

Literary Analysis – Step 1- Example

“The Lady, or the Tiger?” by Frank Stockton

When "The Lady, or the Tiger?" came out in an issue of a popular magazine *Century* in 1882, it was an immediate hit.

The late 19th century was a time when most people could read and many people had leisure time and a bit of extra money to afford entertainment. Books and stories were a centerpiece of pop culture. The phonograph had been invented and there were more and more of them in homes during this time but it would be decades before silent movies, radio, 'talkies' or television would be available.

Reading, and especially reading aloud for the whole family, was the way people would relax in the evening. So writers were rock stars and stories were their Top 40 hits.

Frank R. Stockton was an established writer. He had already published a novel and some other stories. His children's stories were especially well liked.

Stockton had had an interesting early career. He was the son of a prominent Methodist minister in Philadelphia. His father disapproved of Frank's 'frivolous' writing so when Frank married he moved to Nutley, New Jersey and, of all things, supported his family as a hot dog eating champion. [his record was eating 2.5 hot dogs and buns in 60 seconds! He wouldn't do very well in competitions today, would he?] When his father passed away in 1860 Frank returned to Philadelphia to work for the newspaper owned by his brother. From there his published career began and grew.

Stockton wrote this story [first titled "In the King's Arena"] to entertain friends and other writers at a party. His audience loved it and talked about it at the party and for quite a while afterward. Friends urged him to publish it, so he re-worked it, expanded it and submitted it to *Century*, where it was accepted and given its current title by the magazine editor.

"The Lady, or the Tiger?" reads like a fairy tale. It is meant for a more thoughtful audience, however, as you are about to see.

Now, time to read and enjoy "The Lady, or the Tiger?" There are many many copies of the story available, but do download [THIS](#) version, because it has the line numbers that we'll use for reference all the way through the analysis steps ahead.

Don't short change yourself; use the 'W-O-R-D' pauses as you go along. [Literary Analysis Series #1] I've recorded the story to give you a bit of support. Get it [HERE](#) with the "W-O-R-D" pauses to remind you. Or download [HERE](#) without them.

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