

THE GODDESS OF THE GARDEN

(By John Austin Schetty.)

He was forty perhaps, not bad-looking, and a prosperous lawyer well known to metropolitan fame; and because his physician had said he was overworked and in need of a rest he found himself miles away in the country, this bright summer morning, gazing admiringly at his neighbor's garden. He knew nothing about flowers or gardens, except that he loved the former instinctively and admired the latter as a novelty. Outside of the law, which most persons agreed he knew pretty thoroughly, old and rare books were his passion. It was said he was quite an authority on them. But he was absorbed in the charms of the garden.

"How well-ordered it is," he murmured. "This side isn't! I wonder why? What beautiful roses down there near the wall! I love roses. There are hosts of them there. I am impelled to break the law and steal one. I wonder would the goddess mind?—for of course, only where a goddess presides could there be such a garden!"

It was in truth an ideal little spot. There was a winding flower-bordered walk, with great red blooms nodding riotously on either side. Pompous peonies of a blushing pink added color to the scene. A little arbor covered with the clambering vine known as virgin bower stood invitingly at the farther end in the domain of the roses.

"My lady sits there to dream love fancies," determined the lawyer. He gazed at the neighboring house. It was as neat and trim as the garden. No one seemed stirring.

"It must be very early," he thought; "I imagined rural folk arose toward the roses, filled with a sudden joy of life. The bracing air of Vinedale had already performed miracles. The physical weariness of the last months seemed to have left him over night. Birds were caroling to the new born day which had kissed farewell to night. A delicious coolness filled the air, and a butterfly brushed his cheek with its downy wings.

"This is life!" he murmured gratefully. The wall dividing him from the beautiful garden was built of stone. Where he stood it was low enough to vault over, but where the roses clambered it rose to a greater height than the man, as though to protect them.

"But I am going to have one, nevertheless!" he said, determinedly. "I will make ample restitution, if the goddess demands."

A rose nodded invitingly above the wall. "I'll get a foothold—there are hollows in the wall." And forthwith this metropolitan pillar of the law set forth to violate it with all the ardor of a boy. The door of his abode opened and the lady of the house gazed in mute astonishment at her city boarder clinging to the wall and kicking his heels in very undignified fashion as he sought to climb higher.

"I declare them city 'uns is the queerest critters—that's fun for him I s'pose!" She felt her respect dwindling, therefore turned back to get his breakfast. Meanwhile the man struggled. He meant to get a rose, and was too busy to see the door of the trim little house open and some one saunter down the garden path. Just then he got to the top. There were roses galore, but he wanted a particularly choice one. He was forced to stoop over and reach down, and when he grasped it the flower refused to part from its parent stem. More, its thorns pricked him rebelliously.

"Like many human roses," he commented, "though beautiful you can wound! I must get my knife." The next moment, flushed, stained, but victorious, he sat upright with his spoils—to give a strangled exclamation! Standing before him, very near the wall, stood a young woman in an attitude of dignified surprise. But it was not the attitude so much as the woman herself with her long braids of thick clustering brown hair that, framing either side of her white neck, fell in two long plaits over her breast and hung below her waist. Her simple morning gown of some light summer material clung about her slim,

well-moulded figure with a charm he had never observed in any imported gown of fancy price. But this was only secondary to the charm of her oval face with its delicate blend of color.

"Good morning!" he began imperceptibly. "You're the goddess, and I'm, well I'm—the guilty one! You've caught me in the act. What shall I do to be forgiven?"

"For a moment the goddess trembled between her love for dignity and the humor of the situation. Her face grew stern, but her eyes and lips smiled; then she unbent and laughed merrily.

"Keep it," she said. "Thank you ever so much," he cried. "You can't think how I'll prize it, now! You are rewarding instead of punishing me."

"If you really like them so much, take another," she suggested, generously.

"No! More would be vandalism. You have forgiven. That is enough."

"You have determined to reform? Well, I am going to cut some for the table." She turned to the flowers without more ado. He watched her graceful figure with admiration as she stooped to clip a rose here and there. When she leaned forward her long brown hair swung to and fro like pendulums. She straightened up suddenly, and met his scrutiny with a hidden challenge in her own eyes. It was not dislike, and he took it to mean an invitation to farther friendship.

"Your garden is beautiful," he said. "You like it?" she asked, fondling the roses.

"It is fit for a king!"

"We have no kings—in Vinedale," she said demurely.

"But they have queens!" he flung back quickly.

She raised her eyes; they met his in a quick magnetic glance that thrilled him with pleasure. "You must have attended a good many of them to flatter so readily."

"Is that a rebuke?" he demurred, half vexed at her doubting him.

"Where do you come from?" She parried his question with another. "New York, I suppose?"

"Right! My lady of the garden. I arrived last night and—"

"You are staying with Mrs. Bond." This with half a smile.

"Yes, why? Is it going to be bondage?"

She laughed. "Oh, no, I didn't mean that. Only she is not a very lively person." She clipped a few more roses, then, with her arms filled turned smiling to him.

"There—don't move!" he begged. "Oh, what a picture you are. A perfect Esmeralda. I want to fix you as your are now, forever in my memory."

"How very silly. I am going." She moved away, but he knew she was pleased.

"But promise to come back, tomorrow," he begged. She stopped, and suddenly flung him a rose.

"Perhaps," she said, and sped up the winding path to the house. He hoped she would turn to look at him again, but she did not, and Mr. Jeremy Weston climbed down from the wall, tingling with pleasurable emotions. "I always raved over golden-haired women," he commented, "but now I know I meant brown-haired, brown-eyed ones all the time."

Mrs. Bond proved gaunt, stolid, and given to grunts instead of conversation.

"What's the name of the young lady next door?" he asked.

A prelude of three grunts, then, "She that you wuz talkin' to? Rosalie Dale. She thinks a powerful lot of herself, Mr. Weston," snorted the lady.

"Don't blame her," said Mr. Weston, cheerfully.

In the afternoon he took a long ramble through the hills of the countryside, and coming down by way of the village stopped for a glass of milk, when he saw Miss Dale pass. With a gurgle he put down the glass and sped out. She looked up wonderingly as he caught up with her.

"I've just come from town," she said, wearily, "and, oh, I'm tired, real tired."

"Come in here and have some refreshments."

But she declined, saying she must get home speedily.

"You look annoyed," he said.

"It's warm and tiresome in the train," she answered, evasively. Together they sauntered up the road and he could not help but see that she was troubled. She was no longer as gay as in the morning. Her beautiful hair was tucked away under a plain little hat, leaving one with no idea of its profusion. Altogether she was the same, yet not the same. He sought to linger at the gate, but it was plain she was anxious to be within.

"I want to see more of you, Miss Dale," he said abruptly. "Some time I want to make restitution."

She lifted her eyes with something of that same dignified surprise that had greeted him in the morning. Then the candor of his face seemed to melt her reserve.

"You know my name, I do not know yours, that isn't fair!" she protested, closing the gate.

He told her. "Now I hope we can be friends, the best of friends," he said, "and you will be in the garden to-morrow!"

"I do not know. Perhaps. Good night!" She was gone, so there was nothing to do but go home and dream about her.

Next morning she was in the garden and he was overjoyed to find her arrayed with the same simplicity. She seemed cheerful again.

"I always cut some flowers for the table," she explained, "they both love flowers."

"They? Who?" he demanded. "My grandparents."

"Oh!" he exclaimed, with relief. "I feared you meant boarders, men!" She looked startled. "What an idea. We never have kept boarders, but—" her face clouded suddenly and all the brightness left it.

"But what?" he asked.

"Oh, nothing. I must go now. There!" She tossed him a rose. He caught it deftly. "Come back, no," he cried.

Thereafter she tossed him a rose every morning, and at the end of the week they were very good friends. Later he was admitted to the house to meet a sweet old lady and white-haired old man, who were so devoted to each other and so rejoiced in each other's company that he fell in love with them at once. The house was delightfully quaint, old-fashioned and neat. A towering old clock stood in the hall, and there was a spinning wheel in the sitting room which the old lady said her own mother had been wont to use. Looking at these things Weston felt a sudden distaste for the city's turmoil. Having passed muster at his first visit he was admitted to greater intimacy. There was no longer need of his standing on the other side of the garden wall. Instead, he and Rosalie trod the winding path together. The days passed into weeks and what had been expected to be a dreary exile from the city's joys, became instead a Paradise. He put the thought of return from him. There was work awaiting him. What of it? Nothing could make up for these glorious summer days. Mrs. Bond saw little of her guest, for he frequently dined with her neighbors.

Meantime with all the placid calm of the Dale household Weston knew there was something that troubled them. Some burden of grief or care which they did not choose to share with him. And he would have counted it a favor to help them. A month had gone by, when one day he came unexpectedly upon Rosalie, weeping in the garden.

"Dear little girl, what is it?" he asked, tenderly.

She saw it was useless to deny there was something that troubled them. Some burden of grief or care which they did not choose to share with him. And he would have counted it a favor to help them. A month had gone by, when one day he came unexpectedly upon Rosalie, weeping in the garden.

"Dear little girl, what is it?" he asked, tenderly.

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The French Government and the Douai Benedictines

The following letter from Abbot Gasquet appeared in The London Times:

Six months ago you allowed me space to call attention to the threatened expulsion of the English Benedictines from their college at Douai. Since that time, after receiving indirect assurances from the French authorities that the 'law of associations' would not be put in force in respect to our House, at the last moment the college was suddenly sequestered by an official liquidator, and we received notice to quit within three months. The period of grace expires on the 6th of next month, and on that day, which, curiously enough, is the day upon which President Loubet lands in England on his official visit, the present Government terminate by force the hospitality the French nation has accorded to English Catholics at Douai for more than three centuries. Of their right to do so, if they please, I make no question. What, however, I find difficult to understand is why the French should be allowed to confiscate a considerable amount of British property and to break up a working establishment which was purely and entirely English, and on which, relying on the honor of the French Government, a considerable amount of English money has been spent, without some serious attempt to obtain such fair compensation as is usually given by any civilized State for injury done to the subjects of another.

I am, of course, aware that there is no legal method of enforcing any such claim, but generally diplomatic representations on the basis of international equity is sufficient to secure justice. In respect to the English College of Douai I am given to understand that the authorities of our Foreign Office are unable, or unwilling, to render us any assistance to obtain reasonable compensation for the compulsory closing of our establishment and for the loss that necessarily entails, as well as for the confiscation of a (to us) considerable amount of property. For more than three-quarters of a century the property belonging to the English College at Douai has been administered in France by the Bureau des Fondations Anglaises. The revenue disbursed by this bureau is derived from the rents of English properties still existing, like the houses in the Rue S. Jacques at Paris, formerly the English Benedictine monastery, and the college itself at Douai, or from funds derived from the sale of other English properties. During this time, whilst the French Government has insisted upon retaining the administration and upon the revenues being spent in France, they have always allowed the property was that of des établissements britanniques. Nor, indeed, could they do otherwise, since these properties were preserved during the most lawless period of the French Revolution simply because they were English. Whatever damage was done to them was done at a later period, precisely because they were English and at a time when the two countries were at war with each other. For this damage the French nation subsequently paid over to the English Government a considerable sum in compensation, and by this act acknowledged that according to civilized usages such indemnity was due for injury to precisely the same property for which we ask for it now. The British Government of the day, it is true, did in fact confiscate this indemnity paid by the French because we were Catholics, but the fact that the nation retained the money for its own use and did not return it to France must surely be taken as proof that the English authorities regarded the money as in reality due to British subjects.

Why the English Foreign Office now considers that it can do nothing to assist us British subjects to obtain redress I do not profess to know. But it certainly does seem strange and not a little hard that in the year 1836 the English Government could confiscate the compensation paid to us by France for exactly the same injury done to the same property in the same way, and that now, in more liberal days, when we should not lose our own by reason of our religious beliefs, the authorities of the Foreign Office should profess themselves unable to assist us in any way.—I am Sir, your obedient servant,

FRANCIS ADIAN GASQUET, Abbot President of the English Benedictines. The Athenaeum Club, S. W., June 16.

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The Sacred Heart I would praise the heart of Jesus, But my words would find no goal. They are too weak, I cannot speak The praise that's in my soul. —Florence Crane.

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