

## MY FAR-BETTER HALF

he is not the masterful, delightful lover such as my imagination pictures anyway.

He always speaks kindly, but he never flatters. He is one of those men who, if you complained that your feet were cold, would ring for a hot-water bottle. He makes love as he takes food, because Fate has made it a natural need, but he is free from gourmandising either in food or in love; and I believe that he feels ashamed of both appetites. I have no patience with perfect people!

Of course, I never discuss these subjects with him, for his "Really, Phrynette!" is charged with such a surprised disapprobation that it always makes my own words sound much less decent once spoken than they had seemed in my own mind.

I wish he would see me not as I should be, but as I am—just a poor, young, eager, palpitating little animal, hungering for more than mere paternal, respectful affection. He has such a high standard of womanhood that I sometimes wonder whether it is I who am abnormal, or whether he knows anything of my sex at all.

Wherever did he meet the woman he imagines me to be? I know no one answering the description. Did he meet her at all, or is he not rather a poor, blind, innocent, self-made dupe? I shall never know. Our married life will very likely always be this dull, monotonous, correct affair. He always asks my permission before kissing me (this, of course, a way of speaking), until I sometimes want to cry out, "Oh, don't ask me—never mind me—think only of *you*; or don't think at all, but be just yourself, your primitive self, not the gentleman, but the man—the male, the mate, the master—gloves off!"