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THE LOST RING. A Christmas Story.

WHAT a lovely star, Elsie. The yellow immortelles in it make it look like a real star hanging there in the shadow of the choir," said Laura Winthrop, who was weaving a long garland of evergreen. It was Christmas Eve, and the young people of the parish were decorating the church, while the choir was rehearsing Christmas music.

Tom went away with an anxious mind. He arrived in the city only yesterday, and had not yet found an opportunity to speak to Elsie alone, though he called at her mother's house that morning. But he had experienced a great satisfaction to find the ring still upon her finger, and then something in her manner assured him that she was not at least wholly indifferent to his humble self.

for him in church on Christmas morning, but he was not there. She looked for him every day for a week, but he did not come. Then she heard that he had left town, that he had become a partner in the law-firm in Philadelphia to which his brother belonged, and did not think of visiting Bralton again for some time.

assist in decorating the church for Christmas. The color rose in his cheek in spite of himself, however, and quickly Laura Winthrop perceived it. "Elsie," said she, "Why, haven't you heard? When Shaw & Street's banking-house failed, her mother and she lost all their fortune. They do not come here to church any more. They have moved into a little house on Mayfield Street, just on the outskirts of the city, you know, and Elsie gives musical lessons as a means of support."

this eloquence, Elsie's mother appeared on the scene. He did not leave the house until nearly midnight, and before he left, though the three conversed on indifferent subjects, a sort of understanding existed between him and his lady-love. On Christmas morning he placed another ring on Elsie's finger, which meant more than did the ruby-eyed serpent, which had caused so much sorrow for both. Then they walked to church together. It was a bright, frosty morning. Bells were ringing choirs chanting even the very sunshine seemed to praise the Lord.