The TINDER BOX

by

MARIA THOMPSON DAVIESS

AUTHOR OF "THE MILLING OF MOLLY"

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CHAPTER V

Sweeter When Tamed?

"Let Sa[illegible] you don't [illegible]

Sallie and she's worse—worse hey?"

I agreed with his question but I didn't say so.

"Glad your money is safe in public town bonds and city securities, Evelina. If James could he might lose it and could have to move over. It would then be nip and tuck between you and Sallie which got James' nip and tuck hey?"

"Oh, Uncle Peter!" I exclaimed with positive horror that was flavored with a large dash of indignation.

"Well, you—a race between a widow and a girl for a man is about like one between a young duck and a spring chicken across a mill pond, girl and chicken lose, hey? But let Sallie have him since you don't need him. I've got to go home and listen to Augusta talk about my business that she knows nothing in the world about or I won't be ready for town meeting this afternoon. Women are a[illegible] hey?"

Why [illegible] Uncle Peter? I asked tartly. I had settled Sallie in my conception of James's affection and I had put a good stiff bar on it [illegible]

[illegible] I answered. And there was an [illegible] wanted [illegible] Uncle Peter [illegible] Aunt Augusta [illegible] and then [illegible] head to avoid the return [illegible]

"His house is [illegible] and I need a [illegible] work." I [illegible] with the words I have [illegible] weeks [illegible] Peter [illegible] James. He [illegible] James' [illegible] hey? he snapped with the precision of a [illegible]

[illegible] Aunt Augusta [illegible] Uncle Peter [illegible] Aunt Augusta [illegible] Uncle Peter [illegible] and then [illegible] head to avoid the return [illegible]

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[illegible] he grumbled but his feet contained [illegible]

In about [illegible] and a half minutes I had [illegible] in a cushioned rocker on the south side of the porch. Jasper had given us both a mint julep and Uncle Peter was [illegible] less thirsty than he had been for a long time. Aunt Augusta is as temperate in all things as a steel rainbow.

You see, Uncle Peter, I needed you so that I just had to kiss up to you. I said to him as he wiped his lips with a pocket handkerchief as stiffly starched as was his wife herself.

"Why didn't you go over and live in James' henery, live with James hey?" he snapped with the precision of a [illegible]

[illegible] Aunt Augusta [illegible] Uncle Peter [illegible] Aunt Augusta [illegible] Uncle Peter [illegible] and then [illegible] head to avoid the return [illegible]

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