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**The Widow
In White**

By LOUISE MERRIFIELD.

"There she goes!"

Little Compton gave the alarm, and everybody in the Pasquale studio leaped for the windows as the white automobile whizzed by. Four easels crashed on the floor. The model, a slender, dried figure, with a spray of spring boughs over the bare shoulder and trail of grass green velvet from bust to ankle, broke her pose and turned her head.

Pasquale himself had been the first to run and had a front seat, so to speak, at the middle window, with Jules Le Breton towering over him.

No one spoke until the moment of suspense was passed and the white auto had swerved around the corner of the Boulevard des Anges. Then a low, intense breath of released suspense sounded audibly through the bare room, and the Pasquale students stared into one another's eyes rapturously, gloatingly, just exactly as they had done every day at the same hour for six days.

"She is celestial," murmured Le Breton huskily as he lifted his fallen easel.

But he did not place crayon to paper again that afternoon. He sat and smoked a short Amiens pipe and stared at the spray of spring boughs on the model's bare shoulder, and the blood bounded through his veins joyously, bubblingly, like the little mountain brooks breaking through thin April ice.

Le Breton had spring fever; also, in a minor degree, Le Breton was newly in love again.

Pasquale crossed the room as soon as the model had resumed the pose, and he bent affectionately forward over Le Breton's chair and tapped on the plump bowl of the Amiens pipe to recall Le Breton's soul from the asphodel meadow of day dreams.

"Mon ami, I have discovered a small thing," he said in an undertone so that Compton from Delaware would not hear. Compton from Delaware was a cynic, a person utterly beyond the gates of spring enchantment. He had the artistic temperament, but it showed itself in his work, not his hair nor his loves nor his words. And therein Compton from Delaware was absolutely an original and unique character among the art students at Pasquale's. Also he was absolutely despised as a hopeless business proposition. But the eyes of the girl with the spring boughs passed over Le Breton's blond ringlets and velvet blouse and lingered on the close cropped head of Little Compton from Delaware.

It was the way he had with women.

"I have discovered her habitation," whispered Pasquale. "She is a widow."

"A widow in white!" Le Breton's half closed eyes flashed open. "Ah, but it is her whim. It is her divinity revealing itself. It is her symbol of release. She did not love him if she can mourn in white. But the art elusive, enchanting, mysterious, to garb herself from top to toe in svelte white suede, to swathe her face in creamy chiffon like an houri, to challenge one's daring, to pique the curiosity, does it not all prove the woman behind the veil, the woman celestial, yet with the dash, the mere touch, so like the high light of the diabolique in her bereaved nature? Where does she live, Pasquale?"

Pasquale glanced sideways at Little Compton. He was extremely busy giving a touch to the clasp of gold on the model's left arm, a touch to make it gleam.

"At the Hotel Lombard," said Pasquale. "I have engaged the interest of the small boy at the garage. She is a widow, Mme. Germaine—La Belle Germaine. And she lives at the Lombard. So, my Jules, I give you the cue for the romance, n'est-ce-pas?"

Le Breton rose and stretched his arms widely until they touched the gas jet above his head.

"I shall fling violets at her—vast clusters of them, dew wet; Parma violets—straight into her arms as she passes each day until she recognizes me," he said. "I shall pierce the white chiffon veil with opera glasses and see if her eyes divine are melting blue or gloriously, ravishingly dark, like la Zingara. I shall!"

"You will make the customary blooming idiot of yourself, Jules," called Compton from Delaware over his shoulder with cheerful unctious. "How many children did the last divinity have after you had followed the trail of romance for two

weeks and finally landed her in a bakery over the Seine?"

Le Breton raised a glass of ice water to deposit it below the adjacent coat collar, but he stayed his hand and drank the water diplomatically. Once, once long ago, he had not stayed his hand, and the memory of the resultant episode lingered yet. Little Compton had risen swiftly and deftly and promptly fished him. And even the model had laughed. It was not a pleasant memory. Therefore Le Breton stayed his hand and drank of the ice water.

The next day Le Breton vanished from the atelier at a quarter of 3 precisely, but his intentions were public.

The windows of Pasquale's were occupied by an absorbed audience long before the whir of the white auto sounded on the still hush of the midafternoon. By leaning from the windows one could catch a glimpse of a figure standing on the corner, a patient, noble figure under the quaint wrought iron street lamp, the figure of the knight errant, in paint daubed velvet blouse, cap rakishly, romantically wary and in the hands the most beautiful, enormous, languishing bouquet of Parma violets that Le Breton could find. A beauty it was, a regal offering, with silken tasseled cord of gold, and the stems, the tender young stems, prisoned in tin foil violet dyed.

Presently there was the sound of the chariot celestial, the cream white automobile, with the tiny gold monogram on one side, so vague, so unreadable, so divinely mysterious to the faces that crowded one above another at Pasquale's windows, like cabbages in the market stalls.

"She comes, mon Dieu; she comes," gasped Pasquale ecstatically. "Now, Jules, now brave boy, may thy aim be sure as Eros' dart!"

The white auto purred softly, swiftly down the pavement. Le Breton raised his cap, raised his hand to toss his offering, and, lo, he tossed not, for beside the slender figure in the white suede cloak sat Little Compton, severe, masterful and totally oblivious of either Le Breton or the windows of Pasquale.

It was the deadly blow, but Le Breton showed his ancestry. A Le Breton had been in Bayard's band of vagabond free lances and had won a marquise for deeds heroic.

So Le Breton in the velvet blouse stayed not his hand. Neither did he remember the lesson of the spilled ice water. He threw the violets fairly, and they fell in the lap of the widow in white. Out from Pasquale's window went up a smothered cheer. The veiled head bowed, oh, but so slightly, in Le Breton's direction. Still it bowed. And Little Compton raised his American panama in grave salute of heroism undaunted.

The next morning Pasquale was prepared for the challenge. Pasquale himself announced he would present the challenge the instant after Compton from Delaware showed fight. Even the model with the spring boughs trembled when the double glass doors opened and Little Compton entered. He was whistling. Ye gods, the airy arrogance of the assured American! mused Pasquale's crowd and waited for the blow.

It fell.

Straight over to Le Breton's easel walked Compton from Delaware. His hand and gait were resolute, his eye steady. There was even a smile on his lips. As he stood a pace away Le Breton sprang to his feet, and Pasquale's held its breath for the onslaught of the love champions.

But Little Compton smiled. More, he slapped Le Breton upon the shoulder in the manner of Harvard.

"Old man, you're all to the merry," he said. "I didn't think you had the grit. I have the honor to be the bearer of a message from Mrs. Henry B. Germaine, my dearly loved sister. She requests your presence at afternoon tea today." He paused to light a cigarette while Le Breton nursed his mental agony. Then finally he handed over the medicine for spring fever in these cheering words:

"The violets are on her boudoir table, Jules, and she's been a widow four years."

Force of Lightning.

Lightning flashes usually occur within thunder clouds, says Steinmetz, the mathematician, and only rarely come from the clouds to the ground. They seem to follow the rapid condensation of vapor in the air. It requires nearly 75,000 volts of electricity to break down one inch of air space or 1,000,000 volts per foot. Even if the clouds are only 1,000 feet above the ground it will take more than 1,000,000,000 volts to break down the air resistance ahead of the thunderbolt. It is this enormous voltage or electrical pressure which makes the lightning flash so destructive.

OYSTER CRABS.

They Are a Distinct Species and Are Hatched in the Bivalve.

Oyster crabs, those tiny, dainty, pink titbits, are a delicacy highly prized and correspondingly expensive. As the crabs when taken from their homes in oyster shells live but a short time, each day's catch is blanchied at the end of the day's work unless there are orders for live shipments to adjacent points. The partially boiled crab is shipped in glass containers, in which shape it can be had at the stores. It is better so, for small as they are, like all other shellfish, they should never be eaten unless they are alive when thrown into boiling water.

A general idea is that the oyster crab is a baby soft shell, but she (for the edible oyster crab is always a female) is an entirely different species from the blue crab, which is the soft shell of commerce and after theater suppers. She lives only in association with the oyster and carries her eggs into the oyster shell, her young being hatched there and evicted by the oyster only when they become so numerous and lively as to be a nuisance to the foster mother.

The males then assume a hard shell and a dirty brown and shift for themselves as best they can. The female crabs, of a dainty pinkish white hue, scurry about to escape their enemies until they reach a Broadway restaurant via the oyster dealer.

This protected life makes the shell of the female oyster crab degenerate into a mere membrane, and her legs become so weak that she cannot get about or survive at all away from the friendly companionship of the oyster.

Whether it is true that she is a scavenger for and caterer to the oyster is a question the scientists are divided over. At all events she becomes a dainty morsel and shrinks so in the cooking processes that it doesn't seem as if you were getting much for your money when you order an omelet, patty or salad of oyster crabs.

But what you do get is a sublimated reminder of the daintiest shrimp you ever ate, with about the same relationship in flavor that a mushroom has to a brussels sprout.—Buffalo Express.

Told of Turner.

Turner, the English painter, was blunt spoken and often gruff, but on occasion he unbent enough to jest—occasionally at his own expense.

His famous picture, "The Slave Ship"—that wonderful combination of flaming and gorgeous colors—was once described by an exasperated critic as "a cat having a fit in a dish of tomato salad." Turner had never heard the phrase, but once when a salad was passed to him at a dinner he put on a critical and considering air as he regarded it and remarked to his neighbor:

"Nice, cool green, that lettuce. isn't it? And the beetroot a pretty red, not quite strong enough, and the dressing, delicate tint of yellow, that! Add some mustard and then you have one of my pictures!"

The Mighty Dead.

The relations between man and man cease not with life. The dead leave behind them their memory, their example and the effects of their actions. Their influence still abides with us; their names and character dwell in our thoughts and hearts. We live and commune with them in their writings; we enjoy the benefits of their labors. Our institutions have been founded by them. We are surrounded by the works of the dead. Our knowledge and our arts are the fruits of their toil; our minds have been formed by their instructions. We are most intimately connected with them by a thousand dependencies.—Andrews Norton.

Care of Silk Umbrella.

When coming in with a wet umbrella stand it handle down to dry, then wipe off the handle and ferrule and furl the silk sections. If the silk gets a spot on it, remove it with a silk rag, warm water and soap. Clean a gold or silver handle with whiting, wash a china handle in warm soapsuds, rub up a wooden handle with a very slightly oily rag. A good way to mend a silk umbrella is to wet a piece of black coat plaster and fasten it to the silk just under the tear and let it dry.—New York Press.

The Thankful Spirit.

Cultivate the thankful spirit! It will be to thee a perpetual feast. There is, or ought to be, with us no such thing as small mercies; all are great, because the least are undeserved. Indeed, a really thankful heart will extract motive for gratitude from everything, making the most even of scanty blessings.—J. R. Macduff.

EGYPT'S EGG OVENS.

Artificial Hatching is an Old Story in the Orient.

For upward of 5,000 years eggs have been hatched artificially in Egypt, in China and other Asiatic countries. In Egypt the industry is an enormous one, and it is estimated that at the present time in lower Egypt there are several hundreds of these hatching establishments and that in many cases they have a capacity for 40,000 eggs at one time. A few years ago the American consul general in Egypt estimated that upward of 90,000,000 chickens were hatched annually in the egg ovens of that country.

There is usually considerable difficulty in persuading the owner of a mamal el firakh to show a foreigner or even an Egyptian over one of these primitive incubators, though they are quite numerous and are found throughout the Nile valley from Alexandria to Aswan. The secret of their structure and management is carefully guarded. The hatching of chickens by this method is an important industry. It is almost entirely in the hands of the Copts, who make quite a mystery of the whole process. The ovens are worked only from February to May each year.

The one visited consisted of four hatching chambers, each of these chambers, about 4 by 4 yards, being capable of holding up to 6,000 eggs at a time and accommodating each season about 180,000 eggs. When the eggs are first put in the hatching chamber they are often piled up four or five deep, but are afterward spread out in a single layer, this never later than the tenth day. The eggs are turned three times daily. On the fourth or fifth day they are tested and all the infertile ones are taken out and sold for human consumption.

The testing is done in the upper chamber, which is dark, each egg being held up in a ray of sunlight which comes through a hole in the dome roof made for this purpose. Usually one-quarter to one-third of the eggs prove infertile. It is said that very few which are left after this first testing fail to hatch.—Poultry Record.

The Great Pyramid.

The great pyramid originally occupied an area equal to 588,939,595 superficial feet, or almost thirteen and a half English acres, the side of the square being 767,424 feet. The original perpendicular height was 285 feet, and the total contents of solid masonry equal to 89,418,806 cubic feet, weighing 6,878,369 tons. Taking the masonry at only 1 shilling per cubic foot, an almost ridiculously low figure for materials, carriage and workmanship, the cost of the structure would be £4,470,940. The masonry of the great pyramid would be sufficient for the erection of 1,120 columns, each twenty feet square and of the height of the London monument, which is 202 feet. Again, if cut into paving stones four inches in thickness they would cover a space equal to 6,158 acres.—London Answers.

"I Don't Think."

George Grossmith, writing to a London paper of the origin of the slang phrase "I don't think," relates that, in spite of the recent claims to it, he ran it to earth in Dickens. He says:

"One afternoon I commenced reading 'Martin Chuzzlewit' for the—th time, and halfway through the sixth chapter I found Tom Pinch regretting the departure of his friend Westlock and ruminating thus: 'I am a nice man, I don't think, as John used to say, * * * to be feeling low on account of the distance between us.' There is nothing new in this world. Doubtless as I read further I shall discover the immortal humorist inviting me to 'Come over here' and 'Keep smiling.'"

Thrashing Grain in India.

Grain in India is generally trodden out by the feet of cattle, assisted by the thrashing frame. This frame consists of a hurdle covered with brushwood and weighted with bricks or clods of earth. The bullocks are yoked to the thrashing frame and fastened to a post in the center of a thrashing floor of beaten earth. They are driven round and round the stake about which the wheat is heaped, and in a short time the brittle straw is broken up into short pieces and the grain is freed from the chaff.

Wily Athenians.

In Athens goats are marched to housekeepers' doors and milked before the eyes of patrons. But this system does not prevent adulteration. The milkman wears a loose coat with wide sleeves. Around his waist is a rubber bag filled with water, and a tube runs down his arm. As he milks he presses the tube, and milk and water flow silently together into the milk pail.



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