

# HAT TRICK

by WILMA JENKINS

There was a restless pacing in the hall below. Now and again a sound that was half groan and half sigh floated up the stairs.

Joe, in short, was ready first as usual.

"How much longer, old girl?"

"Another two minutes, darling."

Wondering, as I have done throughout our married life, how my husband contrives to look impeccably groomed in so short a time, I snatched up hand-bag, umbrella and clean handkerchief and sped down the stairs.

I flashed Joe my warm possessive smile and proudly took his arm. Once again I was walking out with the charmer who swept me off my feet and then down the aisle.

"Now that I've graduated from golf widow to golfing wife I want to buy an outfit," I said as soon as we were seated in the bus.

"Slacks and a gay pullover at least. But the head-gear will be the problem."

Why do they confuse the feminine mind by tempting it with so many different hats — even in the realm of sport? Some were hard and ultramasculine; others were soft and floppy. Others again were so off-beat and rakish that the mind boggled.

The girl in the fourth sports outfitters we visited suggested that the gentleman should come inside and take a seat. She was an appealing little thing with eyes of cornflower blue. I didn't like the way she discussed the shape of "Modom's" face so intimately with Joe. I believe he would have encouraged her to go on producing hats for the rest of the day. "Let's get out of here and have some tea," I whispered while Baby Face was returning rejected hats to the stock room.

"I've seen three hats I fancy. I'd like to think it over for a week. Could we come in again next Saturday?"

"Anything for a quiet life," said Joe.

On our way to the bus Joe paused at a shop window to admire a tie.

"I'm going to treat myself to that," he said over his shoulder as he left me. "I won't be long."

He wasn't. He emerged with a paper bag before I had fully recovered from the shock of his disappearance.

"I saw two more ties that took my fancy," said Joe, taking my arm. "And while I was in there I bought a hat. It's one of those collapsible non-crease things. You can stuff it into a pocket when you're sick of wearing it. Just the job!"

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