

## DORA

Dora was the "hired girl." Occasionally, a farm girl, yearning, as it were, for the bright lights, applied for housework in the village. It was a great condescension to "work out" and the fact was brought forth and emphasized many times a day by a toss of the head, a disdainful sniff or a quick frown if the task required seemed unduly menial. Dora was no exception to the rule and my mother warned me that I must "handle her with gloves" or she wouldn't stay.

I used to dream up a picture of Dora, standing like a queen, hand extended to bestow favors, while I knelt before her, properly gloved and said humbly, "Your Majesty, I will be glad to relieve you of the dishes this noon!" The picture always brought a giggle which I had to suppress for fear Dora would realize I was laughing at her.

Dora was blond, even more than blond, her long hair bleached by the sun. Her large cheek bones hinted at some Scandinavian ancestry. Her hands were rough and red--but Andy thought them beautiful.

Andy's hands were red too, burned crisp from hours in the hayfield, as were the long bony wrists exposed below a too short sleeve. Andy was tall and gangly and must have outgrown his clothes at an uncomfortable rate.

Andy was a farm boy from Dora's neighborhood and soon followed her to town, calling at our home each evening after Dora had finished the supper dishes and "red up" the kitchen; every night but Saturday--that was bath night.

It took practically the whole evening to bring the big