

head down upon his shoulder; she could feel the mad beating of his heart, and it made her own beat faster.

"Bob," she said.

"Yes," he answered, keeping his face steadily turned away.

"Look at me," she said, authoritatively. "Why do you look away? Am I so ugly?"

He turned slowly, looking down upon her face, at her lips, scarce an inch from his. "So beautiful," he said; "so beautiful. It is best that I do not look at you."

"Am I heavy, Bob?"

"Heavy? No!"

"Put me down if I tire you."

"Tire me!"

"You've turned your face away again."

"I must."

"Why, Bob?"

He held her a little closer, and answered with another question: "Did you ever see cherries growing?"

"Yes, Bob."

"And did you ever notice that folks put nets over them to keep the birds from pecking them?"

"Yes, Bob."

"Do you think they'd be able to resist the temptation of touching them if they could see them looking so tempting, so sweet and beautiful if they weren't protected?"

"I dare say not."

"Well,"—he turned and looked at her or a moment—"I'm like the birds, and your lips are the cherries. I mustn't look or I shall be tempted."

She flushed all over her face and neck, then into her eyes laughter stole.

"Did it ever strike you that perhaps the cherries were made for the birds to peck?" she said, half nervously.

He looked at her once more; the bronze color faded from his face, his great chest heaved.

"Mariposas?" he said, gently, questioningly, "Mariposas!"

She grew pale and frightened, she had only been playing with him.

"Let me down," she said, "I can walk now; let me down, Bob."

"But your foot?"

"Let me down."

He lowered her from his arms gently; she stood firmly upon both feet, there was no vestige of pain in the expression of her face.

"Thank you," she said, demurely, looking up at him and laughing as though something amused her. "Are you going on to the Paradise? Wait a little while; let me go alone; folks'll talk if they see us together; most outrageous ideas get into some people's heads when they've not much to think of."

She tripped away, Bob standing watching her. Almost he expected to hear a little cry of pain and to be called to her help, but seemingly the ankle was quite well.

He watched her out of sight, then his eyes wandered over his own person—his clothes seemed more earth-stained than ever; his shirt, that had been clean that morning, was splashed with liquid mud.

"She's right," he said softly, "no decent woman would marry a dirty fellow like me."

He stood hesitatingly, then turned away towards his hut. There he got water and scoured himself almost savagely, then changed his clothes, and somewhat sheepishly, if the truth be told, made his way towards the Paradise Hotel.

It was pretty full; everyone had knocked off work for the day—the whole camp was spending the evening convivially—they hailed Bob with delight. Someone thrust a pewter pot into his hand, bade him drain it, and give them a song.

Bob looked round at the presiding goddess.

"If it's quite agreeable to all, I'll be happy," he said.

His look asked for Mariposas' permission.

She did not answer for a moment, but looked him all over; he felt himself coloring.

"You've not been working to-day, have you, Bob?" she said.

He blushed painfully, and, their attention thus drawn, the whole camp noticed his spotless cleanliness.

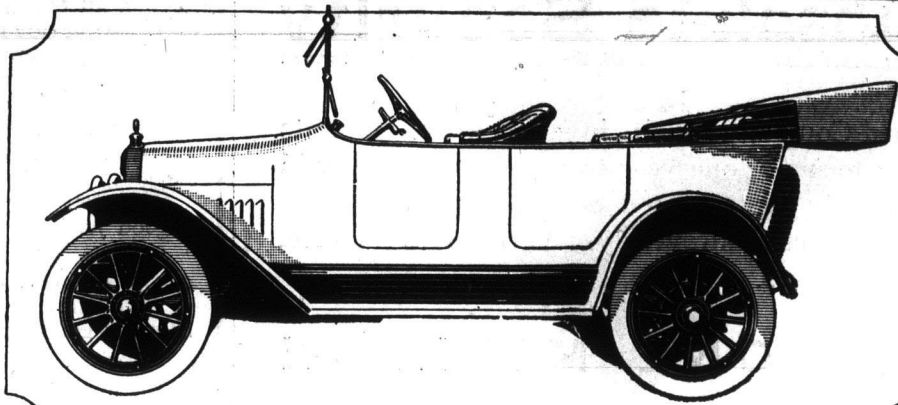
"Yes," he answered.

"Then you've been getting married, or going to a christening since?"

"No."

"Then it's sweethearting you are?"

He looked her full in the face. "Yes,"



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