

The Lady of the Mount

By FREDERIC S. ISNAM

AUTHOR OF "THE STROLLERS UNDER THE ROSE" ETC.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY RAY WALTERS

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SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I—Countess Elise, daughter of the Governor of the Mount, has chance encounter with a peasant boy.

CHAPTER II—The "Mount," a small rock-bound island, stood in a vast bay on the northwestern coast of France, and during the time of Louis XVI was a government stronghold. Develops that the peasant boy was the son of Selgneur Desaurac, nobleman.

CHAPTER III—Young Desaurac determines to secure an education and become a gentleman; sees the governor's daughter depart for Paris.

CHAPTER IV—Lady Elise returns after seven years' schooling, and entertains many nobles.

CHAPTER V—Her Ladyship dances with a strange fisherman, and a call to arms is made in an effort to capture a mysterious Le Selgneur Nois.

CHAPTER VI—Black Selgneur returns, and takes Lady Elise to his retreat.

CHAPTER VII—Sanches, the Selgneur's servant, is arrested and brought before the governor.

CHAPTER VIII—Lady Elise has Sanches set free.

CHAPTER IX—Selgneur and a priest at the "Cockles."

CHAPTER X—Sanches tells Desaurac that Lady Elise betrayed him, but is not believed. The Selgneur plans to release the prisoners at the Mount.

CHAPTER XI—Lady Elise pleads with her father to spare the lives of condemned prisoners.

CHAPTER XII—Disguised as a peasant Lady Elise mingles with the people and hears some startling facts.

CHAPTER XIII—A mysterious Mountebank starts a riot and is arrested.

CHAPTER XIV—The Mountebank is locked up after making close observations of the crowd, and is afterwards summoned before the governor's daughter.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Mountebank and My Lady.

"The governor's daughter!" Had the light been stronger they must have seen the start the mountebank gave. "Impossible!"

"Eh? What?" Surprised in turn, the officer gazed at him. "You dare—out with him!" To the soldiers.

But in a moment had the mountebank recovered his old demeanor, and, without waiting for the troopers to obey the commandant's order, walked voluntarily toward the door and into the passage.

"Our supper! Our supper!" A number of the prisoners, crowding forward, began once more to call lustily, when again was the disk-studded woodwork swung unceremoniously to, cutting short the sound of their lamentations.

"Dog!" Malevolently the dwarf gazed back. "To want to gorge themselves on a holy day!"

"Pious Jacques!" murmured the commandant. "But I always said you made a model landlord!"

"When not interfered with!" grumbled the other.

"At any rate he doesn't seem to appreciate his good fortune," with a glance at the mountebank.

"No," jeering. "A gallant cavalier to step blithely at a great lady's command! Your Ladyship overwhelms me!" bowing grotesquely. "Your Ladyship's condescension—"

"Why, then, need you take me?" interposed the mountebank quickly. "Can you not tell her ladyship I am not fit to appear in her presence—an unwholesome clown—"

"Bah! I've already done that," answered the commandant.

"But how came her ladyship to know of me—here?"

"How indeed!"

"And what does she want of me?"

"That," roughly, "you will find out!" and stepped down the hall, followed by the soldiers, mountebank and dwarf, the last of whom took leave of them at the door.

Clear was the night; the stars, like liquid drops about to fall, careened with silvery rays the granite pines. In contrast to the noisome atmosphere of the prison, faint perfumes, borne from some flowery slope of the distant shore, swept languorously in and out the open aisles and passages of the Mount. In such an hour that upper region seemed to belong entirely to the sky; to partake of its wondrous stillness; to share its mysteries and its secrets. Like intruders, penetrating an enchanted spot, now they trod soft shadows; then, clangorous, beat beneath foot delicate laceworks of light.

"Here we are!" The officer stopped. At the same time upon a nearby balcony a nightingale began to sing, tentatively, as if trying the scope and quality of its voice. "You are to go in!" he announced abruptly.

"Such a fine palace! I—I would rather not!" muttered the fellow, as they crossed an outer threshold and proceeded to mount some polished stairs.

"Stubborn dolt. Now in you march," pausing before a door. "But, hark you! I and my men remain without. So, mind your behavior, or—"

A look from the commandant completed the sentence.

Alone, in an apartment of the palace, some moments later, the mountebank's demeanor underwent a quick change; he glanced hastily toward the

door the commandant had closed in leaving, and then, with sudden brightening gaze, around him, as if making note of every detail of his surroundings. Set with columns of warmed marble, relieved with ornate carvings and designs, the spacious chamber presented an appearance at once graceful and charming. Nor



"But My Livelihood!"

were its furnishings at variance with its architectural elegance; on every hand soft colors met the eye, in rugs of ancient pattern, in tapestries, subdued; in the upholstery of Breton oak. A dominating note was in the center of the room, where a great bunch of roses opened wide their petals.

But bright, however, the clown permitted himself to survey, or study, these details of refinement and luxury; the slight eager interest that had shone from the dark eyes gave way to an expression, lack-luster and stupid; his countenance once more resumed its blank, stolid aspect. As if unconsciously of the anomalous figure he presented, mechanically had he seated himself; was gazing down, when through a doorway, opposite the one by which the commandant had left, a slender form appeared. Under the heavy, whitened lids a slight movement of the clown's eyes alone betrayed he was aware of that new presence. A moment the girl stood there, her glance resting on the grotesque, bent figure before her; then with a quizzical lift of the delicate brows she entered.

"You believe, no doubt, in making yourself at home?"

Crossing to the table, once more she stopped, her figure, sheathed in a gown of brocade of rose, glowed bright and distinct in contrast to the faint, var-colored tints of ancient embroideries on the wall. Above, the light threw a shimmer on the deep-burnished gold of her hair; the sweeping lashes yel the half-disadorned, half-embroidered look in her brown eyes.

"Or, perhaps, you are one of those who think the peasants will some day sit, while the lords and ladies stand?"

"I don't know," he managed to answer, but got up, only to appear more awkward.

"You do not seem to know very much, indeed," she returned, her tone changing to one of cold severity. "Not enough, perhaps, to perceive the mischief you may cause! That play of yours, which I witnessed today—"

"You! Today? Your Ladyship was—"

"Yes," hesitatingly, "I was there! And heard and saw the effect it had on the people; how it stirred all their base, passionate! But you, of course, could not know—or care, thinking only of the soul—that, instead of teaching a lesson, the piece would only move them to anger, or resentment."

"I—your Ladyship—great lords have commended the play—"

"Great lords!" she began, but stopped; regarded her listener and shrugged her shoulders.

A few moments silence lasted, the fellow apparently not knowing what to say, or, he was expected to say anything, while, for her part, the girl no longer looked at him, but at the flowers, taking one, which she turned in her fingers.

"Your Ladyship would command me—"

"To give the play no more!"

"But—"

"In which event you shall be suffered to go free tomorrow."

"But my livelihood! What shall I do, if I am forbidden to earn—"

She gave him a colder look. "I have spoken to the commandant; told him

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what I had seen, and that I did not think you intended to make trouble. Your case will, therefore, not be reported to his Excellency. Only," with a warning flash, "if you are again caught giving the play, you must expect to receive your deserts."

"Of course! If your Ladyship commands!" dejectedly.

"I do! But, as an offset to the copers you might otherwise receive, I will give you a sum of money sufficient to compensate you."

"Your Ladyship is so generous!" He made an uncouth gesture of gratitude and covetousness. "May I ask your Ladyship how much—"

"How much?" scornfully. "But I suppose—"

The words died away; her glance fell; lingered on the hand he had extended. Muscular, shapely, it seemed not adapted to the servile gesture; was most unlike the hand of clod or clown. Moreover, it was marked with a number of wounds, half-healed, which caught and held her look.

"Of course, I am so poor, your Ladyship—"

he began, in yet more abject tone, but stopped, attracted in turn by the direction of her gaze; then, meeting it, quickly withdrew the hand and thrust it into his pocket. Not in time, however, to prevent a startled light, a swift gleam of recollection from springing into her eyes! The very movement itself—ironically enough—was not without precedent.

"You!" She recoiled from him. "The Black—"

As a man who realizes he has betrayed himself, he bit his lips; but attempted no further subterfuge. The shaming figure straightened; the dull eyes grew steady; the bold self-possession she remembered well on another occasion again marked his bearing.

"Your Ladyship has discerning eyes," he remarked quietly, but as he spoke glanced and moved a little toward the window.

My lady stood as if dazed. He, the Black Selgneur, there, in the palace! Mechanically she raised her hand to her breast; she was very pale. On the balcony the nightingale, grown confident, burst into a flood of variations; a thousand trills and full-throated notes filled the room.

"I understand now," at length she found voice, "why that fancy came to me below, when I was listening to the play on the platform. But why have you come—to the very Mount itself?" Her voice trembled a little. "You! On the beach the people tried to stop you—"

"You saw that, too?"

"And you knew the play would make trouble! You wanted it to," quickly. "For what purpose? To get into the upper part of the Mount? To have them arrest—bring you here?" She looked at him with sudden terror. "My father! Was it to—"

A low, distant rapping at the door she had entered, interrupted them. She started and looked fearfully around. At the same time the mountebank stepped back to the side of a great bronze in front of the balcony, where, standing in the shadow, he was screened.

"Eh!" a voice called out.

The flower the girl had been holding fell to the floor.

"My—"

opened and the Governor stood on the threshold.

(To be Continued.)

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DEMOCRACY MUST BE A WORTHY INSTRUMENT

People Trust It, Says Woodrow Wilson, and It Must Make Good.

Sea Girt, N. J.—Woodrow Wilson at the "Little White House" at Sea Girt is daily called upon to demonstrate his ability as a ready speaker.

There is not a day passes but what he meets various delegations who call to assure him of their support.

In speaking of political machines to the Brooklyn Democratic Club Governor Wilson said: "Machines are bad, but an organization may be very essential. For instance, I have been surrounded by an organization here in New Jersey while doing my best work. A machine uses its political opportunities for the selfish ends of its members. No members of our organization would ever think of doing that. Public opinion in New Jersey has drawn the distinction. It has killed the machines, and it is going to keep the organization going."

"It seems to me that we are standing in the presence of something higher than allegiance to the Democratic party. The country has been disappointed in the Republican party, and it is turning to the Democratic party. That party is willing to show the way toward those things which must be realized."

"Some gentlemen seem to find it easy to make personalities out of politics, but it seems to me that whenever that is done politics is debased."

"Men who are in search of reform are now resorting to the Democratic party, because, for my own part, I do not know where else they will turn to expect the results. There is no discounting the strength and serviceability of a united party, and the splendid part is that the Democratic party is united."

"Speaking seriously, nothing affords me more genuine pleasure than to receive such greetings from men in Jersey who have at least tested my qualities. Because you have known me at close range and if you will be kind enough to vouch for me perhaps the rest of the country will be credulous of your report."

"I have spent a great deal of time since I became governor of New Jersey defending your character. It was supposed in the old days, when the board of guardians was in charge of the state, that you were all of you disposed to give the most monopolistic trusts of the country a great ringing welcome in New Jersey."

"New Jersey was known as the mother of trusts—a very troublesome and questionable family—and I had to spend my time outside New Jersey assuring the people of the Union that it had not been the fault or the disposition of the people of New Jersey that there were certain gentlemen who had undertaken to carry the Republican party in their pockets and to administer independently of the rank and file of Republicans in the state."

"New Jersey is progressive, but the United States is progressive, and we have here merely a delightful sample of the people of the United States."

"Now, these people are not bent on destroying anything, but they are bent on setting everything in order; they are bent upon justice; they are bent upon seeing to it that the people in general are partners of the government, as I was trying to show the other day. And the Democratic party is now placed under a peculiar responsibility. It has to prove that it is the worthy instrument of that zeal on the part of the people of the United States. If it does not prove it now it will never be given another chance to prove it. No party that proves unfaithful to that ideal will ever again be trusted by the people of America. And therefore we are standing at a turning point in our politics. We must make good or go out of business. In the vernacular, it is a case of 'put up or shut up,' because words are going to be discounted. Nothing will be honored except the actual carrying out of such programs as sensible men may unite in for the common benefit."

Wilson will make the most accessible president who has ever occupied the White House. He is typically a Democratic man.

Wilson is the best equipped man nominated for the presidency since Lincoln.

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Interesting to Astronomers.

No way has been yet found in which the sun's corona with its unknown gases may be properly studied except during a total eclipse. The wonderful halo that the sun wears is one of the most interesting objects in the heavens to astronomers, and it is important to know all that can be known about these strange lights that shoot out millions of miles beyond the sun.

CIGARETTES ARE BAD FOR WOMEN

Mrs. Woodrow Wilson Has Decided Views on Subject.

A CONFUSION OF NAMES

Wife of Democratic Candidate Gives Out Letter Taking Strong Stand on Smoking Habit.

New York.—For the first time since Woodrow Wilson became the Democratic presidential candidate has Mrs. Wilson appeared. She attended in person her husband's daily conference with reporters, although heretofore she has made special requests that she be not quoted nor written about in the papers.

What Mrs. Wilson wished to have fully understood was that if she becomes the first lady of the land she will not, as has been said in a widely distributed interview, have packages of cigarettes in her personal desk at the White House and indulge in smoking them with her callers.

Through Governor Wilson, Mrs. Wilson asked that publicity be given to a letter she had written to the editor of the State Journal at Columbus, O., repudiating an alleged interview with her in which she defended cigarette smoking for women. The interview had come to her in a letter signed "American Citizen," which said:

"Dear Madam—I can scarcely think of any greater calamity to the young women of the nation than to read such a preachment as your interview offers me. I am a workingman, and I see men lose their jobs almost every day because they are incapacitated for work by the use of the cigarette. If smoking does this for strong men what will it do for girls and women?"

The "interview" was indeed a cordial endorsement of the woman smoker. Here are some of its assuring phrases, all credited to Mrs. Wilson:

"A woman writer for a syndicate of Sunday newspapers asked Mrs. Woodrow Wilson if she agreed with Gertrude Atherton's opinion of the smoking of cigarettes by women. She smilingly exhibited three cigarette boxes piled in the corner of her desk, all but empty.

"Why shouldn't a woman smoke if she enjoys it?" she queried.

"Why hasn't she just as much right to a cigarette as a man? Certainly I agree with Mrs. Atherton that any existing prejudice against women smoking is to the last silly and absurd."

"Smoking cigarettes is a question of manners, not morals. It promotes good fellowship."

"Some women feel that a cigarette calms their nerves and helps their brains into working order. Personally smoking diffuses my thoughts instead of concentrating them. I enjoy it as I enjoy after dinner coffee. Both are pleasant ways of ending and finishing off; both add to conviviality and good fellowship."

The editor of the Ohio State Journal, it was clear, had been much incensed at the apologies for the cigarette habit among women attributed to Mrs. Wilson, as he wrote on Aug. 10 an editorial in which he called for the defeat of Governor Wilson or a repudiation from his wife. If there was no mistake about it, he wrote, "Mrs. Woodrow Wilson shouldn't be mistress of the White House."

If the Ohio editor was emphatic: Mrs. Wilson was certainly not less so. After the reporters had said they would gladly publish her letter to the Ohio editor she asked for an hour's time in which to write one. This was what she prepared:

"Dear Sir—I have just received a copy of the Journal with your editorial entitled 'Smoking Women,' and I beg leave to deny indignantly the statement that I approve of women smoking cigarettes. The interview upon which your editorial was based is a pure invention. I intensely dislike the cigarette smoking habit for women—in fact, so strong is my feeling on the subject that my real danger lies in being unjust and unkind in my judgment of those who differ with me in this respect."

"But certainly no woman in our household ever has or ever will smoke, quite apart from the bad taste of it, I believe with you that it has an extremely injurious effect on the nerves."

"ELLEN A. WILSON."
("Mrs. Woodrow Wilson.")

Governor Wilson, in approving the letter sent out by Mrs. Wilson, offered what he thought might prove an explanation for the interview.

"I do not think it was maliciously invented," he said. "There is a rather well known writer who signs herself Mrs. Wilson Woodrow, and she no doubt has been confused with Mrs. Wilson."

Mrs. Wilson Woodrow was formerly married to a relative of Governor Wilson, and it is understood that her views on the matter of women who smoke are different from those held in the household of the Democratic candidate.

It is reported that papers which are supporting the bull moose have ordered extra fonts of "Ts." And they will be needed when Teddy gets to talking.

Wonder how the colonel likes being an outcast?

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