

TANGLED WIVES

By Peggy Shane



She knew that this wasn't true. She could hardly bear to think of something new happening. Things were complicated enough. Yet she felt that she must know. What if—

But Mrs. Du Val was shaking her head. She had made up her mind about something. She came close to Doris, bent over her affectionately, kissed her warm brow.

"Some day soon you must prepare to see my boy Rocky," she said tenderly. "That was all I meant to tell you. I have heard from him."

All the color seemed to have been lifted out of Doris' face. Something sickening stirred within her. Her voice was hurried beneath a pile of despairing thoughts. Speechlessly, she looked at Mrs. Du Val.

"Ah, it shocks you. But he loves you," Mrs. Du Val's firm cheek was against her hair. "Do not worry so—he is your husband. He loves you."

Some time after Mrs. Du Val had gone Doris lay there without stirring. She had closed her eyes. And Mrs. Du Val full of kind discernment had left her. In all this maze of worry, nothing quite as stupendous as this had happened.

The man she was supposed to be married to—a man she had never seen—was on his way to her now.

She sat up suddenly. Mrs. Du Val had not told her everything. That change which had come over Mrs. Du Val's face when she first spoke of the surprise. It meant something. It meant that she feared Doris was not well enough to hear it—the whole truth. She slipped her feet into her mules and got to the door, her heart beating with suppressed vehemence.

"Estelle," she called softly down the hall to the maid.

Estelle appeared, a prim consternation in her eyes. "You are not up, Madam?" she said reproachfully.

"Yes," Doris' words came in jerks.

"I was afraid, tell me when, how soon does Mr. Rocky get here?"

"Not until this evening. But you are tired?" She took Doris by the arm.

"This evening? Do you mean he'll be out here—in this house—this evening?"

"Yes, Madam. You did not understand?" Estelle looked sympathetic but alarmed.

"No," Doris, breathless for a minute, sat down at the foot of the bed. "I didn't understand. When did he—"

He fastened gradually awakening eyes on the maid, "—will you bring me—no never mind, thank you. That will be all. But Estelle," she called after her a moment later "if you please, don't mention this. I mean my being so shocked, to Mrs. Du Val, will you? It would worry her."

The day passed slowly. She was lying in an inner stillness that was beyond fear. If Rocky turned out not to be her husband—but that just couldn't be. Somehow when he came the kinks would have to be straightened out. If he knew about her loss of memory—if he were to turn out kind and helpful—

Face had taken her to the Biltmore. Surely it could not prove unkind now that Rocky was actually on his way here.

Mrs. Du Val came for the last time. "Ah, Doris, I have news that should make you feel strong and happy, Rocky's boat got in this morning. He is driving out her now. He ought to be here very soon."

Doris squeezed her hands together nervously. "I—I think I will wait up here until he comes."

"Yes, dear that will be best. You must rest quietly. Besides, I know young people like best to be alone when they meet after a long separation."

As Doris was still silent she came up to her and whispered:



Young Face Was Changing. From Expectancy It Had Changed to a Dumb Stare.

"Do not fear. I know that you and Rocky have not been—ah shall we say—no, we will say nothing. It is only a lover's quarrel between you, dear. You must not take it so hard. After this separation you will be happy together once more—happy as can be."

"I—I hope so," said Doris nervously.

She sighed with relief as the little French woman closed the door.

She heard the sound of a car in the driveway at last. From the window she saw a tall young man leaping out. Oscar Du Val was there. She heard the happy voice of Rocky's mother. She wanted in still, agony for what seemed ages.

Now was the moment. She tried to would he never come upstairs to see his wife? At last came the sound of his footsteps mounting.

Now was the moment. She tried to realize what it might mean. Her mind could not grasp it. He was on the threshold—she wanted to run away, the handle was rattling. The door was opening.

Then he was inside her room. Yes, he was Rocky, the man in the picture, the man who had been secretly dwelling in her heart for so many weeks.

Rocky! His young face was changing. From expectancy it had changed to a dumb stare.

A sudden darkness curtained her last hope. Blindly she waited.

He shouted his greeting. "Who the h—l are you?"

CHAPTER IV

This was nightmare. Hope departed. She was not Rocky's wife. His contemptuous eyes told her that even more than his words. She sat looking at him hopelessly, her romantic thought about him mocking her ironically. His return had not brought peace and memory. She faltered mechanically, "I'm—I'm Doris!"

He was bigger, nicer than his picture. Even with rage written on his face she liked him. But the scorn in his voice made her feel cheap, a wisp of a bride in a tawdry blue dress waiting for a happiness that would never come. "I'm Doris," she repeated. At least it had not come to her yet that she wasn't.

"The h—l you are!"

There was no mistaking his sane fury. He threw his bags in the middle of the room. He jabbed his hands into his thin hips so that his arms were set like angular weapons between her and escape.

"I—," she began weakly.

"Where's my wife?"

"How do I know?"

It was silly. But she did not know what to say. His anger was mounding. He was growing red. She surveyed him, looking at the tall well-knit figure, the face which looked so like the youthful image she had half allowed herself to love in her loneliness. Yes, he looked like the hero of her visions, but his actions were very different. If he were only halfway decent! A new emotion came. It was anger. What right had he to stand there accusing her? She had done nothing to deserve this. His tone was sneering, uncontrolled. And what his tongue held back his eyes were saying, calling her dreadful names, suspecting her of things he didn't dare speak of.

"You can't—you can't talk to me like that." He voice wavered. Her eyes were stary with frustration that was near to tears.

"I can't?" he peered. I come back to my home, expecting to find my wife here as she said she would be, and I find instead someone else masquerading in front of my innocent parents. Who the h—l do you think you are to play a trick like that on my mother?"

She looked at him steadily. She was stone cold, paralyzed with embarrassment; unable to think, unable to speak

"Nervy, aren't you?" His mouth twitched slightly as he looked down at her. For a minute something kinder—aloof admiration maybe—swept over his features. But it passed grimly.

"Well, in your business, you gotta be I guess. That's all right. But some times the nerviest thing you can do is to tell the truth, I'm warning you. What happened? Why did she send you here?"

Her fingers passed diffidently over the soft brown waves of her hair. It was an unconsciously helpless gesture. She sat down in a chair facing him dumbly. "I don't know what you mean," she said. "No one sent me here. Your mother brought me here."

Her perplexity seemed to have a hypnotic effect. For a minute Rocky looked dumbly back at her. But the fires of righteous indignation put him back on his guard. "Yes, Mother did bring you here"—his voice was kinder as he spoke of his mother—"you're right about that. She wrote me about meeting you and bringing you home with her. But that's not what worries me." His face came closer again, half menacingly. "I want to know how you happen to be in Doris' place!"

In Doris' place! So there was a Doris. She was not Doris then? She looked up at the young man with tortured eyes. She moistened her lips.

He looked slightly shaken by her evident agony. Then he quickly hardened. "Come on. No baby doll on the witness stand business. I want to know—"

"Who I am?" Doris finished it questioningly.

He waved a hand. "Never mind that. I know d—n well who you are. I want—"

"Who am I?" said Doris joyfully.

He clucked angrily. "You know d—n well what I meant. I mean you were a friend of Doris'. Doris didn't want to come to the country, so she pawned you off on my parents." A movement clenched his jaw sharply. "She'll find out—"

He turned his face away, so that she saw the line of determination written on his profile. A pang struck through her. He loved this other girl. This Doris. He looked back with new contempt in his eyes. "You women are all alike. You'll do anything for money. Let me tell you one thing. Doris promised you some dough for this no doubt. Well, you won't get a cent. Not a cent."

Doris rose. She waved her hands in the air in exasperation. "I don't know your Doris. I tell you, I don't know her!"

"Then how did you get here?"

Doris collapsed. She sat down on the edge of the bed. Again suspicion seemed about to conquer him. "You know I think I'll hand you over to the police!"

Doris breathed deeply. Was all this finally to end in the police court?

His mocking smile came again. "She registers terror!" he said unpleasantly. Very good. Lifeline. Go to the head of the class! He sat down beside her. "Come on, Baby, come clean! What's the story?"

She did not answer. She was thinking suddenly of Mrs. Du Val.

"Your mother?" she said anxiously. "What about my mother?" But now his face showed slight signs of sympathy—a sympathy not for her.

"I can't bear to have her know. What will she think?"

"A lot you care," he said bitterly. "Poor mother—"

"I do care—Oh please believe me. I feel terribly about her—"

"You should have thought of that when you were tricking her."

"I didn't trick her."

He meditated. His gray eyes on the pretty carpet. "You've got her d—l fond of you."

"It's awful," said Doris miserably.

He walked up and down, chewing his lip.

"Awkward. Designing little devil."

"Oh, I'm not."

"Shut up."

Doris was angry. "You needn't be so frightfully rude."

"No?—Well, it's a pleasure. Shut up while I think what to do."

He walked up and down. Doris sat on the edge of the bed, watching him dimly.

"I didn't plan this. Truly I didn't."

"No," said Rocky sarcastically. "I suppose it just happened by accident."

A hot sense of injustice came to Doris. She rose.

"No, really you don't understand. As soon as your mother saw me she took me in her arms. She was glad to see me. She said I was her daughter. I thought—"

She could not go on. Tears were choking her voice.

Rocky said coldly. "You seem very good at falling in someone's arms. So is your friend Doris."

Twisting her handkerchief reproachfully, she said. "You seem perfectly heartless about Doris. It's a nice way to talk about your wife. I'm sure. And you didn't even write to her while you were away."

(To be continued.)

Officers Break Up A Big Picnic

Three or four Wake Forest township moonshiners enjoying a big Brunswick stew supper as they were engaged in making a run at their 100-gallon copper still, were forced to leave their eats behind when five Wake deputies suddenly arrived on the scene.

None of the men around the still was captured, a look-out having fired a shot of warning as he spotted the approach of the officers.

The still, 70-gallon, of whiskey and 1,500 gallons of beer were seized.

Sets Up New Record



Ed Itzbeck, pitching for the New York Giants, established a new record by pitching 46 successive scoreless innings. The former record of 41 was made in 1908 by Ed Reulbach.

Haywood County Is Due State \$6,234 For Poll Taxes

Poll tax levies for the two years 1931 and 1932 were \$1,273,441.34, of which only \$481,899.18 has been paid in to the state treasury, leaving a balance of \$841,542.15 yet unpaid, according to figures compiled in the offices of the state treasurer Charles M. Johnson.

Haywood county's levy for the two years was \$10,450.50, while \$2,939.73 has been paid for 1931 and \$1,276.79 for 1932, total of \$4,216.42 for the two years, thus leaving a balance of \$6,234.08, Johnson's compilation shows.

Of the poll tax levied, three-fourths of \$150 for each poll is levied for school purposes, while one-fourth is retained in the counties for the poor fund. Of the amount forwarded by the counties, all but 20 per cent is sent back to the respective counties through the state school commission, or formerly the state board of equalization.

POTPOURRI

Greatest Mosquito Plague

Almost two and one-half years were spent in fighting mosquitoes in the Panama Canal Zone before construction work could begin. Yellow fever, spread by a certain type of mosquito found there, would have made work impossible. The sanitation work and consequent mosquito eradication is often considered as great a triumph as the normal digging of the canal.

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NOTICE OF Change in Prices on DRY CLEANING

Due to Increased Costs in Operating Our Dry Cleaning Department, the following Prices were put into effect Monday, September 4th.

- Dry Cleaning and Pressing Suits and Plain Dresses 65c
- (A small additional charge will be made on difficult dresses).
- Sponging and pressing suits and Plain Dresses 35c

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Father Sage Says

Nothing is emptier than an empty aphorism—one of those windy things that dull people think mean something.

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SUCH IS LIFE

By Charles Hughes

POPS' PREDICAMENT

Illustration of a man sitting on a bench, looking thoughtful.

Illustration of a man and a woman talking.

WELL, Y'SEE, HE MADE A "HOLE IN ONE" TODAY

BUT THAT SHOULD MAKE HIM HAPPY

YES, BUT HE WAS PLAYING ALONE AND HE KNOWS IT'S NO USE MENTIONING IT

OH! THE FELLOW'S WONT BELIEVE HIM?