

Margaret

By Andrea Louise Watson

It is 1914 and 38-year-old Margaret is wrapped in her dressing gown and brushing her wet hair as sits by her dressing table.

Margaret

I am about to be famous. I can't believe it. In a few days time people all over the country will be talking about me. The world will know about me and my life! I really can't take it in. I haven't done anything special. I'm no actress (she laughs) Look at me; I'm far too plain for that. And my life so far has been, well ordinary. Humdrum even. That all changed a few weeks ago of course.

We, my Mother, my sister and I moved to Bristol 13 years ago, the same month the Queen died. My Mother reminds me of Victoria, she went into deep mourning after Father died too and Ethel, my older sister and I have been taking care of her ever since. Mother says we are far too plain to catch the eye of suitor.

"Your time has passed" she would say. "No-one would want to marry a 38 year old spinster"

(she laughs) Oh, but how wrong she was because here I am sitting in my own beautiful apartment in London. My husband John, has just popped out, he will be back soon. He just played a little tune "Near thy God to thee" on the harmonium for me before he went, it was beautiful.

We got married exactly 36 hours ago and I wrote a letter this afternoon to Mother to tell her so. Oh, I will have caused the most fantastic scandal when Ethel reads the letter to Mother. We eloped, can you believe it? Can you believe that of plain boring Margaret Elizabeth Lofty, sorry Lloyd now!

Mother said I was to avoid the soldiers as they were not to be trusted. She would say, "they are only after a prize before they leave for war".

Well, like a good girl, I stayed true. John is a fine gentleman, not a soldier but a land agent. That is what he told me when I met him 4 weeks ago. He taught me how to do the quickstep at the local dance. We did laugh at my two left feet.

I have never been held like that before, and I never would have imagined one so fine and handsome to take such interest in me. When he looked at you, you had the feeling that you were being magnetised. Those eyes seemed to rob you of your will.

The gifts he showered upon me, the secret rendezvous we would go on. Oh how we laughed. I didn't want it to stop, that's why I never told my family about him. They wouldn't understand or approve, but when you know, you know.

John is slightly older than me, a widower he told me. I brought love back into his life when he thought his heart would never heal. I was so delighted when he proposed last week, and on Monday 15th December we were wed at the registry office and came straight to London to our new home.

Losing his wife made John so sensitive. I caught a chill on the way to London and he made me see a doctor before we got to our new home, I told him I was fine, but he insisted that I see one. I would do literally anything to please him and put his mind at rest.

He is so caring, he wanted me to take a bath, but I was far too tired, as you can imagine after such an exciting and wonderful day.

Today we have been quiet naughty, we lazed in bed and even ate breakfast whilst still under the covers, can you imagine?

I have written to Mother this afternoon and John arranged for us to have life insurance each, he wanted me to be safe should anything happen to him. Then, this evening before our meal, I agreed to take a long relaxing soak in that bathtub. We really are quite lucky to have one in our apartment; it is the height of sophistication. Ethel would be so jealous. John, the scamp, came into the bathroom while I was bathing. He wanted to massage my feet. He lovingly caressed my ankles and I lay back relaxing. Then quite quickly and quite by surprise he pulled my legs toward him and forcefully I went under the

water. I didn't even have time to scream, the water went straight into my mouth and nose so swiftly I immediately fainted. There was no pain, no struggle. Such a quick end.

John played a haunting song for me, and then left. In about ten minutes, he will return. He will ring the doorbell so the landlady knows that he has been out. He'll tell her he had to get tomatoes for our meal and he forgot the key. Together they will find my drowned body. Everyone will comfort the groom who tragically lost his wife so soon after they were married. It will be quite the heartbreaking story around town. My picture, mine, will make the national front page tomorrow under the headline "The Bride of A Day Who Was Found Dead in Her Bath"

My tragic Christmas story will touch many a heart including that of Mr. Burns as it will remind him of his daughter, dear young Alice, that died exactly a year ago just after being wed, only her husband was called Charles Smith. He could be my husband's twin. Mr Burns will contact the police and my fine husband will be discovered to be the serial killer George Smith, The Bath Tub Murderer. Our deaths will change the justice system forever. I will be forever famous. How could he be so cruel to me? I thought he loved me.

All I wanted was to be a good and loving wife.

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