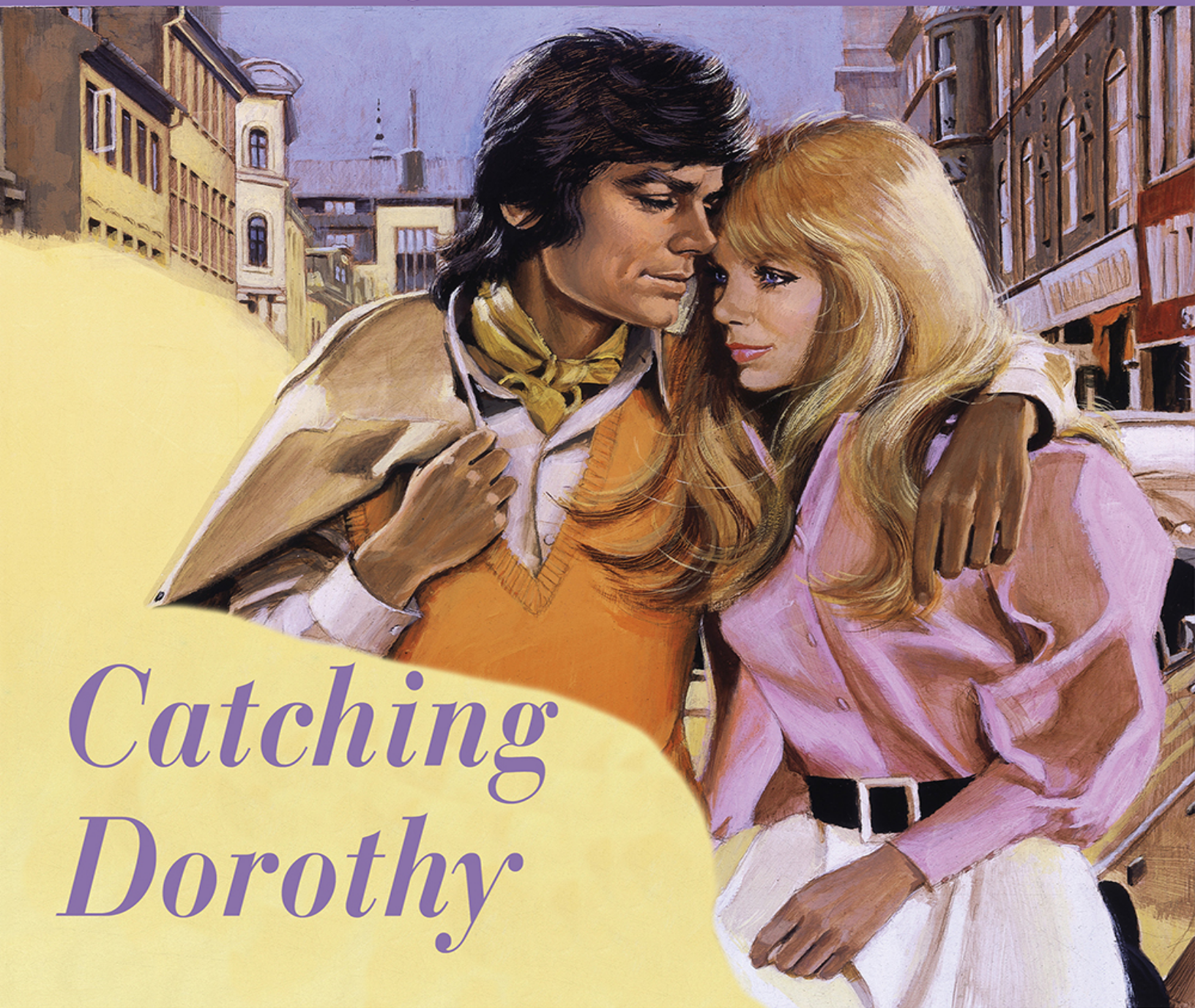


Lady
Courths-Mahler
Vintage Love Stories



*Catching
Dorothy*

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Lady Courths-Mahler – Vintage Love Stories

In this revival of "vintage chick-lit," there are no cell phones nor computers – but love letters that sometimes take weeks to reach their starry-eyed recipients. Suitors court their sweethearts, and gentlemen woo their ladies. Legendary German author Lady Courths-Mahler paints a portrait of magical romance, of a glimpse into the life of beautiful damsels and handsome heroes. These "fairytales for adults," from the early 1900s have been revived from the vaults and appear now for the first time in English. Their tender charm will leave your heart singing for more.

About the Book

Doting father, Albert Groner, is trying to accomplish two goals at once: to see his daughter, Dorothy, happily married, and to secure the future of his company, Groner Aircraft. What could be better than to have his daughter paired off with Jim Boker, heir to another aircraft company – which would also mean a wedding of the two businesses? Through subterfuge – almost a comedy of errors – the lovely, unbridled Dorothy and the dashing man-of-the-world Jim meet and actually fall in love. The result is much more than a marriage of convenience, but the joining of two souls who were meant to be together in every way.

About the Author

The story of Hedwig Courths Mahler's life could have come from one of her novels: a real fairytale like the story of Cinderella- but she did not marry the prince, she became a queen on her own. Born Ernestine Friederike Elisabeth Mahler on February 18, 1867 in the town of Nebra a.d. Unstrut, Hedwig Courths Mahler was the product of an out of wed-lock affair and was raised by various foster parents. She first worked as a saleswoman in Leipzig while she wrote her first seventeen novels. Between 1905 and 1939, after marrying and giving birth to two daughters, she became a highly circulated author with her Courths Mahler romance novels.

But success did not come easy to the energetic young woman who originally wrote in order to feed her family. At times she sat at her desk, writing for fourteen hours a day, turning out six to eight novels each year.

As the Nazis refused to publish her work, Hedwig Courths-Mahler stopped writing in 1939. When her daughter was arrested by the Gestapo, the author suffered such great agony, she never wrote again. On November 26, 1950 Hedwig Courths Mahler died on her farm at Lake Tegern without witnessing the Renaissance of her novels.

Lady Courths Mahler – Vintage Love Stories



Catching Dorothy

By Hedwig Courths-Mahler
Translated by Clair Bacher

BASTEI ENTERTAINMENT 

Goodbye, my dear Papa! You must get the idea out of your head that I'll marry a man chosen for me by other people, even when my own father is behind it! Someday I'll choose my husband for myself. I'm going to the factory today to find an engineer who will teach me how to fly. You won't be able to stop me from doing that, either. There must be some capable young man among your workers with whom you can entrust my precious life."

"My child, are you trying to drive your father to an early grave? How will I ever endure the fear when your plane soars off into the air?"

Dorothy kissed him on the cheek.

"You'll just have to get used to the fear, Papa. I'm not a baby anymore! You reacted the same way when I was learning to drive. And now you prefer it when I chauffeur you about. One day, once I've learned to fly, you can come with me in the airplane."

"For heaven's sake! You really expect me to do that?"

"To be honest, it's a scandal that the head of the Groner Aircraft Works can't fly a plane - and hasn't even been in a plane in flight."

"I'm too old for that."

"Papa, you're a spry young man of fifty. These days, one has to be active and innovative. But since you can't bring yourself to do it, I've decided to learn how to fly. Someday I'll take you with me into the sky, and we'll see everyone from above. Just imagine how happy we'll be!"

"You're terrible, Dorothy! This is exactly why you should be marrying Jim Boker. If his father's firm merges with mine, then one day, when I'm gone, he can be the head of the Groner Aircraft Works. And he can fly, too - he's a wonderful pilot. Why should I bother learning now?"

"This Jim Boker - I don't even know him, but already I don't like him - he should be content to lead his own father's company one day. I can't stand the thought of that

man, if only because, as the son of a German father, he calls himself 'Jim' instead of 'Joachim,' a much nicer name."

"But, child, you're also the daughter of a German mother and father, and you call yourself 'Dorothy' rather than 'Dorothea'."

She hesitated a moment, then shrugged her shoulders.

"At least I have compelling reasons to do so. The German 'Dorothea' - as in Goethe's 'Hermann and Dorothea' - is too obnoxiously good for me to want to emulate her. Just imagine, Papa! Also, you've always called me Dorothy, for as long as I can remember. What could I do about that? Children are helpless against the tyranny of their parents."

"Very well. But perhaps Jim Boker's parents were just as tyrannical as we were."

Again, she hesitated, but then replied, "What kind of man is he, then? He shouldn't put up with people calling him 'Jim'. In any case, I have no desire to marry a man I can't stand merely due to business interests."

"At least take a look at him first!"

"He's not worth the trouble! He should stay in Philadelphia, this insufferable 'Jim' who would permit himself to be forced upon a woman chosen to further his father's business concerns. No, Papa, I shan't! It's not for me. Anyway, why should the head of the Groner Aircraft Works be a man? I'll take it over myself when you die - in a hundred years or so, hopefully. So write your friend Boker and tell him that he should find another bride for his Jim. Dorothy Groner thanks him for the kind offer, but she'll find herself a husband, should that really become necessary."

"You'll at least consider it, Dorothy, and take a look at the young man."

"Nothing doing! Now go, Papa, otherwise you'll be late to the factory, and they need your watchful eyes. I'll come by later this morning and find myself a flight instructor among your engineers."

"You're just terrible, Dorothy!"

She kissed him warmly, set his hat on his head, straightened his tie, and smiled at him, dimples appearing in her cheeks.

Then she pushed her father towards the door, and he had to leave, whether he wanted to or not.

Smiling, Dorothy watched him walk away and then turned back into the house, humming a little tune to herself.

In the meantime, her father drove to the factory. He was worried about his daughter. He had let her get in over her head with many things because he loved her so dearly. But now everything had to go her way. He had always been comfortable with this, but sometimes her headstrong nature posed a real dilemma for him. Like when she decided to learn to drive - although it was true that she had become an excellent driver.

But flying was another story. That was not a pursuit for a young woman, but Dorothy would manage it anyway. Was there anything she couldn't accomplish? However, it really was time for her to be tamed by a young man. Jim Boker seemed like a very energetic young fellow. Every time he came across the man - although it hadn't been very often - he thought to himself: That's the one for your Dorothy. Truly, it had only been much later that he had considered merging the Boker Company with the Groner Aircraft Works through a marriage between the children.

Jim Boker hadn't been enthusiastic about the prospect, either. When the two fathers had discussed the idea with him, he had said, "I'll have to get to know Dorothy first - then I'll tell you whether I agree or not."

This morning, he was supposed to come to the factory. Perhaps he was already there. What was he supposed to say? "My daughter isn't interested, so nothing will come of it." He couldn't embarrass himself like that!

He felt depressed. When he arrived at the factory, he learned that Jim Boker was already waiting for him.

Albert Groner went straight to his private office. As he entered, a young man rose from the chair by his desk. He had in his hands the large photograph of Dorothy that she had recently placed there. He had evidently been studying the photo closely.

Now he gently set it down, walked over to Dorothy's father and reached out a hand.

"Well! Here I am! And I've already made Miss Dorothy's acquaintance. If the picture is a good likeness, she must be lovely."

Groner shook the young man's hand.

"I'm pleased that you like her, Jim, but ... perhaps you shouldn't get too attached to her. She isn't interested!"

Something glinted in Jim's eyes.

"What isn't she interested in? Marrying me?"

"No, that's not it. When I spoke to her about our plans this morning, she simply said that she wouldn't allow a third party to choose her husband for business purposes; when the time is right, she says, she'll choose for herself."

Jim laughed.

"Excellent! Now I'm starting to really like her."

"But what will become of that?"

"A happy couple, I hope."

"Oh, Jim, don't imagine that it will be that easy! Dorothy is too much for me. She's beyond my control. Now she's decided that she wants to learn to fly; she's coming to the factory later this morning to find a flight instructor among my engineers. She even expects me to go flying with her. No matter how much I resist, she'll have her way. That's how she is! I love her hopelessly and am still incredibly happy with her, but she needs a man with a firm hand. Someone like you, Jim. But she just isn't interested!"

Jim strode back to the desk, picked up Dorothy's picture again and looked down at it for a long while.

Finally, he calmly said, "Well, if I decide to marry her, she'll marry me."

"Ah, Jim. You don't know Dorothy. And even if you convince her, she certainly won't be an easy wife to live with."

"We'll see. Just wait, Mr. Groner! I'll take a look at Miss Dorothy. If she's anything like her photograph, then she'll be my wife. I'll tame her, this wildcat. When will she be here?"

Albert Groner looked at him in astonishment. The young man certainly seemed to have courage.

"In about an hour, I think."

"Good. Will you help me win Dorothy over?"

"To the best of my abilities. But that's not much."

Jim laughed, his white teeth flashing. His face was that of an energetic man. He had grey eyes, an intelligent and focused gaze, a handsome, high forehead, and thick blond hair that was smoothly brushed back - a hairstyle that was easy to put back in place after the wind, weather, or his flight helmet had messed it up.

"Here's the plan, Mr. Groner. I'll wait here until Miss Dorothy comes. You'll introduce me as the newly hired engineer Harry White. That's one of our engineers who will lend me his papers in a pinch. If Miss Dorothy pleases me as much in person as she does in this photograph, then ... well, I'll wink at you, like this. Then you can include me among your other engineers as possible teachers for your daughter. If she chooses me, that's the work half done, because it means she likes me. I'll worry about the rest, never you fear. If she doesn't choose me, then we'll see. And another thing: If she picks me, I'll work on taming her. I've just thought of a plan for that. If we go on an especially long flight, you shouldn't be concerned. I shan't say anything else. My plan isn't quite worked out yet, but it'll be ready soon. Now, don't worry any more about it. I hope