

# THE TOY WIFE



GERTRUDE GELBIN

Adapted from the *Memoirs of Madame de Sevigne*

**RESUME**  
 Guberte and Louise Brigard, who have grown up in France, come home to live at their father's plantation in pre-War Louisiana. Guberte is called Froufrou by everyone; she is innocent, delightful, childlike, wanting only a handsome husband. Andre Vallaire, young man about town, falls madly in love with her. Georges Sartoris, serious young lawyer, whom Louise has always loved, also falls in love with Froufrou. Georges, not realising Louise's feeling for him, begs her to help him in his courtship of her sister. Louise urges Froufrou to marry Georges, and Froufrou, influenced by her sister, accepts him. Andre, upon learning the news, goes away.

## Chapter Two THE TOY WIFE

Gilberte Sartoris was the happiest woman in New Orleans. And why shouldn't she be? Hadn't she been married for five years to a husband who adored her? Wasn't their little son, Georgie, the prettiest, the dearest and the smartest child in the city? As Madame Georges Sartoris, Froufrou found life infinitely more exciting and satisfactory than she had as Gilberte Brigard.

And Georges did adore her. He waved aside the inconveniences caused by the haphazard state of their household. How could Froufrou be expected to supervise a house full of slaves? That the servants were surly, unruly and disobedient was a cause for concern; but each time Georges broached the subject, Froufrou's petulant charm won him back to good humor.

Pick laid her finger upon the root of the trouble. "Ah, that's what's ever which way in dis house, ma-tah," she cried. "Ah can't do it. Missey's too nice. Dat's all dat's wrong here!"

George, attempting once more to take Froufrou to account, instead found himself her subject slave. On the subject of their child, however, he was more firm.

"You're not going to accuse me of neglecting Georgie," Froufrou exclaimed.

"No," he sighed, knowing he was losing the battle he had started. "His nurse neglects him, his hand and you spoil him on the other."

She laughed gaily. "Don't worry about Georgie, I adore him — and he adores me."  
 The day came at last when Georges took final reckoning of his marriage. Froufrou's whims and caprices made him give up the one important step in his career — his opportunity to head the Government commission detailed to revise the laws of the South West.

"The Southwest?" she frowned, puzzled. "Where's that?"

He explained the need for their both going to this wild country. "I should die there, Georges! I can't go." Her excuses were legion, and all, according to her reasoning, perfect. "Besides, Georges," she offered as her final reason, "I think of it — after all this time Madame de Cambri has just found the leading man to play my lover in the Charity Play. How dreadful it would be if I dropped out of the play, now."

She went on in detail, explaining that Andre Vallaire, who had been in France these past five years, had returned to New Orleans. That Madame had sought him out at once for the play. That Andre had accepted. That she and Andre were getting along famously at rehearsals. Surely Georges could understand that now. She wasn't leaving the city.

"If you love me," she pouted, "you'll not go either —"

Georges gave up the great chance of his career. Somehow, from that time on, he no longer had the same

patience with her shortcomings. It was Froufrou herself who decided they must bring Louise to live with them.

"She'll take care of everything for us," Froufrou beamed.

Over his protest, she dispatched Georges to get her sister. Louise's arrival in their home marked an instant change. She took matters in hand; safeguarded the precious keys to the household; kept the slaves in control; cared for little Georgie in a way that made him tractable and happy; managed affairs so that Georges, for the first time, knew peace and quiet.

Froufrou was delighted with the arrangement. Now she had nothing to worry about. She had all the time needed for rehearsals. What fun the rehearsals were! Andre read his lines with a fervor that constantly amused her.

The weeks rolled by merrily enough until the day when Froufrou found Pick surly and disobedient. Pick had always been such a devoted slave that Froufrou was astounded. She questioned her sharply.

"If you aint noticed nothin'."



"If that was a tear for me," Andre cried, "I'd not leave without you."

Pick retorted, "Ah aint sayin' nothin' —"

Froufrou demanded an immediate explanation.

"Mam'zelle Louise got de keys and she's got Mahsta thinkin' she knows eberything. You jest watch out, Missey! Pick loves you. She don't care if you hit her — but Mam'zelle Louise is actin' like she was de missy here — and Mahstaht war her man."

Froufrou reached out and slapped Pick full in the face. "That will teach you not to carry tales," she cried furiously.

But the seed of suspicion and unhappiness had been planted; Froufrou began to notice things she had never seen before. She realized that her husband now turned to her sister for advice, for pleasantries, for friendship. Her child, whom she adored as a fellow playmate, no longer looked for her or wanted her. "Aunt Lou-ee" was the only name on his lips.

Into her heart which had known only carefree gaiety crept the bewildered pain of being unwanted. On top of this heart-breaking discovery, came another even more startling and more terrifying: Andre Vallaire still loved her.

"Go away," she begged desperately when he told her.

"Where?" he asked.

"Anywhere — far —"

"If you knew how much I love you," Andre whispered.

"I do know. Oh, I know. That's the trouble. That's the danger."

"Danger?" he asked. "Does that

mean there's a chance of your caring for me?"

"How do I know?" she wept. "How can I tell. I'm a woman who must be loved. That's all I know. That's why I beg you to go away."

"If that was a tear for me," Andre cried, "I'd not leave without you."

A week later, two events occurred which seemed heaven-sent to Froufrou. Andre came to tell her he was going away. Her eyes filled with tears — but her heart felt blessedly relieved. Immediately thereafter, Monsieur de Richelle, who had courted Louise in Paris, arrived in New Orleans to seek her hand in marriage.

Froufrou was beside herself with hope and excitement. Louise must marry him! That would solve everything! She insisted that Georges convince Louise to accept on Monsieur de Richelle. Eventually, despite his demur, she forced him to speak to her sister.

She sat back with cold eyes and watched them, as miserable and beaten, they discussed the matter.

"No," said Louise at last, "I cannot marry him."

Froufrou arose. "Since you have

failed, Georges," she said evenly. "I shall convince Louise, myself."

She suggested that Louise follow her to her sitting room.

"Now," said Froufrou when they were alone, "Let me have the real reason why you refuse this ideal marriage. Or do you want me to tell you?"

"I suppose you think I lied to you about Monsieur de la Richelle that time," Louise answered, her voice low and strained. "I fancied myself in love with him, that time."

"That time you urged me to marry Georges?" Froufrou demanded.

"You are certain you did fancy yourself in love with him then?"

"Whether I was or not," Louise said evasively, "I'm quite certain that I don't love him well enough to marry him, now."

"So am I!" was Froufrou's stinging retort.

"Well," said Louise helplessly, "then — then you have the real reason for my refusal."

"I did not love my husband when you decided I was to marry him," Froufrou replied meaningly.

"That was different —"

"But I learned to love him afterwards — as you were sure I would."

Louise remained silent, her head downcast.

Froufrou smiled. "Why should I not take your fate in my hands," she cried, "just as you took mine? Don't you think you would love Monsieur de la Richelle in time — as I love my husband?"

"No, Gilberte! No!"

"No?"

"No," Louise repeated nervously.

"I am different from you. I am older. I should not be happy — I know myself!"

"Not so well as I know you, my dear sister!" Froufrou placed her words with deadly aim.

"Gilberte!"

"You needn't use that tone Louise. I'm not a child anymore. And I'm not afraid to tell you what I think of you."

"But I'm afraid — I'm afraid you're not yourself!" Louise raised pain-filled eyes. "You may say something you'll be sorry for —"

Froufrou stared down at her with hate.

"You thief!" The words bolted from her lips and struck Louise full in the face. Louise half rose from her chair. "Hush!" she cried.

Froufrou advanced towards her and jerked away the household keys which Louise wore suspended on a cord ever since the day of her arrival — ever since the day Froufrou had given them to her with gaudy abandon of her duties.

"I gave you these keys," Froufrou said with deadly calm. "I trusted you — and you've stolen everything in this house!"

"Gilberte!" pleaded Louise.

"Someone will hear you."

"Let them!" cried Froufrou. "Why not? Even the servants know it before I did! You've stolen my place, my husband — and now, my child —"

"It's not true," wept Louise. "It's not true —"

"And that's why you want neither home nor husband nor children of your own!"

"Gilberte! You must listen —"

"Deny you love him!" cried Froufrou.

Louise lifted her face proudly.

"I don't deny it!"

"Let them!" Froufrou breathed deeply.

"Well, then," answered Louise, her eyes fixed upon her sister's face. "I loved him first. But he loved you; and it was for his sake that I made your marriage — and only to save that marriage did I come into your home."

"That's a lie!" Froufrou stepped back. "We were happy when you came."

"He wasn't," Louise answered hotly. "Ask him! Ask him what he said to me the day you sent him to me. Ask him what he called me."

"What?"

"He said your marriage would lead in disaster unless I saved it. He said your frivolity was destroying his peace of mind and his career. He said you were incapable of caring for your home or your child, as a woman should."

"No!" Froufrou's voice rose in sharp agony. "I don't believe it! I don't believe it!"

"It's true. And more. He said you were only a toy-wife — and a real wife was needed in this household."

"A toy-wife?" whispered Froufrou. "Not a real one?"

In the pause that followed, she looked about wildly, like a trapped and hurt creature with no chance for escape. The name of Andre flashed through her mind. He was going away — tonight! She backed away and leaned against the door for support, staring helplessly, miserably, at her sister.

"So you came here to save this marriage?" Her voice was pitifully small and strange.

"Yes. To save the marriage for which I was responsible. And I have — if you'll let well enough alone —"

Froufrou laughed shortly. "You think so?" She paused and smiled. "You haven't very good eyes, my wise sister."

"What do you mean?"

Her hand found the doorknob. Her eyes grew wild and bright. Andre! Andre! The name pounded through her brain.

"You'll see!" she cried. "You'll see —"

She turned and ran from the room.

What will Froufrou do now that she's learned the truth about Georges' feeling for her? Be sure to read the concluding chapter.

## NEW HOPE NEWS

Miss Celia Blanche Dail left Tuesday for Greenville to enter E. C. T. C. She was accompanied by her parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Dail, and her aunt, Mrs. A. C. Boyce, of Edenton.

Miss Mary Webb, of Edenton, spent the week-end with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. L. R. Webb.

Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Edwards and sons, Mark Wood and Billy, visited Mrs. Edwards' parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Spencer, Sunday.

Mrs. Berta Hobbs, of Elizabeth City, spent the week-end with her daughter, Mrs. Hazel Jones.

Mr. and Mrs. Tom Robbins, of Elizabeth City, visited Mr. Robbins' mother, Mrs. Mattie Robbins, Sunday.

Miss Vida Banks returned home Saturday night, after spending the week in Norfolk, Va., and visiting friends at Virginia Beach, Va.

Mr. and Mrs. MacIver Ward and children, of Edenton, spent Sunday

with Mrs. Ward's parents, Mr. and Mrs. L. R. Webb.

Mrs. Edgar Feilds, of Hertford, visited her father, Johnny Webb, on Sunday.

Mrs. George Turner, Mrs. E. G. Banks, Mrs. S. D. Banks, Mrs. Nettie Barclift and Miss Vida Banks were in Hertford shopping Tuesday.

Mr. and Mrs. B. S. Banks and baby, of Elizabeth City, were dinner guests of Mr. and Mrs. S. D. Banks Sunday.

Mrs. Alphonso Chappell and baby, of Belvidere, visited her parents, Mr. and Mrs. L. R. Webb, Sunday.

Warren Perry, of Manteo, is spending a few days with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. R. R. Perry.

Mr. and Mrs. Rudolph Banks, of Virginia Beach, Va., visited Mr. Banks' parents, Mr. and Mrs. C. P. Banks, over the week-end.

Mrs. S. D. Banks and Mrs. Jim Davis were joint hostesses recently to the Children's Missionary Society of New Hope Church at the Community House. Parents of the members were invited.

# STATE THEATRE

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Thursday and Friday, Sept. 29-30—  
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Saturday, October 1—  
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ALSO COMEDY - NEWS



ALSO COMEDY - NEWS

Monday, October 3—

Jack Oakie  
Lucille Ball

"The Affairs of  
Annabel"

ALSO COMEDY - ACT - NEWS  
MOVIE QUIZ PICTURE

Tuesday, October 4—



ALSO COMEDY - ACT  
MOVIE QUIZ PICTURE

Wednesday, October 5—

MATINEE AT 3 P. M.  
A mysterious modern Robin Hood conquers crime!



ALSO COMEDY - ACT

Thursday, October 6—

Claude Rains  
Lane Sisters

"Four Daughters"

ALSO COMEDY - NEWS  
MOVIE QUIZ PICTURE

## WOODVILLE NEWS

Mrs. Mary Bray and daughter, Attie, visited relatives in Elizabeth City and at Weicksville Sunday.

Mrs. J. M. Tolar, Mrs. Avery Cooke, Mrs. Alvin Cooke and Mary Sue Cooke were guests of Mrs. C. A. Bogue on Monday.

Mrs. Johnnie Bray was in Elizabeth City Monday afternoon.

Mrs. George Poole was the guest of her mother Thursday.

Mr. and Mrs. Garland Humphries, of Moyock, were guests of Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Humphries Saturday.

Miss Katherine Godfrey spent the week-end with Miss Lessie Smith.

Mrs. Walter Deal and Miss Margaret Bogue were guests of Mrs. C. A. Bogue and Miss Beulah Bogue Friday afternoon.

Rev. W. D. Morris filled his regular appointment at Woodville Sunday. Visiting friends from Salem Church were Rev. and Mrs. Arrington, Mr. and Mrs. Meade and Miss Dorothy Mae Meade.

Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Benton attended preaching services at Woodville on Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Bogue, Beulah, Warren and Mildred Bogue were in Hertford on Wednesday.

## RYLAND

Mr. and Mrs. Algine Hollowell and children visited Mr. and Mrs. Willie Byrum, at Center Hill, Sunday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. McEhrie Jordan spent Sunday with Mr. Jordan's parents, Mr. and Mrs. N. E. Jordan.

Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Hollowell and children, Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Craft, of Edenton; Mr. and Mrs. T. D. Davis and daughter, Lois, Mrs. Joe Byrum and E. S. Ward were among those visiting Harriett Parks Sunday after-

## NOON

Mrs. Herbert Lane and son, Herbert Ray, spent last week with relatives at Ocean View, Va.

Mrs. R. S. Ward, William, Lehman and Lelia Faye Ward and Mrs. H. N. Ward spent Sunday afternoon in Elizabeth City with Mr. and Mrs. Bill Tweedy.

Mr. and Mrs. Horace Worrell, of Drum Hill, spent the day recently as guests of Mr. and Mrs. Algine Hollowell.

Mrs. Sallie Dunn and children, of Aulander, spent the week-end with her mother, Mrs. Peninah Ward.

Mrs. Bob Jordan and son, of Hertford, were week-end guests of Mrs. Roy Parks.

Mrs. W. E. Copeland and sons attended a family birthday party at the home of Misses Abbie and Lou Blanchard, in Gates County.

Mrs. Roy Parks, Mrs. G. A. Boyce and Miss Juanita Lane were in Hertford Friday afternoon.

## SNOW HILL NEWS

Mrs. Martha Cartwright, Miss Laura Belle Cartwright and Ernest Cartwright visited Mrs. Ernest Cartwright, who is a patient at Albemarle Hospital, Elizabeth City, Sunday afternoon.

Mrs. Edward Benton, Barbara Ann and Floyd Benton, of Old Neck, were guests of Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Wood Sunday.

Mrs. Mary J. Wood has returned home. She has been with Mrs. Fred Matthews for several weeks.

Mrs. Mollie Tuttle has returned to her home in Norfolk, Va., after an extended visit with her brother, J. T. Wood.

Miss Sallie B. Wood is visiting in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Seth Spivey, in Richmond, Va.

Mr. and Mrs. Moody Harrell, Mrs. J. H. Harrell and Carolyn Dean Har-

rell, and Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Harrell visited Mr. and Mrs. Shelton Harrell, at White Hat, Thursday night.

Mrs. J. H. Harrell spent Thursday with Mr. and Mrs. Odell Cartwright on the Hertford Highway.

Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Wood and Mrs. Mary A. Keaton spent Monday in Richmond, Va., with Mr. and Mrs. Seth Spivey.

Mr. and Mrs. Moody Harrell and Carolyn Dean Harrell spent Thursday with Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Mercer, at Pasquotank.

Mr. and Mrs. Mason Sawyer and family were week-end guests of Mr. and Mrs. D. M. Cartwright.

Mrs. Jesse Harrell, Mrs. Ralph Harrell and Miss Eunice Harrell visited Mrs. Nellie Sumner and others at Hurdletown on Friday afternoon.

## BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr. and Mrs. Shelton Harrell, of White Hat, announce the birth of a son on Wednesday morning. Mother and baby are getting along nicely.

DON'T BOTHER ABOUT WRITING LONG LETTERS  
 WHEN THE BOY OR GIRL GOES  
 AWAY TO SCHOOL

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 9 Months—\$1.00

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