

**THE CHATEAU  
OF MONTPLAISIR**

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The chateau of Montplaisir by Molly Elliot Seawell

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**MOLLY ELLIOT SEAWELL**

**THE CHATEAU  
OF MONTPLAISIR**



*The* CHATEAU *of* MONTPLAISIR



*"She turned on him two sweet, dark eyes."*

# *The* CHATEAU *of* MONTPLAISIR

BY

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"The Sprightly Kumanos of Marsac,"

"Papa Bouchard"



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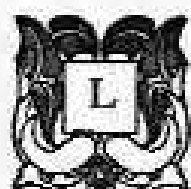
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I

UNCLE AND NEPHEW



LOUIS VICTOR DE LATOUR, recently become lord of the Chateau of Montplaisir, sat, the picture of misery, at a window of the grand saloon of the chateau looking out upon the gray sea. To the right of him, and visible through the misty veil of falling rain, lay the usually merry watering place of Dinard, now—like everything else in sight—dripping wet and forlorn. The sky was gloomier than the sea, and the chateau the gloomiest of all. It was an immense pile, with a great court-yard in the middle, where the flagstones, like everything else about the place, were cracked and broken. Half the windows were out and the other half boarded

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up. There were a few wrecks and remnants of furniture in the saloon where the new owner sat, but these wrecks and remnants were huddled in one corner, the only spot secure from the rain, which dripped ceaselessly from the glass dome in the centre.

As for Louis de Latour, he had been counted the merriest and lightest-hearted fellow alive as long as he had scarcely a franc in his pocket; but now that he had come into his inheritance he appeared to be as melancholy as an owl. He was good-looking and well made and had been reckoned to be of dauntless courage; however, it must be admitted that the Chateau of Montplaisir was enough to take the courage out of a Julius Cæsar.

Louis sat at a rickety little table, taking what he called by courtesy his mid-day breakfast, which consisted of weak coffee, stale bread, and something which old Suzette, who in herself constituted the whole domestic staff of the Chateau of Montplaisir, represented as a salad. But Louis, after tasting it, had determined that it was a collection of weeds

## UNCLE AND NEPHEW

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grown between the broken flagstones of the court-yard.

"Yes," he said sadly, holding up a piece of the green stuff on his fork and looking out into the dreary court-yard, "it is the same. Suzette thinks to impose upon my innocence, but I do know chicory from milkweed. However, she is quite justified. Any man who would accept this old rattletrap as a gift could be imposed upon by anybody in anything. And how delighted I was to get it, and how I used to mention casually, in the days when I was an engineer looking for work, that the seat of my family was the Chateau of Montplaisir, near Dinard! If anybody would ask me now about the seat of my family, I should deny that I ever saw or heard of such a place as Montplaisir. I am convinced that my cousin who left it to me had a secret grudge against me. That man was my enemy during life, and determined to punish me at his death. I can neither sell the place, nor lease it, nor live in it, nor give it away. But one thing remains——"

Here Louis paused, and, getting up from