

# MR. ESHOLT'S YOUNG WIFE

BY T. W. SPEIGHT.

## CHAPTER V.

Agnes was now in a mood which caused her to feel that whatever might happen could not matter greatly. And yet she shuddered involuntarily when she called to mind all that going back to Tydd Street implied. But as regarded her aunt the case was altogether different. Up to the time of her brother's death, Miss Maria had been used to the comfortable affluence of middle-class life; and notwithstanding her high spirit and that reticence of speech which hid from others whatever cares might be consuming her, Agnes knew how deeply she felt the change in their circumstances, and how the bitter tooth of poverty was gradually eating away the sweetness of her life. Moreover, she had been engaged for seven long years, but circumstances had hitherto been adverse to her marriage. Now, however, the chief barrier was removed. Since their arrival at Syringa Cottage, Mr. Ludford had written to announce that he had received the offer of an incumbency the stipend of which was two hundred pounds a year. Modest as this income was, Agnes knew that both her aunt and Mr. Ludford would look upon it as sufficient to allow of their embarking together on the sea of matrimony, so that now she, and she alone, stood in the way of their long-deferred happiness. Agnes knew her aunt sufficiently well to feel sure that she was too proud—with the pride of a poor gentlewoman—to burden her husband with the maintenance of her brother's child, still less would she leave that brother's child to battle alone with the world, not even if her marriage should have to be deferred indefinitely.

It was a hard strait for one so young to find herself placed in. Strive as she might, her heart still clung to her lost lover. What must she do? Where turn for comfort? Not many times had she need to ask herself that question. She went to the one who had been to her both mother and aunt in one and kneeling by her side, opened her heart to her with many blushes and tears. Then it was that Miss Maria told the girl something about which she had hitherto kept silence—how she had seen Wilmot Burrell, in the company of two ladies, coming out of St. George's Hall on the afternoon of the concert. There might be much in such a circumstance, or there might be nothing. Agnes listened with a chill at her heart; but when her aunt had ceased speaking, she said: "After all, Wilmot must know a great number of people who are totally unknown to us. Probably the two ladies were some ordinary acquaintances whom he met at the concert, and to whom he was merely paying those little attentions which ladies look for under such circumstances."

"Such might be the case undoubtedly," answered Miss Maria. "It proves, however, that he was in Liverpool at the same time, and that he could scarcely have troubled himself greatly to find us out."

"But how was he to know we were in Liverpool, aunt? If my letters never reached him, of which there seems some doubt, he would naturally write to the vicarage, in which case his letters would be returned by the post office people."

"Mr. Burrell knew Mr. Ludford's address," said Miss Maria coldly. "Had he chosen to write to him, any information he might ask for would have been furnished him at once."

This was a state of the case which had never struck Agnes, but it was one which she could not gainsay. It was another stab to her love, which was slowly but surely bleeding to death.

Poor Miss Maria was at a loss in what terms to set about telling Mr. Esholt that which she had promised Agnes she would tell him. The duty was a disagreeable one, but it must be got through somehow.

"Mr. Esholt," she began in a voice which was by no means so steady as usual, "I must ask you to excuse my niece's absence this afternoon. Feeling herself unequal to the interview, she has delegated me in her stead."

Mr. Esholt bowed gravely; he began to forebode what was coming.

"With reference to the offer you have made her, she wishes me to say how sincerely she thanks you for the honour you have done her; but that, while she respects and esteems you as much as it is possible to respect and esteem any one, she does not feel towards you that warmth of sentiment which would justify her in accepting your offer to make her your wife."

"Give her time, miss Granby—give her time. She may learn to like me better by-and-by. Time and opportunity often work wonders."

"That is very true, Mr. Esholt," answered Miss Maria with a faint smile, which he took as a token of encouragement. "Young people don't always know their own minds, not even when they think they know them best.—There is one circumstance," she went on after a moment's silence, "which, as matters now stand, I deem it only right that you should be made acquainted with. My niece has been engaged once already; but the change in our fortunes was the cause of a change in the young gentleman's feelings, and—"

"He must have been a scoundrel, whoever he was," said Mr. Esholt emphatically. "Your niece, madam, ought to thank herself fortunate that she escaped becoming the wife of such a man."

"We cannot expect girls in love to be philosophers, Mr. Esholt."

The merchant bent his brows for a few moments, then looking up with a frank smile, he said: "What you have just told me, my dear Miss Granby, has been a great relief to me. So long as my only rival is the memory of her love for one who has proved himself utterly unworthy of it, I will not despair. I believe you to be my friend in this matter. Go to your niece, then, I entreat, and ask her permission for me to continue my visits as heretofore, if not as an accepted suitor, still less as a rejected one, but as one who, while never pressing his suit unduly, will live, ay, and wait, for years if need be, in the hope of one day winning her consent to become his wife."

So Mr. Esholt's visits went on as before, not at Syringa Cottage, however, but at the lodgings in Tydd Street, to which Miss Granby had insisted on their returning. Agnes was pleased to think that matters had been arranged as they led. Unknown to herself she had come to trust in Mr. Esholt, so implicitly, to lean on him as a very tower of strength, that his absence would have left a void in her life far larger than she was aware of. He was so kind and patient, never speaking of his love, but betraying by a hundred little tokens how dear she was to him, that her feelings towards him began imperceptibly to assume a warmer tinge, so that, if he were unavoidably delayed and did not arrive at the expected time, she found herself longing and looking out for him and feeling his absence as a loss. Still, the sentiments with which she regarded him were very different from those she had felt for Wilmot Burrell.

Thus matters went on for some months longer, till one day Mr. Esholt, deeming that the proper moment had come, pressed his suit, and wrung from her a half-reluctant consent to become his wife. She felt relieved and thankful, now the matter was finally settled, but beyond that strangely indifferent. She did not care to think much about her approaching marriage; the prospect had few charms for her; but for all that she was glad—very glad, as she told herself, not once, but a thousand times—that it was to be so. She would do her best to make Mr. Esholt a faithful and affectionate wife, while poor Mr. Ludford would be made happy at last.

Mr. Esholt and his sister lived in a large house on the heights of Everton, from the windows of which there was at that time a wide prospect across the Mersey to the villa-studded sandhills on the opposite shore. Mr. Esholt's father had lived there before him; and the house was furnished in that massive but sombre style so prevalent in those days among the well-to-do middle classes. Everything in it seemed made to last a hundred years at the least. Thick Brussels carpets, considerably the worse for wear; heavy straight-backed chairs, that required both hands to lift them; a few oil-paintings, so dim with age that it was difficult to make out what they were supposed to represent; here and there an oval mirror in a tarnished frame; the windows shaded by red damask curtains, which hung in heavy folds from ceiling to floor, shutting out half the daylight, so that on the sunniest noon the rooms had a dull, twilight appearance—who that can go back in memory forty years does not recognize the kind of house, which even in these days is not wholly extinct! Such as it was, Mr. Esholt had lived in it all his life, and no thought came to him that it was capable of improvement. Long habit and old associations had made it very dear to him.

It was a chill spring evening. Miss Esholt had reached home that day after an absence of several weeks. Dinner was just over, the curtains drawn and the lamp lit. On one side of the fire sat Mr. Esholt, a decanter of wine at his elbow and the *Times* newspaper in his hands, which latter he was turning restlessly over, glancing at it here and there, but never appearing to read more than a paragraph at a time. This was so different from his usual steady adherence to one page before beginning another, that the attention of his sister was awakened thereby; besides which, the continual crackling of the crisp paper was a source of annoyance to her excitable nerves. She was seated in her own special easy-chair on the opposite side of the fire, her shoulders slightly raised, her head thrust forward a little, an elbow resting on either arm of the chair, slowly rubbing her thin transparent hands one within the other, while regarding her brother with a steadfast, unwavering gaze which seemed as if it would fain probe whatever secrets might perchance be locked up in his breast. She was wearing a dark gray homespun dress, with small linen wristbands turned up towards her elbows; round her neck were a black ribbon and a plain white collar. She wore no jewelry or ornament of any kind; nothing could have been more simple and un-luxurious. Her long thin face was perfectly colourless, and bore evident traces of ill-health. Her black wavy hair was combed straight back from her forehead, after a fashion rather uncommon in those days, and fastened in a heavy knot at the back of her head. She was probably five-and-thirty years old.

Restlessly Mr. Esholt continued to turn over his newspaper. It was quite evident to the observant eyes which noted his slightest movement that his thoughts were busy with far other subjects than those about which he was making-believe to read.

"What can that matter, Janet?" he said a little sharply. "You don't call me an old man, surely?"

"It is no concern of mine, of course. You are old enough to know your own mind, and have only yourself to please."

"But I want to please you too, Janet. I want you and Agnes to know each other, and to love each other, as I am sure you cannot fail to do when you come together."

A curious expression flitted across Miss Esholt's face. "You are very kind," she said in her iciest tones. "But I am tired. Will you oblige me by ringing for Davry?"

Mr. Esholt bit his lip as he rang the bell. He knew that for the present the subject must be dropped; but at any rate he had broken the ice.

Next minute, Davry entered. "Upstairs," said Miss Esholt.

Her brother held the door open, and Davry, pushing behind the easy-chair, wheeled her mistress out of the room.

"Good-night, sister," said Mr. Esholt as he stooped to kiss her outside the door.

"Good-night, brother," she replied; but he missed the smile which had never before been wanting when he bade her good-night. He went back into the room and sighed as he shut the door.

"Hum—well—yes. She will be of age in a few weeks, I believe."

"And you, Robert—let me think—are five years older than I, and on my last birthday I was—"

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(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## R. H. Dana in China.

"A Voyage on the Grand Canal of China, Leaves from an Unpublished Journal," is the title of an article in the *May Atlantic* written by the late Richard H. Dana. The voyage was made in 1860. Among other people and things, he thus describes a Chinese official:

The governor received us with great ceremony, tea was served, and a general conversation began, with Mr. Syle as interpreter. He soon discovered that the governor had been to Tai of Shanghai during some troublous times, and had done good service to the foreign residents. First Mr. Syle skillfully informed us of the fact, and then asked us if we were not greatly pleased to pay our respects to so illustrious a man who had rendered such services to our countrymen. To this we assented, and Mr. Syle, with all the Chinese expletives, laid this tribute to his Excellency's feet. This was a masterstroke; he was flattered and softened. To our first request for admission he had replied, with the extravagant politeness of his people, that it was impossible; the law was fixed and rigid. He wrung his hands, —almost wrung his heart,—he all but wept, to think that he must refuse such eminent personages as we clearly were, who had traveled so far, I from the antipodes, expressly to see the world-renowned city of Su-Chau. This had no effect whatever upon the diplomatic Mr. Syle. He planted himself, evidently for a prolonged interview, and seated us all accordingly. Etiquette would not permit his Excellency to rise or otherwise break up the interview, and in this assembly there was no way of putting the previous question, so it seemed to have no natural termination. His Excellency, with bows and smiles, inquired of the ages, names, and occupations of each of us in turn, which Mr. Syle gave him, without diminution, I suspect, as to our dignities at home. With all the ceremony and etiquette of Chinese officials, it was singular that some part of the crowd was let into the room, and even offered opinions on the pending question; and we had warm friends among them. Mr. Syle reported progress from time to time, and said there were signs of relenting. How thoroughly Chinese was the result. His Excellency said that although it was true, as a rule, that no foreigner could be admitted, yet there was an exception which allowed the governor a discretion where foreigners, not more than five in number (which was just our number), applied before nine o'clock in the morning (which was just our situation), and would take a guard or escort with them (without which we certainly shouldn't have attempted to show ourselves in a city of two millions of people), and he would exercise his discretion in our favor. We thanked him profusely, and offered to pay for the escort. Oh, no! Two soldiers and a guide were enough, and his dignity would not permit us to pay. An intelligent guide appeared, who was duly instructed to show the chief places to these illustrious foreigners; and two *braves*, with big paper breastplates, covered with heroic mottoes from the classics, and holding long spears, which they were continually twirling round their fingers, went one before and one behind us. And, with mutual expressions of the best will and the highest hopes, we parted with the governor, who descended to the lowest step of the gate, and whose countenance was intended to express alternately, in equal proportions, delight at pleasing us and dejection at parting from us.

## The Perfect Man.

From the crown to the nape of the neck is one-twelfth the statue of a perfectly formed man.

The hand from the wrist to the end of the middle finger is one-tenth of the total height of a man of perfect proportions.

A man of good proportions is as tall as the distance between the tips of his fingers when both arms are extended to full length.

The face from the highest point of the forehead, where the hair begins, to the end of the chin is one-tenth of the whole statue of a man of perfect mould.

If the face from the roots of the hair to the chin be divided into three equal parts the first division determines the place where the eyebrows should meet, the second the opening of the nostrils, if the man be perfect in form.

The proportions of the human figure are six times the length of the right foot. Whether the form is slender or plump the rule holds good on an average. Any deviation from the rule is a departure from the beauty of proportion. It is claimed that the Greeks made all their statues according to this rule.

## Warning to Granks.

Dear friend, don't hunt the editor With pistol or with gun; And ask him if he said it, or Expect that he will run. His threadbare linen duster May still his patches hide, But his muscles are developed, And the Lord is on his side.

## The Clever Spider.

A gentleman who was fond of studying the habits of insects, one day found a large spider near a pond of water. He took a long stick, and put the spider on one end of it. He then went to the side of the pond, and stretching out as far as he could, fixed the other end in the bottom of the pond and left the stick standing straight up out of the water with the spider upon it. He then sat down on the bank to watch what the insect would do. It first went down the stick till it came to the water, but finding that there was no hope of getting off there, it returned to the top. It then went up and down the different sides of the stick, feeling and looking carefully, till it found there was no way of escape at any part. Then it went once more to the top, and remained quiet for a while, as if thinking what to do. After a short pause, the insect began to spin a thread, long enough to reach from the stick to the edge of the pond, when this was done, it fastened one end of the thread to the top of the stick, and let the rest of it float in the breeze. It waited till the wind stretched the thread out towards the side of the pond. The insect then went crawling along in the thread till it reached the end. After floating in the air a little while it alighted safely on the ground and scampered off to its home.

"How long yer bin in Christian county, stranger?" asked a native, stepping up to me as I was riding slowly along one of the narrow roads near Chadwick.

"About six months," I replied.

"Startin' er boom?"

"No," I answered, in some astonishment. "Gotten patent right?" "Not that I know of." "Runnin' fer office?" "I rather guess not." "B'long ter ther Bald Knobs?" "Certainly not, sir." "Serkit ridin'?" "No." "Makin' moonshine?" "What do you mean, sir?" I broke out, impatiently.

"Oh, nothin'," ingeniously replied the native, digging one of his bare toes in the gravel. "I only wanted ter know which yer was, fer ef er man ain't one er them things down hyar it's purty nigh right ter set him down for hoes stealer, an' bein' er consterbul, I'm jes' carryin' on mer dooty."

## A Good Parrot Story.

Ashland Item: Our next door neighbor, writes a correspondent, owns an amusing parrot which is always getting into mischief, but usually gets out again without much trouble to herself. When she is doing anything for which she ought to be punished she holds her head to one side, and, eyeing her mistress, says in a sing-song tone: "Polly is a good girl," until she sees her mistress smile; then she flaps her wings and cries out: "Hurrah! Polly is a good girl!" She has been allowed to go free in the garden, where she promades back and forth on the walks, sunning herself and warning off all intruders.

One morning a hen strayed out of the kitchen yard and was quietly picking up her breakfast, when Polly marched up to her and called out "Shoo!" in her shrill voice. The poor hen retreated to her own quarters, running as fast as she could, felled by Polly, who screamed "Shoo!" at every step.

A few days later, Polly extended her morning walk into the chicken yard. Here, with her usual curiosity, she went peering out every corner, till she came to the old hen on her nest. The hen made a dive from Polly's yellow head, but missed it. Polly, thinking his discretion the better part of valor, turned to run; the hen, with wings wide spread, following close after.

As she ran, Polly screamed in her shrillest tones, "O Lord! O Lord!"

A member of the family, who had witnessed the performance, thought it time to interfere in Polly's behalf, as the angry hen was gaining on her. He ran out, and stooping down held out his hand. Polly lost no time in traveling up to his shoulder. Then from her high vantage ground, she turned, and looking down on her foe screamed: "Hello there! shoo!"

The frightened hen returned to her nest as rapidly as she had come.

## An Apology that Covered All.

A prominent official at Tabreez, in the course of an altercation with an English gentleman, called his adversary a liar. The result was a challenge, which seemed to the Persian preposterous.

"I fight," said he. "What shall I fight for? I only called him a liar."

"Well," said the gentleman who took the note to him, "he says you will have to fight him; there is no way of getting out of it. It will never do to call an English gentleman a liar."

"But I say I won't fight," replied the other.

"Then you must apologize."

"Apologize! What does he mean by apologizing?"

"Why, take it all back, and say that you are sorry that you called him a liar. That is what it means."

"Is that all?" replied the Persian. "Of course I'll apologize; I'll say whatever he wishes me to say. I lied when I called him a liar. I am a liar, the son of a liar, and the grandson of liars. What more does he want me to say?"—*Persia and the Persians.*

## A DOG THAT FOUGHT SNAKES.

BY ELLA GUERNSEY.

An old settler in Illinois tells me that when she with her family first moved into the poorly built prairie cabin, snakes were numerous. So familiar did she become with the appearance of these disagreeable visitors that she was never surprised by finding inside the cabin a rattlesnake which had crept in unseen by any one of the family.

Being no coward and a strong woman, she usually managed to dispatch those which came into her way, but she feared for the children, until "Bose," the big yellow dog, proved himself a match for the vilest of "rattlers."

Bose did not always escape unharmed in these conflicts, but the intelligent dog was soon able to tell, in his dog fashion, when he had been wounded by a snake, if there had been no witness to the battle.

He knew the remedy would immediately be applied that always brought him relief, which was a big poultice of raw onions, well poulticed.

So familiar did the poultice-bound Bose become to the few neighbors that they came to expect to find him displaying his "badge."

"The worst fright I ever had from seeing a rattlesnake unexpectedly," said Mrs. Brown, "was one morning during bean time. I'd taken little May to the bean patch with me, and she, a little toddling thing, stood beside me when I drew aside some broad bean leaves and put my hand almost on a large rattler."

Bose had scented danger and quicker than I could think was after the reptile. A faintness came upon me, and I could scarcely walk to the house, though in a great hurry to get ready an onion poultice for poor Bose. "Mamma, Bose is kyin,'" said little May, listening to the means the faithful creature was using to ask me to help him.

Another time I went to the shelves that I had curtained off at one end of the cellar, using them as a safe and pantry, in a great hurry.

Upon lifting the curtain, I very nearly roused up a rattlesnake snugly quartered under a plate of cold boiled ham. Without a struggle Bose destroyed his invader.

Pioneer women in those early days endured many dangers and were compelled to neglect their little ones, it being impossible for one pair of hands to do everything that needed to be done. In watching the children and guarding them from danger, Bose was an invaluable help to me. When the weather was fine I did not fear to let them play out in the open prairie surrounding our house if I sent Bose with them, telling him to "watch" them.

Bose ended his days in our service, desiring as he had for his very own the softest, warmest bed that we could manufacture for him.

## Emperor William's Rambles in Disguise.

People who imagine that his Imperial Majesty passes all his time in christening new-born sons, meditating on the wickedness of Prince Bismarck, and quarrelling with Count von Waldersee are very much mistaken. He likes his fun also, and takes it. There is a certain music hall in Berlin where the Emperor enjoys adventures worthy of the Caliph Haroun Al Raschid. Whether he is recognized or not I cannot say, as his Majesty is an adept in the art of "making up." However, policemen, detectives, and others are far too wise to express suspicions in case they have some idea they are in the presence of the Lord of Germany. It is confidently said that the other day, in the guise of a Hebrew peddler, his Majesty wandered through the haunts of the Jewish community in his capital and discussed with a number of working Israelites the condition of their race in his own dominions, and the effect of the harsh measures recently promulgated against them in Russia.

On another occasion the Emperor is said to have passed many hours of the night wandering among the saloons used by sailors and common soldiers, arguing and inviting criticism on the life of a private in his army or an A. B. seaman in his navy. All these things doubtless assist the young sovereign in his endeavours to act as the father of his people; but occasionally the fact that he is a young man bursts upon him, and he is apt to join in vigorous dancing, and play high jinks generally, as enthusiastically as the latest Jack ashore. Then, in the middle of a can-can or a schoppen, comes the memory, "Ich bin der Kaiser," and his temporary boon companions are surprised to see their new comrade suddenly draw himself up, turn on his heel and leave the place, followed by a couple of till, till the moment, supposed-to-be drunken chums.

## Knew the Value of Advertising.

When the defendant took the stand his Honor said:

"Prisoner, you are charged with having removed the goblet from the hand of the Cogswell statue and substituting a pair of two-bit suspenders with a placard calling attention to your establishment across the way."

"Well, Shudge," replied the offender, with an ingratiating smile, "of gorse I wants to get along in peeness."

"After which," continued the Court, sternly, "you substituted a lot of necklaces for the suspenders, and attached to the other hand a lot of bills referring to your new stock of gum shoes and hair oil."

"Dose hair oil is fust rate, your Honor," said the defendant. "I would like to sell you a pottle."

"And yesterday," continued the Court, consulting the indictment, "you obstructed the thoroughfare and created a disturbance by placing a paper collar and a plug hat on the statue in question."

"Dose bug hats is cheap at four dollars, Shudge, Moses Levy sharges fife and a half vor dem same kind," returned the trader, cheerfully. "I beats dose fellers ebery dime."

"And at night," went on his Honor, "at night, it appears you placed in the figure's hand a transparency containing a further advertisement of your wares. Now this is most improper and reprehensible."

"Dot's right, Shudge," said Mr. Sofson, delighted. "Bitch into me off you please. Speak loud, so dose newspaper vellers can hear you, 'and he smiled benignantly upon the reporters."

"Great heavens!" thundered the Court, as a frightful idea struck him. "Is it possible you have the audacity to use the machinery of this Court as an advertising dodge?"

"Dot's it, dot's it, Shudge," exclaimed the Cheap John, rubbing his hands exultingly. "I swore out der complaint myself." — [San Francisco Post.]

More Than She Wan ed.

A story comes from across the water that a young lady in an English church accidentally let her handkerchief fall. By repeatedly stooping to reach it furtively she attracted the notice of a gentleman in the pew behind, who thought she was about to faint. With the best of motives, therefore, he took her greatly to her surprise. As she tried to release herself another gentleman went to her assistance, and before the lady knew what was the matter they were moving her out into the aisle, and, indeed, carried her into the vestibule before she could recover from her astonishment sufficiently to find words for protest. — [Boston Post.]