing anything so foolish. I can save myself cutting her off without a pearl."

The suggestion of poverty carried an irony to the mind of both. Her father was a rascal, who had swindled her out of practically all of her fortune. He was a lying hypocrite, Merriam said to himself; and here was his daughter as calm and cheerful as though there were no such thing as unhappiness in the world. His admiration and affection rose to high tide.

"I'm sorry if I seemed a little—pre-emptive—yesterday," she said. "But it

was all new and strange. And I have known that you did not like father. You will overlook whatever I did and said yesterday, won't you?"

"It's a good plan to begin the world over every morning. I want to you in any way I can, Zee. I began at the wrong end yesterday. The fault was all mine!"

"Father and I have had a long talk about his business. He approached it last night on his own account. I have told him that I was coming to you. Father has met with misfortune. He has told me frankly about it; he speculated with the money that belonged to me—and the money is all gone."

"Yes; I am not surprised."

"There is the house we live in and the farm—they are still free. He says they belong to me."

"If he has not pledged them for debt in any way, they pass to your possession to-day. They are yours now."

"Yes; I understand about that. This is my fateful birthday," and she smiled.

"But there are some things that are not quite right. Father has told me about them. There is something about an order of court, which affects a piece of property that he has sold through this Mr. Balcomb. Father takes all the blame for that. I suppose that is what you wished to tell me last night. But I'm glad I heard it from father. I hope you will not be hard on him. He has talked to me in an honorable spirit that I respect very much."

"Zee!" he exclaimed. "Zee, he isn't worth it!"

"Please don't!"—and the sob clutched her throat again—"I didn't come to ask what it was worth; but to get you to help me."

"Yes. Yes; to be sure. It must be done your way," he replied, quickly.

"But it's the right way. Now I want you to tell me what to do. People have bought property of my father, and he failed to get the approval of the court. I'm not sure that it was his fault—it must have been Mr. Balcomb's way of doing it. But it makes no difference, and father takes all the blame. Now a little given in this way is not right—is that what you say?"

"We say usually that titles are good or bad"—and he smiled at her.

"But there must be a way of making this good."

"Yes; perhaps several ways. That is for a lawyer. You are the only person that could take advantage of an omission of that sort, I suppose."

"That is what I wish to know. And it wouldn't be very much trouble to make it right."

"We must ask a lawyer. Morris understands about it. He is considered a good man in the profession. The advantage of calling on him is that he is a friend and knows Balcomb."

"I told father I might ask Mr. Leighton to help us."

Rodney looked at her quickly. Exra Dameron, Zelda's daughter, and Morris Leighton! The combination suggested unhappy thoughts.

"Morris is coming up this morning. He said so, and he's usually on time. That's one of the good things about Morris. He keeps his appointments."

"I imagine he would. Uncle Rodney, I'm going to ask you something. It may seem a little queer, but everything in the world is a little queer. Did you ever know—was there anything?"

It was the old again and she frowned hard in an effort to keep back the tears—"I'm about mother—and Mr. Leighton's father?"

The blood mounted again to the old man's cheek, and he bent toward her angrily.

"Did he throw that at you? Did Exra Dameron, after all your mother suffered from him, insult you with that?"

"Please don't! Please don't!" and she thrust a hand toward him appealingly. "I used to see the word past in books and it meant nothing to me. But now it seems that life isn't to-day at all; it's just a lot of yesterdays!"

The old man walked to the window and back.

"It was your mother's mistake; but it must not follow you. When did your father tell you this?"

"Yesterday—last night. I had provoked him. It is all so hideous, please never ask me about it—what happened at the house—but he told me about that."

"He's a greater dog than I thought he was; and now he has thrown himself on your mercy! I've a good mind to say that we won't help him. Morris' father was a gentleman and a scholar; and Morris is the finest fellow in the world."

But Zelda did not look at him. He eyes appealed to Morris and he understood that in anything that was done, Exra Dameron must be shielded; and the idea of hiding Dameron's irregularities struck him as reasonable and necessary.

"You can give your father a power of attorney to cover everything he has left of yours if you wish it," said Morris.

"I won't hear to it; it's a farce; it's playing with the law," declared Rodney.

"Uncle Rodney, I'm glad the law can be played with. There's more sense in it than I thought there was. You will do it for me that way, won't you—please? And there are some people who have paid father for an option on what he calls the creek property. I wish to protect them, too."

"You needn't do that," said Morris. "We can repudiate the option probably. It's not your affair, as the law views it."

"But I wish to make it my affair. I wish to do it right away. I've heard that important things can't be done right away, but these things must be"—and she smiled at Morris and then at her uncle.

"You understand, Zee, that if you give this power of attorney you are brushing away any chance to get back this money."

"Yes; perfectly. And now, Mr. Leighton, how long will it take?" Morris looked at Merriam as though for his approval.

"Uncle agrees, of course, Mr. Leighton. You needn't ask him"—and the two men laughed. There was no making the situation tragic when the person chiefly concerned refused to have it so. She had accepted the loss of the bulk of her fortune and the fact of her father's perfidy without a quaver. She seemed, indeed, to be in excellent spirits, and communicated her cheer to the others.

"It is final," began Morris.

"Of course it's final," said Zee. "I'll come back here at 4 o'clock and you can sign the power of attorney if you wish. But there's one thing I'm going to do—on my own responsibility, if necessary. I'm going to get back that option on the creek strip that Mr. Dameron gave my friend Balcomb. Balcomb's had lot, and I'm not disposed to show him any mercy."

"I'd rather you didn't—if my father pledged himself to sell—"

"Let Morris do it his way," begged Merriam. "You may be sure Balcomb won't lose anything."

"I'm afraid he won't," said Leighton, and left them.

(To be continued.)

## FACTS ABOUT COFFEE.

Java Plantations and the Mocha Found in Arabia and Abyssinia.

The old coffee houses have long since disappeared, but the popularity of the beverage remains. The Westminster Gazette says. Only two plants of the species are cultivated to any great extent, namely, Arabian coffee and Libanian coffee. As a rule the coffee shrub first flowers in its third year and then only bears a small crop of fruit. The fifth year is usually the time of the first considerable yield. In Java three gatherings are made annually, called the "early," the "chief" and the "after crop," but only the second is of great importance. The flower enjoys only a very ephemeral existence, as the setting of the fruit generally takes place within twenty-four hours and the petals wither and fall off almost immediately. A coffee estate in full flower is a very beautiful sight, but its glory is very soon past.

The name Mocha coffee is applied generally to the coffee produced in Arabia and Abyssinia. The best portion of the crop, it is said, goes to Turkey and Egypt, being purchased on the trees by traders, who themselves look after the picking and preparation. Abyssinia is the original home of coffee and it is still grown there in its native luxuriance and primitive abundance. The finest coffee of Arabia is grown in the Yemen province, and the best beans are reserved for consumption in the country or by the court of the sultan of Turkey, the khedive of Egypt or the shah of Persia—in other words, by the principal rulers of the Mohammedan world. In the British empire the chief coffee producing countries are India, Jamaica, British Central Africa and Ceylon. Small quantities of the product are grown also in Queensland, British Honduras and Natal, while in almost every part of the tropical regions of the empire one or other species of coffee is cultivated for local use.

## For Renovating Goods.

A process for the renovating of dress goods or other fabrics has been invented by a Missouri man. The apparatus consists of a stand, like a reading desk, with a roller attached to the lower end. The goods is placed on this stand and drawn up as the work progresses.

The actual work of renovating done by a sand blast, propelled through a tube with a fan-shaped mouth. The sand is propelled through the tube by compressed air, which may be supplied by a foot pump and is directed first against the direction of the nap of the fabric and afterward with the direction of the nap. This results in a cleaning out of all extraneous material, and after this is done the particles of sand and other substances can be easily removed by brushing or by a blast of air. The advantage of using the sand is that it works its way under the nap as air would not do. After this treatment the goods are chemically cleaned.

The standard of height in the British army is greater than in any other army in the world.

Tobacco seeds are so minute that a thumbful will furnish enough plants for an acre of ground.

## TWO WIVES OF EUROPEAN RULERS



The Queen of Spain and the wife of President Fallieres of the French Republic in the president's carriage at the occasion of the king and queen's visit at Rambouillet, near Paris.

## TRUTH IN DAILIES

### Novelist Says Sticking to Facts Is Best Policy.

Daily Newspapers, Richard Whiteing States, Prevents Apathy, Aids Literature and Helps the Poor.

London.—Richard Whiteing, veteran of Fleet street and author of "No. 5 John Street," who celebrated recently his seventieth birthday anniversary, has given to an interviewer some of his latest ideas about journalism. Mr. Whiteing sprang into fame at sixty. His well-known novel did it. Prior to "No. 5 John Street," he was a hard-working leader writer on a London morning paper. With his big body and big head, his white hair and his brilliant, penetrating brown eyes, he is one of the most picturesque and most magnetic men of letters in the metropolis.

"I often think," he said, "when I see the order that reigns in our streets what it means to keep these people quiet. A good many of them suffer much. But the fact that the press is there, watching over them as a sort of poor man's friend in the big sense, helps them enormously. The fact that there is always some one who will represent you and your cause aright, as Hamlet puts it, is a great calming and tranquillizing influence."

"The so-called 'lower class' is beginning to feel much the equal of the classes above, chiefly because there is no longer any monopoly of how the world works. Travel, history, politics, art, literature—the daily half-penny manual is a sort of daily manual of all of them. Some foolish people have said that daily journalism is killing literature in its highest forms. I say,

"The dear old truth! That's all we want. The truth is so beautiful, so amazingly interesting, so much more wonderful than fiction. Therefore I say that, quite apart from morality, it is policy for a paper to tell the truth. It is policy in much the same way for a paper to keep itself pure, because the mass of the people are essentially serious. Life hits most of them very hard, and hard hitting does not make a frivolous generation."

Prince Won't Marry Sister. San Francisco.—The crown prince of Siam is adding gray hairs to the head of his royal father, King Chulalongkorn, and has set the country by the ears in refusing to marry his sister.

According to Rev. Will C. Dodd, a Presbyterian missionary, all Siam is agog that the prince's announcement. From time immemorial, the missionary says, it has been the Siamese custom for the crown prince to wed his sister, or if he has none, then a half sister, the daughter of one of his father's numerous wives.

The crown prince, though, has asserted his independence by publicly declaring he intends to have but one wife, and that one of his own choosing.

## 2 BOOZERS, 1 DRINKWATER

New York City Directory, Recently Issued, Records Many Other Freak Names.

New York.—One of the six best sellers, the city directory, is out again. The entertaining little volume contains two Lafs and one Tear.

The original Mr. Smith has 3,318 relatives this year. Brown runs second with 1,600, and poor Jones has only 850.

Temperance people may be glad there are only 2 Drinkers, 1 Booz, 2 Boozers and 1 Drinkwine. Mr. Pickle may be included, but Mr. Drinkwater balances the account. Looking closer we find 30 Beers, 10 Schnapps and 16 Seltzers. There are 9 Batts.

Passing on to the next cage one sees 2 Beans in front of 8 Bears, 24 Beavers and 4 Mules. Near them are 130 Cranes, 4 Ravens, 15 Robins, 9 Ratts and 80 Fishes. They are surrounded by numerous Hogs, Goats, Pigs and Wolves, one Rabbit and a Cow. The latter is a policeman, which is appropriate, as policemen in slang are "bulls."

There is just one Catt. There are five times as many Wilds as Wooleys. Out of 11 names there are 4 Losers, 6 Winners and 1 Even.

## Snake Crawled Into Hose

During Tumult at Fire in Cincinnati Reptile Took Refuge in Fire paratus.

Cincinnati.—Capt. "Billy" Thompson and fire crew 39 were seated in the engine house at Clarion avenue and Montgomery road, Evanston, when a succession of yells came from the cellar, where Pipeman William Gehring was fixing up a hose nozzle.

The firemen rushed downstairs and found Gehring pointing to an immense black snake that had coiled in one corner and, as it had no means of escape, evidently meant to fight. Captain Thompson and Lieutenant Perry Doyle put an end to the snake's life with clubs.

When measured it was found that the serpent was a few inches over five feet in length. Captain Thompson says that the company went out to a small fire in a foundry on Northside avenue a few days ago and, after the blaze was extinguished, the hose was unwound and laid for some minutes in the high grass and weeds adjoining the building before it was placed in the wagon.

to the contrary, that the daily paper provides a sort of first course in literature, and I am an immense admirer of the clear, incisive style adopted by the half-penny press.

"It stimulates curiosity, and when once you have done that in any human being you have started him on the right road. The one deadly thing is apathy. The cow in the field has no note of interrogation. The savage might see an aeroplane and not wonder. You can lead a man from the curbstone to the stars when you have once made him curious. A newspaper forces a man to be curious."

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## Squirrels Rout Many Birds

Seven of Them Hold Trees Against Thousands of Pugnacious English Sparrows.

Glen Ridge, N. J.—A three-day battle between English sparrows and red squirrels ended the other day when a flock of the birds, estimated at several thousand, with a great twittering forsook the lofty double row of trees in Midland avenue, and took up a new home in the woodland between Glen Ridge and Montclair.

The sparrows had become a public nuisance in Midland avenue, where the trees arch overhead and give a tropical look to the street. The birds came there in such numbers sleep grew to be almost an unattainable luxury on the part of the human residents of the vicinity. For the last four weeks nightly pyrotechnic bombs were fired off in the foliage. A number of birds were killed, but the flock soon got so they would not even fly away while the bombs were going off.

Edward Bartelow of Green Pond, who was a visitor at one of the Midland avenue houses, trapped seven red squirrels near his home and brought them to Glen Ridge. He distributed

## DISEASE AT SCHOOL

Chicago Health Department Tells of Germs in Sweets.

City Bureau Issues Timely Advice to Children to Swap Pencils or Marbles, But Not to Trade Apples or Delicacies.

Chicago.—After a series of "health grams" directed to the adults of Chicago, the health department has turned its attention to instructing the school children in ways of avoiding disease.

The weekly bulletin of the department was called "schoolgrams" and contained much pertinent though pithy advice for the youngsters of the city.

"Don't swap candy, chewing gum or apples," "skidoo from the boy or girl with the sore throat," "keep that pencil out of your mouth"—these are some of the bits of advice offered in language that every schoolboy or girl can understand.

Some of the "schoolgrams" are as follows:

"Let the first lesson be—how to keep well."

"You'll be brighter, learn more and keep in better health if your teacher will keep the windows of the school-room open. Bad air makes a sluggish brain."

"Do unto others as you would have others do unto you—meaning: Don't carry disease germs to school and cause sickness and perhaps death among your playmates. If you have a contagious disease at home keep entirely away from all other children. Stay at home if you have a sore throat."

"A 'little sore throat' in one little child may cause a big lot of trouble for many other children. Many 'little sore throats' are in reality diphtheria."

"Wash the drinking cup thoroughly before putting it to your mouth. The child which used it just before you may have left the germs of disease on it. Wash the germs off."

"Keep that pencil out of your mouth. It may have scarlet fever, diphtheria or typhoid fever germs on it."

"Swapping gum, swapping apples and swapping candy are about the dirtiest things—and the most dangerous things—that a child can do. Don't be that dirty."

"Keep your hands clean. Soap is your good friend—dirt is your worst enemy."

"Eat very little candy—treat your stomach well and you'll live longer."

"Never buy candy or fruit at an open stand on the street. Flies have left all kinds of dirt on it and dirt from the streets has been blown upon it."

"When you play, play out of doors—but never play in dusty places."

"Don't run to school—especially just after eating. Start in time so that you will not have to run."

"Be well and you'll be happy—even in school."

## FROG INTERRUPTS A LESSON

Jumps Inside Woman Pupil's Bathing Suit and Causes Commotion—Finally Removed.

New York.—It is written in the philosophy of Capt. James Fitzgerald, instructor at Plaza Pool, that there is always a way—that is, nearly always. But there was no way that he could suggest when a bullfrog jumped inside of a woman's bathing suit.

Captain Fitzgerald was giving a swimming lesson when a bullfrog sat in a crevice at the edge of the pool and watched the proceedings with interest. "One, two, three," chanted Captain Fitzgerald, and just as he said "three," a boy running by on the brink of the pool, startled the frog and he leaped wildly into the pool.

The woman pupil wore a low-cut bathing suit, a trifle loose at the neck. The frog landed inside and both tried to get out. While Fitzgerald hesitated and stammered, another woman swam to the one in need of help, reached inside of her bathing suit and caught the frog and withdrew it and thereby earned the gratitude of the woman—and the frog.

## FORM SOCIETY TO AID HORSE

Wealthy New Yorkers to Secure Better Treatment for Sick Animals—Educate Drivers.

New York.—The Horse Aid society, which hopes to obtain better treatment for sick and disabled horses and to educate drivers and horse owners in the more humane treatment of their animals, has been incorporated here. Its organizers, all wealthy New Yorkers, will build throughout Greater New York model stables, drinking troughs, veterinary hospitals and other means of taking care of and promoting the comfort of the horses and will also establish "rest farms" and veterinary service for sick, sore and broken-down horses.

## AFTER SUFFERING FOR YEARS

Cured by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound

Brookville, Ohio.—"I was sick for years while passing through the Change of Life and was hardly able to be around. After taking six bottles of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound I gained 20 pounds, am now able to do my own work, and I feel well."—Mrs. E. LA DOW, Park Rapids, Minn.

Brookville, Ohio.—"I was irregular and extremely nervous. A neighbor recommended Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound and I have become regular and my nerves are much better."—Mrs. R. KINKINSON, Brookville, Ohio.

Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, made from native roots and herbs, contains no narcotic or harmful drugs, and to-day holds the record for the largest number of actual cures of female diseases we know of, and thousands of voluntary testimonials are on file in the Pinkham laboratory at Lynn, Mass., from women who have been cured from almost every form of female complaint, inflammation, ulceration, displacements, fibroid tumors, irregularities, periodic pains, backache, indigestion and nervous prostration. Every suffering woman owes it to herself to give Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound a trial.

If you want special advice write Mrs. Pinkham, Lynn, Mass., for it. It is free and always helpful.

Woman's sphere now seems to be the whole earth.

ARE YOUR CLOTHES FADED? Use Red Cross Ball Blue and make them white again. Large 2 oz. package, 5 cents

Increase of Commerce. The commerce of the port of New York has had a growth of 62 per cent. in the last ten years.

DR. MARTEL'S FEMALE PILLS. Seventeen Years the Standard. Prescribed and recommended for Women's Ailments. A scientifically prepared remedy of proven worth. The result from their use is quick and permanent. For sale at all Drug Stores.

Science and Cheese. A medical authority kindly assures us that as long as cheese isn't decayed it will not affect the health of the consumer. This is a fact that we have suspected for a considerable time. But how is the ordinary cheese epicure to detect the difference—unless he waits for results?

There is cheese so thoroughly disguised in the costume and aroma of decay that its proper standing on the sanitary testing table, would puzzle a conjurer.

For instance, there is the brand known as limburger.

But why pursue this subject?

The Prettiest Girl in Cincinnati. "My niece," said a well known man the other day, "is often called the prettiest girl in Cincinnati. I believe, half the compliments she gets are due to her shirtings. They are always as clean and dainty looking as a snowflake. She's mighty particular about them. She won't use the cheap, ordinary rosin soaps for washings, but buys this 'Easy Task Soap' you hear so much about. It seems that 'Easy Task Soap' just naturally goes after the dirt and doesn't eat into and rot the fabrics like the common yellow rosin soaps. It costs the same—a nickel a cake."

IT HAPPENED SUDDENLY.

Mrs. Fondman—Fell into a pond! Oh! oh! and with your best pants on! Bertie—Well, I didn't have time to take 'em off!

MUNYON'S RHEUMATISM CURE. Has cured thousands and it can cure you. Relieves from the first. All Druggists, 25¢