

# THE SMART SET

A MAGAZINE OF  
CLEVERNESS

Manuscripts, to receive prompt attention, should be addressed, "Editor of THE SMART SET."

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# THE WOMAN-AT-ARMS

By Victor Starbuck

**I** RIDE to a tourney with sordid things;  
They grant no quarter, but what care I?  
My casque is crested with iron wings,  
And love, for a sword, at my stirrup swings,  
And 'shrill in my ear Truth's trumpet sings:  
"Though they slay you, you shall not die!"  
I have bartered and begged, I have cheated and lied;  
But now, however the battle betide,  
Uncowed by the clamor, I ride, ride, ride!

Who will may splinter the shopmen's panes:  
Such deeds as these be no deeds of mine.  
Not by tumult nor wrong do I measure my gains,  
But where gentleness triumphs and violence wanes,  
With foot in the stirrup and hand on the reins  
You may see my buckler shine.  
I have been wanton and queen and bride,  
I have veiled my soul for my body's pride,  
Now, mighty in armor, I ride, ride, ride!

I ride to the battle with lust and greed.  
Why marvel ye then at a woman in arms?  
I am sprung from the loins of a martial breed—  
Heir to the lances at Runnymede,  
Cromwell's courage and Ireton's speed  
And Yorktown's blood-soaked farms.  
Mother o' God that was crucified,  
Mother o' men that have dreamed and died—  
Like the sons I have borne, I will ride, ride, ride!

I ride to the battle for children's wrongs;  
For the goal that is barred by the lances' gleam.  
Flame springs in the heart that yearns and longs,  
And a faith to conquer the mocking throngs—  
There's a ring of swords in my-cradle songs;  
Spears flash through my brooding dream.  
I who have wept for the life denied,  
Who have quenched the flame that I could not hide—  
It is done! Henceforth I will ride, ride, ride!