

The Vital Flame

A Stirring Serial of Primitive Passions

by May Christie

CHAPTER VII—THE TAMER

"To marry you within a month!" repeated Marcella automatically, scarcely comprehending the import of the words. "You—you cannot be in earnest! You are joking!"

She contrived to shake out a little nervous laugh. The best—the only way was to treat the thing as humorous, though deep in her subconscious mind she knew that a sense of humor wasn't Warwick Tremen's forte.

She knew, too, he realized that she was frightened. He was extraordinarily gentle in reading moods. His insight into the normal workings of the human mind had placed him high in the business world, and he would go still higher.

"Joking?" It was the man's turn to laugh. He did so grimly, and deliberately. "You underestimate your own powers of fascination, if you think I am not serious in every word I say."

Marcella's breath came fast, and her heart fluttered in her bosom like a caged bird.

This "caught" feeling was absurd—as though any girl, these modern days, ever need marry against her inclination—but none the less, the situation was fraught with all sorts of hidden dangers and awkwardnesses.

How foolish she had been, to blurt out the story of her love for Miles! Why not take time, and break the news gradually, diplomatically!

"But I didn't know that Warwick Tremen was so much in earnest!" she told herself. "And anyway I thought—I thought he was a gentleman! This kind of talk is black-mail, isn't it? How too ridiculous to think that he could force my hand!"

Aloud she said, striving for nonchalance of manner:—

"This is 1926, and you can scarcely carry me off by force, can you? As for using the Swiss episode as a lever—why, I was only a kid at the time, and acting on your own suggestion. You wouldn't surely stoop to methods of that sort. You're far too square!"

An appeal to the chivalry innate in every man would soften him, she hoped. Which goes to show Marcella's ignorance of the type.

He leaned back in a corner of the limousine, from which point of vantage he could see each flickering expression of her pretty face. What a child she was! And how desirable!

Doubly desirable, now that this unexpected fear of losing her had cut into his complacency, like a good, to spur him to fresh efforts. For Warwick Tremen loved a fight! Battles in business were his primary interest, naturally. He had never put love before business, not even when he met and was attracted to Marcella.

But now he saw he had neglected her. (Her fickleness—he called it that—had been the natural outcome of his neglect. The man's innate vanity assured him this was the "raison d'être" of her changed attitude towards himself.)

Yet, even if she loved the other fellow, he would cut him out. Hang it, didn't even the poets say that all was fair in love and war? He wanted Marcella. He would have her, willy-nilly!

"Have a cigarette, my dear?" He handed her his gold, monogrammed case. "It's soothing to the nerves. I'll have one too."

He regarded her between half-closed lids. Jove! She was pretty! New York had taught her how to dress.

In spite of her present perturbation, he could see how vastly she had improved—in poise, in gesture, in the very air with which she wore her clothes.

He didn't want a girl with money. He had heaps of that himself. Women with money of their own grow tiresome and "up-stage." He had no use for independence in a wife. She must come to him for everything, like a grateful subject to its monarch!

He would be good to her—in reason. Naturally there were many little things to be corrected. Modern notions that ill became a woman, who, after all, belonged to the inferior sex.

Once pretty Marcella was his wife, he would teach her that her

future aim in life was to minister to her husband's pleasure, to make her interests subservient to his—indeed, to have no interests that did not circle round himself, his home, his happiness and comfort.

The "breaking in" process would be amusing. As a boy, he had broken in many an untamed colt in his uncle's stables.

He had been rather cruel, sometimes, but had always won. It was stimulating to contemplate a similar success with this high-spirited rather "difficile" young woman.

The big car purred along with soothing sound. The rain had ceased and sunshine lay a-thwart the fields and hedgerows, turning the landscape to a mellow golden green.

Marcella was staring out of the window, her clean-cut, youthful profile showing perturbation.

"Turn round, and listen, my dear," said her companion suddenly. "You and I have lots to talk about. But first of all, let's investigate this boardship flirtation of yours. No, don't be angry at the word! It is merely a passing fancy, I am positive. I've crossed the Atlantic several times myself—and so I know."

He gave a light laugh, though his eyes were unsmiling.

Marcella met his gaze.

"You don't understand in the very least!" she responded bravely. "Oh yes, I do! The affair with me had grown a little hazy. I didn't play the 'ardent lover'—I was too busy, making money for our future, dear. Ours, understand! But all the same, though I didn't make the pretty speeches of this pretty boy of yours—" his thin, well-shaped lips curled in a half-sneer—"I have always wanted you, Marcella. And now—now I don't intend to lose you—even if I have to force you hand!"

His eyes held a curious mixture of triumph and desire, so that the girl shivered.

CHAPTER VIII

"That isn't love speaking." (She must not let him see she was afraid.) She must answer him in his own language. Strong men had the bullying instinct in them, and this one was no exception.)

"If a man really loves a girl, he doesn't seek to injure her—her reputation. And he wants to see her happy with the man she cares for!"

Warwick Tremen flung back his head and laughed aloud. The counterflet of mirth was excellent.

"I'm not really to wear a halo yet, my dear. Such heights of altruism are beyond me. I'm not a saint." Then, sobering: "I'm merely a very human individual who loves and wants an equally human woman, and who intends to have her, even if the means to the end are not as pretty as he'd prefer them to be. But he has to use what weapons are available. That's life and common sense. Cut out this 'noble' stuff."

"That's what I would be cutting out, were I to marry you."

He reached over and caught her gloved hand in his.

"Come, don't be silly. This namby-pamby chap has filled you up with all sorts of high-falutin' ideas that could never stand the light of day. You'd tire of poverty with him, in no time. As a practical business man, I've no use for these so-called artistic chaps, and pity the woman who's ever fool enough to be taken in by their clap-trap, and their talk of temperament and 'art for art's sake' and the sickening line that is their stock-in-trade!"

The girl's tones had the sharp clink of ice as she cut in with:

"I should be obliged if you wouldn't drag him into this conversation. You've given your opinion; leave it at that. I shan't contradict you, because even you yourself would see how wide of the mark you are, were you to meet Miles Holden."

"Miles Holden? That's the name, is it? Now, where have I heard it before?"

And Warwick Tremen straightened, knitting his brows thoughtfully for a moment.

"Holden? Holden? Ah yes, I have! He's a friend—a great friend—of little Leonie Day."

And the man gave a meaning smile that was not lost upon his listener.

To love is to suffer—stupidly, un-

reasonably—and to know the painful pang of jealousy.

Marcella was no exception to the normal girl in love.

She despatched herself for saying: "Who is Leonie Day?"—but for the life of her she had to ask.

"Oh, quite a fetching little thing! Plays merry havoc with the men, all right. Cute, pretty, clever! Knows how to flatter. She got round this Holden fellow beautifully. He set her up in a little hat-shop of her own, and she's really doing awfully well in business. Trust her to come out on top!"

He gave a careless hugh, half admiring, half contemptuous, that definitely classified Miss Leonie Day.

Marcella gave an astonished gasp. "Miles Holden—set this girl up in a hat-shop? It can't be the same man."

Her breathless eagerness, her very eagerness at the linking of this other woman's name with that of Holden, the quick jealousy in her very tones—did not all these prove the extent of her infatuation with the fellow?

It pleased Warwick Tremen, therefore, to hurt her further, for he was annoyed and vexed himself.

"It is the same chap, positively, unless there are two sculptors of that name. The girl was his—model, till he paid her off."

He gave a meaning pause, to allow the last remark to sink in properly.

"She has a lovely figure," he continued. "Come, what on earth's the matter?"

"I don't believe a word of it," cried Marcella, giving herself away completely, and heedless that she did. "You are inventing stories just because you know I—I admire him so!"

The man pretended to look amazed.

"Are you really so ignorant of art as not to know that these sculptor-Johnnies work from 'life'?"

"It isn't that. It's your—your hateful insinuations—" paying her off—the hat-shop—"

His lip curled sarcastically. "You're afraid that your saint has feet of clay? My dear child, I know nothing of the morals of the man. But it would be news indeed to learn that artists, of all people, are exempt from the ordinary weaknesses of life. Use your intelligence and common sense, and don't let this idle infatuation run away with you."

"You must tell me you have a 'right to know,'" breathed Marcella, casting prudence to the winds.

Warwick Tremen shrugged his shoulders lightly.

"I'm sorry I mentioned the matter, since you're so upset about it. But I certainly can't go back on what I've said. I've attended to some small investments for Leonie Day, and when your friend set her up in the Maison Leonie, as she calls her place of business, the transaction was put through by my firm. There's no denying the fact that the Holden chap gave her the money. Why, he walked right into my office with the girl! Now that I come to think of it, his face at Southampton was so vaguely familiar! Nice looking chap, I grant you! This happened about a year and a half ago—maybe more. The girl's doing nicely."

Marcella clutched at a straw. "He—he gave her the money out of kindness. He's so generous and quixotic, he would give everything he had to—anybody—"

Warwick Tremen touched her hand. "Wake up, my child. As though seedy sculptors were in the habit of handing out three hundred pounds to 'anybody'! Don't you believe it... not unless they got full value for the money!"

Ensued a very painful pause. Marcella, with averted face, her underlip bitten till it nearly bled, so that its trembling might be controlled, stared unseeing out of the window of the car.

The lovely landscape had grown dimmed, and all its beauty gone.

Warwick Tremen went on, suavely: "Of course the girl's not in your class, Marcella, and I shouldn't be surprised if the fellow's tired of her by now. The trouble is that she's far from being tired of him—in fact, she dotes on him. D'you know, she burst into my office only yesterday, saying how vexed she was she had to go off to Paris for a few days, because she'd miss seeing him here on his arrival? If I had my wits about me, I'd have known he was coming on your boat. Rather odd if the fair Leonie had come down with me to Southampton and we'd both found our best-beloveds had no further use for us, but were infatuated with each other! Eh? Ha! Ha!"

There was no mirth in the attempt at joviality, and Marcella knew intuitively that the speaker did believe that an 'affair' existed or had existed—between Miles Holden and this hat-shop girl.

(To Be Continued.)

"The Maples" of Cartwright's Point

By Miss A. M. Going in Willson's Monthly Magazine.

The Maples, built by the late Sir Richard Cartwright, G.C.M.G., P.C., in 1870 for a summer home, is one of the beauty spots of Canada. It is situated about three miles from Kingston, Ont., on the shore of the St. Lawrence River, and yet is so securely hidden by a screen of the trees from which it took its name that the thousands of motorists who pass along the Provincial Highway from Toronto to Montreal have no idea that within half a mile from the road is this dear old home within its park and garden, with its beautiful views of lake and river, and its memories of the men who were making Canadian history when Rt. Hon. Sir Richard Cartwright was Minister of Finance in the Mackenzie Government.

The house is built on land taken on a long lease from the Government by the young Member for Lennox and Addington, Mr. Richard John Cartwright, a member of a family who had come from the colonies to the south before the exodus of the United Empire Loyalists. In 1784, Hon. Richard Cartwright, his grandfather, was one of the founders of Kingston and had been given grants of land from George III for his services to the state.

From Forest to Estate. When Mr. Cartwright, then sitting upon the Conservative benches in the House of Commons at Quebec, took the lease of what has been for many years known as Cartwright's Point, a rocky promontory, thickly wooded, with little arable land, the only use to which it seemed likely to be put was as a site for another fortress: for the defence of Kingston's harbor. In fact, a clause in the lease mentioned that it could be reclaimed by the Government for that purpose only.

Labor was plentiful, so an army of workmen was sent down from the town; and soon paths were made around the point, the underbrush taken from between the trees in the part reserved for the park, and the house begun where the land seemed most likely to produce flowers and where the best view of the river and the neighboring islands could be obtained. Stories are still told of the hundreds of men employed by Sir Richard in turning this waste land into a small estate, and one of the oldest cab-drivers, lately passed to his rest, told a member of the Cartwright family, whom he had always driven, that when he was young he drove Sir Richard down to see how the work was getting on and saw the workmen roasting a sheep whole for their dinner.

Beauty and Quiet. The Maples was built for a summer home, but its thick walls and large rooms with fire-places, its long French windows opening on to the wide verandah that runs around three sides of the house, give it an air of comfort and permanence. The house faces the southeast, and to the right lies the garden, a border around a square of shaven lawn. In May the great peony bushes make a glorious show; in June the roses take their place; and through the summer a succession of bright blossoms show against the background of tall trees. A cedar hedge encloses the garden; on the lawn to the right of the house, scarlet geraniums make a vivid spot of color; and the gravel drive at the entrance is broken by a bed of flowers and tall palms. This has been the Kingston home of this branch of the Cartwright family for half a century, and here they have spent the summers with the exception of years when a trip to Europe was taken by Lady Cartwright and her daughters. Here came many of the men whose names are famous in Canadian history; here the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava visited Sir Richard and Lady Cartwright when he was Governor-General of Canada, and on the walls of the long drawing-room at The Maples is a picture of him given to them as a memento of a pleasant, restful visit. Lord Carnarvon was another noted visitor to Sir Richard and Lady Cartwright's summer home during his stay in Canada.

A path winds around the point where a view of Lake Ontario stretching to the horizon may be had and passes along the high shore of Dead Man's Bay. You may return to the house under the tall pine-trees where the crews build their nests and under which tradition tells us the Indians buried their dead. A corroboration of this story was found, when the building for the engine that pumps the water for the house was being erected, in the skeleton of a man, evidently buried in the days when the red men were the only Canadians.

Quiet and Relaxation. To Sir Richard Cartwright, his summer residence beside the St. Lawrence was a place of relaxation from the care of statecraft. Here he enjoyed the quiet of his home and the life on the water that he loved. His family tell of long days spent in his yacht, stopping to fish and picnic on the islands. As he grew older, and the rheumatism that claimed him as its victim attacked him, a steam-launch took the place of the sailing-yacht. Sir Richard would not give in to his enemy entirely and until his last few years used to row Lady Cartwright along the shores in the summer evenings when the setting sun turned the spires of the Kingston churches to minarets of gold.

Exquisite Pictures. The cycle of the seasons brings a series of exquisite pictures to the

members of this family who have inherited a love and an appreciation of beauty. In the early spring, the space between the maples is carpeted with hepaticas; blood root opens its trail white blossoms where the tennis-court hides between the trees; and later columbine nods its scarlet head from the rocks and baby ferns uncurl their fronds at the first touch of the sun. The only woods near Kingston where the first spring flowers, pushing their fragrant blossoms through dead leaves, are found—the hospitality of the Cartwrights is at times sadly taxed, for parties of children wander at will through the grounds and may be met with arms full of flowers, frequently throwing away as many as they carry home. The limestone and the granite meet on Cartwright's Point, as the wooded portion of the estate is still called; therefore its flora is varied, and botanists find it a treasure-house.

The family, who during Sir Richard's active parliamentary days spent the winters in Ottawa, have since his death spent them in Kingston and do not wait for the beauty of the early spring to pass before going to their summer home. They are there to watch the birds begin their housekeeping in the big sycamore bushes, where several families of catbirds are always to be found. The phoebes consider the verandah their special place but this year were driven forth by a pair of chipping sparrows; yellow warblers like the rose-bushes to nest in; and a pair of flickers come back every year to an old oak tree at the end of the garden. The owners of The Maples love all wild things, and the birds and the beasts show no fear of them. Rabbits play tag across the lawn, and guests joining the family at afternoon tea may be surprised at a visit from several chipmunks who are on the look-out for crumbs and may linger to play hide-and-seek among the chairs.

The Magic of Autumn. But it is when Autumn enters with her royal banners of scarlet and gold that The Maples is at its loveliest. At the first touch of frost, the magic begins. A maple turns a rosy pink, the sumach of the rocks behind the house holds forth a blood-red finger to show what the Spirit of the North has done for her, the point below the house shows touches of gold and crimson amongst the dark green of the fir-trees, and slowly the yearly pageant of Autumn passes. It was surely from that shore, when the coloring was most glorious that Bliss Carman sang:

On the crown of the hill, for all to see, God planted a scarlet maple-tree.

The west wind from Lake Ontario scatters the leaves, the nuts are gathered by the squirrels, and the big fire-places are not big enough

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to defy a Canadian winter—so the family leaves for Kingston, and a white covering falls on woodland and garden.

The lease of the land was renewed until after Lady Cartwright's death, and since that time the property has been purchased from the Government by the estate. The sons of Sir Richard and Lady Cartwright have served their country both in South Africa and in the Great War. Colonel Robert Cartwright, of Sumnerland, B.C., and Colonel Frank Cartwright served in both wars and were decorated for valor. The latter was also in the West with the Strathcona Horse. Major Conway Cartwright, Vancouver, served in France with the Canadian Medical Service.

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The marriage is announced of Elizabeth Brown, B.A., youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Brown, Philadelphia, Pa., to Gerald De Vere Brennan Gray, son of Dr. W. A. Gray and the late Mrs. Gray, Smith's Falls.

Mrs. J. Pigden, Arden, daughter of Mrs. James Grills, Belleville, who underwent an operation at the Belleville General Hospital a few days ago, is doing as nicely as can be expected.