

THE TEMPTING OF A TAVERNAKE

A TALE OF LOVE, MYSTERY AND INTRIGUE

By E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

SYNOPSIS.
 Leonard Tavernake, Englishman to the bone, proposes Beatrice, a young girl, who is serving in a London boarding house. She follows him to Philadelphia, where he tells her about his life. A restaurant he tells her about himself, but she shrugs her own past in reply.
 After dinner they go to the embarkment, and here Beatrice attempts suicide. Tavernake hurries her into a chemist's shop, and she is saved. While waiting there, Beatrice meets a rich young man, who makes her overhauls a rich young man's suit, and a doctor that Tavernake takes her away.
 To save her his housekeeper. He explains to her that she has nothing to fear from him, as he is not an Englishman. When she returns he finds himself face to face with the chauffeur who frightened Beatrice. From the first, he states, and she wishes to rent a house.

CHAPTER V—(Continued).

INTRODUCING MRS. WENHAM GARDNER.

"I should like to do so, if I may, without delay," she said.

"There is no opportunity like the present," Mr. Dowling replied. "If you will permit me," he added, rising. "It will give me the greatest pleasure to escort you personally. My engagements for the rest of the day happen to be unimportant. Tavernake, let me have the keys of the rooms that are locked up. The caretaker, of course, is there in possession."

The beautiful visitor rose to her feet, and even that slight movement was accomplished with a grace unlike anything which Tavernake had ever seen before.

"I could not think of troubling you so far, Mr. Dowling," she protested. "It is not in the least necessary for you to come yourself. Your manager can, perhaps, spare me a few minutes. He seems to be so thoroughly posted in all the details," she added, apologetically, as she noticed the cloud on Mr. Dowling's brow.

"Just as you like, of course," he declared. "Mr. Tavernake can go, by all means. Now I come to think of it, it certainly would be inconvenient for me to be away from the office for more than a few minutes. Mr. Tavernake has all the details at his fingers' ends, and I only hope, Mrs. Gardner, that he will be able to persuade you to take the house. Our client," he added, with a bow, "would, I am sure, be delighted to hear that we had secured for him so distinguished a tenant."

She smiled at him, a delightful mixture of graciousness and condescension.

"You are very good," she answered. "The house sounds rather large for me, but it depends so much upon circumstances."

"Mr. Tavernake," she continued, "my car is waiting outside and we might go on at once."

He bowed and held open the door for her, an office which he performed a little awkwardly. Mr. Dowling himself escorted her out to the pavement. Tavernake stopped behind to get his hat, and passing out a moment afterward, would have seated himself in the car beside the chauffeur, but that she held the door of the car open and beckoned to him.

"Will you come inside, please?" she in-

quired. "There are one or two questions which I might ask you as we go along. Please direct the chauffeur."

He obeyed without a word; the car glided off. As they rounded the first corner, she leaned forward from among the cushions of her seat and looked at him.

Then Tavernake was conscious of new things. As though by inspiration, he knew that her visit to the office of Messrs. Dowling, Spence & Company had been no chance one. She remembered him, remembered him as the companion of Beatrice during that strange, brief meeting. It was an incomprehensible word, this, into which he had ventured. The woman's face had lost her languid, graceful expression. There was something there almost akin to tragedy. Her fingers fell upon his arm and her touch was no light one. She was gripping him almost fiercely.

"Mr. Tavernake," she said, "I have a memory for faces which seldom fails me. I have seen you before quite lately. You remember, of course. Tell me the truth quickly, please."

The words seemed to leap from her lips. Beautiful and young though she undoubtedly was, her intense seriousness had suddenly aged her face. Tavernake was bewildered. He, too, was conscious of a curious emotional disturbance.

"The truth? What truth do you mean?" he demanded.

"It was you whom I saw with Beatrice?"

"You saw me one night, about three weeks ago," he admitted slowly. "I was in a chemist's shop in the Strand. You were signing his book for a sleeping draught, I think."

She shivered all over.

"Yes, yes," she cried. "Of course, I remember all about it. The young lady who was with you—what was she doing there? Where is she now?"

"The young lady was my sister," Tavernake answered. "She was with me for a moment, as though she would have struck him."

"You need not tell me!" she exclaimed. "It is not worth while. Tell me where you met her, where you were with her at all in that intimate fashion, and where she is now!"

Tavernake realized at once that so far as this woman was concerned, the fable of his relationship with Beatrice was hopeless. She knew.

"Madame," he replied, "I made the acquaintance of the young lady with whom I was that evening, at the boarding-house where we both lived."

"What were you doing in the chemist's shop?" she demanded.

"The young lady had been ill," he proceeded deliberately, wondering how much to tell. "She had been taken very ill indeed. She was just recovering when you entered."

"Where is she now?" the woman asked eagerly. "Is she still at that boarding-house of which you spoke?"

"No," he answered.

"Her fingers gripped his arm once more. "Tavernake," she said, "you must always in monosyllables? Don't you understand that you must tell me everything that you know about her. You must tell me where I can find her, at once."

"Why do you insist upon my understanding her voice had still that note of wonderful sweetness, but she had altogether lost her air of complete and aristocratic indifference. She was a very altered person now from the distinguished client who had first enlisted his services. For some reason or other, he knew that she was suffering from a terrible ailment.

"Where is she now?" the woman asked eagerly. "Is she still at that boarding-house of which you spoke?"

"No," he answered.

"Her fingers gripped his arm once more. "Tavernake," she said, "you must always in monosyllables? Don't you understand that you must tell me everything that you know about her. You must tell me where I can find her, at once."

"Why do you insist upon my understanding her voice had still that note of wonderful sweetness, but she had altogether lost her air of complete and aristocratic indifference. She was a very altered person now from the distinguished client who had first enlisted his services. For some reason or other, he knew that she was suffering from a terrible ailment.

"Where is she now?" the woman asked eagerly. "Is she still at that boarding-house of which you spoke?"

"No," he answered.

"Her fingers gripped his arm once more. "Tavernake," she said, "you must always in monosyllables? Don't you understand that you must tell me everything that you know about her. You must tell me where I can find her, at once."

"Why do you insist upon my understanding her voice had still that note of wonderful sweetness, but she had altogether lost her air of complete and aristocratic indifference. She was a very altered person now from the distinguished client who had first enlisted his services. For some reason or other, he knew that she was suffering from a terrible ailment.

"Where is she now?" the woman asked eagerly. "Is she still at that boarding-house of which you spoke?"

"No," he answered.

"Her fingers gripped his arm once more. "Tavernake," she said, "you must always in monosyllables? Don't you understand that you must tell me everything that you know about her. You must tell me where I can find her, at once."

"Why do you insist upon my understanding her voice had still that note of wonderful sweetness, but she had altogether lost her air of complete and aristocratic indifference. She was a very altered person now from the distinguished client who had first enlisted his services. For some reason or other, he knew that she was suffering from a terrible ailment.

"Where is she now?" the woman asked eagerly. "Is she still at that boarding-house of which you spoke?"

"No," he answered.

"Her fingers gripped his arm once more. "Tavernake," she said, "you must always in monosyllables? Don't you understand that you must tell me everything that you know about her. You must tell me where I can find her, at once."

"Why do you insist upon my understanding her voice had still that note of wonderful sweetness, but she had altogether lost her air of complete and aristocratic indifference. She was a very altered person now from the distinguished client who had first enlisted his services. For some reason or other, he knew that she was suffering from a terrible ailment.

"Where is she now?" the woman asked eagerly. "Is she still at that boarding-house of which you spoke?"

"No," he answered.

"Her fingers gripped his arm once more. "Tavernake," she said, "you must always in monosyllables? Don't you understand that you must tell me everything that you know about her. You must tell me where I can find her, at once."

"Why do you insist upon my understanding her voice had still that note of wonderful sweetness, but she had altogether lost her air of complete and aristocratic indifference. She was a very altered person now from the distinguished client who had first enlisted his services. For some reason or other, he knew that she was suffering from a terrible ailment.

"Where is she now?" the woman asked eagerly. "Is she still at that boarding-house of which you spoke?"

"No," he answered.

"Her fingers gripped his arm once more. "Tavernake," she said, "you must always in monosyllables? Don't you understand that you must tell me everything that you know about her. You must tell me where I can find her, at once."

"Why do you insist upon my understanding her voice had still that note of wonderful sweetness, but she had altogether lost her air of complete and aristocratic indifference. She was a very altered person now from the distinguished client who had first enlisted his services. For some reason or other, he knew that she was suffering from a terrible ailment.

"Where is she now?" the woman asked eagerly. "Is she still at that boarding-house of which you spoke?"

"No," he answered.

"Her fingers gripped his arm once more. "Tavernake," she said, "you must always in monosyllables? Don't you understand that you must tell me everything that you know about her. You must tell me where I can find her, at once."

"Why do you insist upon my understanding her voice had still that note of wonderful sweetness, but she had altogether lost her air of complete and aristocratic indifference. She was a very altered person now from the distinguished client who had first enlisted his services. For some reason or other, he knew that she was suffering from a terrible ailment.

"Where is she now?" the woman asked eagerly. "Is she still at that boarding-house of which you spoke?"

"No," he answered.

"Her fingers gripped his arm once more. "Tavernake," she said, "you must always in monosyllables? Don't you understand that you must tell me everything that you know about her. You must tell me where I can find her, at once."

"Why do you insist upon my understanding her voice had still that note of wonderful sweetness, but she had altogether lost her air of complete and aristocratic indifference. She was a very altered person now from the distinguished client who had first enlisted his services. For some reason or other, he knew that she was suffering from a terrible ailment.

"Where is she now?" the woman asked eagerly. "Is she still at that boarding-house of which you spoke?"

"No," he answered.

"Her fingers gripped his arm once more. "Tavernake," she said, "you must always in monosyllables? Don't you understand that you must tell me everything that you know about her. You must tell me where I can find her, at once."

"Why do you insist upon my understanding her voice had still that note of wonderful sweetness, but she had altogether lost her air of complete and aristocratic indifference. She was a very altered person now from the distinguished client who had first enlisted his services. For some reason or other, he knew that she was suffering from a terrible ailment.

"Where is she now?" the woman asked eagerly. "Is she still at that boarding-house of which you spoke?"

"No," he answered.

"Her fingers gripped his arm once more. "Tavernake," she said, "you must always in monosyllables? Don't you understand that you must tell me everything that you know about her. You must tell me where I can find her, at once."

"Why do you insist upon my understanding her voice had still that note of wonderful sweetness, but she had altogether lost her air of complete and aristocratic indifference. She was a very altered person now from the distinguished client who had first enlisted his services. For some reason or other, he knew that she was suffering from a terrible ailment.

"Where is she now?" the woman asked eagerly. "Is she still at that boarding-house of which you spoke?"

"No," he answered.

"Her fingers gripped his arm once more. "Tavernake," she said, "you must always in monosyllables? Don't you understand that you must tell me everything that you know about her. You must tell me where I can find her, at once."

"Why do you insist upon my understanding her voice had still that note of wonderful sweetness, but she had altogether lost her air of complete and aristocratic indifference. She was a very altered person now from the distinguished client who had first enlisted his services. For some reason or other, he knew that she was suffering from a terrible ailment.

"Where is she now?" the woman asked eagerly. "Is she still at that boarding-house of which you spoke?"

"No," he answered.

"Her fingers gripped his arm once more. "Tavernake," she said, "you must always in monosyllables? Don't you understand that you must tell me everything that you know about her. You must tell me where I can find her, at once."

"Why do you insist upon my understanding her voice had still that note of wonderful sweetness, but she had altogether lost her air of complete and aristocratic indifference. She was a very altered person now from the distinguished client who had first enlisted his services. For some reason or other, he knew that she was suffering from a terrible ailment.

"Where is she now?" the woman asked eagerly. "Is she still at that boarding-house of which you spoke?"

"No," he answered.

"Her fingers gripped his arm once more. "Tavernake," she said, "you must always in monosyllables? Don't you understand that you must tell me everything that you know about her. You must tell me where I can find her, at once."

"Why do you insist upon my understanding her voice had still that note of wonderful sweetness, but she had altogether lost her air of complete and aristocratic indifference. She was a very altered person now from the distinguished client who had first enlisted his services. For some reason or other, he knew that she was suffering from a terrible ailment.

"Where is she now?" the woman asked eagerly. "Is she still at that boarding-house of which you spoke?"

"No," he answered.

"Her fingers gripped his arm once more. "Tavernake," she said, "you must always in monosyllables? Don't you understand that you must tell me everything that you know about her. You must tell me where I can find her, at once."



TAVERNAKE HAD NO TIME TO ESCAPE

"I am not sure," he said at last, "whether I can do as you ask."

"What do you mean?" she exclaimed sharply.

"The young lady," he continued, "seemed, on the occasion to which you have referred, to be particularly anxious to avoid recognition. She hurried out of the place without speaking to you, and she has avoided the subject ever since. I do not know what her motives may have been, but I think that I should like to ask her first, before I tell you where she is to be found."

Mrs. Wenham Gardner leaned toward him. It was certainly the first time that when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

lips were parted, her eyes were pathetically, delightfully eloquent.

"What do you mean?" she exclaimed sharply.

"The young lady," he continued, "seemed, on the occasion to which you have referred, to be particularly anxious to avoid recognition. She hurried out of the place without speaking to you, and she has avoided the subject ever since. I do not know what her motives may have been, but I think that I should like to ask her first, before I tell you where she is to be found."

Mrs. Wenham Gardner leaned toward him. It was certainly the first time that when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"I am only going by her expression when she saw you come into the chemist's shop," Tavernake persisted doggedly.

"Why do you ask such a question?" she demanded.

"It is a cruel suggestion, that," the woman cried. "I wish to be her friend, I am her friend. If I could only tell you everything, you would understand at once what a terrible situation, what a hideous quandary I am in."

Once more Tavernake paused for a few moments. He was never a quick thinker and the situation was certainly an embarrassing one for him.

"Madam," he replied at length, "I beg that you will tell me nothing. The young lady of whom you have spoken permits me to call myself her friend, and what she has not told me herself I do not wish to learn from others. I will tell her of this meeting with you, and if it is her desire, I will bring you her address myself with a few hours. I cannot do more than that."

Her face was suddenly cold and hard.

"You mean that you will not?" she exclaimed angrily. "You are obstinate. I do not know how you dare to refuse what I ask."

The car had come to a standstill. He stepped out on to the pavement.

"This is Grantham House, madam," he announced. "Will you descend?"

He heard her draw a quick breath between her teeth and he caught a glimpse of her eyes which made him feel vaguely uneasy. She was very angry indeed.