

CHAPTER V

THE NICE GARDENER AND A PROBLEM

UNCLE HECTOR, who was a soldier, having been made governor of a prison, the Sergisons paid him a week-end visit in his new quarters.

The prison was on a hill on the edge of a county town. It had very high walls all round it, with spikes on the top, and a gloomy gateway with iron-studded doors which opened only to allow the prison van to rumble through, bringing new prisoners; but Uncle Hector's own quarters were comfortable and cheerful enough, and his garden was gay and pretty, with a croquet lawn and a summer house.

When Rudd heard that he was going on a visit to so terrible a place as a prison he was frightened and unwilling; but curiosity and excitement combined to conquer this reluctance. Still, he shuddered when he was alone and thought of all the bad men kept there. Supposing one should get out and break into the Governor's room for revenge . . .

"I'm sure you'd like to go through the prison with me," Uncle Hector said.

But Rudd shrank from the idea. He had a horror