



The Elusive Flame (The Birmingham Family)

By Kathleen E. Woodiwiss

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A woman in desperate straits ... A fearless man ...A marriage of convenience on turbulent waters ...

Cerynise Kendall has been left destitute and in dire need following the death of her doting patron and protectress. A brilliant young artist tossed from her home with only the clothes on her back, Cerynise must now turn to a childhood companion for assistance - the dashing sea captain Beauregard Birmingham and beg him to provide her with passage to the Carolinas. She seeks a new home and a new life across the waters, but all depends upon the kindness of a charming adventurer who was once the object of her youthful infatuation.

Beneath Birmingham's rugged exterior beats a heart as large and wild as the Atlantic, and Beau readily agrees to aid Cerynise - even offering her his name in marriage, albeit temporarily, to protect his long time friend from scandal. But perilous secrets, determined enemies and tempests of the sea and soul threaten their future and safe passage even as bonds of camaraderie are miraculously reforged as bonds of desire ... and affection becomes passion and love.

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The Elusive Flame (The Birmingham Family) By Kathleen E. Woodiwiss Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #221707 in Books
- Brand: Avon
- Published on: 2007-09-25
- Released on: 2007-09-25
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 6.75" h x .99" w x 4.19" l, .55 pounds
- Binding: Mass Market Paperback
- 496 pages

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Cerynise Kendall's beloved elderly sponsor dies unexpectedly, leaving Cerynise to deal with the woman's heir, Alistair Winthrop. As much as she dislikes Alistair--a difficult man to say the least--even Cerynise hadn't expected him to evict her from her home, which he does without a second thought. Cerynise makes her way to the London docks and finds that fortune has smiled upon her, for a ship captained by a childhood friend, Beau Birmingham, is in port. Beau remembers Cerynise very well and is determined to return her to her uncle's home in the Carolinas. But when Alistair appears and demands that Cerynise be turned over to him as his ward, Beau swiftly arranges a wedding and the two enter into an agreed marriage of convenience. Beau is well aware that he's committed himself to several months of torture, for he wants the lovely Cerynise with a driving passion that threatens to consume him. For Cerynise, the pretend marriage is both heaven and hell. Though she desperately loves Beau, she's sure that his love of the sea leaves no room for a real marriage. Upon reaching Charleston, both Beau and Cerynise believe that they've left trouble far behind, but Alistair is not yet finished with this unsuspecting young woman who stands between him and a fortune. Simmering with passion, *The Elusive Flame* is classic Woodiwiss. --Lois Faye Dyer

From Publishers Weekly

Romance novelist Woodiwiss's sequel to her perennial bestseller *The Flame and the Flower* (1972) continues the story of Heather and Brandon Birmingham's son, Beauregard. Set in 1825 England and the Carolinas, it's a bit more politically correct than the earlier book. Notorious for beginning her stories with the rape of the heroine by the hero, Woodiwiss nods to current sensibilities by having the heroine almost raped by the hero, but here Beau is excused because he's feverish and delirious, and also because plucky Cerynise Edlyn Kendall doesn't seem to mind the experience. Beau's a dashing sea captain (as was his sire, Brandon), and Cerynise is an orphan thrown out on the mean London streets by the villain who usurped her guardian's wealth. (Readers will remember that Beau's mother, Heather, was also an orphan thrown out on the London streets.) In standard Woodiwiss form, the hero and heroine, though burning with lust for each other, are separated by willfulness and misunderstanding. Cerynise's pregnancy brings hot hunk Beau to heel, and they wed?an almost mirror image of Brandon and Heather's relationship. A vicious pair of London villains and an equally vicious trio of villains in Charleston add a new twist to the story and allow Woodiwiss to invent a melodramatic climax in a storm-buffeted house. The prose is stilted, the plot hackneyed and both dialogue and settings pay little attention to historical accuracy.

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From [Booklist](#)

When her guardian dies suddenly, Cerynise Kendall is thrown into the London streets with only the clothes on her back. With the idea of returning home to the Carolinas, Cerynise makes a desperate trip to the docks seeking passage. Her path crosses that of Captain Beau Birmingham, a childhood friend. Beau is stunned to find Cerynise all grown up, and his attraction to her hinders his plan to send her home on another captain's ship. When he realizes that her safety is in jeopardy, he offers a marriage of convenience to protect her reputation, then begins to "court" his new wife. As the two overcome misunderstandings and learn to deal with their intense feelings for each other, enemies from Cerynise's past threaten their future. Woodiwiss set the standard for excellence in romance novels with *The Flame and the Flower* (1972), which featured Beau's parents, a standard that current authors still try to meet, and fans have waited 25 years for this wonderful sequel. A special paperback edition of *The Flame and the Flower* is also being released, so expect high demand for both. *Melanie Duncan*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Eric Freeman:

This The Elusive Flame (The Birmingham Family) is great publication for you because the content which is full of information for you who also always deal with world and have to make decision every minute. This kind of book reveal it facts accurately using great arrange word or we can declare no rambling sentences inside. So if you are read that hurriedly you can have whole facts in it. Doesn't mean it only provides you with straight forward sentences but challenging core information with lovely delivering sentences. Having The Elusive Flame (The Birmingham Family) in your hand like having the world in your arm, facts in it is not ridiculous one particular. We can say that no publication that offer you world inside ten or fifteen tiny right but this guide already do that. So , this can be good reading book. Hi Mr. and Mrs. active do you still doubt in which?

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Abigail Shelton:

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