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# The GOOSE GIRL

By HAROLD MacGRATH

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"That is very generous of him," said the duke sarcastically. "Send for Ducwitz."

"Ducwitz, your highness?" cried the chancellor, chilled.

"Immediately!"

"Your highness, if you call Ducwitz I shall surrender my portfolio." The chancellor was firm.

"Do so. There are others to take up your work."

Hildegarde flew to the duke's side and snatched at his sleeve.

"Father, you are mad!"

"At least I am master in Ehrenstein. Herbeck, you will have the kindness to summon General Ducwitz."

"Your highness," replied Herbeck, "I have worked long and faithfully in your service. I can not recollect that I ever asked one personal favor. But I do so now. Do not send for Ducwitz tonight. See him in the morning. This is no time for haste. You will throw the army into Juggendheit, and there will follow a bloody war."

"I will have my revenge!" stubbornly.

"Father, listen to me. I am the affronted person. I—I alone—have the right to say what shall be done in the matter. And I say to you if you do these cruel things, dismiss his excellency and bring war and death to Ehrenstein. I will never forgive you—never, never! You are wrong, wrong, and I, your daughter, tell you so frankly. Leave it to me. There will be neither war nor humiliation."

"My dear child," he said, "I have suffered too much at the hands of Juggendheit. It was my daughter the first time; it is my honor now," proudly.

"Will it balance war and devastation?" the girl asked quietly. "Is it not pride rather than honor? The prince regent a pardonable blunder. Do not you, my father, make an unpardonable one?"

"A Portia to the judgment!" said the chancellor, his eye kindling. "Let it all rest upon my shoulders. I alone am to blame. It was I who first suggested the alliance."

Notwithstanding that he was generally hasty, the duke was a just man. He offered his hand, with half a smile.

"You are bidding me farewell, your highness?" said Herbeck.

"No, count. I would not let you go for half my ducy. Even a duke may be a fool sometimes."

Herbeck laid his cold hand upon the duke's. Then he went over to her highness and kissed her hand gratefully, for it was truly at her feet the wreath of victory lay.

"Highness," he said softly, "you shall marry when you will."

"And where?"

"I would that I could make it so. But there is a penalty for being placed so high. We cannot change this unwritten law."

"Heaven did not write it," she replied.

"No, my daughter," said the duke. "Man is at the bottom of all the kinks and twists in this short life, not heaven. But Herbeck is right. You shall marry when you will."

The knock of the valet was again heard.

"Your highness, there is a young woman outside, a peasant, who desires to speak to her serene highness."

"What! She enters the palace without any more trouble than this?"

"By my orders, father," said Hildegarde, who gathered that this privileged visitor must be Gretchen of the Krumerweg. "Admit her."

Gretchen was ushered in. Her throat was a little full as she recognized the three most important persons in the grand duchy.

"The little goose girl!" the duke said half audibly.

"Yes, highness," Gretchen's face was serious, and her eyes were mourn-

ful. She carried an envelope in her hand tightly.

"Come to me, Gretchen," said the princess. "What is it?"

"She is dead, highness, and I found this letter under her pillow."

Herbeck took the envelope.

"Dead?" Hildegarde's eyes filled.

"Who is dead?" demanded the duke.

"Emma Schultz, father. Oh, I know you will forgive me for this deception. She has been in Dreisberg for a month dying, and I have often stolen out to see her." She let her tears fall unrestrained.

The duke stared at the rug. Presently he said: "Let her be buried in consecrated ground. Wrong or right, that chapter is closed, my child. What is in the letter, Herbeck?"

Herbeck was a strong man. He was always far removed from tears, but there was a mist over the usual clarity of his vision. He ripped down the flap. It was only a simple note to her serene highness begging her to give the inclosed banknotes to one—Gretchen, who lived in the Krumerweg. The notes represented a thousand crowns.

"Take them, little goose girl," said the duke. "Your ship has come in. This will be your dowry."

An icy shiver ran up and down Gretchen's spine, a shiver of wonder, delight, terror. A thousand crowns! A fortune!

"And I shall add to it another thousand," said Hildegarde. "Give them to me, father."

In all this fortune amounted to little more than \$400, but to Gretchen, frugal and thrifty, to whom a single crown was a large sum, to her it represented wealth. She was now the richest girl in the lower town. Dreams of kaleidoscopic variety flew through her head. Tears sprang into her eyes. She had the power to do no more than weep.

The duke was the first to relieve the awkwardness of the moment.

"Count, has it not occurred to you that we stand in the presence of two very beautiful young women?"

Herbeck scrutinized Gretchen with care. Then he compared her with the princess. The duke was right. And the thing which struck him with most force was that, while each possessed a beauty individual to herself, it was not opposite, but strangely alike.

When the duke was alone he slowly passed on to his secretary and opened a drawer. He laid a small bundle on the desk and untied the string. One by one he ranged the articles—two little yellow shoes, a little cloak trimmed with ermine. There had been a locket, but that was now worn by her highness.

Hermann Breunner lived in the granite lodge just within the eastern gates of the royal gardens. He was a widower and shared the ample lodge with the undergardeners and their families. He was a man of brooding moods, and there was no laughter in his withered heart. He adjusted his heavy spectacles and held the note slantingly toward the candle. A note or a letter was a singular event in Hermann's life. This note, left by the porter of the Grand hotel, moved him with surprise. It requested that he present himself at 8 o'clock at the office of the hotel and ask to be directed to the room of Hans Grumbach, whoever he might be.

He decided to go. Certainly this man Grumbach did not urge him without some definite purpose. The concierge at the hotel, who knew Hermann, conducted him to room 10 on the entresole. Hermann knocked. A voice bade him enter.

"You wished to see me?"

"Yes," offering a chair.

"You are Hermann Breunner," began Grumbach, "and you once had a brother named Hans."

Hermann grew rigid in his chair. "I have no brother."

"You did have."

Hermann's head dropped. "My God, yes, I did have a brother, but he was a scoundrel."

"Perhaps he was a scoundrel. He is—dead!" softly.

"God's will be done!" But Hermann's face turned lighter.

"As a boy he loved you."

"And did I not love him?" said Hermann fiercely. "Did I not worship that boy, who was more like a son to me than a brother?"

"I knew your brother. I knew him well. He was not a scoundrel, only weak. He went to America and became successful in business. He fought with the north in the war. He was not a coward. He did his fighting bravely and honorably. He died facing the enemy, and his last words were of you. He begged your forgiveness. He implored that you forget that black moment. He was young, he said, and they offered him a thousand crowns. In a moment of despair he fell."

"Despair! Did he confess?"

"Yes."

"Did he tell you to whom he sold his honor?"

"That he never knew. A gypsy from the hills came to him, so he said."

"From Juggendheit?"

"I say that he knew nothing. He be-

lieved that the gypsy wanted her highness to hold for ransom. Hans spoke of a girl called Tekla."

"Tekla? Ah, yes; Hans was in love with that doll face."

"Hans followed the band of gypsies into the mountains. The real horror of his act did not come home to him till then. Ah, the remorse! But it was too late. They dressed the little one in rags. But when I ran away from them I took her little shoes and cloak and locket."

Hermann was on his feet. Grumbach's eyes were as bright and glowing as coals.

Hermann leaned forward.

"Is it you, Hans, and I did not know you?"

"It is I, brother."

"My God!" Hermann sank down weakly.

**CHAPTER VIII**  
THE SOCIALISTS.

THE ceiling spun and the gaslight separated itself into a hundred flames before the gaze of the amazed Hermann. "You said he was dead!" he gasped to Grumbach. "So I am to the world, to you and to all who knew me," quietly.

"Why have you returned? The duke will hang you."

"Perhaps I am a fool, perhaps I am willing to pay the penalty of my crime. At least that was uppermost. I have learned that her highness has been found, and the rope is not made that will fit my neck. Will you denounce me, brother?"

"I?"

"Why not? Five thousand crowns still hang over me."

"Blood money for me? No, Hans!"

"Besides, I have made a will. At my death you will be rich."

"Rich?"

"Yes, Hermann. I am worth 200,000 crowns."

Hermann breathed with effort.

"But riches are not everything."

"Sometimes they are little enough," Hans agreed.

"Oh, why did you do it?"

"Have I not told you, Hermann? There is nothing more to be added." Then, with rising passion: "Nothing more now that my heart is blistered and scarred with regret and remorse. God knows that I have repented and repented. I went to war because I wanted to be killed. They shot me here and here and here, and this saber cut would have split the skull of any other man. But it was willed that I should come back here."

"My poor brother! You must fly. The chancellor is suspicious."

"I know that. But since you, my brother, failed to identify me certainly his excellency will not. And you will not betray me when I tell you that I have returned principally to find out whence came those thousand crowns."

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**MINDEN TOT WAS NEARLY DROWNED**

Minden, April 13.—The members of Mr. T. J. Archer's family were very much excited one day last week when their little daughter, seven years old narrowly escaped drowning. She was coasting on a little hill near the river, and when her sleigh began to approach the water she threw herself off, but the sleigh went into the river. Her mother went to Mr. Baker's to get him to recover the sleigh when it had gone that far, but the child followed along the shore thinking her sleigh would come near the shore, and she could get it herself. While running along the shore a snow bank gave way with her and she fell into the water shoulder deep, but succeeded in climbing out without much difficulty. The chill and exertion was too much for her, and she became exhausted before reaching the house. When discovered she could not speak, and was quite unconscious for two hours.

**OBITUARY**

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Islay, April 12.—The residents of this community deeply regret the news of the death of the late Mrs. John Murchison, of Saskatchewan. Her maiden name was Miss Maggie McKay, daughter of the late Andrew and Mrs. McKay, of Glenarm. Deceased was well known in this vicinity, and highly esteemed. The sympathy of the many friends of Mr. Murchison in this district is extended to him, and also to the family of deceased in their sad bereavement.

**Excursion To Guelph**

The Farmers' Excursion to Guelph this year will be run on June 20th.

Graceful picture hats of straw are large as to brim as well as crown.

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Ache they would be almost priceless to those who suffer from this distressing complaint; but fortunately their goodness does not end here, and those who once try them will find these little pills valuable in so many ways that they will not be willing to do without them. But after all sick head-

Is the basis of so many lives that here is where we make our great boast. Our pills cure it while others do not.

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**CARTER MEDICINE CO., NEW YORK.**

Small Pill. Small Dose. Small Price.

"Ah! find that out, Hans; yes, yes!" Hermann began to look more like himself. "But what was your part?"

"Mine? I was to tell where her highness and her nurse were to be at a certain hour of the day, nothing more. My running away was the expression of my guilt; otherwise they would never have connected me with the abduction."

Hans rose.

"Hans, have you no other greeting?" Hermann asked, spreading out his arms.

The wanderer's face beamed, and the brothers embraced.

"You forgive me, then, Hermann?"

"Must I not, little Hans? You are all that is left me of the blood. True, I swore that if ever I saw you again I should curse you."

"And what has become of the principal cause—Tekla?"

"Bah! She is fat and homely and the mother of seven squalling children."

"What a world! To think that Tekla should be at the bottom of all this tangle!"

A rap on the door startled them. Hans slowly opened the door. Carmichael stood outside.

(To be continued.)

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**WILL LINDSAY HAVE CHILDREN'S SHELTER? COMMITTEE ON SCHEME IS SELECTED**

Last evening the Children's Aid Society met in the council chamber and transacted routine business. The attendance was large. A number of needy cases were discussed and some action will be taken to relieve the situation.

The matter of procuring a Children's Shelter was discussed and it was the opinion of the meeting that such an institution would greatly aid the society in their work and enable them to care for more children and to do it more efficiently. A committee comprising Dr. White, John Rogers, George Rae, Mrs. E. E. Sharpe, Mrs. G. A. Milne, Mayor Wood, Aid. McClory and Magistrate Moore was appointed to meet the committee in charge of the old Home for the Aged fund. It is proposed to appropriate this money, some \$3,000, for the use of the Children's Aid Society in procuring a shelter. It has not been decided whether to build or buy a suitable building. Some of those present thought that a building costing about \$2000 would meet the immediate needs of the society. The secretary was instructed to write to neighboring towns and ascertain the plans on which other shelters are run. A number of citizens have offered to assist in furnishing the shelter. The two committees will in all probability meet in the course of a week or ten days.

A Shelter for Lindsay, which is a crying necessity, gives promise of being an assured fact, as a result of last night's meeting. Great credit is due the indefatigable secretary of the society, Mrs. Sharpe, whose persistent efforts along this line give promise of being crowned with success. That such an institution is necessary those who are closely identified with child saving work can testify. Innumerable cases, pathetic and deplorable in their nature are encountered by the Society right along, but the work has been handicapped to a great extent owing to the lack of an institution where unfortunate children can be temporarily housed until suitable homes are provided.

**OBITUARY**

**MRS. T. McNERNEY**

Victoria Road, April 9.—The death at Bexley of an old and respected lady in the person of Mrs. McNERNEY took place on the seventh day of March. The deceased lady will be greatly missed as she was a general favorite with all her neighbors and acquaintances, although a lady of ninety-four years. She will be long remembered both here and in Lindsay, where she spent the most of her early days. Mr. Daniel O'Keefe, of Lindsay is her nephew. She passed away in the arms of her daughter, Mrs. James O'Connor.

Her funeral took place on March 9th and proceeded to the R. C. church, Victoria Road, where Rev. O'Sullivan celebrated requiem mass and spoke very highly of the deceased.

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