The Goose Gir By HAROLD MacGRATH Copyright. 1509. by the Bobbs-Merrill Company

> CHAPTER XV. THE KING.

THE vintner slowly lowered the pistol till it touched the table. Then he released it.

"That is better, your majesty." "Why do you call me that?" "Your face was familiar, but I failed

at first to place it rightly. It was only after you had duped me into going after the velled lady that I had any real suspicion. You are Frederick Leopoid of Jugendheit."

"I shall not deny it further," proudly. "And take care how you speak to me, since I admit my identity."

"This is Ehrenstein. Here I shall talk to you as I please."

The king reddened, and his hand closed again over the pistol. "I have saved your majesty twice from death. You force me to recall it to your mind."

The king had the grace to lower his eyes.

"The first time was at Bonn. Don't you recollect the day when an American took you out of the Rhine, an American who did not trouble himself to come around and ask for your thanks, who, in truth, did not learn till days after what an important person you were or were going to be?"

"For that moment, herr, 1 thank you."

"And for that in the garden below?" "For that also. Now, why are you here?"

Carmichael went over to the table. He bent over it and with his face close to that of the king, "I demand to know what your intentions are toward that friendless goose girl."

"And what is that to you?" said the king angrily.

well"-

"Go on. You interest me."

"Well, I promise to break every bone in your kingly body. In this room it is man to man. I recognize no king, only the physical being." The king pushed aside the table, fu-

rious. "You shall die for this insult!" said

the king as quietly as his hard breathing would allow. "I have heard that before. But how?" banteringly. "I will waive my crown-man to man!" "Sword sticks, sabers or hop poles? Come." savagely, "what do you mean by the goose girl?" So intent on the struggle were they that neither heard the door open and close. "Yes, my dear nephew, what do you mean by Gretchen?" Carmichael released the king and with feline quickness stooped and secured the pistol which had fallen to the floor. Not sure of the new arrival's purpose, he backed to the wall. He knew the voice, and he recognized its owner. "Put it in your pocket, Mr. Carmichael, and let us finish this discussion in English since there are many ears about the place." "His royal highness?" murmured the king. "Yes, sire! True to life!" "A fine comedy," cried Herr . adwig jovially, folding his arms over his deep chest. "a rollicking adventure! Well, nephew, you have not as yet answered either Mr. Carmichael's question or my own. What do you mean by Gretchen?" "I love her," nobly, "And well for you, my uncle, that you come as you do. 1 would have married her. Wrong her? What was a crown to me, who till now have never worn one save in speech? You have been the king." "Bodies must have heads; kingdoms must have kings. I have made an experiment, and this is the result. I wanted you to grow up unfettered by power; I wanted you to mingle with peoples, here and there, so when you became their head physician you could ably minister to their political diseases. And all this fine ambition tumbles down before the wooden shoes of a pretty goose girl." "Now, Mr. Carmichael, what is your interest in Gretchen?" asked the king pened?" tartly. Carmichael trembled with joy. Here was an opening for a double shot. "My interest in her is better than yours, for I have not asked her to become a king's mistress." His royal highness bit his lip. "Uncle!" cried the king, horrified at this revelation. "Mr. Carmichael evidently has applied his ear to some keyhole," Herr Ludwig regiled, recollecting well the day when he suggested to the beautiful young girl how easily and quickly she could secure the riches, the pretty things and the advantages she desired. It occurred in the tap room of the tavern the day he had the mysterious interview with the aged clockmaker. Yes, well did Herr Ludwig remember how he had told Gretchen that she could win the gowns, the carriages and the jewels her girl's heart craved sole-

was open. My clerk heard you plainly."

"Uncle, is this damnable thing true?" "Yes. What would you? You were determined to make a fool of yourself. But rest easy. She is ignorant where this offer came from, and, moreover, she spurned it, as Mr. Carmichael's clerk will affirm. Oh, Gretchen is a fine little woman, and I would to God given adjoining cells on the ground she was of your station." And the mask fell from the regent's face, leaving it bitter and careworn. "Our presence is known in Dreiberg; it has been known for three days at least. And in coming up here I had another errand. Oh, I haven't forgotten it. In the street there are at least ten soldiers

under the subchief of the police. Rather a curious conjunction.' The king turned white.

Carmichael ran to the rear window. in the garden too."

"Is there any way to the roofs?" "None that would serve you."

"Mr. Carmichael," said the king, offering his band, his handsome face kindly and without rancor, "I should be an ungrateful wretch if I did not ask your full pardon. I am indebted to you twice for my life, little as it amounts to. And in my kingdom you will always be welcome. Will you accept my hand as one man to another?" "With happiness, your majesty. And see," I ask that you pardon my own hasty

words." "Thank you."

"He is only young," sighed Ludwig. The king emptied the drawer, put

the contents in his pack, tled the strings and put it under his arm.

"What are you going to do?" asked the uncle, vaguely perturbed. "I am going down to the soldiers, 1

am no longer a vintner; I am a king!" And he said this in a manner truly royal.

"Gott." burst from the prince regent. "This boy has marrow in his bones, after all. But the incarceration will not be long. There are 10,000 troops on the other side of the passes."

"Ten thousand? Well, they shall stay there," said the king determinedly. "I shall not begin my reign with

war. I will tell the duke the truth. He will not dare go far." "He will be a good politician, too," said Ludwig, with a smile of approval at Carmichael. "No, boy, there will be no war. And yet I was prepared for it, nor was I wrong in doing so. "It is this much: If you have acted Already, but for Herbeck, there would toward her otherwise than honorably, be plenty of fighting in the passes.

Ach! Could you but see the princess!" "I have seen her," replied the king. "Heaven would have been kinder had I seen her months ago."

"Say to his serene highness, then, that you are willing to marry her."

"I'm afraid you do not understand, uncle," the king replied sadly. "I have the supreme happiness to love and to be loved. Of that nothing can rob me, And for some time to come, uncle

retoried Carmiculat. "The window cannot go to the Stelasthoss and or- | see, captain."

der them to liberate him." She lifted Gretchen to her feet. "I have been there, and they will not let me see him. I love him so!" "I can arrange that for you. I will go with you myself to the prison." "Thanks, highness, thanks!" Gretch-

en was hysterical. The king and his uncle had been floor. The princess and her protegee were admitted without objection. The sergeant in charge of that floor even permitted them to go into the corridor

unattended. Voices. "Hush!" whispered her highness,

pressing Gretchen's arm. "Ach! Wall, dear nephew; beat your hands upon the bars, curse, waste

your breath on stone. Did I not warn you against this very thing when you He shrugged. "There's half a dozen proposed this mad junket? A fine scandal!"

"Woe to the duke for this affront!" Gretchen started to speak, but the princess quickly put her hand over the goose girl's mouth.

"Uncle, I will have revenge for this!" "Good! Bang-bang! Slash and cut! War is a great invention-on paper. Come, my boy; you were sensible enough when they brought us here. Control yourself. Be a king in all the word implies. For my part, I begin to

"And what do you see?"

"I see that the duke knows who we are, even if his police do not. He will keep us here a day or two and then magnanimously liberate us with pro-



"I AM THE EING OF JUGENDHEIT."

fuse apologies. We shall be escorted to the frontier with honors. His highness loves a jest too well to let this chance escape. Besides, I see in the glass the fine Italian hand of Herbeck." "Gretchen, Gretchen!" said the king, Gretchen could stand it no longer.

Carmichael inspected the little yellow shoes. He turned them over and over in his hand. He shook out the fold of the little cloak and the locket fell on the bed.

"When did you get this?" he cried excitedly. "It is her highness'!" "So it is, captain, but I have carried it about me all these years." "What?"

"Yes, captain. Count von Herbeck is a great statesman, but he made a terrible mistake this time. Listen. As sure as we are in this room together I believe that she whom we call the princess is not the daughter of the

grand duke." Carmichael sat down on the edge of the bed numb and without any clear idea where he was. Free! If she was

not a princess she was free, free! . . . . . . ٠ The duke allowed the quartet to remain standing for some time. He strode up and down before them, his eyes straining at the floor, his hands

behind his back. "I do not recognize any of these persons," he said to Carmichael.

"Your highness does not recognize me, then?" asked the clock mender.

"Come closer," commanded the duke. The clock mender obeyed. "Take off those spectacles." The duke scanned the features, and over his own came the dawn of recollection. "Your eyes, your nose- Arnsberg, here and alive?

Oh, this is too good to be true!" The duke reached out toward the bell, but Carmichael interposed. "Your highness will remember," he

warned. "Ha! So you have trapped me blindly? I begin to understand. Who is this fellow Grumbach? Did I offer im-

munity to him?" "I am Hans Breunner, highness, and I ask for nothing."

"Breunner! Breunner! Hans Breunner, brother of Hermann! And you put yourself into my hands?" The tone developed into a suppressed roar. The duke took hold of Hans by the shoulders and drew him close. "You dog! So you ask for nothing? It shall be given to you. Tomorrow morning I shall have you shot! Hans Breunner! God is good to me this night! Thanks, Herr Carmichael, a thousand thanks! And I need not ask who that damnable scoundrel is who has the black face

and heart of a gypsy." "Your highness," said Von Arnsberg quietly, "all I have left in the world are these two withered hands, and may God cut them off if they ever wronged you in any act. 1 am innocent. Those letters purported to have been written by me were forgeries. Tonight I shall leave this palace a free man, and you shall ask pardon for the wrong you have done me."

.There was no fear in the voice. The duke glared at the speaker somberly, recalling what Herbeck had often said. "What you say still remains to be proved. Now, what is at the bottom

the desk and tingered the locket. The

mine, and what does this signify?"

you have I know nothing about."

daughter, highness," said Hans.

"Not yet, highness; later."

is not? What proof, I say?"

"Speak," said Hans to the gypsy.

"he speaks truly. He came with us.

For fear that the little highness might

be recognized as we traveled, we

changed her clothes. He took them,

together with the locket. One day the

soldiers appeared in the distance. We

all fled. We lost the little highness.

and none of us ever knew what be-

came of her. She wore the costume of

"We shall produce that in time," said

"Damnable wretch!" said the duke,

ed. Produce it."

my own children."

addressing the gypsy.

Von Arnsberg.

must be growing mad!"

daughter?"

Herbeck!"

michael.

The duke rubbed his eyes. "My

"The Princess Hildegarde is not your

"Gott!" The duke smote the desk in

"But if not Hildegarde- I believe

know? Ab. 7 remember. The is even now with her highness. I shall send right it." for them both."

Gretcheu? Carmichael's bewilder ment increased. What place had the goose girl in this tragedy?

"Now, while we are waiting." resumed the duke, his agitation somewhat under control, "the proof, the definite proof!"

"Her highness stumbled one night," said Hans, "and fell upon the fire. I snatched her back, but not before her again." left arm was badly burned."

The gypsy nodded. "I saw it, high-Dess."

And that was why Grumbach went to the military ball with opera glasses! Carmichael was round eyed. But Gretchen?

"The Princess Hildegarde has no scar upon either arm," continued Grumbach. "I have seen them. They are without a single flaw."

"More than that," reiterated the duke. "That is not enough."

They became silent. Now and then one or the other stirred. The duke never took his eyes off the door through which her highness would enter.

Hildegarde came in presently, tender with mercy, an arm supporting Gretchen, who was red eyed and white. "You sent for us, father?"

How the word pierced the duke's heart! "Yes, my child." he answered, for, it mattered not who she was, he had grown to love her.

"I am sorry you sent for Gretchen." anid Hildegarde. "She is ill."

Gretchen sighed. To her the faces of the men were indistinct, and, besides, she was without interest, listless, drooped.

"My child, will you roll up your left sleeve?" said the duke.

"My sleeve!" Hildegarde thoughtfully looked around.

ther," blushing and a triffe angry at so strange a request. Hans opened his knife and laid bare

her left arm. She tried to cover the arm.

"Let me look at it, Hildegarde," requested the duke. To him she presented her arm. But there was neither mole nor scar upon the round and love- friend Hertastk." ly arm.

"Why do you do this, father?" No one answered. Hans unceremoniously ripped open Gretchen's left sleeve. The ragged scar was visible to them all. And while they grouped around the astonished goose girl they heard her highness cry out with surprise.

the two pairs of shoes and the two Miss Alpha Peterson were accepted. clonks. She held up the locket, the Miss Kerr expects to go to the Philtwin of which hung around her neck. "Where did these come from?"

"My child," the duke answered, unashamed of his tears, "only God knows as yet what it means. But the not yet been selected but will be very outward sign testifies to a strange and soon. horrible blunder. The locket you hold

done, and the brought the tere th

"You are a brave man," darkly.

"I am in your hands, highness," sturdily. "In a mad moment I committed a crime. I would not accept till I had talked personally with him. He came at last. His face was hidden and his voice muffled. But this I saw-when he gave me the first half of the money I was certain I should know him

"How?"

"By his little finger, highness." "His little finger?" Von Arnsberg repeated.

The two women, large eyed and bewildered, clung to each other's hand tensely. These were heartbreaking times. Gretchen's mind, however, absorbed nothing, neither the words nor the picture. Her thoughts revolved around one thing-if she were a princess she could be happy. But the other, from under whose feet all tangible substances seemed to be giving way. she was possessed by two thoughts which surged in her brain like combatants. If not a princess, what was she? If not a princess, she was free. She stole a swift glance at Carmichael. who seemed far removed from the heart of this black business, and had he been looking at her he would have

seen the gates opening into Eden. "What was this little finger like?" asked the duke.

> shuddering. "One time it had been cut or mangled." "The man was tall?" "Yes, highness." The duke sllently toyed with the little yellow

shoes. Suddenly he laughed, but it was the terrible laughter of a madman.

"THE MAN WAS "Come, all-TALL? you, Gretchen, and you. Hildegarde; come, Carmi-

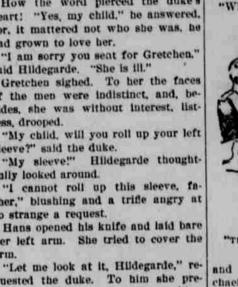
chael, and you Arusberg, all of you! Let us go and pay a visit to our good

## Continued in next issue

## Sschool Board Released Two.

The school board held a business meeting last evening at the First National bank building, the first since Superintendent Gamble's return. The "What is this?" she said, pointing to resignations of Miss Alice Kerr and ippine islands and Miss Peterson will attend the state normal at Peru. The successors to these young ladies have

Water Glass Explodes. Giles Roman had the misfortune to get a piece of glass in the little finger of one of his hands yesterday morning. While the crew was at Pacific Junction the water glass on the engine exploded and a part of "I know you to be brave. Strength- the broken glass penetrated the finger of Fireman Roman. The surgeon probed for the glass but could not remove all of it. In consequence Giles will carry a sore finger for some days.



ly through her beauty, "by the supreme right of her heauty alone."

"No, no, not through the keyhole!"

mine. I shall treasure that happiness. "And the little Gretchen?" "Yes, yes! I have been a scoundrel."

And the kirr's cres grew moist. "You are happy, Mr. Carmichael. You have no crown to weigh against your love." And from that moment Carmichael's heart warmed toward the young man. whose sorrow was greater than his own, for the king was giving up the woman who loved him, while Carmi-

chael was only giving up the woman he loved, which is a distinction. "Come, uncle," said the young king; "let us see what is going on down-

stairs." Carmichael followed them down. "There they are, men." cried the

subchief. "You are under arrest." "I am the king of Jugendheit," calmly announced Frederick Leopold. "Will you subject me to public arrest?" "And I," said the uncle, "am Lud-

wig, prince regent. The subchief laughed uproariously.

The king of Jugendheit and the prince regent! This was a good joke indeed! "Your majesty and your royal highness," said the subchief, his eyes twinkling, "will do me the honor of accompanying me to the Steinschloss. You are accused of being military sples from Jugendheit."

"May I retain this bundle?" inquired the king.

"Yes. I know what is in it. Forward, march!"

Carmichael made as though to protest, but Prince Ludwig signed for him to be silent.

An hour later Gretchen appeared before Frau Bauer. Gretchen had gone home immediately after the termination of the fight in the garden.

"He was not hurt, frau?" she asked timidly.

"Oh. no! The two of them gave themselves up readily. They are snug in the Steinschloss by this time." "The Steinschloss!" Gretchen blanch-

ed. "Holy mother, what has hap-

"Why, your vintner and Herr Ludwig were arrested an hour ago, accused of being spies from Jugendheit." She groped blindly for the door. "Where are you going, Gretchen?"

"To her highness! She will save him!" Her highness was dreaming. She had

fallen into this habit of late. A maid of honor announced that the young woman Gretchen sought her presence. "Admlt her. She will be a tonic."

said Hildegarde. Gretchen appeared, red eyed and disheveled. Instantly she flung herself at the feet of the princess.

"Why, Gretchen!" "They will not let me see him, high-

ness!" Gretchen choked. "What has happened, child?"

"They have arrested him as a spy from Jugendhelt, and he is innocent. Save him, highness !\*\*

"How can I save him?" "He is not a spy."

"That must be proved, Gretchen. I

She wrenched herself free from the grasp of the princess, who, with pity-

ing heart, understood all now. Poor, desk and spread out his treasures under the flickering candlelight. The unhappy Gretchen! "Here I am, Leopoid," the goose girl duke, with a cry of terror, sprang to-

cried, pressing her body against the ward the secret drawer. His first bars and thrusting her hands through thought was that the shoes and cloak, upon which only his eyes ever rested "The devil!" murmured the man in now, had been stolen. Nothing was

the other cell. "You here, Gretchen ?" The king covered her hands with passionate kisses. duke opened the locket, looked long "Yes, yes! They have made a dreadand steadfastly at the portrait and ful mistake. You are no spy from Jugendheit."

"No. Gretchen," said the voice from the next cell. "He is far worse than likeness was perfect in all details. that. He is the king, Gretchen, the

king." "Uncle!" in anguish.

them.

"Let us have it over with," replied Prince Ludwig sadly. "The king!" Gretchen laughed shrilly,

What jest is this, Leopold?" The king, still holding her hands,

looked down. "Leopold." plaintively.

Still he did not speak, still he averted his head. But God knew that his heart was on the rack.

"Leo, look at me! You are laughing!" Gretchen cried. "Why, did we despair. "Herbeck! I must send for not work together in the vineyards, and did we not plan for the future? Ah. yes! You are a king only to me. I see. But it is a cruel jest, Leopold.

Smile at me! Say something!" "Gretchen, forgive me!" despairingly. "He asks me to forgive him!" dully.

'For what?" "For being a villain! Yes," his voice keen with agony, "I am the king of this woman I have called my child?" Jugendheit. But am I less a man for that? Ah, God help me, I have a bowed before this parental agony. right to love like other men! Do not doubt me, Gretchen; do not think that I played with you. I love you better than my crown, better than my hon-Dess?"

Para .

or!"

CHAPTER XVI.

## TWIN LOCKETS.

ARMICHAEL tramped about his room restless, uneasy, starting at sounds. He was waiting for Grumbach and his confreres. Anything but this suspense. A full day! And deeper, firmer, became his belief and conviction that Grumbach's affair vitally concerned her highness. He welcomed the knock on his door. Grumbach

came in carrying under his arm a small bundle. "Where are your companions?"

"They are waiting outside."

"The duke agrees," went on Carmichael. "He will give us an audience at 8:30." "Did you mention my name?"

"No. 1 went roundabout. I also obtained his promise to say nothing to Herbeck till the interview was over."

Grumbach spread out on the bed the contents of the bundle.

"Look at these and tell me what you

in your hand was taken from you of all this?" was the demand.

when you were an infant. The one Hans crossed the room to the duke's you wear around your neck is, according to the statement of one of these men, not genuine." "And the significance?" She grew tall, and the torn sleeve fell away from her arm.

en your heart then. These men say missing. He was overwhelmed, but he that you are not my daughter." steadled himself. He came back to

"And that Gretchen is!" spoke Hans, "1?" Gretchen drew closer to Hildegarde.

The duke studied the portrait of the shut it. Then he went to the drawer mother and then the faces of these two again and returned with the countergirls. Both possessed a resemblance, parts. He laid them side by side. The only it seemed now that Gretchen was pearest to the portrait and Hildegarde "Carmichael," he said, "will you nearest to the doubt.

please help me? Do I see these things "You say she wore the costume of a or do 1 not? And if I do which is gypsy child when you lost her?" said the duke.

Grumbach answered: "This, highness. I took these from the little princess with my own hands. They have never been out of my keeping. Those "Why, those are mine!" exclaimed Gretchen excitedly.

"You see?" said Von Arnsberg. "Would you not like to be a princess, Gretchen?"

A princess! Gretchen's heart fluttered. A princess! She laid her head on Hildegarde's shoulder. She was weak, and this was some dream.

"But who, then, am 1?" asked Hildegarde.

"Patience, your highness," said Car-"Tell what you know," said Hans to the gypsy. "Highness, he alone knows "Patience!" wearly. "You say pathe man who brought about all this." tience when my heart is dying inside "The archplotter of this damnable my breast! Patience! Who, then, is conspiracy?" The duke's eyes became abve, his face, his whole body. Every "God knows, highness?" Hans stood beat of his heart cried out for vengeance. "Who is he? Tell me! Give "But what proof have you that she him to me, man, and all of you shall go free. Give him into these hands. "Would there be two lockets, high-His name!" The duke's hands worked convulsively as if they were already "More proof than this will be needround the throat of this unseen, implacable enemy. He was terrible in this moment. "Highness," said the gypsy, bowing,

The gypsy produced a letter. It had to be held carefully, as it was old and tattered. The duke read it. Beyond that it made the original offer it was worthless. The handwriting was palpably disguised. The duke flung the missive to the floor.

"Fool! Is that all you have? Tell me what you know, man, or I shall have you shot in the morning, immunity or no immunity! Quick!"

"Highness," said the gypsy, thoroughly alarmed. "this is how it hap- Remember, we sell gasoline, dry pened. My band was staying at the time in Dreiberg. We told fortunes and exhibited an Italian puppet show. The letter came first. I was poor and sometimes desperate. I was to take plies. We vulcanize your tires people."

"Ah!" interrupted the duke, with a despairing gesture toward Grumbach,

"Why did you not leave us all in peace?"

Completed the Arguments.

The attorneys in the case of Houston vs. The Mayor, City Council and Water and Light company, who have been arguing the case before Referee D. O. Dwyer, completed yes-"Yes." Von Arnsberg took from un. terday afternoon and the refree will der his coat a small bundle, which he make up his finding and submit opened with shaking fingers. He had them to Judge Travis for his confirbeen in the Krumerweg that afternoon. mation. The case is one that has been hanging fire for some time and the plaintiff was present all the time giving his attorney a few pointers. -Nebraska City News.

> WE HAVE TWO GASOLINE ENGINES WE WILL SELL AT A GREAT SACRIFICE ONE FAIRBANKS MORSE-3-

horse, on truck, new

One Regal 21/2 horse, second hand, but overhauled and in excellent condition.

Just the thing to pump water when the wind mill breaks or there is no wind, run the cream separator, churn butter, saw wood and a hundred other things there are to be done on the farm. Come in and see us as they are a rare bargain.

S batteries, and the best oil you ¿ can buy, MONARCH." Guaranteed not to foul your engine for a year. All automobile supand guarantee them.

Automobiles and Repairing.

PLATTSMOUTH

"Highness, a great wrong has been

"dispatch some one for Gretchen, who

The other shrugged. He had been promised immunity. That was all he cared about unless it was the bag of silver and gold this old clock mender had given him a few hours gone. "I am summoning her highness," said the duke as he struck the bell. "And, highness," added Grumbach,

lives at 40 the Krumerweg." "The goose girl? What does she