



TEARS BEHIND HER SMILE

A LOVE STORY

BY

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IMPRESSUM

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*Dedicated to the memory of my Parents,
And my relative's that were my inspiration.*

*With the exception of certain countries where
the character spent their lives, it's not only the
minor characters that I draw with such confi-
dence, but also a little miracle of creation.*

*All the characters in this book are wholly ficti-
tious and bear no resemblance to any persons
living or dead.*

*A similar statement might be made in regard to
many of the places described in this book.*





*And this is life, I smile a tear,
A sunbeam now, and a shadow then,
Sorrows apportioned to every year
Doubtingly back through the past I look,
But love, and hate, and gloom, I see,
And I weary, and close, and clasp life's book,
For it seldom brings pleasant thought to me.
Glancing adown life's gulf of storm and sunshine,
The Lethe of our sight, we see through memory,
clad in robes of splendor, A vision of delight.
How vivid gleam those shadows in the distance,
Specters that never smile, Array of passions,
Source of soul existence, Marshalled in solemn file.*

*Songs of an Idle Hour
by William J. Coughlin*



**** PROLOGUE ****

We were both born illegitimate children with different fathers, we grew up without the man to

be called father. Sarie as the only female among four brothers, her life was derailed at her early age. Her great love left her when her daughter was born. The child never cried really for her feeds. She never finished her baby food. She did not put on weight very rapidly; at seven months she was ill of dysentery and was brought to a small hospital in the island. Sarie feared that her daughter might not survive, she felt that her baby never wanted for anything and was never satisfied. She was a child whose oral hunger and greed have never found expression; instead of a healthy vigorous expression, excited crying, energetic suckling, emptying her bottle, followed by contented satisfied sleep. Sometimes she fretted continually, seemed to be hungry, yet, when presented with the bottle, sucked desultorily and never satisfied herself.

Perpetual was born curious and inquisitive child, at five years she used to dismantle her handmade doll that she got as Christmas gift and put it back together. She wanted to know how it was made and why it was not beautiful as she saw in some pictures. At this age she had already possess that presentiment a feeling that something is going to happen if she mends it into a nice doll as she wanted it to be as she imagined. When Sarie got pregnant her father Vincent Villars thrown her out from his house and was sent to live with her cousin in the city.

She reared her daughter alone with the handouts from her father. After two years she met another man who swore to be a good Samaritan only to have her first experience repeated. This time she was the one who left for grievous reason of his being physical and violent. Perpetual's only brother two years younger Heino was the opposite of his father. He loves to eat and drink his milk; he was always contented and a happy baby. He was timid, at the age of four he rarely said a complete word, but it was presumed that baby boys talked later than baby girls who at two years could express themselves. We never know who our father was and where he is. Children at our age were always curious why we grew up without a father, mother never tell us anything about our identity and remained in puzzle and confusion. No one had ever told us about anything with regards to my mother's love affair until we were in the primary grades.

*Sarie Villars, a very beautiful young woman, the vision of whose angelic beauty had probably more than anything else to do with the restlessness that before morning made her several times rise and wander about her tiny room to take the whole picture of her life. She thought, I could not prove the Years had feet- Yet confident they run. Am I from symptoms that are past and series that are done? I find my feet have further Goals. She smiled upon her Aims, then she felt so ample- Yesterday-Today have vaster claims. Sarie was unpredictable with a constant mood shift, and sadly judgmental. When she was in good mood, she had the capacity to be exactly the mother that Perpetual wanted. She could be kind and warm, but *loving* wasn't the right word.*

When her father finally allowed her to come home, Sarie drifted through the days in a mountain haze at the huge residence of her father Vincent Villars her last sanctuary with her two kids. She never talked about any of the father of her children, she never talked about her feelings or what she planned to do with her life, since her formidably manipulative father and her tough brothers would plan her life for her. Loreta Villars her stepmother was Sarie's only comfort, such a loving mother to her who understood her situation and protected her from anxious domineering father.

Sarie at twenty-five was no longer a girl but an adult young woman, since she was the only girl among four brothers, she had no right of any opinion not to mention her own decision. She lives in a world among alpha males, she does not need to use her brain, her father and brothers did it for her. When her daughter Perpetual (in short Petsy) reached the age of seven, Sarie Villars married Medolo Delarose. Petsy was told that he is her biological father but not of his brother. It was said that they were old-time lover and the chemistry between them was instant and immediate. A lot were being said those days about their youthful encounter that their mother kept it to herself. Perpetual could not digest as a child what was gossip and what was true. There was awkwardness between the man in the house and us children. It took us time to call him father or Papa. We were told that he was about to become a priest for this reason he wasn't able to marry mother. But at the end he failed his vocation and came back to his former love. Petsy thought my brother must have also a father, she promised to herself that she'll have to find that out later. Medolo showed as a loving, warmhearted and forgiving type of person.

At forty he carried himself like a sanctified priest who had paradoxically, a smile that could light up a town. If any man deserved to be called, charming and good-looking, it was this man Medolo Delarose. He had a thick dark hair; perfect features for a clergy man, brown skin, chain -smoker and intelligent expressive brown eyes. He was kind, had a waning patience and soft spoken. He was never involved in any serious trouble, except accommodating to women who wanted to capture him like a piece of meat. Several women were attracted to Medolo, most of all his warm affectionate, unusually sensitive, even almost feminine quality. It was Sarie's fear that she has secret rivals. *Ever since Medolo could remember, what he had loved most was love.*

In the fifties, when other boys talked about cars, Medolo talked about God. In the sixties when boys talked about politics, Medolo talked about love. Other boys wanted to get laid; Medolo wanted to fall in love. Being a lover brought out the best in him. He wanted to tell a girl "I want you to fall in-love with me." He was a man with good intentions at the first hour. For the first two years of their marriage, my brother and I tried to get used having a man in the house.

They were constantly on alert service for my uncle Cresto Villars who was a famous known politician, a mayor in our small town and forever hosting parties for the endless coming and going of high government officials from the capital city. My mother used to supervise the cooking crew, the series of menu they are going to serve for lunch or dinner for the high and mighty visitors. It had been her life during the regime of her brother. While supervising she starts to drink little by little. In the early evening Sarie was wonderful when she was a bit sloshy, she used to say, I'm not drunk.

Just a tiny bit tipsy, she'd laughed hilariously. She was not alcoholic, but she likes to drink, her personality became huge, her newfound happiness magnified a thousandfold by the alcohol, more affectionate, more vibrant. But as the drinking progressed, things changed when she comes home mirthful, her happiness turned to disappointment, disgust, discontent, she had fun then she became sullen, became distant, she attacked her daughter as if she was jealous. She took her unreasonable rages out on her. As if she doesn't want to share my father with us, she wanted the full attention from her new husband Medolo Delarosa. On the surface they talked about the current politics, trade, gossip and frivolities.

But underneath an entire ma was taking place. They were wildly attracted to one another both physically and emotionally and each reacted to it differently.

As a seven-year-old child Perpetual was seriously confused and never understood her mother's Grand-canyon mood swings, it was a great conundrum for her. *And during those moments my father withdraws from both of us. He tried to talk to her, but it always ends up in a screaming match, so he'd grab his coat and go out of the house, for hours at a time. He needed some relief of mother's tipsy tantrums and he looked like a little boy who had lost his mummy at the pier.* I was indeed unhappy most of the time, somewhere I was aware that occasionally I envied the stability and warmth I found in the homes of my friends, but I never missed it in my own. It was, after all, the only home I knew. The truth seems that mother married my father because she'd gotten scared to be left with two bastard children.

As much as she liked to say that she loved my father from the time they met. Perpetual remembers how much she adored her father when he scoops her up into his arms and sit her on his lap, laughed delightedly when she giggled and wriggled and then he covered her with kisses.

I remember when I was fourteen during my high school days, sitting next to my classmate and best friend Isabel in a history lesson. I had drifted away into a reverie thinking about my one of the male teachers who adored me, I just got to the part when he gazed into my eyes before a magical first kiss, when Isabel nudged me sharply. I looked at her gesturing at the classroom door. I could see the draconic Principal Mrs. Renal approaching, as did the rest of the class. A collective gasp went around the classroom, Mrs. Renal was clearly about to come in, and aside from morning assembly, her formidable presence who was very definitely seen and not heard were not implicitly needed. She was not a lovely woman; the entire school was terrified of her strictness. She rarely smiles and stalked around the school, steely-grey hair around her face, head held high, erect posture staring into the middle distance with a terrifying gleam in her eye. The entire class stopped breathing as we watched the door handle turned and then she was in front of us, asking to have a word with Mrs. Baring our history teacher, the two stepped outside as the class erupted urgent whispers leaping across the room.

Something must be terrible going on. And then the door opened, the two women came back, Mrs. Baring now looking as serious as Mrs. Renal even without looking at them I knew they were going to call my name.

I knew it was going to be terrible. Perpetual Delarose, Mrs. Baring said gently, the Head Principal needs to talk to you. I felt all eyes upon me as I gathered up my books and walked to where Mrs. Renal who was standing before the class, I tried to ignore her gentle hands placed on my shoulder as she guided me out of the classroom and closed the door. I went with her obediently and wondering why me. She didn't say anything walking down to her office at the ground floor of the building and if I'd been older or more confident, or less in awe of her, I would have stopped and asked her to put me out of misery, to tell me immediately what was going on. But I didn't, I shuffled along next to her looking at the ground, knowing that my life was about to change, but not quite knowing how and why.

And in her office, I sat down opposite her table, and she said in quite the gentlest of voices that my grandfather died, and my parents were already on their way to my grandparent's house without waiting for me. I really ought to be crying but I thought of the recent comics I'd seen in which a girl had been told that her mother was shot by her father and how she vaulted, dissolved into tears jumped up screaming No! No! I thought I should have done the same thing, but it didn't feel real, and I couldn't think of anything to say, or do, other than look at the floor. I wasn't actually close to grandfather; he was a tyrant and a domineering terror. I think my lack of sympathy reaction made Mrs. Renal more uncomfortable than she had ever made me. She waited for me to cry, I think wanting to be able to put her arms around me and offer some comfort, and when I didn't cry, she found herself at a loss.

I bear always in my mind when my mother punished me and my brother when we made some little childish mistakes, she used to bark on us. Crying is for kids who had weak nature. And she said, Grief is not a sign of weakness, and not lack of faith. It is the price of love, but tears are for weaklings. Mrs. Renal filled

the silence by telling me that sometimes terrible and tragic things happen in life. Even as I sat peacefully in her office, listening to her, she continued her soliloquy on grief. I thought about my mother who will be acting like a first-class award-winning actress, screaming for grief on the surface about the death of her father. I shivered with the creepiness of it. Her mother Sarie could act like a professional actress to show the world that she mourned for the death of her father. Although the great Vincent Villars didn't forgive her and given her the chance to explain when she got pregnant from her first love.

It was where her life revolves around her wants, her needs and desire; she was mercilessly thrown out from his parental house and was sent in exile to get rid of her bastard child. She didn't do it and waited until Medolo Delarose would be back to his senses and would marry her because they had a child who needs a father. Sarie Villars was the youngest and the only girl of her father's first marriage with her four older macho men brothers who dominated her whole being.

It was only natural back then that she wound up in Medolo's bed, feeling like a deprived protected teenager, when time allows, carefree and happy without any thought about the outcome of such encounter.

They met somewhere private few times, she had worn a white lace sexy dress and he a white shirt and grey pants flattered his sleek, muscular frame. Medolo in his prime was totally appetizing, utterly inviting.

Desire overwhelmed them, before they even reached the meeting place, she couldn't wait neither could he.

It was Sarie's love at first sight. After their secret encounters, she got pregnant. In numerous occasions Sarie mentioned to her mother Loreta Villars about how intelligent Medolo was, how articulate and what potential he had. But Sarie had failed to consider the fact that the potential she had seen in Medolo was gloomy. He was about to be a clergyman and had no desire to climb any farther than the level at which he was comfortable, spoilt easygoing adult.

*** Chapter One ***

"When Strangers Meet". **The** gleaming weather celebrated with them during the thirtieth birthday party of Sophie Norton Penny's best friend. The party was held at their huge backyard, tents were built, with nicely decorated tables and chairs for the eighty people invited friends and relatives. One of them was Nicholas Ventura whom Penny happen to stumble at the party. Sophie introduced Nick to her, and they chat superficially. She slid her channel sunglasses on to her face and gazed Nick's eyes with his grinning smile. Penny thought, not bad, a Cambridge alumnus who at the moment works with his father's Bank as controller. She wore a Versace summer dress, quiet a mini and with her Manolo Blahnik heels, wishing she had brought evening flats rather than high suede Mary Jane; indeed, she was an attractive bee. When she was introduced to Nick Ventura, she thought ah, this is the son of the famous Gynecologist in town, who said directly to her face as if they were long-time friends, *from which beautiful planet you came from?* Sophie the celebrant was the one who answered him, from the wonderful Pearl of the Orient. Nick said can she not answer for herself? You prince Cambridge braggart, Nick raised his hands, cool down Sophie, don't bite me, I'm just interested to know her. Penelope sits schtum on that one for time being, kept back her grin at the same time irritated, she was not used to be confronted by a stranger especially in a party like this one. Sophie whispered in Penny's ears, he could be a right uptight sod sometimes, but he's a great kid.

Sophie said I leave you for a while and don't get intimidated with this future king of louts. Nick laughed loudly caressing his glass of beer asked Penelope what brings you to London from far away pearl of the orient. She tried to open her mouth and showed him that she didn't lose her tongue and said, well this is the nineties, everybody can come to England and work or is that impossible? Nick was fast in replying no, no, everybody can come to England especially skilled workers. I'm a Registered Nurse doing Doctor's dirty job, working at the same hospital your mother works, am I skilled enough in your eyes?

She didn't give him a chance to respond her question and to satisfy your query, Mr. Ventura, just call me Nick everybody does. I don't give a damn what everybody does, to get damn cleared. Can I proceed with my curriculum Vitae? Nick gave his tarantella smile, yes, yes sorry to interrupt you. Penny said I just don't know why I should go through with this interview. Anyway, I am twenty-six years old and had been here for one and a half year, single. If I have a boyfriend or not is not your farting business and I live in Grosvenor square with a housemaid and a butler. I don't really have any sex adventure story since I am no party and Pub goer. Nick Ventura was speechless and thought she's one minute a schtum and the next minute a tongue like a razor. Penelope stared directly to his eyes said, am I thorough enough with my personal resume or have you still any question? And I hate men who are so candid to women they didn't really know. Nick was aghast, interrupted her oh, how small world and I thought you cannot talk. Penny in sarcastic tone, oh, I always give people a chance to express themselves what they have in mind.

Sophie came back grinning says what are you guys talking about? Penelope promptly answered, a job interview, but I am not sure if I qualifies with what Mr. Ventura's needs. *But I'm worried that you gave him a hint about the reality that you are PVNBT. (Pure Virgin Never been Touched).* Nick said what's that mean, Sophie said nothing it's our secret thing. He stands up and said it was so nice meeting you Miss Jimenez, Sophie has my number call me, we'll set up a date. "Ballbreaker" she pretended not to hear, she wanted to raise her voice and tell him he could do with himself and play with his precious balls, but she kept it to herself and shook her head.

When Nick disappeared, she said to Sophie a fucking conceited bloke, this isn't how it is supposed to happen, surely? Granted, that it has been a while since I dated, but isn't he supposed to take my number or my email, at the very least. Isn't he supposed to be the one who get in touch with me, if he is interested to invite me? *I feel as if I'm a forty-year-old spinster hopelessly out of touch or having a life on a shelf, waiting that a Prince in armor or a White Knight might pass by mistake for a quickie.*

Sophie Norton her very best friend in joviality shook her head turns to face Penelope. I don't know, I have no idea how dating works these days, *whether they still woe the girl or bring some flowers or just say come on Babe let's hit the fun. Honestly, I think it's alright you don't have to call him, though. I would email him and leave the ball firmly in his court. When he calls you, just say it's nice to meet you Mr. Cambridge guy and hang up. Sophie thought tonight was shaping up quite well, asked Penny was he always like that? Snobbish arrogant chauvinist.*

I don't know says Sophie, we seldom get together. Penny said, he was pretty forward and behaved like he's a son of a Sultan. I'm the wrong person to stoop down and say, yes sir, I agree what you said or yes sir, I'll open my nice legs for you sir, or I don't know how to do a blow job sir. Or say your place or my place? Sophie was hilariously laughing that ached her stomach, that some party guests were asking what was so funny. Sophie said, no don't get disturb, Penelope had only some funny jokes that's what. Some of Sophie's guests said, can we hear it? Penny interrupted, no it's just a nasty joke which I'm not supposed to say it. They said oh, pity we could have shared the hilarious laughter.

Sophie explained, Nick is a brat spoiled by his wealthy parents, a Banker father and Doctor mother, Penelope said do you think they are wealthier than us? My parents owned an island, and my father is one of the Millionaires in Asia. I didn't fill him of my family status, only personal status. Penelope's face lit up with beaming eyes said, he doesn't know me; I could buy and sell him to the highest bidder. Sophie was again in giggling mood and said, oh my gosh, let me get us some martinis, then I want to hear all of it. I'm not sure if he believes me when I told him, I live in Grosvenor Square with a housemaid and a butler. He must be thinking I'm a sort of crazy woman, a social climber or a great pretender. We're so different. He likes sports beer and bars, I like books, theater and a good wine. No, you don't, said Sophie laughing. Penelope stares at her. What do you mean? Of course, I do. You don't. I mean, who am I to tell you what you like and don't like but I've known you for quite a long time, I've only seen you drink Pinot Noir and Whispering Angel, and vodka which is good.

But not that good. Secondly when was the last time you went to the theater? Penelope sits back. I'm desperate to see Placido Domingo. But when was the last time you went? A while ago, I have no time at all with my full duties, says Penny sheepishly. Sophie said, you lack a social life, your church-mouse tendencies as they called them are always in you. Penny thought, in Sophie, she had found the sister she had always wanted, the best friend she never knew she missed, until she met her. Penny thought, I loved how nothing scared Sophie, how everything in life was an adventure, how she never seemed to worry about anything and took pleasure in everything. Initially, I just met Sophie in one of the parties I attended but then she called me to dine with her for a coffee, we'd end up chatting for a bit. After a while she'd pop in on weekends and the more, I got to know her, the more comfortable I was with her.

Often when I have my off days, we'd meet for lunch at Calden or one of the near neighboring cafes and she fills me in on her glamorous lifestyle and latest men while I myself not to be too envious. It wasn't as if I'd given up a similar lifestyle once I met someone. I'd never have the opportunity to go clubbing with the hottest name in pop music or sleep with the man *Cosmopolitan* who had recently called one of the ten most eligible bachelors in UK. Not that I'd never wanted that. Should I have chosen, I could have hung out in Calden every night, mixing with the Stars Sophie talked about. The Stars you read about in the gossip pages in every morning paper. But even when I had the opportunity, I was more interested in having early nights so I could be up early, ready for work the next morning.

Aside from the fact that my housemaid and butler had to report every week to my parents in Manila about my mundane activities, not that it's a must but to relieve my parents fear of my safety. I couldn't bloody tell them to mind their own stupid business when they were actually instructed what they have to do. A swallow of cold juice helping to drown the rising chuckle, just to think how disappointed her parents might be if they called late in the night, and I am still out of the house. Penny came back to the present from her reverie when Richard Norton, Sophie's father said, the point is, she wanted to go with someone who is interested in theater, Sophie in sisterly tone, if you want, I can go with you or my mom. *You're missing the point says Sophie's mother Jackie Norton, but I think we very much get the point that you wanted to go with a man who wants the same things you want, and like doing the same things you like doing, to fulfill all your wants and needs. Penny looks at Sophie's mother. She said, when you put it like that, it sounds completely crazy because those should be mutual and be there from the very start. Sophie's father Richard nods, 'It does, doesn't it? But it isn't unreasonable to want to have the same aspirations. The same likes and dislikes.*

Well, Penelope said isn't that what good relationships are based on? Richard Norton said, in my experience, good relationships are based on kindness, giving and taking. Jackie his wife stared at her husband her eyes full of passionate love. Penny thought, I wish I could find a man like Richard Norton, he thought there was something about this girl that just seemed kind. It had been a long time since Penny came around, she might have a desperate moment.