

MAGGIE - JANE

JANE (Folding tabloid newspaper she has been reading to Maggie.) So he says, "All you can do with a story like that is live it down, Mary."

MAGGIE I told you they'd begin all over. Once a thing like that is out between a married couple, they've got to fight it out. Depends which they get sick of first, each other, or the argument.

JANE. It's enough to make you lose your faith in marriage.

MAGGIE Whose faith in marriage?

JANE. You don't believe in marriage?

MAGGIE. Sure I do. For women. (Sighs.) But it's the sons of Adam they got to marry. Go on.

JANE. Well, finally he said to the madam, "I gave her up, didn't I? And I was a swine, about the way I did it." How do you suppose he did it, Maggie?

MAGGIE. Maybe he just said, "Scram, the wife is onto us."

JANE Well, the madam didn't believe him. She says, "Stephen, you really ain't seen her?"

MAGGIE. He lied in his teeth

JANE. Oh, the way he said it, I kind of believed him. But the madam says, "Oh, but can I ever trust you again?"

MAGGIE. You can't trust none of 'em no further than I can kick this lemon pie.

JANE. Oh, it was terrible sad. He said, "Mary, dear Mary, Mary, bar Mary, Mary-"

MAGGIE, Dear Mary. But it ain't exactly convincing

JANE Then, I guess he tried to kiss her. Because she says, "Please don't. I'll never be able to kiss you again without thinking of her in your arms

MAGGIE (Appreciatively. Just like in the movies- Imagine him taking up with a girl like that.

JANE. He was telling the madam: She's a virgin.

MAGGIE She is ? Then what's all the rumpus about?

JANE Oh, she ain't a virgin now. She was.

MAGGIE So was Mae West once.

JANE He told the madam he'd been faithful for twelve years.

MAGGIE. Well, that's something these days, that beats Lindbergh's flight. Did the madam believe him?

JANE. She said, "How do I know you've been faithful."

MAGGIE. She don't.

JANE. But the way he said it-----

MAGGIE. Listen, if they lay off six months, they feel busting out all over with haloes.

JANE. Anyway, he says this girl was really a nice girl, so sweet and interested in him and all. And how it happened one night unexpected, in her room---

MAGGIE. Did he think it was going to happen in Roxy's

JANE He said she wouldn't take nothing from him for months----

MAGGIE, Only her education. Oh, that one knew her onions, She certainly played him for a sucker

JANE That's what the madam said, Shesaid Stephen, can't you see that girl's only interested in you for your money

MAGGIE Tch, tch, tch. I'll be that made him sore. A man don't like to be told no women but his wife is fool enough to love him It drives 'em nutty.

JANE Did it! "Mary, I tell you what says. You know all you what kind of girl she is, he says. You know -----I just told you-----

MAGGIE I had her number. You didn't convey no information

JANE. Well, then they both got sore

MAGGIE (Rises, goes out for coffee) I knew it

JANE. So he began to tell her all over what a good husband he'd been. And how hard he'd worked for her and the kids. And she kept interrupting with what a good wife she'd been and how proud she was of him. Then they began to exaggerate themselves-----

MAGGIE (Enters with coffee pot.) Listen, anybody that's ever been married knows that line backwards and forward. What happened?

JANE. Well, somewhere in there the madam says, "Stephen, you do want a divorce. Only you ain't got the courage to ask it." And he says, "Oh, my God, no, I don't, Mary. I laven't I told you?" And she says, "But you don't love me!" And he says, "But oh, my God, Mary, I'm awful fond of you." And she says, very icy, "Fond, fond? Is that all?" and he says, "No, Mary, there's the children." Maggie, that's the thing I don't understand why does she get so mad every time he says they've got to consider the children? If children ain't the point of being married, what is?

MAGGIE. A woman don't want to be told she's being kept on just to run a kindergarten. (Goes to ice box for bottle of cream.)

JANE. Well, the madam says, "Stephen, I want to keep the children out of this. I haven't used the children. I ain't asked you to Sacrifice yourself for the children." Maggie, that's where he got so terrible mad. He says, "But why, in God's name, Mary? You knew about is all along. Why did you wait until now to make a fool of me. As if he needed her help

JANE So then, suddenly she says, in a awful low voice, "Stephen, .. , we can't go on like this. I ain't worthy of what we have been to each other. And he says, "Oh, no, it's not, Mary!"

MAGGIE Quite a actress, ain't you?

JANE. My boyfriend says I got eyes like Joan Crawford.

MAGGIE. Did he ever say anything about your legs? Have a cup of coffee. (Pours coffee.)

JANE. That's when the madam says that you could have knocked him down with a feather! The madam says, "Stephen, I want a divorce. Yes, Stephen, I want a divorce!"

MAGGIE. Tch. Tch. Abdicating!

JANE Well, Maggie, you could have knocked him down with a feather!

MAGGIE. (Waving coffee pot. I'd like to knock him down with this.

JANE "My God! Mary," he says, "you don't mean it!" So she says in a funny voice, "Yes, I do. You've killed my love for you, Stephen."

MAGGIE. He's just simple-minded enough to believe that.

JANE So he says, "I don't blame you. My God, how can I blame you?"

MAGGIE. My God, he can't!

JANE So then she said it was all over, because it was only the children he minded losing. She said that made their marriage a Hackery.

MAGGIE A mockery?

JANE. Something funny.

MAGGIE. I ain't going to die laughing.