

"A chaffinch. He knows you are a Yankee and is telling you to go home."

Ethan laughed. "There's no doubt about that—ill mannered little Britisher!"

For a moment they stood watching him and listening to what he had to say. He said it in a cheery voice, in an off hand, jolly way, and it was more like a laugh than a song. But he studied this man and woman first with one eye then the other, and seemed to sing because he couldn't help it. He gave the impression of one appointed by himself—and possibly other birds in the garden—to order trespassers away.

"An officious, impudent little snob!" said Ethan, "but how merry and optimistic. Why don't we have him in America?"

"America!" Octavia repeated the word with ostentatious contempt. "He is far too wise! But tell me, speaking of birds, are American husbands expensive?"

"Expensive? You mean, are they extravagant?"

"No. I mean, are they expensive."

"To purchase?"

"Yes, to purchase."

"American husbands are dearer than American wives. You can buy an American heiress with any old title."

"But if one wished to buy an American husband of fairly good quality what would be the price?"

Ethan closed his eyes in solemn thought. "Much