



TANGLED WIVES

By Peggy Shane

WNU SERVICE

CHAPTER I.—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 shock." When he leaves her for a moment at a drug store she drives on for she fears him. She stops at the Biltmore, still wondering who she is. Her memory is gone. From the evidence of her clothing and wedding ring, inscribed R. L. V. to D. M., May 19, 1932, she concludes she is married to a wealthy man. At the Biltmore the nameless girl meets a young woman who speaks of her desire to go to Reno for a divorce, if she can get the money. The woman vanishes with the nameless girl's purse and 9900. CHAPTER II.—An elderly woman, Mrs. Oscar Du Val cordially greets the nameless girl, addressing her as "Doris," wife of Mrs. Du Val's son, Rocky. Rocky is abroad and Doris still bewildered, is taken to the home of Mrs. Du Val and her sculptor husband, Oscar. Doris falls in love with Rocky's photograph, but cannot remember having married him. CHAPTER III.—Doris discovering a trademark in her clothing, visits a New York store and is astounded when a saleswoman insists she hide from observation. She goes back to the Du Val's more mystified than ever. Rocky returns, to discover the deception. CHAPTER IV.—He demands to know who she is and why his wife sent her to his home to masquerade in front of his innocent parents. She cannot tell him. He assumes she is some form of gold digger. They agree, for the sake of his parents, to pretend, for the time being, they are husband and wife. CHAPTER V.—After much quarreling, Rocky takes Doris to his New York apartment to confront his wife and have the strange mix-up straightened out. He is disgusted to find the flat empty, and not even a note left for him by his wife. Doris sees the real wife's photograph and recognizes her as the girl who stole her \$900. CHAPTER VI.—Doris finally tells Rocky she has lost her memory, and he believes her, and sympathizes. In a newspaper they see a headline, "Killer Bride's Gun Found; Diane Merrell's Father Identifies It." Doris faints. When she recovers, in Rocky's apartment, her memory has not returned. He informs her he is going to take her to Canada by motor, insisting she wear colored glasses, on the way, and refusing to let her see any newspapers. CHAPTER VII.—A short distance from New York they run into a convivial party, among whom is a girl who knows the "real" Doris. Rocky evades questioning, and resumes the journey. A slight accident compels him and Doris to stop at a garage for repairs. CHAPTER VIII.—Doris is recognized as Diane Merrell, the girl wanted for killing her husband at her wedding. Rocky throws the police off the trail by stopping at the home of his friends, Rockwell St. Gardens, who takes the hint and greets Doris as Rocky's wife. (NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY) Rocky cut in crisply, "But I do mind. I've got to go and buy a new wife, I'm tired."

Doris knew then that the policemen were still suspicious. Rocky had run ahead up the steps of the house, and was ringing the bell. Doris with a policeman on either side of her followed more slowly. Her heart was beating wildly. The door opened slowly. A blonde impassive face looked out. "Hello Swenson. Is Mr. St. Gardens in?" The butler swung the door open. "Yes, Mr. Du Val. Come in." Rocky motioned to Doris. She went into a square hallway. The policeman came too. On a landing above a short, square-set figure appeared. He had on a dressing gown and held a book in his hand. He stared at the group for a minute in amazed silence. "Rocky! Is it Rocky, for heaven's sake?" "It's Rocky. I've brought my wife." Rocky was bounding up the stairs to the landing. Doris saw him take the short square man by the shoulder and say something. Then St. Gardens turned and came down the stairs with outstretched hands. "Doris! It's so nice to see you again. I was wondering when you would turn up. You must be tired from your journey. Been traveling all day?" Doris was confused. She took St. Gardens' hands gladly, smiled at him without speaking, but it was the vague act of a bewildered and exhausted child. She sat down in the nearest chair. The room was going round and round. She hardly heard the policeman. She knew that everything was being arranged. Everything was all right. Rocky had fixed things. The policeman went away. The door was closed. "Beatrice isn't in. Someone's giving her a dinner and dance at the country club. I didn't stay. I just got in," said St. Gardens. "Lucky I did too. Wasn't that a rummy thing—those damn cops picking you up like that?" "Terrible," said Rocky. "They were so suspicious I thought it would save a lot of trouble if you pretended you had already met Doris. May I introduce you now?" Doris roused herself. St. Gardens was holding out both his hands. "This is a great pleasure, my dear Rocky has always been like my own Doris put her hands hastily across her own eyes. She knew she was acting badly, but it was all so puzzling to her tired mind. "She's exhausted," said Rocky apologetically. St. Gardens apparently didn't know her. He had pretended to recognize her in order to save her from the police. He thought she was the real Doris. She was to fool him as she had fooled the Du Vals. She rose trembling, a hand pressed against her cheek. "No, no!" "What's the matter?" They could not follow her thoughts. She was being stupid. She could not pretend to be the real Doris any more. She was really that girl—that criminal, the policeman were seeking. She looked at Rocky with widened eyes. "I can't stand it, I'm—" St. Gardens took her elbow. His voice rich and caressing, spoke to her softly: "You are very tired. You have been through a dreadful ordeal. I can see that. And now you want to go to your room." "Let me take her upstairs," said Rocky. "You are right. She needs to go to bed. She's knocked out." "It's enough to knock anybody out—being mistaken for a murderer," said St. Gardens sympathetically. Doris looked at him. A murderer. That's what she had done. She had committed murder. The room was still rocking, but she no longer felt tired. St. Gardens' words had galvanized her. New life, like second wind coming to a tired swimmer, flooded her. She looked at Rocky in agony. What did St. Gardens mean? Rocky read the question in her eyes, but he deliberately ignored it. "Come, you must go to bed." Doris wanted to speak but her mouth felt dry. Meantime Rocky, as if anticipating her purpose, had begun to talk hectorically about their trip. And he was pushing her up the stairway. A maid came, Rocky went out to get her bags, leaving her standing at the top of the stairs beside St. Gardens. She looked at him with twisted brows. "What did you say a minute or two ago about a woman who shot her husband at a wedding?" "Oh nothing. I was just referring to the stupid business of the local law enforcers, in mistaking you for what's her name—the girl who shot her husband at a wedding." Doris clutched the stair railing. She was looking into a bottomless gulf. "What's her name—the girl who shot her husband at a wedding?" She was what's-her-name—a girl who shot her husband at a wedding. Rocky ran up the stairs bag in his hand. "What's the matter?" he said sharply. Doris said sharply, "He said what's-her-name—a girl who shot her husband at a wedding—am I?" Rocky took her firmly by the arm. "You come with me," he said. "She's hysterical. And no wonder." St. Gardens left them, and he did not notice. She knew that Rocky was pushing her into the room and sending the maid away. It was closing the door.

CHAPTER IX They were in a large room with twin beds. Rocky turned on a light over a dressing table. "Now Rocky. Don't you see I've got to be told everything now?" "In the morning." "No. Now. Am I what's-her-name—a girl who shot her husband at a wedding?" The words were out. Had she killed someone? And was that the reason Rocky wanted to get her away from places, because if she were caught she would be hanged, electrocuted? She sat down in a chair and stared at him. Had she cut off the life of someone—killed her own husband? "Oh G—d," she began silently, "say it isn't true. I couldn't have done that!" As Rocky still did not answer she rose and threw open the window. She inhaled deeply. She could breathe—but someone else couldn't because she had— "Rocky, don't you see I've got to know now or else go crazy?" Rocky came and stood beside her. "Don't feel so. Doris. You're tired. If you get a good night's sleep, I'll—well maybe I'll tell you about it in the morning." She turned up a suffering face. "I won't sleep, Rocky. I've got to know now. Tell me the truth. Truly I can bear it now." Rocky avoided her eyes. "There's really not much to tell." "Anything is better than this uncertainty." "Perhaps that's true," Rocky gently removed her hand from his arm. He ran his brown fingers through his hair. "Can't you trust me, Sweet?" Sweet. For a moment she felt a lifting of spirits. Rocky's tone was so tender. But then he used words like that all the time to all women. She gave a little laugh that she could think of that now. I was a bitter sardonic little laugh. "Don't. Don't laugh like that." "I've got to find out about this." "Trust me." "I do trust you." "Let me take care of you. You'll be all right once we get away from this d—d place." She was startled. "Are we going away from here?" "Certainly. We're going on to Canada." "You can't shut me out from my past forever. Besides—" she sat down on the bed. "I'm not a coward." She was silent. Rocky sat down beside her took her hand. "Please wait—" "No, no." She got up. "I—I can't wait. I have a right to know. I'll—I'll ask Mr. St. Gardens what it's all about. I'll tell him everything I remember. He will tell me. He won't keep me in agony any longer. I can't bear this uncertainty. Anything is better." Rocky sat with his head down looking into space. She controlled herself, looked at him gravely. "Did I—Rocky? Did I do—that awful thing?" Rocky looked at the carpet miserably. "D—n it, how do I know? I can only guess—like everybody else—" "Then it isn't a sure thing?" "Oh they think it's sure all right." His lips drooped unhappily. "Perhaps you went out of your mind?" "Then it was—I did that?" Rocky. I can't be a murderer. I didn't kill anyone." Her eyes, haggard and strained, searched his face for an answering faith. She found it. He looked back at her squarely. "That's the way I feel about it." "Rocky, you're a wonderful friend." Their hands gripped. "I'm not. I wish I could be." "I know you couldn't." He patted her hand, against his knee. "I've always known that about you." "Then why—" she turned suddenly to him. "Why is there such a mysterious silence about me? Why were we arrested? Why have we been racing like mad away from New York?" She stared at his quiet face for a terrified second. "I know! I'll ask the police. I'll go to the station! I must find out!" "Wait—don't you see, Doris. I'm only trying to help you." She stared into his eyes then. Her hand dropped suddenly to her lap. "Did you—I did kill someone?" Rocky's silence was terrible to her. She drew close to him. "I didn't. Rocky. I didn't. Tell me I didn't. Why I couldn't have killed anybody. Rocky. I know that much about myself. I don't." She looked at him pitifully. He took her hand and held it tightly. After a while he said huskily, "That's the way I feel, Doris. That you couldn't have—" "Please tell me how it happened." Still Rocky paused. At last his cheek close to hers, he said slowly, "It's—been in all the papers. It happened the day I sailed. So I didn't see much about it until I got back. Then—of course your picture has been everywhere—" "My picture?" He nodded. "It's you, all right. I

EAST WAYNESVILLE HONOR ROLL FOR OCTOBER Neither tardy nor absent September and October. First Grade—Miss A. P. Ledbetter, Faith Camp, Bobby Gibson. Neither tardy nor absent September and October—Vinnie Fay Sherrill, Willard Howell, Dick Leopold, Ophe- lia Carver, Bobby Gibson, Chrystine Underwood, Edith Camp, Kenneth Turner, Ann Fullbright. Second Grade—Miss Eula Patterson—Second month—Fannie Howell, Fain Sizemore. Neither absent nor tardy for 2 months—Sammie Calhoun, Bob Franklin, Charles Gibson, Farnel Hollingworth, Rex Hosaflock, Billy Limer, Cecil Mehahey, Kenneth Mehahey, Fain Sizemore, Ray Sheehan, Wilma Bryson, Mary Frances Gaddy, Nora Galloway, Mabel Hill, Fannie

Howell, Glenna Mae Hosaflock, Nan Limer, Mildred Messer, Velma McClure, Mildred McRorie. Third Grade—Miss Mildred Crawford—Perfect attendance and no tardies—Florence Eagle, Mildred For- za, Dorothy Francis, Peggy Gaddy, Mildred Leatherwood, Romie Leather- wood, Polly Limer, Pauline Palmer, Mar- garet Underwood, Walla, Anders, J. R. Elders, Everett Frady, Jamie Franklin, Robert Hosaflock, Fred Palmer, Billy Rodgers, Walter West, Irene Hensley. Fourth Grade—Miss Fannie Pearl Feldment, teacher—Neither tardy nor absent for October—Harry Dyer and "A" on all subjects. Neither tardy nor absent first two months—Guy Arrington, Mae Smith, Ernest Davis, Harry Dyer, Walter Franklin, Joe, Francis, Billie Frazier, Hampton Galloway, Eugene Gibson, Oscar Howell, Charles Leatherwood, Edward McRorie, Wilson Morrow, Clara Carver, Wilson Medford, Don- ald Morrow, Oris Sizemore, Paul Underwood, Billie Calhoun, Clara Carver, Mary Fullbright, Oberia Jones, Margaret McRorie, Ruth Messer, Dorothy Phillips, Virginia Sheehan. 5th Grade—Miss Elizabeth Henry— Neither tardy nor absent—Montgomery McElroy, Polly Francis, Frank, Leopold, Louise Limer, Montgomery Queen, Ella Hosaflock, George Milner, Hubert Clark, Lucile Davis, Hugh Francis, Troy Smith, Leah Mehahey, Ruth Turner, Wanda Anders, Virgil Smith, Wanda Sizemore, Wilson Underwood, Wallace Morrow, Katherine Leatherwood, J. L. Frady, Linwood Hosaflock, Charles Garrison, Maggie Allison, George Sheehan. Sixth Grade—W. L. McCracken— Neither absent nor tardy—Carl Turner, Annie Mae Leopold, James McClure, Fannie Mae Galloway, Mattie Mae Messer, Troy Franklin, Hattie Under- wood, Zimzy Sizemore, Carrie Haney, Elizabeth Garrison, Mary Calhoun, Alice Russell, John Hill, Lane Arring- ton, Fannie Pearl, Gaddy Arthur

Turner Lois Limer. Seventh Grade—W. Thos. Reeves— Neither tardy nor absent September and October—Vera Clark, Edna Davis, Georgia Davis, Blanche Dyer, Carrie Mae Galloway, Eva Mae Hollings- worth, Fannie Hosaflock, Inez Jordan, Grace Dean Leatherwood, Anna Mae Moffat, Pearl Miller, Velma Press- ley, Francis Turner, Joe Calhoun, Carl Francis, Wm. Messer, Harry Phillips, Robert Underwood, Herbert McHaffey.

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