

## CHAPTER LIV

“**G**OD bless you, Poppy; how late you are to-night.”

“Gran’pa, I waited until Tom came off duty. I hope you don’t mind.”

“Tom?”

She dragged the tall young man in “special’s” uniform into the room. “This is Tom, who saved my daddy.”

Lord Woden held out his old hand.

“And this is the man I am going to marry.”

“I am a little bewildered, Poppy. I think I should like another small drink. Perhaps your friend will join me?”

“And you don’t mind about my father and mother?”

Tom asked, falteringly.

“Not the least little bit in the world,” said Poppy.

“Tell my gran’pa; he is a very understanding man, my gran’pa.”

Lord Woden understood very well. Love had conquered Poppy’s prejudice and he was glad.

“As to my financial position——” began Tom.

“Damn that, my boy. Leave such things to me. You saved Antony, and I’ll see you through.”

“You do not mind that the name I bear is necessarily my mother’s?”

The old man shook his head and smiled. “What’s in a name?” he quoted. The next moment he was to learn that there is sometimes much in a name.

“My father’s name was Bonvill,” said Tom, simply.

“Gran’pa, gran’pa, what is the matter?—And you have spilled your brandy.”

"Bonvill?—Can it be? Yet, I thought there was something vaguely familiar in the face. Lizzie's—eighty years ago. My God." Lord Woden, for the first time for many years, called upon his God.

"Tell me: were your people ever in Australia?"

"Yes," said Tom, and gave of them all the information that he knew.

"Then it is the same—to think of it: after all these years. Do not these things come home?—And he saved Antony—and I—I took him where he died that night with Diane—to that house where the sin began. . . . Tom, I must tell you—no, I cannot; I am too old. Tell him, Poppy."

The old Earl of Woden tottered from the room and went to bed.

"*What dreams may come?*" Well, he wasn't dead yet, but these occurrences made an old man dream. Here in this house had been Angeline, his wife, the "wood-syrup" of the Redehall Woods; Lucy's daughter, his sons, his grandsons, Diane of New Orleans, Poppy, and now, with Poppy, her lover, her husband-to-be, Tom—Tom, who had sprung from that affair in the little old house in the Strand so very many years ago.

So very many years ago: yes, it made an old man dream.

Below Poppy sat with her lover and whispered of many things.