

REVELATIONS OF A WIFE

The Story of a Honeymoon

A Wonderful Romance of Married Life Wonderfully Told by ADELE GARRISON

CHAPTER CCCLXXXIV

WHY MADGE TRIED TO KEEP KATHERINE FROM WORRYING.

"So Jack had some reason for his jealousy after all."

I regretted the tactless little speech as soon as I had made it. How I ever permitted it to pass my lips I don't know. Katherine flamed in an instant.

"That is most unjust and unlike you, Margaret," she said heatedly. "Jack never knew anything about the matter at all. It was something that only Mrs. Braithwaite and I knew. Even Dr. Braithwaite himself, I am convinced, didn't realize what he was doing. Jack's jealousy is based only on his own imaginings, and his resentment of the fact that the work of the hospital unit, which I am doing for Dr. Braithwaite here, takes so much of my time."

"Forgive me," I pleaded sincerely. "I'm getting to be a regular vinegar cruet with all this worry. The work I have on hand is heavy enough for two women, although I'm glad and proud to be entrusted with it. And then Jack is behaving like a regular bear. If he would get smotheringly angry now and then and be sunny in the meantime I wouldn't mind it so much. But his face is like a tombstone all the time, and he has the most martyr-tied-to-the-stake air."

"Do you know, Madge, really if I thought that was his real temperament, and that he would be apt to keep this sort of thing up all our lives, I don't believe I'd dare to marry him, much as I love him. Tell me, you have known Jack from childhood, is this sort of thing his natural disposition?"

"Why No?"

"Why, no!" I stammered, anxious to put my brother-cousin in the best

light possible, and yet to tell her the truth concerning him. "He's very intense, and has a most rigid, almost Puritanical sense of right and wrong, but I've never noticed any jealousy in his nature. I could hardly judge of that, though," I added, "for he wasn't in love with me. We were brought up together like brother and sister, you know."

I am afraid the words were not convincingly uttered, for even as they left my lips my memory flashed back to the time when Jack had come back from a year's work in the wilds of South America, not knowing that I had been married during his absence. The impassioned declaration of his love long suppressed which he had poured into my ears at that memorable dinner we had together, and the agony I had seen on his face when I told him I was married were not things to be forgotten.

Yet I had no qualms of conscience in telling Katherine that Jack hadn't been in love with me, for it was my sincere belief he had deceived himself as to his affection for me. That because of our long association and the fact that he had never known any other girls intimately, he had imagined his heart to be broken when he found me married. That his meeting with Katherine had taught Jack his mistake quickly I had abundant evidence. But my eyes fell before the knowledge in her eyes as she looked at me.

"Isn't There Something—"

"It's good of you to try to make me believe that," she said, and I fancied there was just a tinge of irony in her voice, "but you see part of Jack's creed is that people who are engaged should have no secrets from each other, so he has told me all about his suffering when he returned and found you married."

"Jack's overtrained conscience will be the death of him some day," I returned shortly, for I was really very angry at my cousin for making so un tactful a revelation to his little fiancée. "And I can assure you that he deceived himself as to his feeling. For instance, he was never jealous of me. It wouldn't have worried him if 20 principals had entrusted me with their most important work."

"And now I am going to send you to bed," I finished, rising and slipping my arm around her. "You need a good sleep more than anything else, and I'll warrant you'll wake up thinking better of Jack. He needs a good old-fashioned scolding more than anything else, I imagine, and I believe I shall administer it the next time I see him."

"You are so good to me, Madge," she said gratefully. "I am tired, but I don't know whether I shall be able to sleep or not. Tell me first, dear, isn't there something troubling you."

too? Your face looked strained to-night."

At her question there rushed over me the full realization of my own worries, my anxiety over the terrible predicament of my father, my terror of Mrs. Allis, who, for all I knew, might even now be lurking somewhere in the shadows outside. But there was no help which Katherine could give me.

"Nonsense!" I returned with as fine an air of nonchalance as I could manage. "I've no worries that a good night's sleep won't cure."

(To be continued)

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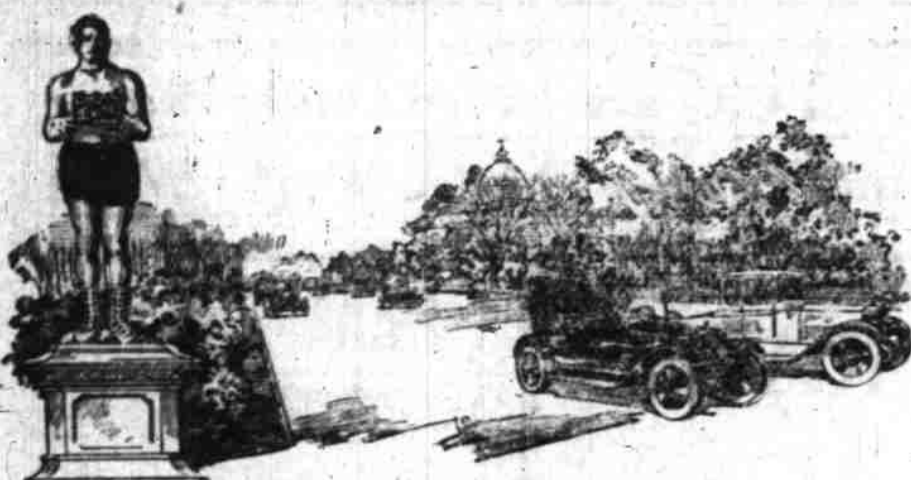
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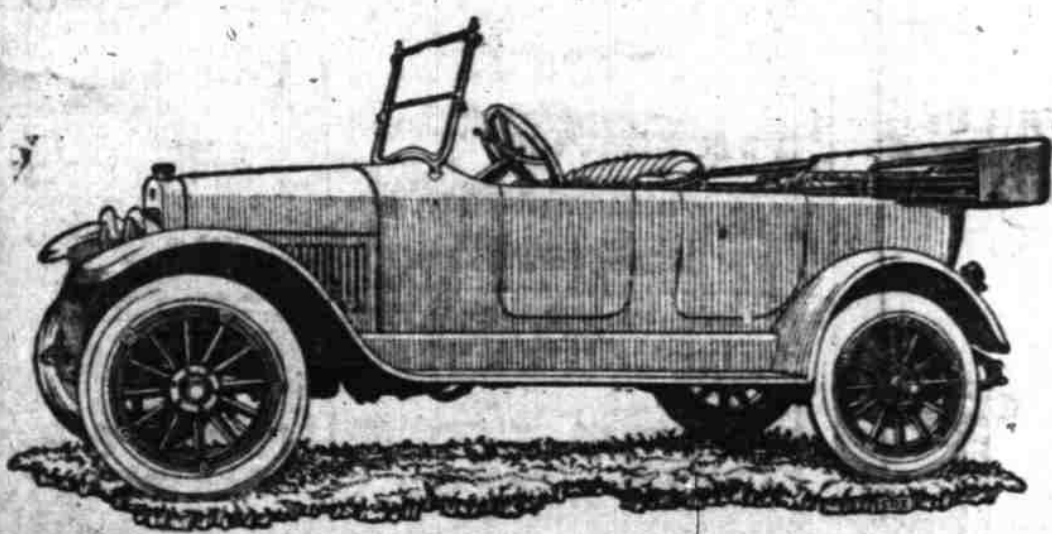
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