# THE HUSBAND HATER

By HAZEL DEYO BATCHELOR

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*Jean Northrup, brought up in luxury, is forced by her father's death and her own fear of poverty into a marriage with her guardian, Mack Hood, a man she hates at sight. She goes West with him and is very unhappy until a friendship develops between the Brands and Dick Mason, a mining engineer. Everything goes well until Dick falls in love with Jean and asks her to run away with him, and Jean, horrified and disgusted, refuses. Mack overhears, and despairing of ever winning Jean's love, offers to let her go away from him. Jean goes East to visit Cicely Knowles, an old school friend, but life in the city with its pettiness and surest soap palls on her. She meets an interesting woman, lawyer, in Carol Baker, the novelist, who is a real friend.*

## A Straight Talk

"No. I'm not happily married," Jean said evenly, looking straight into Carol Baker's eyes. "I wonder if you could help me."

Carol was a very wise woman. She did not come over to Jean and take her hands and ask for any confidences. She stayed where she was and said calmly: "How can I help you now, child?"

"When I came away," Jean went on, "I came away for good. I thought I would view Cicely for a time until I got my bearings, and then I would get work of some kind. If you could help me to get something to do, I should be so grateful."

Had you anything in mind?"

Jean shook her head. "No, but there must be something I could do. So many women work for a living. I ought to be able to do something."

Does your husband know about this line of yours?"

Jean flushed scarlet and her sensitive lips quivered. "Of course not. He sends me money and of course he doesn't realize that it hurts me to have to accept it. I want to play fair. I don't want to give everything and give nothing, that's why I simply must get something to do. You see that, don't you?"

I think I understand. You want to get away, anything so long as it brings you nearer to that you can return his money, so that you can send him a check to him some day and tell him not to send any more."

Jean's eyes were miserable; Carol had but to look into them to know that what she said was true.

I don't want to interfere in the slightest with your private affairs, my dear, if you have given your consent to a certain extent, and I must say that I think. Why don't you have a talk with your husband?"

Jean shuddered. "Oh, you don't understand. I couldn't do that. I don't want to talk with him. I feel all my pride slipping away from me when I speak to him. He is so big and overpowering and I feel so small and helpless. You think I am talking wildly, but I didn't want to marry him. At first I thought I couldn't, but I was so poor and father died and I was all alone. I've never told this to anyone before; that's why I'm talking so wildly now. But I just had to tell you. I had to."

You are married now because you were afraid of being poor," Carol said gently.

Jean flushed, but it was true. She owed to you married this man and were afterward that you would face poverty than live with him."

The word came in a whisper. "Yes."

Carol came over to New York with his consent?"

Yes."

It has been rather fine about it, I think he deserves a square deal. Have you given a thought to the question, or to the fact that you are considering only yourself