

HIS LOVE STORY

MARIE VAN VORST

ILLUSTRATIONS BY RAY WALTERS

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SYNOPSIS.

La Comte de Sabron, captain of French cavalry, takes to his quarters to raise by hand a motherless Irish terrier pup, and names it Pitechoune. He dines with the Marquise d'Esclignac and meets Miss Julia Redmond, American heiress. He is ordered to Algeria but is not allowed to take servants or dogs. Miss Redmond takes care of Pitechoune, who, longing for his master, runs away from her. The Marquise plans to marry Julia to the Duc de Tremont. Pitechoune follows Sabron to Algeria, fox and master meet, and Sabron gets permission to keep his dog with him. The Duc de Tremont finds the American heiress capricious. Sabron, wounded in an engagement, falls into the dry bed of a river and is watched over by Pitechoune. After a horrible night and day Pitechoune leaves him. Tremont takes Julia and the Marquise to Algeria in his yacht but has doubts about Julia's Red Cross mission. After long search Julia gets trace of Sabron's whereabouts. Julia for the moment turns matchmaker in behalf of Tremont.

CHAPTER XX—Continued.

After a moment, in which the Marquise d'Esclignac gazed at the bougainvillea and wondered how anyone could admire its crude and vulgar color, Miss Redmond asked:

"Did you ever think that the Duc de Tremont was in love?"

Turning shortly about to her niece, her aunt stared at her.

"In love, my dear!"

"With Madame de la Maine."

The arrival of Madame de la Maine had been a bitter blow to the Marquise d'Esclignac. The young woman was, however, much loved in Paris and quite in the eye of the world. There was no possible reason why the Marquise d'Esclignac should avoid her.

"You have been hearing gossip, Julia."

"I have been watching a lovely woman," said the girl simply, "and a man. That's all. You wouldn't want me to marry a man who loves another woman, ma tante, when the woman loves him and when I love another man?"

She laughed and kissed her aunt's cheek.

"Let us think of the soldier," she murmured, "let us think just of him, ma tante, will you not?"

The Marquise d'Esclignac struck her colors.

In the hallway of the villa, in a snowy gibbet (and his clean-washed appearance was much in his favor), Hammet Abou waited to talk with the "grandmother" and the excellency.

He pressed both his hands to his forehead and his breast as the ladies entered the vestibule. There was a stagnant odor of myrrh and sandalwood in the air. The marble vestibule was cool and dark, the walls hung with high-colored stuffs, the windows drawn to keep out the heat.

The Duc de Tremont and Madame de la Maine came out of the salon together. Tremont nodded to the Arab.

"I hope you are a little less—" and he touched his forehead smiling, "today, my friend."

"I am as God made me, Monsieur."

"What have you got today?" asked Julia Redmond anxiously, fixing her eager eyes upon Hammet.

It seemed terrible to her that this man should stand there with a vital secret and that they should not all be at his feet. He glanced boldly around at them.

"There are no soldiers here?"

"No, no, you may speak freely."

The man went forward to Tremont and put a paper in his hands, unfolding it like a chart.

"This is what monsieur asked me for—a plan of the battlefield. This is the battlefield, and this is the desert."

Tremont took the chart. On the page was simply a round circle, drawn in red ink, with a few Arabian characters and nothing else. Hammet Abou traced the circle with his fingers tipped with henna.

"That was the battle, Monsieur."

"But this is no chart, Hammet Abou."

The other continued, unmoved:

"And all the rest is a desert, like this."

Tremont, over the man's snowy turban, glanced at the others and shrugged. Every one but Julia Redmond thought he was insane. She came up to him where he stood close to Tremont. She said very slowly in French, compelling the man's dark eyes to meet hers:

"You don't wish to tell us, Hammet Abou, anything more. Am I not right? You don't wish us to know the truth."

Now it was the American pitted against the Oriental. The Arab, with deference, touched his forehead before her.

"If I made a true plan," he said coolly, "your excellency could give it tomorrow to the government."

"Just what should be done, Julia," said the Marquise d'Esclignac, in English. "This man should be arrested at once."

"Ma tante," pleaded Julia Redmond. She felt as though a slender thread was between her fingers, a thread which led her to the door of a labyrinth and which a rude touch might cause her to lose forever.

"If you had money would you start

out to find Monsieur de Sabron at once?"

"It would cost a great deal, Excellency."

"You shall have all the money you need. Do you think you would be able to find your way?"

"Yes, Excellency."

The Duc de Tremont watched the American girl. She was bartering with an Arabian for the salvation of a poor officer. What an enthusiast! He had no idea she had ever seen Sabron more than once or twice in her life. He came forward.

"Let me talk to this man," he said with authority, and Julia Redmond did not dispute him.

In a tone different from the light and mocking one that he had hitherto used to the Arab, Tremont began to ask a dozen questions severely, and in his answers to the young Frenchman, Hammet Abou began to make a favorable impression on every one save the Marquise d'Esclignac, who did not understand him. There was a huge bamboo chair on a dais under a Chinese pagoda, and the Marquise d'Esclignac took the chair and sat upright as on a throne. Mimi, who had just been fed, came in tinkling her little bells and fawned at the sandals on Hammet Abou's bare feet.

After talking with the native, Tremont said to his friends:

"This man says that if he joins a Jewish caravan, which leaves here tomorrow at sundown, he will be taken with these men and leave the city without suspicion, but he must share the expenses of the whole caravan. The expedition will not be without danger; it must be entered into with great subtlety. He is either," said Tremont, "an impostor or a remarkable man."

"He is an impostor, of course," murmured the Marquise d'Esclignac. "Come here, Mimi!"

Tremont went on:

"Further he will not disclose to us. He has evidently some carefully laid plan for rescuing Sabron."

There was a pause. Hammet Abou, his hands folded peacefully across his breast, waited. Julia Redmond waited. The Comtesse de la Maine, in her pretty voice, asked quickly:

"But, mes amis, there is a man's life at stake! Why do we stand here talking in the antechamber? Evident-

ly the war office has done all it can for the Capitaine de Sabron. But they have not found him. Whether this fellow is crazy or not, he has a wonderful hypothesis."

A brilliant look of gratitude crossed Julia Redmond's face. She glanced at the Comtesse de la Maine.

"Ah, she's got the heart!" she said to herself. "I knew it." She crossed the hall to the Comtesse de la Maine and slipped her arm in hers.

"Has Monsieur de Sabron no near family?"

"No," said the Marquise d'Esclignac from her throne. "He is one of those unfamilied beings who, when they are once taken into other hearts are all the dearer because of their orphaned state."

Her tone was not unkind. It was affectionate.

"Now, my good man," she said to Hammet Abou, in a language totally incomprehensible to him, "money is no object in this question, but what will you do with Monsieur de Sabron if you find him? He may be an invalid, and the ransom will be fabulous."

The Comtesse de la Maine felt the girl's arm in hers tremble. Hammet Abou answered none of these questions, for he did not understand them. He said quietly to Tremont:

"The caravan starts tomorrow at sundown and there is much to do."

Tremont stood pulling his mustache. He looked boyish and charm-

ing, withal serious beyond his usual habit. His eyes wandered over to the corner where the two women stood together.

"I intend to go with you, Hammet Abou," said he slowly, "if it can be arranged. Otherwise this expedition does not interest me."

Two women said:

"Oh, heavens!" at once.

Robert de Tremont heard the note of anxiety in the younger voice alone. He glanced at the Comtesse de la Maine.

"You are quite right, Madame," he said, "a man's life is at stake and we stand chaffing here. I know something of what the desert is and what the natives are. Sabron would be the first to go if it were a question of a brother officer."

The Marquise d'Esclignac got down from her throne, trembling. Her eyes were fixed upon her niece.

"Julia," she began, and stopped.

Madame de la Maine said nothing.

"Robert, you are my godson, and I forbid it. Your mother—"

"—is one of the bravest women I ever knew," said her godson. "My father was a soldier."

Julia withdrew her arm from the Comtesse de la Maine as though to leave her free.

"Then you two girls," said the Marquise d'Esclignac, thoroughly American for a moment, "must forbid him to go." She fixed her eyes sternly upon her niece, with a glance of entreaty and reproach. Miss Redmond said in a firm voice:

"In Monsieur de Tremont's case I should do exactly what he proposes."

"But he is risking his life," said the Marquise d'Esclignac. "He is not even an intimate friend of Monsieur de Sabron!"

Tremont said, smiling:

"You tell us that he has no brother, marraine. Eh bien, I will pass as his brother."

A thrill touched Julia Redmond's heart. She almost loved him. If, as her aunt had said, Sabron had been out of the question—

"Madame de la Maine," said the Marquise d'Esclignac, her hands shaking. "I appeal to you to divert this headstrong young man from his purpose."

The Comtesse de la Maine was the palest of the three women. She had been quietly looking at Tremont and now a smile crossed her lips that had tears back of it—one of those beautiful smiles that mean so much on a woman's face. She was the only one of the three who had not yet spoken. Tremont was waiting for her. Hammet Abou, with whom he had been in earnest conversation, was answering his further questions. The Marquise d'Esclignac shrugged, threw up her hands as though she gave up all questions of romance, rescue and disappointed love and foolish girls, and walked out thoroughly wretched, Mimi tinkling at her heels. The Comtesse de la Maine said to Julia:

"Ma chere, what were the words of the English song you sang last night—the song you told me was a sort of prayer. Tell me the words slowly, will you?"

They walked out of the vestibule together, leaving Hammet Abou and Tremont alone.

CHAPTER XXI.

Master and Friend.

Pitechoune, who might have been considered as one of the infinitesimal atoms in the economy of the universe, ran over the sands away from his master. He was an infinitesimal dot on the desert's face. He was only a small Irish terrier in the heart of the Sahara. His little wiry body and his color seemed to blend with the dust. His eyes were dimmed by hunger and thirst and exhaustion, but there was the blood of a fighter in him and he was a thoroughbred. Nevertheless, he was running away. It looked very much like it. There was no one to comment on his treachery; had there been, Pitechoune would not have run far.

It was not an ordinary sight to see on the Sahara—a small Irish terrier going as fast as he could.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Rome's Colossal Fish Pond.

The duke of Sermoneta, who is acting as president of the committee formed in Rome to promote the independence of Poland, ranks among the greatest landowners in Italy. Fogliano, his estate near the Pontine marshes, extending to 80,000 acres, mainly under grass, for the duke owns vast herds of cattle. The most productive portion of the estate, however, is a lake several miles long and about a mile in breadth, which, from the time of the Roman empire downward, has supplied fish for the market in Rome. Whenever there is a flood by rain on the hills the lake overflows through a narrow channel into the sea. The sea fish find their way through into the lake, and remain to fatten in the fresh water, and then are captured on their return by an ingenious labyrinth constructed of reeds into which they swim. They are of the best kind—chiefly gray mullet.

And That Spoiled It.

Douglas Fairbanks went to a social affair the other night and an admiring woman cornered him.

"Oh, Mr. Fairbanks," she said, "your acting is wonderful."

"Thank you," he replied.

"It's marvelous how you bring out the different emotions."

"I'm glad you appreciate my work."

"Yes, indeed, you are a great actor."

"You are indeed complimentary."

"And do you know," the woman rattled on, "I have a little five-year-old son at home who acts exactly like you do."

USE SPARROWS TO TEASE STOREKEEPER

Patient Merchant, Victim of Youths' Pranks, Finally Rebels at Latest Trick.

Rochester, N. Y.—F. W. Huntington, who runs a notions and candy store at 349 Bay street, is a patient man, but when some boys in the neighborhood who have been annoying him let loose three sparrows in his store he felt the limit of endurance had been reached.

Mr. Huntington accused two boys, about fifteen or sixteen years old, as the leaders in devising tricks to plague him, although younger boys have also joined in the tricks. He had one of the sparrows, which he caught in the



Let Loose Three Sparrows.

store, with him as evidence. It was in a pasteboard box, with a small hole in the top for air.

"I chased those birds all over the store," he said, "and you may believe it was a job to drive them out. They would fly everywhere except out of the door."

Yelling derisively when customers were in the store, throwing cabbages into the place and the operation of the device known as a tick-tack had all been tried by the ingenious youths before letting loose the sparrows.

BULL'S LOVE CAN'T BE COWED

Elopes With Maude Veal After Family Roasting, and Expects Beefing Now.

Binghamton, N. Y.—Charles Bull and Miss Maude S. Veal were married here, which is nobody's business. Mr. Bull, who is not in the meat business, told Rev. H. S. Sweetland that he and his bride had traveled from Scranton to avoid any action by the Veal family, who opposed the match because of the bridegroom's name.

Mr. Bull explained that he and his bride had put up with this opposition like lamba until they decided to chop out for themselves and stake all on their affection for each other. He said they hoofed it down to the station, hopped into a chair car and completed arrangements for the marriage while on their way here.

"Mr. and Mrs. Veal will never get over beefing about this affair," said Mr. Bull, "but we can stand their roasting, as we have in the past. We're here and they're there, so what do we care. They cannot cow us."

SHOT CHILDREN IN DREAM

Texas Ranch Woman Finds Her Offspring Wounded When She Awakes.

San Antonio, Tex.—Mrs. W. B. Libtle, who resides on a ranch near Medina Dam, shot her two children one recent Sunday night when she was dreaming burglars were trying to break into her home.

A bullet from an automatic revolver struck each of the children, a girl six year old and a boy three, in the right leg, causing only flesh wounds.

News of the unusual incident reached San Antonio relatives of Mrs. Libtle recently. According to their advice Mrs. Libtle was so unnerved by the consequences of her vision she does not recall whether she dreamed the children had been sleeping beside her were burglars and had aimed at them, or whether she was walking about the room and dropped the revolver, causing it to be discharged.

BOY TRIES TO RIVAL BIRDS

Indiana Youth Breaks His Arm in Glide From Barn Loft on Wings.

Evansville, Ind.—John Mitchell, aged fourteen, living in the Mount Vernon road below the city, attempted to rival the birds and came to grief with a broken arm. Mitchell made a glider and wings after a pattern in a boy's book which he bought at a local store.

He attempted to glide from the loft of the stable to the ground. The gliders were not strong and the wings collapsed. Mitchell fell to the ground and his left arm was broken near the elbow and he suffered slight internal injuries.

HUBBY HAD NOT FORGOTTEN

Was Right There With Wedding Anniversary Present, and Yet Wife Was Not Pleased.

It was late afternoon and time to get her husband's supper, but the woman sitting moodily by the fire never moved.

Her heart was breaking. It was her birthday. She had been married only four years, but her husband had forgotten her birthday already. That morning he had given her no present; not even an extra kiss before rushing off to town.

Presently there was the sound of a key turning in the lock. Into the room came her husband. Still she never moved.

He bent over her and whispered as he dropped a tiny parcel into her lap: "Many happy returns, darling!"

Her heart was mended. She sprang to her feet and seized him in a frantic grasp as she realized that, after all, he still loved her. Then she opened the parcel.

"Pipe cleaners!" she gasped, as she displayed a little bundle of feathers. "Yes, sweetheart," said the man. "I knew that they'd please you, as you object to my using your hairpins!"

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Poor Father!

"When I was a boy," said the head of the family, "I had to wear my father's old clothes made over."

"That's all right, dad," answered his son. "I've got a couple of old suits you can have."

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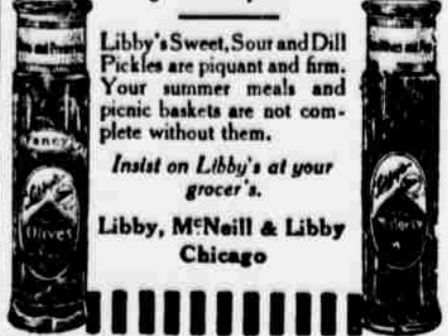
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