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# The Chalice of Courage

## A Romance of Colorado

By Cyrus Townsend Brady

### CHAPTER XV.

#### The Man's Heart.

Now, love produces both happiness and unhappiness, but on the whole I think the happiness predominates, for love itself if it be true and high is its own reward. Love may feel itself unworthy and may shrink even from the unlatching of the shoe lace of the beloved, yet it joys in its own existence nevertheless. Of course its greatest satisfaction is in the return, but there is a sweetness even in the despair of the truly loving.

Enid Maitland, however, did not have to endure indifference, or fight against a passion which met with no response, for this man loved her with a love that was greater even than her own. The moon, in the trite aphorism, looks on many brooks, the brook sees no moon but the one above him in the heavens. In one sense his merit in winning her affection for himself from the hundreds of men she knew, was the greater; in many years he had only seen this one woman. Naturally she should be everything to him. She represented to him not only the woman but womankind. He had been a boy practically when he had buried himself in those mountains, and in all that time he had seen nobody like Enid Maitland. Every argument which had been exploited to show why she should love him could be turned about to account for his passion for her. They are not necessary, they are all supererogatory, idle words. To him also love had been born in an hour. It had flashed into existence as if from the fiat of the Divine.

Oh, he had fought against it. Like the clematis of old he had been scourged into the desert by remorse and another passion, but time had done his work. The woman he first loved had ministered not to the spiritual side of the man, or if she had so ministered in any degree it was because he had looked at her with a glamour of inexperience and youth. During those five years of solitude, of study and of reflection, the truth had gradually unrolled itself before him. Conclusions vastly at variance with what he had ever believed possible as to the woman upon whom he had first bestowed his heart, had got into his being and were in solution there; this present woman was the precipitant which brought them to life. He knew now what the old appeal of his wife had been. He knew now what the new appeal of this woman was.

In humanity two things in life are inextricably intermingled, body and soul. Where the function of one begins and the function of the other ends no one is able to say. In all human passions are admixtures of the earth earthly. We are born the sons of old Adam as we are reborn the sons of the New. Passions are complex. As in harvest wheat and tares grow together until the end, so in love earth and heaven mingle ever. He remembered a clause from an ancient marriage service he had read, "With my body I thee worship," and with every fibre of his physical being, he loved this woman.

It would be idle to deny that, impossible to disguise the facts, but in the melting pot of passion the predominant ingredient was mental and spiritual; and just because higher and holier things predominated, he held her in his heart a sacred thing. Love is like a rose; the material part is the beautiful blossom; the spiritual factor is the fragrance which abides in the rose jar even after every leaf has faded away, or which may be expressed from the soft petals by the hard circumstances of pain and sorrow until there is left nothing but the lingering perfume of the flower.

His body trembled if she laid a hand upon him, his soul thirsted for her; present or absent he conjured before his tortured brain the sweetness that inhabited her breast. He had been clear-sighted enough in analyzing the past, he was neither clear-sighted nor coherent in thinking of the present. He worshipped her, he could have thrown himself upon his knees to her; if it would have added to her happiness, she could have killed him, smiling at her. Rode she in the Juggernaut car of the ancient idol, with his body, would he have hesitatingly paved the way and have been glad of the privilege. He longed to compass her with sweet observations. The world revenged itself upon him for his long neglect, it had summed up in this one woman all its charm, its beauty, its romance, and had thrust her into his very arms. His was one of those great passions which illuminate the records of the past. Paolo had not loved Francesca more.

Oh, yes, the woman knew he loved her. It was not in the power of mortal man no matter how iron his re-

straint, how absolute the imposition of his will, to keep his heart hidden, his passion undisclosed. No one could keep such things secret, his love for her cried aloud in a thousand ways, even his look when he dared to turn his eyes upon her was eloquent of his feeling. He never said a word, however, he held his lips at least fettered and bound for he believed that honor and its obligations weighed down the balance upon the contrary side to which his inclinations lay.

He was not worthy of this woman. In the first place all he had to offer her was a blood stained hand that might have been overcome in his mind; but pride in his self punishment, his resolution to withdraw himself from the world, completed his explanation and signified his acceptance of the penitent by taking away his life, held him inexorably.

The dark face of his wife rose before him. He forced himself to think upon her, she had loved him, she had given him all that she could. He remembered how she had pleaded with him that he take her on that last and most dangerous of journeys, her devotion to him had been so great she could not let him go out of her sight a moment, he thought fatuously! And he killed her. In the queer turmoil of his brain he blessed himself for everything. He could not be false to his purpose, false to her memory, unworthy of the passion in which he believed she had held him and which he believed he had inspired.

If he had gone out in the world, after her death he might have forgotten most of these things, he might have lived them down. Saneer clearer views would have come to him. His morbid self reproach and self-consciousness would have been changed. But he had lived with them alone for five years and now there was no putting them aside. Honor and pride, the only things that may successfully fight against love, overcome him. He



The Dark Face of His Wife Rose Before Him.

could not give way. He wanted to, every time he was in her presence he longed to sweep her to his heart and crush her in his arms and bend her head back and press lips of fire on her lips.

But honor and pride, held him back. How long would they continue to exercise dominion over him? Would the time come when his passion rising like a sea would thunder upon these artificial embankments of his soul, beat them down and sweep them away?

At first the disparity between their situations, not so much upon account of family or of property—the treasures of the mountains, hidden since creation he had discovered and let lie—the woman compared to his own maturer years, his desperate experience, and his social withdrawal had reinforced his determination to live and love without a sign. But he had long since got beyond this. Had he been free he would have taken her like a viking of old, if he had to pluck her from amid a thousand swords and carry her to a beggar's but which love would have turned to a palace. And she would have come with him on the same conditions.

He did not know that. Women have learned through centuries of weakness that fine art of concealment which man has never mastered. She never let him see what she thought of him. Yet he was not without suspicion; if that suspicion grew to certainty, would he control himself then?

At first he had sought to keep out of her way, but she had compelled him to come in. The room that was kitchen and bed room and store room for him was cheerless and somewhat cold. Save at night or when he was busy with other tasks outside they lived together in the great room. It

was always warm, it was always bright, it was always cheerful, there. The little piles of manuscript she had noted were books that he had written. He made no effort to conceal such things from her. He talked frankly enough about his life in the hills, indeed there was no possibility of avoiding the discussion of such topics. On but two subjects was he inexorably silent. One was the present state of his affections and the other was the why and wherefore of his lonely life. She knew beyond peradventure that he loved her, but she had no faint suspicion even as to the reason why he had become a recluse! He had never given her the slightest clew to his past save that admission that he had known Kirby which was in itself nothing definitive and which she never connected with that package of letters which she still kept with her.

The man's mind was too active and fertile to be satisfied with manual labor alone, the books that he had written were scientific treatises in the main. One was a learned discussion of the fauna and flora of the mountains. Another was an exhaustive account of the mineral resources and geological formations of the range. He had only to allow a whisper, a suspicion of his discovery of gold and silver in the mountains to escape him, and the canons and crests alike would be filled with eager prospectors. Still a third work was a scientific analysis of the water powers in the canons.

He had willingly allowed her to read them all. Much of them she found technical and, aside from the fact that he had written them, uninteresting. But there was one book remaining in which he simply discussed the mountains in the various seasons of the year; when the snows covered them, when the grass and the moss came again, when the flowers bloomed, when autumn touched the trees. There was the soul of the man, poetry expressed in prose, manlike but none the less poetry for that. This book pored over, she questioned him about it; they discussed it as they discussed Keats and the other poets.

Those were happy evenings. She on one side of the fire sewing, her finger wound with cloth to hold his giant thimble, fashioning for herself some winter garments out of a gay colored, red, white and black ancient and exquisitely woven Navajo blanket, soft and pliable almost as an old-fashioned piece of satin—priceless if she had but known it—which he put at her disposal. While on the other side of the same homely blaze he made for her out of the skins of some of the animals that he had killed, a shapeless foot covering, half moccasin and wholly leggin, which she could wear over her shoes in her short excursions around the plateau and which would keep her feet warm and comfortable.

By her permission he smoked as he worked, enjoying the hour, putting aside the past and the future and for a few moments blissfully content. Sometimes he laid aside his pipe and whatever work he was engaged upon and read to her from some immortal noble number. Sometimes the entertainment fell to her and she sang to him in her glorious contralto voice music that made him sad. Once he could stand it no longer. At the end of a burst of song which filled the little room—he had risen to his feet while she sang, compelled to the erect position by the magnificent melody—as the last notes died away and she smiled at him triumphant and expectant of his praise and his approval, he hurled himself out of the room and into the night, wrestling for hours with the storm which after all was but a trifle to that which raged in his bosom. While she, left alone and deserted, quailed within the silent room till she heard him come back.

Often and often when she slept quietly on one side the thin partition, he lay awake on the other, and sometimes his passion drove him forth to cool the fever, the fire in his soul in the icy, wintry air. The struggle within him preyed upon him, the keen loving eye of the woman searched his face, scrutinized him, looked into his heart, saw what was there.

She determined to end it, deciding that he must confess his affections. She had no premonition of the truth and no consideration of any evil consequences held her back. She could give free range to her love and her devotion. She had the ordering of their lives and she had the power to end the situation growing more and more impossible. She fancied that matter easily terminable. She thought she had only to let him see her heart in such ways as a maiden may, to bring joy to his own to make him speak. She did not dream of the reality.

One night, therefore, a month or more after she had come, she resolved to end the uncertainty. She believed the easiest and the quickest way would be to get him to tell her why he was there. She naturally surmised that the woman of the picture which she had never seen since the first day of her arrival, was in some measure the cause of it; and the only pain she had in the situation was that she had learned through centuries of weakness that fine art of concealment which man has never mastered. She remembered everything that he had said to her, and she recalled that he had once made the remark that he would treat her as he would have his wife treated if he had one, therefore whoever and whatever the picture of this woman was, she was not his wife. She might have been some one he had loved, but who had not loved him. She might have died. She was jealous of her, but she did not fear her.

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**A CLEVER ARREST.**

Constable Beamish made a very clever arrest on Tuesday last. Some way or other he heard that a man had wired for money from Mr. McMannel, of Warton, and signed the money, but before he received the money, constable Beamish placed him under arrest. When communicating with High Constable Ward, of Warton, he found that there was a warrant out for the same man's arrest. His name is McDougall, and he is supposed to have passed a worthless cheque not long ago. Constable Ward came down and took him back to Warton on the 10 train.—Hanover Post.