

Getting Married: 2



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Getting Married I was written in 1884, when Strindberg was thirty-five.-He was already the author of a considerable body of work, plays, prose, and poetry, much of it heartily disliked by many of his fellow-countrymen. To escape from their recriminations he had taken refuge in Switzerland, where he was living with his wife and family at Ouchy, near Lausanne. He and his wife, Siri von Essen, had been more or less happy together for seven years, and had three children, two girls and a baby boy. Siri had been married before, but had left her first husband, Baron

Wrangel, and married Strindberg partly because she hoped that through him she would be able to achieve her ambition to become an actress, a profession impossible for the wife of an officer. Her hopes had only been partially realized, as her talent was small, and while Strindberg was happy and contented in Switzerland, Siri was longing to return to Sweden to continue her career.

Strindberg wrote *Getting Married I* (that is the preface, the interview, and twelve stories) at breakneck speed between 25 May and 4 July. While working on it he was in a state of creative frenzy.

"I'm writing like a sleep-walker, and must not be awakened, for then I might come to a standstill in the middle of it", he wrote to Karl Otto Bonnier, his publisher's son, on 12 June (B. IV, p. 210).

This does not mean that the stories were a new idea. Strindberg had been planning them for several years, and may even have done some preparatory work on them. In his letters of 1880-81 he several times mentions a prospective work which may have been the germ of *Getting Married I*. But other things intervened, and in 1882 he was fully occupied with no less than five works, including *The New State* (*Det Nya Riket*, SS. 10), and *The Swedish People* (*Svenska folket* trouble.

S. 7-8), both of which got him into

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