

My Husband Is Insanely Jealous

This Week's True Story
taken from
REAL LIFE

A True Story of Jealousy

Complete on This Page

CHARLES was terribly grouchy that morning. A fine, cold rain had been falling since midnight, and as it was not late enough in the fall for our furnace to be going, the breakfast room was a little uncomfortable. I glanced up now and then as he impatiently tore through his newspaper and tried to eat grape fruit at the same time.

"What's the matter, dear?" I asked as sweetly as I could. "Nothing!" he growled, looking blackly over the morning Times.

"Oh, yes there is," I insisted. "Please tell me."

"Well," he relented, dropping the paper and revealing his careworn countenance, "I've just got to sell out that garage by next week. The mortgage is due and I haven't the money to meet it. Business has been discouragingly poor, and I guess a big place like that was a little too much for me to handle anyway. I've been expecting a man in town from Louisville to look it over with a view to purchase, but he hasn't arrived and naturally I'm worried half sick about it."

"I'm so sorry, honey," I comforted. I wished so much that there was something I could do, but I knew there wasn't. Had I known the situation before hand, I might have been able to interest some of my father's friends in Louisville. But Charles had never been in the habit of telling me anything about his business.

He was and is the old fashioned type of husband: believes the wife's place is in the home; that husbands should only be interested in their business affairs. Moreover, he is insanely jealous. I believe he is one of the most jealous men in the world.

Although I have shown him in every way during the ten years of our married life that I care only for him, he continues to be jealous and ready to flare up at the least little matter. He is short, dark and serious; a good provider and an exceptionally dutiful husband, but he has annoyed me terribly at times with his jealous rages. I dare not ever be seen with another man, for he has seriously warned me against it.

It is all very silly, of course, because it is inevitable in this day and time for a wife to have some acquaintances and friends among the men of the community. This is 1930 not 1830, but Charles doesn't seem to know it.

I can understand his jealousy, of course. When he married me I was the belle of Louisville and considered one of the most beautiful girls in the Negro community. My friends assure me that after ten years of married life I have lost little of my comeliness. I am very fair, with dark brown hair, large and lustrous black eyes, have a very fine, smooth skin, and am still quite slender and active. Charles worships me. And I always vowed to do nothing to arouse his fierce jealousy.

It is thrilling to be loved by a man like that, but then, it is also sometimes annoying.

Enter Mr. Dilworth

After Charles, somewhat relieved by taking me into his confidence, had gone to business, I decided to go down town to shop. I love to stroll down the streets and admire the shop windows, to walk along the aisles in department stores and look at the multitude of gorgeous things on display,

to make purchases and be able to say in a lordly manner, "Please charge it to my account!" and "Please deliver that tomorrow!"

I had just left Milner's when whom should I bump into but Clarence Dilworth. I hardly recognized him after eleven years. He is, if anything, more distinguished-looking than he was when he ardently paid court to me in Louisville, before I married Charles, what with his aristocratic complexion, graying temples, soft vibrant voice and elegant manners. I almost fainted with surprise.

"Betty Foster!" he gasped, gripping my hand and gazing down admiringly at me. "Wherever in the world have you been?"

"Not Betty Foster any more," I chided him, "but Mrs. Charles Bundle. You must know that I'm married."

"Oh, yes. Of course. How stupid of me to forget," he admitted, still holding my gloved hand. There was a tone of regret in his voice and a certain wistful look in his eyes. He suddenly dropped my hand like an awkward boy.

"It doesn't seem eleven years have passed," he said reminiscently. "To me it was only yesterday that we used to take those long walks of a summer evening together, swinging hands, or go for a spin around the country roads in my old freak Ford. By golly, those were happy days for me, Betty! What a lucky devil Bundle was to get you."

"But remember, you went away and was gone a year when I married," I reminded him. I thought I saw the smooth, rich brown skin of his face flush faintly as I said it.

"Well, let's not talk about that," he said, evidently pained. "I - I had to go. Business, you know. And I wasn't able to get back until after you married and went away. God, what a shock that was!"

"It is probably for the best," I remarked, as indifferently as I could to conceal my emotion.

I had loved Clarence Dilworth far more deeply than I had ever admitted to anyone. And as I looked up into his earnest eyes I found myself terrified by the thought that I still liked him, next to my husband, better than any man in the world.

"Let's go down the street a piece

He Warned Me Never to be Seen in Another Man's Company, but - - -



"I had just left Milner's when who should I bump into but Clarence Dilworth."

and have a little lunch together for old time's sake" he suggested, noting the awkwardness of our position right in front of the swinging doors of Milner's. Without a thought, I agreed.

As if in celebration of the occasion, the fine rain and mist had made way for the warming rays of the sun and already the pavement was drying. The city smelled so clean and washed. The window displays seemed more, and more stunning the smiles of the loiterers and pedestrians more cheerful, the automobiles more shiny, the noises of the city like a giant symphony. Arm and arm we tripped lightly down to Castle's, a cozy tearoom on a side street, where palms and bowers about the tables give that privacy so conducive to romance.

At Castle's

"Gee, but it's good to sit opposite you once again," he remarked ardently as we waited for our order. "I often thought about you when I was in Texas—wondering where you were and what you were doing. I was too hurt to write when I heard you had married, and then I didn't know how Bundle would take it."

"Oh, he's terribly jealous," I said, thinking for the first time that even then I was disobeying orders in hav-

ing lunch with another man. "If he was to see me here with you there would be an awful scene."

"Well, I can't blame him for being jealous," Clarence bantered, "as beautiful as you are. But he needn't worry about me. I'll only be here for a day or two. I ran up to close a business deal."

While we talked, I couldn't help having a feeling of uneasiness. I was doing wrong, according to my husband's standards. I knew he wouldn't like it if he should find out that I had had tea with Clarence Dilworth, of all men, but then, he would never know. That at least, was comforting.

How charming and quaint it was in Castle's, sitting there with an old sweetheart I hadn't seen for eleven years. What tricks Fate plays! One can never tell what may happen. And yet it is the unexpected that makes life worth living; that presents the variety without which life is drab and spiceless.

"What are you doing here?" The cold, hard tones of my husband startled me from my musing. He was standing opposite us, glaring malevolently down upon us.

I was struck dumb. I tried to say something, but my voice failed me, at first. Terrified, I glanced from Clarence to Charles. The former was calm and collected, my husband was plainly furious, his mouth twitching, his hands opening and closing, his eyes burning.

"Charles," I finally managed to blurt out "this is Mr. Clarence Dilworth of Louisville, Kentucky, a childhood friend and general manager of the Kentucky Motor Company, one of the leading Negro businesses. He's just in town to close a business deal. We just met in front of Milner's and came in here to have a lunch and a chat."

Like a flash my husband's demeanor changed. It was so amazing that I was swept practically off my feet. His face was wreathed with smiles and he held out his hand eagerly.

"By jove!" he almost chortled. "I'm certainly glad to see you Mr. Dilworth. Been expecting you for some days. I'm the owner and manager of the Progressive Taxicab Company and Garage, you know."

"Well, well, well!" boomed Clarence.

"What a coincidence!"

"Say, what does this mean?" I cried.

"Tell me something, you two."

"You see, honey," Charles expatiated, seating himself at the table. "Mr. Dilworth's company is going to buy my garage. You know I was telling

you how worried I was about it this morning? . . ."

"And," Clarence interrupted "I didn't know that your husband was the head of the Progressive Taxicab Company and Garage, and your husband didn't know that I was general manager of the Kentucky Motor Company. You see, my company is going to do business here and negotiated with your husband to purchase his garage repair shop and taxicabs."

"Oh!" I smiled broadly. "And to think that Charles was about to jump on you, Clarence, for trying to steal his wife!"

"Oh, I'm just a jealous fool," Charles confessed. "Let's forget it."

But I couldn't forget that look on his face when he came in and saw me with Clarence Dilworth. So I'll never go anywhere with another man again.

THE END



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