

The Lady Paramount

"That's a long story," said Miss Sandus. "When you're married and come to stay with me in Kensington, I'll ask the literary man to dinner. Perhaps he'll give you his account of the affair. Ah, here's your ambassador returned," she exclaimed all at once, as Father Angelo, his beads swinging beside him, appeared advancing down the pathway.

"Well, Father——?" Susanna questioned, looking at him with eyes that were dark and anxious.

"Your cousin is a very headstrong person," said Father Angelo. "He refuses to accept your offer. He swept it aside like a whirlwind."

"Ah,—who told you he would?" crowed Miss Sandus.

"He is here to speak with you in person. He is waiting in the loggia," said Father Angelo.

Susanna leaned back in her chair. She had turned very pale.

"I think I am going to faint," she said.

"For mercy's sake, *don't*," Miss Sandus implored her, starting.

"I won't," Susanna promised, drawing a deep breath. "But you will admit I have some provocation. Must I—must I see him?"