

# **The Willing Widow**

Ursula LeCoeur



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Publishers Weekly says, "The constant romantic tension is cleverly aligned with sinister events to create a novel that's both tender and mysterious." (November 23, 2015)

As featured on USA TODAY! LIBRARY JOURNAL raves, "This debut romance with a mystery element makes for a compelling read from mother/daughter writing team LeCoeur."

THE WILLING WIDOW will thrill fans of Amanda Quick, Madeline Hunter and Tessa Dare with intrigue, mystery, and the glamorous setting of New Orleans during the Gilded Age. Cultures clash and collide in thrilling and provocative ways in this historical romance by debut author, Ursula LeCoeur. On Sundays, Mass at St. Louis Cathedral is standing room only, but on Mondays, the good Catholics of New Orleans are buying love potions and devotional candles from their favorite voodoo priestess. Fashionable and proper ladies dine at Antoine's and other centers of Creole cuisine; they dance at masked Mardi Gras balls, show off their décolletage at America's first opera house, and meet for trysts in the shadow of palatial oaks. Gentlemen idle at the Absinthe House on Bourbon Street, conduct business with relentless energy, and visit dance halls and brothels until the early morning on Gallatine Street.

From the fabled cobblestone streets of the French Quarter, to the gracious mansions of the Garden District, to the swamps and watery mists surrounding the beloved city of New Orleans, Ursula LeCoeur introduces readers to the world of two unforgettable characters: Renee Desselle is a beautiful young widow who owns a thriving French Quarter millinery. Irishman William Collins is a newcomer to New Orleans who manages his uncle's prosperous cotton brokerage. In the midst of preparations for the city's grand World Exposition and Cotton Centennial of 1884, Renee offers to assist a desperate society matron who is being stalked by a mysterious stranger. To help his uncle, William undertakes the search for an embezzler on the Cotton Exposition Committee. Passion ignites between hero and heroine as their investigations intertwine on a path that leads to love--and murder. In this witty and passionate first novel, courage and the promise of new love triumph over unknown dangers threatening from darkened alleys, and the mistrust and desperation of a complicated past.



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