

TANGLED WIVES

By Peggy Shine



"If I Had the Dough, I'd Be on My Way to Reno Now."

A pretty young woman finds herself in a taxicab in New York with a strange man who addresses her endearingly and speaks of "an awful look." When he leaves her for a moment to go into a drug store she slips on for she fears him. She stops at the Biltmore Hotel still wondering who she is. Her memory is gone. The tags on her bags have the initials D. V. This does not help her remember who she is. She goes into the ladies' room and there sees herself in the mirror. Now Go On With The Story.

And everything else faded from her mind because though she saw with relief that she was young and pretty, that she was well dressed and had an air of smartness, not one flicker came into her mind of any kind of recollection. She could not even decide whether she had ever seen herself before or not. But she was certainly feeling better. She sat at a table and gazed down into her own eyes.

"Well, you'll know yourself the next time you see yourself, Girlie," said a voice. "But if you haven't anything to do for the rest of the day would you let me take a crack at that mirror for a minute?"

A girl was grinning at her. A rosy, dashing girl with lips a lively red. "Hello," she faltered. Perhaps this girl was her friend.

"Move over, Cutie." The stranger's violet eyes were ringed with mascara. Her pretty lids were painted blue. "Get something in my eye and this is the only mirror I can get close to." She edged in and pulled competently at her lashes.

"That's a shame," said the nameless girl sympathetically. She wanted to shout: Do you know me? What's my name?

The new girl fished a speck of black out of her eye. "There, that's that!" She stood back and eyed herself with critical admiration.

The nameless girl watched with a friendly eye, hoping that the newcomer's greeting had meant a former acquaintance. But the girl took no further notice of her for the moment.

The nameless girl took off her gloves to wash her hands. There was the wedding ring again. She thought: Wedding rings are usually inscribed on the inside. She drew it off and began to examine it.

She found the inscription: "H. L. V. to D. M., May 19th, 1932." "H. L. V. to D. M." The bridegroom would be H. L. V. And he had given the ring to the bride, D. M. And on their wedding day which was May 19, 1932.

She examined the ring wonderingly, turning it in her fingers.

"Satisfying. Lucky, lucky. How do I get so lucky?"

"You don't sound as if you liked being married!" The nameless girl spoke disinterestedly.

"Do I look crazy?"

"Not at all. Tell me—" The nameless girl paused. She wanted to ask if this talkative woman had ever seen her before. But it was hard to find the proper words. Such a question would seem very odd. She fingered her ring thoughtfully. May Nineteenth? She wondered how long ago that was. "Do you know the date today by any chance?" she asked finally.

"Do I know the date? Ask me."

"I do ask you."

"She asks me. She asks me the date. Ask me now if I can forget it. The answer is no. No. I can't." She sighed. She was rubbing some blue paste carefully into her upper eyelid.

"Excuse me, Girlie, for inflicting my dismal personal life on you, but you asked me the date. The date is 'der tag.' Get it—der tag!"

"I'm afraid I don't."

"You wouldn't. It's just one of those things."

"The day—"

"The day I say good-by to all this. The day the big fight starts. And believe me, it's going to be a good old war while it lasts. The day, in words of one syllable, that I go off to prison."

"Prison?"

"Yeh. But I don't mean what you mean. I'm going to be a bird in a gilded cage, dearie, see? But, excuse me, you asked me for the date. Didn't you—it's the nineteenth."

"Not May—Not May the nineteenth!"

The talkative girl swung around and put her hands on her hips. Her expression was a little sarcastic. "Now listen. No kidding! Do you think it's December the nineteenth? It's May the nineteenth, Girlie, and—" She went on talking but her audience was no longer listening. She was thinking. This was the nineteenth of May and—her wedding day.

She looked once more into the mirror. Her eyes were starry with excitement. Besides the vanished face of the other girl she looked young and very beautiful, but she was not thinking of that now. She was thinking that some of the pictures of her jig-saw puzzle past were beginning to fit in. She had been married that day to the man in the cab. She hated him.

The shock of marrying him had made her lose her memory, and no wonder. She was grateful for the strong enclosing walls around her for shielding her from that man. She was grateful to the city for being so big and impersonal that she could lose herself in it. All she needed now was to rest quietly until her memory returned.

Her action in leaving that man had been purely instinctive. But she was glad that she had done it. Still, she wondered, was it as simple as it now seemed? She married a man she hated and then lost her memory because he was so horrible, and then had left him. She was not satisfied. It seemed too easy an explanation. Why had she married him? She would have to find him again sooner or later and tell him that she must divorce him. She could do that at Reno—for this strange chatty girl to whom she had scarcely been listening was talking about Reno.

"If I had the dough, Baby, believe me I'd be on my way to Reno right now."

"It's easy to get a divorce in Reno, isn't it?"

"If you have the dough! But that's a big if, Girlie."

"How much does it cost?"

"About a thousand dollars, including the trip and everything, but I know a girl who did it for seven hundred and fifty. She had a friend living out there, and her living expenses didn't cost her anything."

"It doesn't take very long, does it?"

"It takes exactly six weeks. Oh, ask me anything about Reno. I know. I've been studying up on it like it was the Bible. You got to go out there and establish a residence, stay there six weeks, then file your suit."

As she talked the nameless girl was wondering. It was a little fantastic to be thinking of Reno when she did not yet know for certain that she was unhappily married. Could it be possible that the man in the cab was not her husband? Surely in a few moments she would be able to remember about herself, and when she did there would be time enough to make plans.

The woman grew kindly and fervent. "There's always Reno," she said. She became thoughtful. "If that cheap-seater husband of mine weren't so damn stingy—Baby, there's always Reno if you have the dough. And you seem to have plenty!"

"You mean I could get a divorce?" said the nameless girl.

"It's easy in Reno—especially for a girl like you with plenty of cash."

The woman's eyes had dropped to the open hand bag on the dressing table. The nameless girl wondered if she could divorce a man whose name she did not know.

"Reno!" said the girl in the blue coat. "G—d! And if you know what I have got to go through you wouldn't hesitate." She rambled on in a tone that was full of resentment and self-pity. The nameless girl paid little heed. Again she noticed the woman's eyes on the bills that were visible in her purse.

Now it occurred to her to count them and find how much she had. As she did so, she was aware of a certain tenseness in the atmosphere. She turned her head to stare at the other girl and she could have sworn that as she did

so the woman turned away as if to give the impression that she had not been watching the younger one. Her former friendliness was washed from her face but there was a watchfulness in the lines of the figure that the nameless girl could not understand. Perhaps the other girl did know her. And perhaps the lack of response in the nameless girl had offended her.

So she reasoned, not in any way connecting the girl's sudden change with the large roll of bills she had shown.

"I've met you some place, haven't I?" she said at last half timidly.

But the other girl no longer wanted to talk. "Doubt that," she said briefly.

The nameless girl saw a towel rack and a row of wash-basins in an adjoining room. She rose and went in, leaving hat and purse on the tiny dressing table.

Her feeling of depression had now completely lifted. She was separated from a man she hated. She was in a comfortable hotel. She had plenty of money. She would make up a name, register under it, and try to get a good rest.

She washed her hands in warm water. Then she let ice water chill her wrist and hands, thinking that the shock might restore her memory. A cold shower would be even better, she thought almost happily. She looked thoughtfully in the glass. She was

completely alone. Yet somewhere surely she must have friends. Perhaps they were looking for her now. She smiled. She would remember. Of course she would remember.

She turned to go into the outer room. The girl was gone.

She went to the small dressing table and picked up her hat and fitted it slowly on her head. Then she looked for her purse made the gesture of picking it up and found that her fingers slipped over the smooth surface of the dressing table only. The purse was not there.

It was not on the floor. It was not in the room.

She walked out in the lobby once more. It was evident that the girl had taken it, but she was nowhere to be seen.

CHAPTER II

When you have just lost your name, your family (if any) and your whole collection of remembrances of your early life, the disappearance of nine hundred dollars does not seem as important to you as it would under ordinary circumstances.

Annoyance was her strongest emotion as she walked toward her luggage. It did not occur to her to try to follow the thief. Her mind was still too hazy. Her consciousness was filled with loss. The money seemed only part of the general wiping out of possessions.

But now as she neared her bags she saw that a fat little woman was apparently trying to take possession of them. Waving pudgy little hands in the air, she was addressing the bellboy in charge of them.

"But naturally I will take charge of the baggage!"

The woman's voice was low and commanding, and it had more than a trace of foreign accent. She shrugged her round shoulders as she spoke in a way that none but a French woman could do. "Oh my G—d. But he is stupid! The bags must go immediately to my car."

The bellboy was unwilling to let them go.

The girl hurried forward. "I'm sorry," she said to the little foreign woman, "but I believe the bags are mine!"

The woman turned and scrutinized the girl for a moment slowly. Her face was broad and friendly, her eyes shrewd but kindly. The long gaze was one of appraisal. Then she said: "Ah, Doris! How beautiful you are. Doris! I am glad you are here! And she flung her two fat arms around the girl's soft fox collar and slender throat and pressed a firm wet cheek against hers.

Doris! So that was her name. She hardly felt the embrace, nor wondered at the tears. Doris! She was grateful that she had found a friend. The woman talked on. Out of the jumble of words a sentence suddenly disclosed itself: "And so now with

your husband on the seas we will have to console ourselves together, until he comes back to us!" She listened breathlessly—her husband on the seas! It seemed too good to be true.

"Oh, she is frightened," said the woman fondly, addressing nobody as seemed to be one of her habits. "And no wonder. So young. And such excitement!"

The bellboy still stood beside the luggage. The fat little woman turned to Doris. "He would not believe I was Mrs. Du Val. He wanted to guard the luggage well." She shook her head. "Doris will carry out the luggage."

Doris then noticed that a hunched, unattractive man was standing a few feet away. He came forward and picked up Doris's bags. Watching everything, at the alert for some clue that would unravel more of her past to her, Doris followed.

A limousine stopped at the curb. Decidedly Doris hopped in after the little fat woman. There was not a quiver in her heart. Undoubtedly she had known this woman, and perhaps it would soon come back to her when and where. At least she would learn her own name.

"Put Mrs. Du Val's bags in front," said her hostess fussy. Doris stared. Mrs. Du Val! The older woman had been speaking of her to the chauffeur. So she was Mrs. Du Val, Du Val, Du Val D. V. She did not feel quite satisfied.

The baggage was quickly adjusted and the car started through the traffic-laden New York streets. "Ah, Rocky is scissick by now, nest-see pas?" said little Mrs. Du Val. "He cannot stand traveling, poor fellow." She tucked a robe anxiously around Doris. "But she mustn't catch cold at such a time." She went on. She clucked in her throat like a worried old hen. "You feel warm? We have a long ride, you know."

Doris did not know. But she smiled gratefully. Rocky? Who was Rocky? And why mustn't she catch cold at such a time? She wondered where they could be going.

Her mind was going around and around in a circle. Her husband was named Rocky Du Val. He had sailed for France. That much she gathered. Then the man she had been with in the taxicab had not been her husband. What a long and painful journey they had just been making and were going to spend their honeymoon in Europe, and she had escaped from him. That seemed very clear.

Then why had her mother-in-law expected to meet her at the Biltmore? No, that theory couldn't be right. Doubtless it was all simple enough and would come to her in a flash. The main thing was not to let anybody know she did not remember lest they think she had gone crazy. She felt perfectly sure she was not crazy but she didn't think she could convince anybody else.

(To Be Continued.)

Henry Ford Dearborn, Mich.

IN ANSWER TO A LADY'S LETTER

A lady writes to say that she does not understand why an 8-cylinder car does not cost more to run than a car with fewer cylinders. She refers to my statement that our Ford V-8 develops more power on a gallon of gas than any car we have made.

The use of 8-cylinders does not mean the addition of two or four extra fuel consumers. It is not, for example, a 4-cylinder engine multiplied by two. Our 8-cylinder engine takes the fuel supply of an ordinary 4-cylinder engine and divides it eight ways. And why?

By reducing four larger explosions into eight smaller ones, we get engine smoothness and quietness. Eight-cylinders indicate the way the gas is used, not the amount. It is just the difference between going upstairs in four long jumps or in eight ordinary steps.

Two things use up gas—bad engine design and useless car weight. Besides having an engine that gets a high percentage of power out of the fuel, the Ford V-8 has a light, strong body and chassis so that no power is wasted in moving excess weight.

The only extravagance about the new Ford V-8 engine is in the building of it. The extravagance is ours—the economy is yours.

The whole question of car economy needs clearing up. An economical car gives economy all round. Price, operation, upkeep, all play their part. If what you save on gas you lose elsewhere, that is not economy.

As to upkeep, our dealers say that in recent years the improved quality of Ford cars has cut down their repair business 50 per cent.

As to price with quality,—judge for yourself.

As to economy, here is the record of a stock car three weeks out of shop in Oklahoma:

On a run of 10,054 miles at the rate of 1,000 miles a day—the Ford V-8 gave 18.8 miles per gallon of gas. Not a drop of water was added to the radiator. The oil was changed once in 1,000 miles.

That should answer a lot of questions.

Henry Ford

July 24th, 1933

Wins British Title



Densmore Shute, young golf pro of Philadelphia, who won the British open championship in a play-off with Craig Wood of Deal, N. J.

Father Sage Says:

Civilization's triumph is now in the kitchen where it is not found necessary to overheat the whole room in order to bake a chicken.