

The Fighting Chance

ROBERT W. CHAMBERS

Copyright, 1906, by the Curtis Publishing Company.
Copyright, 1904, by Robert W. Chambers.

(A continued story.)

Something was amiss too. Men were rushing from the verandas, women screamed and stood up wringing their hands. A mounted policeman came galloping through the darkness. People shouted: "Throw sand on it! Get shovels, for God's sake! Lift that tonneau. There's a woman under it!"

But they were mistaken, for Lella lay at the foot of the slope, one little bloody hand clutching the dead grass, and Plank knelt beside her, giving his orders quietly to those who came running down the hill from the roadway above, which was now fiercely illuminated by burning gasoline. At last they got sand enough to quench the fire and men sufficient to lift the weight from the dead man's neck and drag what was left of him on to the grass.

"Don't look!" whispered Sward, drawing Sylvia back.

He and she both had put their shoulders to the tonneau along with the others, and now they stood there together in the shifting lantern light, sickened, shivering under the summer stars, staring at the gathering crowd around that shapeless lump on the grass.

Plank passed them, walking beside an improvised stretcher, calm, almost smiling, as Sylvia sprang forward with a little sob of inquiry.

"There's the doctor over there. That man is a doctor. He knows," repeated Plank with studied deliberation, looking down at Lella's deathly face. "He says it's all right. He says he'll get a candle and that he can tell by the flame's effect on the pupils of the eyes what exactly is the matter. No," to Sward, beside him, pressing forward through the crowd which eddied from the dead man to the stretcher, "no, there is not a bone broken. She is stunned, that's all. She fell in the shrubbery. We'll have an ambulance here pretty quick, Stephen," using his first name unconsciously. "Won't you look out for Sylvia? I'm going back on the ambulance. If you'll find somebody to drive my machine I wish you would take Sylvia back. No, I don't want you to drive, Stephen—if you don't mind. Get that machinist, please. I'm rattled, and I don't want you to drive."

Lella lay on the stretcher, her bloodless face upturned to the stars. Beyond, under a blanket, something else lay very still on the lawn.

Plank beckoned a policeman and whispered to him.

Then, far away in the darkness, a distant clamor grew on the night air, nearer, nearer.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.



Lella lay on the stretcher.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.

Plank, standing beside the stretcher, raised his head, listening to the ambulance arriving at full speed.



Sylvia, with that plump sun-burned boy at your heels all day long? Are there no men about?

Sylvia, with that plump sun-burned boy at your heels all day long? Are there no men about?

"One's coming today," said Sylvia, laughing, and slipping her arm around Lella's waist she strolled with her out through the tall glass doors to the terrace, with a backward look of airy dismissal at Sward.

Plank had wired from New York the night before that he was coming. In another hour he would be there. Lella knew it perfectly well, and she looked into the wickedly expressive young face of the girl beside her, eyes soft but unsmiling.

"Child, child," she murmured, "you do not know how much of a man a man can be!"

"Yes, I do!" said Sylvia hotly. Lella smiled. "Hush, you little silly! I've talked Stephen and praised Stephen to you for days and days, and the moment I dare mention another man you fly at me, hair on end!"

"Oh, Lella, I know it! I'm perfectly mad about him, that's all. Look at him as he saunters across the lawn. Lella! Look at him!"

"Well? I see him."

"Isn't he almost an ideal?"

"He is. He certainly is, dear."

"Do you think he walks as though he were perfectly well?"

"He may be coming down with whooping cough."

Sylvia rose indignantly, but Lella pulled her back to the sun warmed marble bench.

"A girl in love loses her sense of humor temporarily. Sit down, you little vixen!"

"Lella, you laugh at everything when I don't feel like it."

"I'm not in love, and that's why."

"You are in love."

They sat there in the sun, Lella's hand lying idly in Sylvia's, the soft sea wind stirring their hair and in (To be continued.)

Spend the Summer at NEWPORT YAQUINA BAY

The only beach in the Pacific Northwest where the pretty Water Agates, Moss Agates, Moonstones, Carnellans, and Rock Oysters can be found.

Outdoor Sports, all Kinds

Including Hunting, Fishing, digging Rock Oysters, Boating, Surf Bathing, Riding, Antelope, Canoeing and Dancing. Pure mountain water and the best of food at low prices. Fresh Crabs, Clams, Oysters, Fish and Vegetables of all kinds daily. IDEAL CAMPING GROUNDS, with strict sanitary regulation at nominal cost.

Low Round-trip Season Tickets from all points in Oregon, Washington and Idaho on sale daily.

Three-day Saturday to Monday rate from S. P. points, Portland to Cottage Grove inclusive, including branch lines; also from all C. & E. stations Albany and west. Good going on Saturday or Sunday, and for return Sunday or Monday.

A Sunday Excursion Rate of \$1.50

from Albany, Corvallis and Philomath, with corresponding low rates from points west, in effect all summer. Call on my S. P. or C. & E. Agent for full particulars as to rates, train schedules, etc.; also for copy of our beautifully illustrated booklet, "Outings in Oregon," or write to

Wm. McMurray,
GENERAL PASSENGER AGENT PORTLAND, OREGON

Standing by the Family Name

A maker has his own reason for putting his name on a piano. It is a creditable piece of work. He is willing to assume the responsibility for its future.

Makers who send out pianos without their factory imprint have their own reasons also. Stenciling on the name board any name that strikes a retailer's fancy their own personality does not appear in the attraction at all; why, then, invite trouble? The dealers who sell these fatherless "stencil" instruments—sell them, recommend them, do everything but become accountable for them. How can they? Their interest in a piano that bears one name this year, another the next, must be more or less transient. The purchaser cares nothing about that. He does care, though, about the instrument wearing well. Not for one year nor for ten, but long after the dealer may have, and doubtless has, gone out of business. That is why all sound piano reasoning leads to buying from the manufacturer or from his direct representatives. Here is the

Matchless Baldwin Pianos

Grand Prix-Paris, 1900. Grand Prize-St. Louis, 1904.

Its makers work with half a century's experience at their command. Flawless materials are chosen. Specialized craftsmen toil over every detail. The whole is refined, polished, brought to rare perfection. When the instrument goes out into the world to meet artistic standards, the makers not only sign it with their own name but (such is the personal "paternal" nature of their feeling) follow its career with as keen an interest as a father keeping track of a particularly promising child.

The name "Baldwin" on your piano is sterling assurance of continued satisfaction. To the big mass of buildings comprising the Baldwin home you may look for the redeeming of this pledge. Skilful control of factory economies brings price within the lowest figure consistent with high quality.

Come and hear the Baldwin at our Salesrooms

SALEM MUSIC COMPANY
L. F. Savage, Manager, - - 135 Liberty Street

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

IN September, her marriage to Sward excitingly imminent, Sylvia had been seized with a passion for wholesale renunciation and rigid self chastisement. All that had been so materially desirable to her in life, all that she had heretofore worshiped in and belonged to her own world, she now denied. Down went the miniature golden calf from the altar in her private shrine, its tiny crashing fall making considerable racket throughout her world and the planets and satellites adjacent to that section of the social system which she had long been expected to dominate.

The spectacle of their youthful ruler-elect in sackcloth as the future bride of a business man had more than disconcerted them. The amazing announcement of Quarrier's engagement to Agatha Calhoun stupefied the elect, rendering in one harrowing instant null and void the thousand petty plans and plots, intrigues and schemes upon which future social constructions on the social structure had been based.

The grief and amazement of Major Belwether, already distracted by his nonparticipation through his own fault in Plank's consolidation of Amalgamated with Intercounty, was pitiable to the verge of the unpleasant. Like panic stricken rabbits, his thoughts ran in circles, and he skipped in their wake, scurrying from Quarrier to Harrington, from Harrington to Plank, from Plank to Sward, in dis-

tracted hope of recovering his equilibrium and squatting safely somewhere in somebody's luxuriantly perpetual cabbage patch. He even squeezed under the fence and hopped humbly about old Peter Calhoun, who suddenly assumed monumental proportions among those who had so long tolerated him.

But Quarrier coldly drove him away, and the increasing crowds, besieging poor, bewildered old Peter Calhoun, trod upon the major, and there was nothing for him to do but to scuttle back to his own brush heap and huddle there, squeaking pitifully.

As for Grace Ferrall, she lost no time in tears, but took Agatha publicly to her bosom, turned furiously on Quarrier in private and for the first time in her life permitted herself the luxury of telling him exactly what she thought of him.

"You had your chance," she said. "But you are all surface! There's nothing to you but soft beard and manicuring and the reticence of stupidity! The one girl for you—and you couldn't hold on to her! The one chance of your life—and it's escaped you, leaving a tuft of pompadour hair and a pair of woman's eyes protruding from the golden dust heap your father buried you in. Now you'd better sit there and let it cover your mouth, and try to breathe through your nose. Agatha is looking for a new sensation. She's tried everything, now she's going to try you. That's all. She will be an invaluable leader. Howard, and we shall not yawn, I assure you. But, oh, the chance you've lost, for lack of a drop of red blood and a barber to give you the beard of a man!"

Which merely deepened the fear and hatred which Quarrier had entertained for his pretty cousin from the depths of his silk cradled cradle. As for Kemp Ferrall, now third vice president of Intercounty, he only laughed with the tolerance of a man in safety, and, looking at Quarrier through the pickets of the financial fence, not only forgot how close his escape had been, but, being a busy and progressive young man, began to consider how he might ultimately extract a little profit from the expensive tenant of the inclosure.

Grace made the journey to town to express herself freely for Sylvia's benefit. But when she saw Sylvia the girl's radiant beauty checked her, and all she could say was: "My dear, my dear, I knew you would do it! I knew you would fling him on his head! It's in your blood, you little jade—you little jilt! You mix of a baggage! I knew you'd behave like all women of your race!"

Then she drove to the Santa Regina, where Marion was to join her in her return to Shotover. And she was already trying to make up her disturbed mind as to which might prove the more suitable for Marion—Captain Voucher, gloomily recovering from his defeat by Quarrier, or Billy Fleetwood, who didn't want to marry anybody.

In the meanwhile Sward's new duties as second vice president of Intercounty had given him scant leisure for open air convalescence. He was busy with Plank. He was also busy with the private investigation stirred up at the Patrons club and the Lenox and which was slowly but inevitably resulting in clearing him, so that his restoration to good standing and full membership remained now only a matter of formal procedure.

So Sward was becoming a very busy man among men, and Plank, still carrying on his broad shoulders burdens unheeded by any man save such a man as he, shook his heavy head and ordered Sward into the open. And Sward, who had learned to obey, obeyed.

But September had nearly ended when Lella, in Plank's private car, attended by Sward and Sylvia and two trained nurses, arrived at the Fells. The nurses—Plank's idea—were a surprise to Lella, and the day after her arrival at the Fells she dismissed them, got out of bed and dressed and came downstairs all alone on a pair of sound though faltering legs.

Sylvia and Sward were in the music room, very busily figuring out the probable cost of a house in that section of the city east of Park avenue, where the newly married imprudent are forming colonies—a just punishment for those reckless brides who marry for love and are obliged to drive over two car tracks to reach their wealthy friends and relatives of the golden zone.

"What have you been playing?" asked Lella. "What do you find to do with yourself."

"What have you been playing?" asked Lella. "What do you find to do with yourself."