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Can a Wife Love the Woman Who Wins Her Husband from Her?

(The Interesting Social Problem Raised by Two Wives Who Gave Their Mates to Their Rivals)

Yes, Says Mrs. Craig Wentworth, of Boston, Who Gave Her Husband Up to Her Friend.

Because—"Love is a natural impulse. After love has gone, or after one has come to love a third person better than one's lawful mate, it is ridiculous for either to insist upon living together. You have no right to blame the other woman, and there is no reason why you should not love her."

Yes, Says Mrs. Olive Brandon, of Denver, Who Did the Same Thing with Her Husband.

Because—"He loved her. I wanted him to be happy. I love her because I love him, and she may make him happy."

RECENTLY Mrs. Craig Wentworth, an accomplished and cultured Boston woman gave up her husband to a friend who had won his love and secured a divorce that they might marry. Still more recently Mrs. Olive Brandon, of Denver, found that her husband and the daughter of an old friend had fallen in love with each other. Mrs. Brandon did just what Mrs. Wentworth did—gave her husband up to a friend who had won his love.

The curious part of both transactions is not the giving up of the husbands—but that each wife declares she loves the woman who won her husband from her. Is such a thing possible? Here Mrs. Wentworth and Mrs. Brandon tell why it is, and Clara Morris, the distinguished American actress and essayist, tells why it is not.

"She seems to give away her husband over **BUT** she is still a cave woman who fought with the teacups, toasting her rival's success **BUT** the interloper for possession of her mate!"



No, Says Clara Morris, the Noted American Actress and Writer.

Because—"It is against nature, instinct and heredity."

"The natural prey of both pursued and pursuer is man." "All women have a fierce sense of the right of possession to their own husbands! This ineradicable trait is a legitimate inheritance from their far, far away cave ancestresses—she whose greatest chance for life depended upon securing to herself some two-legged animal with a bludgeon to defend her from other two-legged animals and four-legged animals."

"This passionate sense of possession has come down through the centuries to every woman to-day. Unreasoning, sometimes, seemingly inexplicable when the wife who has never loved, but has committed the crime of marrying for home or position sees her lord wooing and wooed by another who does love him. Yet loving or unloving, the cave woman, who is one of us, must feel bitter resentment against the creature who dares challenge this right of possession."

UNLESS—"She is so tired of him that she hails the other woman as a deliverer, and feels for her a gratitude so great that it seems love!"

"And so it is that I say that no wife can love the one who wins her husband from her—unless she is one of these few whose boredom has become so great as to stupefy the primitive."

"Why I Love the Woman to Whom I Gave My Husband"

By Marion Craig Wentworth

LOVE is a natural impulse. It is something you cannot control. Love just is. It cannot be denied. I speak of the true element of love, and not the tawdry imaginary emotion with which it is too often confused.

Love is often misunderstood. When it is real, it is all-powerful. Miss Chapman was my intimate friend. We regarded each other with the highest esteem. We continue to do so. I do not hold her to blame in the slightest.

Love sprang up between Miss Chapman and my husband. Both admitted it to me.

I love my husband deeply and fervently. If his happiness demanded that he marry Miss Chapman, I hold that I had no right to deny it.

Why should I claim ownership over an individual? I could not control their love. They loved, and that was the end of it. I am a socialist and believe in the freedom of the individual. If my theories were true, here was my test.

We talked it all over, Miss Chapman offering to go away and never visit us again. But I felt that I should release my husband that he might marry the woman he loved more than he loved me.

I went West, lived in Reno a year so that I could get my divorce on the ground of desertion, and when I had secured my decree returned home. Our boy, Brandon, was given to me, but my husband is at liberty to see him

at any time, and plans to educate him, although I do not require, nor need it.

Trials marriage is a doctrine I could never consider. Medical examination interferes with personal liberty. If a couple wish to marry, they should not be prevented by any medical board.

Love is an element that makes one willing to suffer anything for one's mate, and marriage should be actuated by love, and by love alone. There should be no basis of mating, no eugenics, no medical stipulation—no limitation.

Had I failed to secure a divorce from my husband when he loved another more than he loved me, I should consider that my love had failed.

When marriages are based on love, as I understand it, we shall have a more happy world. We need most a clearer and loftier conception of matrimony. The new and broader conceptions will do away with marriages for money, for commercial advancement, for personal gain, to get a home, to attain social rank, and all the other "ambitious" arrangements which cheapen and corrupt the rite.

Why should one be forced to make allegations and counter allegations and submit to abuse and vilification in order to secure divorce?

When both parties agree to separation, that should be sufficient to secure a decree of divorce.

After love has gone, or after one has come to love a third person better than one's lawful mate, isn't it ridiculous for a couple to attempt to live together?

I will make Boston my home for the present.

so that Brandon may not be deprived of the companionship of his father.

The boy and his father are very fond of each other, and I could not bear to do anything which would interrupt their comradeship. As things are now, Brandon and his father can see each other as often as they desire.

I have explained to the boy—in a very simple way, of course—what the situation is. I think that he partially understands, but the continued absence of his father from home does not surprise him as much as it would in some cases, for his father has always been absent a great deal, on account of his work.

Both Mr. Wentworth and Alice now regard me in the light of an elder sister or guardian angel. People need not be in the least surprised if we were all seen in public together. I have had several letters from Alice since their marriage, and I am glad through and through that they found happiness together.

"Why No Woman Can Love a Rival"—By Clara Morris

PECULIAR domestic conditions have brought great searchlight of publicity upon Mrs. Marion Craig Wentworth, of Boston, and Mrs. Olive Brandon, of Denver. Each has given her husband to another woman, each declares that she has acted from the highest, most self-sacrificing motives, and each declares that she loves the other woman.

"One star differeth from another star in glory," so does one wife differ from another wife in depths of love and devotion. But the one thing that is certain is that there can be no wife on earth who can love the woman who wins her husband away from her. It is against nature, instinct, heredity. Women are divided into two great classes—those who are pursued and those who pursue. True, the latter may not go forth openly now with stone hatchet and spear, but secretly they may set many a prettily-painted and daintily-baited trap. The natural prey of both pursued and pursuer is man. The desirableness of her who is pursued is as much a trap as those which she who is not so desirable sets to prevent her favorite game from falling to the lot of her more desirable sister.

Now, just as you may never find any two leaves from the same tree exactly alike, neither can you find any two women from the tree of life exactly alike, and yet there is one trait all possess in common—a fierce sense of the right of possession to their own husbands! This ineradicable trait is a legitimate inheritance from their far, far away cave ancestresses—she whose greatest chance for life depended upon securing to herself some two-legged animal with a bludgeon to defend her from other two-legged animals and four-legged animals with teeth and claws, to provide her with meat, a gillie coat of fur, and a "gallus" or two of hide to keep it up.

People bestow much unnecessary pity upon the cave woman. She was much happier than are her myriads of ceremonially wedded descendants in that she knew herself to be of tremendous value to her mate; not merely as a giver of sons to stand by his side fighting with bits of clubs when scarce thigh high to him, but as the keeper of the fire she was scarcely second in importance to her hairy lord. That precious fire, which not only scorched and singed their chunks of meat and gave comfort and cheer, also secured for them safety for sleep, frightened off prowling beasts from the marital lair during the dark hours of the night. Hence woman's love for the hearthstone—greater far than man's. Hence, too, her pride as wife, and the bitter resentment she must feel when displaced.

The keeping of the fire became a religious rite, one of the earliest of rituals. The first priests were women, and the first Deity a mother goddess. In woman to-day this ancient devotion to the fire is transformed into devotion to the home. Through the ages she has confused the man for whom she kept the fire with the fire itself. The dominant idea that she

must not let the fire go out is forged tight and fast to the idea that leaving her mate or being left by him is the same thing.

To let the fire go out meant disaster or death, and she who kept hers brightest was the best mate. She knew it, and she was proud of her trust. And depend on it, if any giddy young thing in neck-lace of teeth came phandering about or tried to poach on her preserves, there was grim battle given with tooth and nail, stone hatchet and club. For her mate was her very own, one with the sacred fire, the bringer of food and fur—and she fought to keep him! And that passionate sense of possession has come down through the centuries to every woman to-day. Unreasoning, sometimes, seemingly inexplicable when the wife who has never loved, but has committed the crime of marrying for home or position sees her lord wooing and wooed by another who does love him. Loving or unloving the cave woman in us must feel bitter resentment toward the creature who does challenge this right of possession. This is so of all women—except those very, very few who have become so tired of their mates that they welcome the other woman as a Hagar and Her Son Isaac Being Driven from the House of Abraham. Fritz von Uhde's Famous Painting of the Biblical Incident Told in Genesis xxi, 9-14.

And so it is that I say that no wife can love the woman who wins her husband from her—unless she is one of these few whose boredom has become so great as to stupefy the primitive. How, then, does it happen that we find both Mrs. Wentworth and Mrs. Brandon avowing their love for the other woman?

Now, it is a peculiar fact that in all history I cannot recall a single case of a capable, vital woman giving up her husband, cheerfully and voluntarily, and loving the woman to whom she had given him. There have been men who have done this—Ruskin, who gave his wife to the painter, Millais, and was friend of both till death—but woman does not mean as much to man as

man does to woman. "Man's love is of man's life a thing apart"—you knew the old hackneyed phrase of Byron, which, though hackneyed, is still true. Why should she? The reason lies with him as with her in these primeval days of cave life. A man was far better able to get along then without a mate than was a woman. It has been so all through the ages. All that he needed of food and covering he could get himself with his stone club, and if he had no fire he could make shift to hide in the rocks. There has grown up in man no such intense sense of possession as in woman. He can find it in his heart to let the woman go, and still retain friendship for her and his rival. There



are not so many complexities concerned in his affections. There is no record in the Bible of a man giving up his wife to a rival, but there is the record that Sarah, the wife of Abraham, caused Hagar and her child to be banished into the wilderness. And in doing so she acted truly, as all women either act or would like to act. But to return to the case in point! Woman is, at the same time the most conservative of beings, and under stress she can become the most reckless of gamblers. Being a creature of habit herself, she knows the terrible strength of habit. Also woman's mind is subtle. Often it is mole-like and works best under cover and in darkness, coming to the surface only when the work is done, and the most cautious woman, when driven desperate, will gamble on chances that would make a professional card sharp ask for a foot warmer. What has this to do with the question? Well, this: No woman has ever been able to hold a man by sorrow, by reproaches, by the recalling of hot past vows and endearments. You cannot revive a man's love by showing him, and the last spark of affection is soon extinguished in the drip of tears. Broadening womankind is beginning to realize that the "tranny of tears" is not and never has been a guarantee of allegiance. Man wants what is denied him, and he strains at the halter. Man never finds so desirable that which is freely given him and if the halter is loosed he may run for a time, but habit drives him sooner or later, back to the old barn. A man who lives for ten years with one woman grows into habits that mark him indelibly. Every second wife knows this to her unhappiness. When the glamour of the new begins to fade the old habits begin to reassert themselves. He is in their bondage. They clamor for their familiar setting. The discarded wife waits.

By permission of the Syndicate de la Propriete Artistique. "I never see some marriages without thinking of Flanck's great painting of 'Poland,'" says Clara Morris. "I see the woman lashed to the post of matrimony and the prey of every brutality and cruelty. In such cases I can well imagine the wife will love her deliverer."

two women love the woman who have taken their husbands from them. I think that Miss Brander at least has said: "I cannot keep him as things are. I will gamble on this trait of man. I will not reproach him nor will I weep. I will loose the halter and give him to this other woman. And I will even say that I love her, too, so that the last shreds of my opposition to his desire may seem to vanish, and so I may have easier access to his abode. He will not then feel that I desire him and he will wonder at this and I will be more in his mind than this woman to whom I have given him. And because I have become again a mystery to him, which by now the other woman will not be, he will begin to want me again. Then old habits will come up and pull him toward me, and at the last he will throw aside this woman and return to me." There is a difference between these two women who have given up their husbands. Mrs. Wentworth is financially independent, attractive, at the very Summer tide of life; accomplished, too; gifted, ambitious; an author, a lecturer, a playwright. She spies love between her husband and her friend. "They admit their mutual passion, and the friend makes the most sensible, courageous and honorable proposal possible: 'She will go away and live down her unhappy love.' And this suffering wife—does she take the girl in her arms and tell her how brave she is and promise to love and trust her always? Not a bit of it! She eagerly declares that 'love is a natural impulse that cannot be controlled.' And since Mr. Wentworth loves her he must wish to marry her, and she straightway promises to go to Reno. Blithely she keeps her word and blithely she returns, gives the lovers to each other and is free. Is the love for her husband only friendship; her love for her rival gratitude?" Both these women have set a bad example. The cave woman's idea was a better one.

And so I do not believe that either of these