

***MARIA
THOMPSON
DAVISS***



***ANDREW
THE GLAD***

Maria Thompson Daviess

Andrew the Glad

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CHAPTER I

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THE HEART TRAP

"There are some women who will brew mystery from the decoction of even a very simple life. Matilda is one of them," remarked the major to himself as he filled his pipe and settled himself before his high-piled, violet-flamed logs. "It was waxing strong in her this morning and an excitement will arrive shortly. Now I wonder—"

"Howdy, Major," came in a mockingly lugubrious voice from the hall, and David Kildare blew into the room. He looked disappointedly around, dropped into a chair and lowered his voice another note.

"Seen Phoebe?" he demanded.

"No, haven't you?" answered the major as he lighted his pipe and regarded the man opposite him with a large smile of welcome.

"Not for three days, hand-running. She's been over to see Andy with Mrs.

Matilda twice, and I've missed her both times. Now, how's that for luck?"

"Well," said the major reflectively, "in the terms of modern parlance, you certainly are up against it. And did it ever occur to you that a man with three ribs broken and a

dislocated collar-bone, who has written a play and a sprinkle of poems, is likely to interest Phoebe Donelson enormously? There is nothing like poetry to implant a divine passion, and Andrew is undoubtedly of poetic stamp."

"Oh, poetry—hang! It's more Andy's three ribs than anything else. He just looks pale and smiles at all of 'em. He always did have yellow dog eyes, the sad kind. I'd like to smash all two dozen of his ribs," and Kildare slashed at his own sturdy legs with his crop. He had dropped in with his usual morning's tale of woe to confide to Major Buchanan, and he had found him, as always, ready to hand out an incendiary brand of sympathy.

"He ought not to have more than twenty-three; one on the right side should be missing. Some woman's got it—maybe Phoebe," said the major with deadly intent.

"Nothing of the kind. I'm shy a rib myself and Phoebe is *it*. Don't I get a pain in my side every time I see her? It's the real psychic thing, only she doesn't seem to get hold of her end of the wire like she might."

"Don't trust her, David, don't trust her! You see his being injured in Panama, building bridges for his country, while you sat here idly reading the newspapers about it, has had its appeal. I know it's dangerous, but you ought to want Phoebe to soothe his fevered brow. Nothing is too good for a hero this side of Mason and Dixon's, my son." The major eyed his victim with calculating coolness, gaging just how much more of the baiting he would stand. He was disappointed to see that the train of explosives he had laid failed to take fire.

"Well, he's being handed out a choice bunch of Mason-Dixon attentions. They are giving him the cheer-up all day long. When I left, Mrs. Shelby was up there talking to him, and Mrs. Cherry Lawrence and Tom had just come in. Mrs. Cherry had brought him several fresh eggs. She had got them from Phoebe! I sent them to her from the farm this morning. Rode out and coaxed the hens for them myself. Now, isn't a brainstorm up to me?"

"Well, I don't know," answered the major in a judicial tone of voice.

"You wouldn't have them neglect him, would you?"

"Well, what about me?" demanded David dolefully. "I haven't any green eyes, 'cause I'm trusting Andy, *not* Phoebe; but neglect is just withering my leaves. I haven't seen her alone for two weeks. She is always over there with Mrs. Matilda and the rest 'soothing the fevered brow.' Say, Major, give Mrs. Matilda the hint. The chump isn't really sick any more. Hint that a little less—"

"David, sir," interrupted the major, "it takes more than a hint to stop a woman when she takes a notion to nurse an attractive man, a sick lion one at that. And depend upon it, it is the poetry that makes them hover him, not the ribs."

"Well, you just stop her and that'll stop them," said David wrathfully.

"David Kildare," answered the major dryly, "I've been married to her nearly forty years and I've never stopped her doing anything yet. Stopping a wife is one of the bride-notions a man had better give up early in the matrimonial state—if he expects to hold the bride. And bride-holding

ought to be the life-job of a man who is rash enough to undertake one."

"Do you think Phoebe and bride will ever rhyme together, Major?" asked David in a tone of deepest depression. "I can't seem to hear them ever jingle."

"Yes, Dave, the Almighty will meter it out to her some day, and I hope He will help you when He does. I can't manage my wife. She's a modern woman. Now, what are we going to do about them?" and the major smiled quizzically at the perturbed young man standing on the rug in front of the fire.

"Well," answered Kildare with a spark in his eyes, as he flecked a bit of mud from his boots which were splashed from his morning ride, "when I get Phoebe Donelson, I'm going to whip her!" And very broad and tall and strong was young David but not in the least formidable as to expression.

"Dave, my boy," answered the major in a tone of the deepest respect, "I hope you will do it, if you get the chance; but you won't! Thirty-eight years ago last summer I felt the same way, but I've had a long time to make up my mind to it; and I haven't done it yet."

"Anyway," rejoined his victim, "there's just this to it; she has got to accept me kindly, affectionately and in a ladylike manner or I'm going to be the villain and make some sort of a rough house to frighten her into it."

"David," said the major with emphasis, "don't count on frightening a woman into a compliance in an affair of the affections. Don't you know they will risk having their hearts

suspended on a hair-line between heaven and hell and enjoy it? Now, my wife—"

"Oh, Mrs. Matilda never could have been like that," interrupted David miserably.

"Boy," answered the major solemnly, "if I were to give you a succinct account of the writhings of my soul one summer over a California man, the agony you are enduring would seem the extremity of insignificance."

"Heavenly hope, Major, did you have to go up against the other man game, too? I seem to have been standing by with a basket picking up chips of Phoebe's lovers for a long lifetime; Tom, Hob, Payt, widowers and flocks of new fledges. But I had an idea that you must have been a first-and-only with Mrs. Matilda."

"Well, it sometimes happens, David, that the individuality of all of a woman's first loves get so merged into that of the last that it would be difficult for her to differentiate them herself; and it is best to keep her happily employed so she doesn't try."

"Well, all I can say for you, Major," interrupted Kildare with a laugh, "is that your forty years' work shows some. Your Mrs. Buchanan is what I call a finished product of a wife. I'll never do it in the world. I can get up and talk a jury into seeing things my way, but I get cross-brained when I go to put things to Phoebe. That reminds me, that case on old Jim Cross for getting tangled up with some fussy hens in Latimer's hen-house week before last is called for to-day at twelve sharp. I'm due to put the old body through and pay the fine and costs; only the third time this year. I'm thinking

of buying him a hen farm to save myself trouble. Good-by, sir!"

"David, David," laughed the major, "beware of your growing responsibilities! Cap Hobson reported that sensation of yours before the grand jury over that negro and policeman trouble. The darkies will put up your portrait beside that of Father Abe on Emancipation Day and you will be in danger of passing down to posterity by the public-spirit-fame chute. Your record will be in the annals of the city if you don't mind!"

"Not much danger, Major," answered David with a smile. "I'm just a glad man with not balance enough to run the rail of any kind of heavy track affairs."

"David," said the major with a sudden sadness coming into his voice and eyes, "one of the greatest men I ever knew we called the glad man—the boy's father, Andrew Sevier. We called him Andrew, the Glad. Something has brought it all back to me to-day and with your laugh you reminded me of him. The tragedy of it all!"

"I've always known what a sorrow it was to you, Major, and it is the bitterness that is eating the heart out of Andy. What was it all about exactly, sir? I have always wanted to ask you." David looked into the major's stern old eyes with such a depth of sympathy in his young ones that a barrier suddenly melted and with the tone of bestowing an honor the old fire-eater told the tale of the sorrow of his youth.

"Gaming was in his blood, David, and we all knew it and protected him from high play always. We were impoverished gentlemen, who were building fences and restoring war-devastated lands, and we played in our shabby club with a

minimum stake and a maximum zest for the sport. But that night we had no control over him. He had been playing in secret with Peters Brown for weeks and had lost heavily. When we had closed up the game, he called for the dice and challenged Brown to square their account. They threw again and again with luck on the same grim side. I saw him stake first his horses, then his bank account, and lose.

"Hayes Donelson and I started to remonstrate but he silenced us with a look. Then he drew a hurried transference of his Upper Cumberland property and put it on the table. They threw again and he lost! Then he smiled and with a steady hand wrote a conveyance of his home and plantation, the last things he had, as we knew, and laid that on the table."

"No, Major," exclaimed David with positive horror in his voice.

"Yes, it was madness, boy," answered the major. "Brown turned his ivories and we all held our breath as we read his four-three. A mad joy flamed in Andrew's face and he turned his cup with a steady wrist—and rolled threes. We none of us looked at Brown, a man who had led another man in whose veins ran a madness, where in his ran ice, on to his ruin. We followed Andrew to the street to see him ride away in a gray drizzle to a gambled home—and a wife and son.

"That morning deeds were drawn, signed, witnessed and delivered to Brown in his office. Then—then"—the major's thin, powerful old hands grasped the arm of his chair—"we found him in the twilight under the clump of cedars that crowned the hill which overlooked Deep-mead Farm—broad acres of land that the Seviars had had granted them from

Virginia—*dead*, his pistol under his shoulder and a smile on his face. Just so he had looked as he rode at the head of our crack gray regiment in that hell-reeking charge at Perryville, and it was such a smile we had followed into the trenches at Franklin. Stalwart, dashing, joyous Andrew, how we had all loved him, our man-of-smiles!"

"Can anything ever make it up to you, Major?" asked David softly. As he spoke he refilled the major's pipe and handed it to him, not appearing to notice how the lean old hand shook.

"You do, sir," answered the major with a spark coming back into his eyes, "you and your gladness and the boy and his—sadness—and Phoebe most of all. But don't let me keep you from your hen-roost defense—I agree with you that a hen farm will be the cheapest course for you to take with old Cross. Give him my respects, and good-by to you." The major's dismissal was gallant, and David went his way with sympathy and admiration in his gay heart for the old fire-eater whose ashes had been so stirred.

The major resumed his contemplation of the fire. Hearty burning logs make good companions for a philosopher like the major, and such times when his depths were troubled he was wont to trust to them for companionship.

But into any mood of absorption, no matter how deep, the major was always ready to welcome Mrs. Matilda, and his expectations on the subject of her adventures had been fully realized. As usual she had begun her tale in the exact center of the adventure with full liberty left herself to work back to the beginning or forward to the close.

"And the mystery of it all, Matilda, is the mystery of love—warm, contradictory, cruel, human love that the Almighty puts in the heart of a man to draw the unreasoning heart of a woman; sometimes to bruise and crush it, seldom to kill it outright. Mary Caroline only followed her call," answered the major, responding to her random lead patiently.

"I know, Major; yes, I know," answered his wife as she laid her hand on the arm of his chair. "Mary Caroline struggled against it but it was stronger than she was. It wasn't the loving and marrying a man who had been on the other side—so many girls did marry Union officers as soon as they could come back down to get them—but the *kind* of enemy he was!"

"Yes," said the major thoughtfully, "it would take a wider garment of love to cover a man with a carpetbag in his hand than a soldier in a Yankee uniform. A conqueror who looked around as he was fighting and then came back to trade on the necessities of the conquered cuts but a sorry figure, Matilda, but a sorry figure!"

"And Mary Caroline felt it too, Major—but she couldn't help it," said Mrs. Buchanan with a catch in her voice. "The night before she ran away to marry him she spent with me, for you were away across the river, and all night we talked. She told me—not that she was going—but how she cared. She said it bitterly over and over, 'Peters Brown, the carpetbagger—and I love him!' I tried to comfort her as best I could but it was useless. He was a thief to steal her—just a child!" There was a bitterness and contempt in Mrs. Matilda's usually tender voice. She sat up very straight and there was a sparkle in her bright eyes.

"And the girl," continued the major thoughtfully, "was born as her mother died. He'd never let the mother come back and he never brought the child. Now he's dead. I wonder—I wonder. We've got a claim on that girl, Matilda. We—"

"And, dear, that is just what I came back in such a hurry to tell you about—I felt it so—I haven't been able to say it right away. I began by talking about Mary Caroline and—I—"

"Why, Matilda!" said the major in vague alarm at the tremble in his wife's voice. He laid his hand over hers on the arm of his chair with a warm clasp.

"It's just this, Major. You know how happy I have been, we all have been, over the wonderful statue that has been given in memory of the women of the Confederacy who stayed at home and fed the children and slaves while the men fought. As you advised them, they have decided to put it in the park just to the left of the Temple of Arts, on the very spot where General Darrah had his last gun fired and spiked just before he fell and just as the surrender came. It's strange, isn't it, that nobody knows who's giving it? Perhaps it was because you and David and I were talking last night about what he should say about General Darrah when he made the presentation of the sketches of the statue out at the opening of the art exhibition in the Temple of Arts tonight, that made me dream about Mary Caroline all night. It is all so strange." Again Mrs. Buchanan paused with a half sob in her voice.

"Why, what is it, Matilda?" the major asked as he turned and looked at her anxiously.

"It's a wonderful thing that has happened, Major. Something, I don't know what, just made me go out to the Temple this morning to see the sketches of the statue which came yesterday. I felt I couldn't wait until to-night to see them. Oh, they are so lovely! Just a tall fearless woman with a baby on her breast and a slave woman clinging to her skirts with her own child in her arms!

"As I stood before the case and looked at them the tragedy of all the long fight came back to me. I caught my breath and turned away—and there stood a girl! I knew her instantly, for I was looking straight into Mary Caroline's own purple eyes. Then I just opened my arms and held her close, calling Mary Caroline's name over and over. There was no one else in the great room and it was quiet and solemn and still. Then she put her hand against my face and looked at me and said in the loveliest tenderest voice:

"'It's my mother's Matilda, isn't it? I have the old daguerreotype!' And I smiled back and we kissed each other and cried—and then cried some more."

"I haven't a doubt of those tears," answered the major in a suspiciously gruff voice. "But where's the girl? Why didn't you bring her right back with you? She is ours, Matilda, that purple-eyed girl. When is she coming? Call Tempie and tell her to have Jane get those two south-wing rooms ready right away. I want Jeff to fill up the decanters with the fifty-six claret, too, and to put—"

"But wait, Major, I couldn't get her to come home with me! We went out into the sunshine and for a long drive into

the country. We talked and talked. It is the saddest thing in the world, but she is convinced that her mother's people are not going to like her. She has been taught that we are so prejudiced. I think she has found out about the carpetbagging. She is so sensitive! She came because she couldn't help it; she wanted just to see her mother's country. She's only been here two days. She intends to steal away back now, over to Europe, I think. I tried to make her see—"

"Matilda," said the major sternly, "go right back and tell that child to pack her dimity and come straight here to me. Carpetbagging, indeed!—Mary Caroline's girl with purple eyes! Did old Brown have any purple eyes, I'd like to know?"

"I made her promise not to go until tomorrow. I think she would feel differently if we could get her to stay a little while. I want her to stay. She is so lonely. My little boy loved Mary Caroline and grieved for her when she went away. I feel I must have this child to comfort for a time at least."

"Of course she must stay. Did she promise she wouldn't slip away from you?"

"Yes, but I'm uneasy. I think I will go down to her hotel right now. Do you mind about being alone for lunch? Does Tempie get your coffee right?"

"She does pretty well considering that she hasn't been tasting it for thirty years. But you go get that child, Matilda. Bring her right back with you. Don't stop to argue with her, I'll attend to all that later; just bring her home!"

And as Mrs. Buchanan departed the major rose and stood at the window until he saw her get into her carriage and be driven out of sight. Looking down the vista of the long street, his eyes had a faraway tender light, and as he turned

and took up his pipe from the table his thoughts slipped back into the province of memory. He settled himself in his chair before his fire to muse a bit between the whiffs of his heart-leaf.

And Mary Caroline Darrah's girl had come home—home to her own, he mused. There was mystery in it, the mystery that sometimes brands the unborn. Brown had never let Mary Caroline come back and the few letters she had written had told them little of the life she led. The constraint had wrung his wife's yearning heart. Only a letter had come when somehow the news had reached her of the death of Matilda's boy, and it had been wild and sweet and athrob with her love of them. And in its pages her own hopes for the spring were confessed in a passion of desire to give and claim sympathy. Her baby had been born and she was dead and buried before they had heard of it; twenty-three years ago! And Matilda's grief for her own child had been always mingled with love and longing for the motherless, unattainable young thing across the distance. Brown had kept the girl to himself and had never brought her back—because he *dared* not.

The major's powerful old hands writhed around the arms of his chair and his eyes glowed into the embers like live sparks. It was years, nearly thirty years ago—but, God, how the tragedy of it came back! The hot blood beat into his veins and he could feel it and see it all. Would the picture always burn in his brain? Nearly thirty years ago—

The logs crashed apart in the hearth and with a start the major rose to his feet, a tear dashed aside under his shaggy old eyebrows. He would go back to his Immortals—and

forget. Perhaps Phoebe would come in for lunch. That would make forgetting easier.

Where had the girl been for the last few days? He smiled as he found himself in something of David's dismay at not having seen the busy young woman for quite a time.

And it was perhaps an hour later that, as he sat in the breakfast room partaking of his lunch in solitary comfort, lost to the world, his wish for her brought its materialization. He had the morning's paper propped up before him and an outspread book rested by his plate, while he held a large volume balanced on his knee, which he paused occasionally to consult.

Mrs. Buchanan had telephoned that she would be home with her guest at five o'clock and his mind was filled with pleasant anticipation. But there was never a time with the major, no matter how filled the life was around him with the excitement of events, with the echo of joy or woe, the clash of social strife or the turmoil of vaster interests, when he failed to be able to plunge into his books and lose himself completely.

He was in the act of consuming a remnant of a corn muffin and a draft from his paper at the same time, when he heard a merry voice in laughing greeting to Jeff, and the rose damask curtains that hung between the breakfast room and the hall parted, and Phoebe stood framed against their heavy folds. She was the freshest, most radiant, tailor-made vision imaginable and the major smiled a large joyful smile at the sight of her.

"Come in, come in, my dear; you are just in time for a hot muffin and a fried chicken wing!" he exclaimed as he rose

and drew her to the table. The old volume crashed to the floor unheeded.

"Oh, no, Major, thank you, I couldn't think of it," exclaimed Phoebe. "I'm lunching on a glass of malted milk and a raw egg these days. I lost a pound and three-quarters last week and I feel so slim and graceful." As she spoke she ran her hands down the charming lines of her tall figure and turned slowly around for him to get the full effect of her loss. She was most beautifully set up and the long lines melted into curves where gracious curves ought to be.

"Nonsense, nonsense, Phoebe Donelson!" exclaimed the major. "Every pound is an added charm. Sit here beside me." And he drew her into a chair at the corner of the table.

In a twinkling of her black eyes Tempie had served her with the golden muffins and crisp chicken. With a long sigh of absolute rapture Phoebe resigned herself to the inevitable crash of her resolutions.

"Ah, I never was so miserable and so happy in all my life before," she said. "I'm so hungry—and I'm so stout—and these muffins are wickedly delicious."

"Phoebe," said the major sternly, "instead of starving yourself to death you need to lie awake at night with lovers' troubles. Why, the summer I courted Matilda I could have wrapped my belt around me twice. I have never been portly since. It's loving you need, good, hard, miserable loving. Didn't you ever hear of a 'lean and hungry lover'? Your conduct is positively—have another muffin and this little slice of upper joint—I say positively, unwomanly inhuman. Are there no depths of pity in your breast? Is your bosom of

adamant? When did you see David Kildare? He is in a most pitiable condition. He left here not an hour ago and I felt—"

"Don't worry over David, please, Major," said Phoebe as she paused with a bit of buttered muffin suspended on the way to her white teeth. "He is the most riotously—thank you, Tempie, just one more—happy individual I know. What he wants he has, and he sees to it that he has what he wants—to which add a most glorious leisure in which to want and have."

"Phoebe, David Kildare has an aching void in his heart that weighs just one hundred and thirty-six pounds, lacking now I believe one and three-quarters pounds plus three muffins and a half chicken. How can you be so heartless?" The major bent a benignly stern glance upon her which she returned with the utmost unconcern.

"He did not see you all of yesterday or the day before and only once on Monday, and then you—"

"That sounds like one of those rhyming calendars, my dear Major.

"Monday I am going far away,
Tuesday I'll be busy all the day,
Wednesday is the day I study French,
Thursday is the—"

and Phoebe hummed the little nonsense jingle to him in a most beguiling manner.

The major laughed delightedly. "Phoebe, some day you will be held responsible for David Kildare's—"

"But, my dear Major," interrupted Phoebe, "how could I be expected to work all day for raiment and food, with