

And So They Were Married

By HAZEL DEYO BATCHELOR
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START THIS STORY TODAY

AFTER dinner one evening Natalie sat fingering the leaves of a book and watching Jack turn the pages of the newspaper. A curious little feeling of desolation was in her heart. She and Jack seemed like two strangers, excepting for that consideration of manner that he showed her unflinchingly.

Up in the Raymond apartment, Ruth and Scott were just finishing dinner, and Ruth, who had been unusually happy all day, was looking across at Scott reading the evening paper. Strange how so many people do the same things at the same time. But Ruth was not unhappy, nor did she doubt Scott's love. She had begun to understand him better than that; she understood why it was that men grew to accept things as a matter of course; why they cannot always be lovers. The reason is quite obvious. Courtship is after all a time of probation; marriage is the finished thing.

During courtship a time, because he hits best at certain times, because he exists between the times of seeing his beloved one only because of the stimulations of the next meeting. Ruth was accepting marriage now more sanely, although she still had a lot to learn. Suddenly, like a small whirl, she was in Scott's arms, the newspaper fluttering to the floor, her arms about his neck, his arms tight about her.

"Do you love me?" she asked foolishly. He caught her closer. "Let's have the Bonds over to play cards," she suggested.

Scott knew nothing of Ruth's experience with Natalie, and the clasp of his arms loosened. Ruth knew why; she knew that Scott thought she was encouraging Jack when she shouldn't. Nevertheless, she went on. "Shall we?"

"All right." His tone was indifferent. "I'll call them up." And Ruth flew to the telephone. Natalie's book fell to the floor with a crash as the telephone tinkled and Jack flung his paper down and went to answer it.

"Yeh, Ruth?" His tone was surprised. Natalie's voice sank. "Come over; why I guess so; wait a minute. Like to go over to the Raymonds and play cards?" He called into the living room.

"All right." Natalie responded lightly. She didn't want to go, but she must, she simply must. Since she had gone to Ruth that day she had not seen her, neither had she any way of knowing whether Jack had seen her or not, but she must play the game no matter what happened.

Half an hour later they were climbing the winding stone stairs that led to the Raymonds' apartment. Jack with a light hand beneath Natalie's arm, Natalie with a vague wish that there was some kind of an understanding between them.

The minute they entered the apartment, Natalie realized somehow that the atmosphere was different. Ruth was just as dear as ever, but that half bantering manner that she had always used with Jack was gone. She gave him no chances to flirt with her at all.

Scott had once told Ruth that he could not make love to her before people, and half impatiently she had refrained from the little endearments that she had often longed to bestow upon him even when people were present. Tonight she did all manner of little things. She touched his hair when she passed his chair, she flirted outrageously with him and once in the midst of an exciting hand of bridge she slipped her hand into his. It

was impossible to withstand her in this mood, and Natalie found her spirits rising. Finally at the end of the game Ruth vanished into the kitchen. Often when Natalie and Jack had been there for an evening and Ruth had gone out to make sandwiches and open beer she had called upon Jack to help her. Natalie had endured long minutes of agony as she listened to soft talk and laughter through the half-open door while Scott tried to entertain her in the living room. Tonight Ruth called for Scott and flitted so outrageously with him that they were a long time over the refreshments. Ruth contrived that some of the conversation should be overheard, which had a queer effect on the two left in the living room.

Jack had for a long time entertained the idea that in a way Ruth cared still, but that, of course, marriage was the barrier between them. She had led him to believe this by encouraging their friendship, and by keeping the conversation when they were alone dangerously personal. No man, however, can go on thinking anything like that when a woman is openly making love to her own husband, and Jack turned unconsciously to look at Natalie.

She had wandered over to the window and was looking down into the street. She was wondering what it would be like to carry on in that friendly frolicking fashion with Jack.

Something in the slender curves of that little figure in the plain blue gown, and the mop of yellow hair, standing alone at the window, suddenly made Jack's heart leap strangely. He had never noticed that Natalie was so little before. With a sudden stride he was at the window, and she made room for him quickly. Natalie's hand was twisting the cord of the shade nervously and Jack's fingers suddenly closed over it. What a little hand, soft and babyish! He looked at it curiously and then with a sudden impulse, touched his mouth to the palm.

There was a shout behind them and they whirled around startled and embarrassed. Ruth and Scott, standing arm in arm, were laughing at them, but Jack drew Natalie's arm through his, still retaining that soft little girl hand, and marched her in triumph down the room.

(The next instalment of this serial is called "The Apartment Next Door.")

Things to Know

Wrap your white face in blue tissue paper or blue cheesecloth before packing it for the summer and it will help to keep them from turning yellow. Ermine and white fox should always be kept in blue paper to retain their pure white color.

Please Tell Me What to Do

By CYNTHIA

Puppy Love

Dear Cynthia—I have been reading your column in the evening paper each night and I certainly have enjoyed it immensely. I must say my sympathies are with Lieutenant B who expressed his thought so well in the column on April 20. I am a young girl and have had a little experience in the question under discussion. Thoroughly, I believe what Lieutenant B says about it being the girl's fault. You may not always find this to be true, but if it is the girl's fault, then the girl may very quietly but firmly put him in his right place.

I am pretty good friends with all the boys I go with and if some of the girls only knew how they talked about girls who allowed every one to kiss them, why they would change their brand of attraction. Girls like that may have a great many dates, but the boys only go to see them for what they get. For instance:

I know a great many college men and when they meet a girl like that

they go to see her about twice, then they are tired of her.

I have a question to ask: You know every one falls in "puppy love," and, of course, at the time one feels that it is real love and that he is the only man.

Now—should one, under the influence of "puppy love," allow this person with whom she is in love to kiss her?

Suppose they were on a lawn belonging to a house in the suburbs of Philadelphia and this lawn had on it lovely shady evergreen trees under which hung a large porch swing. Suppose the night was very springlike with a lot of nice stars and a lovely moon and no mosquitoes. Now remember this is your best beau and you wear his fraternity pin and a little gold football he had worn at college.

What would you do in a case like that? Hoping that some one will advise me.

FINE JEUNE FILLE.

A girl is always so sorry, Jeanne Fille, if she allows a boy to kiss her. You see one falls in and oft of puppy love so often that this would be a very poor rule or guide.

Keep Them Guessing
Dear Cynthia—I am a young fellow stationed in Cape May at the Section

Base. About five months ago I met a girl whom I have learned to care for considerably. But there is one thing that I find against her and that is, I take her to the dances and dance about three times with her and all the rest she has with other boys.

I am inclined to be jealous of her. Would you please tell me if I should say anything to her. I do not want to hurt her feelings in any way. Do you think it would? A GOB.

Why don't you make up your mind to get ahead of the other boys a few times during the evening? When someone else claims your girl for instance after the third dance or so why not arrange that you meet her for the sixth or some other one not too far away? Then arrange for another dance later on in the evening when you have that one. I would not for the world let her see that I was jealous, not that it would hurt her feelings, but it would make her too sure of you. Keep them guessing!

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