

NELL

Josephine and Georgina were both lovely girls in their own separate ways but it's hard to imagine two such different sisters. Georgina, the elder was bright, frightfully so. She was fluent in French by the time she was ten, and Italian and Spanish by the time she was fifteen. She excelled at everything she did at school both academically and on the sports field. Captain of the lacrosse team, winner of the inter-house swimming competition and show jumping champion two years running if I recall. But she was such a plain girl when she was younger. Josephine on the other hand was the beauty; she clearly inherited her looks for her mother, Tatiana. My cousin, Henry met her, Tatiana that is, in - oh what do they call it now? Used to be part of the Austria-Hungarian Empire up towards Russia. Oh Never mind, it's not important. Anyway, Tatiana was an exquisite lady in every sense; third daughter of a count who had distant connections to the Romanovs - or so I was told, and she was everything you'd expect a fine woman of breeding to be. While Georgina inherited Henry's fine mind and physical prowess, Josephine had the very essence of her mother- she would quite literally light up a room by walking into it. We always thought that there was no jealousy between them - but we were wrong. Georgina, you see, felt a bit, well overlooked. While she was excelling at everything she did, she just couldn't compete against Josephine's beauty. The

resentment grew and grew inside Georgina until one day it boiled over. I'm not sure what happened, and Tatiana and Henry never spoke about it until the day they died, but Georgina and Josephine were never the same after. Oh on the outside they were the same loving sisters they'd always been, but to those close to the family knew that there was something different. Georgina herself changed as well, she became more, well, ladylike. She started wearing nice clothes, putting on makeup and doing her hair. While she could never rival Josephine, Georgina did become more attractive, in an ordinary sort of way. It became most pronounced when she went off to university I suppose. She started having Gentlemen friends then so I suppose it was the done thing. And of course, Josephine had met Thomas by then and was planning on moving to India with him - only she fell pregnant with Eve more or less straight after getting married so their plans had to change. It became Georgina's time to shine I suppose and she did, eventually. She met her handsome airman and lived happily ever after. It was just a shame that Josephine never lived to see it.

They did, though seemed to finally make peace with each other that summer before Josephine died. I was staying at Stargrove, helping Josephine with little Evie, and Georgina came to stay for while. It was just before Georgina went to Switzerland for that rest cure for her migraines; it does seem to be a bit of a family trait- terrible headaches; Henry had them, I do, and

clearly Georgina does as well. Anyway, Thomas was out in India, so there was just the three of us and little Evie who I suppose was about two. It was such a lovely time. And then it ended - oh dear- I really can't talk about it even now. Poor Evie. Poor, poor Evie. Thomas did his best and I stayed on of course until Evie went to school; Georgina did a bit of course, but she was seconded by the war office and after the war she went to America. But none of us could ever replace Josephine.