Matrimonial Adventures

The Perfect Husband

BY

Charles G. Norris

Author of "Salt," "Brass," etc.

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There was sullen silence across the breakfast table. Lucy Vallentine bent her head, and unseeing poked at her food. Her husband finished his ham and eggs deliberately, pushed away his plate, and lounging back in his chair, sucked the wind through his teeth with little smacking noises of his tongue. Then he leisurely folded the morning newspaper, rose, took his hat and coat from the closet, and stalked out of the apartment without [illegible], sharply slamming the outer [illegible] him.

[illegible] thinking. A look of [illegible] almost of despair [illegible] her face. That was Tom [illegible] the way Tom acted; they [illegible] for another dreary spell of [illegible]! She thought over the [illegible] years of her married life; she [illegible] the thirteen that might fol[illegible] twenty-six perhaps. That [illegible] fate: yoked to a churl, [illegible] ill-mannered, who was [illegible] he offended her. [illegible] infuriated her [illegible] Tom regarded himself [illegible] husband, faithful, good, generous, devoted to her and to his home! It was true enough. In fairness, Lucy had to admit that Tom was generous; he was faithfulness [illegible]: he earned a good salary; he [illegible] every night and even [illegible], and gave her an [illegible] He considered that [illegible] discharged his duty as a [illegible], and regarded the [illegible] their constant bickerings, which recently he had chosen to treat [illegible] as being entirely [illegible] responsibility. He never [illegible] opportunity to point out to [illegible] had no vices; he did not even smoke. He regarded her sourly as an ungrateful spouse—a cranky, unreasonable, nervous woman.

Lucy rocked her head in her hands, and moaned. Tom was so egregiously stupid, so self-satisfied, so blind. She could have forgiven his obtuseness, but she could not forgive his rudeness. Every day of his life he unconsciously affronted her, and almost as frequently did so deliberately. He growled at her, sneered at her, and when crossed, shouted her into silence.

She had rebelled this morning. The incident that had precipitated the whole trouble had been of trivial inconsequence; it always was. Tom had said the cream was sour, and she had casually remarked that she didn't see how that could be since it was the morning's delivery, and then he had shouted at her that he guessed he knew what he was talking about, and that when he said the cream was sour, it was sour. She had said nothing in reply; she had considered his ungraciousness dispassionately for a time, and then in the midst of the breakfast, she had suddenly put her clasped hands down before her on the table, and said her say temperately and earnestly, urging her right to courteous treatment. She was familiar with the look of displeasure that came into his face as he listened, and reaching for an argument that would strengthen her words, she had alluded to Mr. Gray and his wife, who lived in the adjoining apartment, and that had proved the spark to his anger.

For Tom hated the Grays, hated everything about them. The suite of rooms these neighbors occupied was on the same floor as the Vallentines'; an air-well separated the two establishments, and upon this source of light and ventilation a bedroom window of each apartment gave vent. Much that went on in the Gray household could be heard by the Vallentines, and Tom and Lucy listened to the stray words and casual conversations that went on between their unsuspecting neighbors, unabashed.

Lucy loved the way in which the Grays spoke to each other. It was so different from that to which she was accustomed. The man had extraordinary nuances in his voice; it was beautifully modulated, and when he happened to address his wife as "my dear," it was like a caress. Tom chose to ridicule the little intimate things they said to one another, and to imitate Mr. Gray's manner. It made Lucy acutely uncomfortable, for she admired Mrs. Gray, was genuinely fond of her, and was in terror lest Tom should be in turn overheard.

Lucy had had her misgivings as to the decency of listening to her friend's confidential murmurings with her husband, but she assured herself that her motive was not unworthy curiosity. It was merely that she enjoyed with a hungry soul the manner in which this particular husband and wife spoke to one another. It was beautiful, it soothed her, it was like exquisite distant music.

She had come to be more or less intimately acquainted with Mrs. Gray since that lady had moved next door. The two women visited one another, made frequent shopping trips together, and sometimes lunched in each other's kitchens.

Mr. Gray was an interior decorator; he was often away for several days at a time when he went to supervise the work on some rich man's country home. He returned home, always, with a trifling present for his wife: a bangle, a pair of silver buckles, a lacquered box, or perhaps only a handful of jonquils. Frequently he took her out to dinner and the theater, and once, to Lucy's positive knowledge, he had inveigled her down town in order to buy her a hat.

That had seemed to Lucy the apotheosis of conjugal devotion. Her own husband had never brought her home unexpectedly a present in all his life. Once in a great while, she induced him to go with her to the theater or the movies. He had never commented on anything she wore, or took the smallest notice of hat or gown.

Lucy, considering her own lot and the happy circumstances that were Mrs. Gray's on this particular morning, said to herself with considerable bitterness that while she was in no danger of coveting her neighbor's husband, she did long with all her soul for some degree of contentment with her own. And upon these reflections, came Alice Gray, her sweet, composed face free of worry, her serene beauty glowing today with unexpected interest.

Alonzo had telephoned, she explained, that he was obliged to go to Boston; he would have to be away for several days, and he wanted his wife to accompany him. Could she arrange her affairs to be ready to leave with him on the late afternoon train?

Could she? Alice Gray's eyes danced with excitement as she caught Lucy's hand. There was nothing to detain her; she had never visited Boston, she thought it perfectly sweet of Alonzo to want her to go. There was the whole day before her in which to get ready; she needed a new hat, a veil and a bag, and she urged Lucy to come with her and help her pick them out.

Lucy could not resist. She was not small enough to refuse to share this friend's pleasure even though she felt the injustice of Alice Gray's having so much and herself so little. And the bitter feelings of the early morning were forgotten, as she hastily piled the unwashed dishes in the sink to soak, gave an indifferent glance at the unmade beds, thrust head and arms into her trim tailor skirt, and reached for the smart little yellow straw hat which she had only been able to wear once since she bought it, a month before.

Later, seated beside her radiant friend on the top of a Fifth avenue bus, the spring sunshine flooding the city, the street gay with fashionably dressed women, she caught something of Alice Gray's exhilaration.

The two women threaded the aisles of department stores, priced fabrics and exclaimed over the novelties. Alice Gray bought a charming hat, the veil, and a neat little handbag with nickel clasps, and Lucy indulged herself in a much-needed electric iron. In buoyant spirits they made a leisurely progress at a late luncheon hour to one of the smart, new French restaurants on Park avenue.

And almost in the entrance way, about to pass through the revolving glass doors to the street, absorbed and gaily chatting together, they encountered Alonzo Gray and a handsomely dressed woman. A happy exclamation burst from Lucy and she started forward with a delighted greeting.

"Why, it's your husband—it's Mr. Gray—"

But her words died on her lips. Alice Gray's fingers closed like a vise upon her arm, and the hand dragged her aside. Something ugly and unpleasant flashed into Lucy's mind. There was a whirling silence, a dizzying moment while her pulses raced, and her breath was still. Then, unconscious and still chatting amiably, Alonzo Gray and his companion passed into the street.

"Two, please—and in the corner. I like those upholstered seats." Alice Gray composedly addressed herself to the head waiter, and serenely followed him into the cool and flower-scented restaurant.

"Come, Lucy—"

Lucy, shaken, bewildered, the significance of what had occurred still half guessed, mechanically obeyed. Mechanically she ungloved her hands, mechanically she pushed stray locks of hair up under her hat, mechanically she ordered. But when the obsequious head waiter had murmured: "Bien, madame," and had departed, she could only keep her eyes on her plate, and sit tongue-tied, fearful of any comment she might hazard, miserably conscious of what must be her friend's humiliation and discomfiture. That unquestionably had been Alonzo Gray, and the woman with him had been—Lucy knew with unmistakable intuition, that the woman was not of her world, or of the world of decent women. Alice had seen it all; she had understood, and had saved Lucy from precipitating a frightfully embarrassing encounter!

"My dear—my dear—" Alice Gray laid her hand on Lucy's arm. "You mustn't feel so badly. I understand what's passing in your mind—but, my dear, you mustn't concern yourself on my account! . . . I know; I know all about it."

Lucy met her friend's unruffled gaze with widening eyes and parted lips. Mrs. Gray smiled at her, a wry, twisted little smile.

"Oh, yes. I know all about it, and—and I don't care! Alonzo is all that I need in a husband; he is considerate, attentive, deferential; he likes to be with me, and to have me with him, and he loves me. Oh, yes, he does; he loves me truly. . . . There have always been women in Alonzo's life! This one happens to be a clever artist. Alonzo employs her as a decorator. I even know her name. She's Flora Balzanni. You know Balzanni, the opera singer? She's his divorced wife, and is quite promiscuous. Alonzo has been—well, attentive to her for more than a year. Of course, he has no idea I know anything about it, and I wouldn't have him suspect I've learned for anything in the world. You see, he wouldn't want to hurt me, and he would think that if I knew, I would be offended. But I have no more feeling of jealousy for this passing fancy of his than I would have for a good cigar he enjoys after dinner. . . . Oh, I know my views are anything but conventional. I am shocking you"; Alice interrupted herself, smiling a rather hard, cold little smile. "I would shock most women. But I believe altogether too much emphasis is placed upon fidelity in marriage. As long as my husband in no way jeopardizes my rights as his lawful wife, why should I concern myself with what he does outside his home? Frankly, I would rather have him unfaithful to me in an occasional way, as he is, than have him drink himself into besottedness, as many a man does, and bring home to me a throbbing head, a nasty temper, and a rancid breath. Alonzo satisfies me; he more than adequately fulfills his part of life's companion with me. I am thoroughly content; what else matters?"

Her own apartment smelled close to Lucy, when, later the same day, she closed the door behind her. It seemed cheerless, empty, desolate. The mood with which Alice Gray had infected her all day, dropped from her like a cloak suddenly falling to the floor.

She put away her things and set about getting dinner, washing the dishes, whipping the unmade beds together, setting the table. After all, her husband was probably no worse than any other woman's. She made him a pan of hot biscuits, of which she knew he was particularly fond.

At six o'clock, she heard him come in. She heard his creaking steps to the closet where he always hung his hat and coat; she heard him creak his way back to the front room where she knew he had thrown himself down on the sofa, and was reading the evening paper with feet cocked over one hard, upholstered arm. He had no word of greeting for her; he would have none; a dark and sullen silence would enwrap him for days to come.

She put the food on the table at the half-hour, and called him to dinner. He did not stop to wash his face or hands or comb his hair; he came just as he was, sullenly, silently, and hunched his chair up to his place.

Suddenly something snapped in her. She screamed; she screamed piercingly; one wild, sharp shriek. She buried her face in her hands, forcing the fingers deep into her eyeballs. Then she began to sob, brokenly, passionately, all the grief pent up in her bursting out in an agony of weeping.

In 13 years, Tom Vallentine had never seen his wife cry. He was startled now—alarmed and shocked. He watched her in pained uneasiness for some minutes, groping about in his mind for some way to check the flood of sobbing that beat upon his ears. It had been a long, long time since he had laid a hand upon her in affection, yet now he was moved by the violence of her grief, and the unfamiliar impulse came to him. He laid down his knife and fork and stared at her stolidly, frowning deeply. He thought of getting up and patting her shoulder; he tried to think of something to say, and in his perplexity began to talk at random. He did not know how to be gentle; he had forgotten how to be tender. The iron bonds of habit were too well forged about him. He had always treated his wife with contumely, and now when he strove to reach her troubled spirit with gentle words, he found himself only mouthing a justification of his actions that morning. Lucy could not suspect that behind the harsh voice, and slow, clumsy words, there stirred within him the first concern for her he had known in years. Only the dogged reiteration of the facts about the cream reached her consciousness. Her sobbing fell silent, but she still pressed her palms to her cheeks, her fingers to her eyes. Presently she was aware he had forsaken the topic of the cream; now it was of his virtues he discoursed.

". . . I let you live your own life; you go and come as you please; you have your own friends. I never ask you how or why you spend the money every month, and I never let the first go by without depositing your check in the bank! I never question what you do with yourself all day; all I ask of you is to run the house and keep things nice. . . . I don't see how you've got much fault to find with me. I don't drink or gamble or smoke; I don't go out nights, and I've never looked at another woman in all my life! Now, some men . . ."

Lucy listened until she could stand no more. With wet tears staining her cheeks, her face convulsed, she suddenly straightened herself and faced him, her lip trembling, her hands half outstretched to him across the table.

"Oh, Tom, Tom," she cried, "I don't care how moral you are. I don't care anything about other women. I don't care whether you go after them or not. Seek them, kiss them, have them—do anything you like! Gamble, smoke and drink! Deny yourself nothing on my account. I don't care how wicked you are. All I want you to do is to be kind to me, Tom—be kind, be kind! Don't be so ugly and mean to me. And sometimes—just now and then—try to love me a little!"

"What's in a Name?"

By MILDRED MARSHALL

Facts about your name; its history; meaning; whence it was derived; significance; your lucky day and lucky jewel

HELEN

LEONORE, NELLIE, LENA, ELINOR

SOMEONE once said that a woman may be a proverb for any amount of evil or misfortune, but as long as she is a proverb for beauty, her name will ring through the centuries. In proof of this is the ever-popular name of Helen. Coming from "Helios," the Greek sun god who drove his flaming chariot around the heavenly vault day by day, the name signifies light and brightness, and conjures up a dazzling figure of youth, beauty and cleverness. It is the queen of feminine names, its fame beginning with the oldest of Greek epics, the Iliad, with Helen of Troy whom Tennyson describes as

A daughter of the gods divinely tall,
And most divinely fair.
Her loveliness with shame and with surprise
Froze my swift speech; she turning on my face
The star-like sorrows of immortal eyes,
Spoke slowly in her place.
I had great beauty; ask thou not my name;
No one can be more wise than destiny.
Many drew swords and died. Where'er I came
I brought calamity.

One of the first to bear the name was the mother of Constantine and restorer of the shrines at Jerusalem, who was called St. Helena. Through careless pronunciation, Helen became Ellen or Ellin, the Welsh version. Elayne followed, the name becoming famed as the mother of Sir Galahad, whom Tennyson later identified with his "Lady of Shalott." From this, Ireland adopted Eileen, or Aileen. Its poetical associations are continued through Ellen Irwin and her piteous death upon Braes of Kirth, and Ellen Douglas, beloved heroine of Sir Walter Scott.

Italy took the name of Helen and transformed it into the soft musical

SHOWS HIMSELF TO FAITHFUL

Tradition of Rising of Martyred Priests' Coffin Has Strong Hold in New Mexico.

To the Church of St. Augustine at Isleta, N. M., there attaches a queer legend. It is the tradition of the rising of Padre Padilla's coffin. Among the Franciscan friars who accompanied Coronado on his famous march to what he called Quivira—country of the Wichita Indians in Kansas—was Padre Juan de Padilla. This intrepid servant of God (when Coronado turned homeward), remained with a view of christianizing those Indians. He was killed by them, and now tradition has it that somehow in the heavenly ordering, the body of the martyred padre got miraculously transferred from Kansas to a place under the church altar at Isleta, and that periodically the coffin, which was a section of a hollow cottonwood trunk, rises plainly to view in the church, disclosing to whomsoever may be present, the padre, rather mummified, but still in his black whiskers.

Fine for the Bath.

The efficacy of common salt as a gargle for the throat, a dry shampoo for the hair or for a five-minute morning rub, is a well-recognized fact. A towel, especially prepared for the latter use, however, gives a sense of well being that little else can equal. To prepare it, dissolve one cupful of either table or sea salt (preferable sea salt) in a quart of hot water. When cool immerse a large Turkish towel, allowing it to remain for 15 or 20 minutes or until the salt is all absorbed. Hang it up and let it drip dry, without wringing. On arising in the morning rub the body vigorously with the dry salted towel. It will give a wonderfully stimulated, invigorated feeling.

MICKIE SAYS

England and France couldn't get much madder at each other if they were baseball umpires.

The Friendly Path

By Walter L. Robinson

FENCE-CORNERS

CLEAR out the fence corners.

Any good farmer knows that he is endangering his crops when he permits weeds and briars to grow in adjoining pastures or in the areas near to fences surrounding the fields.

Everyone has some idea of the disreputable appearance of farms where fences are tumbling down and all sort of rubbish and undergrowth conveys the impression of a run-down place. Yet it is not uncommon to find disgruntled agriculturists who complain of weeds in their fields and low prices offered for their land.

An authority recently said that wayside weeds should be destroyed for these reasons:

"They act as centers of weed infection for adjoining fields.

"They sometimes are carried for miles by vehicles and passing animals.

"They harbor harmful insects and plant diseases.

"They create unsanitary conditions.

"They are unsightly."

Admitted that this is true of the fence corners which have been neglected, is it not also as true in the case of other corners which have been permitted to lie uncleaned and unsightly? How about the corners in men's minds and men's hearts which are filled with unimportant, unwholesome and disappointing thoughts and desires?

Is it not just as important to keep homes and lives free from contamination as it is to keep fields free from weeds and disease?

REMEMBER

When corned beef was eight cents a pound?

And a suit was twelve bucks?

And doctors charged a dollar?

And nobody ate bak[illegible]

And they gave spare [illegible]

And nobody ever [illegible]

And there [illegible]

And mo[illegible] hits?

And [illegible] blush?

And the best [illegible] dollars?

An[illegible] piano?

And [illegible]

stock raisers.

The Treasury department [illegible] that approximately $[illegible] spent each month for amu[illegible] throughout the United States; bulk of this money is spent at picture shows, the theaters, at [illegible]cuses and amusement parks.

In Paris, fashionable women are [illegible]ing their dogs to match their [illegible]. We'd go a long way to see a fash[illegible]able Parisienne with a plaid dress and everything.

The statement that there are more bolsheviki in the United States than there are in Russia may be true, but they are spread out a good deal thinner in this country.

Vienna has appointed an official whose duty is to give advice to all couples contemplating marriage. The dispatch doesn't state whether this official is married or not.

The military attache of the American embassy in London is acknowledged to be the best amateur dancer in England. At last, we are to have a really distinguished embassy.

A speaker at a recent parent-teacher meeting said that the absent-minded child may be a genius but the chances are that he is merely wishing dinner was ready or school out, or something like that.

For Quick [illegible]

Call the

Nyssa Tran[illegible]

PHONE 70[illegible]

Nyssa Barber [illegible]

SHAVING, HAIR [illegible]

HOT AND COLD [illegible]

Office [illegible]

THE NEW [illegible]

Hey [illegible]

How a[illegible] bill heads [illegible] lopes, cards, etc. [illegible] until they are all [illegible] then ask [illegible]

Let us have [illegible] while we have [illegible] Printing as it [illegible]

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BIG QUA[illegible] LEDGE [illegible]

SOME "JEWELER'S [illegible] IS TAKEN [illegible]

LEDGE 18 INCH[illegible]

MINERS BELIEVE [illegible] EQUAL RICH RA[illegible] MORMON BA[illegible]

There seems to be [illegible] doubt left but that one [illegible]est quartz ledges ever [illegible] Oregon has been locate[illegible] by James T. Worsham [illegible] Glenn. The find is [illegible] White and Blue min[illegible] George H. Bodfish. [illegible] Glenn are working it o[illegible] an option to purchase.

Both of the miners [illegible] Rainbow mine for [illegible] know from assays, the [illegible] have a richer vein and [illegible] they have one as large [illegible]bow mine was a $2[illegible] ducer.

The new ledge is ver[illegible] quartz, some of it, in [illegible] the rich "jewelers' qua[illegible] several Alaska fields. [illegible] assay they have had [illegible] ton and from that up [illegible] ton. The ledge is 18 [illegible] and they have blocke[illegible] sixty feet in length a[illegible] deep as a preliminary [illegible] to its size.

Even a layman has n[illegible] the value of the quart[illegible] taken out by hand by [illegible]ers is he visits the [illegible] sees some of the tests [illegible] party of men from Va[illegible] day. Small pieces of [illegible] knocked off at rando[illegible] ledge blocked off; f[illegible] from the bottom an[illegible]ens. Pulverized in a [illegible] mortar and quickly wa[illegible] prospector's pan, ev[illegible] quartz tested left gol[illegible] with the naked eye. [illegible] quartz tested weigh[illegible] pound.

Messrs. Worsham an[illegible] taken out quartz with [illegible] shovel in the last few [illegible] contains more than $10 [illegible] gold, they assert. Th[illegible] quartz stored ready to [illegible] as they have the stam[illegible]ing.

Mr. Worsham pound[illegible] gold in two hours, he [illegible] small hand mortar fr[illegible] the richest quartz.

The Red, White an[illegible] includes six claims whi[illegible] an immense quantity [illegible] if the vein continues [illegible] shows now. There is [illegible] charge six stamp mill [illegible]erty all ready to run. [illegible] a capacity of 18 tons [illegible] in good condition and [illegible] but little. Most of t[illegible] has the original paint [illegible]

This mine was orig[illegible] and started by an eas[illegible] The mill was put up [illegible] shafts sunk. The com[illegible] ran out before the ri[illegible] located. Mr. Bodfish [illegible] to the mine on a lie[illegible]sham, one of the pion[illegible] that district, has k[illegible]ledge for several year[illegible]

Mr. Glenn will leave [illegible] Saturday to secure a [illegible] and other additional m[illegible]essary for them to tak[illegible] quantity of the qua[illegible] men propose to work [illegible] without outside capit[illegible] have no stock to sell.

The discovery has c[illegible] deal of excitement, no[illegible] Malheur district but [illegible] Northwest. Since the f[illegible] published in The Ent[illegible] has hardly a day pa[illegible] some party has come [illegible] to look over the field. [illegible]ing engineer was ther[illegible] this week from Baker [illegible] that the hills around [illegible] be dotted with monum[illegible] short time. A good [illegible]pecting and claim stak[illegible] going on for the past [illegible]

Mr. Worsham beli[illegible] placer fields around [illegible] "ripe" again to yield [illegible] placer fields all overla[illegible] large deposits of [illegible] weather and wash ea[illegible] has been a good man[illegible] these fields were wo[illegible] Worsham believes it i[illegible]tion of getting water [illegible] district to make thes[illegible] again. Placer mining [illegible] continued when the [illegible] ditch was diverted to [illegible] into irrigation use.

[illegible] camel in the m[illegible] languishes and [illegible] surrounded by [illegible] thorney desert vegetat[illegible] roughly happy and con[illegible]

Absorb This:
OLD AGE PASSETH AWAY.
BUT YOUTH IS PERENNIAL.
(© by McClure Newspaper Syndicate.)

[illegible] trip. Dear, the bride inquired anxiously, "in the excitement of leaving did you say good-by to papa and mamma?"

"No," he replied, "I said 'Au revoir!'"—Boston Transcript.

[illegible] of it.

BANK OF NYSSA

[illegible] trict.

8. The formation of a drainage district under the provisions of Chapter 340 of the General Laws of Oregon for 1915, under the provi[illegible]

R. W. SWAGLER
Attorney at Law
Rooms 12 14, 15
Wilson Bldg