



The Lady Clare

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Portuguese

Intermediate
3 min read

Lady Clare was in her garden overlooking the sea. It was a summer's day, and the many coloured butterflies flitted about under the trees and among the sweet smelling flowers.

Lady Clare was combing her golden tresses with an ivory comb, seated on a crimson velvet cushion. She looked towards the sea, and she saw a gallant fleet making for the land.

He who was in command stepped on shore. He was a belted knight, but his features could not be seen as his vizor was down.

Approaching Lady Clare, he saluted her, and she thus addressed him—

“Hast thou, noble knight, seen my husband, who bid me good-bye many years ago when he sailed for the Holy Land?”

“I know not thy husband, fair lady. By what should I know him?”

“He took his white charger with its golden trappings with him,” answered Lady Clare. “On his lance he bore a red pennon; a tress of my hair served him for a belt, from which hung his sword. But if thou hast not seen him, Knight of the Cross, then woe be to me, lonely widow, for I have three daughters, and they are all unmarried.”

“I am a soldier,” continued the knight; “war is my employment. But what wouldst thou give, fair lady, to have thy husband near?”

“I would give thee more money than thou couldst count, as well as the roof of my house, which is made of gold and ivory,” answered Lady Clare.

“I care not for gold nor money; they are of no use to me, for I am a soldier and engaged in war, and I never saw thy husband. But what wouldst thou give, fair lady, to have him here?” inquired the knight.

“I would give thee my jewels, which cannot be weighed nor measured; I would give thee my golden loom and my distaff of burnished silver,” said Lady Clare.

“I neither wish for gold nor for silver: with steel is my hand better acquainted, for I am a warrior, and I never saw thy husband. But what wouldst thou give to have him near thee?” cried the knight.

“I would let thee choose one of my daughters; they are as fair as the moon, or as the sun when rising,” urged Lady Clare.

“I do not want thy daughters; they may not marry me, for I am a soldier and engaged in warfare, and I never cast eyes on thy husband. But what wouldst thou give to have thy own knight here?” exclaimed the warrior.

“I cannot give thee more, nor hast thou more to ask of me,” replied Lady Clare.

“Thou hast still more to give, for thou hast not yet offered thyself, fair lady,” said the knight.

“A belted knight who dare so speak deserves to be dragged around my garden, tied to the tails of my horses. Come hither, my vassals, and punish this rude soldier!” exclaimed Lady Clare.

“Do not call for thy vassals, for they are mine also,” said the knight; “and do not be angry with me, for I have already kissed thee.”

“Then thou art surely my brave lord,” said Lady Clare; “but how wilt thou prove thyself?”

“By the golden ring with seven gems which I divided with thee when I left,” answered the knight. “Here is my half; where is thine?”

“My daughters,” cried the Lady Clare, “bring hither my half of the ring, for your father is here to claim it! But, oh, my husband, joy at seeing thee again had nigh made thee a widower.”

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