

MADAM OF THE IVIES

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649205332

Madam of the ivies by Elizabeth Phipps Train

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
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ELIZABETH PHIPPS TRAIN

**MADAM OF
THE IVIES**

MADAM OF THE IVIES

BY ELIZABETH PHIPPS TRAIN

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THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A PROFESSIONAL
BEAUTY

A MARITAL LIABILITY

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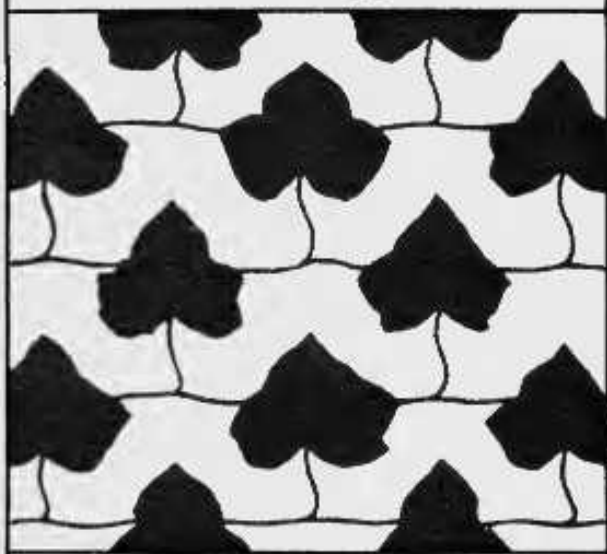
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THE IVIES

BY

Elizabeth Phipps Train



PHILADELPHIA & LONDON
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY

1898

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Madam of the Ivies



CHAPTER I.

“WANTED—A young woman to perform the customary duties of companion to an elderly lady. To a person of the requisite qualifications, willing to live in strict retirement, a liberal salary and comfortable home are offered. References required.—Apply to M. H. E., The Ivies, Eldon.”

I READ the above advertisement aloud to my mother in a voice that trembled somewhat, notwithstanding all my efforts to render it calm and even.

“Here it is, mother dear,” I said, with a foolish little laugh that meant nothing, and yet concealed much. “I have searched long enough for it, in all conscience.”

“For what, my dear?” my mother asked, with innocent surprise in her pretty, faded blue eyes.

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"For a response to the various appeals I have made to the future," I replied. She looked bewildered itself.

"You mean——?" she began, and paused in helpless perplexity.

"I mean that those few lines that I have just read to you represent the only attention that Fate has ever vouchsafed to my incessant applications for assistance in unravelling the tangled thread of my destiny," I answered, in a tone of solemn significance.

"But I don't see, Dorothy——"

"No, of course you don't, you unsuperstitious little soul!" I cried, with a laugh that was really now the proper thing, the precious little woman's utter lack of comprehension was so genuine and amusing. "You were born a generation too early for endowment with all the marvellous psychical gifts which are the birthright of my era. We of this age can look into the future as well as divine the thoughts of our fellows, and in this bit of typographical matter I can see what life holds in store for me as if I were at the end

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instead of the beginning of existence. I see Kismet written all over this advertisement, where you see but the expressed needs of a fellow-mortal."

She still looked dubious and uncertain.

"What is it you mean?" she asked, a little impatiently for her.

Her want of sympathy with my mood somewhat sobered and steadied it. Mother and daughter as we were, loving each other fondly though we did, we were of such absolutely contrasting natures and temperaments that we rarely understood each other by intuition; we never fully entered into each other's joys and sorrows. I went over to the low chair where she sat with her sewing lying idle in her lap, and knelt down beside her. I took her small hands, worn with much labour and ceaseless industry, into mine, and raised an earnest and serious face to hers.

"Dearest," I said, "you are going to be annoyed with me again; you are going to feel again that you have just cause to consider me foolish and inconsequent. Forgive