

McCLURE'S

EDITED BY HERBERT KAUFMAN

MAY
1920

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IN THIS NUMBER

Eleanor Nallowell Abbe
Booth Tarkington
Vicente Blasco Ibañe
Ella Wheeler Wilcox
Harvey O'Higgins
George Lederer
George Jean Nathan
James Branch Cabell

25¢



McCLURE'S

Volume 52
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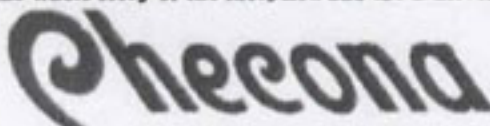
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Your Child's Education
 The future of your boy or girl depends very largely on the school you select for him. McClure's School Bureau will put you in touch with schools and colleges equipped to develop the fullest moral, mental and physical capacities of your son and daughter.

different sort. One night, while one of his musical comedies was playing in Baltimore, Lederer, standing in the lobby of the theatre, observed a remarkably beautiful young girl pass into the auditorium with her escort. She was so precisely the beauty-type for which he was constantly seeking that he set out at once to find out who she was. In the back aisle of the theatre he encountered the house-manager. Indicating the superb one, he asked the latter if he had ever seen her before and, if so, what her name was. That worthy replied that he had never seen her and hadn't the faintest idea who she might be. An usher, a boy of about sixteen or seventeen, standing close by overheard the conversation.

"I KNOW who that corker is, Mr. Lederer," he said. "You do?" returned Lederer, not without some surprise. "Well, who is she?"

"She's my sister," replied the lad.

The usher was Wilmer Bentley who, after Lederer had made his sister Irene famous, became an actor in one of her companies.

Who was the prettiest girl of all those days of surpassingly pretty girlhood? What is Lederer's own vote?

I asked him.

"There were many, many pretty ones, but" — and he looked cautiously in the direction of the door as if to make sure no one was listening — "but I'll tell you a secret. I never, in all my experience of those days, ever saw one absolutely and entirely pretty girl!"

Egad, sir, and here was intriguing news! What, Vashti Earle not a pea-chick of the first carat! Elsie Ferguson not a *persicum* of the highest blush! Christine Blessing not a plum of the true vintage! It was unthinkable. I contrived to gasp out a *why*.

"There was something about every one of the girls that kept them from being entirely pretty," confided our connoisseur. "Take Elsie Ferguson, for example. She had a very pretty face, but her pretty face was spoiled by her utter lack of expression. Her expression was always as listless as the lake in Central Park. I never knew a girl with so 'dead' a look."

I was horrified. Here was a sour sacrilege.

"But the Mlle. Vashti!" I interjected.

"An eye-massaging damsel, I grant you," replied

our connoisseur. "Truly, an eye-massaging damsel," he repeated. "But, to my mind, one thing kept her, too, from being completely lovely. She had a funny walk. If she stood still, she was what we may describe as a humdinger. But the moment she got in motion — presto! — the illusion was gone. That's why I always kept her standing still on the stage. I never let her walk more than three paces in any single act. And it was that, my friend, that fooled you."

"Mona Sydney," he went on, "was too tall. Ruby Reid was too fat. Frances Belmont was much too tall. Marie George's hair was just a shade 'off' to harmonize with her delicate complexion. Edna May, as I have already said, was too stupid to be completely pretty, though her eyes tricked everybody into imagining that she was pretty. Irene Bentley was not tall enough: her type of beauty demanded for perfection at least two extra inches. Mabelle Gilman lacked repose: she always gave one the impression that she was working too hard. I'll tell you a story some day to illustrate how she thus spoiled the English audiences' belief in her good looks. Virginia Earle was a trifle too plump. And so with all the rest of them. There was in each case one thing wrong with them."

I smiled a smile of superior and complacent wisdom. I had something, thought I, up my sleeve.

"Why are you smiling?" our connoisseur bade of me.

"What" — and I slowly turned my *coup* round and round in my mouth, as if presently to use it in dismaying manner through a bean-shooter — "what," I repeated, "about Lillian Russell in those days?"

I sat back and waited. Surely, I had fetched our Lederer at last. There was one he had overlooked in his too comprehensive sweep!

But alas for Bottom and his conceit. It was our Lederer's turn to display the smile of superior and complacent wisdom.

"Lillian was a beauty — in the main," he qualified. "But she had ugly arms. No one knew this better than she did; she was a clever woman. That's the reason she always wore long sleeves."

According to George Lederer the "run" of a woman's beauty is for ten years at most. "The season of prettiness," he expresses it, "lasts only ten years." Eighteen to twenty-eight are the best pretty years. "I have

seen them dandelions at eighteen," he says, "and thistles at twenty-eight and one month."

"But what of so-called personality?" I asked.

"But we were speaking of physical beauty," he reminded me.

"But what of so-called personality?" I persisted. And I again felt into my pocket for the possibly necessary bribe, my choice ten-cent cigarro.

"That's another matter. Russell had it and it lifted her over when her youth and youthful prettiness left her. So, too, did Elsie Ferguson. Her very devastating 'coldness' was in itself a contribution to her individuality: the two were indistinguishable: one was the other. Lotta Faust and Edna Wallace had it and lovely Irene Bentley didn't. There were many who lacked it — and they were promptly forgotten once the oncoming years robbed them of their early prettiness. Jeannette Bageard was thus quickly forgotten once youth departed from her. So were Jane English, and Nina Randall, and Irene Bishop, and Geraldine Fair, and Helen Lord, and many of the others I have named. But the personality, as we call it, of Madge Lessing has kept her theatrically alive even at this late day. So, also, has the so-called personality of Christie MacDonald. So, too, through her life, did the vivid personality of little Della Fox."

"What is this so-called personality, then?" I asked, bromidically.

"PERSONALITY" — and Lederer fixed my choice ten-cent cigarro with a covetous eye — "personality is the triumph of nothing over something."

"That," I remarked, "sounds very much like the kind of nonsense I write."

"True enough," he retorted; "yet, strangely enough it is a fact. Personality may be merely two sad eyes inserted into what is otherwise a large, vapid pumpkin pie. It may be a smile. It may be an exaggerated animal liveliness — like Eva Tanguay's 'personality,' for instance. Or, paradoxically, personality may be a complete absence of personality — as in the case of Pauline Chase. But the best of all personalities, I believe, the most durable and the most successful is the 'sad' personality. The girl who looks 'sad' to nine out of ten has a stock in [Continued on page 54]

The Hour of Freydis

Here is Medieval Romance Woven Into a Weird Tapestry

by James Branch Cabell

Illustration by Arthur E. Becher

THEY of Poictesme narrate that in the old days Count Manuel made three earthen images, because of the urgency of his dream, and that he got small comfort from his images. They tell how he carried these images in an osier basket to Hoel the Deep-Minded.

King Hoel looked at the images, prodded them with a shriveled forefinger, and cleared his throat; and then said nothing, because, after all, Dom Manuel was Count of Poictesme.

"What is needed?" said Manuel.

"They are not true to life," replied Hoel.

"Then who can give life to my images?"

King Hoel pushed back his second best crown, wherein was set the Fire-bird's feather, and he scratched his forehead. He said: "There is a power over all earthen images, and a queen whose will is neither to loose nor to bind." Hoel turned toward a thick book, wherein was magic. "Yes, queen is the same as *owen*. Therefore, Queen Freydis of Audela might help you."

"Then I will go to Freydis, that woman of strange deeds."

"Nobody can go to Freydis uninvited. Still, it can be managed that Freydis will come to you when the moon is void and powerless, and when this and that has been arranged."

Thereafter Hoel the Deep-Minded told Count Manuel what was requisite. "So you will need such and such things," says King Hoel: "but, above all, do not forget the ointment."

Count Manuel went forthwith into Morven, and beside the ten-colored stone, whereon men had sacrificed to Vel-Tyno in time's youth, he builded an enclosure of peeled willow wands, and spread butter upon them, and tied them with knots of yellow ribbon, as Hoel had directed. Manuel arranged all matters within the enclosure as Hoel had directed. Then Manuel waited, regarding the full moon. In a while he saw the shadowings on the moon's radiance begin to waver and move; later they passed from the moon's face like little clouds,

and the moon was naked of markings. Thus Manuel knew that the Moon-Children had gone to the well from which once a month they fetch water, and that for an hour the moon would be void and powerless. With this and that ceremony Count Manuel kindled such a fire upon the old altar of Vel-Tyno as Hoel had directed.

When the fire was the height of a warrior, and queer things were happening to this side and to that side, Count Manuel spoke the ordered words: and the flames' colors were altered, so that green shimmerings showed in the fire, as though salt were burning there.

This greenness shifted and writhed and increased in the heart of the fire, and out of the fire oozed a green serpent, the body of which was well-nigh as thick as a man's body. This portent came toward Count Manuel horribly. He grasped the monster's throat, and to the touch its scales were like very cold glass.

THE great snake shifted so resistlessly that Manuel was forced back toward the fire and toward a doom more dreadful than burning; and the firelight was in the snake's contemptuous wise eyes. Manuel was of stalwart person, but his strength availed him nothing until he began to recite aloud, as Hoel had directed, the multiplication tables: Freydis cannot withstand mathematics. So when Manuel had come to two times eleven the tall fire guttered as though it bended under the passing of a strong wind; then the flames burned high, and Manuel saw that he was grasping the throat of a monstrous pig. It was a black pig, caked with dried curds of the Milky Way; its flesh was chill to the touch, like dead flesh; and it had long tusks, which possessed life of their own, and groped and writhed toward Manuel like fat white worms.

Then Manuel said, as Hoel had directed: "Solomon's provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour, and threescore measures of meal, ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and a hundred sheep,

beside harts, and roebucks, and fallowdeer, and fatted fowl. But Elijah the Tishbite was fed by ravens that brought him bread and flesh."

Again the tall flames guttered. Now Manuel was grasping a thick heatless slab of crystal, like a mirror, wherein he saw himself quite clearly. Just as he really was he saw Count Manuel, housed in a little wet dirt with old inveterate stars adrift about him everywhither, and Manuel was frightened.

So Manuel said: "The elephant is the largest of all animals, and in intelligence approaches the nearest to man. Its nostril is elongated, and answers to the purpose of a hand. Its toes are undivided, and it lives two hundred years. Africa breeds elephants, but India produces the largest."

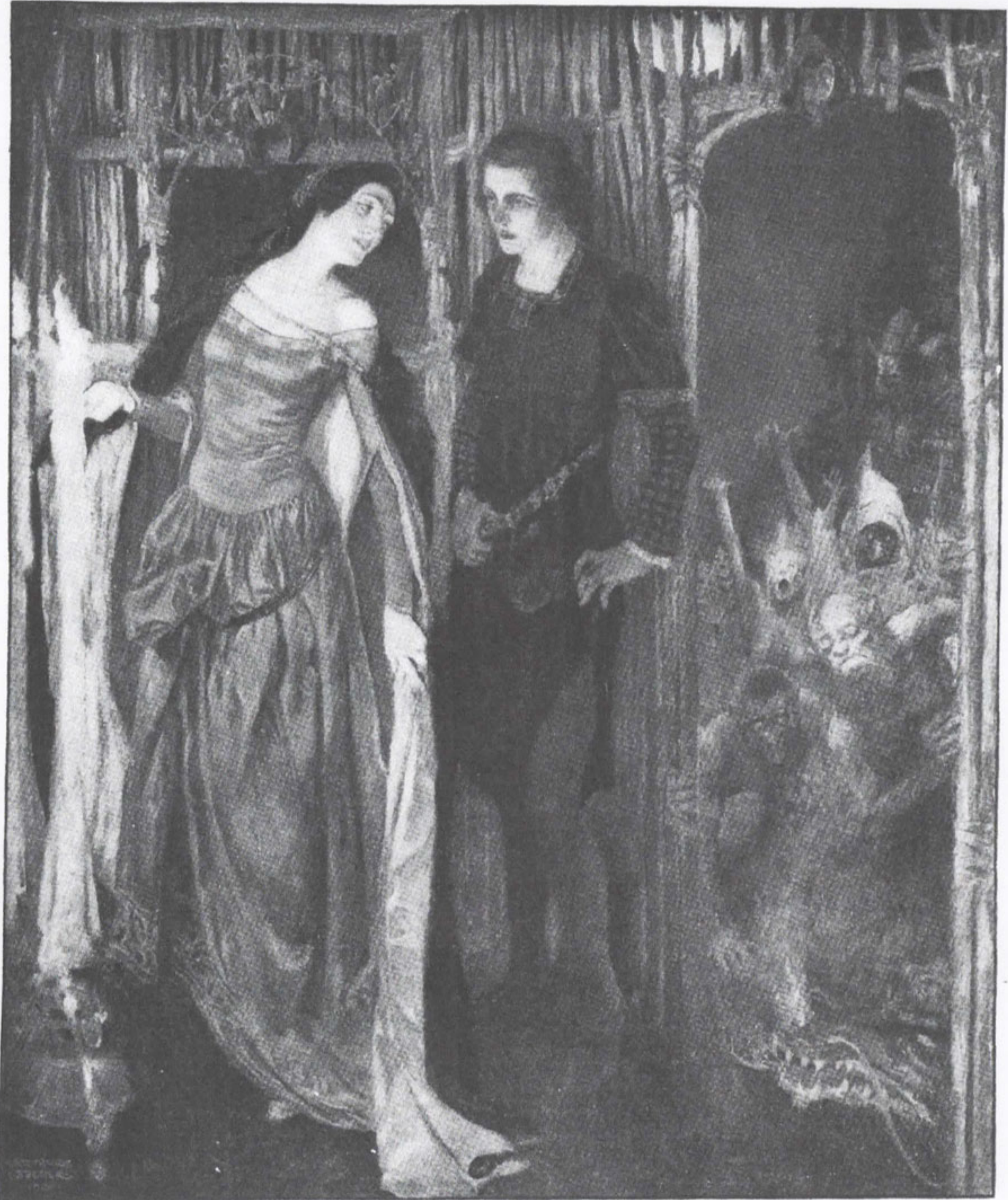
The mirror now had melted into a dark warm fluid which oozed between his fingers, dripping to the ground. But Manuel held tightly to what remained between his palms, and he felt that in the fluid there was struggling something small and soft and living, as though he held a tiny minnow.

Said Manuel: "A straight line is the shortest distance between two points."

Of a sudden the fire became an ordinary fire, and the witches of Amneran screamed, and Morven was emptied of sorcery, and Count Manuel was grasping the warm soft throat of a woman. Instantly he had her within the enclosure of peeled willow wands that had been spread with butter and tied with knots of yellow ribbon, because into such an enclosure the power and the dominion of Freydis may never enter.

So by the light of the seven candles Dom Manuel saw Queen Freydis in her own shape and in the appearance which she wears in her own country. To Manuel it seemed that all his living until this had been but a drugged prelude to the moment wherein he stood face to face with Freydis, the high Queen of Audela.

Freydis showed now as the most lovely of woman-kind. She had black plaited hair, and folds of crimson silk were over her white flesh, and over her shoulders



"You were in my power," said Manuel. "Now I destroy that power. All your terrors are free to enter. I love you with such mortal love as values nothing else beside its desire, and you care nothing for me"

was a black cloak embroidered with little gold stars and ink-horns, and she wore sandals of gilded bronze. But in her face was such loveliness as may not be told.

Now Freydis went from one side of the place to the other, and saw the magics that protected the enclosure. "Certainly, you have me fast," the high queen said. "What is it you want of me?"

Manuel showed her the three pitiable images which he had made, set there arow. "I need your aid with these."

Freydis looked at the poor toys. Freydis smiled cruelly. "They are very painstakingly made. What more can anybody ask?"

Manuel told her that he needed life for these images.

She laughed. She said that never would she give such aid.

"Very well, then," said Manuel. "I have ready the means to compel you." He showed this lovely woman the instruments of her torture. Already his heart was troubled. He thrust her hand into the cruel vise which was prepared. "Now, sorceress, whom all men dread save me, you shall tell me the Tuya incantation as the reward of my endeavors, or else a little by a little I shall destroy the hand that has wrought so many mischiefs."

Freydis in the light of the seven candles showed pale as milk. She said: "I am frail and human in this place, and have no power beyond the power of every woman and no strength at all. Nevertheless, I will tell you nothing."

Manuel set his hand to the lever, ready to loose destruction. "To tell me what I desire you to tell me will do you no hurt —"

"No," replied Freydis: "but I am not going to take orders from you or any man breathing."

"— And for defying me you will suffer very terribly —"

"Yes," replied Freydis. "And [Continued on page 34]"

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The Hour of Freydis

[Continued from page 15]

much you will care!" she said, reproachfully.

"—Therefore I think that you are acting foolishly."

Freydis said: "You make a human woman of me, and then expect me to act upon reason. It is you who are behaving foolishly."

Count Manuel meditated, for this beyond doubt sounded sensible. His heart was now exceedingly troubled. Queen Freydis now breathed more freely, and began to smile, with the wisdom of women, which is not superhuman, but is ruthless.

"The hand would be quite ruined, too," said Manuel, looking at it more carefully. He touched it. "Your hand, Queen Freydis, whatever mischief it may have executed, is soft as velvet. It is colored like rose-petals, but it smells more sweet than they. No, certainly my images are not worth the ruining of such a hand."

Then Manuel released her, sighing. "My images must wait," says Manuel.

"Why, do you really like my hands?" asked Freydis, regarding them critically.

Manuel said: "Ah, fair sweet enemy, do not mock at me! All is in readiness to compel you to do my will. Had you preserved some ugly shape I would have conquered you. But against the shape which you now wear I cannot contend. Dragons and warlocks and chimeras and such nameless monsters as I now see crowding about this enclosure of buttered willow wands I do not fear at all, but I cannot fight against the appearance which you now wear."

"**W**HY, do you really like my natural appearance?" Freydis said, incredibly surprised. "It is a comfort, of course, to slip into it occasionally, but I had never really thought much about it one way or the other." She went to the great mirror which had been set ready as Hoel directed. "I never liked my hair done this way, either. As for those monsters yonder, they are my people, who are coming out of the fire to rescue me, in some of the forgotten shapes, as spoons and calcars, and other terrors of antiquity. But they cannot get into this enclosure of buttered willow wands, poor dears, on account of Hoel's magickings. How foolish they look, leering and capering and gnashing their teeth, with no superstitious persons anywhere to pay attention to them." Now the queen paused: she coughed delicately. "But you were talking some nonsense or other about my natural appearance not being bad looking. Now most men prefer blondes, and, besides, you are not really listening to me, and that is not polite."

"It is so difficult to talk collectedly," said Manuel, "with your appalling servitors leering and capering and gnashing double sets of teeth all over Morven—"

Freydis, the high queen, went to the doorway through which she might not pass, unless a man lifted her over the threshold, on account of the tontices and the spaks and the horseshoes. She cried, in a high sweet voice: "A penny, a penny; twopenny, a penny and a half, and a halfpenny! Now do you go away, all of you, for Hoel's wisdom is too strong for us. There is no way for you to get into, nor for me to get out of this place of buttered willow wands, until I have deluded and circumvented this pestiferous young mortal. Go down into Bellegarde and spill the blood of peasants, or raise a hailstorm, or amuse yourselves in one way or another. Anyhow, do not take thought for me who am now a human woman; for my adversary is a mortal man, and in that duel never yet has the man conquered."

She turned to Manuel. She said: "Freydis am I, the dread high Queen of Audela. But you embraced my penalties, and made a human woman of me. So do I tread with wraiths, for my lost realm alone is real. Here all is but a restless contention of shadows that pass presently; here all that is visible and all the colors known to men are shadows dimming the true colors, and time and death, the darkest shadow known to men, delude you with false seemings; for all such things as men hold incontestable, because they are apparent to sight and sense, are a weariful drifting of fogs that veil the world which is no longer mine. So in this twilit world of yours do we of Audela appear to be but men and women."

"I would that such women appeared more often," said Manuel.

"Freydis am I, the dread high Queen of Audela, the queen of all that lies beyond this veil of human sight and sense. This veil may not ever be lifted, but very often the veil is pierced, and noting the broken place, men call it fire. Through these torn places men may glimpse the world that is real; and this glimpse dazzles their dimmed eyes and weakling forces, and this glimpse mocks at their lean might. Through these rent places, when the opening is made large enough, a few men here and there, not quite so witless as their fellows, know how to summon us of Audela when for an hour the moon is void and powerless: we come for an old reason: and we come as men and women."

"You do not speak with human voices," Manuel replied, "for your voice is music."

"Freydis am I, the dread high Queen of Audela, and very often, just for the sport's sake, do I and my servitors go secretly among you. As human beings we blunder about your darkened shadow world, bound by the laws of sight and sense, but keeping always in our hearts the secrets of Audela and the secret of our manner of returning thither. Sometimes, too, for the sport's sake, we imprison in earthen images a spark of the true life of Audela: and then you little persons that have no authentic life, but only the flickering of a vexed shadow to sustain you in brief fretfulness, say it is very pretty; and you negligently applaud us as the most trivial of men and women."

"No: we applaud you as the most beautiful," says Manuel.

"Come now, Count Manuel, and do you have done with your silly flatterings, which will never wheedle anything out of me! No, you have trapped Queen Freydis in human flesh. Therefore I must abide in the body of a human woman, and be subject to your whims and to your beautiful big muscles, you think, until I lend a spark of Audela's true life to your ridiculous images. But I will show you better, for I will never give in to you nor to any man breathing."

In silence Count Manuel regarded the delightful shaping and the clear burning colors of this woman's face. He said, in sadness: "The images no longer matter. It is better to leave them as they are."

"That is very foolish talk," Queen Freydis answered, promptly, "for they need my aid if ever any images did. Not that, however, I intend to touch them."

"Indeed, I forbid you to touch them, fair enemy. For were the images made living things in consonance with my desire I would be looking at them always, and not caring for any woman; and no woman anywhere would have the power to move me as your beauty moves me now, and I would not be valuing you the worth of an old onion."

"That is not the truth," says Freydis, angrily, "for the man who is satisfied with his images is as great a fool about women as any other man. And who are you to be forbidding me anything?"

"I would have you remember," said Manuel, very masterfully, "that they are my images, to do with as I wish. Also I would have you remember that, whatever you may pretend to be in Audela, here I am stronger than you."

Now the proud woman laughed. Defiantly she touched the middle image, with formal ancient gestures, and the clay shivered and caught sobbing breath from her touch. The image rose, a living creature that was smaller but far more beautiful than human kind, and it regarded Manuel scornfully. Then it passed limping from the enclosure, and Manuel sighed.

"That is a strong magic," said Manuel: "but I now perceive too late that I fashioned the legs of this image unevenly, and the joy that I have in its life is less than the shame that I take from its limping."

"Such magic is a trifle," Freydis replied, "although it is the only magic I can perform in an enclosure of buttered willow wands. Now, then, you see for yourself that I am not going to take orders from you. So the image, will you or nill you, must limp about in all men's sight, for not more than a few centuries, to be sure, but long enough to prove that I am not going to be dictated to."

"I do not greatly care, O fairest and most

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shrewd of enemies. A half-hour since it seemed to me an important matter to wrest from you this secret of giving life to images. Now I have seen the miracle; I know that it is possible for the man that has your favor to become as a god, creating life, and creating lovelier living beings than any god creates, and beings that live longer, too: and even so, it is not of these things that I am really thinking, but only of your eyes."

"Why, do you like my eyes?" says Freydis—"you, who if once you could make living images would never be caring about any woman any more?"

But Manuel told her wherein her eyes were different from the eyes of any other person and more dangerous: and she listened, willingly enough, for Freydis was now a human woman. Thereafter a grieving and a great trouble of mind came upon Manuel because of the loveliness of Freydis, and he made this complaint:

"**T**HERE is much loss in the world, where men war ceaselessly with sorrow, and time like a strong thief strips all men of all they prize. Yet when the emperor is beaten in battle and his broad lands are lost, he, shrugging, says, 'In the next battle I may conquer.' Thus hope serves as a cordial for every hurt: but for him who has beheld the loveliness of Freydis there is no hope at all.

"For in comparison with that alien clear beauty there is no beauty in this world. He that has beheld the loveliness of Freydis must go henceforward as a hungry person, because of troubling memories: and his fellows deride him enviously. All the world is fretted by his folly, knowing that his faith in the world's might is no longer firm-set, and that he aspires to what is beyond the world's giving. In his heart he belittles the strong stupid lords of earth: and they, being strong, plan vengeance, the while that in a corner he makes images to commemorate what is lost: and so for him who has beheld the loveliness of Freydis there is no hope at all.

"He that has willed to look upon Queen Freydis does not dread to consort with serpent nor with swine: he faces the mirror wherein a man beholds himself without self-deceiving; he views the blood that drips from his soiled hands, and knows that this, too, was needed: yet these enduring purchases but one hour. The hour passes, and therewith passes also Freydis, the high Queen. Only the memory of her hour remains, like a cruel gadfly for which the crazed beholder of Queen Freydis must build a lodging in his images, madly endeavoring to commingle memories with wet mud: and so for him who has beheld the loveliness of Freydis there is no hope at all."

Freydis heard him through considerably. "But I wonder to how many other women you have talked such nonsense about beauty and despair and eternity," said Freydis, "and they very probably blondes! And I wonder how you can expect me to believe you, when you pretend to think me all these fine things, and still keep me penned in this enclosure like an old vicious cow."

"No, that is not the way it is any longer. For now my images and all that life holds and all that is anywhere without this enclosure of buttered willow wands mean nothing to me, and there is no meaning in anything save in the loveliness of Freydis." Dom Manuel went to the door of the enclosure, then to the windows, sweeping away the gilded tonthecs and the shining spaks, and removing from the copper nails the horse shoes that had been cast by Mohammed's mare and Balaam's ass and Pegasus. "You were within my power. Now I destroy that power, and therewith myself. Now is the place unguarded, and all your servitors are free to enter, and all your terrors are untrammled, to be loosed against me, who have no longer anything to dread. For I love you with such mortal love as values nothing else beside its desire, and you care nothing for me."

After a little while of looking she sighed, and said uneasily: "It is the foolish deed of a true lover. And really I do like you, rather. But, Manuel, I do not know what to do next! Never at any time has this thing happened before, so that all my garnered wisdom is of no use whatever. Nobody anywhere has ever dared to snap their fingers at the fell power of Freydis as you are doing, far less to be making eyes at her. And besides, I do not wish to consume you—with lightnings, and to smite you with insanity appears unnecessary."

"I love you," Manuel said, "and your heart is hard, and your beauty is beyond the thinking of man, and your will is neither to loose nor to bind. In a predicament so un-

McCLURE'S for MAY

exampled, how can it matter to me at all whatever you may elect to do?"

"Then certainly I shall not waste any of my fine terrors on you!" said Freydis, with a vexed tossing of her head. "Nor have I any more time to waste upon you either, for presently the Moon-Children will be coming back to their places; and before the hour is out wherein the moon stays void and powerless I must return to my own kingdom, whither you may not follow me to provoke me with any more of your nonsense. And then you will be properly sorry, I dare say, for you will be remembering me always, and there will be only human women to divert you, and they are poor creatures." Freydis went again to the mirror, and she meditated there. "Yes, you will be remembering me with my hair done this way, and that is a pity, but still you will remember me always. And when you make images they will be images of me. No, but I cannot have you making any more outrageous parodies like astonished corpses, and people everywhere laughing at Queen Freydis!" She took up the magical pen, laid ready as Hoel had directed, and she wrote with this gryphon's feather. "So here is the recipe for the Tuyla incantation wherewith to give life to your images. It may comfort you a little to perform that silly magic, and it will prevent your good-for-nothing blondes from talking too much idiotic nonsense about the images which you will be foolish enough to make of me with my hair done unbecomingly."

"Nothing can ever comfort me, fair enemy, when you have gone away from me," said Manuel, as he took the parchment.

Then they came out of the enclosure to the altar of Vel-Tyno while the moon was still void and powerless. The servitors of Freydis were thronging swiftly toward Morven after a pleasant hour of ravening and ramping about Poictesme. As spoorns and calcars and as other long-forgotten shapes they came, without any noise, so that Morven was like the disordered mind of a wretch that is dying in fever: and to this side and to that side the witches of Amneran sat nodding in approval of what they saw. Thus one by one the forgotten shapes came to the fire, and cried, "A penny, a penny, twopenny, a penny and a half, and a half-penny!" as each entered into the fire which was the gateway to their home.

"Farewell!" said Freydis: and as she spoke she sighed.

"Not thus must be our parting," Manuel said. "For do you listen now, Queen Freydis! It was Hoel the Deep-Minded who told me what was requisite. 'Queen is the same as *cwen*, which means a woman, no more nor less,' said the wise king. 'You have but to remember that.'"

She took his meaning. Freydis cried out, angrily: "Then all the foolishness you have been talking about my looks and your love for me was pre-arranged! And you have cheated me out of the old Tuyla mystery with just such nonsense as a plowman trades against the heart of a milkmaid! Now certainly I shall reward your candor in a fashion that will be whispered about for a long while."

"**A**LL, all was pre-arranged save this," said Manuel, with a yapping laugh. He thrust into the fire the parchment which Freydis had given him. "Yes, all was pre-arranged save that Hoel did not purge me of that which will not accept the hire of any lying to you. So Hoel's wisdom comes at the last pinch to naught."

"But have you no sense whatever, for you are burning your hand!"

Dom Manuel withdrew his hand, with a grimace, for in the ardor of executing his noble gesture he had not estimated how hot the fire was. "It is but a little hurt to me who have taken a great hurt," says Manuel, sullenly. "For I had thought to lie, and in my mouth the lie turned to a truth. At least, I do not profit by my ill-doing, and I wave you farewell with empty hands burned clean of theft and double dealing."

Then she who was a human woman said, "But you have burned your hand!"

"It does not matter: I have ointments yonder. Make haste, Queen Freydis, for the hour passes wherein the moon is void and powerless."

"There is time." She brought out water from the enclosure, and swiftly bathed Dom Manuel's hand.

From the fire now came a whispering. "Make haste, Queen Freydis! make haste, dear Fairy mistress."

"There is time," said Freydis, "and do
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you stop flurrying me!" She brought from the enclosure a pot of ointment, and she dressed Manuel's hand.

"Borram, borram, Fairy mistress!" the fire crackled. "Now the hour ends."

Then Freydis sprang from Manuel, toward the flames beyond which she was queen of ancient mysteries, and beyond which her will was neither to loose nor to bind. "A penny, a penny, twopence—" she began.

But just for a moment she looked back at the man, alone and hurt. In his eyes the fire-light showed love out of measure and without hope. And the heart of a human woman moved in the breast of Freydis.

"I cannot help it," she said, as the hour passed. "Somebody has to bandage it, and men have no sense in these matters."

Whereon the fire roared angrily, and leaped, and fell dead, for the Moon-Children had returned from the well, and the moon was no longer void and powerless.

"So, does that feel more comfortable?" said Freydis. She was a mortal woman now, with no choice in the matter.

For awhile Count Manuel did not speak. Then he said, in a shaking voice: "O woman

dear, it is you and you alone that I will be loving eternally with such tenderness as is denied to cold and lonely queens. And it is you that I will be serving always with such a love as may not ever be given to perverse small images either! And though all life may be a dusty waste of endless striving, and though the ways of men may always be the ways of folly, yet are these ways our ways henceforward, and not hopeless ways, for you and I will tread them together."

"Now certainly there is in Audela no such moonstruck nonsense to be hearing, nor any such quick-footed hour of foolishness to be living through," Freydis replied, "as here tonight has robbed me of my kingdom."

"Love will repay," said Manuel.

And Freydis, a human woman now, laughed low and softly. "Repay me thus," she said: "no matter how much I may coax you, do you not ever tell me how you happened to have the bandages and the pot of ointment set ready by the mirror. For it is bad for a human woman ever to be seeing through the devices of wise kings, and far worse for her to be seeing through the heroic antics of her husband."

Minnie Tighthand and Mrs. Dunley

[Continued from page 17]

Chapter VI The Marriages

It was now the day before the marriage of Eliza and Mr. Tighthand. Minnie was making an ornament to place on the head of the bride. Little May sat by her side. Both were very happy. Little May was much pleased with her new home. Mr. Tighthand sat by Minnie. His face looked happy, and most undoubtedly he was. The day came. The marriage was to be at Minnie's home. Upon the piazza stood groups of young men ready to wait upon the ladies out of their carriages. There had a carriage just arrived. The bride was in it. She looked magnificent. Her dress was white over a blue lace one. It had short sleeves gathered at the bottom with a silk ribbon. Her hair was curled, with the beautiful ornament Minnie had made around it. Mr. Tighthand stepped forward to take her out of the carriage, when John Morton bounded toward him and said "Hands off, that is for me to do." "Step right back, Sir," said Mr. Tighthand calmly. "I will not," shouted John. "What business have you with her?" "Why she is to be my wife," was the reply. "Your wife, don't you insult me in that manner again," said John. Mr. Tighthand took no notice of this remark, but calmly waited on Eliza out of the carriage, and into the house. Every eye was upon the bride, every person rose from their seats to give the bride and bridegroom a seat. The ceremony had commenced, at the right of the bride stood two young brides-maid, Ida and Minnie dressed in blue silk. At the right of Mr. Tighthand stood two young groomsmen, James Dunley and George Rome. The Priest had opened his book, when Mrs. Dunley and Mr. Grant entered. The ceremony went on. When it had ended Mr. Grant and Mrs. Dunley rose to be married. The ceremony was ended. Mrs. Dunley was no longer a widow, nor was Mr. Grant a widower. No longer would people say "the rich widow Dunley," but the rich Mrs. Grant. The company had gone. Mr. and Mrs. Tighthand and Minnie were all that were left, and of course they were not going.


Chapter VII Little May's Home

Little May was now pretty well acquainted. Minnie was quite certain now that she was Ida's sister. Minnie had just gone over to Mr. Grant's to see Ida. "How do you do, Ida," she said. "Very well, I thank you," said Ida. In the course of their conversation Minnie said to Ida: "Ida, do you know that you said your little sister's name was Louise May Dunley?" "Yes," said Ida. "Well now you know that if she had travelled all her life, and she went when she was so young that she would forget the name of Louise and Dunley, as they are so long and would remember the name of May, and I think the little girl to my house is your little sister." "O! Minnie, Minnie, it is, it is, it is my dear little sister Louise. Let us go over now and find out more about her." "Well," said Minnie, "Put on your things, and we will go." And they went. When they got there May was sitting on a stool by the side of

Eliza, and Eliza was sewing. After they were seated Minnie called May to her, and said to Ida, "Can you see any look like your little Louise?" Ida looked at her, and said "yes, there are the same blue eyes, the same auburn hair, and the same delicate white complexion." May now ran up to Ida, and said, "I had a sister that looked just like you." Now Ida and Minnie were fully convinced that it was little Louise. Ida's heart leaped for joy, and said she to May. "Did you ever have a home?" May replied "O! yes, and a Pa and a Ma." "Where did they go to," asked Ida? "I don't know" answered May. May kept her eyes upon Ida, and at last said "O! you do look just like my sister." Ida now jumped up and caught May in her arms, and said "O! May, you are my dear little sister, I know you are." Minnie and Ida was going to take May over to Mrs. Grant's and ask Mrs. Grant if May was her child. When they got there Mrs. Grant was sitting by the window. As soon as she saw little May she jumped up and caught her in her arms, and said to Ida, "Ida, Ida where did you get her, it is our little Louise. Where did she come from?" Mrs. Grant asked May if she remembered her. Little May told her that she looked like her Mother and she guessed she was.

Chapter VIII The Insult

Minnie and George Rome seemed to think a great deal of each other. One day as they were walking out together George asked her to be his wife. Minnie told him yes, but first ask her Father. George did so. Her Father said yes, but that they must live with him. George consented to do so. They were to be married the Fourth of July, a month from then. Mrs. Grant was now just going in to see Mr. Tighthand. Minnie met her at the door. When they were seated Mrs. Grant said to Minnie, "Don't you think you are about old enough to get married?" "Yes, I think I am," replied Minnie. "Well, my business here with you is to know if you will have my son James." Minnie's eyes flashed with anger, and she said: "Mrs. Grant I will not, and I don't want you to insult me again in that manner." "I ask you again Minnie," said Mrs. Grant, "If you will have my son James?" Minnie straightened her tall form up and looked down at Mrs. Grant with contempt, and said, "Mrs. Grant, I say once for all, I will not. I am engaged to another man, and if I were not I would not have your son, and I should think you would not want such a romping, coarse girl for your daughter." Mrs. Grant did not say one word more, but went straight home. After she had gone Mr. Tighthand came into the room and said, "Was there any one here, Minnie?" "Yes," said Minnie, "Mrs. Grant. She came to see if I would wed her son." "Wed her son!" said Mr. Tighthand, with both anger and surprise. (We shall hereafter call Mr. Tighthand the Colonel). "Yes, have her son," replied Minnie. "And what did you tell her?" "O! I told her I was engaged to another man, and if I were not I would not have her son, and that I should think she would not want such a vulgar, coarse girl to



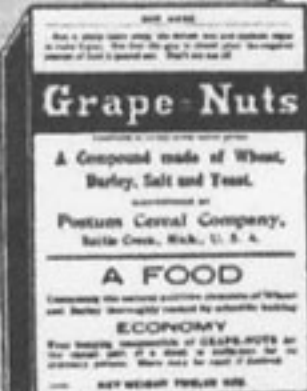
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