

THE WOMAN

(a play in two acts)

RG GREGORY

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THE WOMAN

was first performed by The Wyvern School (Eastleigh) Drama Club in 1961.
It has since been performed by adult companies.

THE WOMAN is something of a morality play, maybe a parable. Although set in *primitive* times, it contains (and retains) strong contemporary resonances. People may now lead more complicated lives, but, at heart, we are all simple souls, innocent (in our own self-view) and ignorant, as we have always been.

Since 1959 RG Gregory has written all his plays to be performed in-the-round. They are free of interpretative hints and all but the most factual stage directions. The playwright's job is to provide the dialogue, not attempt to usurp the roles of actor (and director) by providing external hints about how those words should be presented.

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(a play in two acts)

CHARACTERS

The Woman

The Plots

King Dolphin
Queen Anjina
Willow
Edith
Lydia
Toxin

The Delts

Queen Marl
Chill
Long
Short
Milly
Albert
Women of the Delts

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE

Enter THE WOMAN

The Woman:went up the hill to fetch.....
are all the children in their beds
it's past.....all the queen's horses and all.....
couldn't put humpty in prison again.....

She collapses

Enter Edith and Lydia

Edith: lydia my sweet that's too outrageous
how dare you put your family tree
in the same field as mine

Lydia: same field – my dear my tree would die
of shame to share such common soil
your tree is little better than a sapling

Edith: better to be young than stunted

Lydia: stunted – a family giving so much
in blood and honour to the community
and you call it stunted – my own dear father
who let himself be stoned to death
singing a patriotic song in the last war
against the delts – what finer man.....

Edith: what spit and polish – there's not a person
in this camp who doesn't know the truth
about your father

Lydia: malicious slander

Edith: my uncle leon was in that battle
your father didn't mean to let himself
be killed – he'd had too much to drink
and he walked into the wrong lines
singing at the top of his voice

Lydia: my dear how vicious – my family has always been
loyal and sober in the face of duty
which is more than can be said....

Edith: not my great-great-grandfather again

Lydia: why not if we must start washing dirty linen

Edith: because he wasn't really one of us

Lydia: of course he was – drunks criminals and traitors
grow by the bushel on your family tree

Edith: there's not a single stain upon our pedigree
my so-called great-great-grandfather
did not belong to us – we've had an expert
trace our family back by the latest methods
that man was never of our stock

he was grafted on to us by trickery

Lydia: how can you be so snobbish

Edith: i'm not a snob

Lydia: oh yes you are my dear – denying flesh and blood

Edith: i'm not denying flesh and blood – i'm simply lopping off a dead branch from an otherwise perfect tree

The Woman: what makes you come so soon

Edith: i beg your pardon

The Woman: you used to come....

Lydia: i hope she's not talking to us

The Woman: but now you come at noon

Edith: the woman's mad

Lydia: i think we ought to move away she might attack us

Edith: what a nerve to talk to us like that

Lydia: perhaps she's ill

Edith: what's she doing out here if she's ill she's nothing to do with us

The Woman: heigh-ho....rowley

Lydia: heigh-ho....disgusting

Edith: rowley – really

The Woman: a lily-white duck came and gobbled me up

Lydia: my dear – look at her eyes

Edith: where has she come from

Lydia: she can't be one of us – she frightens me

The Woman: save me from the spider

Lydia: the spider

Edith: take your hands off me – how dare you touch me i want nothing to do with you

Lydia: who can she be

Edith: we ought to go back to the walls

Lydia: and leave her

The Woman: may i go with you my pretty maid