



Text Version of Audio Story: Edward

She grew up on the wrong side of the tracks, so to speak.

Her father died from tuberculosis when she was just an infant.

She did not have the good fortune to live in a big house and know the luxuries that so many of her friends took for granted.

But as she matured, she would find herself in the circle of affluent living. She would become a world traveler. Not a stunningly beautiful woman, but to her credit, she was very well built. She had a flawless complexion, and her personality was genuine, charming and engaging.

She met Edward at a party. There were no sparks. No initial attraction. She didn't even seem to catch his eye — and it wouldn't have made much difference if she had. No matter who she was today, she could never live down her upbringing *on the other side of the tracks*.

Edward, on the other hand, came from one of the most affluent families in the world. It was foolish to believe that these two could ever mix.

But as time went on, mix they did. Edward came to know, understand and fall in love with this young woman — all much to the chagrin of his family.

“What is he doing?” they said. *“Our Edward taking up with the likes of her? Why, it’s unthinkable! Shameful! This will be frowned upon by everyone.”*

Edward was handsome, and although he may have come from a rich family, he was no slouch. As a 14-year-old boy, he had enlisted in the First World War.

Women were crazy about him. He had his pick of the ladies, but he didn't want any other woman. He was so madly, passionately in love with this young woman from Maryland — the young woman who didn't even turn his head at first.

His family disapproved of her so greatly and had so much money and power that they were successful in keeping her away from him.

In January of 1936, all was about to change. Edward's father died.

The grip that Edward's father had over him was now relinquished by death, but there was still the rest of the family. Edward's soul was tormented. Loyalty to his family or loyalty to the woman he loved. It seems so unfair to have to choose. He anguished over the decision. It tore him apart inside. But once he made his mind up, there was no turning back.

Finally, on December 10, 1936, he announced his decision.

He said, "After long and anxious consideration, I have determined to renounce my throne to which I succeeded on the death of my father, and I am communicating this, my final and irrevocable decision. Realize, as I do, the gravity of this step, I can only hope that I shall have the understanding of my people in the decision I have taken and the reasons which lead me to make it. I will not enter now into my private feelings, but I would beg that it should be remembered that the burden, which constantly rests upon the shoulders of a sovereign, is so heavy, that it can only be borne in circumstances different from those in which I now find myself."

With those words, King Edward VIII of England abdicated the throne to marry a commoner. His brother George would ascend to the throne. Edward would be given the title, Duke of York.

Regardless of his once position as King and his title as Duke, he and his wife would be shunned and sent into exile to live out their years. His majesty and the girl from the wrong side of the tracks would remain madly, passionately in love for the rest of their lives.

Edward died in 1972. His wife, Wallis, would die in 1986.

I'm the American Storyteller.