

THE SMART SET

Edited by
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and
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Manuscripts must be addressed, "Editors of THE SMART SET"

CONTENTS

VISTAS	Odell Shepard	281
WHEN FANCY LEAVES THE NARROW PATH (novelette)	Helen Jetmore Major	283
ANNUNCIATION	Witter Bynner	314
CAMERON'S CONCLUSION	P. F. Hervey	315
THE DANGEROUS INHERITANCE	Louise Winter	317
JEALOUSY	William Anderson	323
THE UPLIFTERS	Jacque Morgan	325
GRANDMOTHER	Helen Woljeska	332
LITTLE GIRL	Lee Pape	333
THE VICTORY	R. C. Whitford	338
THE GREATEST PAINTER IN THE WORLD	Lord Dunsany	339
THE MAN WHO WAITED	Lina S. Bernstein	341
FLIRT	Thomas Ransford	351
THE DESERT IS NOT FIFTH AVENUE	Marshall Hugh Irish	353
THE TWELFTH JUROR	Scammon Lockwood	359
THE WINDY SHOT (one-act play)	Edward Harold Conway	367
THE CAD	Harry Kemp	379
LOVE FOR ART'S SAKE	Paul Hervey Fox	386
CERTAINLY, IT CAN BE DONE!	John Sanborn	389
FELIX AND CARLOTTA	Edna Marion Hill	393
MOUNTAINS AND MOLEHILLS	Edwin C. Dickenson	398
A CAREFUL SURGEON	William Caine	401
THE MORAL DEFEAT	Alexander Harvey	407
A TALE OF LONDON	Lord Dunsany	411
THE FLIGHT	Maurice Samuel	413
AFTER LONG YEARS	Lucy Stone Terrill	418
LA VIE DES MINEURS (in the French)	Pol d'Ostrevent	421
WITH THE MINSTRELS OF THE MOMENT	George Jean Nathan	423
THE GRAND-STAND FLIRTS WITH THE BLEACHERS	H. L. Mencken	430
IN THE SHOPS OF THE SMART SET	Jeanne Judson	437

AND

HALF A HUNDRED BURLESQUES, EPIGRAMS, POEMS, SHORT SATIRES, ETC.

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THE DREAM OF KING KARNA-VOOTRA

By Lord Dunsany

KING KARNA-VOOTRA sitting on his throne commanding all things, said, "I very clearly saw last night the queenly Vava-Nyria. Though partly she was hidden by great clouds that swept continually by her, rolling over and over, yet her face was unhidden and shone, being full of moonlight.

"I said to her 'Walk with me by the great pools in many-gardened, beautiful Istrakahn where the lilies float that give delectable dreams; or, drawing aside the curtain of hanging orchids, pass with me thence from the pools by a secret path through the else impassable jungle that fills the only way between the mountains that shut in Istrakahn. They shut it in and look on it with joy at morning and at evening when the pools are strange with light, till in their gladness sometimes there melts the deadly snow that kills upon lonely heights the mountaineers. They have valleys among them older than the wrinkles in the moon.

"Come with me thence or linger with me there and either we shall come to romantic lands which the men of the caravans only speak of in song; or else we shall listlessly walk in a land so lovely that even the butterflies that float about it when they see their images flash in the sacred pools are terrified by their beauty, and each night we shall hear the myriad nightingales all in one chorus sing the stars to death. Do this and I will send heralds far from here with tidings of thy beauty; and they shall run and come to Sédara and men shall know it there who herd brown sheep; and from Sédara the rumor shall spread on, down either bank of the holy river of Zoth, till the people that make wattles in the plains shall hear of it and sing; but the heralds shall go northward along the hills until they come to Sooma. And in that golden city they shall tell the kings, that sit in their lofty, alabaster house, of thy strange and sudden smiles. And often in distant markets shall thy story be told by merchants out from Sooma as they sit telling careless tales to lure men to their wares.

"And the heralds passing thence shall come even to Ingra, to Ingra where they dance. And there they shall tell of thee, so that thy name long hence shall be sung in that joyous city. And there they shall borrow camels and pass over the sands and go by desert ways to distant Nirid to tell of thee to the lonely men in the mountain monasteries.

"Come with me even now for it is Spring."

"And as I said this she faintly yet perceptibly shook her head. And it was only then I remembered my youth was gone, and she dead forty years."

