



A Woman of Temperament

Lucile Duff Gordon

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In her own words, the story of a remarkable woman who built an international fashion empire, survived the sinking of the Titanic, and invented the catwalk show.

Left a near-penniless single mother and divorcée by the collapse of her first marriage, Lucile Duff Gordon began her fashion career cutting out dresses on the floor of her house and ended it as proprietor of Maison Lucile, an internationally famous brand of its day and featured in the TV series *Downton Abbey*. Now all but forgotten, she invented the catwalk show, 'diffusion' lines for department stores, and the cult of the professional model, taking young women from anonymity in the suburbs of London to international stardom. She designed theatrical costumes for the stars of the day, wrote a fashion column, and became confidante to the famous names of her day on both sides of the Atlantic – and yet she is now known principally for the scandal surrounding her escape from the Titanic in an almost empty lifeboat.

Formerly published as *Discretions and Indiscretions* in 1932, Lucile's autobiography is reissued on the centennial commemoration of the Titanic disaster with a foreword by her great-great-granddaughter Camilla Blois. *A Woman of Temperament* is a fascinating glimpse into a remarkable woman, the vanished, glittering world she moved in, and the birth of modern fashion.

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