

Companionate

Vilma Banky and Rod
they reconcile domes-

By Ruth



Rod takes care of their investments. The La Rocques frankly own up to an ambition to make and save plenty of money

WE have heard about the girls who are "Dodging the Wedding Ring" in the Cinema City. We have read Francis X. Bushman's advice "Don't Marry" given to young men with screen aspirations. Now let us spend an evening with two stars who failed to heed such words of warning, who just went out and were married.

Rod La Rocque and Vilma Banky.

You know, I am glad I had not chanced to meet these two stars until, some eight months after their world-renowned marriage, I went out to talk to them about it. Glad that I was not prepared, had no inkling as to whether they were really happy or already half-tired of their bargain.

As we sat down to dinner, it was Rod who remarked casually, "We've never missed a dinner together. Not one, since we were married."

And Vilma who added, "We usually eat alone. We don't like company for dinner." Then said hurriedly, "That is, we don't mind one or two, but we don't like to be in a crowd for dinner."

"But how do you manage your schedules?" I queried. Although there seemed little doubt that they were, indeed, happy, yet, to one used to the early hours, the night hours, the location hours of the motion picture schedule, it just didn't seem that matrimony between stars could run as smoothly as this surface-taste promised.

"We have two," they both

answered. "One when we're working and one when we're not."

The working schedule is as follows:

Rise at eight. "When the studio is good to me," Vilma interjected. "When it's not, up an hour earlier."

Breakfast together.

At the studio by nine.

Luncheon together, when they're both working. When Vilma is working and Rod isn't, which is the case while this story is being written, Rod sees Vilma off, takes an hour in his gymnasium with his trainer, then comes into the house, reads the morning papers and checks up the amount they have lost or have made on the rise or fall of the stocks they have

purchased. If it's a rise, he orders his car and dashes to the studio and lunches with Vilma to tell her how much money they have made since yesterday morning.

If they have lost, he telephones her and says, "Dear, I have to go down town and talk to our brokers about it." And even though they have won, when he leaves her after luncheon, he goes into Los Angeles to talk with his business advisers to see if they can sell anything at a profit and invest where they can make even more profit!

THEN home to dinner, together, alone, and out to a picture show in the evening.

Yes, a picture show is what they insist is their favorite recreation. Oh, they have to go to parties once in awhile, but not any oftener than is professionally and socially essential. For they are movie "fans" pure and simple. And I doubt if there is a picture you could mention, that they haven't seen and discussed together.

There is a neighborhood theater around the corner, where they see most of their pictures. Independent productions, comedies, whatever hodgepodge is offered. Once in awhile, downtown to a big theater, or to Cecil B. De Mille's private projection room, or some other producer's.

Home early and to bed, where they read, usually, O. Henry.

"You know," Rod said, "I had heard Europeans, as a rule, do not appreciate our O. Henry. Imagine my surprise and my joy

HERE are some of the rules that Vilma Banky and Rod La Rocque apply to keep peace in the family:

They eat dinner together.

They go to parties together.

They aren't jealous of each other's professional associates.

They never criticize each other's work until the film is finished.

They pool their money, but each reserves a small separate account for minor expenditures.

And—this is most important—they never both lose their tempers at the same time.

Stardom

La Rocque tell how
ticity with their careers

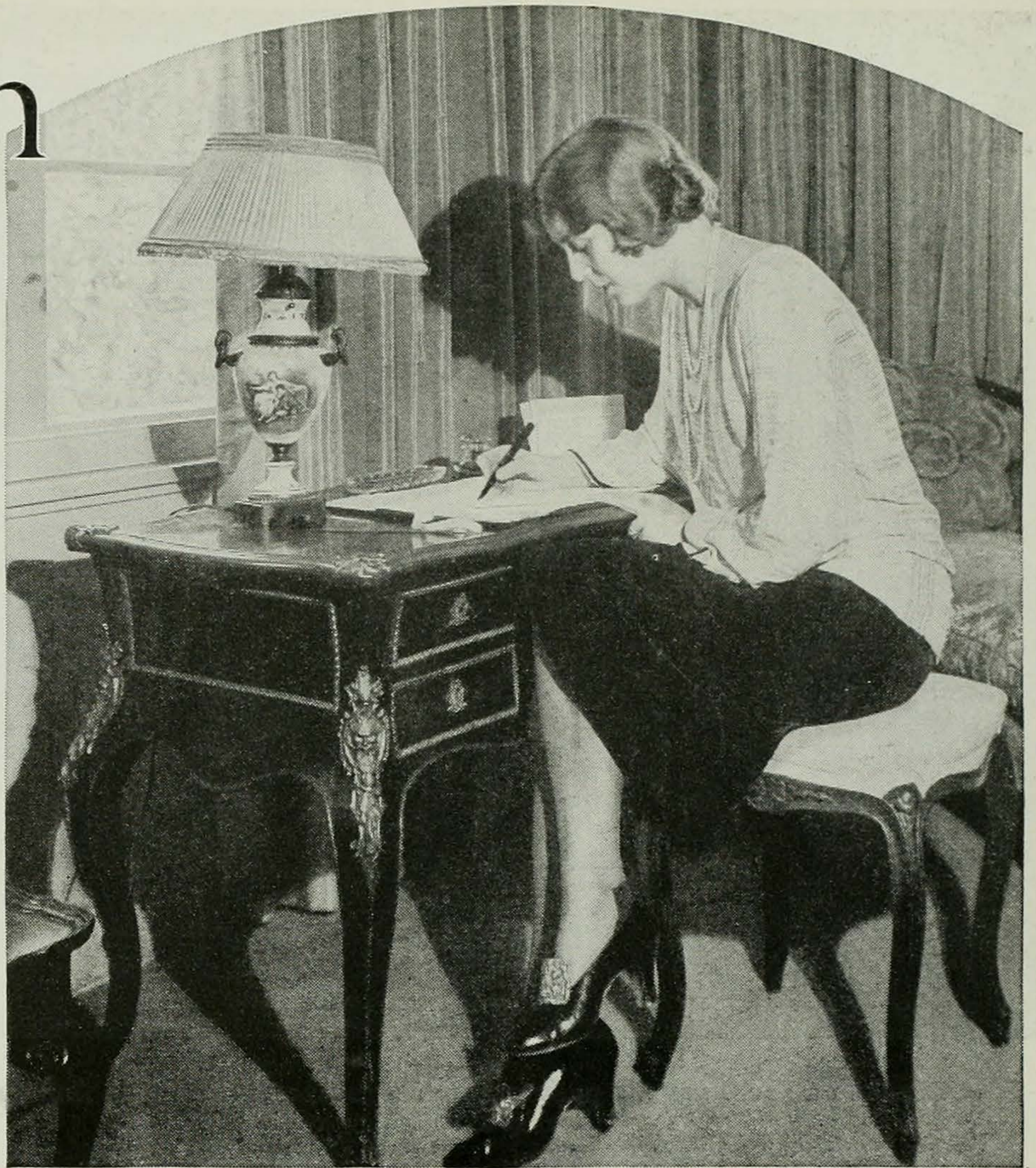
Biery

when I found Vilma loves him. We read him over and over, and the other day I caught Vilma telling her maid an O. Henry story!"

In one respect, at least, it is a very modern marriage. They have separate bedrooms and separate baths, too. This arrangement, Balzac once said, is the sign either of a completely happy marriage or a completely disastrous one. In this particular case, it is the sign of a completely congenial marriage.

They are happiest, they both agree, when neither happens to be working, when they are both "on vacation" at the same time.

"Our schedule is wonderful! We do exactly as we please!" Vilma described it.



Vilma keeps the family budget. She runs her home far more economically than many housewives with nothing better to do



Since their marriage, their "fan" mail has increased twenty per cent, which shows that the public approves of the match

They go to parties only when they are not working, and they go only together. They don't even dance with others—"unless we can't help it," Vilma explained.

"Are you ever jealous of each other's leading men and leading women?" It's a dangerous question, but I asked it.

"Why, we never think about it!" Rod answered, calmly.

"But, isn't it true the world wanted Vilma to marry Ronald Colman?"

ROD leaned across and answered quietly, "Our fan mail has increased between fifteen and twenty per cent since we married, and there has never been a suggestion that Vilma should have married Ronald Colman."

"Do you criticize each other's pictures?" I thought it time to change the subject.

"And how!" Vilma promptly aided in switching the conversation.

"But not while they are being made. Not until they are finished do we talk about them," Rod added.

Aside from their love and their profession, money is the most important question between them.

"We want to be very rich," Vilma announced frankly.

Rod laughed. "You know, I realized I was marrying a star, and I was prepared to make allowances. I did not [CONTINUED ON PAGE 92]

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expect domesticity. Imagine my surprise and delight when Vilma came to me at the end of our first month at home and told me exactly how much it was costing to run our home!"

"How much does it cost?"

Vilma laughed and Rod hesitated. "It won't sound possible. People won't believe it. I've added it on the adding machine and worked it out on the comptometer, and aside from the salaries we pay the six servants, Vilma averages exactly \$11.58 a day for household expenses."

Yet consomme, thick lamb chops, celery and endive salad, fruit whip and cake had been included in our dinner.

"Rod forgot that I was raised in Europe and knew how to keep house before I knew anything about acting. I am really domestic." So domestic, indeed, that she has her Viennese cook prepare their luncheons and their assistant chauffeur bring them to the studio, hot, in containers; not only because the food is better, but, because it is just a little cheaper.

They have pooled their money. All is

community property, except a small separate account for petty expenditures. Even here they have a friendly contest to see who will save the most money.

In five years, perhaps, they will be able to retire and travel. There is a rumor they will make one picture together, which they expect would add much to their fortune building ambitions. If this co-feature goes through, they admit it will be the fulfillment of one of their greatest joint aspirations.

The other fulfillment will be their children. Oh, yes, Vilma and Rod both hope for children.

The only subject that brought a cloud to Vilma's eyes was that of location trips and possible separation. "I suppose I'd just have to stay at home and stand it," she said.

They haven't quarreled yet, not in earnest. They don't always agree on all matters, but each one has promised the other to remember the words of their lawyer on the day of their wedding:

"I suppose you've had lots of advice, but I'm going to add my word. It is, simply, never get angry together."



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Why Lenore Coffee would rather work at home than at the studio. One of Cecil B. De Mille's best scenario writers, Miss Coffee finds that motherhood is the best incentive for a career