

# WHEN WOMAN PROPOSES

BEING a True Story of a Marriage Intended To Be Only a Mere Business Partnership and What Problems Grew Out of It

THIS is a true story. It might be entitled "She Fell in Love with Her Husband," for that is precisely what one wife did. The man in the story, who, of course, cannot be named here, is a national figure. He is talented, wealthy, and is still advancing in his chosen vocation. The wife who tells the story for these columns has written her romance in such style that all her friends and those of her husband will recognize them both at once, and no doubt, will be amazed by the true story she now tells.

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It is a long story and in some respects a curious one. There is a theory that an heiress, no matter how stupid or hopelessly ugly she may happen to be, is surfeited with matrimonial offers. If this be true, I must prove the exception to the rule, for though an heiress to a handsome fortune and by no means a plain woman I have never received a proposal of marriage.

But to start at the beginning of the story. My father and mother were very plain people. The former began life as a section boss and my mother cooked the meals for the hands. As you may know, a section boss is the head of a gang of men who build or repair railroads. To be a success he needs strength of hand as well as coolness of judgment and an unlimited vocabulary of profanity. Father could be classed as a post-graduate in these requirements, but, though he was rude of speech and bearing, he had a keen mind and an indomitable perseverance, the kind that "gets there."

His one lesson to me was if I wanted a thing to first make up my mind if it was really worth while; if so then get it despite "man and the devil." This may seem an extraordinary doctrine to preach to a girl, but it bore good fruit.

My mother died at my birth. At that time my father was investing nearly every dollar of his wages in timber lands, and when he died, many years later, he was known as the lumber king of the Southwest. Meanwhile he had established the family home in Corsicana, Texas, and as his fortune increased the house and grounds spread out in ever increasing magnitude and luxury. From the first he carried out a definite plan of educating me. I learned the rudiments in Corsicana, progressed to a boarding school in Washington, thence to a fashionable finishing school in New York and was then given a year in Europe.

I came out of this a well bred, well groomed young woman, with absolutely no knowledge of men, as my acquaintance with the opposite sex had been limited to school dances, and I was too quiet to have ever been "rushed." No one has ever told me whether I can lay claim to beauty. I am tall and straight and I know how to wear the expensive clothes that have always come my way. I have a quantity of dark, wavy hair, gray-blue eyes with black lashes and fine

joyed the mantle of importance that my father had relegated to me. I really felt an immense pride in the great fortune that evidenced my father's ability, and I was keen to continue his work. Even had I not been thoroughly engrossed with my own affairs and had wakened to Truston's attractions—he was a handsome man of thirty-two, with fine intellect and a gift of speech that had scored in public—his aloofness would have repelled me. If possible he was more absorbed in his affairs than I in mine.

I was sole heir to my father's estate and his will enjoined me not to sacrifice any of his holdings. The ever increasing scarcity of lumber not only advanced my property to enormous values but made the direction of my business affairs an arduous undertaking for me. I determined to get married.

I did not arrive at this decision hastily, but after considering at length the chain of reasoning laid down by my father before his death. I was twenty-five years old, alone in the world, with ever accumulating properties. I needed a protector as well as a business manager. The sensible thing to do was obvious; I must marry some one, and feeling no need of looking further I decided upon John Truston. Father had proved him to be honest, and he had my affairs at his finger tips.

Down in the section house where I was born there was a dearth of the finer sensibilities, and my upbringing had not eradicated the pine knot methods of my people. I sent for John Truston and asked him to enter into a life partnership with me.

I shall never forget his panic stricken, apologetic refusal!

But let me describe for you this strange reversal of the code of courtship. My home shows no crudities in the quiet elegance of its appointments. This is especially true of the library, where I always received Truston. He had unbent once, and expressed admiration for the room, while his eyes roamed longingly over the well filled book shelves. I directed that as usual he should be sent to the library, and though I was too hopelessly burdened with common

womanly, and the severe folds of my white gown enhanced the pliancy of my figure.

Truston came in with the glow of health lighting his fine features, and I felt reassured that what I was about to do was for my best interest. Here was a sane, healthy man who had proven his honesty and ability, and I certainly would not know where to look to find another so well fitted as he to handle my affairs.



An Astonished Gasp Was Truston's Reply—He Was Fairly Speechless

Without a tremor and with no feeling of hesitancy I laid the matter before him. At the time it seemed nothing unusual. But never, never, could I do such a thing again! Now, when the cool monotony of my words recurs to me my face tingles with the blush of shame.

"Mr. Truston," I said, "I want to take a partner, a man who can direct my public and private interests in a way my father would approve of. As you know, my fortune is increasing to unwieldy proportions, and I am not competent to manage it alone. In taking this partner I also want to free myself from possible fortune hunters, so I have decided to marry him. Will you be that partner?"

An astonished gasp was Truston's reply. He was fairly speechless. With smiling composure I stemmed the tide of his first words. When he recovered himself, with many directness he pointed out to me that I was indulging in a fantastic whim for which I would suffer keen regret. Inwardly he doubtless thought me brazen, but his every word breathed chivalrous consideration, and from that moment I entertained for him a friendly warmth of feeling I had not experienced before.

## The Woman Woos.

I listened to his arguments. I always let people have their say. He grew eloquent over the many reasons why we should not marry, even telling me of the love affair that had wrecked his life and his consequent dedication of it to ambition. He could not find one good excuse for us to join our lives, but his words failed to weaken my resolution. I had made up my mind to marry him, and as he talked on my determination

agreement.

We were married without ostentation. There was no honeymoon; my contract called for a partner, not a husband.

The semi-detachment of our lives did not prove unpleasant. We met at meals and John was always companionable. He threw himself into the management of my affairs with untiring zeal, always consulting me with the utmost deference. In his rare moments of leisure he would slip into the music room where I spent much of my time and sit silently while I strayed among the well loved masters. This was our nearest approach to sociability. Truly we lived to the letter of our bargain.

For a time all went well, until, womanlike, I became discontented with my own bargain. My vaunted common sense took wings and I awoke to the realization that I was madly in love with a man on whom I had thrust myself, and one who had never entertained for me the slightest sentiment. Inwardly I rebelled and chafed with bitter mortification; outwardly I continued in the serenity of my ways.

earth was the good of all my money if I could not remedy this defect and at least have a try for John's affection?

My one desire now was to throw aside my practical, sober sided habits; to forget the business partner side of life, and to be rejuvenated into a young, frilly woman like some I had noted as being particularly attractive to men. I had a long mental argument over the ways and means to acquire this end. I realized that it meant an entire upheaval of my personality and a sacrifice of some of my cherished tastes, but to develop the attributes hitherto scorned might help my cause, and with characteristic energy I began to make myself over.

## "Loosening Up."

John was running for the Legislature, and I took the opportunity to go to New York. I looked up an old schoolmate whom I had always frowned on as undesirable because she had small patience for the serious side of life and was forever indulging in pranks. I asked her to be my guest at my hotel, and though I did not confide in her why I wanted to see the gay side of New York, I let it be known that such was my intention, and she set to work enthusiastically to promote my knowledge.

I laid in a supply of new clothes and hats, all girlish, fluffy things, and I learned to do my hair in a youthful fashion. I eschewed all the oratorios and classical recitals, and went to "shows" good, bad and indifferent. At one of the vaudeville houses a comedian told a story of "loosening up the old mare." My tribute of laughter must have astonished him, but the story went home, and though I suffered much in the loosening up process I looked five years younger when I returned to Corsicana, and felt accordingly when I watched John's puzzled eyes scanning the gaiety of my attire.

Following the programme I had mapped out, I no longer appeared in severe tailor frocks and shirt waists. I had gay French morning gowns and dinner dresses, and my hair was allowed to curl softly about my face. I refused to talk business, and indulged in lively topics, and played the popular music I had heard in New York. And all the satisfaction I got out of it was that John did see me. I frequently found him looking at me with that same puzzled expression. But this was small gain, and my pillow was often wet with tears.

After all, my silly strategy would have doubtless come to naught, if I had not fallen off the stepladder. I had climbed to get a book from the topmost shelf, and, forgetful of my long tailed gown, came to grief. With a twisted ankle I huddled on the floor. At first I cried because the pain was sharp; no one came, and I cried for loneliness, and then I sobbed aloud because I could not control myself. When John came in I found myself telling him I was crying because no one in the world loved me.

Poor John! He had no alternative but to take me in his arms and to once more point out my mistakes. According to his story, and he told it very convincingly, I was very much beloved, and had been for a long time.

We forgot the business partnership and started on a belated honeymoon which has never ended.



sense to resort to any striving for effect, it was with satisfaction that I saw my reflection softened by the glow from the wood fire. I looked young, strong and

## LITTLE SCIENCE STORIES FOR LAYMEN

**O**ZONE, which is an allotropic form of oxygen, has long been recognized as an active purifying agent in the atmosphere owing to its powerful oxidizing qualities; but the question of its origin has been much disputed.

The investigations of Henriot, in France, have led him to the conclusion that ozone forms in the upper regions of the air, probably under the influence of the ultra-violet radiations from the sun, and that it is brought downward toward the surface of the earth both by descending air currents and by drops of rain.

After a shower of rain the quantity of ozone in the air is always found to have been increased.

## UNIQUE COFFIN.

**P**ERHAPS the most singular coffin in which a human being ever was buried is the one of which the following story is told.

A workman engaged in casting metal for the manufacture of ordnance in the Woolwich arsenal, in England, lost his balance and fell into a cauldron containing twelve tons of molten steel. The metal was at white heat and the man was utterly consumed in less time than it takes to tell it.

The War Office authorities held a conference and decided not to profane the dead by using the metal in the manufacture of ordnance, and the mass of metal was actually buried and a Church of England clergyman read the services for the dead over it.

## ELECTRIC LIGHT FOR BIRDS.

**I**T has been found by the authorities of many zoological parks that one of the difficulties in maintaining their aviaries is the providing of a proper environment for birds brought from the tropics.

To warm the air to a tropical temperature is not enough. The birds demand light as well as heat.

Many of them in their native homes are accustomed to feed at sunrise and again just before sunset, and their habits in this respect are seriously disturbed by the shortness of the winter days in Northern climes.

It has been found beneficial to keep aviaries containing tropical birds brilliantly illuminated in the daytime with electric light from six o'clock in the morning to six in the evening, thus closely imitating the duration of daylight to which they are accustomed in their natural habitat. The result is that they feed in the normal way, live longer and remain in better condition.

## HOW PERFUME IS WEIGHED.

**I**T was the Italian physician Salvioni who devised a microbalance of such extreme delicacy that it clearly demonstrated the loss of weight of musk by volatilization. Thus the invisible perfume floating off in the air is indirectly weighed.

The essential part of the apparatus is a very thin thread of glass, fixed at one end and extended horizontally. The microscopic objects to be weighed are placed upon the glass thread near its free end, and the amount of flexure produced is observed with a microscope magnifying one hundred diameters.

A mote weighing one-thousandth of a milligramme is said perceptibly to bend the thread.

## WHY SNOW BURSTS A GUN.

**I**N a discussion at the Royal Society in London of some experiments on the effects of sudden pressures attention was called to a singular experience which, it was said, persons who go shooting in winter sometimes have.

If the muzzle of a gun happens to get plugged up with a little snow the gun invariably bursts when fired in that condition. Light as the plug of snow is, it requires a definite time for a finite pressure, however great, to get it under way, and during this

short time the tension of the powder gases becomes so great that the barrel of the ordinary towling piece is unable to withstand it.

## THE PRESSURE OF LIGHT.

**T**HE idea that the waves of light produce a mechanical push or pressure is not new, having been advanced years ago by Clark Maxwell, who could offer only a theoretical proof.

Later Lebedew, of Moscow, made an experimental demonstration of the pressure of light. He employed a radiometer resembling the familiar Crookes radiometers with their revolving vanes, but used a larger and more completely exhausted bulb, from which the heating effect that is the principal agent in moving the Crookes vanes was excluded.

When the light falls upon the vanes they are driven before it, and the intensity of the pressure thus revealed comes within ten per cent of that calculated by Maxwell. The effect is independent of the color of the light, and directly proportional to its energy.

## DIAMOND CLEAVING.

**T**HE art of the lapidary is one of the most delicate employments of mechanical force known. The practical diamond cutter learns many facts about precious stones which are sealed books even to mineralogists.

For instance, it is the lapidaries who have found out that diamonds coming from different districts vary remarkably in their degrees of hardness. It appears that the hardest diamonds known come from New South Wales.

An unfamiliar fact is that diamonds are made to assume approximately the required shape by slitting and cleaving and by "bruting," which is the rubbing of one diamond against another, before they are submitted to the polishing wheel.

In cleaving the diamond is cemented on the end of a wooden stick, and a steel blade is driven with a smart blow in the direction of the natural plane of cleavage. Diamonds that have been cut by the lapidary's wheel lack some of the brilliance possessed by those that have simply been cleaved.

"When John Came In I Found Myself Telling Him I Was Crying Because No One in the World Loved Me"

teeth. I am not talkative—in fact, abhor the small talk of drawing rooms. I am placid rather than enthusiastic (many call me stolid), and my father inculcated in me his own practical view of life and a fine appreciation of the power of wealth.

Soon after my return to Corsicana from Europe my father died, and my mourning afforded an excuse to escape the tiresome social affairs of a small town. In consequence I knew nothing of the younger set or their merry makings. Aside from a daily ride or drive I secluded myself at home, trying to grasp the details of the vast business willed to me. My only recreation was my music. I play rather well and father had built for me a magnificent music room.

The lawyer, John Truston, whom my father had employed in his lifetime to look after his legal affairs was named as executor, and in course of the adjustment of the estate it was necessary for me to confer with him frequently. I developed a fair amount of business ability, but it was sometimes difficult for me to grasp the technicalities of the law. At these times Truston would patiently elucidate obscure points and give unsparingly of his time. But he was thoroughly impersonal in his attitude and gave no recognition of the fact that I was young, rich and not an unattractive woman.

## Owner of Great Wealth.

Not that I noticed this at the time. My ego loomed larger than anything else. I was a great lady and the richest person in the little Texas town, and I en-