

RODDY, MARIA, AND NED
(AND GEORGIE, TOPSY, JANEY, AND GABRIEL):
AN ENTANGLEMENT

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The research for this essay was originally intended to account for a group of paintings, homogenous in style and content, several of them painted on same-size canvasses, and unlike the other productions of the artist who made them. When I learned that one of them was painted from a known model, I found myself drawn, half-reluctantly, into the private lives of the Pre-Raphaelites. My title deliberately echoes those of such films as *Bob and Carol and Ted and Alice* and *Rita, Sue and Bob Too* which seek to disentangle the adulterous networks of their eponymous characters. The complicated relationships of Maria Zambaco, her lover Edward Burne-Jones, his wife Georgiana, her admirer William Morris, his wife Jane, and her lover Dante Gabriel Rossetti have already been amply documented, but I am introducing an extra character to the otherwise familiar *dramatis personae*.

The following unsympathetic summary of Maria Zambaco's romantic affairs comes from the diary of Jeanette Marshall (whose father was John Marshall, doctor to many members of the circle):

I hear that Mme. Z. after carrying on with Burne-Jones, tired of him (wh. I don't wonder at), and went off with another admirer. Burne fell deathly sick, but recovered. Mr. Z. did not divorce his wife, but refused to have anything more to do with her-- Quite right! Why Mrs. Jones did not show old Jones the door, I don't know. In time Mme. Z. returned to her mother. I suppose No. 2 may have tired of her (also very natural!). (Attwood, 32; and see Shonfield, 109-21)

Rossetti revealed more in a letter (dated 9 October 1879) to Jane Morris:

Marie S. [Marie Stillman, née Spartali, of whom more later] told me that Mary Z. and her little pseudo-husband do nothing but work awfully hard at painting and produce Ned Joneses without number. They seem however to be very dejected, and the account rather recalled the end of M. de [illegible] (if you ever read that horrid book) where the 2 lovers who have made all sorts of mistakes for each other's sake end by living in one