



## SHOUTS AND MURMURS

## HOW I MET MY WIFE

BY JACK WINTER



IT had been a rough day, so when I walked into the party I was very chalang, despite my efforts to appear grunted and consolate.

I was furling my wieldy umbrella for the coat check when I saw her standing alone in a corner. She was a descript person, a woman in a state of total array. Her hair was kempt, her clothing shevelled, and she moved in a gainly way.

I wanted desperately to meet her, but I knew I'd have to make bones about it, since I was travelling cognito. Beknownst to me, the hostess, whom I could see both hide and hair of, was very proper, so it would be skin off my nose if anything bad happened. And even though I had only swerving loyalty to her, my manners couldn't be peccable. Only toward and heard-of behavior would do.

Fortunately, the embarrassment that

my maculate appearance might cause was evitable. There *were* two ways about it, but the chances that someone as flap-pable as I would be ept enough to become persona grata or a sung hero were slim. I was, after all, something to sneeze at, someone you could easily hold a candle to, someone who usually aroused bridled passion.

So I decided not to risk it. But then, all at once, for some apparent reason, she looked in my direction and smiled in a way that I could make heads or tails of.

I was plussed. It was concerting to see that she was comunicado, and it nerved me that she was interested in a pareil like me, sight seen. Normally, I had a domitable spirit, but, being cor-rigible, I felt capacitated—as if this were something I was great shakes at—and forgot that I had succeeded in situations like this only a told number of times. So, after a terminable delay, I acted with mitigated gall and

made my way through the ruly crowd with strong givings.

Nevertheless, since this was all new hat to me and I had no time to prepare a promptu speech, I was petuous. Wanting to make only called-for remarks, I started talking about the hors d'oeuvres, trying to abuse her of the notion that I was sipid, and perhaps even bunk a few myths about myself.

She responded well, and I was mayed



that she considered me a savory character who was up to some good. She told me who she was. "What a perfect nomer," I said, advertently. The conversation became more and more choate, and we spoke at length to much avail. But I was defatigable, so I had to leave at a godly hour. I asked if she wanted to come with me. To my delight, she was committal. We left the party together and have been together ever since. I have given her my love, and she has requited it. ♦

JOOST SWARTE