

The Marquise of O--

In M--, a large town in northern Italy, the widowed Marquise of O--, a lady of unblemished reputation and the mother of several well-bred children, published the following notice in the newspaper: that, without her knowing how, she was in the family way; that she would like the father of child she was going to bear to report himself; and that her mind was made up, out of consideration for her people, to marry him.

What an amazing way to open a story--a single, packed sentence revealing everything you, as a reader, need to know about the protagonist of this story. Your task is to unpack the sentence and draw as many inferences as you can about “the widowed Marquise of O--”. Her entire character is sketched out and embedded in this unique opening sentence.

You will make a list about the character traits of the Marquise of O--. Each conclusion you draw should be a bulleted item based on a specific detail found in the sentence, that detail could include the use of punctuation marks. Please exhaust as many possibilities as are available. Following your list of inferences, offer a paragraph which you think explains where the story heads. In other words a type of summary of how things will play out for the Marquise.

