

Duo

When two elderly people are young at heart, ^{relationships} ~~friendships~~ develop quickly. A ~~simple~~ simple game of gin can become a friendship. But ~~As~~ As the friendship begins to tear itself apart, Fonsia is determined to remain calm, collected and friendly, but Weller loses his pride and his temper when he loses

THE GIN GAME

by D.L. Colburn.

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For a Male/Female
Team

FONSIA: I know who my son takes after. His father was as rotten as they come--I always hoped Larry'd be different. I did the best I could. I struggled to raise him by myself--trying to hold on to what little we had. And after all I did for him, what's he up and do--about five years ago, he tries to look up his father!! "Over my dead body," I told him. You do that, and you've seen the last of me!" Sometimes I think he hates me . . . I don't know.

WELLER: Fonsie, you're just getting yourself all upset. There isn't a thing in the world you can do.

FONSIA: I know. I shouldn't get this way.

WELLER: Just relax yourself. You're only doing yourself harm. What you need is to get your mind off him. (Clap of thunder, lights go out momentarily.) Good God, I hope that didn't hit the home! No, I guess it just hit a power line or something. What the hell is that? Look at that. The goddamn roof's leaking again. They were supposed to have renovated this place five years ago, and look at that! The roof leaks. The walls are so damn thin you can punch your finger through them. The heat doesn't work. This is a goddamn slum . . . that's what it is ... a goddamn slum. It's falling apart! Look at that! There's a perfect example of *exactly* what I'm talking about. That switch is on there at damned near a 45-degree angle. (Comic slur) I don't know how drunk a man would have to be to think that's straight up and down.

FONSIA: I know.

WELLER: I guess it's going to rain all day.

FONSIA: I think so...

WELLER: (sitting down) Well, come on. I'll play you a hand of gin.

FONSIA: You know, Weller, you can be such an enjoyable person to be with--you've got a wonderful sense of humor . . . If it wasn't for that damn gin game.

WELLER: My goodness, Fonsia, such language.

FONSIA: Weller, I've played all the cards I'm going to play.

WELLER: Now Fonsie, I'm not going to argue with you. We're playing gin!

FONSIA: That's it, Weller! You're not going to drop this gin game business... and I'm not going to play. So there's no reason for us to sit here and fight over it. I'll go in.

WELLER: You stay right where you are.

FONSIA: I have to go in. It's the only thing I know to do.

WELLER: What do you mean "It's the only thing I know to do??" You came out here, didn't you?

FONSIA: Yes, I did. But certainly not to play gin. All I wanted...

WELLER: All you wanted to do was manipulate me! We've been playing your game ... NOW WE'RE GOING TO PLAY MINE.

FONSIA: I'm not even going to get into this with you, Weller.

WELLER: The hell you're not. You knew your sister Hattie wasn't here. You saw through my little plan to get you out here--but you came

anyway. You can't tell me you didn't enjoy beating me game after game, watching me get angrier and angrier.

FONSIA: Taking a chance on Lord knows what kind of violence.

WELLER: Don't be ridiculous!

FONSIA: I don't think I'm being ridiculous when I say that. When you lose that temper of yours, I believe you're capable of anything.

WELLER: Oh, for Christ's sake, would you get off that and come back over here and sit down!

FONSIA: No, Weller. I'm going in.

WELLER: Goddamn it! I'm not going to let you in there. You'll tell 'em I'm crazy!

FONSIA: Let me go! Get your hands off me!

WELLER: Quiet! For Christ's sake, they'll hear you!

FONSIA: I hope they do.

WELLER: You *do*, don't you. You'd love to get in there and tell them I've been out here shouting at you again. That'd do the trick. (Pause)

VINDICTIVE! That's what you ~~are~~ . . . **VINDICTIVE!** (Pause) Screwed your own son out of the house--just so you could get even with him . . . for God knows what reason.

FONSIA: (Pissed off) That's my business, damn it! You just shut up about it! Who do you think you are, anyway??? Maybe I had good reasons for what I did. You don't know the situation. The only thing you care about in the world is that damn gin game. You're the one who's vindictive . . . saying anything just because I won't play . . .

WELLER: SIT DOWN! SIT DOWN!

FONSIA: All right, goddamn you!!!

WELLER: We'll play one hand . . . and you play to win, goddamn it!

FONSIA: Don't worry about that, mister.

WELLER: All right, by God . . . you've got it! This is it! This is the game! (WELLER quickly shuffles.)

FONSIA: Deal.

WELLER: (Dealing) One . . . (Starts to deal to FONSIA. Changes to himself first.) One, one. Two, two. Three, three. Four, four. Five, five. Six, six . . .

WELLER and FONSIA: Seven, seven. Eight, eight. Nine, nine. Ten, ten. Eleven.

WELLER: I'm going to beat you this hand . . . By God, I'm going to beat you.

FONSIA: (Acidly) I don't know what makes you think it's going to be any different this time.

WELLER: Don't you get smart with me.

FONSIA: I'm not being smart--it's the truth. If you played this game so well, you would've beat me long ago.

WELLER: (Incensed) SHUT UP, GODDAMN IT!!! I'll show you who's going to win, by God--you just concentrate on your cards.

FONSIA: It's *your* discard!

WELLER: I KNOW IT'S MY DISCARD!

FONSIA: (Acidly) I hope you *do* lose. I hope you lose so badly . . .
God.

(Sound of a choir from other room.)

WELLER: Jesus Christ, another choir. That's all we need is another choir. (Pause) Why don't you pick up my card and gin on me? You can't do it can you? It's going to take a lot more than luck this time.

FONSIA: You've got to be the victim of bad luck, don't you Weller?

WELLER: Watch your cards.

FONSIA: Because if it wasn't bad luck, it'd have to be something else, wouldn't it?

WELLER: I said watch your cards!

FONSIA: It'd have to be something like--maybe you think you play gin a whole lot better than you really play it . . .

WELLER: Goddamn it, you're asking for it, Fonsia!

FONSIA: If it hadn't been *bad* luck with your business partners, then it probably would've had to have been something like *bad* judgment . . . or worse yet, maybe they were simply better businessmen that you were. Or it could've been. . .

WELLER: YOU SHUT YOUR FUCKING MOUTH! You don't know the first thing about . .

FONSIA: DON'T USE THAT WORD IN MY PRESENCE!

WELLER: I'll use any FUCKING word I please.

FONSIA: You're just like the one I got. A filthy foul-mouth. That was his word. There I was with a two-year-old baby hearing such filth.

WELLER: I'm sure he had a damn good reason for using it.

FONSIA: I fixed his wagon. He came home one night with half a load on . . . and I had everything he owned right on the street. I mean *right on* the street! That was the end of that!

WELLER: I would have knocked your damn teeth in . . .

FONSIA: And I would've had you in jail so fast it'd make your head spin.

WELLER: Bullshit!

FONSIA: Don't you think I wouldn't. Besides, Walter was too much of a coward to do that anyway.

WELLER: You don't have too many kind things to say about the men in your life, do you?

FONSIA: I'll admit, when it comes to men, I've been very unlucky . . .

WELLER: What did you say?

FONSIA: I said, I haven't had much success . . .

WELLER: You've been UNLUCKY.

FONSIA: All right. . . .

WELLER: It sounds like the same kind of bad luck you've been telling me about. It had to be bad luck, because if it wasn't bad luck, it would've had to been the fact that maybe it was you. That maybe you're a rigid, self-righteous, vicious . . .

FONSIA: All right! You've made your point! Just be quiet and play your cards.

WELLER: All right, by God. (Pause) Play. (Pause) Well, are you going to discard?

FONSIA: You have some nerve complaining about the time I take.

WELLER: You want this one. (Holds out card.) This is the one you want. And I'm going to have to give it to you, too, damn it.

FONSIA: (Contempuously) That was stupid. You just gave me the other queen three plays ago. I'll take it.

WELLER: I didn't have any choice, idiot!

FONSIA: Don't you ever call me an idiot, you . . . don't you ever call me an idiot, you . . . **FUCK!!!** (WELLER looks at FONSIA incredulously.) I've never used that word in my life.

WELLER: Play a card.

FONSIA: (Slams card down.) All . . . right! God *damn* you.

WELLER: Now we'll see who was stupid. One card. One card. (Discard.) Now we'll see who's an *idiot!*

FONSIA: (Seething) Shut your mouth!

WELLER: Be it. Be it Goddamn! So close!

FONSIA: Gin!

WELLER: (Stunned.) Gin.

FONSIA: (Real sly-like.) Gin.

WELLER: (Quietly) Gin. (Louder, hitting things.) GIN! GIN!

FONSIA: Don't hit me! Weller, for God's sake! Nurse!

WELLER: GIN! GIN! GIN! GIN! GIN! GIN! GIN!

FONSIA: (Pause) Weller . . . (Pause) Oh, no . . .