

THE CAROLINIAN CHRONICLES

*Romantic Stories
of Five
Generations of a
French
Aristocratic
Family
1820-Present*
by
D. N. Sutton

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The Carolinian Chronicles

Romantic Stories of Five Generations of a
French Aristocratic Family 1820-Present Day

A Novel by
D.N. Sutton

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to all 90-year-olds
who thought it was the end, when actually
IT IS ONLY THE BEGINNING!!!

Thanks be

*To all the wonderful people who have helped make this
book come together.*

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assist me on a regular basis when I arrived home from
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the French language and "all things French".*

Dear Friends, I love you all!

A Note From The Author

On The 3rd Anniversary of Her Stroke
March 8th, 2014

Writing these six fictional tales of love, disappointment and glorious fulfillment has been a true labor of love for me. Three years ago, on March 8, 2011, I was cut down by a stroke. It turned out not to be the end of life but a new beginning. Recovering from such a profound illness may have hindered my body but it seemed to enhance my creativity. Today, on the third anniversary of my stroke, I am not only celebrating the birth and success of my first novel, *The Romantic Tales of Old Mulvedania* but also welcoming my second novel, *The Carolinian Chronicles*. After a lifetime of writing poems, short stories, and plays, I found with the help of my wonderful friends and caregivers that there was a new world for me in writing novels.

Now, as I approach my 94th birthday on March 25th, I live with my newfound fictional friends and my life is greatly enriched. I love the fictional characters in my first fully realized novel. Now, in my second novel, *The Carolinian Chronicles*, which is about tales of French aristocracy in modern day France, I love the beautiful people who fill the pages of this novel, too. All of these beautiful people are my dear friends. Not one of these characters is intended to bear any resemblance or connection to real people. They are all the creation of my imagination and they are all very dear to me because they

have illuminated my life in this three-year experience of recovering from a near fatal stroke. My novels are historically accurate, as near to the truth as I can possibly attain, but the characters are all fictional.

This is escape literature and the background world I have created is fictional alone. But the background is historically accurate, warmhearted, supportive, even in circumstances less than happy, and each scene is written with love-at-heart. In my fictional pages there is no lasting meanness. Tolerance and forgiveness illuminate even the pages that deal with darkness. Basically these are sun-lit pages refreshing to the human spirit and dedicated to the goodness within all people. These are novels of the heart lasting in their dedication to love and forgiveness so that to the last page one experiences an underlying feeling of sweetness and basic human decency.

So, while we cope with human inadequacy we also embrace a larger long lasting forgiveness and fulfillment throughout our own histories, real or imagined. It is my dream that this novel *The Carolinian Chronicles* and all subsequent novels bring you joy and fulfillment too.

Lovingly yours,

D.N. Sutton

La Jolla, California, March 8, 2014

PS. It is my wish that all proceeds of this book be donated to the SignWriting ASL Wikipedia Project: www.SignWriting.org/donate

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About the Author, D. N. Sutton: Inside Back Cover



The Eiffel Tower, Paris, France

Chapter 1

THE BEGINNINGS

Life has many unexpected twists and turns, and Ginger Haskell had just suffered defeat in her first big campaign. The environmentalists had beaten her out in their defense of their pie in the sky schemes. Her disappointment was crushing. This was her first big account, her first chance to show her talents as an organizer and she was bitterly disappointed.

She was throwing items of her display into a large shipping carton and feeling pretty mad at the world, when suddenly she was aware that someone was standing there waiting to talk to her. She looked up in surprise and recognized R.L. Devereau, the man who had just defeated her. "Ms. Haskell let me congratulate you on the very capable campaign you conducted." She looked up at him with obvious annoyance. "Look," she said, "You won, isn't that enough? Or did you come by just to gloat?" She realized she was being rude. But his entire demeanor just infuriated her. My goodness, was that amusement in his eyes? "Look", she said, "You better get lost, you won and I'm a very poor loser. So let's let it go at that, okay?" She turned back to the huge box she had been packing with the remains of her display. After a minute or so she looked up and he was still standing there with that semi-amused expression and it made

her angrier than ever. "I don't know who you think you are Mr. Devereau but there is nothing more to be said. You won the day isn't that enough?" He said, "No, that isn't all Ms. Haskell, I want you to know I admire your abilities and if ever there is anything I can do for you, keep me in mind. Here is my card. Please put me down on your list of admirers."

Annoyed as she was, when she looked into his face she was disconcerted to see a man without malice, a man of infinite patience, a man who mattered. She felt so uneasy under his gaze that she turned back to her box and pretended that he was not standing there. Until now she had steered clear of all personal involvements, wanting to get to the top in this man's world. But now she sensed instinctively that Mr. Devereau was going to be a problem for her and she resented him for it. He made her feel uneasy, unsure. She knew he was a powerful person, apparently of great wealth, because all his efforts had been non-paying, idealistic affairs to help the environment. She couldn't afford that nonsense. She went for the paying jobs and no one was going to get in her way.

Now she was becoming more and more annoyed as he just stood there watching her throw things into the box. She thought he was strange, though also realizing he was very attractive; a good-looking man whom she felt was trying to intimidate her. Ginger found herself very emotional, unsure of what to say next. Finally, she turned to him, "Is there anything more you want Mr. Devereau, because I need to pack up and the convention center is

closing its doors for the night." "Of course", he said, "I'd like to help you. Is there anything I can do?" Then to her dismay he came around the counter to where she was standing and he kissed her. She was furious. "How dare you!" "It's all right my dear, just consider it a down payment on the future because some day you will marry me!" And that is how the romance of Viscount Roland Lamont Devereau and Ginger Haskell began. But it was not an auspicious beginning.

Ginger had found him from the beginning to be a threat to her sense of self. She was trying desperately hard to find her own business identity. She found this guy devilishly handsome and coolly confident. Now, at this meeting she was exhausted. All the other booths were manned by a staff of people, but she was alone in her efforts and it was almost beyond her strength to wind the whole thing down now and try to plan for the future. She had carefully avoided all men to keep her mind clear and her efforts unobstructed. But now she realized she was being out-manuevered.



Viscount Roland Devereau



Ginger Haskell

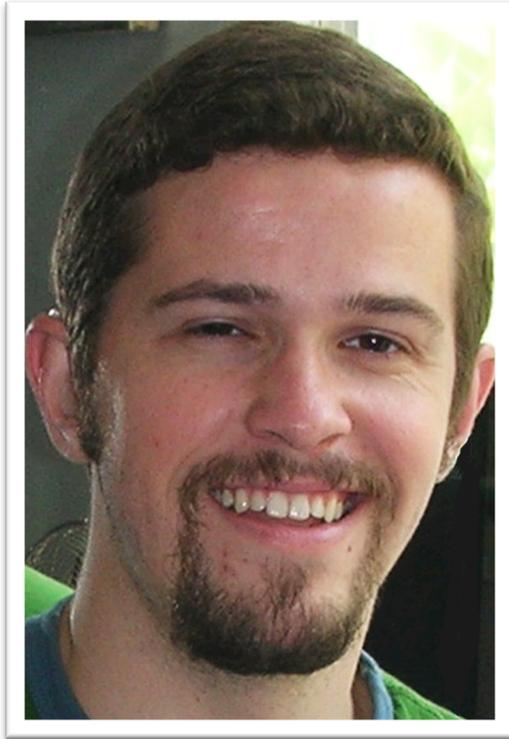
It was late in the day and she felt overwhelmed. She hardly remembered eating anything all day long and maybe that was why she was feeling so vulnerable and fighting hard for her own equilibrium. She felt tears in her eyes, which made her all the more furious at him and the whole situation. Now he was talking on his cell phone and two of his people, Jean-Pierre and Ann-Marie of his support team showed up, just in time to see her meltdown. "Oh, Mademoiselle" Ann Marie said to her

soothingly, "Come with us and Jean-Pierre will bring your big box on his dolly and when you get a cold drink and something nourishing to eat, you'll feel much better".

So the four of them got into the hotel elevator and went to the top floor suite that Devereau and Company occupied. Ann-Marie took her to a beautiful bathroom and drew a bath for her in the luxurious hot tub. Weeping quietly, Ginger allowed herself to be taken care of, pampered would be a more descriptive word. From feeling alone in the world and utterly forlorn, she was now in some fairytale city and all she knew was that it felt good. Ann-Marie dressed her in a luscious, luxurious piece of loungewear and fortified by an iced tea and a few tasty hors-d'œuvres, Ginger emerged feeling like she had died and gone to heaven. It was such a relief after the massive effort she had just made to stake her claim as an anti-environmentalist.

Ann-Marie seated her at a beautiful table for two and Mr. Devereau rose to greet her by kissing her hand in the most un-American fashion. This guy was a Frenchman and he had these elegant manners to go along with his title, Viscount. The table setting with its unmistakable stylishness of heavy silver and fine china was not lost on Ginger. This man was very rich and very powerful and she was a working girl in the world. Her father had died when she was very young and her mother married a wealthy man from South Africa and moved away, and was now almost a distant memory. When the Viscount Devereau asked if there were any persons to call to let them know

where she was, she said there was no one. "I'm all alone", she said. He looked at her with the look she found so disconcerting, the look of a man who understood it all and accepted the situation as it truly was. She hoped in her heart that she was not in some kind of trap but at the same time she noticed how attractive he was and she was drawn to him.



Viscount Roland Devereau

The worst part of it all was the fact that she knew that he could read her like an open book. "I must go." she said "No, you must stay" he said, "You are quite safe here, Ms. Haskell. I am a Frenchman of the very old school, a knight

come to defend you against all comers. So you get into bed and relax" And so Ann-Marie helped Ginger into bed and she fell asleep. She would face the realities later on but for now she was truly in need of rescue.

From that day on their relationship proceeded in much the same fashion with her fighting hard for her independence and her progress, Roland always standing by and always supportive, affectionate, and convinced of her ability to face the realities and ultimately to conquer. This extraordinary relationship came to her as a great surprise. She hardly knew how to assess it; all she knew was having Roland there as her very special friend was comforting and kind of wonderful. She realized over time with his always being there in the background that she had come to cherish him and appreciate him. But now, after several weeks being pampered by Roland and his people, Jean-Pierre and Ann-Marie, she left them to start a new approach.

Being on the wrong side of progress was not a good place to be. If she really intended to do something big, she had better figure out a better way to go that was more in keeping with the times. So, she set up her agency *Excelsior Advertising and Public Relations*. That seemed to work out better and when her accounts doubled and then multiplied she felt much encouraged. She knew in her heart that she could never accept Roland as her husband until she had proven to herself that she would not be coming into this marriage as just another gold-digger that seemed to be always hanging around him, hoping to make the match of the century.

Ginger Haskell decided that she had to have at least three million dollars in her personal assets before she would even consider accepting Roland's standing invitation to marry him.

It was a very exciting time for Ginger, deeply satisfying as each client came in and her firm expanded its accounts. With each acquisition she felt nearer to the day when she could retire and marry Roland. But it was no easy game she was in, besides the usual courage and patience and careful attention to detail was a need for genuine inspiration and grasp of her subject matter and she had discovered that she had all of these. But while she had appeared to have enough in order to triumph, her success seemed to be more and more costly to her health. After each major campaign even with the accolades coming in, she invariably became acutely ill, so ill she hid away in the privacy of her hotel suite and braved it out. She had gotten so she could hardly keep food down. Each campaign was financially remunerative but left her physically shaken.

Now, time went by and three years later she realizes she has reached her personal goal. Her agency is one of the most successful in the country, the envy of many of her competitors. And in her personal assets, she has reached more than her 3 million dollar goal. She would not come to Roland as a starving waif without her own means and dowry. If she had to go back to France to meet his mother and his aunt, the co-owners of a billion-dollar cosmetics company, she would be able to hold her head high and reassure them she was not after Roland's inheritance.

She and Roland talked on the phone several times a week and now that her agency had just won the coveted *American Society of Advertising and Public Relations Award*, she felt she has achieved her goal. "Roland, I've made it! I am now going to retire, keep my agency but turn it over to my wonderful staff and I can go away with you, if you wish". He said, "Hallelujah, my Love! I will come out to Colorado Springs and I do like the Broadmoor Hotel. In fact, it is one of my favorites." So everything seemed to be coming to one glorious finale.

When he arrived Ginger was excited to have him visit the Excelsior suite. "I learned this trick from you" she said, "Remember? That first time we met in Dallas when you were so gloriously ensconced in the Skyloft Suite. Goodness, you wowed me then" she said. She flashed her dimples at him, "See, I've learned from a master, so welcome, my Darling, to the *Excelsior* suite at the Broadmoor". It was a special event for Ginger because her agency was being honored and finally after all the ceremonies were over she spoke to assembled guests thanking them for their support and friendship.

"I have some news for you, I am going to retire now because I am going to marry this wonderful gentleman, my fiancée, Roland Devereau." It was a great moment for her and when Roland embraced her before the crowd, she all but dissolved in his arms and was immensely happy. Finally all the celebration was over, goodbyes and well wishes and people surrounding them with warmth and affection.

And at last they were alone. Ginger became very quiet and Roland realized that she was struggling with her feelings. This was a big transition point for her but also he realized she was bone tired. "Lets go down to the dining room and get you a cup of soup," Roland suggested and she agreed. But by the time they had gotten back to their suite he was aware that she was quite ill. He called Ann-Marie on her cell phone and the next thing Ginger knew was she was being undressed for bed and then exhaustion hit, the same feeling that had shafted her at their first meeting three years earlier. This time it was worse.

Roland called the doctor at the hotel and Ann-Marie rushed to the rescue with whatever resources she had to handle the situation. For many minutes Ginger was acutely ill but started to calm down when the hotel doctor appeared. "Please everyone leave the room," he said. Ginger whispered to Roland, "Please stay Roland!" and he did. The doctor looked at her unflinchingly, "Are you sure if this gentleman stays in the room that you can speak candidly?" "Yes", she said, "We have no secrets". "Okay, then" said the doctor, "First question, are you pregnant?" she replied, "No". The doctor asked her how she could be so sure? She said, "I have not been intimate with anyone." The doctor did not buy into that unlikely story and persisted in his questioning. "Look" she said, "I am sure, I know it is not possible".

But the doctor continued with his disbelief and finally she replied, "I know I have had some business success in my life but I can assure you that even I am not capable of an

immaculate conception." Everyone laughed at this remark which eased the tension, but Ginger was still sick. The doctor said, "Very well then, but I want to warn you two that sometimes couples don't go the whole way and the gal becomes pregnant anyway. So, don't take any chances because I have this to say to you both, this lady is so depleted and worn-out that if she becomes pregnant the chance of her survival and the baby's survival are very low. If at any point you become pregnant I advise you to immediately go to the hospital and terminate the pregnancy."

This drastic talk astonished them both but the doctor was not through yet. "All right, given that you don't think you are pregnant, lets move on to the next question. What have you been doing to yourself for a long time to so severely deplete yourself that you are in such fragile condition? Whatever your behavior has been you are getting a severe warning that you better change tack and go in another direction. You cannot take on the world, little Lady, your strength has given out". Her eyes filled up with tears.

"Doctor" Roland said, "These are drastic words". "Yes" the doctor replied, "I am giving you fair warning that this young woman cannot go on any longer in this fashion or she will not survive. Now the first thing you need to do is consult a dietitian because she needs six small meals a day besides a time of total rest and I mean total rest. I am going to send over a very good nutritionist and you are to follow her orders exactly and I think we will see a quick recovery or at least a quick solution to quell this

throwing up. And if possible I would advise you to relax here at the Broadmoor as long as you can because our little lady is in no condition to travel". With that the doctor stood up smiling, "Congratulations to you both. I believe we will have a good outcome".

So here it was now three years later, and history was repeating itself. Roland soon found out that after each big project, even when the denouement was a happy one, Ginger Haskell always landed in bed too sick to face the world. She had a big heart and an even bigger mind but the reality was she was just one small girl and could not hold the world up all alone for too long.

Remaining at the Broadmoor was more than just pleasant it was great. Ginger was only too glad to be remaining there indefinitely. She was encouraged because Roland seemed very pleased with their present circumstance. They both took it easy and enjoyed the fine restaurants and the grand views. Ann-Marie and Jean-Pierre stayed close by to help them with every need. As the doctor predicted, with good care there was indeed a good outcome and Ginger soon began to feel more than well, she began to feel wonderful. For the first time in her entire life she felt really safe inside. At least she no longer was struggling every minute for certainty and security.

There was so much to do around the Hotel. They branched out from miniature golf to the real course and tried to play some holes of golf every day. The swimming pool was fun too. And after they took bridge lessons in the game room, Roland turned out to be a super good

bridge player. Even though Ginger had never taken the time to play cards and she was new at all the games, she proved herself to be a very enthusiastic student. Roland was encouraged by her attitude and more and more everyday she flashed that dimpled smile. He thought she was adorable. They took short trips to the mountains and that was fun too.

And so time passed happily and productively reassuring to Roland that this lovely girl was indeed getting stronger and more at ease with herself and with him. There had been quite a bit of publicity about Ginger's success with her agency and people she met at the hotel often recognized her because of stories in the local press. She was finding her success a source of great pleasure. For the first time the work at the agency was being done by her two partners, co-owners who each had twenty percent of the controlling stock.

Even though everything seemed to be going smoothly from Ginger's point of view, Roland was becoming increasingly embarrassed about their living together so openly. He wanted her to marry him now. So he told Ginger that until they went home to France and were married there in the proper, traditional way, he could not feel truly happy. But for the near future he thought they should get married now, that she should be protected by his name and fortune and honored in every way. And so she went along with his desires and they were married at the Broadmoor Hotel. A gala wedding celebration began with many of Ginger's personal and business friends in attendance. She was supremely happy and

delighted with the turn of events and feeling energetic and full of life again as these happy weeks unfolded.

But Ginger's active mind was still hard at work and without telling Roland she transferred sixty percent of the shares of her firm into his name, insisting that this was her dowry. "How am I going to face your mother and your aunt unless they know that I am not some gold digging pauper? I have to come into this marriage with my head held high." And so because she insisted, he accepted, full of admiration for her spunky instinct of independence. Viscount Devereau who had more money than he cared to contemplate was now made even richer by Ginger's largesse.

Meanwhile Roland was in weekly communication with his mother and aunt as they planned the big social event of the season, a traditional wedding in the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris, France. Roland was not in a hurry; he was very content at the Broadmoor Hotel after he and Ginger were married there. He wanted her to build up her strength and learn how to play and enjoy the fruits of her labors. But he realized that he could not keep his mother and aunt waiting indefinitely because the wedding they planned for their royal and international friends was something bigger than any of them and he wanted to be sure that Ginger was up to the pomp and circumstance that was sure to take place in France.

Ginger was taking French lessons by listening to a tape and she was having a giggly good time with it practicing on Roland and he enjoyed her amusement. Meanwhile, she was

trying to learn something of the background of being a Viscount, since, of all things when she goes back to France, she will be a Viscountess. The chateau belonged to him, as he was the male heir. His mother and aunt as co-owners of their huge cosmetic company were rich in their own right; the billion-dollar company was theirs, hardly an insignificant achievement. The Chateau and the title on the other hand were all Roland's. Understanding this made Ginger more comfortable. Roland was his own man, beholden to no one but himself. And his tenants, people who had lived on the land for generations, were a contented lot. The land was marvelously fertile and his estates were sustaining through the many years. His family had lived in Paris and in the Chateau in the Loire Valley since the time of the Norman Invasion of England and Ginger found this quite impressive. She continued to marvel that this powerful man, Roland Devereau, was in love with her and wanted her to be his Viscountess when he could have almost anybody he wanted. It made her feel very special and very cherished.

Each week that went by, she found her health returning. She was very pleased also with the direction of her advertising agency, *Excelsior*. The two young men she had hired right out of the business college she attended herself had turned out to be exemplary people. Without them the agency could not have had the success that it was enjoying now. She realized that the award that came to them was based on the program she herself wrote and developed, but both Edward Forsythe and Jon Coolidge were go-getters in their own right. Now that she

was feeling stronger she and Roland called a meeting with the two young men and formally gave them each 20%, together 40% in all of the company stock.

She was pleased with how happy the two partners were and when Roland made it clear to them that they were in total control and Roland and Ginger were only there to help them move on smoothly into an even more productive future, they felt greatly empowered and enfranchised. Ginger did not forget her office manager, Elsie Becker, by giving her an outright gift from her personal funds to help the guys handle all the office details.

That done, Roland and Ginger felt free to enjoy their lives together. They indulged in the card game bridge, started to square-dance, attended the theatre, and enjoyed meeting with Ginger's large group of friends and clients. It was a happy time for the newlyweds. The happiest part of the whole scene was the fact that he and Ginger were finally getting to know each other. The three years that they had been "keeping company" were hardly intimate years. Roland used to be frequently out of town and now Roland was discovering that during all that time, Ginger became ill after every campaign she launched, much to Roland's concern and to his dismay.

He wished he had intervened sooner in Ginger's mad-dash to success, which had come to her with such great physical cost. No one but Ann-Marie and Ginger's office manager, Elsie Becker, had even a glimmer about how ill Ginger had become. But now it was all out in the open, at least it was no longer a secret to

Roland. After the doctor's dire warning, he and Ann-Marie kept careful watch of Ginger's well-being. They partnered with the doctor and the nutritionist to try to bring Ginger back to health. The doctor was so concerned about her becoming pregnant because he feared for her life that he had Ginger in the hospital to be outfitted with an updated form of contraception. With that assurance Roland and Ginger began the romantic beginnings of their lives together.

By the time the phone call came from his family to return for their religious ceremony in Paris, Roland and Ginger had already been married for three months. Roland felt secure in his belief that Ginger was happy and content with him. He explained to her that the Chateau and all its attributes, including the surrounding land were his through inheritance. According to tradition the male heir received all property and land. This allowed for no conflict between her now mother-in-law and aunt. They were in their own right very successful women and owned many of their own properties throughout France.

The day arrives when they get into the plane, flown by Jean-Pierre, Roland's personal pilot and Ann-Marie's husband. They fly into the Loire Valley near Paris and when they enter the grand doors of the Chateau, they enter the main hall. All the staff was lined up to formally greet the Viscount and his bride, Viscountess Ginger.

Ginger was prepared for this scene but unprepared for how exuberant they were in welcoming her with genuine warmth and excitement. The staff at the Chateau had known Roland when he was growing up and they were

overjoyed to see him and to greet the American heiress he had picked to be his bride. Ginger did not expect so much informal enthusiasm and she and Ann-Marie had a beautiful time visiting with the staff. Meanwhile, Roland bounded up the formal staircase to the second floor to greet his mother and aunt in their apartments. Then Ann-Marie took Ginger to the elevator to join Roland upstairs in introducing her to his mother. Roland embraced Ginger and then guided her to his mother who was seated in her wheelchair. Ginger, all excited by the warm reception downstairs, kissed her mother-in-law with spontaneous warm-heartedness. This amazing chateau and the remarkable people who lived in it both upstairs and downstairs filled her with great happiness. Roland had taken such amazingly good care of her in the three months living at the Broadmoor and he had prepared her so carefully for the new world of the French aristocracy, that she did not feel apprehensive.

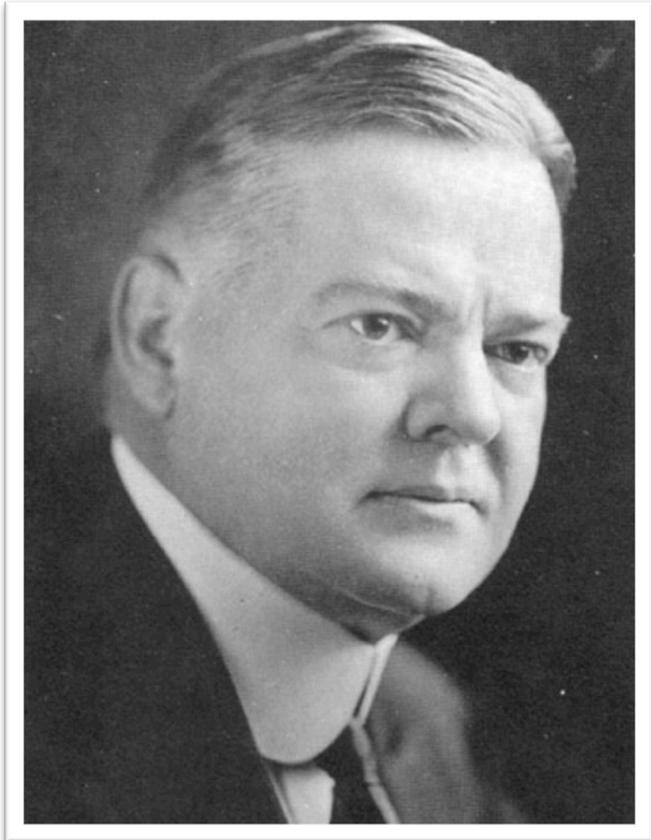
It was very reassuring to her that Roland was more than his own man. He had inherited the title Viscount. His mother was still the Viscountess Devereau, but she and her sister Juliette were the co-owners of a billion dollar cosmetic company.



... the story of Louis Vincent & Caroline ...

The love story between his mother Caroline and his father Louis Vincent was something special in itself. It all began in the

year 1918 when Louis Vincent, who had been the French Emissary to the United States, had come home after the armistice.



Herbert Hoover

In 1918, the armistice had been signed and the French Emissary to the United States Louis Vincent, the Viscount Devereau, was returning to France anxious to get back to implement the strategies that he had worked out with that amazing man, Herbert Hoover. Now, the Emissary from France, Louis

Vincent was returning home on a converted ocean liner, the Lutitia. It was thread-bare, but still sturdy and Louis Vincent looked forward to ten days aboard where he can catch up with the bags of mail he was bringing home to France from the French embassy in Washington, DC. To his amazement, one bag contained only the mail from Caroline Bertrand, the fifteen-year-old daughter of his boyhood friend, the chemist Marcel Bertrand.



Marcel Bertrand

He had arranged with Marcel to allow Marcel's daughter, Caroline to work in the library, the renowned private library of Devereau House.

Louis Vincent did not read Caroline's correspondence during the day, too much detail pertaining to the affairs of state, but after dinner he settled down with a glass of wine and looked forward to the luxury of reading Caroline's daily report to him, the anecdotal account that brought her alive to him. He had been present at the marriage of Caroline's mother and father and mourned with the family at the death of Marcel's bride, Francine. It was two years after the birth of her second baby, Juliette. Francine first was weakened by influenza but her death was attributed to rheumatic fever, which damaged her heart.

In the spacious stateroom aboard the ship, next door to the Captain's quarters, there was one good lamp; the reward for his diligence during the day was his meeting of the minds with Caroline Bertrand in the evening. That became the reward of his life. In all of his career he had been pursued by women everywhere he went on both sides of the Atlantic. He felt almost besieged. He never had any desire to marry any of them. His secretary in Washington DC kept Caroline's letters in perfect sequence and it was a delicious introduction to the mind of a brilliant young person who felt deeply indebted to him for the opportunity of living in Devereau House back in Paris, France.

A captivating sequence of communication bound him to her in ways that no other person had ever made possible. He had no idea what Caroline looked like. There were photographs enough of him all over Devereau House. His father, Desmond Devereau was a pioneer photographer, but no one had ever sent him, Louis Vincent, a photograph of Caroline.

Nonetheless he was in love with her by the time the S.S. *Lutitia* docked in Le Havre. He knew that Caroline was the girl of his dreams with a mind that was interested in everything, but most certainly in the wide ranging world of arts and letters with all the qualities that he had longed for in a mate. He knew he could live with Caroline with utmost happiness because she was like the other part of himself.

An official government car awaited the arrival of Viscount Devereau in Le Havre, driven by Joseph Pierre, with whom he had worked on other important missions. It took the two men three weeks to empty the hull of the ship of its life saving food supply and direct its contents to the suitable locations to immediately relieve the threat of impending starvation. Caroline remained in Paris at Devereau House but she directed every detail of the food distribution. When the hull of the *Lutitia* was completely empty, Joseph drove Vincent back to Paris, both men trying to overlook the shabbiness and the heartbreak, the desolation of war. Vincent felt an intense desperation to get started on Hoover's plans

for the rescue of Europe from starvation. On the other hand, he was almost tremulous thinking of Caroline and he knew intensely exciting days were ahead.



Joseph Pierre

He had never written to Caroline. He really did not think of her at all until he boarded the ship that brought him to Le Havre. The first thing he did when he arrived there and was provided with a telephone line from the French Foreign Office, was to phone Caroline at Devereau House. Her excitement at hearing from him was palpable and his

reaction to her response to him almost electrical. Her one hundred and twenty pages of reports to him, one a day for almost four months, had paved the way for what he considered an inevitable love affair. Besides all else, he knew he could confide in Caroline and he was always comforted by her lucid analysis and never failing encouragement. He felt she was magical, the other part of himself that he had been unconsciously seeking, but never expected to find.

With him in Le Havre and with her in Paris they found there was no difficulty in weighing out the best strategies to distribute the supplies that filled the hull of the *Lutitia*. It took three weeks of their most urgent efforts and only then was Louis Vincent ready to return to Paris. It gave him only four days time as he was slated to open the food emergency meeting in Geneva, Switzerland. Only four days to finally meeting his blessed Caroline and to embrace his boyhood friend, Marcel, Caroline's father. How it would work out was unknown. All he knew was that he wanted to marry Caroline and take her with him to Geneva.

Louis Vincent had grown up with photography; his father was Desmond Devereau, a pioneer photographer who brought to a waiting world an awareness of the wonders that our planet offered, pictures of people of all colors and customs, a new world of discovery and celebration. Caroline knew almost everything there was to know about the Viscount Devereau. But he had

never seen a photograph of Caroline and he didn't care because he was in love with her no matter how she looked. He was indebted to her, committed to her, and amazingly in love with her. In his public career as *the bachelor Viscount*, he had carefully sidestepped all entanglements. No one anywhere was more surprised than the Viscount Louis Vincent to find himself enthralled by any woman no less than the fifteen-year-old daughter of Marcel Bertrand. When, at last he came to Devereau House, Louis Vincent was pleased that Caroline was off to meetings of the Victory Garden Executive Committee with the Devereau family bookkeeper, Ilsa Hollander.



Ilsa Hollander

Louis Vincent was glad for the chance to plan his activities with his Aunt Anna and

Uncle Hubert in quiet comfort. It gave them a chance to decide on the plans for the wedding, as Louis Vincent wanted to take Caroline with him to Geneva, and he needed essential time with Marcel Bertrand to arrange this.

He was grateful for the quiet time that he and Marcel had now, a meeting so much needed. Marcel was distressed that Caroline was off somewhere and didn't want Caroline roaming around Paris as he was aware that every man that met her was interested in her. He was also completely assured that she was not the least bit flirtatious but he worried anyway. Being a father, alone in the world with two little girls, was beyond his courage. Once again, he started voicing his concerns to Vincent. "Oh cheer up, Marcel" Vincent said, "Her troubles are almost over. Her husband will take care of her". "How I wish that were so", Marcel said. "I have been thinking of sending her to a convent but how can I do that to these wonderful ladies? Its too much of a problem for them to take on Caroline". Vincent said, "There you go again, Marcel." but Marcel interrupted, "That girl will be the death of me yet. I am so concerned about her. She is still so young, yet every man who sees her seems to be attracted to her and she is so managerial, so outspoken, so impossible to control. I don't know how I'll be able to protect her. I tell you, Louis Vincent, the job at the library that you gave Caroline has been a blessing for all of us. Without it, I don't think we could have survived these past

months. I couldn't bear another day of Caroline telling me she wants to manage my sister Caroline's cosmetics company. That girl is relentless when she has an idea in her head. She never gives up and I am just worn out with worry."

"My poor Marcel," Louis Vincent said, "Caroline is a smart articulate young woman and soon things will be better. She will be married to someone who is right for her and her husband will take care of her and you will be enormously relieved. " Marcel shook his head sadly. "If that were only the case, I keep telling her that no man will want her, she is so headstrong and hard to handle, but she is like a Lorelei. You know that story about the temptress in the middle of the Rhine River ... that old German tale of temptation. It is not Caroline's fault. I know that. She is far too genuine to be deceitful but nonetheless I am afraid there is going to be a disaster." "Oh just hang on a little longer," Louis Vincent said reassuringly, "it is all going to work out beautifully now that I am back in Paris".

While Marcel was confiding in Louis Vincent about Caroline's future, she and Ilsa were busy at the meeting of the "Executive Committee of Victory Gardens Association". Caroline took her role very seriously and worked tremendously hard at producing and distributing nourishment to the surrounding countrysides of Paris. She too was looking forward to the first meeting with Louis Vincent. Even though she was pouring her dedication into the food relief efforts she

could not get Louis Vincent out of her heart and out of her mind. She was thoughtful of the opinion of her father but she could not stop thinking about Louis Vincent and was hoping that their first meeting would go well, perhaps even more than that.

When Caroline returned to Devereau House she was flooded with emotions. It turns out that Louis Vincent was not home at the time but her father, Marcel, was still on the grounds. She was happy to see him and told him all about her work with the Victory Gardens Association. He was glad she was focused on something so important and was relieved that she was going to be staying with Louis Vincent. “He will be a good influence for her”, Marcel thought to himself.

Caroline did not tell her father, Marcel, of her feelings for Louis Vincent. She wanted Louis Vincent to be the first one to know of her feelings, and couldn't wait to see him.

Chapter 2

PROGRESS



Louis Vincent and Caroline Bertrand

World War I presented numerous difficulties to the leaders in France and the Viscount Louis Vincent Devereau felt keenly challenged by the enormous perils that loomed ahead for his beloved France. He was a French diplomat and with the outbreak of the war he could see many difficulties ahead that somehow had been unforeseen before. Europe seemed to him to be a tinderbox with the Germans eager

for war. His personal conclusion was that if help could come to France it would be from the United States. As a peer of France, a single man without personal ties, there was nothing to deter him in any plans he made. And so, with a considerable family fortune to sustain any activities he chose, he proceeded with his plans.

When the armistice came on November 11th 1918, the Viscount Devereau was the French Emissary to the United States and was conferring with Herbert Hoover in Washington DC. Hoover had made numerous trips through the German U-Boat infested waters during the war as the head of the Food Administration Bureau. He was a hero to everyone on both sides of the Atlantic. Louis Vincent's trip to Washington was very successful as he found Americans very warmly responsive to the needs of France. He could come back to Paris assured that at least in the immediate future there were funds to repair the ravages of war at home.

He procured passage on the *Lutitia*, a converted French troop ship that brought him back to France. He was looking forward to a ten-day sea voyage where he could collect his thoughts and sift through piles of unopened mail that had come to him while he was in America. He was surprised to receive a communication from his chemist friend Marcel Bertrand concerning the Devereau Library in Devereau House, which was on adjacent parcels of land to the Bertrand Estate. Bertrand wanted permission for his daughter, Caroline, to work in the Devereau House Library.



Caroline Bertrand

Marcel Bertrand felt she would be safe enough there rather than running around Paris with her ideas of promoting the cosmetic company that her Aunt Caroline had started.



Aunt Caroline Bertrand

Louis Vincent had already written back with permission and he also reassured Bertrand that his housekeeper and also his Aunt Anna, Madame DuPont, would watch over Caroline. Furthermore, any supplies that Caroline would need should be purchased on the Devereau account. Louis Vincent was delighted to have Caroline aboard. He had already assured Marcel Bertrand that he, Louis Vincent, would be pleased to hear from Caroline if she had any questions or problems. He then gave Bertrand the name and address of his supplier of library

needs and he told them he was looking forward to seeing the wonderful results that he was certain would follow.

And so the war years thundered on with dreadful, unthinkable hardship and bloodshed. Every war turns out to be a tragic story but somehow WWI was particularly awful. Trench warfare exceeded earlier war stories in horror and heartbreak and finally, when the armistice was signed, now the tattered remains of armies came home to their uneasy futures. There was universal hunger. In 1918 the groundwork was already being laid for the horrors of WWII to take place, the inevitable road to worldwide disaster in 1939.

Louis Vincent came home to Devereau House thankful the war had ceased. His chemist friend Bertrand had stayed on in his own laboratory, helping as much as he could and the world settled down to so-called peace. When Vincent came back to Paris, pleased to be returning to Devereau House, he had not forgotten about his deal to allow Caroline Bertrand to preserve his library. And when he came in he noticed the library door open, a high ladder in use. When he caught sight of Caroline perched on the top of it he thought he had never seen a more glorious sight. Here was this incredibly lovely young woman engrossed in looking at an ancient appearing manuscript and she took his breath away. "Well" he said "you must be Caroline Bertrand" and she looked down at him with such surprise and delight that he was completely captivated. "I'm Louis Vincent, as you may have guessed".

She thought he was adorable. He was very good looking, as she already knew from the numerous photographs and stately oil paintings adorning Devereau House and she seemed absolutely delighted to see him there. The next thing she knew he was holding his arms out to her and she found herself in his most welcome embrace, transported to a level of happiness neither of them had dreamed possible. The much sought after bachelor, Viscount Devereau was destined to become Caroline Bertrand's knight in "shining armor" and their love affair became legendary, the envy of all.

Louis Vincent felt keenly the disparity in their ages but he reasoned that the thirty years between them was a good thing for both of them. With normal good fortune he should be young and vigorous enough for the next twenty years, enough time for them to have a family and enough time for the realization of their personal hopes and dreams. He could give Caroline the freedom that Caroline's father could not countenance.

Before contacting his old friend and chess mate Marcel Bertrand, Louis Vincent arranged for his wedding to Caroline in the Notre Dame Cathedral. He was not about to ask Marcel permission to marry his daughter. He asked his beloved Aunt Anna, Madame DuPont, to assist Caroline with her trousseau. He deliberately included an invitation to his long time bookkeeper, Ilsa Hollander, to attend this crucial meeting because he wanted Caroline to have the blessing of Ilsa's managerial mind. Starting a business was, to his way of thinking,

unthinkable without the support of Ilsa's knowledge.

Ilsa ran Devereau House for his aunt and uncle and they relied on her explicitly and greatly appreciated her many management skills. Louis Vincent had always respected her abilities but he was totally unprepared for her reaction about his impending wedding. She blanched at the news and he felt sad and pained that here was yet another single women who had secret feelings for him in a way he had never encouraged. "Ilsa" he said "this is great news for all of us, this wedding. It will come as an equal shock to Marcel Bertrand, who is Caroline's father. He is a widower, you know and a very remarkable single man, worthy of your romantic attention. So we will all go forward as the Fates dictate".

Then he dispatched an invitation to Marcel to come with his youngest daughter Juliette to Devereau House for dinner. In his invitation he mentioned that he had at long last found the girl of his dreams and he was planning a wedding in the near future. In his note he wrote of his great joy and that he could not wait to share this good news with his dear friend, Marcel.

Madame DuPont was a superb hostess and the day dawned bright and sunny so they could eat on the deck overlooking the city of Paris below. Marcel was genuinely happy for his friend Louis Vincent and there was a feeling of jubilation and excitement in the air. The two men embraced in a bear hug; they had been friends since boyhood and it was a happy occasion. "Tell me" Marcel said looking at

Louis Vincent "who is the amazing woman who captured your heart?" and Vincent laughed and said to him, "You have no idea, not a clue?" Marcel asked. "No. How could I know who has captured your heart?" This interchange was very reassuring to Louis Vincent. It was obvious to him that Marcel really had no idea, and that this little interlude of having Caroline work in the Devereau House Library was not part of some deliberate scheme. He knew Marcel so well that if there had been any ambitious plan afoot, then he, Louis Vincent, would have detected it. He whispered to Madame DuPont to please bring his engagement ring for Caroline and he slipped the ring on her finger.

It was a glorious ring that had been his mother's and Marcel instantly understood what had happened. His little girl Caroline, had indeed made a great match and was now to be the Viscountess Devereau and with Louis Vincent's blessing could become one of the most important women in France. He was overcome with emotion, excited and pleased, humbled and thankful and breathed a great sigh of relief that his beautiful child Caroline had indeed made the match of the century. He sat in blissful tears and Caroline and Vincent knew that they had his blessing.

The Archbishop of Paris presided over their wedding ceremony with the wedding reception held at Devereau House. The library, which had brought them together, glowed with festive decoration and flickering candlelight. Caroline was transported. Not two weeks earlier, she was worried that her over-protective

father might send her to a cloistered convent in his fears for her future wellbeing.

Her beloved husband-to-be, Louis Vincent, was an adorable man. She marveled at the wonders of Fate and was pleased to feel empowered to proceed with her dream of promoting the Carolinian Cosmetic Company. Her father could live life the way he loved it, content behind his vials and formulas, but she, Caroline, with the blessings of her Aunt Caroline, could create her dream of promoting the Carolinian Cosmetic Company with the backing and approval of her beloved husband.

But for the present, Vincent was interested in arranging for a four month visit to the countries that had benefited from the largesse of Herbert Hoover, a four month trip to check on the recipients of America's substantial help to a recovering Europe. He saw this journey as a necessary follow-up on his and Caroline's enormous effort to feed the hungry population. It was a chance for him to show his young bride the wonders of the European continent and to bring as much comfort and rescue as possible to a still suffering population. He was deeply content with the way circumstances worked out and he felt that four months was all the time that he and Caroline needed to review the effects of Hoover's rescue mission. Having the pleasure of Caroline's presence meant much to him, and he was eager to commence the journey.

Much to his surprise, he found Caroline balking at the idea that they use every means available to them to keep from getting Caroline pregnant. Marcel, Caroline's father, was one of

the most innovative chemists in all of Europe. Now he had offered Vincent his latest product and also a really effective device that Caroline could employ to keep her baby-free until the four month honeymoon trip was over; then the newlyweds could settle down to raising a family.

To Vincent this plan sounded eminently sensible but Caroline arched her back. She was furious at her father's intrusion into their personal lives and her reaction was so overblown from Vince's point of view that he found himself quite angry with her. Here was a means to be carefree and happy as they traveled and her unreasonable response turned him off. It was the first spat that they ever had but neither one of them backed down from their initial position. Vincent did not want to go on this journey worried that he was putting Caroline's wellbeing into needless jeopardy and she was dismayed that she had angered her husband. But peace restored itself relatively quickly. They were too much in love to want to be separated. She accepted the fact that being estranged from Vincent was more than she intended and she graciously accepted her father's gifts.



Viscountess Caroline Devereau

So the newlyweds took off to Geneva and points East and West, North and South, happily secure that the days of starting their family had been postponed until a time more sensible and convenient.

Being married to Louis Vincent was an amazing experience. There never was a dull day. Almost from the beginning she felt like being a secretary to him, keeping a record of callers and calls, letters and appointments of causes worthy and unworthy. But no matter how busy the days he kept evenings quiet and personal. There was nothing frenzied in the schedule that Louis Vincent setup, nothing thoughtless or pointless.

Caroline could see why her husband inspired so much respect. He was a person capable of self-discipline, pleasant and charming. Caroline had a crush on him. She thought he was marvelous and fussed over him and supported him and she found life with him more than she had dared to hope for. She traveled with him on many of his important missions and when he didn't take her with him it was usually because she preferred to stay back and catch-up with some of her personal obligations in Paris. One of the exciting things for her was setting the worldwide promotion of the already existing Carolinian Cosmetic Company.

Now that she was the Viscountess Devereau, her father was far less timid about her promoting his sister's cosmetic company. His sister, also named Caroline Bertrand, founded the Carolinian Cosmetic Company in 1904. She

was very innovative in developing her cosmetic line but did not have the grasp of the international outreach that was necessary to make the Carolinian Cosmetic Company effective worldwide. He realized that his young



Caroline Bertrand

daughter Caroline, who had been the director of the Food Program responsible for saving Europe from starvation, this same young girl who had the organizational ability to save Europe, his little girl Caroline, had the intellectual grasp and the personal courage to continue to make her mark on the international scene. He watched with interest and paternal pride as she helped propel the Carolinian Cosmetic Company into a modern day 30 billion dollar enterprise. He himself liked to be in the laboratory dealing with the chemistry of various products, but Caroline had a vivid imagination and a driving need to organize. She soon had an eager group

of young sales people calling on hairdressers selling the Carolinian line. It was a wonderful time to start this business. Women were beginning to bob their hair and short hair inspired innovative products, new colors, new styles, new combs, new perfumes, new accessories, and colorful ornaments; a brave new world of fashion.

Caroline and Louis Vincent had three children, two girls, Vivianne and Vera, and finally the much longed for heir, Roland Lamont Devereau.

Roland was the sole heir to the cosmetics company founded by his mother's family, as well as all the holdings he inherited from his father. He had spent much time at the Chateau when he was growing up and many of the staff of the house lived in the village and had helped raise him, as Ginger soon found out. Walking the gauntlet of staff lined up to greet them upon their arrival, Ginger felt excited and special. They all were happy to see Roland and proud that he had come home to get married in the French tradition. Everyone formed a circle to hug Roland and his bride; everyone knew they had been married in a civil ceremony in the United States, but until he was married in the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris he was not truly married in their eyes. Ginger was astonished at the morning's display of love and affection for Roland; growing up at the Chateau he had always been their charming little boy. His father, who was considerably older than his mother, doted on him. Father and son had been inseparable.



Aunt Juliette Bertrand

After a little while, Roland slipped away unnoticed while everyone milled around Ginger. Due to Ginger's natural warm-hearted personality the meeting upstairs was an echo of what happened downstairs. There was nothing stiff or reserved about it, everyone was in high spirits and thrilled with the turn of events. Ginger was immediately drafted for fittings.

The ladies, Aunt Caroline and Aunt Juliette, had plans in place for the wedding, but in true French fashion the details of Ginger's trousseau were of prime importance. These two talented ladies who headed up the billion-dollar Carolinian Cosmetic Company were two of the

most inventive minds in the country. In the next days Ginger found out why they were so immensely successful. Both were so creative, so attentive to detail and so "on the go" enthusiastic. Ginger knew no bride in the world was more exquisitely accoutered than she. She was to wear Mama's wedding dress and jewels, jewels handed down to her through the Devereau line from hundreds of years before. Ginger knew that if the wedding had come any sooner she might have been intimidated by all of this finery and festivity. But now she knew with absolute certainty that this was her husband's domain. She was coming to him with her own fortune and her own presence. She was indeed the present day Viscountess Devereau. With her head held high with Roland's never failing support of her, she felt at ease in his warm and accepting world.

Fortunately the French she had learned when she and Roland were living at the Broadmoor stood her now in good stead. Simple everyday French was readily understandable to her and the rest she knew would fill in later. In one year of exposure to the French language in college she had acquired a few poems and stories from French literature. Her French teacher believed in the memorization of passages. Now she amused her husband with little tidbits that she recalled from her college days. She knew a poem by Anna de Noailles, "L'innocence". The first line began with "Si tu veux nous ferons..." Then her memory faltered but Roland filled in with "notre maison si belle que nous y resterons les étés et l'hiver!". Roland was very impressed by this and he bought her a

small book of poems to supplement her earlier exposure. Another paragraph she recalled was from the book *Maria Chapdelaine*, a French-Canadian classic. Roland was very amused by Ginger's efforts to recall the opening paragraph to that novel and he got her a copy of it along with the poetry so they could read it together.

They had a great time waiting for the wedding; Roland drove her to every spot on the magnificent estate that he loved so that she knew every place that filled his childhood with such happiness. He shared with her the tremendous love that he felt for his father and shared with her the pain of his loss. His father was thirty years his mother's senior. He was an old man when he died. But in Roland's heart he was ever young and vital, a man of letters with a supreme command of French language and literature besides being a capable diplomat and a vibrant leader in governmental and foreign affairs of the French Republic.

Reading up on French history became a daily quest of Ginger's. She became aware that being the Viscount Devereau, Roland, had not only inherited the title but also the responsibilities of high office. The library of the chateau was extensive; it was not only there for the family but for the village and beyond. It was regarded not only as a regional treasure but a National Treasure of the Republic. So when Roland was away and preoccupied with other duties she was never alone. She could always enter the larger world of endless ideas and connections, the amazing gift of this extraordinary family.

So now the wedding was upon them. Guests renowned and international, guests local and much beloved, came to Paris to attend their wedding and to be lavishly entertained at the Carolinian Complex. The Cardinal of Paris officiated over the ceremony and there were so many celebrated and honored guests that Ginger felt bewildered. Roland was concerned that her health might not hold up and he had Ann-Marie alerted to any sign of her old illness. Ann-Marie shielded her and tried to keep her quietly ensconced in their private apartments.

The doctor, Dr. Marcus Reid, who had taken care of her in Colorado Springs was there with them. He and Roland had become close friends and Roland felt reassured with him there that Ginger would live through the pomp and circumstance that was to be visited on her. And to Roland's great relief she mustered the calm and strength she needed to walk down the aisle of the great Cathedral on the doctor's arm and he gave the bride away to Roland at the altar and all was well.

The events of the next few weeks were amazing, the trappings of nobility and high position vividly displayed in our time. Some would say they were in a time warp. They were in a time warp, out of sync with modern day democracy and empowerment for every human being on the planet. Ginger could not resolve that equation. All she knew was that Roland was essential to her life. She would endure this invasion of their privacy for as long as it took because she sensed that Roland would always carve out a private space that was for them alone. And she knew without a shadow of doubt

that he was her forever knight. The words of Sir Walter Scott rang true for Ginger, "To every lovely lady bright, I wish a gallant faithful knight; To every faithful lover, too, I wish a trusting lady true." The Loire valley, the Chateau country, was where Roland was born and grew up. These were country houses but Paris was the center of all power and consideration. Paris was the true heart of France and it had to play a central role in the marriage of Viscount Devereau and Ginger Haskell.

Both Roland and Dr. Marcus Reid had been concerned for Ginger's health. But any fears of a meltdown were needless now because she felt so loved and secure. When finally they could leave Paris and go home to the Chateau they all felt that Ginger had survived a milestone and triumphed. Now the only requirement was to live happily evermore. Finally the guests went home and so did Roland and Ginger.

Roland's friendship with Dr. Marcus Reid was very genuine and he really hated to see Marc return to Colorado. It looked to Ginger like this was a friendship that would last throughout a lifetime, but now Marc felt he had to get back to his practice. And Roland and Ginger had to get on with their lives. One of the nicest things was having lunch in the kitchen with Lisette. Lisette was almost a surrogate mother to Roland. He was her darling boy and was ever-present whenever any mothering was needed. The old Viscount was almost thirty years older than Roland's mother and he absolutely doted on his son. When Roland was not in the kitchen with Lisette he was with his

Dad. Even as a very young boy his father confided in him and explained at length the management requirements of their very large estate. His father was a renowned scholar and the library in the Chateau was dedicated as a National Asset. So on certain days the library was open to the public. Even after hundreds of years, this magnificent estate had a permanence and an elegance that lived on.

Roland was enjoying all the fuss, delighted to see his mother so happy and his aunt so satisfied with the arrangements she had orchestrated but he stayed next to Ginger, ever watchful of any signs of panic or unusual fatigue. This was his world but for Ginger it was like waking up in fairyland. She was the star of the occasion, this American heiress, who had ventured into their midst and many ambitious persons in the audience wondered how this American girl, who scarcely spoke French, could have captured Roland's heart and his enormous fortune. His family was one of the richest in France and owned the Carolinian Cosmetic Company, which was only part of Roland's inheritance. As much or more came down to him with the title of Viscount, chateaux and farmlands, the shipping company and other holdings of this old name family, holdings almost too numerous to mention.

Roland had in place part of his inheritance a remarkable panoply of "protectors", skillful people who had grown up in these different companies, career individuals who treasured their place in the Devereau holdings; Roland was the ceremonial head of this business hierarchy. He spent a week each

month with his Aunt Julie by his side, guiding him to what was working well and what was amiss, a tight together hierarchy, which kept this hundreds of years old identity still operative in the modern world.

As the days rippled by with small and big festivities, Dr. Marcus Reid was becoming increasingly restive. He felt he really must get back to his practice in Colorado Springs. He left Roland and Ginger as usual with a stern warning that she must continue many small meals and have at least two quiet times each day in order to keep up with the social events that bombarded her. Then he went back to the Chateau to gather up his things and there was more drama awaiting him than he ever anticipated.

Chapter 3

CRISIS

When Marc Reid first met Roland and Ginger he had no inkling of the changes that would take place, not only in the circumstances of his life, but with the very essence of his knowledge and awareness.



Dr. Marcus Reid

He had grown up in Colorado Springs with only three years of high school French to his name. He had read some of the great French literature

but like most Americans his speaking knowledge of the French language was extremely limited. He had no intimation when he first met Roland Devereau and Ginger Haskell how intertwined their lives would become. All he did was do his job with his usual forthrightness and dedication. His job was to safeguard Ginger's life, which she had jeopardized so severely by her desperate rise to fame. He felt Roland and Ginger were estimable people. He was intrigued with them both and fascinated by their unusual patterns of thinking and living. It was not surprising that he and Roland became fast friends and when Roland asked him to give away Ginger in marriage at the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris, France, he was deeply honored. The three of them got into Roland's private plane with Roland's friend and assistant, Jean-Pierre, at the controls. Marc then realized he was in for an out of this world experience, a chance to live in another space and situation beyond his total imagination. The plane flew directly to the Loire Valley and he found the Chateau, an almost storybook location, an incredibly lush old mansion that had been in Roland's family for hundreds of years.

Now, he found Paris even more surprising and to be giving away his patient and dear friend, Ginger Haskell, in her wedding to Roland Devereau in the Cathedral of Notre Dame was more than he had ever anticipated. He was overwhelmed by the undisguised affection that greeted every member of the wedding party at every turn. All of them were treated with such a lavish show of affection and affirmation! This was a wedding party that only

could be conceived by the Carolinians, Roland's mother and his aunt, Juliette.

It was a truly glittering occasion, an affair of the heart, and never in his 26 years had Marc ever seen such a display. But now, for some reason he could not explain, he was restless and uneasy and he felt an urgent need to get back to the Chateau and then home to Colorado. When Roland's mother, Lady Caroline, expressed a need to go home to the Chateau also, he was delighted to escort her back to Chateau Devereau. She retired immediately to her apartments and he went first to his room and then to the kitchen where usually Lisette took her accustomed command.

But all was not well at the Chateau. He found Madame Apillon, wife of the general manager of the estate, in a fit of near hysteria because lying in the bed, in the small room off the kitchen, was a desperately ill, very young woman, whom she feared was near death. When Marc looked at her, he too feared for this young person's life. She appeared to be comatose but every now and then she was convulsed in nausea, sweating, white as death.

Marc had spent two years as an emergency physician, ER doctor. He thought he had seen it all and that there was nothing new that could floor him now. He had dealt with almost every possible scenario from snakebite to frostbite, gunshot wounds, and domestic violence. He doubted there was any human condition that he had not seen before. But now he was in for a shock, as he looked at this exquisite young girl convulsing. He knew he was dealing with some kind of poisoning; she

appeared to be comatose. She would make eye contact with Marc and then her eyes would roll back into her head. Several times in the next grueling hours he despaired that he was going to lose her. He was almost *willing* her to live. In English he told her over and over again in a language she most certainly did not know that she must fight to live.

What followed were several critical hours when he despaired that they could save her. Then, she started to hemorrhage and they then realized belatedly that she was pregnant and was losing her baby. With Ann-Marie at his side, he instructed her to save the contents of the delivery and he then concentrated on the enormous blood loss that was so life threatening to this young girl. Meanwhile, Monsieur Apillon had called for medical support and Marc was greatly relieved when the French equivalent of the paramedics arrived by helicopter and were able to give the patient critically needed blood transfusions and other infusions for life support.

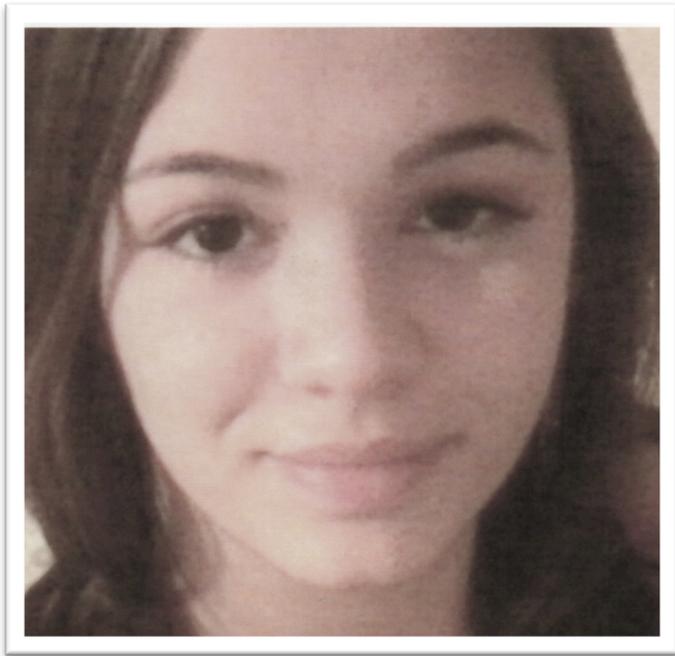
These anxious hours brought her around and Marc was greatly relieved, as he feared that at some point he might need to resuscitate her. Ann-Marie and Madame Apillon were immensely impressed with Marc's compassion. They had never seen a doctor before who was so passionate about saving his patient's life and they had an enormous rush of appreciation for him. But he was concerned about them too, and insisted on everyone getting some rest because he didn't know what was going to happen next and needed everyone strong. The whole arduous time, Dr. Marc did not leave this young girl's side. He kept cold compresses on her head and

warmed-up blankets on her body. Whenever she opened her eyes he would call her "Cherie".



Monsieur and Madame Apillon

Madame and Monsieur Apillon informed Marcus that the young girl had volunteered almost no information; they did not know her last name or who her parents were. Nor had she mentioned anything about the father of the unborn child, who had just been spontaneously aborted. They thought her name was Liliane and she was around 16 years old. Madame Apillon did not know who the father of the child was because Liliane told her it was too dark to see the face of the man when he attacked her. But the Apillons showed Marc the empty bottle of fluid that was used to abort horses and cows, used by local farmers when needed. To Marc's intense relief the paramedics had taken this appalling substance to be chemically analyzed.



Liliane

Only time would tell if Liliane could survive. The young girl clung to his hand and seemed to be comforted by his presence. Now in the remains of the day, with the paramedics gone and the worst of the crisis behind them, Dr. Marc breathed a sigh of relief. His years working in the emergency room had not equipped him for the intensity of this crisis and he found himself furious at the man who put this poor girl in such jeopardy.

The medics were great. This marvelously equipped flying hospital provided every known modern method of life support. Seeing this beautiful girl respond filled him with

thanksgiving. He kept holding her hand, mopping her brow with cold compresses. When she opened her eyes he smiled at her and he caught a glimmer of response in her dark eyes. He asked Ann-Marie, who was acting as his assistant, to ask the medical crew if he should continue to give her medicine to ease her pain and when they concurred and her moaning finally stopped, he knew she was now feeling more comfortable.

Marc was immensely relieved by this. He had been in desperate fear that he would have to resuscitate, a procedure he always tried to avoid. Every time her eyes rolled back he would say, "Oh, no, no Cherie". Never in all his medical experience had he ever cared so desperately to save a patient. Now with the paramedics hooking her up to their state of the art equipment Marc was sure that she had a chance to live.

Now that the worst of the crisis had passed they had time to reflect and he was aghast, furious, as he never had been before. To think that these evil people, whoever they were, forced this fluid down this young girl's throat was beyond the parameters of human decency. Everyone's conclusion was that her panicked parents had created what they thought was their own rescue and she was the unfortunate recipient of their selfish intentions.

He sat by her all day, popping little slivers of ice into her mouth, hoping to fend off possible dehydration. Whenever she opened her eyes he would repeat cooing sounds. The relief he felt not having to resuscitate her was so

intense that he kept saying to himself "thank you God, thank you!"

While all this was going on at the Chateau, Roland and Ginger were in Paris. Roland had moved Ginger to his father's home in the building that his family had owned since the days of Napoleon. It was an absolutely magnificent apartment with floor to ceiling bookcases, plush carpets and lavishly framed mahogany-carved mirrors. "My father's name was Louis Vincent Devereau and he was much beloved", Roland told Ginger. "He would have adored you, Darling. He would have loved you and you would have loved him. " Bringing Ginger home to his Dad's Paris quarters fulfilled one of Roland's deepest wishes: to enfold his bride in all the trappings of his unique inheritance. But even more so, this was the place he had dreamed his adolescent dreams. In those young years, he never had a face to accompany his fantasies but now he had Ginger by his side and that was all he wanted in his life. Ginger was over-awed by all of it and was excited and worn-out at the same time. She was overcome by Roland's love for her, more than any woman could ask for. He felt now that a few days alone together in this wondrous old home would help them both come down to earth, anchored once again in their effervescent reality.

He sat down in what he used to call his daydream chair while Ginger was freshening up. He was planning a cute little diversion which would echo one of the themes of a certain painting that hung on the wall and then there stood Ginger in the very place that he was

imagining her to be. Lo, there stood Ginger, in tears, much to his surprise. "Roland", she said, "You and your family have been so good to me and I am so ashamed of the way I treated you when we first met. How could I have been so mean and nasty? I am so ashamed of that day and how I acted toward you". She stood there, looking completely dismayed. Roland could hardly keep from laughing it was so ludicrous. "My Darling Ginger, if you had said one word differently, you wouldn't be here in this house as my beloved wife. Let me inform you, My Love, not one night since that event have I ever gone to sleep without thinking of you and about that angry tirade. And in my fantasy I come around the counter and kiss you not only once but again, and again, and again. That's how I endured the three years you kept me waiting, busy with your mad pursuit of funds and fame."

He took her into his arms and she did not know whether to laugh or cry, she was so indignant at him for letting her stand there like a penitent while he was amused. Her reaction was so like her first day's reaction to him, so similar in fact that he could hardly hide his enjoyment of her anger with him. "Ginger" he said, "Do you realize that your disdain for me was so unique, so honest, and so spirited that I knew that here was the woman I was looking for. One who would love me whether I was rich or poor." And then he kissed her again and again, just like in his fantasy. He scooped her into his arms and carried her into the bedroom.

They knew they had time before brunch, which Louisa was now in the process of preparing for them. For the first time, in so

many days, they could actually relax and not feel rushed, not feel hounded by social obligation. They enjoyed this peaceful morning hour together and then the phone rang. To Roland's horror, it was Monsieur Apillon. Roland knew instinctively that this call would be notification of some disaster and the news was indeed dire. Roland could hardly absorb it all but he quickly realized it was truly an emergency. He was informed that the Red Cross flying hospital was due to arrive any minute, not a minute too soon, and Roland's presence was urgently needed. Marc would not speak with Roland until the rescue helicopter arrived.

When the medics had Liliane hooked-up to their life-saving equipment, only then did Marc take a minute to get on the phone to tell Roland that he needed many specialized doctors to assist in this young girl's recovery. Marc told Roland he needed a gynecologist, an internist, a surgeon, and a chemist. They needed to be the best Roland could find and Marc proffered to mortgage his condo, if need be, in order to pay for it.

Roland brushed aside any talk of money but quickly concurred with Marc. He knew that the four depositions from these experts would not only support Marc's urgent medical needs but would sustain the court inquiry that was bound to take place almost immediately. Roland requested that Jean-Pierre drive back to Paris from the Chateau to pick them up and that he select the largest limousine in their garage to accommodate the four consultants, along with Ginger and himself. They drove straight to the

Chateau, all realizing that difficult days lay ahead.

On arrival, Roland instructed Monsieur Apillon to proceed with their court inquiry and when they were confronted with Marc's incensed reaction, they realized that this was to be a criminal inquest into the assault of this young girl and not a trivial event. Two days later, when Liliane sparked a life-threatening high fever, Marc was keenly alarmed and both Roland and Ginger realized how greatly involved he was with this girl's plight. They too, were deeply concerned.

Three days later the hearing was held in the District courthouse. The District Patrol had determined that the girl's name was Liliane and they were certain that they now had her parents name and the reason for their dreadful behavior. They feared the disgrace of their daughter's pregnancy and had resorted to criminal behavior to induce labor. Roland kept everything very low key. He allowed Liliane's parents to talk freely until he finally asked them if they would like to cut their ties to their daughter. The mother responded with a bitter denunciation but the father was quiet, less hostile. "She is a good girl" he said, "and my wife is a hard woman" but the father concurred that it would be best for his daughter to sever all ties to them. The courtroom clerk brought the documents to be signed and this accomplished, Roland then turned over the meeting to the magistrate, Monsieur Apillon.

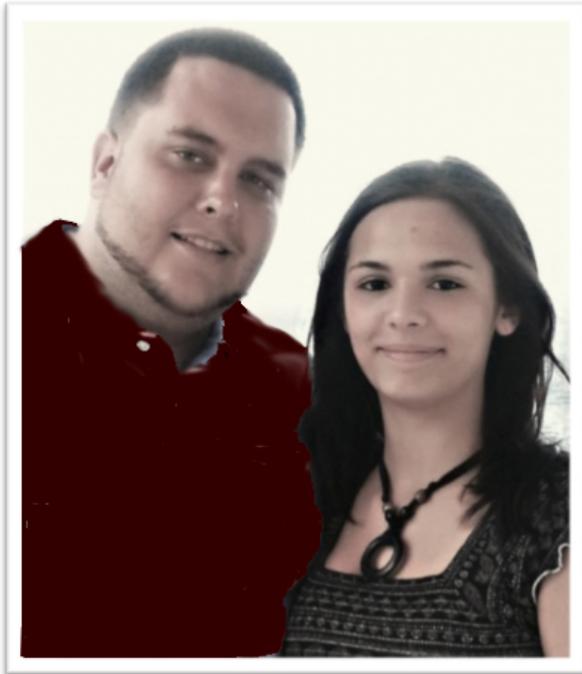
Then they left the courtroom but still remained the problem of what to do with this young lady when she recovers. To Roland and

Ginger it was very obvious that Marc held some kind of answer to this dilemma. It was obvious to them that Liliane, who spoke no English and Marc who spoke little French, were committed to each other. Marc was greatly concerned that even though Liliane appeared to be recovering he knew only too well what some of the future problems could be and he could barely wait to get her back to his hospital where he knew the top doctors who could rescue her.

There was also concern about transporting her into the United States without the proper credentials. Ginger and Roland suggested several solutions but Marc would not have any of it. "There is only one answer. I will marry her! If she is Mrs. Reid there is no problem. She will be my wife and I her husband. She will be provided with legitimacy and security while in America. It solves the whole problem and is the best thing for her. Besides, I want to marry her."

But this happy decision was not the only one that has to be made. In the court hearing Roland had made sure that the young girl's identity was protected. Nowhere in the proceedings was her name mentioned and when he and Ginger realized that Liliane was going to marry Marc, they decided that her last name was going to be Devereau. Ginger was sixteen years older than this young girl but she and Roland felt she was to be their daughter. When the wedding ceremony was to take place Roland was to give away his new daughter, Liliane, to his dear friend, Dr. Marcus Reid. The wedding took place in the Viscountess Caroline's apartments at the Chateau. Presided over by the

local Bishop, the now Liliane Reid was enraptured and clung to Marc, looking at him with adoring eyes. This obviously was making him happy, too. Ginger and Roland would have wished something more for him, something less chaotic.



Dr. and Mrs. Marcus Reid

But Marcus was a man entranced by this gift of Fate. He had already contacted the pastor of the French Protestant Church in Colorado Springs and asked him for help. Marc explained that he needed an older woman who spoke both French and English and this brought an unexpected, happy result. The pastor's mother, Nina, was a registered nurse and could be available to take care of Liliane for as many

hours as needed. When Marc finally brought Liliane into his hospital, the relief he felt was enormous. He knew that she would be in the best hands and she had a very good chance of eventually being restored to health. Roland and Ginger also felt there was a good chance of this being a loving and lasting marriage.

Once the newlyweds flew off to Colorado in Roland's plane, once more Roland and Ginger returned to Devereau House in Paris determined to recapture their feelings of peace and contentment that the recent drama at the Chateau had interrupted. But somehow they both knew something was not right. Ginger was not feeling well but she hesitated to tell Roland because Roland was so intent on her being well from now on and their doing exciting things together. He was laying out the good life that most certainly could occur now and later on and in her secret heart she was wondering how she could cope with all these marvelous plans. All she wanted to do was to be alone and uninvolved. She was afraid to tell Roland that she was sick to her stomach for fear that he would assume she was back in the throes of her old malady. Yet, at the same time she could not keep up with him. It was a puzzle to her and she did not know how to resolve her difficulties.

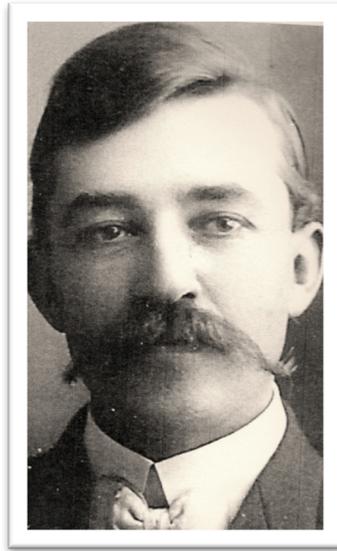
In the old days, when she used to get sick after a big campaign, the upheaval was dramatic and dreadful. Now she just felt constantly sick to her stomach but never threw up at all. She knew she was frightening Roland. She could see the concern in his eyes but she did not have the energy to cope and all she could do

was withdraw and that only heightened his concern. It had been a difficult 10 days for both of them. She stayed in the dressing room, pleased to be able to lock the door and she knew he felt hurt and dismayed by that. Finally it had to come to a confrontation and when he used a spare key to come into the dressing room she was not surprised. She knew it was inevitable. She did not know what to say or do. How could she tell him that she felt too sick to want to be kissed and to want to be touched? All she could do was sit quietly and weep. She knew her past history was very much on Roland's mind and they both felt that their best efforts had failed.

They were both sad at the turn of events. Their relationship had always been loving and supportive and to have Roland so distressed made her even more depressed. But they sat around, talking, after a stormy interaction. And now it was approaching the dinner hour. "I have a favor to ask you" he said to Ginger, "We have three people coming to dinner tonight and it would mean a great deal to me if you were to join us and bring your sparkling self into the conversation because Abbe Carre was my father's personal friend as well as the priest who used to live in Paris and I will be so proud if my beautiful wife would welcome these dear old family friends".

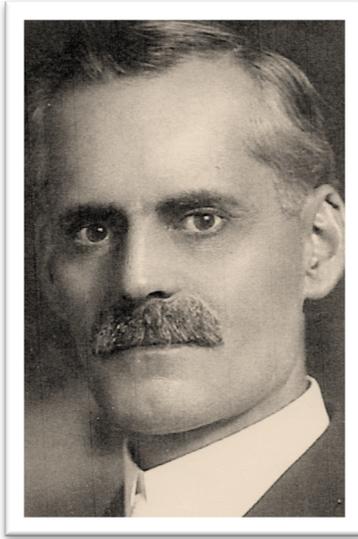
Ginger agreed she would dress for dinner and greet Abbe Carre and Dr. Lambert who was Juliette's boyfriend of 50 years. Juliette had many admirers but she did not want to marry anyone. When Ginger agreed to dress for dinner, Roland kissed her, appreciating the effort she had to make, "I will send Yvonne to

come and help you dress" he told her, "and I am sure you will enjoy the evening." When Yvonne came she did indeed make it easy for Ginger to dress. With a little makeup and attention to her hair, Ginger looked lovely and felt inspired to put on a great front of assurance and enthusiasm.



Dr. Lambert

Louisa arranged for them to sit at a round table, the five of them. Ginger immediately loved their guests. Both the middle-aged men had gray hair and smiling eyes, delighted at meeting her again. Both of them were long time friends of Roland's, more than that even, admirers of Roland's who had known him when he was an outstanding young boy and were proud of him now that he was the Viscount Devereau, a grown man highly regarded by everyone.



Abbe Carre

Abbe Carre held her hand at the table telling her how much he had looked forward to this intimate meeting at her home. He commented that Roland was considered the most eligible bachelor everywhere so all eyes were on her when he married her not only once, but twice. "Yes", Ginger replied, "I know becoming the Viscountess Devereau is a supreme honor but Father Carre, I am unworthy. I am deeply honored but not worthy of this wonderful man."

"My dear," he replied, "You know what good judgment Roland has and what impeccable taste, surely you are being too modest". "No," she said, "I am afraid that I have let him down and everyone else down, too". "Oh, my dear child, that is not so! You are the pride and joy, the light and substance of Roland's life". But

Ginger sat dissolved in tears. "You may be feeling just a little low or tired out but I assure you that nothing but smiles and good wishes and heartfelt support surround you. And everyone who has ever known the Devereaus are rejoicing that you have come into Roland's life". Through her tears she hugged Father Carre.

The dinner that Louisa served was superb as was the champagne and other wines, so carefully calibrated with the food. It helped raise the topics of conversation to more general and hopeful levels. Roland was despairing of Ginger's obvious sadness, puzzled beyond belief at the turn of events. But he noticed that Dr. Lambert was looking at him and Ginger with some surprise. "We all know", the Doctor was saying, "how fabulous your wedding was in the Cathedral of Notre Dame and we are happy to celebrate with you again tonight. But Lady Devereau, I observe that you are not feeling as well as you expected." "Yes" she replied, "that is true but I plan on feeling better soon." She then looked at Roland and flashed him a cute smile, "I hope to feel better soon" she repeated. But Dr. Lambert just smiled at her.

"Do either you or your husband have any idea about why you're not feeling well?" Ginger replied "No" and the doctor turned to Roland, "Do you mind Roland, that I be direct and candid with you both?" Roland said, "Please, tell us what you are thinking" He said, "I think Lady Devereau is pregnant. That is why she is having morning sickness and sometimes afternoon and sometimes even evening sickness. But I know one thing, another 10 days she will

be out of this phase and will be feeling just fine".

It took a few minutes for his words to sink in. Roland and Ginger felt his response was amazing and wonderful. The terrible fear of major illness was nothing more than the usual ups and downs of the first days of pregnancy. What a marvelous solution to their dilemma! What started out as a somber dinner became a celebration. The rest of the evening went on with great peals of laughter as dark clouds turned to bright ones, as ease of comradeship and celebratory thoughts salvaged the evening.

Everyone felt like celebrating the wonderful epic events of two weddings; Ginger's recovery and the storybook romance of Liliane Devereau Reid's. Liliane was bursting with happiness. Being Marc's bride kept her in a state of continual euphoria, fun to behold and as February grew into March and the snowpack became so ideal for skiing, Roland and Marc hatched up a reunion on ski trails in Aspen, Colorado. Roland was encouraged that Ginger seemed more like herself again and she seemed pleased at the idea of going back to Colorado for a few weeks visit at the Broadmoor.

Jean-Pierre flew back to pick them up in Paris then flew them back to Colorado Springs. There was a wonderful reception awaiting them at the Broadmoor Hotel. Ginger was glowing and Roland was thankful to see her so happy. A number of their other friends joined them in Aspen since the snowpack was ideal at the moment and it was a truly raucous time. Several of the men decided to take off on a cross-country ski junket and the girls decided to stay

back at the Lodge. But word came back to them that Marc had tripped over a root and hit his head but that he was okay. Even so, they decided to return with him a day sooner than expected, anyway.

This news hit Liliane with great fear, even though Marc had been unconscious for only a short while and he now seemed to be just fine. Every one had a jolly good time at the Lodge and came back to Colorado Springs happy and refreshed. Marcus was checked out at his hospital and all seemed to be well. So once again Roland and Ginger went back to Paris for a week or two before leaving for the Riviera. Ginger liked the South of France immensely and was feeling happier than she had in months. But first she was looking forward to going back to the Broadmoor and the reunion with her staff at the Excelsior Advertising and Public Relations Company, which she still owned and that was more profitable than ever. And they were looking forward to seeing their darling Marc and Liliane. But as glad as they were to be back, they were distressed to see that Marcus was in the throes of serious trouble.

It was obvious to everyone that Marc was not himself. He was very quiet; frowning, and jumpy, his eyes darting around nervously, and no way near the usually relaxed and pleasant doctor that everyone knew and liked. When Ginger and Roland saw him in such a changed state of mind they were greatly alarmed. But they hardly knew how to broach the subject of Marc's declining health. He seemed to them trigger happy, jumpy and angry. They noticed that dear little Liliane was acting

like she was walking on eggshells. Her relaxed adoration of Marc was no more. She was completely quiet and on edge, fearing that at any moment some explosion on his part could upset the festive day for everyone.

When Roland saw the change in Marc's personality he became very fearful. He immediately arranged a dinner party at the Broadmoor that would include all of them plus Dr. Mullane and his old friend and confidant, Dr. Scofield, friends of Roland's and both colleagues of Marc Reid's. A very apprehensive Liliane sat next to Ginger wary of any storm clouds on the horizon because Marc had become more and more difficult to live with. Something was obviously amiss. And the break came soon enough, early in the evening.

Marc looked over at Liliane talking to Ginger and said to Liliane, "What are you doing? Complaining to Ginger about me? Just remember Roland and Ginger are my friends. They were here long before we ever knew there was any Liliane". Liliane's face flushed with embarrassment. This angry Marc was a stranger to her; she could hardly process his hostility toward her when everything that had come before was so loving and supportive. But this personality change in Marc was obvious to everyone and Roland and Ginger were deeply troubled by it. Dinner proceeded pleasantly enough but all the while its two doctors and Roland and Ginger were wondering how they could best proceed to get Marc back in the hospital and have new x-rays taken of his skull. He had suffered a long bloody gash when he was injured and the danger of infection or a

leaking blood clot loomed large, but somehow they managed to get through the meal. Then the two doctors suggested to Marc they all go back to the hospital with them to look over some x-rays and he went along with them pleasantly enough, seemingly unaware that these were to be x-rays of his own head. The doctors were very afraid that his fall on the ski slope had created more brain damage than anyone had realized.

Once in the hospital many new techniques were available. With Marc under anesthesia the two doctors could proceed with more thorough diagnosis. They were able to see blood in the brain that had not been obvious before. Liliane stayed close to Ginger and Roland, overwhelmed in fear. After surgery Marc was wheeled back to his hospital room, pronounced okay by the doctors. Everyone breathed easier. When Marc woke up from the anesthesia the first thing he said was Liliane. His joy in seeing her by his bedside was clearly evident, the old Marc concerned about Liliane the first thought in his mind when he opened his eyes. His recovery was good news for all of them. Liliane was back to herself sitting at Marc's bedside full of happy thoughts, grateful to Roland and Ginger for their ever-present support.

Ginger and Roland were really a bit young to be her parents but they were her parents nonetheless. Her name now was Liliane Devereau Reid. They had adopted her and she knew she could turn to them with any problem that ever arose. But having Marc back again, so

loving and caring was all she wanted or needed in life.

While he was recovering Ginger told Liliane to look around for an apartment or house that she would enjoy living in. Marc's old apartment was okay for a bachelor who was never home anyway but not as bright and attractive as it could be. This was a welcome diversion for Liliane and Nurse Nina. They were both having a fun time looking for new quarters for the newlyweds. When Marc came home from the hospital it was to a new place, bright and cheery and large enough to be welcoming. Finally convinced that Marc was on his way to recovery Roland and Ginger flew back to Paris and hoped for some great times together living in Devereau House.

What a welcome relief it was to Roland to finally relax back in Paris. But they weren't home for more than two days when it was clear that Roland's hope for some good times together was not going to work out. Ginger seemed to be very morose and withdrawn. He couldn't imagine what was happening. They had always gotten along so beautifully and their life together had been so ideal. Now she was withdrawn and unhappy. Roland was totally unprepared for Ginger's sad-sack transformation from a sunny laughing girl to one now teary and withdrawn. When he asked her what was wrong she said nothing, "I'm just depressed". He couldn't see what she could be depressed about, everything seem to him to be wonderful beyond words. Being alone with Ginger in Devereau House in Paris seemed to him like the ideal place to be, but not so for Ginger. Ginger didn't

know why she felt so blue. All she knew was that she felt like hiding out in the dark. She was so dizzy that she had to hold on to the walls.

She was frightened knowing that Roland would immediately think that she was relapsing into some eating disorder that never had applied to her to begin with, but seemed to be the in fad in current so-called medical thinking. She was terribly nauseated and dizzy, teary and depressed. Not knowing what to do and realizing how disturbed Roland would be if she confided in him about her current state of affairs, all she wanted to do was hide away in the dark in their dressing room which provided a safe haven for her because she could lock the door. How could she tell Roland that she didn't want him to kiss her because she was so sick to her stomach and how could she explain to herself why despite this upset feeling, she never threw up but was continuously dizzy and sad inside. They had only been back at Devereau House for ten days but because she felt so sick it seemed like forever. She was in tears most of everyday since they had returned. She knew that she had to get better before too long because she could see the desperation in Roland's eyes, his fear for her, and for them; for their marriage. Finally some resolution had to occur.

On a beautiful sunny morning as they sat on their sheltered terrace, the brightness of the sun was more than she could stand and she excused herself and sought refuge in the dark dressing room where no outside light penetrated. But this was once too many times for Roland, and with his spare key he opened the dressing room door, to find Ginger sitting

alone in the darkness, weeping. "Roland," she said "Don't look at me that way. You are scaring me". He said, "You locking me out of your life is scaring me". She burst into tears and put her arms out toward him, and he embraced her gladly and they clung together. "Roland I've missed you so much, so much!"

As she lay sobbing in his arms he was enormously relieved to have her cling to him. He embraced her and asked her forgiveness for having frightened her. It was a time of deep healing for both of them expressing their need for each other and both were greatly comforted by this return to intimacy. "Are you feeling better, my darling?" he asked her. She responded by holding him even tighter in embrace. "I've missed you so terribly, Roland". And he could only reply by saying over and over and over again, "My darling, my darling, my darling." There really was nothing either one could say. All they knew was that some part of their awful ordeal of separation had been resolved. They both knew that healing was on its way and that without understanding it somehow their marriage had been saved. Now that they had reconnected somehow the good life would resume.

"Is it time for another bite to eat?" Roland asked her, and she laughed and said, "Yes, yes". He rang for Yvonne. "Could we eat outside of this dressing room?" he asked her and she laughed and she said, "Yes, yes". And so they came out into the light and the brightness of their magnificent bedroom and Yvonne brought them omelets and fruit and poured coffee from his father's ornate coffee service in

silver. The happiness they both felt was so intense, the relief knowing that some undefined illness was behind them gave the day a feeling of celebration. Whatever lay ahead was now hopeful rather than dire. Whatever lay ahead was doable, now that they were together again.

Dr. Lambert was remarkably accurate with his prediction of pregnancy and eight months later Roland had his heir happily sleeping in a bassinette when the next family celebratory dinner party took place. The baby was named Roland Lamont Devereau. Following that was a baby girl named Alondra Virginia Devereau. Roland and Ginger thought their family was complete but three years later Ginger gave birth to twin girls, whom they named Caroline and Juliette, after Roland's mother and aunt. These were very happy years. They shared the thrill of having one darling baby after another and life seemed very blessed and wonderful. But life has a way of thrusting itself on all participants and one dramatic instance for a time loomed very large indeed. It was an angry episode, totally unforeseen, and it left its mark in many ways for some time afterward.

When Ginger's son was born, named for his dad Roland Lamont Devereau, Roland flew down to Marseille in response to his shipping company's needs. The baby was only two weeks old but Ginger seemed to be doing well and so Roland took off without too much concern. He took a commercial plane and returned from the airport in the early evening with Francois at the wheel, driving him home. They drove up to

Devereau House only to see a moped lying in the driveway and a rope ladder thrown over the wall. When Roland saw this his heart dropped. He knew there was an intruder inside the walls and he was in a panic, because everyone in France knew about the second-story rapist.

They hurriedly drove through the gates and up to the front door, Roland noting that his Aunt Juliette and her neighbor Marcelline were sitting at the dinner table but no sign of Ginger. He ran to their bedroom behind 2-foot thick stonewalls and when he opened the door he could hear Ginger screaming, calling for him. He bolted across the big bedroom floor and entered the side-room he had had recently built inside the grand bedroom they shared.

And there was Ginger with her back to the wall and a chair in front of her. The intruder was standing in front of her completely naked from the waist down and threatening her with a hot poker. Roland came up behind him and grabbed him by the hair and pulled him back away from Ginger. Francois took the poker away from him but he, as lithe as a circus performer, wiggles around and kicks François viciously. Francois grabbed the poker and struck a stunning blow across the intruder's bottom. The only conclusion anyone could come to was the poker must have been red hot because the yelping that ensued indicated even more pain than one would have anticipated and he took off into the larger bedroom, hopping around like a person in agony.

Ginger stayed frozen against the wall clutching her chair and Roland realized she was in some kind of shock. "Sweetheart, let the chair

go. Let me take it from you. There is no danger now; he is in the other room. I will not let him near you". She was literally in such a state of shock that he had to coax her fingers off the chair as she was unable to release them of her own volition. "Where is the baby" he asked her "I shoved him under the bed" and so together they reached under the bed and retrieved the still sleeping baby. "Thank God you are both safe" said Roland. They just stood there together numb in thanksgiving.

Then Roland pressed the call button and asked Juliette and Marcelline to please come into the little bedroom and take care of Ginger because he could hear a new terror in the cries of the intruder and he was afraid that the anger of his own men was so great that they might kill the man. But in the few minutes he had taken to help his wife and son, the escalation of the cries were such that he knew that further mayhem was visited on this unwelcome guest. Sure enough, the man lay on the floor in front of the fireplace and he had been divested of his manhood. Roland did not know who of his men was responsible but he could tell by the escalation of the victim's cries that something violent had taken place. Roland was aghast. He abhorred violence and now he was confronted with this grievously damaged man bleeding on the bedroom floor, his personal parts severed from his body.

"Call the police" he shouted "and call Dr. Lambert at once" and the men scurried to follow his instructions. Then they lifted the unfortunate victim up and carried him into the laundry room where there were several tubs and

a bathtub. Roland ordered the bathtub to be filled with cold water and he had the men lift the still screaming victim into the tub. The cold water brought some relief and comfort to this man. Roland ordered his men to find ice and to bring some cognac to help relieve the man's pain and then without mentioning anyone's name he looked directly at François and told him to remove himself from the scene and he, Roland, would stay with the victim until help arrived.

That such violence could be visited on anyone on the premises of his home was beyond Roland's worst imaginings. He thought the victim was going into shock and he was afraid he would drown in the bathtub so he stood there making sure the man's head stayed clear of the water. When Dr. Lambert, his Uncle Louis, arrived he was greatly relieved because the victim now appeared to be unconscious. The Paris police came in almost simultaneously as the doctor and Roland was both relieved and concerned. The victim appeared to be no more than 40 years old unusually muscular and trim and to Roland's uneducated eye appeared to be in extreme likelihood of losing his life. He addressed the Gendarme's when they arrived telling them that the victim was in extreme pain and must be treated humanely even though he was obviously the guilty party. He introduced the police to Dr. Lambert and he said to them "I must go and make sure Lady Devereau is all right. Promise me gentlemen you will treat this man with kindness. He has suffered exceedingly and I regret to say that some of the suffering was visited on him by my own men". He turned

to Dr. Lambert and told him he was going to see his beloved wife now, who had been terrorized by this fellow.

When he got back to Ginger she was lying in the bed with the baby in her arms and looked tranquil enough to reassure him that at least she and the infant were okay. The outcome of this terrible misadventure was so mind-boggling that Roland called in several sets of experts to make Devereau House an armed fortress with seen and unseen protections that would most likely suffice for another lifetime.

The upstairs rapist did survive the night. He was treated as humanely as Roland could arrange, but there was no question that he had terrorized many a woman in the course of his career. No one was very sorry to see him incarcerated for life. However, while the intruder recovered, he never got over his conviction that the Viscount Devereau was a living saint. Though imprisoned for life, he worked closely with Roland over the years to improve the treatment of all prisoners of all kinds, not only in France but internationally as well.

When this awful night came to its conclusion, Roland was upset as never before in his life. Devereau House had been violated. That such violence could occur on the floor of the glorious master bedroom was too horrible to contemplate. Devereau House had been in his family's possession for hundreds of years and the fact that this vile intruder could undermine its heritage was a truly sad event for everyone involved.

Roland knew that he could not raise his children there as he had originally planned. Now he must find other quarters for them, surroundings that were not stained with crime and bloodletting. And so it was with a heavy heart that he finally crawled into bed next to Ginger and breathed a prayer of thanksgiving that his beautiful young family was safe, but grieving that Devereau House had been violated.

Roland told no one of his plans for his family. And when the time came that he and Ginger felt was the right moment to leave, they moved elsewhere, taking only the baby cribs and their clothes and a few keepsakes. They left Devereau House intact. This fine old house, so replete with treasures of all kinds, would now become a museum of culture and art, open to the public everyday of the week excepting Sundays. The hallowed memories of his sainted father and his ancestor the Dowager Viscountess Robyn Devereau who saved Devereau House for the family in the dark days when the King had confiscated all of their lands and given them to his relatives. The Dowager Viscountess Robyn would live on in these beautiful rooms and the horror of home invasion would be washed clean of evil happenings so that only the good and the glorious would be remembered.

In the course of organizing the treasures in Devereau House, one of the magnificent finds that Roland discovered was the story of Robyn and Franchot. He was organizing the contents of Devereau House when he found the papers of his ancestor, Robyn de Lyscelles, Viscountess Devereau. In her papers it explained how the

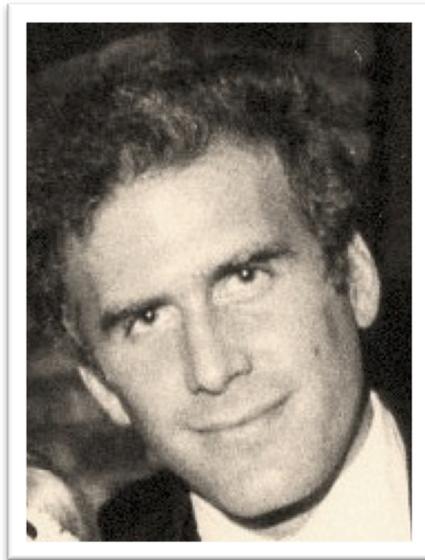
name de Lyscelles entered the Devereau line and how the Devereau holdings remained in the family.

Roland loved the story of Robyn and Franchot and read Robyn's account over and over again, thrilled with every word that rounded out his family heritage. Ginger was as enthralled with it as he was. They had many copies made and gave beautiful bound books to their children. Roland gathered the entire family together to read this extraordinary document that had come down to them from the reign of Louis XVIII. When they moved out of Devereau House the story of Robyn and Franchot came with them, a glorious, an ever-present reminder of their remarkable family history.

Chapter 4

THE LOVE STORY OF ROBYN & FRANCHOT, 1820

It was a crisp autumn day when the Honorable Franchot de Lyscelles came to Devereau House to claim the gift of his relative, the King. He had been involved for six years with the King Louis XVIII's personal Regiment, both in active combat and involved with delicate diplomatic maneuvers. He was now happy to be back in France and for once attending to his own business, not that of the King's. It was the year 1820 and King Louis XVIII decided on a pacifistic foreign policy. The King rejected any idea of an intervention anywhere outside of France's borders and recalled all French nationals who were abroad ordering them back to France.



Franchot de Lyscelles

Franchot was pleased to have been of service to the King but now even more pleased to no longer be in that service, looking forward to raising his six-year-old son and making a home for him. When he was notified that the King had given him the Devereau holdings he was immensely pleased and knew at last he was in a position to move on with his life. He had sent a notice to the Devereau Estate's Manager, Jean Percival, that he would call on him on this specific date to settle the affairs of the transfer of the Devereau Estates to him. He hoped the transfer would go smoothly. Taking over someone's property could be an embarrassment, perhaps a dismaying procedure, one that did not occur very often in anyone's lifetime, so he had very carefully laid out the facts and circumstances in his letter to Monsieur Percival.

Two attendants accompanied him, a man and wife from his family's estate in the Picardy region of northern France, Jacques and Janette Dewar. They were a bright couple, better educated than most and, as his estate managers described them, "clever with money matters". Before heading to Devereau House the three of them spent a very meaningful week at the Chateau Sisson, the home of Franchot's father-in-law and mother-in-law, the grandparents of his beloved little boy, Etienne, now 6 years old. In the six years since the death of Etienne's mother, Aimée, somehow he and the Sissons managed to go forward, but the shock of losing her in childbirth was more than anyone of them could reconcile.

For Franchot it was always a feeling of recognition whenever he saw Etienne; he was the living incarnation of his mother, so fair skinned, with hair like burnished sunlight, so clearly a child of the Norseland. That his shy little Aimée had not lived to see her son was to Franchot an ongoing tragedy. The mystery of death in childbirth was beyond anyone's comprehension. How could this exquisite young girl, only sixteen years old, seemingly in superb health and brimming with life, how could she have perished in the course of such a natural event? Something must have gone terribly wrong but not even the doctors that Madame Sisson had known so well and trusted so completely, could offer a valid explanation, but so it was. Now parents and husband had to face a saddened future without her golden presence.



Princess Maria Christina and baby Franchot

With her loss a light had gone out of their lives and motivated Franchot to become a doctor. With his mother, Princess Maria Christina they opened the Amiens Lying-In Hospital where they provided the latest medicine could offer for new mothers and babies. When Franchot was asked to join the King's Regiment his medical degree was welcomed, valued and especially needed in countries outside France.

But now being home, it also was an enormous joy and relief to Franchot that his son was so happy, so charming and well adjusted. He could not have asked for more that in these challenging six years when so much was happening in Franchot's life, that his little boy was thriving and secure in the lovely environment of the Chateau Sisson.

When they rode up to the gate at Devereau House he was pleased that Monsieur Percival was there to greet him and he and his party were invited into the spacious well-furnished guardhouse, welcomed with every courtesy and convenience. Their horses were tended to and all sat down together at a light repast. "What is the condition of the Estate, Monsieur Percival?" was the first question that the honorable Franchot de Lyscelles asked him and it was reassuring to hear Percival reply enthusiastically that it was in a very fine state of upkeep. "As you probably know, the honorable Robyn Devereau lives here". "No", de Lyscelles answered, "I did not know any family was living here, in fact I did not know there were any descendants of the Viscount Henri". "Yes," said Percival, "Devereau House has been in

continuous possession of the Devereau family almost since the Norman invasion of England. We are close to Normandy here and our roots go deep. In fact, until the death of the Viscount last year there has been no break in the line for hundreds of years".

De Lyscelles was thoughtful for several minutes. Then he ventured to comment, "I suppose no one was more aware of this fact than the Viscount Henri himself." "Yes" Percival answered, "But there was not much that could be done about it. His son and daughter-in-law were trapped in an avalanche in Switzerland." With the loss of his son and heir, Viscount Henri was left to raise his granddaughter Robyn and he made her the son and heir he no longer had. He taught her to run the estates, down to each administrative detail. He taught her to shoot and ride horses and fence and fight with swords because he knew that she would face difficult days without these skills. He knew every titled male in France would be trying to get hold of the Devereau Estates through marriage and he tried to equip Robyn with every possible defense. She's a free spirit, our Robyn. He was a wonderful man, Viscount Henri, and we all miss him to this day" was Percival's comment as he busied himself replenishing coffee and offering fresh croissants. "They should be riding in shortly, Robyn is on her white stallion, Pegasus, and she is with my brother, Edmond, who is in control of the Estates finances. She should be here soon".

He told his visitor more about Robyn and how she wears a knitted helmet to cover her hair and although she is a well-known person in

this area of France, not many have seen what is under her cap. It is a head of glorious hair, gold like the sun. She will be here shortly, Monsieur, with my brother Edmond and they both are looking forward to meeting you".

De Lyscelles was unnerved by this news, unsure of what lay ahead and uneasy that his presence would bring consternation to all concerned. But he was pleased that the honorable Robyn Devereau was expecting him and was pleased Percival showed him the map so that he had some idea of how far north the estate extended, almost to the Chantilly Forest. He knew that the old Viscount Henri was well passed 90 years old when he expired so he expected the honorable Robyn Devereau to be at least middle aged. Percival entertained him with small talk and then Robyn appeared to welcome him.

To say that de Lyscelles was more than dumbfounded when he met Robyn would be a wild understatement. He not only was thunderstruck. He was struck to the core by a lightning bolt. Here was this incredibly beautiful young woman, about his own age, his Aimee but taller and grownup, his little girl with the same spectacular Norse coloring but, powerfully vibrant and alive, commanding in her self-assurance. His immediate reaction to her was an overpowering desire to fold her into his arms and hold her forever. But somehow he restrained himself and stood speechless. Yet as overcome as he was by emotion, she was calm and completely in command. Somehow he got through the uncomfortable first hour while she enthusiastically brought him into the main

house, showing him the beautiful grounds, the elegant interior of the weathered old mansion, mellow with book-lined walls, thick carpets, and carved mahogany furniture. No stranger to diplomatic interactions, he found himself almost unable to talk but she controlled the conversation with infinite ease pointing out to him all the lovely features of the Estate and helping him to overcome his uneasy feeling, feelings of shame wondering how was he to take possession of her ancestral home. How even to broach the subject without feeling like a pirate or worse?

But meanwhile the hours were slipping by pleasantly and he felt absolutely baffled. He was sure the King would never have knowingly put him in such an uncomfortable position. On the other hand he badly needed a home of his own, a place to bring his six-year-old son living nearby with his grandparents in the Loire Valley. "Where are you staying, Monsieur?" she asked. He informed her he had rooms at the Inn at the Four Corners, that he had two attendants with him, a middle-aged couple from his family's estate in the Picardy region in northwestern France. "How long are you planning to be in the Environs", she asked him and he said, "I have no set plans yet as I have just returned from duties abroad". "Well, that's wonderful" she said, "That will give us time to make our plans".

Robyn appeared to be enjoying his company but he was finding the day painful to endure, wondering how he could resolve the certain conflict that had to lie ahead. How was he ever to explain to the devastatingly beautiful

Robyn Devereau that he was going to take over her estates? Finally, she helped him move forward. "Franchot" she said, "Let me make it easy for you. I am a very good swordsman and I know you are too, so why don't I challenge you to a duel and the outcome will decide who retains this property."

He laughed. "My dear, I never thought much of duels under any circumstances. But the idea that I would raise my sword against the lady of the house is just too gross to consider." Robyn answers mischievously. "Well, I don't blame you for declining because I think you know that I would win". He is amused. "As a gentleman, and as a knight of San Cyr, I would be obliged to let you win," said Franchot. She replied, " You know that is nonsense!" They both laughed. He finally says to her, "This is a no win situation. It does not solve my problem with the King. How am I to explain to him that my conscience would not let me take the estate away from you on that or any basis. No, no Mademoiselle, that only makes the situation worse, not better".

He was finding the day pleasant enough, in fact quite enjoyable. He found himself considering asking Robyn to marry him. Without a shadow of a doubt he knew marrying Robyn would make his heart sing, but would she marry him? He asked her as politely as he could why she had not considered marriage as a possibility, as she might have produced a son and heir and that would have kept the Devereau property within the control of her family. But she dismissed this idea. "I am not one to marry

for convenience. In fact, marriage has never been in my plans".

He appreciated her honesty, her confidences, and he shared more detail with her about his first marriage to the then fifteen-year-old daughter of the Viscount Sisson. "She was so lovely", he told Robyn, "Such a radiant young girl. But to his immense sorrow she died in childbirth. I was heartsick. I left my infant son in the care of his grandparents while I went to medical school and soon after joined the King's fighting regiment as a doctor. That was six years ago. Now when the King gave me the Devereau holdings situated so close to the Viscount Sisson, I felt that was wonderful. I had no idea, Robyn, that you were still living here. I thought there was no family left and to find you so young and so beautiful, it has taken my breath away" Franchot says to her with complete candor.

He looked at her wondering what she was thinking. "I had no clue that the Honorable Robyn Devereau was living in Devereau House. I really owe you a profound apology". Robyn laughed and shrugged her shoulders. "So be it" she replied, "So be it". As relaxing and pleasant as the days had been, Franchot knew he was facing a deadline. His formal acceptance of the Devereau holdings had to be dispatched to the King within the next two days. In fact, he had to go to the Registrar's office in midtown Paris immediately to take care of that and other business, but he was somewhat uneasy to leave with nothing resolved between him and Robyn. Yet Robyn seemed to be cheerful enough and told him she was looking forward to his return.

"Robyn" he said to her as he mounted his horse, "Think it over. The only logical thing is for you to marry me and marry me now. That way you will not lose Devereau House and I would be greatly honored if you would consent to marry me. Think about it while I am away today. Everything is in our favor and we will be blessed". He bent down from the saddle and kissed her.

On his way through the village, without waiting for Robyn to assent, he stopped at the parish church and talked to the elderly parish priest about an immediate wedding in the next day or two and then went to take care of his legal affairs. When he returned in the evening, Robyn concurred with him that marriage made sense under the circumstances and a small wedding ceremony was arranged at Devereau House with his young son, Etienne, and his in-laws present as well as Monsieur and Madame Percival and Percival's brother, Edmond. A party followed with some of the villagers present and it turned out to be a happy occasion. Robyn was now Madame Franchot de Lyscelles and now Devereau House would not be lost to the Devereau family.

Festivities lasted all afternoon and then just before dark Etienne and the Sissons left for their estate with plans firmly in place for Franchot and Robyn to pick up their little boy ten days hence and bring him back home to Devereau House to live with them. The merriment went on until darkness fell, then the courtyard quieted down and Robyn and Franchot at last found themselves alone. Now that the sun had gone down, the air seemed cool

and refreshing and Franchot threw some extra logs in the fireplace. "Just in case you walk in your sleep Robyn, we've got to keep the air warmed up" and they both laughed. But the truth was he realized that Robyn was profoundly perturbed. Everything had happened so fast for them and though he tried to be calm and reassuring to her he was aware that much had happened for her in a very short time. He observed that she was feeling powerless and could not fend off her fears.



Robyn Devereau

Robyn had confessed to him that she had never been tempted to marry anyone she had ever met. But she told him that she realized that in everybody's eyes, Franchot was a "supreme catch". But now this attractive man was her

husband yet she felt trapped and enraged anyway, wondering how this had happened to her when only a week before she did not even know he existed. She realized he was an exceptional individual and she found him quite intriguing and more educated and cosmopolitan than any man she had ever encountered before. But circumstances were pushing her beyond the tolerance point.

The roaring fire in the fireplace was a cheerful note but despite it she was becoming increasingly upset and desperate inside and she was afraid that he could read her mind without her having said a word. But he smiled at her reassuringly and she decided he was a truly nice man. She remembered from her history books that the Huguenot King Henry IV in 1594 became a Catholic, and the new King of France saying, "Paris is worth a mass". She was trying to console herself with the idea that Devereau House was worth a husband and that she could tolerate this urbane and charming man despite her aversion to matrimony.

He set out a repast for them, cheese and fruit and wine, "We will have our own party now, my Darling and only good lies ahead." He was always so pleasant, this attractive man and she marveled at him. He was so easy, so graceful, and they sat there enjoying the evening talking about history and theater and music as though they were old, old friends and not newlyweds about to embark on the most intimate adventure of their lives. But finally the fire was burning down and the air was cool and he said, "If we get into bed it will be warmer and we can keep talking if that is what you

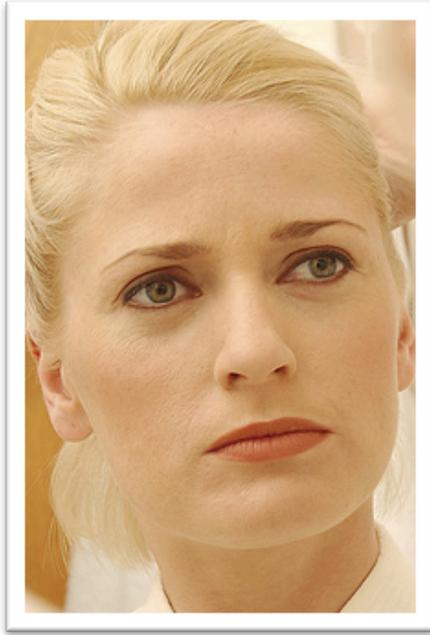
would like to do". So, they got into bed and he embraced her. "I want you to know, my Dear, you are the dream girl that I hoped to find when I came back to France and that I was to find you at Devereau House is the absolute astonishment of my life. Fate has put us together and it may seem very fast and even frightening to you but I know in my heart that ours will develop into a great marriage and we will be very blessed." She whispered, "I hope so, I hope so".

They kissed goodnight and fell asleep. A few hours before dawn, he was wakened by the sound of her replenishing the fire. He got out of bed and put on his robe.

"Good morning, my Darling! You are up very early". She turned to him with fire in her eyes, "I couldn't sleep. How did you ever lead me into this marital trap? Six days ago I didn't even know you and now you are living in my house and sleeping in my bed. You have taken possession of my lands and that wasn't enough. You have even taken possession of me. You are a quick worker, Monsieur de Lyscelles." He replied softly, "Only because circumstances demanded haste. I am truly sorry, Robyn. But I am so honored I am to be in your life and I pledge that I am your devoted knight of San Cyr, eternally in your service. You are the beloved Queen of my dreams." "My goodness" she said acidly, "You sure are flowery". He replied, "Yes, I am. Not everyone's dreams come true as mine have. So now my dear, we have nothing more to do but to go forward with our lives but I will make a prediction. Fifty years from now we will be

laughing together about how our love affair began."

But Robyn was not amused "Don't sweet-talk me" she replied angrily, "You know how to get what you want, don't you? Just too smart for your own good." He answered quietly, "If you think I want your anger I can only reply that I regret that my words evoke this kind of response. Your approval would be far more to my liking". It was obvious to him that she was really furious and he stood there silently waiting for her next words. "If you think you are going to take over without a fight, think again" she said testily "I intend to fight with every weapon at my disposal."



Robyn Devereau

"Indeed," he replied, "Aren't you a day late? The day before yesterday you were Mademoiselle Devereau and yesterday you became Madame de Lyscelles. Doesn't that complicate your situation somewhat, today?"

But she was not listening. She was too preoccupied with meting out a sword to him and to his complete astonishment there she was at sword point challenging him to a duel. He abhorred duels; he considered them barbaric and incredibly stupid and he knew that many a good person was lost in this nonsense, including the famous Alexander Hamilton, a patriot in the American Revolution. In going further back in time to 1627, Cardinal Richelieu, prohibited dueling, which had become a mania in France when more than 4,000 had been killed in a period of eighteen years. The idea of having a sword fight was too ludicrous to even imagine. He was half laughing to himself until he realized how desperately serious his bride was. This impassioned girl who fancied herself half-boy, was willing to risk all to swordplay, willing to put everything on the line including their promising future together.

Before he even assembled his thoughts she was thrusting at him and he raised his sword only in his own defense, trying not to hurt her and fending off each thrust with a passive defense of his own. There was no mistaking her skill. He was incredulous, wondering how such a travesty could be occurring and the next thing he knew she had pinned him, his shirt, to the wall. He remained unreactive, which infuriated her all the more. For what seemed to be an eternity, they each stood their ground. But she

continued to keep him pinned to the wall without apology, without softening her stance.

He could have knocked the sword out of her hand, but he did nothing. So they stood together wrapped in this improbable personal drama. At stake was the love affair he had hoped for but which seemingly had burned out before it even began.



Robyn Devereau

When she finally dropped her sword he looked at her icily, "Are you quite through, Madame?" She stood, uneasy, unsure of what she had just done and why she had done it. But he ignored her, picked up the swords and put them in a cupboard, out of sight. Then he stoked

the fire so the room stayed comfortably warm and he pulled the bell for the servants and requested breakfast for both of them. "Sit down, Robyn", he said. "I think we have to have an understanding here. I have rooms at the Inn at Four Corners and two attendants from my family's estate are there to take care of you. I am sure after what has just happened that you no longer want to continue our marriage, so pack up your clothes and I will have Jacques move them to the Inn, and you will no longer have to tolerate my presence."

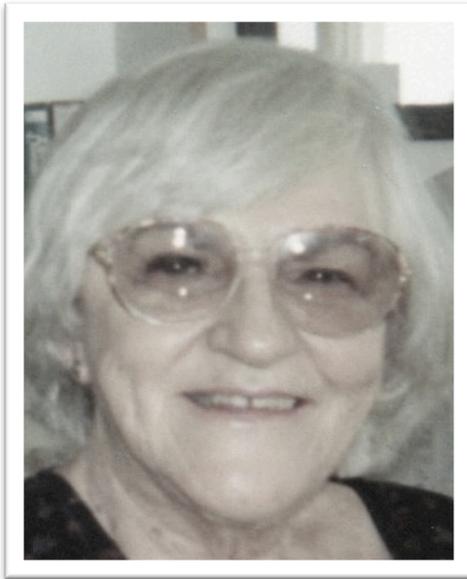
She stood thunderstruck at his words and she realized that she had made a gargantuan, Fate-changing, unforgivable error. She had alienated this beautiful man whom she had just married and now he was about to send her away.

Franchot busied himself for a few minutes with papers to put into his portfolio then he said, "Robyn, Percival and I are going to the Registrar's office in midtown Paris but we plan to be home for dinner". Then he informed Madame Percival that Robyn was in an agitated condition and he hoped she could comfort her.

In the late afternoon, when they returned to Devereau House, Franchot was in high good humor, immensely pleased that Robyn had stayed on and had not gone to the Four Corners. Maybe there was still a chance for their marriage? He turned to Percival, "Since Robyn is here, she and I will join you at seven for dinner" and Percival left to tell the cook. But Madame Percival did not leave with her husband. She stood there dissolved in tears.

Franchot said reassuringly, "Oh, my dear, Irene, why so upset? Everything is going to be all right. Another few hours and all our difficulties will dissolve. You will see". "Oh, I hope so," said Irene. But he was aware that Madame Percival was not really hearing him. Her eyes were focused in horror on the package he was holding. When he followed her eyes and recognized why she was so concerned, he laughed out loud.

"The cane is just window dressing. I figure that if a lady feels she can keep swords in her cupboard the man in the house feels he can keep a cane in his closet". She looked into his smiling face and twinkling eyes and felt infinite relief.



Madame Percival

"You know, she was only three years old when her parents died and the Viscount Henri just doted on this child. He never reined her in. She has always been a tomboy and we all love her spirit. That is why it is so hard for her, Monsieur, now that she is married. She does not know where her freedom ends and custom prevails. But in a few days, I know she will calm down and will become a wonderful wife to you, Monsieur and she will do anything to please you because she knows she cannot trust her own insights. She is a free spirit and being caged is terrifying to her." Franchot laughed and hugged Madame Percival and she indeed seemed greatly relieved and hugged and kissed him back.

Then he turned his attention to Robyn. He embraced her. "I did not know if I were to find you still here or not" he said to her gently, "I am glad you are still here". She raised her eyes, full of tears and affection, relieved that he was smiling at her, no longer so cold and distant. "I just couldn't leave, Franchot. I don't want to go. I want to stay here with you. I found out a lot about myself this morning. I discovered that as angry as I am about my circumstances, I am not angry with you." "Well, that is good news, my Love, because I would have been very sad if I had come home and found you gone". Then she let him kiss her and let him proclaim his devotion to her like the devoted knight of San Cyr that he really was.

The anguish she had just lived through fearing she had lost him for all time was gone. He was smiling at her, as openly delighted to have her there, as she was feeling secretly

thankful to be there. The fear that she had lost this wonderful man's allegiance even before she had gotten to know him was a feeling too catastrophic to focus on. Somehow she had been redeemed even before she tried to redeem herself.



Robyn Devereau

The next day with another long session at the Registrar's Office, Franchot returned with good news. He had succeeded in establishing Robyn Devereau as the Viscountess Devereau, a Viscountess in her own right, not because she was the wife of the newly appointed Viscount Devereau, the honorable Franchot de Lyscelles. This was almost unprecedented and Franchot was pleased to be able to offer this gift to Robyn, a generous gesture on his part and a meaningful relief to her feelings of

independence. She received this news with great pleasure and hugged and kissed Franchot in her joy. Her affection was so genuine and uncontrived that he felt enormously rewarded and when evening came he was hopeful. He was greatly encouraged but to his dismay when he entered the bedroom she was backed-up into the corner as stiff and unyielding as he had ever seen her. "I'm sorry, Franchot. I know you have been just wonderful to me but I am not able to go forward. The time is not yet." His first, almost primitive instinct was to grab her and kiss her anyway. But instead he said, "You have no worries, Robyn, as a Knight of San Cyr I vow I will not intrude on you, so lets get some sleep". She got into bed beside him and there was no more discussion that night.

Marriage is always a crisis for families. The presence of a new person in the family mix is always upsetting. In the marriage of Franchot and Robyn there was genuine acceptance of Franchot except from Robyn's great-aunt, the sister of her grandfather, the Baroness Vivienne De Valois. She was bristling at the idea that some opportunistic character could appear with almost no notice and in the king's name take away Robyn's lands and independence. Now this rascal had married Robyn and the Baroness was arched for battle.

Franchot knew that great-aunt Vivienne was appalled at his presence. She had been out of the country when the local parish priest married him and Robyn. Now Vivienne had been notified that Franchot and Robyn were to be married a second time at the Cathedral in Senlis by the Archbishop. Her presence and

blessing would mean much to everyone at the ceremony. Festivities at the Chateau Devereau nearby would be greatly enhanced with her presence and it was their profound hope that Lady Vivienne would bless the occasion. The Baroness replied that before she give her blessing, she would come to Devereau House in Paris with her husband, Baron Hubert, the following week. Robyn was dismayed by her great-aunt's reaction to Franchot but he was unperturbed, calm, and pleasant.



The Baroness Vivienne De Valois

When Vivienne arrived he kissed her hand with due deference and told her how honored he was to meet her and how much it meant to him and Robyn to have her come. He expressed his appreciation of her concern for Robyn's welfare and that he was fully aware of her deep concern for Robyn. By the end of the day, Vivienne's

fears diminished. She found Franchot charming and sensitive to her needs, and as the only remaining relative in Robyn's world, she told Franchot she was greatly relieved that he was such a fine young man.

The next three days were extremely busy everywhere on the Estate, Robyn knew that Franchot was a doctor who served as the medical officer for the Kings Regiment abroad, but she was surprised when she heard he was developing a clinic on the Estate grounds to help care for people in need. He did not ask for her permission as he was obviously accustomed to command, but his sincerity and kindness was clearly evident.



Amiens, France

Robyn was enormously impressed with the universal approval of Franchot by the people of Amiens. Regardless of social position or class, everyone was welcomed at the clinic and this made Franchot very loved by everyone. This

outpouring of approval for Franchot helped Robyn realize she had picked a great man to be her husband and her love for him began to grow. This was an unexpected development but she liked where it was leading.

The next few days went by pleasantly. Franchot and Jacques were busy with details of events pertaining to Amiens as well as the Devereau Holdings and Robyn was impressed with Franchot's patience and careful attention to every detail. This was exciting for her, to see her estate's business so well handled with its great promise for the future.

She was enormously impressed and encouraged, too, by Franchot's persona, his ever-present acceptance of occurrences without a trace of impatience, annoyance or condescension. When one of their people was hurt in the field, Franchot's response was so kind and supportive that she felt great affection for him and pride he was the man that he was, more than she could have ever asked for. In the evenings they relaxed with some of her favorite books, enjoying in particular, the romantic novels of Sir Walter Scott. She was glad Franchot was there, because at this point in her life, she would have missed him terribly if he were not there. She realized she was falling in love with Franchot.

Who knows how long they would have gone on in this fashion but to date, there had been nothing slow about this courtship. She had known him all in all nine days and so much had already happened in their lives. But on day nine she overheard him and Jacques talking about a return trip to Amiens and it struck panic in her

heart. When Franchot saw her so distressed, Jacques very tactfully took his leave and Franchot turned to Robyn. "Why so upset, my Darling? I will be gone only five days and there will be no more trips until we have settled down and you can accompany me. This trip is just to take care of the important details of putting our lives and our fortunes together." But her eyes filled with tears anyway. "Please don't leave Franchot, please don't go! I've been hearing tales when I am at the stables and even in the kitchen when some of our vendors come, there is so much talk about highwaymen. It is dangerous out there, Franchot and I am terrified for you." Seeing her stand there, expressing concern for him, teary and caring was more than he could have hoped for. He stood there thinking to himself how beautiful she was, how appealing and the next thing he knew she was melting in his arms.

Robyn continued to express her concerns, "You know Franchot, we've only known each other nine days and each day makes me more aware of what a wonderful person you are. I don't want to lose you when I have just found you". "Oh, don't worry Darling, there really is no danger now. There was danger, I'm sure, but now we have the Guardians on the highway all the way from Chantilly to Amiens and they will keep Jacques and me safe." She pulled away from him with terror in her eyes, "How can you be sure they will protect you? I've never heard of them before." "Well you will hear more about them from now on because I just formed the Guardian Company. From the moment the route between our two Estates is

secure, I intend to spread the company to all highways in France". She looked at him in astonishment, "My goodness Franchot, you must be a rich and powerful man to be able to do this. I do not really know who you are but what I do know is I'm your wife and I'm afraid of becoming a widow before my wedding night" Then she dissolved in tears in his arms.

One truth Franchot was convinced of was no two wedding nights could ever be the same. Something so highly prized, deeply felt, and uniquely individual could never be replicated again in the same configuration. But neither Robyn nor Franchot understood how needed was this night of communion and connection. The nine day crucible of their interaction was so intense and convoluted and unbelievable that they fell into each others arms with an intensity that neither one had foreseen. The hours they had spent talking about relationships and music and art and the physical attraction they felt for each other coalesced into a night of dream. Franchot could not know, could not foresee that Robyn would be a fireball in bed. In his arms she rocketed them from a place on earth to somewhere in the stars and beyond. She was impassioned in a way that runs beyond his imagining. He was astounded and astonished and amazed. He was unaware that coming together could be so conclusive, so exalting and so all encompassing. Robyn, his "amazing Robyn" was all he had hoped for and beyond.

He didn't know what he had expected but she had released the genie of ardor and glorious fulfillment and for both of them there

was no way to encompass it again in narrow confines. The love affair of Robyn and Franchot seemed to exceed human boundaries. It was a constant burning light that illuminated seemingly every hour of their mortal lives. In itself it was a total eclipse, dismissing drab and dragging practicalities, their love affair transcended, transformed, fusing all eventualities into loving certainty.

*“Not since the dawn of time had there been love more than this...not since the constellations spilled out of the palm of God”**

These lines of poetry said it all for them.

Is there anything more unique and wonderful than one's wedding night when there is love and enchantment in this most personal of all happenings? For the nine days that Franchot and Robyn had just lived through, the confusion and concern and profound connection they felt for one another in fact, every aspect of their relationship was such that when they finally fell into each other's arms, it was like stars illuminating the universe. There was nothing casual or uncaring about them. It was starburst and dreamtime. It was all of the hopes and dreams and expectations and desires rolled into one extraordinary union far more than either one of them had ever imagined, certainly far more

* D.N Sutton, *LOVE, Poems for the Romantic Heart*, Sherwood Spencer Publishing, 1994 La Jolla, CA

than either of them had known before. Two impassioned people whose individual needs came together in fiery union, reunion, an event that was memorable, amazing, and enduring for all time. The love affair of Franchot and Robyn filled an empty void and made heaven and earth sing. From that day on, Franchot and Robyn lived up to their own starry legend and their story has been the inspiration of many love stories to come.



The Guardians

The next day Franchot introduced Robyn to his personal Guardians, three brothers whom he had known since boyhood. From now on he would keep them on the premises as protection for Robyn. These were young men he had known for many years and he was confident of their loyalty. He wanted Robyn protected at all costs and he hoped they would be reassuring to her.

At least one part of Robyn's problem was resolved. She had her wedding night and several days after as a honeymoon when Franchot did nothing but dote on her and finally she felt relaxed and secure enough to send him on his way to Amiens with her blessing. This interlude gave them both time to plan for the

future, which was so filled with exciting events that time seemed to be racing away with them.

She told him of her desire to be married again in the very old Cathedral in Senlis and she wanted Janette Dewar to accompany her, to bring her magic touch to the preparations for the wedding. Robyn had to arrange the date with the Archbishop and then her grandmother's wedding dress, which was at the Chateau Devereau near Chantilly, had to be fitted to her. Janette was a fabulous seamstress. She would remain at Chantilly to decorate the Chateau and make detailed arrangements for a very big wedding celebration.

It really worked out well because the Chateau, though very old, was a magnificent structure and her grandfather's suite was prettied up as their wedding chambers. The third Percival brother, Antoine, lived in Chantilly and he kept the Chateau in mint condition. The nicest thing of all was that Antoine had a beautiful six-year-old daughter whom they call Marita. She would be the flower girl and Etienne, Franchot's son, would be the ring bearer. They made an adorable little couple, a real grace note to the affair.

But the absolute high point in Robyn's schedule was the chance to prepare her wedding gift to her husband, the magnificent black stallion whom she named Pericles. In the five days that Franchot was to be away, she had the chance to have an ornate, really glorious saddle prepared for Pericles engraved with the words, "Franchot de Lyscelles, 17th Viscount Devereau". With a heart full of joy, looking

forward to her husband's safe return, she realized Franchot was the love of her life.

She was busy enough when she returned to Devereau House. Her grandfather's old groom, Marcel, was there to greet them and he took care of Pegasus, while she tended to Pericles. She had no idea what hour, exactly would bring Franchot's return so she stayed in the stables grooming Pericles. The butterflies in her insides were quieting down as she groomed this magnificent stallion. She had been present when this little foal was born and no one had ever touched him but the groom, Daniel, and their most trustworthy keeper, Marcel. Without quite understanding it, she had always felt that Pericles was worthy of a prince, and now her prince had come.

As the afternoon wore on, absorbed in her joyful task, she looked up and there was Franchot with his groom, Simon Benoit. "Lady Devereau" he said, "may I present Simon Benoit, who is married to Jacques and Janette's daughter, Simone". Robyn shook hands with him, "Welcome" she said "to Devereau House". "I have already introduced the Benois to Madame Percival" Franchot informed Robyn "so they can move into the room assigned to them and they can unpack and relax this evening. If you don't have any need for their help tonight, can we arrange to meet after breakfast tomorrow?" Franchot asked. "By all means" Robyn assented "I'm so glad to welcome you, Simon." As Simon was leaving, he caught sight of Pericles. "My goodness" he gasped "what a magnificent steed! He would bring a fortune at the horse auction in Chantilly". "Oh,

thank you Simon" she said "but I assure you, this stallion will never be for sale" and he replied, "I can see why, my Lady. He is a champion. It would be a shame to sell him" and Simon took his leave.

Robyn and Franchot soon realized they were alone. As he hugged her, she said shyly "Franchot, this is my wedding gift to you". He looked at Pericles with wonder in his eyes and when he saw the inscription on the saddle he felt a surge of pleasure and appreciation to Robyn for her heartfelt gift. Then she led him to a building tucked in a grove of trees. It was a small fortress, no windows on three sides and the fourth side with its screened porch faced away from all other buildings. "This is my hideaway" she said to him "all ours and so private that even the Guardians will approve". "Both of us are dusty from the road," she said "and here is some change of clothes for both of us so we can take a hot bath in the wooden tubs outside". Ten minutes later they were in the hot tubs giggling at the pleasure of this unexpected indulgence. Who would have dreamed of a hot tub in the woods and it was all theirs! Huge bath towels were laid out and he wrapped Robyn and himself in them and they went inside to change into dry clothes and then they sat down to a hot meal that Yvonne had prepared for them and left on the table.

So much had happened to Robyn and Franchot in such a brief time. Now they received word from the Percivals that Robyn's great Aunt and Uncle, Vivienne and Hubert, were home again in Paris after their travels abroad. They wanted to call on Robyn and

Franchot as soon as possible before they could agree to attend the wedding in the Cathedral at Senlis. They wished to meet with Robyn's husband, Franchot de Lyscelles. It was very troubling to hear that Robyn, who had been so adverse to marriage, was now the consort of this young man whom they never heard of before. They would definitely come to lunch on the date set by the Percivals.



Cathedral (Notre Dame) of Senlis

Robyn was excited to know that her last remaining relative, her grandfather's sister, great Aunt Vivienne and her husband Hubert were back home in Paris and would be coming to a luncheon to meet her new husband, her beloved Franchot. She wrote to them expressing her joy that this much desired meeting could take place. Franchot added a few lines of welcome to what she had written. Both of them were hopeful that Robyn's great aunt and uncle would bless their

union and that Uncle Hubert would give the bride away in Senlis.



Uncle Hubert

Robyn was as nervous as she could be, but Franchot was sure that the day would work out well. He could understand her relative's fears for Robyn's present and future happiness. He was concerned for Robyn's wellbeing too, but felt assured that all would be well. When the Baron and Baroness de Valois drove up to the gate in their carriage then the Percivals joined them and brought them to the entrance of Devereau House.

The 18th Viscount Devereau, Franchot de Lyscelles, and his wife Robyn Devereau were outside to greet them. When they entered the main hall the staff stood at attention in

formal acknowledgement of the arrival of Baron and Baroness de Valois. Madame and Monsieur Percival were present to ease the reception and soon they were all seated on the glorious deck with its long views of Paris lying below. Robyn was all keyed up inside, very emotional and excited, but Franchot seemed to be totally at ease, gracious, and welcoming. The people whom Franchot brought to Paris from Amiens were fabulous performers. The chef whose cooking they had sampled earlier turned out to be a master chef; others seemed equally expert in handling the wines and the service. Robyn was greatly relieved at their skills. Wine and good food had the conversation flowing easily.

"The Baron and I" Vivienne was saying "were understandably startled to hear of your marriage Robyn, considering your aversion to matrimony. I was worried knowing the predatory nature of some of our so-called nobles, always looking for some personal advantage at the expense of the rest of us. I have been eager to meet you, Viscount Franchot." "Of course", said Franchot, "In your place, I too, would have been most anxious about Robyn's well being. Robyn is a very fortunate person to have an Aunt and Uncle so concerned about her fate. So I suggest that you just ask me what you would like to know and I will do my best to answer." "Yes," Uncle Hubert chimed in. "I guess the first question is where are you from?"

Franchot responded pleasantly, "I grew up in Picardy, in the northwest part of France. My father was the Duke of Amiens and when he died last year my older brother inherited the

title. My father was a good deal older than my mother, but it seems that I was the pride and joy of his old age. He doted on me." "And your mother?" asked Vivienne pointedly. "My mother, Maria Christina, was the youngest sister of the King." "Well", said Vivienne, "that makes you a Prince of the Blood." Franchot laughed, "Yes, I guess it does." He turned to Robyn and said, "I hope that doesn't dismay you, my Darling." She looked at him lovingly. "Franchot, I don't care who your mother is or was. In my book, you are my prince and I don't care about anything else". Vivienne could hardly hide her delight. At least Robyn hadn't fallen in love with a nobody, which could have easily happened. She knew that Robyn had never been in love with anybody before. She was relieved that her grand niece had picked somebody so suitable.

"Well" Vivienne said, "let me compliment you Robyn on your choice of husband. Your uncle Hubert and I have been so worried that some imposter might have come on the scene and taken you away from us". Robyn smiled, "I wouldn't do that, dear Aunt Vivienne. I know you are the only living relatives that I have and there is nothing so important as family." She reached over and patted Aunt Vivienne's hand. Robyn could see that Franchot was winning good points in rapid fashion, too.

"As Robyn may have told you, I have been overseas for six years with the King's Regiment, and I just returned. Perhaps Robyn has told you I was the Regiment's doctor. After my first wife died in childbirth, I decided to go to medical school and with my mother, Princess

Maria Christina, we opened the Lying-In Hospital in Amiens and I remained there until the King asked me to go abroad. I am happy to tell you that my little boy has been living with his grandparents at the Chateau Sisson in the Loire Valley nearby" said Franchot, "He is doing very well and is 6 years old now." "Oh yes", said Robyn "you must meet Etienne. He loves me and I love him. He and I have the same coloring, so blonde, so Norse." "Isn't that wonderful", said Uncle Hubert "how exciting for you Robyn to already have a 6-year-old son." Robyn smiled happily. Everything seemed to be going along fine and the delicious food, excellent wines, and good company were turning the luncheon into a success story.

Then a message came to Mr. Percival on a golden plate. It seems that there was a caller at the gate. His card was on the plate and Percival read it carefully. Then he handed it to Franchot. "This is interesting" Franchot said, "Everyday or so another unattached aristocrat contacts us by way of exploring what possibilities are available at Devereau House. Word is slowly seeping out onto the highways and byways that the Devereau holdings are up for grabs. There are so many younger sons of aristocrats hoping to find their fortune at Devereau House. This man, today is named Guy de la Fontaine. Anyone present know him?" Uncle Hubert laughed, "Well, I do know some De La Fontaines. I wonder if there is any connection?" Franchot then asked if Monsieur Percival should invite him in for dessert and everyone agreed that might be interesting. So Percival went to the gate and welcomed the honorable Guy De La

Fontaine and his wife, Katarina De La Fontaine, to their table.

Guy De La Fontaine turned out to be a very attractive young man who explained that he was in the vicinity and thought that he would drop in because he had heard that Devereau House was no longer in control of the Devereau family. Franchot hastened to put the record straight. I am the 18th Viscount Devereau" Franchot explained, "And this is my wife Robyn, the Viscountess Devereau. It is true that the 16th Viscount, Henri Philippe, died last year, well into his 90s. We believe that the question of inheritance has been settled now for some years to come."



Guy and Katarina De La Fontaine

Guy De La Fontaine showed no awkwardness or dismay at this news. He was a very well poised young man, seemingly well bred and well versed in the social niceties. He and Baron Hubert discussed the La Fontaine family and the conversation was moving merrily along. It turned out that Guy's father was an acquaintance of the Baron's. Guy's family owned property adjacent to the lands of mutual friends. And so the afternoon passed pleasantly.

Aunt Vivienne watched with interest her niece's interaction with Franchot and she was relieved at the look of trust and affection that passed between her and her new husband. When it was time to go home they had all agreed with the happy decision that the Baron Hubert would give Robyn away at the altar in the Cathedral at Senlis three weeks from the present date.

Two days later, at the usual hour, Robyn Devereau had the horses ready for the heralded journey to Chateau Devereau, close to the Chantilly Forest. Everyone in the wedding party took off with them on their horses or in their carriages. Robyn rode her horse Pegasus with Franchot beside her on his horse Pericles and the happy group of people rode north toward the Chantilly Forest. In each town or hamlet they entered they were hailed with an excited crowd. Robyn was greatly heartened by the enthusiasm and affection that was demonstrated by the populous. She had been visiting them, even the smallest hamlets, regularly for several years, long before her grandfather, Henri Philippe, had passed away. Everyone everywhere seemed to be overjoyed to meet her husband, the new Viscount Devereau. More than pleased, she was

enormously gratified that Franchot was taken aback by the warmth and loyalty expressed to them. And in every place they entered there was great acclamation, genuine appreciation of the generous gifts of food and wine that Franchot brought them. Everyone was in a celebratory mood. And so once more Robyn and Franchot could meet their joint fate with happiness and hope.

Several days later, after the joyride through the Chantilly Forest with their wedding party, Franchot and Robyn took a carriage down to the Chateau Sisson, in the Loire Valley. It was here they united the happy families and Etienne was so excited to see them! After much celebration with Viscount and Viscountess Sisson, the new family drove back to Devereau House in their carriage with Etienne sitting between his father and new mother; all three ready to launch their lives together.

Franchot was deeply thankful and enormously hopeful as he glanced at Robyn playing finger games with Etienne. He knew that no action on his part could have been more of a gift to his son than his marriage to Robyn and life indeed seemed blessed.

One of the first things they did on their return to Devereau House was to raise the lid of the keyboard to the grand piano in the living room and to everyone's astonishment the Viscount de Lyscelles presented his family and friends with a brilliant concert, a concert suitable for the world's finest concert stage. Robyn was absolutely blown away! She had never heard such agility and ability, even though she herself was an accomplished musician. So,

when Franchot told her that he was a friend and a student of young Franz Liszt, she continued to be astonished at his proficiency but not at all surprised. Nothing about her husband surprised her any longer. He was a truly cultivated, cultured person, so utterly unlike the boorish men who had crossed her life earlier, that she realized with every day how fortunate she was.

Meanwhile, Etienne was determined to play the piano like his father and Robyn was pleased to perfect her own playing, so music became a magnetic centerpiece in their family life. They all loved poetry very much, too. When the French and English poets and the Italian sonnets filled the quiet moments in their schedules, Devereau House was on its way to becoming a grand salon of the time, a place where some of the best minds of their era came together to enjoy the fruits of their generation's artistry. It was really quite remarkable and wonderful but the most amazing part of all was the overpowering love that sustained them. Franchot had predicted that Robyn would eventually be passionately in love with him and his prediction came true. She knew he was a sweetheart of a man but she also knew that he would never countenance again another episode like the swordfight she had foisted on him in her improvident youth. There was no question now that she was indeed the Viscountess de Lyscelles of Devereau House and thanks to her husband's skillful diplomacy and inherent generosity she was also the Viscountess Devereau in her own right.

On the anniversary of her fortieth year married to Franchot she wrote a letter to Etienne

and the three children that followed him, telling them of her great love and pride in being their mother and wishing them evermore fulfillment in their personal dedication to humanity.

“As you know your father and I have had a great life together, a truly inspired love affair with each other and a great sense of pride in all of you. May the mission of service we all share continue for generations. Devereau House is our gift to the future and may that future ever be bright.

Lovingly yours,

*Robyn Nina Desiree Devereau de Lyscelles,
Viscountess Devereau”*



For 40 years Robyn was immensely happy, enjoying her children to the utmost and always impressed with her husband, his awe-inspiring sense of humanity, his inherent kindness and generosity to all he dealt with. But in 1860 time brought changes to their relationship. Of her four children, only Etienne was still in their lives. Of the four children, he was the most devoted to her. Even into middle age, he was the one who looked the most like her. There was a bond between them that was evident to everyone, a deeply appreciated bond between mother and son that was undeniable.

Etienne followed his father into medicine. With his Dad, they had opened the

Clinique De Médecine Moderne Du Monde and its international outreach only increased with each passing year. But in 1860 Franchot was nearing retirement age; it was becoming a time of drastic change.

Etienne was carrying the full burden of the Clinique and of the family as he knew his father was not well. He was very afraid for Robyn's safety because while Franchot was still active physically he was mentally distorted by what Etienne feared to be an inoperable brain tumor. It was a time of acute distress for Robyn. Etienne had given his father his word that he would not reveal the cause of Franchot's unreasonable behavior but the time was closing in now and he had to protect his mother from his father's utterly unpredictable behavior. For at least 6 months Etienne had managed to keep them apart by creating little diversions that made sense at the moment, diversions that effectively kept his parents separated from each other.

But now, the inevitable time had come and now the truth had to be told. Robyn could not understand why Franchot no longer wanted to be with her or at a minimum, to be in touch with her. The coldness of their separation was more than she had ever dreamed possible. There had always been so much warmth between them. The matter came to a head when she received an angry message from Franchot demanding that she withdraw her promise to speak to the Epernian League citing unforeseen health problems. Robyn didn't mind withdrawing herself from the event because she

did not like to travel alone. She was pleased to conform to Franchot's request.

For the first time in several months, Franchot leaves the Clinique to show up in the family quarters at Devereau House. He was obviously furious with her and observing his emotional state she stood there quietly and kept saying, "Franchot, Franchot, I declined their invitation. Franchot, my Dear, I am not going. I was really glad to decline". Her quiet repetitions seemed to finally penetrate his awareness and when he at last stopped himself midsentence, she could observe the changes in his thinking and the dissipation of his anger. "I am so happy to see you Franchot. It has been some time since you have been over here to see me. I am so happy to see you". He stood still in his tracks and she knew without anyone telling her, without any word from Etienne, that her beloved Franchot was barely himself anymore. He must be very ill, she thought to herself, ill beyond repair and not long for being present on this earth. She persuaded Franchot to sit down and got him some crackers and milk. They sat together and giggled over their repast together. Remembering how much he loved jam, she got some preserves out of the pantry and with a hot pot of coffee between them, they sat together like old times.

But there was something amiss. "Robyn" Franchot said to her, "as a physician I know that unless surgery can be performed successfully I am not long for this world. The headaches that I have been having are truthfully killing me. Etienne knows that the brain tumor I have is a killer. But he feels, and I agree with him, there

is no one in Paris whom we can turn to for help. He has been trying to coax Dr. Schroeder to come from Vienna. So Robyn, I need your help in going to the Registry. I want to hand over my title to Desmond now while I still have some of my mental capacity left. I want him to become the Viscount Devereau as soon as possible because without surgery I will surely become incapable of fulfilling my duties. And even with surgery I will be months in recovery, so it is paramount that we make the transition official immediately! There is no point in postponing this decision because either way I cannot handle the management of the Devereau Estates".

Robyn agreed that this was an imperative move and so Franchot dictated to her the formal letter that they both felt was necessary to file at the Registry. In the letter Franchot would hand to his son and heir the honorable Louis Desmond de Lyscelles his Title of Viscount Devereau and all Devereau holdings. Louis Desmond de Lyscelles is my biological son and legitimate heir to the title Viscount Devereau. He is the direct descendent of the 16th Viscount Henri Philippe. Desmond is the son of Robyn Devereau, the granddaughter of Henri Philippe. He is also heir to the title Viscount by being my biological son as well as the son of Robyn Devereau de Lyscelles. *"Critical illness makes my resignation imperative and immediate. I hereby resign any further claim to the Title of Viscount Devereau and name my biological son the 19th Viscount Devereau". Sincerely, Franchot de Lyscelles.*

When this document was completed and registered, both Robyn and Franchot breathed

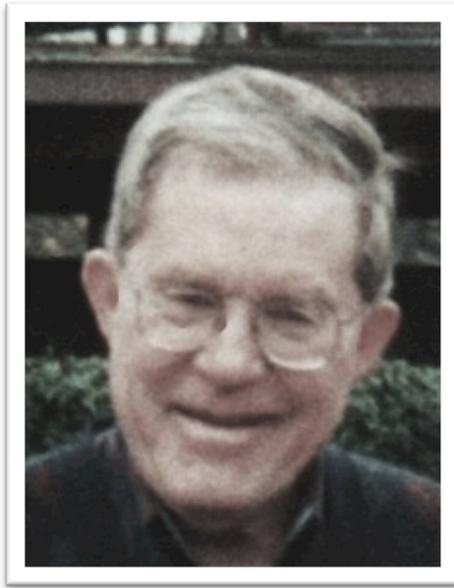
easier. The recent history of France with its swift political changes had made them both feel uneasy about the certainty of Desmond's inheritance. They wanted to finalize and ensure the validity of Desmond's future as soon as possible.

When Etienne came by he found his mother and father relaxed and happy together as though nothing was amiss. But when Franchot saw Etienne he stood up and said to Robyn, "I loved seeing you again, my Darling. No matter what happens you will always be my darling" and he kissed her goodbye as though he realized that he might never see her again. A few weeks later he lapsed into what seemed to be a coma and Robyn never left his side. These were essential days for her being alone with Franchot. She was able to kiss him and would whisper her innermost thoughts to him and express her undying devotion. He was the love of her life and these last intimate days of theirs were most essential to her. She felt that she could go on living now that they had these comforting days together.

But then the unexpected happened...

To Robyn's amazement, her prayers were answered, just when the world seemed at its darkest moment. Word came from Vienna that Dr. Schroeder, whom Etienne had been trying to persuade to come to Paris for several months, sent word that indeed he agreed to make the trip from Vienna, Austria and would consider operating on Franchot. This wonderful news raised Robyn's hopes that a miracle was possible. Etienne was excited that Dr. Schroeder was consenting to come to Paris and evaluate

his father Franchot's condition and determine if surgery could save his life. Etienne would not allow any surgeon in Paris to operate on his father. Dr. Schroeder's fame as a surgeon transcended all geographical boundaries and Robyn was deeply thankful for this remarkable opportunity. Eventually Robyn and Etienne learned that Franchot is indeed a candidate for the life saving surgery. The result exceeded their greatest hopes, as the surgery was a success.



Dr. Schroeder

Although recovery was very slow, eventually Franchot was himself again. His appearance and his demeanor were so obviously improved, so wonderful that Robyn was happy, as she had not been for a long, long time. With this magical transformation, this gift of having

her husband back with her again, she and Franchot made new plans. They felt almost like newlyweds again. Now there were no responsibilities that they had to meet. Now, Franchot had given up his title and responsibilities of being Viscount to his son Desmond. They were indeed retired and free to travel and enjoy life almost as they did in the first months of their marriage. Time for going to the theatre and going out dancing, traveling, and dreaming of new places and new things that they could do without any concern about money, health or responsibilities. With the miracle of Franchot's recovery, Robyn also had a new spurt of life.

To add to her joy, their youngest child, Desmond returned to Paris from French Polynesia. Robyn's happiness was complete. Desmond would no longer travel from one continent to another but would instead display his life's collection of photographs in a Paris gallery. His collection included photographs of tribal families, most of whom had never been known by the West. Desmond's photographs increased awareness and helped to usher in the needed insights that could shape the modern world. Without the invaluable technical assistance of the father and son team of Octavio and Bruno, Desmond's work would have not accomplished what it did, opening a new world of connection and mutual awareness.

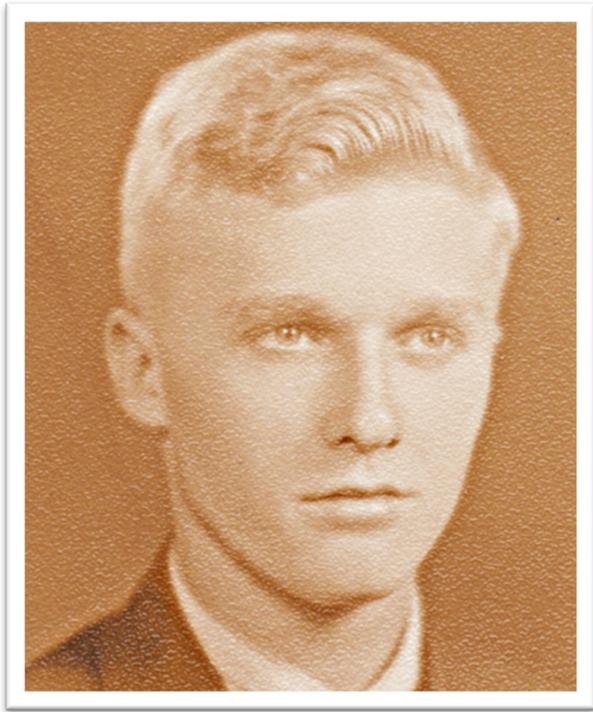
Chapter 5

LOVE STORIES OF THE FAMILY OF ETIENNE DE LYCELLES, VISCOUNT SISSON 1832 - 1860

Etienne de Lyscelles was born in 1814 in the Chateau Sisson in the Loire Valley near Paris, France. Although his beautiful young mother Aimée died in childbirth giving birth to him, he nonetheless had an extraordinarily happy childhood. His grandfather and grandmother, the Viscount and Viscountess Sisson, though grief stricken at the loss of their 16 year old daughter, doted on Etienne. Aimée and her mother had spent months decorating the nursery. Aimée decided that it would be done in different shades of yellow so if the baby were a boy or a girl there would be a bright cheerful decor. There was every expectation of a happy event, not a cloud in the sky to make anybody less than joyful.

Aimée's marriage to Franchot was a thrilling happening for the family as he was a nephew of King Louis the 18th. This meant that he was a Prince of the Blood, a Bourbon Prince, and the family was very pleased with this match. Franchot was 22 years old, an officer in the King's Regiment and he was much in love with Aimée.

There was no reason to expect anything but happiness ahead until the day came when Etienne was born. He was a full term baby but unusually large, 9 lbs. 4 ounces; he was a breach baby and when it looked like the delivery was not going well the doctors resorted to a caesarian section so he was born without a blemish on him, a beautiful little boy in perfect condition, almost from his first few moments a smiling child, extremely fair-haired and attractive.



Etienne De Lyscelles MD., Viscount Sisson

His grandmother had engaged the services of a wet nurse just as a matter of

course, the traditional French way to welcome a new baby to the family.

Almost from his first breath, Etienne charmed everyone who came in touch with him. He was a very happy child and much loved from the very beginning. His grandmother never let anybody discuss Aimée's death and the wet nurse, Susanne, was always there with her own little boy, Anton. The three of them had a great time together playing games, reading books and dancing around the playroom pretending they were on the stage or animals in the jungle. Etienne and Anton had lessons too, they started to play the piano because Etienne's father was a devoted student of Franz Liszt. Etienne was determined to play the piano as well as his daddy. One of the most exciting things to happen to Etienne was to have his daddy come back from overseas, no longer in the King's regiment, and to his amazement, bringing home to Etienne a new mother.

When Etienne met Robyn Devereau, he was six years old. When he looked at her he knew she was his mother. They both had this extraordinary fair colored hair, so blonde, it was almost white and pink skin unlike everyone else's. He and Robyn felt a very strong bond from the very beginning, one that never weakened and carried them on together as a mother and son team to the end of their lives. When Etienne was six years old, his father Franchot de Lyscelles came

back to Paris and moved into Devereau House. Etienne had always adored his father and to have him home now was the most thrilling event of his young life.



Robyn Devereau

When the family assembled to make the historic trip to Chantilly, his father told him of a gift that awaited him at the Chateau Devereau just south of the Chantilly forest a little black foal and his white sister. Two baby horses were awaiting him when they got to Chateau Devereau. Etienne knew Marita, the six year old daughter of Anton Percival was waiting for them in Chantilly. The big family group joined together, with Etienne driving in the carriage with his grandparents. His father and his new mother Robyn rode

together on their steeds. Robyn rode the white horse, Pegasus, and his father rode the black horse, Pericles.

When the family assembled to make its historic trek to Chantilly, Etienne's father told him there was a gift of a foal awaiting him at the Chateau Devereau. At the Chateau Devereau near Chantilly was also the little foal's sister, a gift to Marita, the six-year-old daughter of Anton Percival. Going across the miles as a festive group was an amazing experience for an impressionable young boy. He was surprisingly happy because everyone in his life whom he cared about the most was with him. He knew that when he got to the Chateau Devereau, he would be the ring bearer and Marita would be the flower girl in the wedding in the Cathedral in Senlis.

Meanwhile they visited many people



in the little hamlets on the way. It seemed to Etienne that the whole route from Paris to Chantilly offered one party after another. And every little place that they stopped, everyone was so excited to meet Franchot!

This had to be the most meaningful event of Etienne's life. When they finally got to the Chateau Devereau, there was even more excitement in the air. And when Etienne first met Marita the little flower girl, he felt certain that someday he was going to marry her, she was so cute! Etienne was so excited to be in the wedding party that day. It seemed to him that magic was in the air. His Daddy was marrying Robyn Devereau for the second time at the Cathedral in Senlis. She had the same light hair and fair coloring that he had. The immense excitement of having a new mother who looked like him was almost too wonderful to believe.

The Senlis Cathedral was so beautiful. Its many alcoves were alive with flickering lights. To Etienne, the whole event seemed better than anything that had ever happened before. When the entire wedding party retired to Chateau Devereau, magnificently decorated by Janette Dewar, Etienne found himself living in a blur of happy confusion. He wanted to stay with Marita but on the other hand he wanted to be near his parents and grandparents. When his grandmother Sisson insisted that they take their leave and say goodbye to all the happy revelers, Etienne was glad to be going home to the Chateau Sisson knowing in the near future his Dad

and his new mother Robyn would take him home with them. When finally they came back to Devereau House, Etienne was ready to enter his new life and celebrate its many joys.

These were exciting times because his mother Robyn eventually brought him two baby sisters followed by a baby brother named Louis Desmond. The baby girls were fun. They had little pink ballet shoes and almost as soon as they could walk, they were dancing. When his baby brother was born, named Louis Desmond, Etienne was now 12 years old, old enough to understand what was happening.

Etienne's grandparents, who doted on him, wanted him to become their legal heir. He understood that he was to give up any claim to becoming the Viscount Devereau. Etienne would become Viscount Sisson, the sole heir to the Sisson title and fortunes.

To Etienne it seemed only right, as he had been his grandparents dream for their future. His success and happiness had brought healing and the one bright spot following his young mother's death. Etienne could cope with this reality by slipping into the role of heir to the Sisson family without personal conflict because he knew how close the two families were. He proceeded with his usual cheerful ease to embrace the future. There was no question in Etienne's mind that he would model his life on the principles of his father who happened to be the nephew of King Louis the XVIII.

But then France slipped into its usual confusion about kings versus emperors, veering between republicanism and imperial might. There was no question in Etienne's mind when it came to charting his future. He trained to be a doctor like his father, played the piano brilliantly, and gave concerts. Etienne's life was always divided between Devereau House in Paris and Chateau Devereau in Chantilly where his sweetheart Marita lived with her family.

Dreams do bring fulfillment and when he turned eighteen, he and Marita married in the Senlis Cathedral. Then they went to live in the Chateau Sisson in the Loire Valley. When Etienne trained beside his father to become a physician, Marita decided she would become a nurse.

They felt life was wonderfully complete when Marita gave birth to their daughter, Esmeralda Delphinia, and from the beginning she was known as Esmé. She was a strikingly beautiful child. Of all the grandchildren that were born into Franchot's family, Esmé was the first-born. She particularly enjoyed her younger cousins because no more babies were born into her immediate family. Esmé was their first grandchild, daughter of Marita and Etienne. She came on the family scene when Robyn and Franchot were still in top form and her coming created great excitement. Later, when Franchot became ill and after his surgery and retirement, Esmé became Franchot's special friend and fan. She thought her grandfather a

romantic lead for her daydreams and she was a factor in his recovery. Etienne was pleased that his father was an inspiration for Esmé, a factor in keeping Franchot going until more grandbabies came along, tumbling around their playpens.



Esmeralda Delphinia

Esmé, Esmeralda Delphinia, daughter of Etienne and Marita de Lyscelles, made her royal social debut in Stockholm, Sweden, considered the world's most beautiful princess. She was sponsored by her father's sisters, Vera and Vivianne, who were both married to Swedish princes. For Esmé, this was an exciting time that would have been and could have been a tremendously happy

interval, except for one thing--the onerous presence of the Prussian Ambassador. The reason that Etienne was sending Esmé to Sweden was to help her get away from the unwanted pressures of the Prussian Emissary in Paris. That the Prussians would have so much presence at the Royal Court at Stockholm was an unexpected complication. The Prussian Emissary was even worse than the Prussian Prince himself. These men did not know how to take "no" for an answer and Esmé was dismayed! Her father, Etienne, always the gentleman, had turned these aggressive suitors away several times before. That Esmé would fall into their clutches again in Stockholm was unexpected. Esmé was so overwrought that it was clear to everyone, including her sympathetic aunts, that she had to leave Sweden immediately, and that is what she did.

The family arranged that their trusted assistants, Hilda and Otto, rig up a cart and filled it with sacks of potatoes. They dressed Esmé as a peasant girl and the three of them made their way out of Stockholm undetected by the Prussian enclave. Stockholm is a good several days by boat and cart from the Northern most borders of Paris and Esmé wondered whether her bones and her disposition could survive the journey but eventually they made it down to Devereau House in Paris. When they drove up to the guardhouse, everything changed. They were welcomed into the arms of Esmé's grandparents, Franchot and Robyn, fed and

fussed over, comforted until they felt back to normal again. Robyn was enormously happy to welcome her eldest grandchild and finally after a long visit together Robyn and Esmé joined the rest of the family in the main hall.

"We have guests," Robyn explained as they entered the reception room, the same room where Robyn and Franchot met each other initially so many years earlier. "We have guests, two brothers from America. One of them is quite ill from a difficult trip but the other one is fine and feeling quite bored, I believe. He is a young doctor who will be working with your father. So he will probably enjoy meeting you, Esmé."

And there he stood, Keith Richard Averill Norris, an American friend whom Esmé had already met as a teenager, when he was visiting his parents in Europe one summer, of all people!

Esmé was happy to see Keith at her grandparent's estate, but she was only vaguely aware of Keith's past ...



... the story of Keith & James ...

When Keith and James' parents, King Arne Viktorean and Avril Jardine of the country of Nordlandia, married in 1835, the news rippled round the globe. King Arne had been the romantic lead of many women's dreams.

He was exceptionally handsome, big and powerful, and women everywhere knew that his marriage to Paulina was a match in name only. For the next 20 years he played the romantic field and when he finally won Avril's love and commitment, their interest in each other had been a long known fact.

They entered into a morganatic arrangement and Avril produced two baby sons, James and Keith. Perhaps they would have gone on that way for years but two dramatic events produced change. Queen Paulina died and Avril sent her baby sons to her sister in America.



King Arne

This dramatic breach in the family arrangement came about when baby James was just past three years old. Avril left the

room momentarily, returned to hear James crying just in time to see Arne hurl the crying child against a wall. Baby James dropped in a heap on the floor without a sound and the silence was ghastly. Avril rushed to pick up the little boy who collapsed on her lap like a rag doll.



Avril Jardine

With that awful happening, Arne faced a lonely future. Avril left him. She gave the little boys to her sister and her sister's husband to raise as they had no children of their own. She financed their trip first to Norway-- a medical trip-- then without further fanfare to the United States and her young children did not again return to Arne's kingdom of Nordlandia, not until they were almost grown. Avril made sure

that her two little boys were wonderfully loved and cared for by her sister Anitra and Anitra's splendid husband Greg.



Anitra and Gregory Norris

But Avril herself could not make her absence from Arne permanent. As furious as she was at Arne, she found that she did not have the heart to leave him. Arne's formidable temper, which only increased each year, was enough to keep him alienated and alone and his need for Avril only increased. She was the only person who was not afraid of him and she stood by him, in love with him despite all.

The boys grew up happily with their aunt and uncle while Avril stayed on with Arne.

One thing Avril did orchestrate was her demand that Arne support their sons in royal style, but no one knew better than she that Arne and young children were not a good mix.

The boys knew that their real mother and father lived in Europe and were famous people. They knew their mother was a famous athlete. All the winter sports were in her bailiwick and they knew their father was enormously proud of her prowess. It was because of their mother, Avril Jardine that they ever got to meet their father at all.

When the boys became teenagers they began to meet with their father and mother in some of the beautiful lake regions of Nordlandia, creating some happy memories. They also visited Paris before returning to the United States, where they met Esmé.

Arne had a profound need of Avril, and his unquestioned adoration of her was so world-shaking, so imperative, that Arne cherished her until the day she died.

On the occasion of her passing, he built a shrine for her on the palace grounds in Nordlandia. King Arne could only go on living knowing that her shrine would be open to the world public. People could come from all over the world to see the monument he had raised in her memory.

King Arne had not only embraced Avril in his vows to keep her his beloved until death did them part, but now he would embrace Avril in his vows to keep open the pathway from earth into eternity. No one anywhere would live on in more regal splendor, no one anywhere was more

beautifully and lavishly enshrined than King Arne's Avril.

The occasion when his grown sons could return and he could give them the bequest of Arne and Avril-- only when all the chips were in place, only when the outside world would know of the inner torch that still burned in his breast, only then could Arne go on living and have the courage to face some kind of future without her. Only then could James and Keith, now adults, face their intimidating father and accept the enormous largesse that came to them from both their parents.

So time passed and the day finally came when their father called James and Keith back to Nordlandia to give them the inheritance he had promised to leave to them. It was an enormous bequest, welcomed by James and Keith, enabling them to launch the international medical facility they had dreamed of creating.

This last meeting with their father King Arne was enormously difficult as he was in a great state of agitation, mourning the loss of his beloved Avril, almost unhinged by sorrow. Losing Avril was so cataclysmic for him, so earth crushing, so incomprehensibly awful, that it blotted out any thoughts of anyone else's pain. It seemed that there was nothing that his sons could do or say to console him. His agony was overpowering and all consuming. When the day of blessed relief arrived, the day when Arne's magnificent ocean yacht The Nordlandia was provisioned and ready to emerge as a fully equipped ocean going vessel, King Arne was so

absorbed in setting up an unforgettable shrine to Avril that he barely noticed the ship's departure.



King Arne and Queen Avril

And so, the anguished last chapter proceeded in Nordlandia, with Arne absorbed in his task of commemorating his Beloved. And with his last final gift to his sons, the gift of his ocean going yacht *The Nordlandia*, a new chapter could be written that could release his sons to their new lives away from him, their father King Arne Viktoorean

Keith, who was younger than James and had fewer dark memories of their father had gotten through this final week visiting Nordlandia in good health, but James was wrung out with bad memories and dark thoughts. They decided to visit Devereau House in Paris, before returning to America, because they wished to discuss their launch of their new international medical facility,

but when they arrived Keith, as a physician, ordered James to bed and kept him sedated until he could compose himself and face his own demons.



... the story of Keith & Esmé ...

It was around this time that Esmé arrived at Devereau House. When Esmé saw Keith standing there she broke into tears and threw herself into his arms. Robyn was astonished with this turn of events and Keith himself was almost overwhelmed.

"Don't cry, dear Esmé. I am here to defend you. What is the problem?"

"The Prussians! I can't stand them!" she said. She looked up at him and said in an accusatory voice, "Don't you dare tease me, Keith. I can't stand to be teased. It has been so upsetting, so scary".

Robyn did not know how Esmé and Keith knew each other but it was plenty plain to her that Keith was delighted to be holding her in his arms.



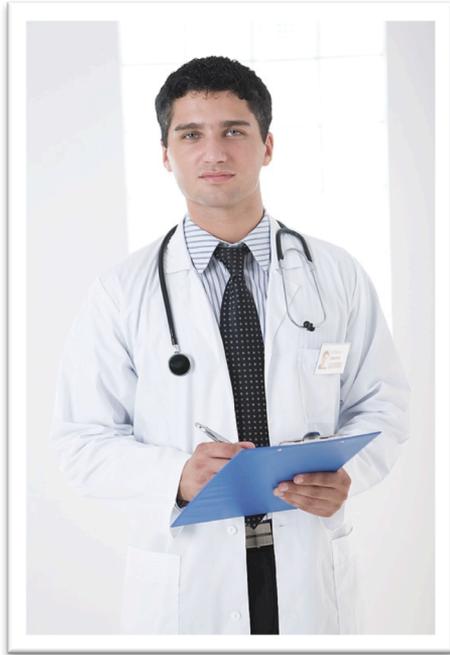
Esmeralda Delphinia

They explained to Robyn that they had met in Paris as teenagers.

Keith had an easy solution of settling the Prussian problem, "Esmé" he said, "Get married to somebody. Once you're married you're out of bounds. Not even the Prussians will hound you. And you know, I know the perfect Prince for you. He is the second Prince in line but he just came into an enormous inheritance. If you marry him, you will be one of the richest women in the Western World. And he needs to marry someone anyway, why can't it be you? You're pretty cute! I think I can talk him into it."

Esmé did not take the bait. She was too worn out from her long journey and her frightened thoughts, to react with her usual verve and Keith was smart enough to know it was best for him to keep quiet. Keith picked Esmé up, placed her on the couch and wiped her

tears, "I promise you I will not tease you. But I really am quite serious. If you are into marrying princes, this guy I am telling you about is one you should consider".



Dr. Keith Norris

Robyn, always with her accustomed hospitality had refreshment for them and they all had some luscious cake, so the air took on the aspect of a party.

"What are you doing here at my grandmother's house?" Esmé asked him. He replied, "My brother and I had some family business to take care of and now, as soon as James is healthy enough to travel, we are going home to Southampton, USA. Maybe you would like to travel with us?" She agreed.



Dr. Keith Norris

"Yes, whenever you are ready to go I will join you." But that was not the end of the story. He realized she was very perturbed.

"So" he said to her" let me know your plans" and she was quick to reply, "I have no plans, I am utterly astonished how rough the world is, even though it is the *so called* polite world we grew up in. All I can think to say is, I want to stay close to family and friends because I just proved to myself I cannot go it alone."

"Well, if you get married you would not be alone" Keith said.

"Yes, that is true. I guess I don't want to marry a Prince. Who needs them? I think if

I ever see a prince again with a monocle in his eye it will be too soon."

"What about this Prince I was telling you about? He doesn't have a monocle."

"Keith, please don't tease me. Please don't get me upset again."

"Ok, Esmé. I wont do any more talking. I will wait for you to talk to me".

"Well, I have nothing to say. I feel safe with you, Keith."

"You are safe with me, Esmé. But maybe you don't know me as well as you think?"

"I do know you. You're a doctor who works with my father. What else do I need to know?"

"Well, you know the Prince I was telling you about, this really rich guy. Would you consider marrying him?"

"Keith, I don't want to marry anyone else. I want to marry you! At least I know who you are. That is a big comfort."

"Ok, then it is all arranged. You will marry me. Even if I am not a prince?"

"Keith, please don't be so dense."

"Would you still want to marry me even if I am a prince?"

"I know you are a prince, Keith. You're a lovely man and I have known you since I was a teenager. That is good enough for me."

"So are we engaged then? Prince or not?"

"I don't care what you call yourself. I claim you as my Prince".

"Well, that's not a bad deal. You asked me what I am doing here? Well, James, my brother and I came back to visit our father, who is the King of Nordlandia. Does that please you or scare you?"

"Keith, the only person that scares me is the Prussian Ambassador."

"Well," said Keith, " he doesn't scare me. You know I was on the wrestling team in college. Did you know that?"

Esmé said, "No I didn't."

"I am in pretty good shape still. Still, do you think if the Prussian Ambassador could wrestle do you think I would win?"

"Keith, don't be ridiculous. But I do think you would win."

Keith said, "If I told you the amount of money I inherited then you would think I am ridiculous."

"Well, then don't tell me. I don't want to know."

"I think James and I will start a hospital with these funds. He inherited the same amount as I did. We really are finding it hard to realize the extent of it" Keith said.

Esmé asked, "Should I congratulate you?"

Keith replied, "No. It's more responsibility than anyone needs".

"When are we going to Southampton, USA?" Esmé asked.

"As soon as James is well enough to travel is the answer" said Keith "and as soon as our relatives come in from Norway and Sweden."



Esmeralda Delphinia Norris

It took a couple of days until Esmé could absorb what had happened to her. She was enormously relieved to be safe at Devereau House and embraced by her wonderful grandparents and betrothed to Keith.

It was funny, of all things she realized she was in love with Keith. Now it was crystal clear how much he mattered in her life. It was as if she had taken him for granted because he was always there and had always been there for her. She realized she did not have to go through the surprise and adjustment that other brides went through. Esmé was deeply thankful. She could hardly explain to herself the confusion and uncertainty she had gone through to emerge tremendously happy and secure. She knew

there would be some delays but all problems would resolve.

But the fact is that Esmé really did not know whom she was marrying, because Dr. Keith Norris was more than just an American doctor. His family had a European and royal history, but she really did not want to dwell on it. She had enough excitement and exhaustion in her life at the moment. She felt she hardly had the stamina for any more drama and melodrama but she was confronted with it anyway. How could she have known, or even dreamed of knowing that Keith and James were actually sons of a king? That was too far-fetched to believe possible.

When she met the brothers in her teens, she learned that Anitra and Gregory Norris were the boys' aunt and uncle. But she never heard anything more about their family.



Dr. Keith Norris

Keith's intention was to keep Esmé soothed and calm and happy. But how he was going to get over the hurdle of princedom, he still wasn't quite sure. But it really was of no consequence now, he thought to himself...

Keith found Esmé adorable; her tumultuous ups and downs interesting, intriguing in fact, and he could understand where she was coming from. Because she herself was a princess, her father the Viscount Sisson was a grand nephew of King Louis XVIII, and her mother was a Spanish princess from one of the most distinguished families in Spain. Her grandfather, Franchot, Viscount Devereau, was a renowned military leader on the colorful checkerboard of royals in Europe. Keith could understand Esmé's aversion to royalty; she didn't want to think that she would fall into the clutches of a new prince, no matter who he was, even if he were her own much loved husband.

But Keith could see from the sidelong glances that Esmé threw at him that she was catching on to the fact that he was indeed the son of a King and he could tell that she was more annoyed than amused at this. She was his beloved little firebrand. He figured there would be some more fireworks but he assumed that ultimately peace would descend.

Her anger built until she finally spoke. She informed him that she felt he had taken advantage of her. He knew perfectly well that she was a princess but she did not know that he was a prince. He must have gotten quite a laugh at her expense and she said that she could never forgive him for that.

"No, my darling Esmé, I was very impressed with your wisdom and understanding deciding for both of us that despite our royal connections we were going to live our lives as non-royal people. None of our relatives had enough common sense to choose the path that you decided on for both of us and I am enormously impressed with your wisdom. Never once did I ever think for a moment that you were wrong in this decision."

He took her in his arms. "Esmé, Esmé what can I do or say that will make you feel better about us? Our relationship? I am tremendously sad that you had such a rough time in Sweden and I understand how difficult your trip back to Paris has been for you. But now that you are here and safe and we are engaged to be married, can you forgive me for not reassuring you more than I have done?"

"No!" proclaimed Esmé, "I can't forgive you! You made me feel so insecure. Every time you talked about my marrying that prince, you made me feel that you didn't love me. Every time I realized that you could be laughing at me for my stupidity, it just made me feel worse and worse."

Keith replied, "We haven't been very smart handling this situation but please Esmé can't we go on to make things better? We have always loved each other. Wouldn't it be sad to break-up now, just when we are on the verge of marrying? So my darling, you decide. Is this the day we break-up entirely or can we soon have our wedding day? You get dressed up in your prettiest outfit and we will go to Tiffany's in Paris and pick out our wedding rings. And while

they are inscribing them for us, we will have a lovely brunch. We will return to the Registry and get married. We will indulge in a sumptuous dinner and dancing. When the day is over we will return to our beautiful hotel suite and spend the night together. By the time the day is over, you will no longer hate me, in fact I hope that you will love me even a little bit, if not a whole lot more.” Esmé ended up sobbing in his arms and he understood that she was accepting his offer.

But even as they talked, events were spinning them beyond their personal realm's small orbit. James, Keith's brother, the Crown Prince of Nordlandia, who had been seriously ill, had now become dangerously ill, and Keith's uncle Justin Jardine, the Controller General, called an emergency meeting of the Nordlandian Council to decide what to do at this critical juncture.

James, who was already married to Nordine Nielsen in the US, did not want his bride, living alone in Southhampton, to be informed and he was determined to survive this medical emergency and not leave Nordine and his countrymen in jeopardy. Keith pinned a note to Esmé's pillow, explaining his unexpected absence from her side and joined the vigil at the bedside of his brother.

Both Esmé and Keith were very young, but with this fast changing scenario, and it's life changing decisions had a way of maturing young people almost instantly. James was determined to cheat Death, and this determination saved his life, and saved the day for the future of Nordlandia. And to Keith's

great joy Esmé responded to the gravity of the situation, and stood by him in his hour of need.

Esmé's parents, Etienne and Marita, came in from the Loire Valley. Esmé, relieved to have her parents on the scene, was overwhelmed with the turn of events. Deeply remorseful at her role in disquieting the family, she realized that she had made some poor moves in her relationship with the ever-accepting Keith. She sensed that despite his ongoing acceptance of her, she had gone too far. She realized their relationship would never be the same again.

Now as Keith caught up with his sleep and his peace of mind, Esmé was fearful that he would no longer marry her, and her parents were almost of the mind that temperamentally, perhaps Keith and Esmé were really not that suited for each other.

The Nordlandia was fully provisioned, ready for its ten-day journey across the Atlantic, but departure was delayed until the family decided whether to go ahead with the wedding of Keith and Esmé. Esmé was aware that the subtle nuances of their former relationship were missing now, and the wedding scene was in new territory. Her parents Etienne and Marita, were more than aware that their tempestuous little girl was in no way as mature, and inner-directed as Keith. They watched from the sidelines, not knowing how it would go. But Keith decided to go ahead with the wedding as planned, to everyone's great relief and profound thanks giving. No surprise to Keith was Esmé's

mellowing. He had loved her since they first met as teenagers, and love like his could create small but everlasting miracles.

With the arrival of Prince Agon James and Princess Kristina Aine, the family was complete. The recent marriage of this beautiful couple, cousins from Norway, came like a blessing to the wedding party. Both of them were so tall and so beautiful that everyone in the family felt touched divinely.



Prince Agon James and Princess Kristina Aine

Coordinating the family events was a big scenario with their relatives from Sweden interacting with relatives in Paris, all determined to attend the wedding ceremony in Paris, and then to board King Arne Viktorian's yacht, the Nordlandia, after the wedding, to sail to Southampton in America.

Keith knew that Esmé's father, Etienne, was expecting them to come to a religious ceremony in the Chapel at Devereau House, but Etienne knew that Keith was going to marry Esmé two days before so they could have a little private time that was greatly needed to give their marriage a chance for success.

The scheduled wedding of Princess Esmeralda Delphinia de Lyscelles and the Honorable Keith Norris took place in the Chapel of Devereau house in Paris in 1860, bringing together the many diverse members of their widespread family from far off Sweden and Paris environs. It was a challenging bit of choreography under the best of circumstances.

Now she was married to Dr. Keith Norris. Esmé was happy with that and his being a prince of Nordlandia was to her really of no consequence. It was neither here nor there. One was real, everyday clear and certain, and the other was sort of a fairytale. Now, with the passing of each day, life began to resume its inevitable rhythms and healing brought its happy denouement.

Soon they would get on the yacht and sail across the ocean for Southampton, NY, to unite James with his wife Nordine, and to celebrate the marriages of Keith and James with

a party at the home of Nordine's grandparents,
Commodore Nielsen and his wife, Constanza.



... the story of James & Nordine ...

When James and Keith were recovering at Devereau House grateful to Franchot and Robyn Devereau for their hospitality and protection, James' wife, his beloved, Nordine, waited for their return, living alone at a loss in Southampton, not understanding what was going on.



Nordine Nielsen

As hard as these days of separation were for her, they were a blessing for James. He

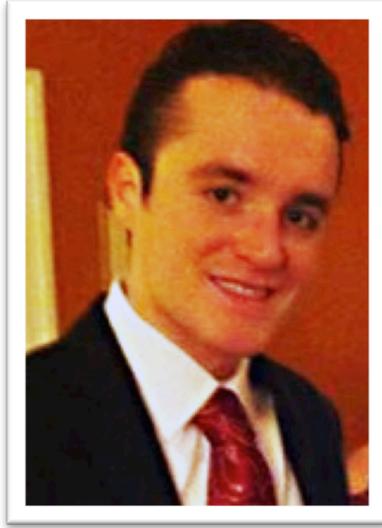
needed this separation to enable him to join the others aboard his family's yacht, *The Nordlandia*. When the ship left Europe behind, with all its hidden wonders and hidden hurts, James and Keith breathed a profound prayer of thanks. James was able to recover, breathing deeply and freely once again. And knowing at the end of the ten-day journey Nordine would be there waiting for him was enough to greatly empower him.

The ocean voyage returning the family to Southampton enabled James to recover. He reminisced during the long days at sea about how he and Nordine first met. He was a successful architect and owned a building close to his brother's New York hospital. One of his tenants was Nordine Nielsen and she occupied the ground floor apartment where she established her design company's headquarters.

James was enormously impressed with her abilities, her charm, and her beauty. He could imagine so many ways they could combine their talents and he was very confident because he had established himself as an entrepreneur on the New York real estate scene, the owner of a chain of boutique hotels. One day James ripped his jacket getting out of a carriage and he knocked on her door and asked Nordine for help repairing it, following the suggestion of his downstairs neighbor, Mama Rosina. Nordine laughed at the request and stitched up his jacket within fifteen minutes. When James offered to pay, she refused payment. Then he countered and invited her to have lunch with them.

So he, Mama Rosina, Keith, and Nordine went out to lunch together. James had

plans to stay in New York for only one week and he asked Nordine if she would spend some time with him, which she did.



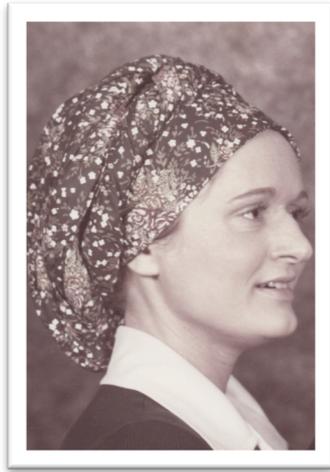
James Norris

It was the beginning but to James' amazement Nordine was not impressed with his ability to provide for her. He found to his genuine surprise that she was a fiercely independent businesswoman, absolutely uninterested in support. Little did James know then that Nordine was the granddaughter of the famous Commodore Nielsen, who owned large shipyards and amassed a fortune of his own and that Nordine was his sole heir. She looked beyond James' success and found him to be sincere, loving, and a very attractive man. They began to share in each other's lives and a strong relationship had begun. She felt confident in their marriage for many reasons among them

being they both had their own fortunes and money was not an issue.

When they docked, James was back to his usual strength, truly well again, ready to visit Nordine and plan a celebration party with her grandfather, the Commodore.

Now James was well enough to take control. He waited until the day before the ship was scheduled to dock in Southampton. He asked the ship's operator to send a message through to Nordine. When Nordine received James' message, her reaction was so unrestrained and joyous that it banished any lurking fear that he may have had that she might have had a change of heart. Her joy was so evident, her eagerness to see him was so real and reassuring, that James knew there was a real homecoming in store for him.



Nordine Nielsen

Next, he put through a message to his good friend Winslow Harris and requested he

gather every red, white, and pink rose he could find. He asked Winslow to corner the rose market and work fast! James knew with Winslow on the job he had nothing to worry about.



Winslow, the Florist

Winslow had inherited the Florist Shoppe from his family and it was a successful going enterprise when it came to him. But no one in his family had foreseen what would happen next. The Florist Shoppe started winning awards because Winslow was so clever with his arrangements. He had such a flare for color and glamor. The Florist Shoppe had become a point of pride to the community. When the ship docked there was Winslow with a basket of nose-gays for every woman aboard. Then Winslow brought James to his flower carriage and opened the doors of the carriage so James

could see what he had arranged for James to take home for Nordine. James arranged with Winslow for the arrangement to be dropped off at the home he shared with Nordine and Winslow knew how desperately he wanted something spectacular to present to her. Winslow arranged the abundance of roses in a large white wicker basket; its handle adorned with huge red and pink satin bows, more glorious than James dared hoped for.

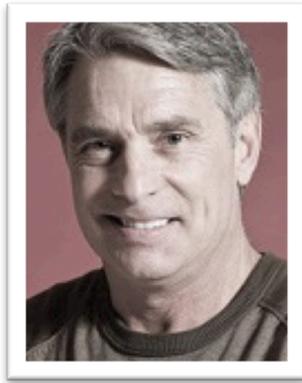


Nordine Nielsen

James was so excited to see Nordine he was trembling. His one hope was that she wanted to see him. The long days and nights that he had spent apart from her were almost too painful to remember. The most wonderful aspect of his recovery was this reunion, now so needed, so wanted. Being one again with Nordine was the fulfillment of his dream.

Meanwhile Keith had his new bride, Esmé, with him on board. She was very proud to be Mrs. Keith Norris and they were happy.

The ship docked in Southampton and everyone aboard knew that *The Nordlandia* would remain a floating hotel for everyone of them, if so desired. That meant that no one was frantic about leaving the vessel. James gave his brother Keith the job of arranging sightseeing for everyone who wanted to explore the area. The Captain of the ship, Captain Ekstrom, arranged for tours, delighting everyone with this unexpected opportunity.



Captain Ekstrom

Meanwhile James had his bride waiting for him in their own home on the water; they locked the doors to their marvelous quarters, and he and Nordine hid away on their sun-filled decks, blissfully alone. There was so much to communicate, so many lonely hours apart fulfilled now by

these quiet days of communion, commitment and celebration.

The next four days were spent happily for everyone. James had always felt a oneness with Nordine that went beyond words, and to his enormous relief and happiness nothing had changed for either one of them during their forced separation from each other.

James was aware that he and Keith would have to settle with Commodore Nielsen. Finally they knew that now was the time to contact Nordine's grandparents, the Commodore and Lady Constanza. The Niensens were excited to be able to announce the celebration of the marriages of their granddaughter Nordine Nielsen to HRH James Kimball Norris and of Princess Esmé de Lyscelles to the Honorable Keith Averill Norris, M.D.

The Niensens planned to give the newlyweds a grand celebration, a second ceremony in the Lutheran church, a religious dedication of love. James knew he had to contact the Commodore, and on their 4th day in Southampton he sent a note to The Esplanade, the Nielsen's spectacular hilltop estate. The Commodore responded to the message himself. "Glad to hear from you," he wrote. "We noticed your father's ship was docked four days ago. We have been expecting your message." "Good" James replied enthusiastically, "Nordine and I are delighted to be here and are looking forward

to calling on you". "I tell you what I suggest" the Commodore replied, "tell Nordine to get in touch with her grandmother. Let the women put this event together". And so the event was delegated to Constanza and James was delighted to turn the arrangements over to the ladies, relieved to let events unfold as they would. So much had to be decided, it took another several days to set the plans.

There was to be a religious ceremony with a reception following at the Nielsen home located above the Esplanade, an eleven o'clock morning wedding with luncheon on the lawn and a continuing party with orchestra and dancing at the park where the Nordlandia was docked, beginning at 4PM.

To facilitate with the planning, the Niensens immediately invited the newlywed couples to their home for breakfast, a spectacular setting on their terrace overlooking the beautiful coastline. Commodore Nielsen was chuckling, amused to have the sons of King Arne Viktorean as his guests. "I can tell you that if I hadn't known you were raised by Greg and Anitra Norris, you would not be sitting here planning this wedding. Your father was hardly one of my favorite people. He was always a doubtful entity. When he came to St. Olaf's we were all twelve years old. He was a hellion even then, only twelve years old and he was already a King. His mother was Regent and she was determined to have him marry a princess of her choice".

Arne himself was pursued by everyone. He was bigger, better looking, and completely headstrong and, his classmates were disgusted with him. There was something about Arne Viktorean that attracted the girls. He always was a hit with the ladies, much to his classmate's annoyance.

To this day, Gregory Norris and King Arne Viktorean can't abide each other. "I am tremendously relieved that Arne is not planning to attend this celebration". Nordine could see that her grandmother was very anxious to change the subject. Her husband's blunt way of talking was the source of keen embarrassment to her and she tried to veer the conversation away from the subject of angry twelve year olds at St. Olaf's Academy so long ago.

But James and Keith were amused that the old men were still fuming at the early outlandish antics of their unrestrained father. Even now at an advanced old age, half a century later, everyone agreed that the celebration would proceed with much more *éclat* without the presence of King Arne Viktorean.

When the celebration day came it was a beautiful event. It seemed that everyone in Southampton had been invited. The clear skies, the soft summer breeze, and the all-encompassing good cheer brought everyone in town together in an unforgettable day of festivity.

Chapter 6

THE LOVE STORY OF VISCOUNT DESMOND DEVEREAU & PRINCESS ZOE MARGRETTA OF SAVOY, 1866



Desmond Devereau and Zoe Margretta

When Louis Desmond Devereau returned to Paris after his long odyssey photographing the known world's myriads of people, his managers decided that the Galleries of Princess Zoe Margretta would be the ideal place for his huge artistic display of photographs. This collection was a summation of his unique career, years of wandering from one continent to another revealing the tremendous riches of humanity, many unknown

species of humans all with a culture and an essence of their own. He might not have returned so soon but malaria wracked his frame. He did not need doctors to tell him that he was pushing the limits of his life.

But even more compelling for his return was the possibility of the impending death of his father Franchot de Lyscelles, the 18th Viscount Devereau. So he came back to Paris to his beloved Devereau House to embrace his worried mother, Robyn, who was overcome with joy to see him. Well, yes this was the right time to return while she was still there to greet him and while he could still make her happy. He did not tell her of his severe malaria but he told her of his exotic journeys and his presence made her happy. He was happy, too. Exhausted as he was from his travels he was immensely appreciative that his managers had found him a remarkable venue for his display, which he entitled *Humankind: A Living Gallery*.

He knew that this collection of photographs would shake the known world. In America the newly launched art of photography, thanks to the magical work of Matthew Brady, had recorded the agonies of its civil war when the forces of the North and South eventually freed the country of slavery. But in France the displays of the work of Desmond Devereau revealed the myriad races and sub-races of people alive in the hidden byways of the world. He had spent twenty-five of his forty some years recording families hidden away in many of the tribal hinterlands, unknown to other tribes even those who may have lived nearby, but were still as unknown as planets in the sky. Photography

made mankind's presence on this globe we call Earth a known quantity, a recognized reality.

Everyday Desmond Devereau could be found at the Gallery organizing his photos and perfecting the lighting for them. At first he went home to have lunch with his mother but now he was finding time closing in on him so he brought a lunch from Devereau House.

Finally, the opening day of his exhibit had arrived and he received a handwritten note from its owner, Princess Zoe Margretta of Savoy. She told him that she was hoping he could come to the Gallery before the opening so she could present him with a personal gift from her, a life-size portrait of him that she felt was one of the best canvases she had ever produced. She was immensely proud of this work which was entitled *Viscount Louis Desmond Devereau*. When he came into the Gallery the painting had been already framed, lighted and centered on its display easel.

She was standing beside her painting, obviously excited and emotional and he was just captivated by her. She was so slender and bubbly and overjoyed. He was so overwhelmed by her that it diverted his attention from the canvas, much to her chagrin, "I am very proud of this canvas, my Lord. It is one of the finest pieces of portraiture I have ever done". Then out of sheer politeness, he looked at her work. It was a full-size canvas showing him being pulled from the right side of the painting into its center by two beautiful greyhound dogs, dogs that Zoe herself had rescued from the dog races when they were no longer able to race. "Look at your hand" she said, "Your hands are works of art".

No one had ever made this observation to him before. In fact, the magnificent life-size painting, the beautiful dogs and the sublime lighting made him feel he was looking at a masterpiece. "This work is my crowning achievement as an artist and I want you to know, Lord Devereau, that every stroke of the brush was a stroke of love".



Princess Zoe and Viscount Desmond Devereau

So he looked from the canvas to her expressive face and he could not mistake the fact that this beautiful Princess Zoe was telling him that she loved him. His own mood was so excited by her excitement, his instantaneous awareness of how cute she was and how special and he found himself saying, "My darling Zoe, I cannot help but love you for the loving gift you give to me, but if I am allowed to embrace you, will some irate lover of yours be stabbing me in

the back for my effrontery?" "Of course not," she laughed and her eyes were shining "There is no man in my life. There never has been. I was raised by the *Sisters of the Sacred Heart*. I am celibate. I wanted to keep it that way in case I ever thought of entering the convent but that will never happen now. It couldn't happen now" she said. Her dark eyes widened, like a child's. Desmond was overcome by the certainty of their joint future. He swept her into his arms. Princess Zoe Margretta and Viscount Devereau were destined for each other.

All through the opening days he met many prominent people but most important of all was meeting the owner of the gallery, Princess Zoe Margretta of Savoy. The opening day and days following were so filled with sales, talk of sales, talk of art, and talk of the beautiful paintings in other parts of the Gallery, there was almost no time to sit down and be contemplative. Through the days he caught glimpses of Princess Zoe. Her dark eyed beauty caught his eye but her inherent shyness astonished him. He thought to himself, who is this modest person, a glowing artist in her own right but so unassuming, basically shy? In the early hours of the following days, before the gallery opened he finally got to know her better. He shared the contents of his picnic basket that came from Devereau House, pretty interesting stuff to eat. His mother Robyn always had a flair for exotic foods, and Princess Zoe and he giggled over the variety of food that he brought down from Devereau House. Meanwhile his photographs were selling at a rapid rate and at a

good price, enriching him and Zoe because they shared in the revenue that came in.

In the quiet morning hours before the public intruded on them, they slowly got to know each other. Zoe found her tenant enchanting. He was fair-haired and blue-eyed and she found his looks intriguing. Zoe turned out paintings of him, one after another. He wasn't too surprised at her preoccupation with him as a subject. She told him how desperate she had been to escape the snares that would have entrapped her for a lifetime as a Princess of Savoy. She told him how carefully she squirreled away her money and when she was being fitted for her wedding dress to an elderly royal chosen by her family, she fled to Paris and never looked back again. She chose the name Zoe because to her Zoe represented modernity and independence. Somehow she has managed to support herself royally without being involved with any man, royal or not. Zoe vowed she would never enter a convent and that she would remain single on her own terms.

Desmond listened to her and his genuine sympathy and empathy moved her greatly and she asked him about his life and his experiences. When she had told him that she really was a princess, that it was not just an imaginative tool to enhance her gallery, he found himself amused and amazed that this gentle girl could find her way so well on her own. And when she asked him about the Devereaus, he told her frankly that his father Franchot was a Prince of the Blood, a Bourbon prince. Like her, he was something of a rebel against convention, too. "Now I know why" she said "That my life has

worked out the way it has and that my gallery would be here to introduce your great photographic art to Paris". She was so serious, so solemn when she told him this. Her large dark eyes were so expressive that Desmond was overcome with affection for her. She was still such a little girl even though she was a grown woman. It was not long before they began to realize they were in love.

Love was a quiet realization and they did not feel like trumpeting this news to the world. The requirements of high society demanded more energy than they could muster. So they went down to the Registry and married without any relatives present, without any announcement to anyone. Then they went back to the Gallery and continued the sales of the photographs, watercolors and oils, all the while amassing a very extensive accumulation of both money and acclaim.

Then word came to them that the old King of Savoy, so frail in health, had relinquished his crown to his eldest son, Victor Emmanuel. This news plunged Zoe into great spasms of guilt and self-accusation. Desmond tried to comfort her and quiet her fears. However her brother, as the new King of Savoy, rushed a letter to communicate his wishes. He wrote; *While our father is still alive, although barely, I think you ought to return home and honor his wish to marry a suitable nobleman. It certainly is not proper for a princess of our house to be prowling around Paris. Zoe, come home to where you belong.*

When Desmond read this unwelcome message from his new brother-in-law, he

laughed out loud. But Zoe did not laugh with him. She was dismayed and fearful and Desmond could easily see why. This situation was going to come to a head and their happy life together was about to be questioned.

When Zoe did not reply to her brother's communication, Victor came to Paris armed with indignation. His father could not cope with Zoe, but Victor never doubted for a minute that he could and would handle this situation. When the King of Savoy called on his sister at her Gallery there was an excited reaction by all present. The Gallery was crowded with visitors, none of whom expected that the King of Savoy would be present.

The afternoon turned into a merry event. Wine, cheese fondue and luscious cookies turned his visit into a party. It was not what the King expected. He found Desmond Devereau to be a charming host and his sister a delightful hostess. There was no privacy so they could not have a moment of serious talk. When the Gallery was closing, Desmond Devereau brought out the champagne and the King found his resolve softening. To him, it didn't look like this Devereau fellow was taking advantage of his sister, not at all. Like everyone who had met him before, Desmond Devereau always was a gentleman of the old school, never for a second being anything less than gracious. "Perhaps you will tell me what it is you fear most for your sister?" asked Desmond. The King paused to think of how he was to answer this question. The King could see that this pair of gifted artists belonged with each other. When they informed him that they were indeed married, what more

could he say? His amazing sister, Zoe, was incredibly well off financially and married to a charming and gracious man who was the Viscount Devereau of Devereau House in Paris. She was a Princess of Savoy but he was a Bourbon Prince of the Blood, a grandnephew of King Louis the XVIII. This turned out to be more than the King had expected and he left Desmond and Zoe with his blessing. And to Zoe's joy it dissipated any feelings of needing to interfere so Desmond and Zoe could go on with their beautiful life together, and that is exactly what they did!

Weeks passed happily and Desmond kept counting his blessings. But he had a question or two in the back of his mind and finally, at a brave moment, he asked Zoe if she had ever had any periods. Desmond had grown up with two older sisters and he knew that periods were a part of a young woman's life and there had not been any mention of this phenomenon in Zoe's life. "Oh" she said, "That is one of my blessings. Almost from the first day of our marriage I never had any periods again. Isn't that wonderful...nothing to get in our way." Desmond said, "Well, yes. That is a wonderful thing".

He did not want to raise any concerns in her mind but he had noticed that Zoe seemed to be gaining a pound or two and he wondered if she were not carrying a child. But he said no more and instead arranged for a family reunion, which included his brother Etienne who was a doctor and his wife, Marita, who was a nurse. And so a memorable family reunion took place at Devereau House. With Franchot well enough to participate, Robyn glowed with happiness.



Marita de Lyscelles Viscountess Sisson

Desmond had confided his suspicions to his brother that Zoe might be pregnant but because she was so reluctant to go to a doctor he was hoping that Etienne would bring his stethoscope and all would have fun listening to everyone's breathing and hopefully Zoe's pregnancy could be verified. It turned out to be a banner day, a family reunion that a few months ago would have seemed impossible and the stethoscope made its rounds with everyone having fun listening to each other's breathing. And when it was Zoe's turn to be listened to she submitted to this indignity happily enough. When the doctors

and nurse confirmed the verdict, it seemed that Zoe was indeed pregnant.

When Zoe and Desmond found out that she was about to be a mother, their happiness knew no bounds and when their first-born turned out to be a girl as well as their second baby, Zoe was ecstatic. Providentially, her third pregnancy produces the heir. The Devereau line would not die out again with the birth of Louis Vincent, who was slated to become the 19th Viscount Devereau.

In fact, everyone in the family was excited. Out came the sewing machines and darling little clothes were designed for mother and daughters. Zoe loved coming to the gallery with her adorable little girls and Desmond was delighted. Being a father was a Dieu-Donne, a supreme joy to Desmond.

New babies are always exciting to have in the family, but for two artists like Zoe and Desmond, they could hardly keep up with day-by-day events. These babies plunged their parents into excesses of painting and photographing, events that not only thrilled them but made Grandparents Franchot and Robyn ecstatic. Their other grandchildren lived in Sweden far from Paris and for the moment anyway Franchot and Robyn were not traveling that far away from home. In 1870, Zoe gave birth to a son, Louis Vincent, the heir to the title of Viscount Devereau.

Eventually Louis Desmond and Princess Zoe had three children, two little girls named Zosia and Zena and at last the heir to the title of Viscount, Louis Vincent. As a father, Louis Desmond's gentleness, his graceful way of

talking, his shining decency, his kindness to everyone became legendary. The love given illuminated the life of his son, Louis Vincent and everyone was touched by their remarkable relationship.

Louis Vincent grew up idolizing his father.... But meanwhile, until Princess Zoe became a mother, she was really unaware of her position in society. Now she had become less involved with the operation of the Gallery and much more mindful of being a Princess of the House of Savoy. How could it not be otherwise? Her ailing father died and her brother Victor Emanuel II became the King of Italy. In the innumerable wars in Europe trying to establish permanent boundaries there were frequent battles but when the unification of Italy was accomplished and Zoe's brother Victor Emanuel II became King of Italy the map of Europe took its more modern shape. Zoe, so happy with her marriage and her children, found herself astonished at the importance of her family and its long long history as the oldest reigning House of Europe.

It seems that education of Princesses was quite haphazard. Zoe did not come into mature realization of the importance of her family until much later but still when her three children were very young. She was mainly preoccupied with keeping them beautifully dressed, carefully fed (according to the latest ideas of the day) and actively involved with music and poetry. Her husband Desmond was primarily an artist. He was not interested in war or legal disputes between principalities. The great artists of the day, the philosophers and other purveyors of

serious thought interested him beyond citations of battles.

Unlike his father, Franchot De Lyscelles, who was a vibrant military leader when he came to Devereau House from the King's Regiment, Desmond remained the artist and poet from his first days to his last, much to Zoe's joy. Franchot was taught to command from the very beginning of his career and he never lost that quality of charisma and regal presence, no matter how old or ill he became.

When Franchot began his slow recuperation from the massive brain surgery that saved his life but left him ill and weakened, Zoe came to know her father-in-law. She was now mother of three young children, barely interested in the work of the gallery so aptly administrated by her beloved husband, Desmond, the present Viscount Devereau. Her father-in-law, Franchot, before consenting to the drastic brain surgery that eventually saved his life, had given up the title of Viscount to his son Desmond. Years earlier it had been established that his eldest child, Etienne, would become the Viscount Sisson. This satisfied the deepest emotional needs of his in-laws, parents of his first wife, Aimee. Etienne was always Robyn's first child and he was forever dedicated to her as the only mother he had ever known. No one ever disputed their relationship; he and Robyn resembled each other in their similar Nordic coloring, extraordinarily fair skin and light hair. Etienne had followed his father into medicine and together they ran the immensely successful Clinique Du Monde. It was not until Franchot turned 65 years old that he started to

demonstrate the bizarre behavior that prompted him to procure the services of the eminent Austrian surgeon, who ultimately operated and saved his life.

When Desmond returned to Paris from his long odyssey photographing the world's unknown and unrecognized families of the Western and Eurasian World, Robyn hastened to bring Franchot down to the Registrar's office where he officially resigned his Viscount title to be handed over to his son and heir, Desmond. Now Franchot was retired and Desmond was the official Viscount Devereau. Then almost immediately afterward, Franchot submitted to the brain surgery that was ultimately to save him from death. When he lay around for some months following, his daughter-in-law, Zoe came to Devereau House three mornings a week with her darling little ones. This was a blessing for all concerned, a great joy to Franchot and fun for the children, who came to adore their grandfather.

These morning visits were a blessing to both Robyn and Zoe. Soon the two women began cooking together, which became a creative pastime that benefited both families. Zoe learned much more about her own family, its long European history that made it historically the most continuous royal family in the history of Europe. Her own education had been so neglected, so overlooked in contrast to the opportunity offered to princes of her dynasty that it wasn't until her brother, the King of Savoy, became the King of Italy, that she grasped the importance of her own house, the House of Savoy. She resolved that her children

would be educated regardless of their gender and she herself became a student of world history and became intrigued with the amazing story of the House of Savoy.

Her father-in-law, Franchot de Lyscelles, was recovering slowly from drastic brain surgery but he cherished the company of Zoe and her eager mind and he and she became fast friends. Zoe felt instinctively that she had been cut off from her rightful position in society and she vowed that the same thing would not happen to her children.

Robyn found the friendship of Franchot and Zoe both amusing and amazing. She was relieved to have Franchot so entertained by his interaction with Zoe. She was waiting for his full recovery and was hopeful that Franchot could accompany her to Sweden to see their two daughters, who both had married Swedish princes. Until that great day could come around it would take many more months of recovery time. Meanwhile photographs of their daughters (Denise and Danielle) with their fair-haired children kept Robyn satisfied but still longing to see them, getting to know their grandchildren in person.

Time has a way of resolving all issues, whether the resolutions are to our taste or not. In this, the Devereau family was no exception. While Zoe was raising her young children and trying to resolve her confusions and uncertainties of herself and her family, time kept moving on in a more modern world with different answers to old questions, many of them revelations. Zoe had become accustomed to Desmond's preoccupation with running the

Gallery and one day she found that circumstances there had changed the equation. Desmond need no longer be fixated on making the Gallery a success. It had become so and was a triumphant happening for the history of their family. Its success was now a reality that no longer needed daily reinforcement.

Then one day to her surprise Desmond showed up at Devereau House free of concern. He had established Octavian and Bruno as directors of the Gallery. He had also put the financial affairs of the organization in the hands of accountants, Gilbert and Guy de La Fontaine. This was the firm that Guy de La Fontaine had launched soon after he crashed the breakfast at Devereau House in the 1820s. Now in the 1870's their firm had become the established accountants of the times, resilient and reliable. Desmond was pleased to deal with them, confident that all would go well under their steady hand.

When Desmond walked into Devereau House feeling free of all the demanding details of running the Gallery, he caught Franchot and Zoe by surprise. They had become so accustomed to proceeding in their own way and in their own right that the presence of Desmond jolted the even tenor of their ways. Now Zoe had to keep in mind that while she was still a free spirit there was a husband in the picture with a deciding voice. Desmond foresaw an expanding role for Devereau House and its myriad holdings that stretched from northwest Paris all the way to Chantilly, France and its environs. He was delighted to be free of the restricting details of running the Gallery, turning

that chore over to his trusted lieutenants, Octavian and Bruno, a welcome relief to Desmond's creative mind.

One of the most imminent decisions was how to cope with the demands of the new unified Kingdom of Italy, now under the jurisdiction of none other than Zoe's brother, King Victor Immanuel II. It was a fortunate break in their family happenings. Zoe needed her husband to help her cope with the many cross currents of reality that befell her family with this tumultuous change. Both sides of the family were challenged by these world-shaking events and their teenage children were also dramatically involved in this next phase of their family's international obligations. Zoe was grateful for Desmond's stronger presence in her life. She really had carried on nobly on all fronts of her varied life until now. But now the family scene was becoming less familiar and more confronting than it had ever been before. Now, as Viscountess Devereau she had to be involved in new ways with the convolutions of history and the entire family was involved in transformation.

The crowning of her brother as King of Italy affected every one of them and Desmond's strong presence at her side was much needed to support her still tremulous self as King Victor Immanuel's sister. As his sister's consort, Desmond took his place in the historic transition of change of government, with its accompanying panoply of transfer of power.

Louis Vincent was born in 1870 and became known as the bachelor Viscount Devereau because of his unmarried status until

his marriage to Caroline Bertrand. He was an intentional bachelor, much sought after by single women everywhere. He traveled widely and it wasn't until the end of WWI that Caroline Bertrand entered his life.

Forty-eight years later, Louis Vincent remembered his father, Desmond, sharing memories of his marriage to his mother, Zoe. In the despairing moments like the crushing disappointment of his wedding night in 1918, Louis Vincent revisited his parents' amazingly happy marriage and its example guided him.

Chapter 7

THE MARRIAGE OF CAROLINE BERTRAND AND LOUIS VINCENT VISCOUNT DEVEREAU, 1918



Caroline Bertrand and Viscount Louis Vincent Devereau

So much had happened so fast that when Caroline and Louis Vincent's wedding day came into reality, Caroline was euphoric. She could hardly believe the amazing events that continued to unfold for her. All she knew was that she had a crush, a delirious affection for Louis Vincent. She thought he was absolutely adorable, and the most attractive man she had ever seen and the most wonderful life partner she could ever conceive of. She was supremely happy and so was Louis Vincent.

Louis Vincent had really been content to remain a bachelor, liking everybody but not being committed to any woman in particular. Caroline was another story. He was certain that she was another part of himself, the soul mate he had longed for, but never expected to find. There wasn't a shred of doubt in his mind that his beloved Caroline was the woman he dreamed of and was now his dream come true.

Louis Vincent had no fixed idea about what his bride should look like, but he had an absolute certainty about what she would “be” like. He had not remained a bachelor for no reason. The reason was Caroline. She was his total answer and the wedding ceremony in the Cathedral was a culmination of his life's dream. This was the woman he had been waiting for.

He was overcome with thanksgiving that the complex arrangements came together in such blessed fashion. He was thrilled to be marrying Caroline and she seemed to be crazy about him. That this young girl would find him so attractive when he was 30 years older than she, made him very happy.

It was a wonder to him that the daughter of his boyhood friend Marcel Bertrand was now his bride. Now they would have their wedding night and take off in the morning for a four-month tour to the critical places in Europe most desperately needing food as designated by the amazing American, Herbert Hoover.

After the service officiated on by the Archbishop of Paris in the Cathedral of Notre Dame, the wedding party met at Devereau House in Paris for an exquisite celebration with superb food, fine wines, and genuine jubilation.

Never had there been a happier wedding party than this one. Everyone knew that this was a marriage of minds. There was nothing half-hearted, halfway about it. It was the celebration of the century. There was no doubt in anyone's thinking that Caroline and Louis Vincent were slated for each other.



Caroline Bertrand

When the days' festivities came to their inevitable end, Vincent carried his bride over the threshold into the beautiful tower rooms of Devereau House, with a view of Paris in every direction.

Louis Vincent put Caroline down on the sofa and got them both lemonades. Then they fell into each other's arms like two teenagers. Life seemed flawless, more than either one of them dared hoped for. The happy events of the

day returned to intrigue them and soothe them and lull them into feelings of happiness.

"I know you feel that I am much more experienced than you," Louis Vincent said, "but in the arena of love, I am a novice, too. I cannot claim total innocence, but I must tell you, my darling, that I never was in love before. This is my first time, too. So we can build our lives together in the way that you want it to go. My one hope is that you will be tremendously happy and I am here to help you make your dreams come true."

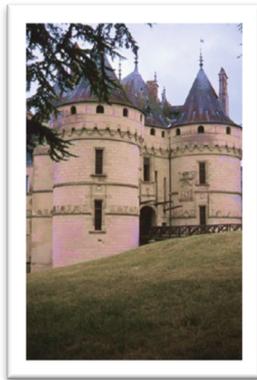
Caroline looked at him incredulously, afraid that at any instant she would wake up and find it all a dream, but it wasn't a dream. It was real. She and Louis Vincent were born for this moment in time and now they were on the road to a lifetime of dedicated effort, partners in commitment.



Caroline Bertrand Devereau in Paris, France

Louis Vincent continued, "I am hoping that we can travel as we must, to bring comfort to the people who are hurting in Europe. I believe that we can inspire hope and increase efficiency in our distributions, but then it is my desire that we will stay here in Devereau House and have a family. One thing that will happen, if we are lucky enough, is that you will become pregnant, Caroline. Is that what you want? Because if not, there are precautions that we can take so that we can postpone this and this postponement can happen immediately.

Caroline was happy with anything Vincent wanted. She told him, "I will be thrilled for us to have children, my darling."



The Tower Rooms of Devereau House

There were many gifts laid out on the table but two of them caught Vincent's attention, a great big box from his Auntie Anna and a small one from Marcel Bertrand, Caroline's father.

First they opened the one from Auntie Anna and it was what Vincent had been expecting, loungewear designed for them to put

on after all the guests have gone home. Anna was a terrific designer and her matching loungewear was perfect for the occasion, fun to dress alike in bold patterned garments easy to slip on and off.

Then Vincent opened the small package which came from Marcel, Caroline's father. With it came the note that read, "*Just yesterday I completed work on these. May they keep your minds at rest, family free, until you return home and are ready for little ones.*"

Enclosed in the package was a slender packet for Louis Vincent and a very small one for Caroline. But with these seemingly innocent words came the evening's turning point. The ever creative Marcel Bertrand was right on the forefront of invention with his latest items, a way to thoroughly enjoy their four-month journey without fear of early pregnancy.

Then the scene changed from untrammled bliss to the absolute unforeseen explosion of anger and confusion. Caroline was highly indignant, furious, that on the very day of their marriage her father would manage to insinuate himself into their private lives recommending what to do in the very personal arena of their behavior between the sheets.

Vincent was so unprepared for Caroline's indignation that he was rendered speechless. His own reaction to Bertrand's thoughtfulness and generosity was deep appreciation but he could understand how a new bride could feel embarrassed by her father's intervention in their most intimate bedroom behavior. Vincent said nothing at first but

Caroline's anger was escalating in ways he did not admire or desire.

Finally he said, "Enough of that, Caroline. Your Dad is a brilliant man and we are lucky to be the first recipients of his latest achievement, a way to keep from getting pregnant while we are traveling and I, for one, am grateful to him for this gift."

Caroline turned on Vincent in an unrestrained fury, "So you're siding with him, are you? I might have known that this would happen!"

Vincent realized the ecstatic mood of their wedding night was deteriorating rapidly as Caroline's vitriol was increasing. Her long time feud with her father spilled over in an uncontrolled torrent. What she thought was behind her now suddenly came on as an in-her-face-reality.

"Well, Sweetie," said Vincent, "I can see your point of view. So just give me back that little item and I will put it together with the stuff he sent me and we will put it aside in my safe and forget that it is there".

To Vincent it seemed like a perfectly reasonable solution, but not to Caroline. As she continued her diatribe, Vincent found himself becoming more and more disenchanted. "Look Sweetheart," he said, "we do not have to use these things that Marcel sent over. I'll just put it into my safe and forget about it." She said, "No. I'm going to hold onto this thing and I'll throw it into his face when I see him next time."

"Caroline, please Honey," Vincent pleaded, "we should put it away and forget about it." "No" she replied, "No".

Vincent looked at her incredulously. "You won't let this little thing spoil our wedding night will you?" Vincent asked her quietly, but Caroline was on a roll, unable to staunch her long-standing resentment of her father.

Vincent was becoming unable to process much more of this kind of negativism. Their wedding night hopes and dreams had exploded into a sad state of stasis. They each had staked out a position and they were stuck in it like flies on flypaper. The great wedding night so looked forward to, came to a disappointing hold.

"I always thought, Caroline, that you were fifteen years old going on fifty," Vincent said, "but tonight I feel you are fifteen years old going on age nine. Isn't it time to drop this fiasco? If you cannot do that, I suggest we go to sleep and see what tomorrow brings."

Tears welled up in her eyes. Their anticipated wedding night ended up with Caroline crying herself to sleep.

Lying out on the deck under the stars thinking of his mother and father who had such loving fulfilling lives together, helped Louis Vincent through the night. When morning came, he bundled up his bedroll and carried it inside to the bedroom closet, then caught sight of Caroline. She was absolutely breathtaking, beautifully coifed; a true magazine princess if ever there was one. "Do you feel like coming to Geneva with me?" Vincent asked.

She replied, "Yes, I am ready". They watched as their bags were picked up and they got on the plane without any difficulty and took off for their destination.

Flanders and Northern France, the site of so much bitter trench warfare were the areas most acutely in need of food, places where recovery could only come slowly because it and its people were so gravely wounded. Geneva was the site of the first international meeting facing the food needs of Europe.

After the disappointment of their wedding night, Louis Vincent had grave doubts about Caroline. If he could have done so conveniently, he would have gone off on his four-month journey without her. He was so let down by her relentless hatred of her father that taking her with him on this trip was not the joyous journey he had dreamed of.

He made it clear to her that she was coming along with him on probation. He would not brook another word of her insubordination, not one sidelong expression of annoyance or resentment. He told her that he was looking for the wife of his dreams and not another enfant gâtée. This term often was an affectionate statement between loving family members, but when Louis Vincent consented to taking Caroline with him after the complete let down of their wedding night he was not feeling affectionate toward Caroline.

She understood this and quietly complied, once again taking on the role of Caroline Bertrand, his efficient secretary. So they got on through the conference in Geneva and their trip to Flanders and to Brussels very neatly.

This may not have been the wedding trip that Louis Vincent had envisioned, but it was a very efficient trip in every other way,

accomplishing much to relieve the ever-present threat of starvation in Europe. And fortunately, Geneva turned out to be a very joyous occasion for both Vincent and Caroline.

. Geneva was a major event for Louis Vincent. He had been lionized for long as *The Bachelor Viscount*. Now coming onto the diplomatic scene with a beautiful young wife was going to be a fascinating spectacle.

The three days spent in Geneva were most enjoyable. Introducing Vincent's many old friends and acquaintances to Caroline was more fun than he could have imagined. She never failed to amaze him. She was highly intelligent, brilliant in fact. He had always known that she could have the poise and manners of a great lady despite her young years. Surely he could forgive a one-time lapse of immaturity! If anyone had told him that he would end up with a young wife as sensational as Caroline he would have scoffed at this idea.

The bachelor Viscount Louis Vincent was welcomed with enthusiasm as his presence always excited much interest from the ladies. He had spent forty-eight years dodging women's advances, determined to remain single. But now unknown to everyone was the presence of the new Viscountess Devereau, Caroline Bertrand.

And so the opening hours went by. Lunchtime came and Caroline was the keynote speaker as Director of the Herbert Hoover Consortium For Feeding Post-War Europe. It was Caroline's brilliant mind that had created an easily instituted plan for this urgently needed program that was now taking place across the European continent. In the evening, the

welcoming banquet brought some of the almost forgotten glamour of pre-war years to the party. Superb music and dancing, fun entertainment and an atmosphere of promise and hope for the future filled the happy hours.

What made Caroline so spectacular was her striking good looks. No one quite realized how young she was because she was so tall, so poised, so knowledgeable and capable. Caroline was really unforgettable and her being there with him truly made his day. Prior to meeting her, he had never given Caroline's looks much thought at all, he was so entranced with the qualities of her mind. In fact, that his Caroline would turn out to be such a spectacular beauty was one of the big surprises of his life. Who would have anticipated that? But on the other hand, remembering how beautiful her mother Francine was, he should have anticipated that Caroline might have inherited her mother's good looks.

At the convention, it was clear from the agenda that the Viscount Devereau was indeed no longer a single man. The printed program clearly stated that he and the Viscountess Devereau were attending as representatives from France. But not everyone had seen the program and one of his most aggressive admirers, the Countess Stephanie Briault, flung her arms around his neck. "How is my beloved bachelor?" she said.

"I am just great, Stephanie," he replied, "but no longer a bachelor."

"Oh no, do you mean to say you were married? That's going to spoil all the fun!" Countess Briault said.

Louis Vincent laughed, "I think it is time, don't you, for me to acquire a beautiful wife?" He drew Caroline away from the booth that the French government had set up. "Caroline, my love. I want you to meet an old friend, Countess Stephanie Briault." This scene was repeated again and again in their three-day visit in Geneva, a delicious time recorded in their memory books.



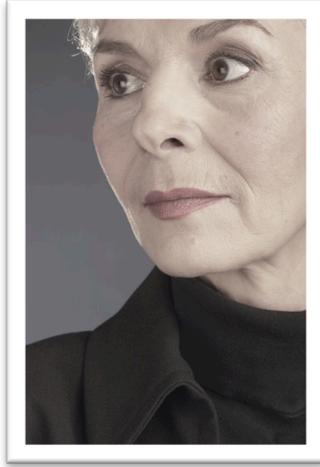
Countess Stephanie Briault

Caroline, who had been the architect of the relief program from the beginning, was the ideal person to direct its future. In its present and later applications in Flanders, there was much unrest and who knows how long Caroline and Vincent would have gone on together semi-

alienated from each other, if they had not unexpectedly run into trouble.

The enormity of popular resentment of the post war hardships in Europe was unforeseen by almost everyone. In Flanders, to Caroline's horror, a crowd converged on their car, pulling Louis Vincent out of the car, hitting his head on the hard stone roadway. Then one young man attempted to hit him over the head with a piece of piping. Caroline, seeing that a blow was about to occur jumped in-between the assailant and her husband and said, "No! He is a good man and you must not hit him." The startled assailant looked into her commanding eyes, and was faced with her fiery order to put down the piece of pipe. She said to him, "Quickly push it away and I will tell the guards that you helped my husband so he would not be hit on the head with it." And that is what happened.

The young man stood there frozen in his tracks and Lady Devereau pointed out to the questioning police that this young man had saved her husband from a blow on the head. When others were hustled into the paddy wagon this young man was not arrested. When the unconscious Louis Vincent was removed to a hospital she said to the young man, "You stay with me and help me now." Because of his explicit directions she was able to follow her husband to the Central Hospital. It was chaos. The halls were filled with uncared for patients and how she would find Louis Vincent was an awesome challenge. She demanded to be taken to the Mother Superior with her newfound assistant Claude by her side.



Mother Clothilde

Mother Clothilde looked up at her in the midst of this bewildering confusion with some concern, but Caroline Bertrand, Viscountess Devereau, was very authoritative. "Mother Clothilde" she said, "please take care of this young man who saved my husband from a blow on the head. He is very hungry, I believe, and needs a bath desperately and clean clothes. I hope you will take care of him for me because I have to walk down the hallways and find my husband. I want to be sure that Claude will be here to be of service to you and to me. I know we need his help and he also needs our help. I can read your eyes, Reverend Mother, but any minute a train carload of supplies will be delivered to your hospital and there will be enough food for everyone in your care. So may I leave him with you while I try to find my husband?" It was a formidable job. So many

were hurt in the food riots and dumped at the hospital door.

Caroline was in despair; then she caught sight of an exposed hand wearing Louis Vincent's ring and she was sure that she had found her husband. The victim was unconscious, but some doctor had seen him because his head wound had been attended to. His head was swathed in bandages. He was still unconscious. She looked at his face intently. There were the dimples she had always loved and the little cleft in his chin that made him look so distinguished and elegant. To her amazement his rings were still on his fingers. No one had robbed him, as he lay defenseless. There were some good people in the world even though so many were dismayed and starving. What should she do? She suspected that any further treatment might be more dangerous at this point than continuing benign neglect. She worried that Vincent would become dehydrated and demanded and actually got a bucket of clean ice slivers. She slipped them into his mouth over the ensuing hours.

Ever since their wedding night, they had been traveling together without any intimacy. She was acting as his assistant, as if she were a paid employee. Their estrangement was still a factor, but now she had the chance to show him the affection she truly felt for him. She covered his face with kisses and whispered endearments. She figured that some of it might penetrate and hasten his recovery. Meanwhile Mother Clothilde had a carload of supplies just as Lady Devereau predicted. With the help of Claude she was able to keep them flowing to the most

needy patients. Finally, she walked down the aisles of the hospital looking for Lady Devereau. "My dear, we will move your husband to a private room and try to get the surgeon to look at him. We want to thank you for the trainload of food and medicine."



Claude

Louis Vincent barely understood that he was being transported from the hallway to a hospital room. Caroline was amazed at the sight of Claude who was totally transformed from a doubtful entity into a presentable young man with a clean face and combed hair. She was grateful for the hospital room and the relative quiet and essential privacy of it. She remained at Louis Vincent's side waiting for some sign of recovery. Caroline gave him the endearment that she had not dared to express since the night of their estrangement. After awhile she detected some response. His eyes remained closed but when she kissed him she felt that he had kissed her back. She sensed his responsiveness.

"Vinnie, do you hear me? It's Caroline." "Yes, I hear you. I don't want to wake up and find that you are only a dream." Vincent was too ill to know what was happening, but Caroline knew that more than Vincent's injuries were healing; she knew that the awful rift between them was healing as well. For that she was deeply thankful. Everyday Claude and Mother Clothilde stepped in to check on her.

Louis Vincent was alert a part of each day now and Caroline was greatly encouraged. Their driver, Ferdinand, who escaped the attack on their vehicle with minor wounds, was telling everyone how Lady Caroline prevented her husband from further damage by standing up to the man with the iron pipe who wanted to hit him over the head. That man was Claude, but Ferdinand didn't recognize him when the now cleaned up Claude was with Mother Clothilde. In the Viscount's hospital room no one could connect this clean-cut young man with the brutal assailant who had threatened to end the Viscount Devereau's life.

Caroline was in no hurry to move Vincent out of the hospital. For the moment they were secure. Initially the idea that they could be the objects of mob anger was an eventuality that had never occurred to them. But there were large numbers of rootless young people, mostly men, living on the streets of war-torn Europe and that they would turn as a mob on any obviously upper class person was understandable. Hunger and hopelessness are the natural causes of anarchy.

In the years following the horrors of WWI, after the heartbreaking famine of 1921 in

Southern Russia, the food situation improved in Europe and no longer was there a threat of starvation looming on the horizon. Caroline came home to Devereau House happy to be there with Louis Vincent. As her ever supportive husband had promised her, she knew she had his full approval in expanding the reach of the Carolinian Cosmetic Company. Her Aunt Caroline's participation was a blessing to the Company and ever the magnificent creative spirit, she rejoiced to watch her company grow with the times, eventually to become the 30 billion dollar entity that it is today.

It was a wonderful time for starting a new business; women were experiencing a new freedom, a new way of conducting business, a new way of looking at themselves. Glamorous bobbed hair burst on the scene, combs, barrettes, bobbie pins, hair sprays, perfumes, shampoos, hair dyes all opening fragrant vistas of glamour and beauty. Aunt Caroline could scarcely keep up with it all and running the business efficiently was no small challenge. At the beginning her little sister Juliette insisted on being the company's bookkeeper and Ilsa Hollander became the company's accountant, but not for long! As the company grew, many more highly skilled managers joined them.

During the war the girls had all been actively involved in the Vegetable Victory Garden group; these people were the same people that had helped Caroline run the Victory Gardens with such success. Now they turned their combined efforts to grow a new garden, the Carolinian Complex. It started with a momentum that was astonishing, especially to

Marcel Bertrand. Nothing slowed them down. Caroline was immensely thrilled with the inspired way that the Carolinian Concept took hold. She never relented for a moment from her dedication to its international success as it grew as a fashion entity. Many skillful talented people joined the roster of directors and artists. It began in 1904, the creative brainchild of Marcel's older sister, Caroline, and it continues on today as a 30 billion dollar company under the direction of Marcel's daughter, Caroline, the Viscountess Devereau.

The twentieth century began with action and re-action, an enormous surge of energy and economic optimism, followed by crushing depression and despair, all within a period of twenty years. Then the world went from sunshine to gloom and while, hopefully starvation did not return, hunger did. In the United States people sold apples on the street to tide them over to better times. It was a slow recovery, but eventually good times did return. From 1942 through 1946, one of the most catastrophic wars of all time descended on Europe, annihilating populations of Jewish people, gypsies and those categorized as undesirables as proclaimed by the ruthless distorted mind of Germany's dictator, Adolf Hitler. World War II grew out of the mistaken judgments that followed the horrors of World War I.

But despite catastrophe, progress was made. Caroline enjoyed the excitement and the achievement of the promotion worldwide of the Carolinian Cosmetic Company, while her

beloved husband Louis Vincent traveled widely as a peace emissary in the service of France.



Viscount and Viscountess Devereau

Caroline and Louis Vincent had three children; two girls, Vivianne and Vera, and Roland Lamont Devereau, their only son and heir. Upon Louis Vincent's death at age 84 in 1954, their son Roland inherited the title of the 21st Viscount Devereau. Two years later, at the age of 35, Roland married the American Ginger Haskell. Roland and Ginger gave Caroline four grandchildren; Roland Devereau II, Alondra, Caroline and Juliette.

Roland loved Devereau House and ached inside to stay, and yet for his family's

sake, he chose with Ginger to leave Devereau House, establishing it as an historic museum.

Roland moved his family onto the grounds of the Carolinian Complex in Paris and started immediately to construct their new home as bright and modern as Devereau House was old and mellow. He arranged to have a schoolroom to give his children and the children of certain select friends, a unique education in their native French language and literature, a living tribute to his esteemed father, the scholar Louis Vincent, the 20th Viscount Devereau. They also acquired a speaking knowledge of English, German, Italian, Spanish and Russian at very young ages, immersed in music, dance, science and sports, the best education that modern day concepts could offer.

Roland and Ginger also spent a part of each year in America, settling in the town of Southampton. Since Southampton has Devereau roots originating from Esmeralda de Lyscelles and Dr. Keith Norris in 1860, they liked the idea of reuniting the Devereau family on both sides of the Atlantic. The Devereau clan continues to grow and flourish today in Paris and its environs, in Chantilly, France, and in New York City, as well as in Southampton, NY.

Roland wanted Ginger to be free to pursue her own broad interests, and with their hugely supportive financial largess there was nothing to hinder them. The sense of responsibility that they both shared so deeply was the engine that would thrust them into activities that they knew would illuminate the world and their lives, and carry them forward into a splendid and fulfilling old age.



Caroline Bertrand Devereau

THE END

About The Author, D.N. Sutton



D.N. SUTTON has been writing poetry and stories since age seven, published first at age eleven in the Miami Herald. She is the author of poetry books and audio CDs available on iTunes, Amazon.com and CDBaby, including "Love Poems for the Romantic Heart", "Death Poems for the Grieving Heart", and "Psalms For Life Living", with a new poetry collection "Perceptions" scheduled for publication.

D.N. Sutton is a person who believes that all dreams can be, in some way, fulfilled. In her youth, trained for the theater, she worked on radio, and was a professional photographer's model, working for the Conover Modeling Agency in New York City. Some of the photos in this book are modeling photos of D.N. Sutton in the 1940's.

D.N. Sutton was also a poetry editor and playwright and was active in publicity and public relations for China Relief during World War II. She developed and taught a college course called "Presentation of Self" in the 1940s and 1950s.

In 2013, at the age of 93, after suffering a stroke two years earlier, D.N. Sutton inspired us all with her first novel: "Romantic Tales From Old Mulvedania", and now, just one year later, here is her second novel, "The Carolinian Chronicles". Charming love stories intertwine in these two fantasies for grown-ups, making her novels a hit with anyone, no matter the age, who believes in love everlasting!

*At age 94, D.N. Sutton has once again captured
romance for all ages!*

Love stories through the generations
of a powerful French family!



When American Virginia "Ginger" Haskell agrees to marry Viscount Roland Devereau after a three-year courtship, she didn't realize how much her life would change. Marrying into today's French aristocracy, living in lordly chateaus & divine Parisian apartments was beyond her daily experiences. Roland was the man of her dreams, but becoming a present day, modern Viscountess was not her expectation. And their close friend, Dr. Marcus Reid, also

finds unexpected romance, returning to his Colorado practice with a romantic liaison from beyond -- an adoring young wife who knows no English. Modern day life intrudes on age-old convictions -- surprising twists and turns that everyone believes could never happen but nonetheless do!

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