

How I Nearly Lost My Husband.

Narrated After Approved Fashion of Heart and Home Magazines

By STEPHEN LEACOCK.

It was after we had been married about two years that I began to feel that I needed more air. Every time I looked at John across the breakfast table, I felt as if I must have more air, more space.

I seemed to feel as if I had no room to expand. I had begun to myself whether I had been wise in marrying John, whether John was really sufficient for my development. I felt cramped and shut in. In spite of myself the question would arise in my mind whether John really understood my nature. He had a way of reading the newspaper, propped up against the sugar bowl, at breakfast, that somehow made me feel as if things had gone all wrong. It was bitter to realize that the time had come when John could prefer the newspaper to his wife's society.

where I should be his and his alone, and no other man should share me; and John had said all right.

Or else I had planned to go away somewhere to the seashore where I could have watched the great waves dashing themselves against the rocks. I had told John that he should be my cave man, and should seize me in his arms and carry me whither he would. But I looked over all the ho-



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gave me a dreadful shock to realize that such was not the case.

The first one I noticed was a young man who came to the house, at an hour when John was out, for the purpose, so he said at least, of reading the gas meter. He looked at me in just the boldest way and asked me to show him the way to the cellar. I don't know whether it was a pretext or not, but I just summoned all the

I noticed some little things.

So presently we came back home and I spent many busy days in fixing and arranging our new house. I had the drawing room done in blue, and the dining room all in dark paneled wood, and a boudoir upstairs done in pink and white enamel to match my bedroom and my dressing room. There was a very nice little room in the basement next to the coal cellar that I turned into a "den" for John, so that when he wanted to smoke he could go down there and do it. John seemed to appreciate his den at once, and often would stay down there so long that I had to call to him to come up.

When I look back on those days they seem very bright and happy. But it was not very long before a change came. I began to realize that John was neglecting me. I noticed it at first in small things. I don't know just how long it was after our marriage that John began to read the newspaper at breakfast. At first he would only pick it up and read it in little bits and only on the front page. I tried not to be hurt at it, and would go on talking just as brightly as I could without seeming to notice anything. But presently he went on reading the inside part of the paper, and then one day he opened up the financial page and folded the paper right back and leant it against the sugar bowl.

I could not but wonder whether John's love for me was what it had been. Was it cooling? I asked myself. And what was cooling it? It hardly seemed possible when I looked back to the wild passion with which he had proposed to me on the garden bench, that John's love was waning. But I kept noticing different little things. One day in the spring time I saw John getting out a lot of fishing tackle from a box and fitting it together. I asked him what he was going to do, and he said that he was going to fish. I went to my room and had a good cry. It seemed dreadful that he could neglect his wife for a few worthless fish.

So I decided to put John to the test. It had been my habit every morning after he put his coat on to go to the office to let John have one kiss, just one weeny kiss, to keep him happy all day. So this day when he was getting ready to go I bent my head over a big bowl of flowers and pretended not to notice. I think John must have been hurt as I heard him steal out on tip toe.

Well, I realized that things had come to a dreadful state, and so I sent over to mother and mother came and we had a good cry together. I made up my mind to force myself to face things and just to be as bright as ever I could. Mother and I both thought that things would be better, if I tried all I could to make something out of John. I have always felt that every woman should make all that she can out of her husband.

So I did my best first of all to straighten up John's appearance. I shifted the style of collar he was wearing to a tighter kind that I liked better, and I brushed his hair straight backward instead of forward, which gave him a much more alert look. Mother said that John needed waking up, and so we did all we could to wake him up. Mother came over to stay with me a good deal, and in the evenings we generally had a little music or a game of cards.

About this time another difficulty

over the keys in such a mournful way that I knew he must have fallen in love with me. Of course I told John nothing of all this.

Then there was Mr. McQueen, who came to the house several times to play cribbage with John. He had been desperately in love with me years before, at least I remember his taking me home from a hockey match once and what a struggle it was for him not to come into the parlor and see mother for a few minutes when I asked him; and though he was married now and with three children, I felt sure when he came to play cribbage with John that it meant something. He was very discreet and honorable and never betrayed himself for a moment, and I acted my part as if there was nothing at all behind.

I See Love Dwindling.

Then presently a new trouble came. I began to suspect that John was drinking. I don't mean for a moment that he was drunk, or that he was openly cruel to me. But I think he was drinking heavily by himself, too, though I could never be sure of it. At any rate he often seemed queer and restless in the evenings, and instead of staying in his den he would wander all over the house. Once we heard him—I mean mother and I and two lady friends who were with us that evening—quite late (after 10 o'clock) apparently moving about in the pantry. "John," I called, "is that you?" "Yes, Minn," he answered, quietly enough. I asked, "What are you doing there?" I asked, "Looking for something to eat," he said. "John," I said, "you are forgetting what is due to me as your wife. You were fed at 6. Go back."

He went. But yet I felt more and more that his love must be dwindling to make him act as he did. I thought it all over wearily enough and asked myself whether I had done everything I should to hold my husband's love. I had kept him in at nights. I had cut down his smoking. I had stopped his playing cards. What more was there that I could do?

I Decide on the Great Step.

So at last the conviction came to me that I must go away. I felt that I must get away somewhere and think things out, just face things as they were. So one morning I said to John, "John, I think I'd like to go off somewhere for a little time, just to be by myself, dear, and I don't want you to ask to come with me or to follow me, but just let me go."

What is believed to be the largest ruby in the world was recently received in London. The stone is oval in shape, weighs 23 carats and is valued at \$69,000.

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We each grasped one of John's wrists and took him to father.

John said, "All right, Minn. When are you going to start?"

The cold brutality of it cut me to the heart, and I went upstairs and had a good cry and looked over steamship and railroad folders. I thought of Havana for a while, because the pictures of the harbor and the castle and the queer Spanish streets looked so attractive, but then I was afraid that at Havana a woman alone by herself might be simply per-

There were others, too. There was a young man with large, brown eyes who came and said he had been sent to tune the piano. He came on three separate days and he bent his ear

scouted by attentions from gentlemen. They say the Spanish temperament is something fearful. So I decided on Bermuda instead.

Telegram for John.

I said nothing more to John, but in the next few days I got all my arrangements made and my things packed. And when the last afternoon came I sat down and wrote John a long letter, to leave on my boudoir table, telling him that I had gone to Bermuda. I told him that I wanted to be alone. I said that I couldn't tell him I would be back—that it might be months, or it might be years, and I hoped that he would try to be as happy as he could and forget me entirely, and to send me money on the first of every month.

Well it was just about that moment that one of those strange coincidences happened, little things in themselves, but which seem to alter the whole course of a person's life. I had nearly finished the letter to John that I was to leave on the writing desk, when just then the maid came up to my room with a telegram. It was for John, but I thought it my duty to open it and read it for him before I left. And I nearly fainted when I saw that it was from a lawyer in Bermuda—of all places—and it said that a legacy of \$200,000 had been left to John by an uncle of his who had died there, and asking for instructions about the disposition of it.

A great wave seemed to sweep over me, and all the wicked thoughts that had been in my mind—for I saw now that they were wicked—were driven cleanly away. I thought how completely lost poor John would feel if all this money came to him and he didn't have to work any more and had no one at his side to help and guide him in using it.

Love Triumphs.

I tore up the wicked letter I had written and hurried as fast as I could to pack up a valise with John's things (my own were packed already, as I said). Then presently John came in and I broke the news to him as gently and as tenderly as I could about his uncle having left him the money and having died. I told him that I had found out all about the train and the Bermuda steamer and had everything all packed and ready for us to leave at once.

We left for New York that evening and after we had been to Bermuda and arranged about a suitable monument for John's uncle and collected the money we sailed for Europe.

All through the happy time that has followed, I like to think that through all our trials and difficulties affliction brought us safely together at last.

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Passing of the Clawhammer

It Has Gone the Way of the Prince Albert and the Tile Hat—Read This and You'll Find Out Why it Is.

As far as Omaha is concerned the clawhammer is engaged in a neck and neck race with the Prince Albert and the tile hat to see which first reaches the shadows where "the has-beens cress." The Prince Albert and the silk hat still do duty at coronation layings and funerals, the clawhammer at weddings; that's all.

It was at a formal ball held not so long ago that the death knell of



the clawhammer was indubitably sounded. Wedding receptions have come and gone and the dinner jacket has departed itself jauntily thereat with a bravado which snapped its fingers at Rule No. 628 in the etiquette books. Formal dinners have been eaten and theater box parties attended as unattended as a Munn cat. But when coats were worn bobbed at a formal ball it became time for the curious to pick up inquiring ears.

"The manager of one of Omaha's leading stores for men went an appeal." "Tell me," he was asked, "are you selling any full dress suits for men?" He stared as though he had been asked for Tutankhamun's telephone number. "Do you mean clawhammers?" he gasped. "Yes, clawhammers, swallowtails, moonshine fronts, whatever you call 'em." He smiled indulgently. "No. No one ever asks for them any more. We hardly keep a line in stock."

"What seems to be the main difficulty?" "Well, I think partly it's the dancing. Clawhammers fit rather snug."

Dublin, Feb. 24.—The Ku Klux Klan has arrived in Ireland, according to C. F. Ridgeway, organizer of the Irish Transport and General Workers' union, the largest trade union in Ireland.

"All the farmers are now in dispute with their men," Ridgeway said, "and they have formed themselves into a flying column, even intimidating other farmers to force them to join the organization, lock out the farm hands and compel them to take a reduction in wages."

"In one case that I know of the Ku Klux Klan farmers imposed a fine of \$45 upon a farmer who refused to discharge his laborers. The marauders searched the farmer's home and, when he tendered a check in payment of the fine, refused to take it, demanding money."

"Since this Ku Klux Klan has been formed fires have been frequent among the farmers' buildings, and the workers are being blamed for the work of the marauders."

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of the clawhammer. Tuxedos are worn almost entirely in New York, it is reported, and even in Washington the dinner jacket has made its inroads into diplomatic circles and is a good guess."

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Duke Kahanamoku Invited to Enter Swimming Meet

Honolulu, Feb. 24.—An invitation to Duke Kahanamoku, Hawaii's greatest aquatic star, to come to the islands from Los Angeles, where he has been residing for the last nine months, in order to participate in an army-civilian swimming meet in Honolulu harbor next month, has just been forwarded by George (Dad) Center, president of the local Amateur Athletic Union. Kahanamoku is asked to take part in the sprint events.

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| Saniflush 17c | 50c Glycerine and Rose Water, at 29c |
| Palmyra Soap 33c | 50c Tr. Iodine 29c |
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| 60c Sal Hepatica 42c | \$1.00 Swisco Hair Tonic 58c |
| 30c Sal Hepatica 21c | 50c Swisco Hair Tonic 29c |
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