Artemesia D'Ecca

The Secret of Jules and Josephine

The Secret of Jules & Josephine

by Artemesia D'Ecca

PHÆTON

The Secret of Jules and Josephine

An Art Deco Fairy Tale

by
Artemesia D'Ecca

PHÆTON

The Secret of Jules and Josephine

FIRST PUBLISHED IN THE U.K. & IRELAND 2007
Phaeton Publishing Limited, Dublin.

*

Copyright © Artemesia D'Ecca 2006.
Artemesia D'Ecca has asserted her right
to be identified as the author of this work.

Cover drawings and illustrations copyright
© O'Dwyer & Jones Design Partnership 2006.

Printed and bound in the United Kingdom
by T J International Limited, Padstow.

*

British Library Cataloguing In Publication Data: a catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN: 978-0-9553756-0-6 HARDBACK
Limited Edition
ISBN: 978-0-9553756-2-0 PAPERBACK
Edition in seven parts

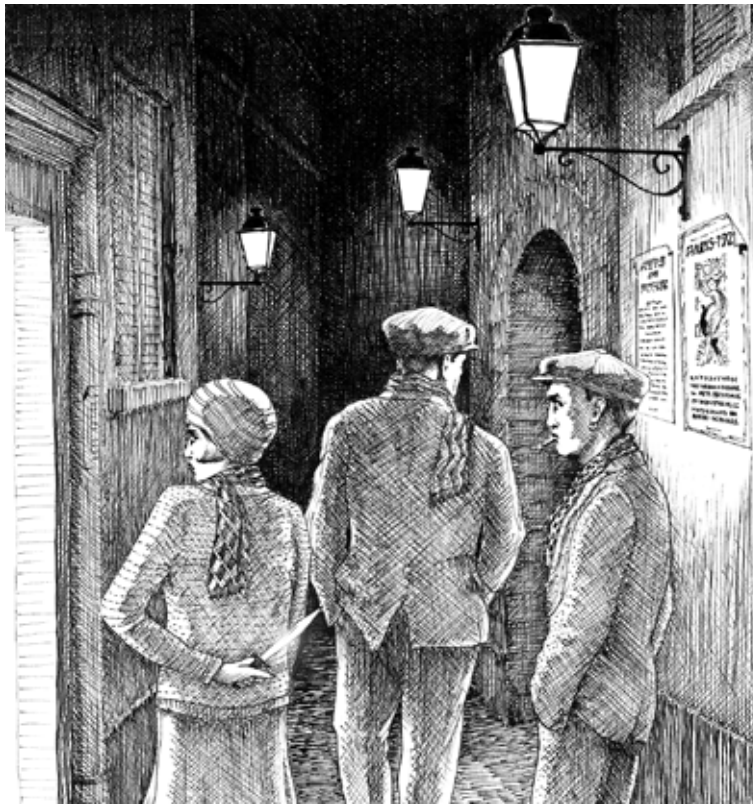
All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise) without the prior written permission of the publisher.

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out or otherwise circulated, without the publisher's prior consent in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published, and with a similar condition imposed on all subsequent purchasers.

This book is a work of fiction: names, characters, places, organisations, and incidents are either products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, organisations, or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

Illustrations

	PAGE
Paris Apaches	FRONTISPIECE
Murder at Place de l'Opéra	1
Scene of the Crime	2
A Crowded Bed	5
The House at Fairy's Leap	13
Jules & Josephine	71
The Silver Poodle Club	141
The Concierge at the Ritz	163
Finn's Room	172
Plan of Finn's Sleeping Car	179
The Blue Train	199
A Fast Car	219
Cloche Hats	246
The Aquitania	258
The Great Æneas	279
Dancing on Deck	294
A Notice	312
Oscar	340
Paris Lights	343
Josephine Baker	354
Prima Ballerina	357
Christmas at Fairy's Leap	385

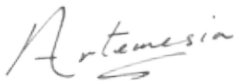


'*. . . the apache gangs were very dangerous in Paris in the 1920s.*'

Author's Note

I have been asked if this is a book for children or adults. It is an entertainment. Childlike and sophisticated travel hand-in-hand on unworn tracks. The adult world is seen through children's eyes, the human world through fairies' eyes. Cynics say it is a satire, but they would, wouldn't they?

I would like to thank—oops, sorry, must run now. The hotel manager's coming with my bill.



Contents

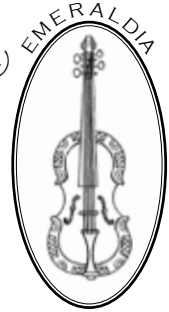
CHAPTER		PAGE
	Prologue	1
	PART 1	
I.	*The Plan*	5
II.	*A Time of Crisis*	10
III.	*Cover of Darkness*	15
IV.	*A Reconnoitre*	21
V.	*Jules & Josephine*	25
VI.	*The Fairy Forts*	32
VII.	*Homeless*	37
VIII.	*The Foundling Fairy*	41
IX.	*The House at Fairy's Leap*	47
X.	*Strudel, Zanzibar & Daisy*	53
XI.	*The Silver Poodle Club*	63
XII.	*The Guardian of the Soldiers' Fort*	70
	PART 2	
XIII.	*The Black Air from the Underworld*	77
XIV.	*Rubies & Emeralds*	86
	PART 3	
XV.	*Walter*	93
XVI.	*First Contact*	105
XVII.	*The African Job*	114
XVIII.	*The Lawful Guild*	124
XIX.	*The Recruit*	129
	PART 4	
XX.	*The Jewel Thieves*	139
XXI.	*Apaches!*	147
XXII.	*A Trip to the Woods*	152
XXIII.	*The Concierge at the Ritz*	160
XXIV.	*Savannah Gray*	167

CHAPTER		PAGE
XXV.	*The Home Front*	173
XXVI.	*Le Train Bleu*	176
XXVII.	*Mr Omera*	183
XXVIII.	*Finn*	192
XXIX.	*The Letter*	200
XXX.	*The Dining Car*	204
XXXI.	*A Change at Dijon*	212
XXXII.	*A Worldly Fairy*	220
XXXIII.	*Primrose*	229
XXXIV.	*Horseflies in December*	235
	PART 5	
XXXV.	*The Cloche Hats*	241
XXXVI.	*The Aquitania*	249
XXXVII.	*Princess Carlotta of Modonia*	259
XXXVIII.	*A Letter to Savannah*	269
XXXIX.	*The Great Æneas*	276
XL.	*The Telegrams*	283
XLI.	*Nijinsky's Return*	292
XLII.	*Elder*	299
XLIII.	*The Wearers of Horse-Bottom Wigs*	306
XLIV.	*Job Satisfaction*	316
	PART 6	
XLV.	*The Stowaways*	323
XLVI.	*Not a Hallucination*	333
XLVII.	*City Lights*	341
XLVIII.	*Trouble at the Place de l'Opéra*	346
	PART 7	
XLIX.	*A Different World*	361
L.	*The Christmas Tree*	373

EXTRACT FROM *THE SMOOTH GUIDE TO EUROPE*

Emeraldia—
A Celtic island country at the western edge of Europe.

Q. What is its national emblem?
A. The Fiddle (illustrated right—)



Q. What is it famous for?
A. Rain, mostly. Also horses and potatoes. It used to be famous for fairies, but no one there believes in them any more.

Q. But they believed in them once?
A. They certainly did. In the 1930s, the location of Emeraldia's first runway for transatlantic planes had to be changed because a fairy fort was in its path.

Q. Did that sort of thing happen often?
A. It did actually. When this writer's father was holidaying in Emeraldia in 1959, a new road in one of the western counties had to be re-routed for the same reason—the men with shovels went on strike rather than disturb a place where the fairies lived.

But that was then. Now, unfortunately…

EDITOR'S NOTE: ANY RESEMBLANCE BETWEEN EMERALDIA AND ANOTHER CELTIC ISLAND COUNTRY AT THE WESTERN EDGE OF EUROPE IS ENTIRELY COINCIDENTAL

DRAMATIS PERSONAE—THE PRESENT TIME:

JULES AND JOSEPHINE— vintage dolls, and portals back to 1927 Paris.

MAY AND FUCHSIA— Emeraldia fairies. In great danger, but always well dressed.

CORNELIA— the fairies' chosen time-traveller: '*too young* (age 8) *to be suspicious about what we tell her*' and '*hardly ever stopped talking*'.

TANSY—(formerly *Tänzī*) '*the biggest mystery in the history of Emeraldia fairies*'; also a great dancer.

BARRY O'HARA— Cornelia's older brother, more doer than talker.

KATE AND DAN O'HARA (the parents)— the last to know what's happening. (*'We'll have no chance if an adult finds out'*, say the fairies.)

PUFFY PICKENOSE— mad, bad, & Wearer of Horse-Bottom Wig.

POMPEOUS POTTY-PICKENOSE XIII— mad, bad, & Lawful Guild member.

THE RYANS—nice neighbours, fled Emeraldia in dark of night.

PRIMROSE— a librarian, '*the cleverest fairy in Emeraldia*'.

ELDER— '*unusual fairy—can depend on him for anything except small talk*'.

FREDDY AND TICKLES— the dogs.

WALTER AND OSCAR— the less said the better. *ETC., etc.*

AND IN 1927:

FINN O'HARA— Cornelia's great-granduncle, murdered in Paris 1927.

SAVANNAH GRAY— famous American artist, disappeared in Paris 1927.

CLAUDETTE LILAS— legendary ballerina.

THE PRINCE & PRINCESS GROMANANOV— fond of money & caviar.

MR OMERA— '*a fine criminal mind*'. & ☞

The names of most characters have been changed to protect their identities. The following persons whose real names were used are remembered with affection and gratitude for the assistance they gave to Emeraldia's fairies at their time of greatest need—

F. Scott Fitzgerald
Charles Lindbergh
Charles Chaplin
Coco Chanel
Sigmund Freud
The Concierge at the Ritz
and in particular— Josephine Baker.

The Secret of Jules and Josephine

Prologue

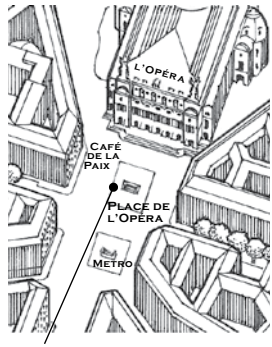
DATE: 1927

Murder at Place de l'Opéra

Paris, May 22, 1927—A man was stabbed to death last night at the Place de l'Opéra in full view of the large crowd gathered there to celebrate the safe arrival of Captain Lindbergh.

Members of an apache gang are being sought for the murder.

Investigators at *La Sûreté* are working on the theory that this was a gangland killing and that the four apaches were paid assassins.



LOCATION OF THE ATTACK

The dead man has not yet been identified, but a bottle of chloroform and a small diamond ring found in his jacket pocket link him to a major jewel robbery earlier this month. He is described as six feet tall, with blue eyes, dark curly hair, a pale complexion, and aged about twenty-five.

—Chapter 1—

The Plan

DATE: THE PRESENT TIME

'I'm not sure,' May said uneasily, as she looked at the girl with pale skin and dark curly hair sleeping in the crowded bed.

The girl had one arm around a stuffed elephant and an ancient rag doll, and the other resting against a small grey-and-white sheepdog snoring comfortably into her shoulder. A moving bump down near her feet, and a few faint yelps, indicated that a second dog was dreaming vividly under the quilt.

'She's very young, Fuchsia. I'd feel better if we could use an adult human.'

'An adult would never take the risk,' Fuchsia replied. 'Even an older child wouldn't. This one's a perfect age. She's old enough to follow instructions, but too young to be suspicious about what we tell her.'

May and Fuchsia were sitting on the mantelpiece in Cornelia's bedroom, talking about the only subject fairies ever talked about any more—the Great Terror

and who would be the next victims. More specifically, they were talking about a complex plan Fuchsia had thought up that might yet save them all.

It involved a big risk for the human in the bed, however, and because of this, he was having a hard time convincing May that they should go ahead with it.

'We have to be ready to act without notice,' he reminded his wife. 'We have to remember we're in danger all the time now, and this mortal and those two flimsy toys are the only things that stand between us and—'

'Oh, don't say it,' May said quickly.

'No, no, I won't,' he agreed. 'But all the same, just look at them,' he added despairingly, pointing both to the sleeping child and to the very odd pair of dolls—an unsmiling man and woman dressed in evening clothes of the 1920s—resting on a pink shelf over her bed. On a piece of folded card standing beside the dolls, the child had written the names '*Jules and Josephine*' with a pink crayon.

'To think that with all our powers and magic, this is what we're depending on now,' he said, shaking his head in disbelief. 'A mortal child and two strange toys that could be gone the next time we put our heads above ground. This human family won't be left here much longer—we know that—and those two dolls will disappear with them. And what happens to us then? I know that what we're planning with her is a big risk, but we have no choice.'

May said nothing for a while. She was as frightened as her husband by what was being done to their world, but if Fuchsia's plan went wrong, they—the fairies—would have caused the death of a human, and who knew what would happen then?

Fairies did not kill. Mortal creatures—humans and animals alike—killed one another all the time, of course, but fairies never interfered with Nature. Even to be thinking about the possibility made her feel strange and shivery, and almost without noticing, she livened up the fire in the grate—a move that brightened and warmed the room, and woke the small sheepdog.

He sat up tiredly, growled as a matter of principle, and if he could have talked, might have said 'here we go again,' as he recognised the same elusive, unidentifiable sense of something in this bedroom that had plagued him for years. He did not bark or try to wake Cornelia, however, because he saw no immediate threat. This annoying presence had been coming and going for most of his life, but had done no harm yet—that he knew of anyway. He would just keep watch for a while.

His growl did, however, wake the other dog, the white terrier that had been asleep under the bedclothes; and now she made her way out and settled down beside her companion—not really having much sense of the mystery visitor that frustrated the venerable sheepdog, but determined to keep watch with him all night if need be. To prepare herself for the vigil, the terrier scratched her ear, had a comfortable stretch, and a minute later, fell back asleep.

'It's a pity those two *old* humans went away,' May said after a time. 'The child's grandparents, I think they were. If we explained the situation to them, they might have done what we wanted, even though they knew what the risks were.'

'Or not,' said Fuchsia sceptically. 'If they knew what we were planning they might have taken the whole family away from here rather than let any one of them get involved with us. No. We'll have no chance if an adult finds out.'

Worried where all this might lead, May swung her feet up on the mantel, and leaned back against her husband's shoulder, feeling an unfamiliar weight of guilt and helplessness.

'I tell you what, May,' Fuchsia said conspiratorially, wanting to cheer his wife up, 'no one needs us back at the fort right now. We could pay a quick visit to the Silver Poodle Club. One fox-trot, and you'd feel like a new fairy.'

May brightened instantly at this suggestion. 'I could wear my gold and black dress,' she said eagerly. 'With the diamond beading.'

'And your diamond earrings, maybe,' Fuchsia suggested, as the two fairies vanished from the mantelpiece.

The sheepdog had allowed his heavy eyelids to drop shut for a second or two, but now he raised them again quickly as he felt one of those unaccountable breezes over his head that he noticed so often in this room. It was

a reason he slept on Cornelia's bed every night, instead of dividing his nights between her bed and her brother's bed as he used to do long ago. There was something in this room that needed watching, he thought, as he rested his chin protectively on Cornelia's shoulder and fell back asleep.

'It's okay, Barry,' she said, putting together the bravest voice she could manage. 'You came back okay from Zanzibar, so I'll probably come back okay from Josephine. I think I'd better just do it.'

And that was that. The last nervous word had barely left her lips when her cosy bedroom suddenly vanished, and she was in an adult world of the night: a dark, smoky room in which her ears were almost overwhelmed by the music of a jazz band, combined with the din of hundreds of people laughing and talking.

She found it hard to remember at first that she was invisible, and was expecting every instant that one of the many cross-looking waiters who were rushing around and holding trays high in the air with one hand would order her to leave. Everything was so different, and things were happening so fast, that she felt as if she were on a strange amusement-park ride, flitting effortlessly,

—Chapter 24—

Savannah Gray

To Cornelia, the taxi ride seemed to take forever, although the driver, to be fair, drove as fast and as wildly as anyone in a hurry could wish, blowing his horn and shouting insults out the window at whatever he judged to be an obstacle to his progress, which broad category included anything on the street that either breathed or moved: pedestrians waiting to cross; cars foolishly slowing at corners; cyclists, of which there were many; horses pulling carts; men in overalls pulling carts; dogs; pigeons; other taxis; even a traffic policeman.

'Rue Vavin,' the driver announced at last, stopping the car with a great screech of brakes.

Scott Fitzgerald pulled out his wallet and put a bill into the driver's outstretched hand, and when the hand remained outstretched, slowly added another bill and then a third, at which point the driver withdrew his hand, wished the writer a cheery good night, and drove off, blowing his horn as he did. 'I didn't want to spend any more of Scott Fitzgerald's money than necessary,' Tansy explained. 'But I think that probably worked out all right, didn't it?'

Scott Fitzgerald knocked on the door of another concierge, this time not a grand personage in a tailcoat

replied, under Tansy's guidance. 'But I want to get this letter written first.'

'Now I should be able to make things perfectly clear,' Cornelia said contentedly, when Finn had returned to the compartment and seated himself in front of the shelf-table beside the window. He laid the paper on this and then searched through his pockets for a pen, and when he had found it, Cornelia concentrated hard on composing the longest letter she had ever written to anyone.

—Chapter 29—

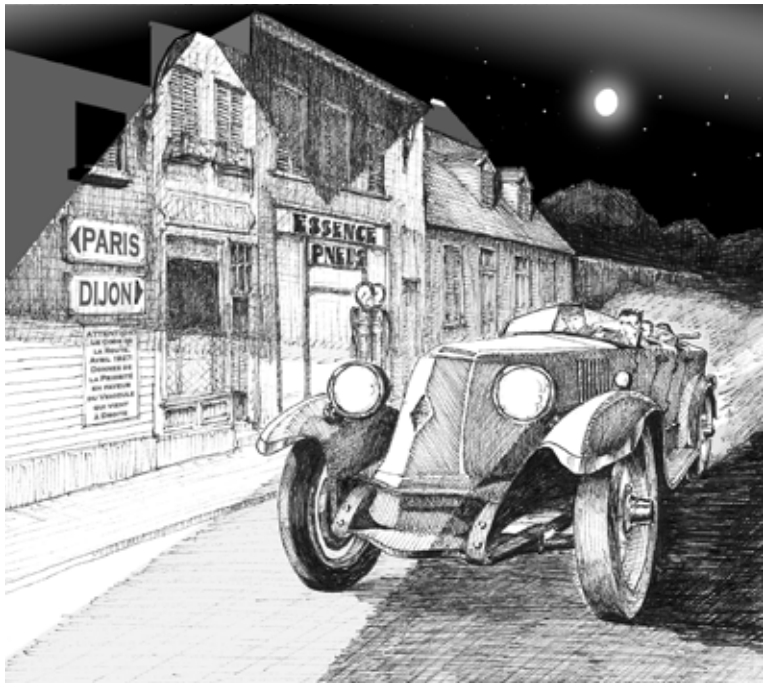
The Letter

'*Dear Great-Granduncle Finn,*' she began. '*My name is Cornelia O'Hara, and I'm eight years old. I was born a very long time after you left Emeraldia. I live at Fairy's Leap, where your brother lived, who was my great-grandfather. As you know about fairies, you will find this situation much easier to understand than my parents would, who do not believe in fairies at all.*

'*I am sure it must seem very odd to you that Tansy and I could be inside you just now and controlling what you say and do so that you are writing this letter, but we have been inside many people so far and it has not harmed any of them, except maybe Scott Fitzgerald might have bruised his foot a little when he kicked open your door, but Tansy does not think so, and says your door was not very good anyway and really did not have to be kicked very hard.*

'*You probably also wonder how we came back in time, but that really was very easy. You may remember the dolls Jules and Josephine which Savannah Gray made for you and which you sent back to Emeraldia and which I now have in my bedroom. The fairies discovered that when they went into Jules and Josephine, they went back to this time, and they are able to take a human spirit with them if they want to, and they took me so that I could talk to*

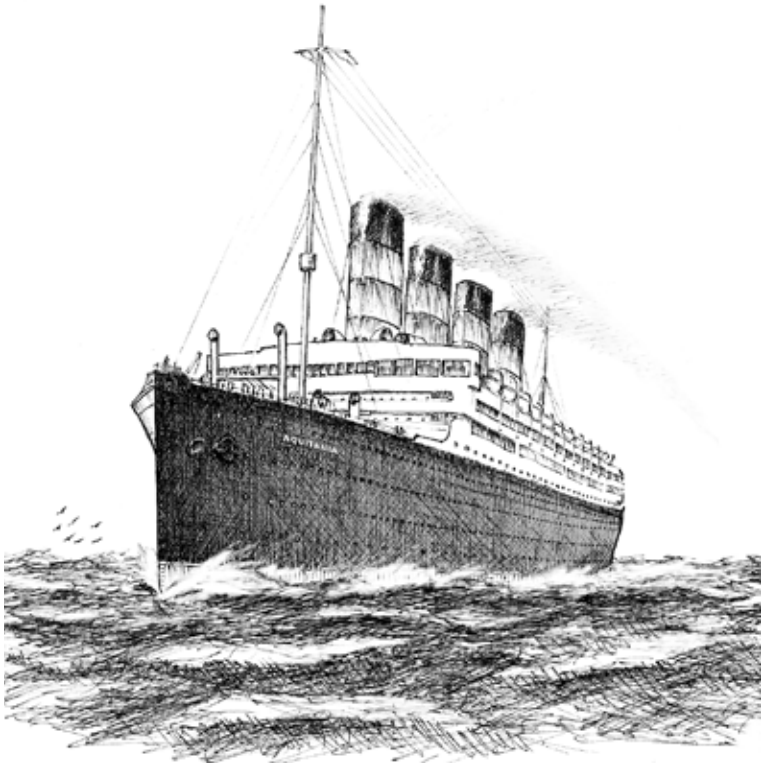
problematic visitors stayed, she would have to get rid of them before taking Cornelia away again, but for the moment, she had a much more serious worry on her mind.



anywhere in the world, Tansy had succeeded in landing the two of them—head first but perfectly intact—back on the deck of the *Aquitania*.

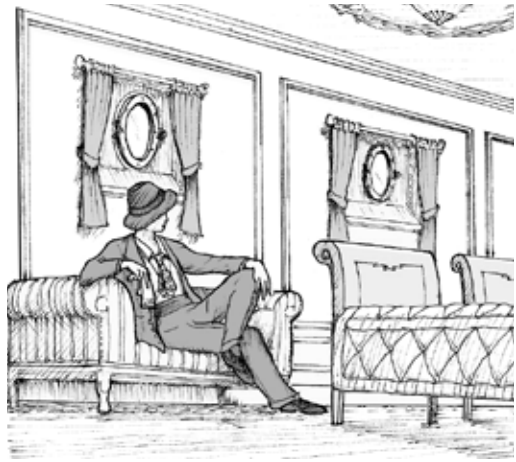
'Are you finished dancing over water now?' Cornelia asked in a trembling voice. 'I don't think I like doing that very much.'

'I don't either,' Tansy agreed. 'And we're not going to do it any more. No matter what happens, we're not going to move an inch away from this ship from now on until it reaches New York.'



and nothing shouts "artist" to the world in general as much as a big, floppy hat.

'Maybe I could also use one of Mr Durham's ties,' she said, loosening the one she had just knotted. 'This get-up might benefit from something a bit gaudier than the elegant ones you picked for Finn. So, what do you think?' she asked, pleased with herself, as she sat down on the sofa, and crossed one leg over the other. 'They're not going to think I'm a stowaway in this posey outfit, are they?'

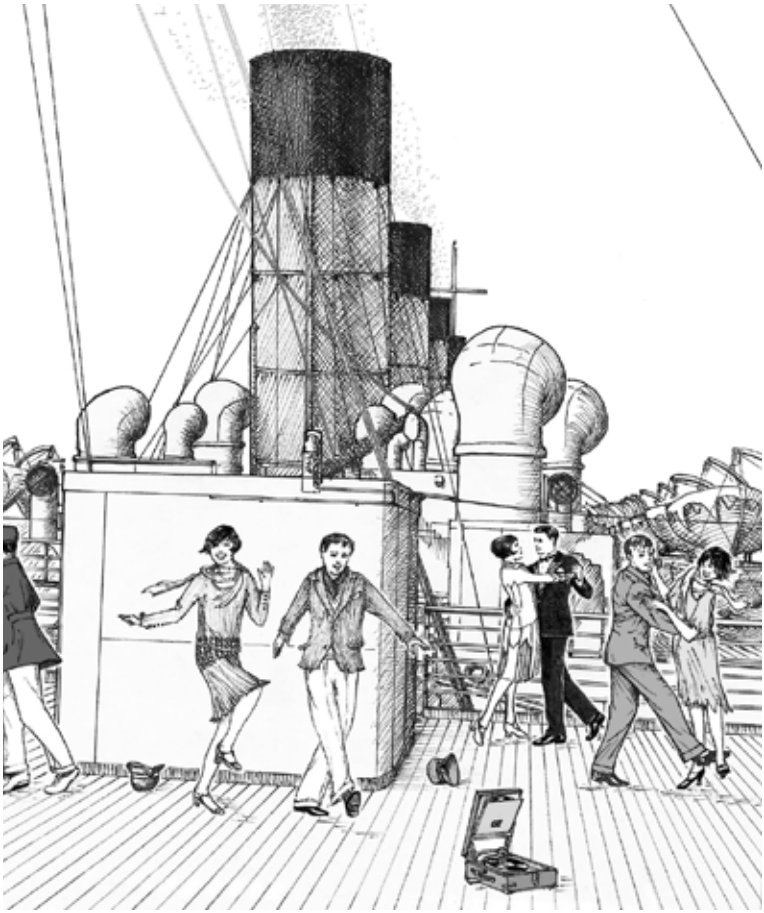


'I think we ought to go for a walk now,' Tansy suggested, the fairy having her own ideas about how to add to Savannah's credibility. 'If we walk five times around the promenade deck, that's a mile,' she added informatively. 'And they may still be serving tea in the main lounge.'

Savannah's appearance was so unusual that a lot of eyes did follow her as she walked around the deck, but she carried herself with such assurance that the curiosity she excited was not critical. Everyone wanted to know who was this slender young man with such a delicate complexion and such a very odd hat.

man chosen) won handsomely, pulling the other team not just over the line, but right to the end of the deck, in one effortless jerk of the rope.

Savannah felt most sorry for Tansy when they had to pass other passengers dancing, and this happened very



often. It was, after all, 1927, and everywhere on the ship, people were dancing morning, afternoon, and night.

On the decks, portable record players provided

An Art Deco Odyssey

PHÆTON
PUBLISHING LTD.

Paperback £7.99

ISBN 978-0-9553756-2-0

9 780955 375620

The Secret of Jules and Josephine
by Artemesia D'Ecca —Juvenile & Adult FICTION—

The Secret of Jules & Josephine

by Artemesia D'Ecca

PHÆTON