

The Trouble with Doubles

T'was the night before Christmas, two guests in our house
Were playing some bridge against me and my spouse.
Please tell me, she shouted "Why didn't you double?
T'was plain from the start that we had them in trouble."

"Tis futile, my Dear – I am taking no stand
So please stop your nagging. Let's play the next hand."
"Remember next time," she said with a frown,
"To double a contract that's sure to go down."

So I picked up my cards in a downtrodden state,
Then I opened one spade and awaited my fate:

Dealer: East, N-S vulnerable
Contract: 2 Spades
Opening Lead: Q of hearts

	North	
	9876	
	65432	
	8765	

West		East (Me)
-----		AKQJ10
QJ109		AK87
KQJ109		-----
KQJ10		A987
	South	
	5432	

	A432	
	65432	

The guy sitting South was like many I've known.
He bid and he played in a world of his own.
"Two diamonds," he countered with scarcely a care:
The ace in his hand gave him courage to spare.

My wife, smiling faintly and tossing her head,
Leaned over the table: "Double!" she said.
And North for some reason I cannot determine
Bid two hearts like she was preaching a sermon.

I grinned as I double enjoying the fun,
And turned 'round to South to see where he'd run.
But South, undistressed nor at a loss for a word
Came forth with "Two spades" – did I hear what I heard?

The other two passed and in sheer disbelief
I said, "Double, my friend, that'll bring you to grief!"
South passed with a nod, his composure serene,
My wife with a flourish led out the heart queen.

I sat there and chuckled inside o'er their fix,
But South very calmly ran off his eight tricks.
He ruffed the first heart in his hand right away,
And then trumped a club on the board the next play.

He crossruffed the hand at a breathtaking pace
'Til I was left holding five spades to the ace.
In anguish my wife cried "Your mind's growing old
You should see that six notrump for us is ice-cold!!"

By doubling this time I'd committed a sin-
It just goes to prove that you never can win.