

The Lady OF THE Mount

By **FREDERIC S. ISHAM**
Author of
"The Strollers"
"Under the Rose"
- Etc. -
Illustrations by
RAY WALTERS

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Whereupon the latter, spurring his horse nearer his chief, launched into eloquent explanation.

"And then," ended the bard, "the Governor's daughter walked into our ambush as unsuspectingly as a mouse into a trap!"

"The Governor's daughter cozened by Nanette!"

"That she was! A clever wench and a brave one, Nanette! Although, the poet's jovial eyes studied the dark face, 'unless I am mistaken, she found the task to her liking!'"

"You treated her, the Governor's daughter, well?" said the other abruptly.

"Gave her your cabin, mon capitaine, where," chuckling, "she ruled like a despot. Not once did she whimper, or beg favor—for herself! For the Marquis, it is true, she did plead—that day we took them!"

"He's her betrothed!" said the young man shortly.

"A marionette!" glibbed the poet. "Some of the men were for making short shift of him, and they might have—only for her!"

"They will soon be safe enough together now!" remarked the Black Seigneur.

Again a peculiar, half-questioning expression shaded the poet's eyes, while furtively he regarded the young man. "Yes, they ought to be!"

"The terms of exchange—what were they?"

"You for her! That was our demand. After the place had been agreed upon, his Excellency asked to name the hour, and further interdicted a condition, binding both parties to secrecy in the matter, that the people might not know. They acted badly when the soldiers returned to the Mount without his daughter; they might behave worse, no doubt he thinks, when they come back with her."

"So will she be safely returned in the darkness! A wise provision!"

"That," murmured the poet, studying the horizon, "was evidently his thought. But," as the Black Seigneur, relaxing his pace, drew rein at a fork in the pathway, "yonder lies our cove, mon capitaine, and—"

"Do you and the men go there!" commanded the other, and gave a few further instructions.

"See that the ship is kept in readiness!" he ended. "As for me—" He made a vague gesture.

That evening found the Black Seigneur in the Desaurac forest; where, as a boy, he had fled for shelter, now some instinct, or desire he did not strive to analyze, drew him. As slowly he made his way through the wood, on every hand familiar outlines and details, seen vaguely in the last light of day, invited him to pause; but without stopping he moved on to the castle, and up to the chamber, where Sanchez, returning from America, had found him, a vagabond lad. Through the window the same unobstructed view of the Mount dimly unfolded itself in the dusk, and for some moments he regarded it—august, majestic; glistening its heart's black secrets with specious and well-composed bearing! As he looked, there suddenly came to him the remembrance of another impression; the same picture, seen through the eyes of a boy—standing where he was now! Then had the Mount seemed a marvelous series of structures, air-drawn, magical—home of a small and fairy-like creature, with hair of shining gold. Dusk turned to night; in the distance the Mount vanished, and through the break in the forest only the stars twinkled.

Then lighting his fire, the young man sat down at the side; with faculties alert, listened to the wind; looked at the flames. Demon-like they leaped before his eyes, as when he had waited and watched for the emissaries of his Excellency; and mechanically he placed his weapons on the same spot he had been wont to lay them in those days. There was little likelihood they would seek him now, however; the Governor was fully occupied elsewhere, looking to interests more important to himself and to—

Her ladyship! the fire leaped wildly, as laughing at fate's foolish prank. Her life for his! What irony! If she had betrayed him? "If!" His laugh crushed possibility for supposition; but almost at once itself died away! Indissolubly associated with the thought, a scene in a dungeon must needs recur; her denials; the touch of a hand; the appeal of light fingers

thrust through the bars! Why? The questions he had asked then, were reiterated now; the hand that had gripped hers opened, closed; once more he seemed to see the steadfast, unswerving eyes; once more seemed to read in their depths, "Believe!"

The pine branches continued to crackle as with merriment; but his gaze was somber. How glad she must have been to see the end of her captivity! The sudden leaping of yonder flame was like the quick, bright flush that had mantled her cheek at sight of her liege lord to be! They should have arrived at the Mount ere now; about this time were entering the gates! He could see her, the Marquis at her side—

A sudden sharp detonation afar dissipated the picture. Other explosions followed, like volleys of muskets; and, springing to the window, the Black Seigneur looked toward the Mount; from it, flashes of light gleamed and glistened. Then the loud report of a cannon reverberated in the distance.

CHAPTER XXXI.

The Attack on the Mount.

The rock loomed black before them, as the troopers, escorting the Governor's daughter, rode up to the Mount. Entering the town, at its base, dark walls on either side of them shut out the broad map of the heavens and left but a narrow open space above; few lights were visible, so that many of the houses seemed tenanted; even at the tavern, unwonted stillness prevailed. Apparently was the return well-timed; in twisting street and tortuous byway, where hostile faces had been prone to frown upon the soldiers of his Excellency, emerging from, or ascending to, the stronghold of the summit, now only chill drafts of air swept down to greet them; passed on with shrill whistlings, and died away in the distance.

Nearby the massive portals that opened wide into his Excellency's realm, my lady suppressed a shiver; but the Marquis, in a low tone, ventured to jest on the depressing and melancholy aspect of the Mount at that hour. To these light remarks she returned no answer, and he had just begun to rally her on a certain quietness of spirits, apparent on the beach and irreconcilable with the circumstances of the moment, when a sharp exclamation fell from the girl's lips.

his forces had been commendable, his Excellency walked toward the great stairway leading up to the open space near the church. Arrived at this high point from which the town unfolded itself, in the starlight and flicker of lamps, he sought, as best he might, to acquaint himself further with the situation; to judge the numbers of the assailants and the extent of their preparations.

The scene that met his eyes was not so reassuring as he had expected; that which until now he had considered but a spasmodic outbreak of a comparatively few townspeople, excited by the news of the Bastille and bent on any petty mischief, resolved itself into more than an orderless, desultory uprising. To his startled gaze the rock, like an ant-hill disturbed, seemed swarming with life. Even as he peered down, new relays of men poured up from the dark byways to the reinforcement of those already gathered at the portals, and, for the first time, his confidence, bred of contempt for the commonalty, became slightly shaken.

Fate, which had struck him sharply in the capture of his daughter and the enforced negotiations leading to the release of one he would have dealt with after his own fashion,

now gripped him closer. What did it portend? Whence came all these people? Not all of them from the immediate neighborhood! Voices, among the assailants, had called out in what was surely the Parisian dialect of the rabble; here to propagate the revolution; extend the circle of flame! And they had seen that arms were not wanting! Muskets, pikes, swords, must have been kept concealed for some time in the town at the base of the Mount or on the shore. In his mind's eye, too late perhaps, his Excellency could see now how the assault had long been planned, how all these people had only been waiting. For what? The opportunity afforded by a treacherous word! Spoken by whom?

But a moment these reflections surged through his brain; an instant, and his gaze swung around, at towers—turrets—as a magician might apprehensively survey a fabulous architectural creation, handwork of his dark craft, threatened, through an influence beyond his control, with destruction; then with a quick start, his Excellency wheeled; walked toward the stairway. About to descend, the sight of a figure coming up, caused him, however, to pause; in the flare of the light below, something in the manner of the man's advance impressed the governor as peculiar.

The movements of this person, who was under-sized, wiry, were agile and cat-like; first would he stoop, look around him and listen; afterward spring forward a few steps as not quite sure of his course. But still he came on, keeping as closely as might be to the cover of the shadows, until a growing impression he had seen the fellow before resolved itself into positiveness in his Excellency's mind. And with the conviction and a sudden remembrance of the place and the char-

Clear Creek Items
Clarence Fielding has been working at Mr. Van Dyke's during the past week.

Maurice Lowry returned home from Purdue, Neb., Thursday.

A few of the young people of this vicinity attended the play at Mason City last Friday evening.

News was received here Friday that Mr. and Mrs. Wash Peters of Cole Creek were rejoicing over the arrival of a new baby girl at their home.

Miss Lena Zwink and Frank Zwink were in this part of the country Friday, calling on friends.

Mr. and Mrs. Andy Coppersmith visited at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Wash Peters one day last week.

Miss Inez Van Dyke spent Saturday and Sunday at home.

Mrs. Wilt Hill and family spent Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. Frank Potter.

Mr. and Mrs. Esterbrook visited with Mr. and Mrs. Frank Kuhn and family Sunday.

Russell Adams returned home Tuesday.

(To late for last week)

Miss Ida Adler's school closed last week.

Mr. and Mrs. Haney are spending a few days at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Reed on Route 2, before moving to Iowa.

Ed Bishop and wife are staying at the home of Sam Hill until their house is ready for occupancy.

Miss Anna Dorman closed a very successful term of school last Friday.

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"Mon pere! Mon pere!" she cried eagerly, divining his face in the light of lamps on that side of the wall. He answered only with a laconic command to go at once to the palace; and, regarding his features, tragically appealing to her at the moment—so strange and different they seemed!—she prepared to obey. But ere turning: "You think the soldiers can hold the gate?" she asked.

"Yes; yes!" he replied sharply, as if annoyed at the question.

"But if—"

"There is no 'if!' said the Governor, and as the girl rode away, his look, hard, stiff, shifting to the soldiers, made quick mental note; they were holding the gates. Satisfied with the front his men presented, and, delivering a few brief orders to the commandant whose valor in rallying

his forces had been commendable, his Excellency walked toward the great stairway leading up to the open space near the church. Arrived at this high point from which the town unfolded itself, in the starlight and flicker of lamps, he sought, as best he might, to acquaint himself further with the situation; to judge the numbers of the assailants and the extent of their preparations.

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CONTEST BULLETIN

BIG SPECIAL PRIZE OFFER

Contest Closes March 31st., 9 P. M.

Two Passenger Ford Runabout Car

Every Candidate Gets a Prize

Now is the time to get busy in the Northwestern's big contest. Win a prize

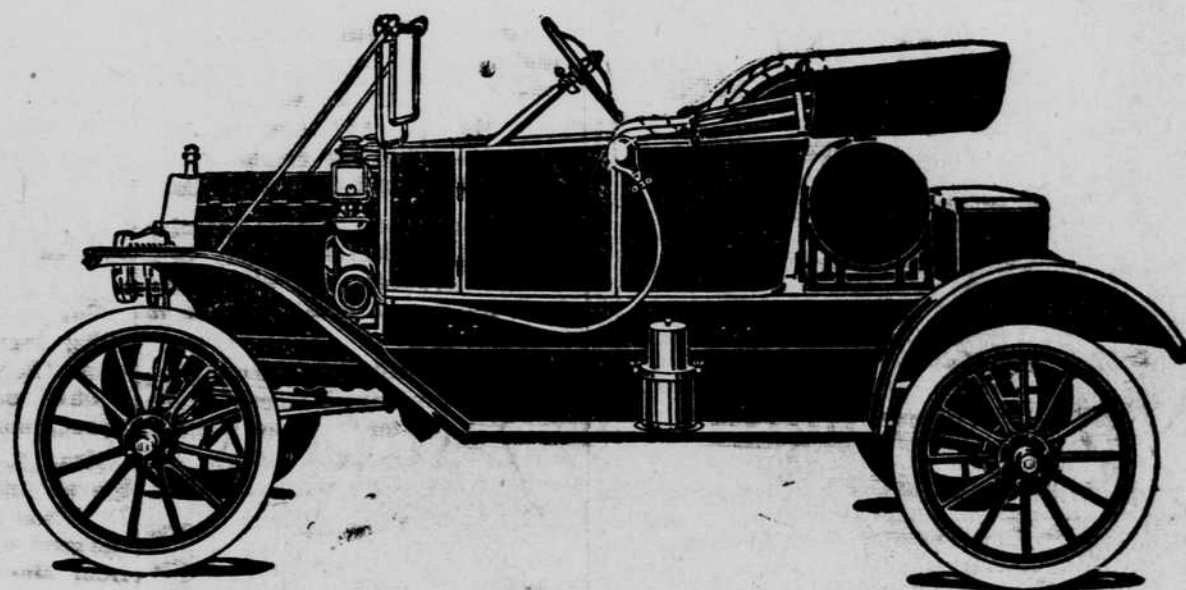
for a few days effort and lay a foundation of votes for the capital prize. Your friends will help you if you help yourself. Many votes are coming into the Northwestern office for the candidates. No contestant should miss this chance to get a nice Special Prize. Make a big effort to get in \$25 by March 19 at 6 o'clock p. m., and you are sure of a prize and a little more than that amount may win you the Diamond ring or one of the better specials and this effort may pave the way to other bigger prizes. Now is the time to get busy. Every contestant can rest assured that there will be no better prizes given and the contest will close March 31st, if death or sickness does not prevent. The special prizes mentioned will be given away March 19.

Special Prizes to be Awarded Between March 6 and March 19

- One Diamond Ring - - \$25
 - One Silver Mesh Bag - \$15
 - One Toilet Set, Stag Horn, Plate Glass \$6.
 - One Gold Calling Card Case and Purse \$2.50
- And Every Contestant who turns in \$25 will get a \$2.50 Hand Bag

Prize To Be Awarded At Close Of Contest

Ford Roadster



One Automobile

SPECIAL PRIZES

- One Diamond Ring.....\$25.00
 - One Silver Mesh Bag.....\$15.00
 - One Toilet Set, Stag Horn Finish, Plate Glass.....\$ 6.00
 - One Gold Calling Card Case and Purse.....\$ 2.50
- And every contestant who turns in \$25 will get a hand bag.....\$2.50

To be given between the dates of March 6 and March 19, inclusive, of both dates. The choice of prizes will be given to the candidate having the most money to her credit and the candidate having the second largest amount will get second choice and so on down until the four better prizes are taken, and then each candidate turning in as much as \$25 will get a nice \$2.50 leather hand bag. The special prizes will be on

exhibition at VAUGHN & HINMAN'S and SWANSON & LOFHOLM'S. They are all nice prizes, and are fully guaranteed by these gentlemen, they say they are first class and their word goes. Go and see these fine prizes.

How easy you can get this \$25.00. Just ask twelve of your friends to subscribe for the Northwestern for two years each, and possibly you can get people to give you a five year subscription each. Now Contestant you are asking no favors of a man when you ask him to subscribe for four years in advance, as he will get his money's worth.

Get busy and get a fine prize. Call the Contest Manager and tell him your troubles.

Special Prize Awards

The candidate that has turned in the most money between the dates of March 6, and March 19, (both dates inclusive) will get choice of the special prizes and the candidates that have the largest amount of money in respective rotation will get choice until all the larger prizes are taken, and every candidate that has turned in \$25. between March 6 and March 19 at 6 p. m. will get a hand bag, so don't get discouraged you will get a prize. It's easy to collect \$25, all you have to do is to ask four subscribers to pay 4 years each and you have it. You must not be afraid to ask for big subscriptions. Your friends can pay ahead as far as they like. A word to the wise is sufficient, the subscription price of this paper is \$1.50 per year.

Contestants who live outside of Loup City may send their money by mail with list of subscriptions, but the post mark must show that the subscriptions were mailed not later than six o'clock p. m., Mar 19

Schedule of Votes on Subscription Contest

1 year \$1.50.....	300 votes
2 years \$3.00.....	700 votes
3 years \$4.50.....	1200 votes
4 years \$6.00.....	1800 votes
5 years \$7.50.....	2500 votes
6 years \$9.00.....	3300 votes
7 years \$10.50.....	4200 votes
8 years \$12.00.....	5200 votes
9 years \$13.50.....	6300 votes
10 years \$15.00.....	7500 votes

Not The Close of The Contest

Do not confuse March 19th and the prizes to be awarded at that time, with the close of the contest. The above prizes will be given as an extra reward for work done by contestants from March 6 to March 19. The closing day of the contest when the Automobile is to be awarded will be announced later. The regular schedule of votes will apply to money turned in on special prize period, and the votes will count on the Automobile and other capital prizes.

Prizes For Everyone

All contestants who turn in at least \$25.00 who do not win one of the above prizes will receive a beautiful leather hand bag.

J. W. Burleigh
Proprietor

Contest Manager,

Care Northwestern



Looked Toward the Mount.