

The GOOSE GIRL

By HAROLD MacGRATH

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CHAPTER V.

THE KING'S LETTER.

CARMICHAEL at once seized the chancellor's cabinet. To his surprise the room was already tenanted. Grumbach and a police officer!

"What's the trouble?" Carmichael inquired.

"Your excellency knows as much as I do," said the officer.

Occasionally Grumbach wiped his forehead. Then the chancellor came in. He bowed cordially and drew chairs about his desk. He placed Grumbach in the full glare of the lamp.

"Herr Grumbach," said the chancellor in a mild tone, "I should like to see your papers."

Grumbach laid them on the desk imperturbably. The chancellor struck the bell. His valet answered immediately.

"Send Breunner, the head gardener, at once."

The chancellor shot a piercing glance at Grumbach.

Breunner entered. He was thin and partly bald.

"Breunner, her highness will need many flowers tomorrow. See to it that they are cut in the morning."

"It shall be done, excellency."

The chancellor turned to the passports.

"There is only one question, Herr Grumbach. It says here that you were a native of Bavaria before going to America. How long ago did you leave Bavaria?"

"A good many years, your excellency."

"You have, of course, retained your Bavarian passport?"

Grumbach brought forth a bulky wallet.

"Here it is, your excellency."

The chancellor went over it carefully.

"Herr Captain, do you know this compatriot?"

"We fought side by side in the American war. I saw no irregularity in his papers."

"Then he is no stranger to you?"

"I do not say that. We were, however, in the same cavalry, only in different troops, Grumbach, you have your honorable discharge with you?"

Grumbach went into his wallet still again. This document the chancellor read with an interest foreign to the affair under his hand. Presently he laughed softly.

"I am sorry, Herr Grumbach. All this unnecessary trouble simply because of the word Bavaria. How long will you be making your visit?"

"Only a few days. Then I shall proceed to Bavaria."

"Your excellency has no further orders?" said the head gardener patiently.

"Good heaven, Breunner, I had forgotten all about you! There is nothing more, Herr Captain, you will return with me to the ballroom?"

"If your excellency will excuse me, no, I am tired. I shall return to the hotel with Herr Grumbach."

Carmichael and Grumbach crossed the Platz leisurely.

"How did you come by that Bavarian passport?" asked Carmichael abruptly.

"It is a forgery, my friend, but his excellency will never find that out."

"You have me all at sea. Why did he bring in the head gardener and leave him standing there all that while?"

"He had a sound purpose, but it fell. The head gardener did not recognize me."

"Do you know him?"

"Yes. He is my elder brother."

The ambassador from Jugendheim, Baron von Steinbock, was not popular in Dreiberg, at least not among the people who still held to the grand duke's idea that the kingdom had been behind the abduction of the Princess Hildegarde. Never a hot-headed Dreiburger passed his house without a desire to beat it, to scold the pined fence and batter in the doors and windows.

The king of Jugendheim was to marry her serene highness. The menials in and about the embassy felt the new importance of their positions. So then imagine the indignation of the majordomo when, summoned at dusk one evening to the carriage gates three or four days after the portentous news had issued from the palace, he found only a ragged and grimy carter who demanded preposterously to be admitted and taken to his excellency at once.

"Go away!" The majordomo spun on his heels contemptuously.

"I will stain you alive," roared the carter, striking the iron with the butt of his whip, "if you do not open these gates immediately. Open!"

"If you do not stop hammering on those bars I shall send for the police."

The carter thrust a hand through the grill. There was a ring on one of his fingers.

"Imbecile, set your eye on that and admit me without more ado!"

The majordomo was thunderstruck. He threw back the bolts, and the carter pushed his way in. That ring on the carter's finger!

"Take me to the baron."

Vastly subdued, the majordomo preceded the carter into the office of the embassy and went in search of the baron, who was in his study.

"Your excellency, there is a man in the office who desires to see you quickly. A carter!"

The ambassador jumped to his feet.

"One moment, your excellency. He wore a ring on his finger, and I could not refuse him."

The majordomo whispered two words. The ambassador rushed from the study.

It was dark in the embassy office. Quickly the ambassador lighted some candles. Gas would be too bright for such a meeting.

"Well, your excellency?" said a voice from the leather lounge.

"Who are you?"

"For this was not the voice the baron expected to hear."

"My name at present does not matter. The news I bring is far more important. His majesty emphatically declines any alliance with the house of Ehrenstein."

"Damnation!" swore the ambassador.

"The exact word used by the prince. Now then, what's to be done?"

"This means war."

"War! It looks as if you and I, baron, shall not accompany the king of Prussia into Alsace-Lorraine."

"This is horrible!"

"But what possessed the prince to blunder like this?"

"The prince really is not to blame. Our king, baron, is a young colt. A few months ago he gave his royal uncle carte blanche to seek a wife for him. Politics demanded an alliance between Jugendheim and Ehrenstein. There have been too many years of useless antagonism. On the head of this bolt from heaven comes the declaration of his majesty that he will marry any other princess on the continent."

"They will pull this place down."

"Let them. We have 10,000 more troops than Ehrenstein."

"You young men are a pack of fools!"

"Softly, baron."

"Where is the king?"

The carter smiled. "He is hunting, they say, with the crown prince of Bavaria."

"But you, why have you come dressed like this?"

"That is a little secret."

"But what's to be done?"

"Tell lies. They will suspend the catastrophe till we are ready to meet it. The marriage is not to take place till spring. That will give us plenty of time. After the coronation his majesty may be brought to reason. This marriage must not fall through now."

The grand duke will not care to become the laughingstock of Europe. The prince's advice is for you to go about your affairs as usual. Only one man must be taken into your confidence, and that man is Herbeck. If any one can straighten out his end of the tangle it is he."

"Where is the prince?"

"Wherever he is he is working for the best interests of the state."

"There is the Bavarian princess," remarked the ambassador musingly.

"Ha! A good thought! But the king is romantic. She is older than he and ugly."

"You are not telling me everything," intuitively.

"I know it. I am telling you all that is at present necessary."

"You make me the unhappiest man in the kingdom! I have worked so hard and long toward this end. When did the king decline this alliance?"

"Evidently the moment he heard it. I have his letter. Listen:

"My illustrious and industrious Uncle-I regret exceedingly that at this late day I should cause you political embarrassment, but when I gave my consent to the espousal of any of the various princesses at liberty surely it was understood that Ehrenstein was not to be considered. I refuse to marry the daughter of the man who privately strove to cover my father with contumely, who dared impute to him a crime that was any man's but my father's. I realize that certain policies called for this stroke on your part, but it cannot be. My dear uncle, you have dug a fine pit, and I hope you will find a safe way out of it. I refuse to marry the Princess Hildegarde. This is final. It can be arranged without any discredit to the duke or to yourself. Let it be said that Her serene highness has thrown me over. I shan't go to war about it."

"FREDERICK.

"Observe! My illustrious and industrious uncle!" laughed the carter without mirth. "Our king, you will see, has a graceful style." He gained his feet. He was young, pleasant of face, but a thorough soldier.

"You are Lieutenant von Raden-

stein!" cried the ambassador. "I recognize you now."

"Thanks, your excellency."

"You are in the royal household, the regent's invisible arm. I have heard a good deal about you. I knew your father well."

"Amen, thanks. Now, the regent has heard certain rumors regarding an American named Carmichael, a consul. He is often seen with her highness. Rather an extraordinary privilege."

"Rest your mind there, lieutenant. This Carmichael is harmless. He can be eliminated at any time."

"This is reassuring. You will see the chancellor tonight and show him this letter?"

"I will."

"One word more, and then I'm off. If a butcher or a baker or even a mounsigner pulls the bell cord and shows this ring admit him without fail. He will have vital news."

For half an hour the ambassador remained staring at the candlesticks. He wanted no dinner. He rang for his hat and coat, and twenty minutes later he was in the chancellor's cabinet.

"You seem out of health, baron," was the chancellor's greeting.

"I am indeed that, count. I received a letter today from the prince regent. It was sent to him by his majesty, who is hunting in Bavaria. Read it, count, but I pray to you to do nothing hastily."

The chancellor did not open the letter; he merely balanced it. His accustomed pallor assumed a grayish tinge.

"So his majesty declines?" he said evenly.

"You have already heard?" cried the amazed ambassador.

"Nothing. I surmise. The hour, your appearance, the letter—to what else could they point? I was afraid all along. Ah, if his majesty could but see her! Is she not worthy of a crown?"

"Herbeck, nothing would please me better than to see this marriage consummated."

"I believe you. We two peoples should be friendly. It has taken me months to bring this matter round. The duke rebelled; her highness scorned the hand of Frederick. Still, if you saw all the evidence in the case you would not blame the duke for his attitude."

"But those documents are rank forgeries!"

"So they may be, but that has not been proved. What remedy do you suggest?" asked the chancellor.

"I suggest that the duke must not know."

"Agreed. Go on."

"You will put the matter before her highness."

"That will be difficult."

"Let her repudiate the negotiations. Let her say that she has changed her mind. His majesty is quite willing that the humiliation be his."

"That is generous. But suppose she has set her heart on the crown of Jugendheim. What then?"

"In that event the affair is no longer in our hands, but in God's."

"Is there no way of changing the king's mind?"

"Read the letter, count," said the ambassador.

Herbeck read the letter. It was the work of a rather irresponsible boy.

"May I take this to her highness?" asked the chancellor. "I promise its contents will not go beyond her eye."

"I will take the risk."

Herbeck consulted his watch. It was half after 6. Her highness did not dine till 8.

"I shall go to her highness immediately, baron. I shall return the letter by messenger, and he will tell you the result of the interview."

"God be with you," said the ambassador, preparing to take his leave, "for all women are contrary."

After the baron was gone the chancellor paced the room, with halting

step. Then, suddenly, a flash of his ambition he waved a hand as if to explain how futile are the schemes of men. He proceeded to the apartments of her highness. Would she toss aside this crown or would she fight for it? He found her alone.

He saluted her hand respectfully. "I have here a letter. I have given my

"He declines the honor of my hand—is that not it?" she finally said.

The chancellor assented.

"Ah!" with a note of pride in her voice and a flash in her eyes. "And I?"

"You will tell the duke that you have changed your mind," gravely.

"And if I refuse to change my mind?"

"I am resigned to any and all events."

"War!" Her face was serious. "And what has the king to suggest?"

"He proposes to accept the humiliation of being rejected by you."

"Why, this is a gallant king! Puff! There goes a crown of thistle-down." Then she laughed. There was nothing but youth in the laughter—youth and gladness—"Listen to me. I declare to you that I am happier at this moment than I have been in days. To marry a man I have never seen, whose looks, character and habits are unknown—why, I have lived in a kind of horror. I am free!" And she uttered the words as with the breath of spring.

The chancellor's shoulders drooped a trifle more, and his hand closed down over the letter.

"There will be no war," resumed her highness. "I know my father. Our wills may clash, but in this instance mine shall be the stronger."

"But this is not the end."

"You mean that there will be other kings?"

"Yes, there will be other kings. I am sorry. What young girl has not her dream of romance? But princesses must not have romances. Yours, my child, must be a political marriage. It is a harsh decree."

"My highness will or will not marry, as she pleases. Am I a chattel that I am to be offered across this frontier or that?"

The chancellor moved uneasily.

"You will, then, tell the duke that you have changed your mind, that you have reconsidered?" he persisted.

"This evening, now, godfather, you may kiss her serene highness on the forehead."

"This honor to me?" The chancellor trembled.

"Even so."

He did not touch her with his hands, but the kiss he put on her forehead was a benediction.

"You may go now," she said, "for I shall need the whole room to dance in. I am free, if only for a little while!"

(Continued next issue.)

Freak of Lightning.

During the recent thunder storm the large barn of Henry Keil was struck by lightning and damaged to some extent. The barn being insured in the Farmers Mutual Insurance company, the loss was adjusted satisfactorily by Messrs. John Becker and John Albert. The peculiar feature connected with the incident was the result of the bolt which struck four horses in the barn at the time which belonged to Mr. Keil. The horses since have been as deaf as a post. Mr. Keil first noticed the unnatural condition of his teams, when hauling gravel a short time afterward. The horses which had been previously docile and start and stop at the word of command, paid no attention when spoken to. The usual chirps and peculiar signals used by drivers to start their teams had no such effect on the four. Mr. Keil realized that his horses were deaf. He can start them only by a tap and stop them by pulling in on the reins. The freak is something unusual and a like incident has never come under the observation of the writer.

Returned From Knox County.

Ben Beckman and his daughter, Mrs. Anna Lindner and her three children, William, John and Grace, returned today from a week's visit with friends in Antelope, Knox and Madison counties. While absent they visited with George Ludden, formerly road overseer in Rock Bluffs community, and with the Williams brothers and found all doing fine and prosperous. George Ludden is doing exceedingly well and was delighted to see former Cass county neighbors. The Williams brothers, three of them, are located near Norfolk, and are doing well, farming there. There was two good rains fell there, one last Sunday and another Monday and the corn crops in all of the counties mentioned is looking fine. Mr. Beckman and his daughter enjoyed their visit hugely and appreciated very much the pleasant treatment and hearty greeting given them by all of the former Cass county folks. Mrs. Lindner remarked that she had never had a more enjoyable visit in her life.

Delightfully Entertained.

Mrs. F. C. Weber entertained a number of her friends at cards last evening in honor of her sister-in-law, Miss Mollie Weber of Fond du Lac, Wis., who has been her guest for several weeks. A two course luncheon was served, the hostess being assisted in serving by Miss Marie Fitzgerald and Miss Margaret Scotten.

Miss Josie Grace of Omaha proved herself to be the most proficient player, being awarded king prize, while Miss Amelia Marten carried away the honors of the consolation prize. Among those present were: Misses Josie Grace of Omaha, Rose O'Donnell of Union, Mollie Weber of Fond du Lac, Wis., Amelia Marten, Minnie Guthmann, Thressa Hempel, Lillian Murphy, Florence Dover, Rose Vondran, Hattie Flight, Marie Fitzgerald, Margaret Scotten, Loretta Scotten, Loretta Frances Weber, Mrs. W. R. Clement, Mrs. Mabel Smith, Mrs. C. E. Hartford, Mrs. W. T. Scotten.

Pelicans Visit Plattsmouth.

A flock of about two dozen pelicans came down from the Platte river this morning and circled over the city returning in a northwesterly direction toward the river from which they came. Two of the birds, apparently scouts of the party, flew over the court house and circled toward the west meeting the flock on high school hill when all went off together. It is not thought that the institute influenced the birds.

FIRE CAUSES NARROW ESCAPE

The Burning of a Barn in the South Part of Town Causes Alarm.

From Wednesday's Daily.

Yesterday afternoon about 4:15 the fire alarm was sent in and the boys were directed to go to the home of L. E. Vroman in the Fifth ward. The distance out was long and the road hilly and considering the obstacles to overcome, the boys did exceedingly well. The nearest hydrant was almost two blocks away, and the hose was soon unrolled and the water playing on the blaze. The Burlington hose cart was on the ground, also, but the hose would not connect with the city hose, being of different size, so that it could not be used at first.

The building burned was a small barn belonging to Mr. Vroman, and had it not been for the prompt work of the fire company, assisted by some of the neighbors the fire would have spread to the nearby buildings. The barn and straw stack which burned was only a few feet from the dwelling of Mr. Vroman, the owner, and just across the alley from the property of Mrs. Hall. The wind was in the northwest or there might have been serious results before the fire company arrived. The roof of the coal shed of Mrs. Hall caught fire and was blazing in a small way when discovered by her daughter, who extinguished the blaze with a piece of wet carpet.

The fire is supposed to have started by a twelve year old boy of Mr. Vroman's lighting a piece of celluloid near the hay stack. It spread to the barn adjacent in an instant. Luckily, the horse was not in the barn at the time or it might have perished in the flames. The fire burned so rapidly that by the time the department arrived and had the hose stretched the stack and building were a heap of smouldering ruins. The water was turned on to extinguish the remaining blaze and prevent the fire spreading to other buildings.

At Teachers Institute.

From Wednesday's Daily.

At the institute this morning Dr. Winship gave a very interesting lecture lasting forty-five minutes, taking for his subject: "The Boy," the lecture leading up to his subject tonight. Tonight at the Parmelee he will lecture on "Rascals and Saints."

The institute work is increasing in interest with each session, many of the ladies of the city are taking advantage of the domestic science hour and hear Miss Rowan in her chosen line.

The teachers are enthusiastic over the primary methods and water colors as given them by Miss Martin. This morning Miss Martin had the class paint the dandelion, which was an interesting study. Miss Martin is pleased with the interest manifested by the country teachers, as they are in advance of many of the teachers in the city schools. The water colors would be a good departure from old methods if the Plattsmouth schools would take them up. There is nothing that will interest the young mind as much as nature studies and the child that is interested will grow mentally. Miss Martin gives her teacher pupils three or four primary colors and from them they fix their own colorings.

Back From Minneapolis.

Mr. J. E. Tudy, the Sixth street merchant, returned from Minneapolis and Concord, Minn., this morning. Mr. Tudy had been absent for a week looking after business there. The crops in that locality were generally very good, wheat of the spring variety going from 18 to 32 bushels per acre, while the fall variety went as high as 60 bushels to the acre. The hay crop would yield about half its annual amount. Corn in that locality is not grown much; what he saw looked very good. The corn crop from Ft. Dodge, Ia., to Omaha, being the territory in his daylight ride was of good color but was very late.

Dies at Omaha.

Billie Mayol, well known to many Plattsmouth people, died yesterday at Omaha, and the funeral occurred today. The deceased was an employee of the Burlington shops here for several years. At the time of his death he was tending bar at Omaha. A week or so ago he was in Plattsmouth visiting friends for a day or two. He was about forty years of age, and was born in England. Anton Nijka went to Omaha this morning hoping that he may find a letter among his effects telling the address of relatives in England. The deceased had no relatives living in this country.

Chamberlain's Cough Remedy is a very valuable medicine for throat and lung troubles, quickly relieves and cures painful breathing and a dangerously sounding cough which indicates congested lungs. Sold by all dealers.

Injunction Suit Today.

From Wednesday's Daily.

Judge Travis was engaged today in listening to the evidence and argument in the case of J. S. Hall vs. the County Commissioners and John Bauer. The parties testified each in his own behalf, in addition, F. H. Bishop of the United States Supply company of Omaha testified in the case.

The county commissioners were represented by C. H. Taylor, and John Bauer by Clark & Robertson, while D. O. Dwyer appeared for the plaintiff. The evidence was submitted in the forenoon, and the court took a recess until 2 o'clock at which time the attorneys was to begin argument. The court made some observations on what the evidence showed thus far, but wanted to hear what the attorneys had to say by way of argument. The court seemed to think that the only point in the case was whether the fact that the successful bidder had filed his bid after the time advertised would render the proceedings void or only voidable. He would decide this point after hearing what the decision of the courts had been in such cases. At the time of going to press the decision had not been rendered.

The Worth of Living.

Some people value their life highly while others seem to care very little for it. Some take good care of themselves, live modestly and avoid danger as much as is in their power. Others live a high life, paying no attention to the laws of nature and voluntarily shortening their life. Our duty toward ourselves, our family and our nation, is, to keep our body in health and vigor and to prolong our life by proper living. The first condition is to prevent the digestive organs from weakening. We must have a good appetite and a perfect digestion. As soon as we find that our appetite is not as good as usual, we should at once use Triner's American Elixir of Bitter Wine, a natural remedy made of selected herbs and old wine. Herbs cure, wine strengthens. Use it in diseases of the digestive organs. At drug stores. Jos. Triner, 1333-1339 So. Ashland ave., Chicago, Ill.

Has Typhoid Fever.

James Mauzy received a telegram last evening telling of the sickness of his little sister, Marian, who is with her mother visiting at Stanton, West Virginia. The little girl has an attack of typhoid fever, from which she has been suffering for a week. The telegram said that the little sufferer remained the same, growing no worse than she has been for a week, but the critical stage of the disease has not yet been reached, and until that is past the relatives here will be anxious about her. Mrs. Mauzy and her daughter have been absent about a month. It is not known where she contracted the disease, but it is probable she did so en route to Stanton.

Stagers Skeptics.

That a clean, nice, fragrant compound like Bucklen's Arnica Salve will instantly relieve a bad burn, cut, scald, wound or ples, stagers skeptics. But great cures prove its a wonderful healer of the worst sores, ulcers, boils, felons, eczema, skin eruptions, as also chapped hands, corns and sprains. Try it. 25c at F. G. Fricke & Co.

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"SO HIS MAJESTY DECLINES?" HE SAID EVENLY.

word that its contents shall not be repeated to the duke, your father. If I let you read it will you agree to that?"

"And who has written this letter?"

"His majesty the king of Jugendheim," slowly.

"A letter from the king!" she cried, curious. "Should it not be brought to me on a golden salver?"

"It is probable that I am bringing it to you at the end-of-a-bayonet," solemnly. "If the duke learns it contents the inevitable result