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## Why Husbands Ought Not to be PERFECT!



### How Contrary Mrs. Marjorie De Cou Ran Away from Her Husband Because He Was TOO PERFECT, Thus Proving That the Course of True Love Ought Not to Run Smooth.

THERE is a good old Cockney joke often quoted to illustrate the manners of the English lower classes. "Don't you love me no more, Bill?" says the wife of the coxter. "O' course I loves yer, Sal," is his reply. "Then," says Sal, "wy don't yer beat me abart a bit?"

This apparently was exactly the frame of mind Mrs. De Cou was in when she left her husband. Mrs. De Cou lived in Irvington, Cal. She was married to Edwin De Cou, a prosperous merchant. Two years ago, unable to stand his kindness any longer, Mrs. Marjorie De Cou ran away. Her husband has just obtained a divorce on the ground of desertion. According to Edwin De Cou's testimony, he gave his wife every luxury, placed no restraints on her amusements and never showed jealousy. He admitted he had no bad habits.

"Didn't she ever find any fault with you?" the Judge asked.

"Oh, yes," Mr. De Cou replied, "she frequently said that she could have loved me if only I beat her, or at least scolded her, once in a while!"

Here is a new peril to married life. Husbands, avoid perfection! Men, as yet, scarcely realize how dangerous kindness may prove to be. Lest, unthinking, careless of the first symptoms of disruption, married men may fall into this pitfall, listen to the awful example of Edwin and Marjorie De Cou.

Mr. De Cou was an idealist. He worshipped his wife. He thought nothing too good for her. The medieval idea of women was that they were half angel and half devil. Mr. De Cou was a modern man, and he considered his wife wholly an angel.

They had no trouble during their engagement. His candy and flowers were pleasantly received. Marjorie, while admitting to her girl friends that "Edwin was easy," did not protest when he suggested cabs instead of the trolley car. She let him carry her coat without rebuff. She accepted the books he sent, "Lucille" and "The Prisoner of Zenda," with no show of anger. Even the beautiful \$325 diamond engagement ring failed to irritate her, and when he tied her shoe laces, got her a glass of water or mailed a letter without forgetting it, still she controlled herself. It was, of course, annoying, but she bore it, expecting the usual change after the wedding ceremony.

Hardly had the bridal knot been tied, however, when Mr. De Cou showed plainly that what he had done was a fixed habit. He had planned to go to the Yosemite on the trip. The bride, of course, wanted to go to Hawaii, and insisted upon it, hoping against hope that he would display the firmness a woman longs for. Was he firm? Alas! He humbly apologized, exchanged his tickets and took her where she wanted to go. Docile as a lamb was Edwin De Cou.

This was a bad enough beginning to mar-

ried life for poor Mrs. De Cou, but she did not yet know the full depth of Edwin's pitiful weakness. She began to flirt with a missionary as soon as the steamer had left San Francisco harbor. Was Mr. De Cou jealous? Here is what he said:

"I know I can trust you, Margy, and whatever you do is right. If this man pleases and amuses you, go ahead, and I'll just have a little game of cards in the smoking room."

That night Marjorie De Cou wept herself to sleep. It was a sad beginning to all her hopes for a "masterful" man. She wept aloud, keeping Edwin awake in the upper berth. Was he angry? No. He merely leaned over the edge and remarked pathetically:

"If I have done anything to annoy you or make you unhappy, Margy, please tell me and forgive me. I would do anything in the world to make you happy. Could I ring up the steward and get you a pineapple ice? Or shall I read you to sleep?" Margy did not close her eyes that night.

The next day it was even worse. Edwin De Cou brought up her steamer rug (she was simply dying to wait upon him, but men never know) and he tucked her into her chair, gave her a Robert Chambers novel and brought up all the best-looking men on the boat to talk to her.

By the time their honeymoon was over poor Mrs. De Cou was nearly distracted. She came back from Honolulu a mere wreck. Things went steadily from bad to worse.

Still blindly pursuing his fatuous theory, Edwin De Cou loaded his wife with compliments and caresses. Marjorie, when she first saw the new house he had provided for their home, could stand it no longer.

"How dare you!" she exclaimed. "You know I have been used to living in a four-room flat, and here you have a fine electric lighted house, with elevator and outside plumbing, in the most aristocratic part of town! You have engaged three servants and filled the place with expensive furniture. The next thing I know you will be presenting me with an automobile. I warn you, Edwin, you may go too far!"

"I thought you'd like it," Mr. De Cou replied. "But, of course, I'll apologize." "Apologize!" she screamed. "Will you pile insult on insult!"

For some time this cowed him. He even had the courage to try to reform. He told her that her new Spring hat was unbecoming, and that if she got a facial massage occasionally it would improve her looks. He managed, with great effort, to drink a cocktail and say "darn." Margy beamed with happiness, but alas, this ideal state of affairs was too good to be true. Before long Edwin had begun to lapse into his original altruistic condition.

For a few days he succeeded in concealing his lapse from vice. He threw kisses at her behind her back and remarked upon her beauty only at his club. But this could not go on long. Edwin De Cou was at heart a paragon and his true nature could not be hidden.

One afternoon, while his wife was at a bridge party, Edwin smuggled a costly rosewood piano into the drawing room. As Margy had just been elected a president of the Native Daughters of the Golden West (Irvington Parlor, No. 57), her head was so turned that she did not notice the gift at first. When she did there was a scene. Then, half-crazed by his love for her, he took a pearl and diamond necklace from his pocket and thrust it into her hand.

Marjorie's rage knew no bounds. She was scarlet. With a swift gesture she flung the gaudy gems across the room, smashing a vase of rare old Venetian glass en route.

"Viper!" she hissed. "For three months I have stood insult and degradation such as no wife yet ever endured. Now you complete the outrage by giving me \$400,000 worth of jewels! Do you think I can stand any more? I'm going home to ma tonight!"

She was as good as her word. Edwin, however, insisted upon calling a taxicab, packed her trunk for her and placed a thousand-dollar bill in the tray. Fight as she would against the outrage, she was but a woman and had to submit to his will.

"Ma," Margy exclaimed when she reached the parental home, "I've run away from Edwin! How can I confess my shameful story? You know that when I married him I was a perfectly good woman. Now I am completely spoiled!" She burst into tears.

Margy's mother was a woman of the world. "Take my advice," she said, "and try Edwin a little longer. Give him another chance. Remember that the first year of married life is always a readjustment, and things will be arranged in time so that your two characters won't clash. Perhaps he didn't really mean what he did. He may have suddenly made a million dollars in stocks and didn't know what else to do with the money. These things are often mere accidents. No doubt the presents were intended for some one else. Edwin is not too old to reform, and in time he may learn to treat you with the cruelty you deserve."

"Cruelty!" Margy exclaimed. "Why, ma, do you know that man hasn't so much as raised his little finger against me in all the time we've been married! If he'd only slap my face occasionally or pull a chair out from under me I could stand it. But to have to endure his sickening politeness, day in and day out—well, it's just getting on my nerves, I tell you, and I'll go mad!"

"Have you tried nagging him?" asked Margy's mamma. "Sometimes, with a little goading, you can get a man to act delightfully savage. Suppose you burn the chowder or put too much sugar in his coffee—men are awfully particular, you know. If you would empty the carpet sweeper over his dress shirts occasionally. Little things like that are often more effective than tears. I once got a beautiful assault from your father by merely pouring a teaspoonful of muck into his slippers."

That night Marjorie returned home. She filled his smoking tobacco with perfume; she cut off the buttons from his trousers; she pricked holes in his cigars; she filled his vest pockets with mashed potatoes. Then, hoping against hope, she awaited his return.

Next morning there was a deceptive calm about him. At first Marjorie thought that her dream had come true. She took his cane and carefully placed it where he could easily get at it; she held her pink cheek ready for the long-looked-for blow. Edwin came down to breakfast, smiling. He always smiled. It was one of his worst traits.

"I guess we'll have to discharge the maid," he said. "She's too careless."



"She begged him on her knees only to be cruel to her, beat her, anything—and like a perfect dummy husband all he did was to give her more diamonds, more French dresses, more luxuries."

"It was I who did it all," she said; "it was your own little wife. And, what's more, I'm going to do it again. I hate you!"

Edwin De Cou leaned back and laughed both long and loud. Then, to complete the indignity, he went over and kissed his wife. She had been expecting to fuss with arnica and court plaster! How proud she would have been of even one tiny black-and-blue spot. The shock prostrated her. It took her weeks to recover—weeks of expensive flowers, rare old port wine, celebrated physicians, trained nurses, everything—there was nothing Edwin could do to wound her feelings that he left undone.

No woman could stand such treatment long. She grew worse and worse. At last, when her life was despaired of, her physician attempted to reason with the husband.

"I can give you very little hope," said the doctor, "unless you can consent to change your treatment of your wife. Even with the worst possible abuse, it may be possible that she may not recover. You ought, however, to try, at least. If you could only drag your wife out of bed, kick her a few times, pull down her hair, black her eyes and call her a few opprobrious names she might rally. I appeal to you, Mr. De Cou, as man to man. Are you going to let your wife die for the need of an unkind word?"

Mr. De Cou, however, was obdurate and refused to yield. The only answer he gave to this advice was to present Margy with a solid gold manure outfit and a set of Russian sables.

That night Margy, almost dying of kindness, was smuggled out of the house by her mother, and she left Edwin De Cou never to return.

Now, if Edwin De Cou had only read Nietzsche he might still be happily wedded. For Nietzsche, like Schopenhauer, St. Paul and others, had a rather poor opinion of women. One of his remarks is famous: "Are you going to meet a woman? Be sure you take your whip!"

Poor Mr. De Cou, indeed, need not have looked up even this high-brow advice. There is an old English proverb which goes: "A woman, an ass and a hickory tree, the more you beat them the better they be." In short, all Mr. De Cou lacked was a little common sense and a slight knowledge of women's nature.

Mrs. Marjorie De Cou is no suffragette, no "modern," supercivilized, ultra-educated, hyper-sensitive female with a higher education. She is just a plain woman, and poetry and science prove her to be right. She has well read her Shakespeare, for in the fifth act of "Measure for Measure" you may read Margy's whole argument: "They say best men are molded out of faults."

And, for the most, become much more the better.

For being a little bad." Hazel, in fact, suffered from what is scientifically termed "masochism"—the desire to suffer pain inflicted by a loved one. It is one of the fundamental emotions connected with love. Do you not pinch a baby's cheek, and jestingly threaten a child you adore? Do you not say, "You are so pretty I could eat you!" Does the object of your affection grow angry or alarmed? No, for masochism in its lesser forms is an essential part of love. Even the kiss, the evolutionist says, is but a relic of the primeval love-bite, and no girl yet ever objected to being hugged too tightly.

Love is but a pretty, mimic warfare, after all—a battle of flowers. No woman but wishes to be captured; surrender is her dearest desire. And, once won, she would be a slave, not a master. To poor Mr. De Cou, then, let this advice be given: If he has not already learned his lesson, "Order your wife about occasionally, avoid her often enough to make her reek your praise, and have at least one reflecting fault."

But of this be careful: Do not ever command her to do only the things she wants to do. AWFAY.

Mrs. Marjorie De Cou, Who Left Her Husband Because He Gave Her Everything She Wanted Except a Beating.