

# The Goose Girl

By HAROLD MacGRATH

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## SYNOPSIS

Gretchen, a goose girl, meets a mysterious mountaineer and Carmichael, American consul in Dresden, Kingdom of Ehrenstein. Carmichael loves Princess Hid grade.

"So he did." Carmichael ably concealed his surprise.

He was willing to swear that she was making fun of him. Was she a simple goose girl? Was she not something more, something deeper? War clouds were forming in the skies. They might gather and strike at any time. And who but the French could produce such a woman spy? Ehrenstein was not Prussia, it was true, but the duchy, with its 20,000 troops, was one of the many pulses that beat in unison with this man Bismarck's plans. He was certainly puzzled, but a glance at her hands dissolved his doubts. These hands were used to toil. They were in no way disguised.

"You have been to school?"

"After a manner. My teacher was a kind priest. But he never knew that, with knowledge, he was to open the gates of discontent."

"Then you are not happy with your lot?"

"Is any one, herr?" quietly. "And who might you be and what might you be doing here in Dresden, riding with the grand duke?"

"I am the American consul." Gretchen took a step back.

"What did Colonel Wallenstein say to you?" he asked.

"Nothing of importance. I am used to it. I am perfectly able to take care of myself," she answered.

"What did the policeman say?"

"What would he say to a goose girl?"

"Shall I speak to him?"

"Would it really do any good?" skeptically.

"It might. The duke is friendly toward me, and I am certain he would not tolerate such conduct in his police. My name is Carmichael. Now, listen, Gretchen—if at any time you are in trouble you will find me at the Grand hotel or at the consulate next door to the Black Eagle."

"I shall remember. Sometimes I work in the Black Eagle."

"Good night," he said.

Gretchen extended her hand, and Carmichael took it in his own, inspecting it.

"It is a good hand. It is strong too," he said.

"It has to be strong, herr. Good night."

Carmichael raised his hat again, and Gretchen breathed contentedly as she saw him disappear in the crowd. Suddenly she felt an arm slip through hers. Her head went round.

"Leo?" she whispered.

It was the young vintner whom Carmichael had pushed against the wall that day.

"Who was that?" he asked.

"Herr Carmichael, the American consul."

"Carmichael?" he gasped.

"What is it, Leo?"

"Nothing, only I grow mad with rage when any of these gentlemen speak to you. Gentlemen! I know them all to well. Ah, how I love you!" Gretchen thrilled.

"To me the world began but two weeks ago. I have just begun to live," he whispered warmly.

"I am sad and lonely tonight," she said gloomily.

"Why, indeed?"

"Leo, as much as I love you, there is always a shadow."

"What shadow?"

"It is always at night that I see you, rarely in the bright daytime. What do you do during the day? It is not yet vintage. What do you do?"

"Will you trust me a little longer, Gretchen, just a little longer?"

## CHAPTER II.

### FOR HER COUNTRY.

"COUNT, must I tell you again not to broach that subject? There can be no alliance between Ehrenstein and Jugendheim."

"Why?" asked Count von Herbeck, chancellor.

"One of my reasons is that I do not want any alliance with a country so perfidious as Jugendheim. What! I make overtures—I, who have been so cruelly wronged all these years? You are mad."

"But what positive evidence have you that Jugendheim wronged you?"

"Positive? Have I eyes and ears? Have I not seen and read and heard?"

"Your highness knows that I look only to the welfare of the country. In the old days it was a foregone conclusion that this alliance was to be formed. Now, you persist in averring that the late king was the chief conspirator in abducting her serene highness, aided by Arnsberg, whose successor I have the honor to be. I have never yet seen any proofs. Show me something which absolutely convicts them and I'll surrender."

"On your honor?"

"My word."

The duke struck a bell.

"My secretary and tell him to bring me the packet marked A. He will understand."

The duke was frank in his likes and dislikes. He hated secrets, and he loved an opponent who engaged him in the open. It was this extraordinary rectitude which made the duke so powerful an aid to Bismarck in the days that followed. The man of iron needed this sort of character as a cover and a buckler to his own duplicities.

Herbeck was an excellent foil. He was as silent and secretive as sand. He moved, as it were, in circles, thus always eluding dangerous corners. He was tall, angular, with a thin, immobile countenance, well guarded by his gray eyes and straight lips. He was a born financier, with almost limitless ambition, though only he himself knew how far this ambition reached. Twice had he saved Ehrenstein from the dragnet of war and with honor.

The secretary came in and laid a thin packet of papers on the chancellor's desk.

The secretary bowed and withdrew. The duke stirred the papers angrily, took one of them and spread it out with a rasp.

"Look at that. Whose writing, I ask?"

Herbeck ran over it several times. At length he opened a drawer in his desk, sorted some papers and brought out a yellow letter. This he laid down beside the other.

"Yes, they are alike. This will be Arnsberg. But—mildly—'who may say that it is not a cunning forgery?'"

"Forgery!" roared the duke. "Read this one from the late king of Jugendheim to Arnsberg then if you still doubt."

Herbeck read slowly and carefully. Then he rose and walked to the nearest window, studying the letter again in the sharper light.

Herbeck returned to his chair. "I wish that you had shown me these long ago. You accused the king?"

"Certainly, but he denied it."

"In a letter?"

"Yes. Here, read it."

Herbeck compared the two. "Where did you find these?"

"In Arnsberg's desk," returned the duke. "Arnsberg, my boyhood playmate, the man I loved and trusted and advanced to the highest office in my power. Is that not the way? Well, dead or alive, 10,000 crowns to him who brings Arnsberg to me dead or alive."

"You are very bitter," said Herbeck.

"And have I not cause? Did not my wife die of a broken heart, and did I not become a broken man? You do not know all, Herbeck—not quite all. Franz also sought the hand of the Princess Sofia. He, too, loved her, but I won. Well, his revenge must have been sweet to him."

"But your daughter has been restored to her own."

"Due to your indefatigable efforts alone. Ah, Herbeck, nothing will ever fill up the gap between, nothing will ever restore the mother." The duke bowed his head.

Herbeck opened another drawer and took forth a long hood envelope creased and sealed.

"Your highness, here is a letter from the prince regent of Jugendheim formally asking the hand of the Princess Hiddegarde for his nephew Frederick, who will shortly be crowned. My advice is to accept, to let bygones be bygones."

"Write the prince that I respectfully decline."

"Do nothing in haste, your highness. Temporize. Say that you desire some time to think about the matter. You can change your mind at any time. A reply like this commits you to nothing, whereas your abrupt refusal will only widen the breach."

"The wider the breach the better."

"No, no, your highness; the past has disturbed you. We can stand war, and it is possible that we might win, even against Jugendheim, but war at this late day would be a colossal blunder. Victory would leave us where we began thirty years ago. And an insult to Jugendheim might precipitate war."

## "Have your way, then."

The duke departed, stirred as he had not been since the restoration of the princess. He sought his daughter. She was in the music room. "My child," he began, taking Hiddegarde's hand and drawing her toward a window seat. "The king of Jugendheim asks for your hand."

"Then I am to marry the king of Jugendheim?" There was little joy in her voice.

"Ah, we have not gone so far as that! The king, through his uncle, has simply made a proposal."

"It is for you to decide, father. Whatever your decision is I shall abide by it."

"It is a hard lesson we have to learn, my child. We cannot always marry where we love. Diplomacy and politics make other plans. But fortunately for you you love no one yet, and the king is young, handsome, they say, and rich. Politically speaking, it would be a great match."

"I am in your hands. You know what is best."

The duke was poignantly disappointed. Why did she not refuse outright, as became one of the house of Ehrenstein?

"What is he like?" she asked.

"That no one seems to know. He has been to his capital but twice in ten years. The young king has been in Paris most of the time. That's the way they educate kings these days. They teach them all the vices. Your father loves you, and if you are inclined toward his majesty, if it is in your heart to become a queen, I shall not let my prejudices stand in the way."

She caught up his hand with a strange passion and kissed it.

"Father, I do not want to marry any one," wistfully. "But a queen?" she added thoughtfully. "Would it be for the good of the state?"

Here was reason. "Yes; my objections are merely personal," said the duke.

"For the good of my country I am ready to make any sacrifice."

"Very well, but weigh the matter carefully. There is never any retracing a step of this kind." He paused and then said:

"You are all I have, girl."

"My father!" She stroked his cheek. The restoration of the Princess Hiddegarde of Ehrenstein had been the sensation of Europe, as had been in the earlier days her remarkable abduction. For sixteen years the search had gone on fruitlessly. In a garret in Dresden the agents of Herbeck found her, a singer in the chorus of the opera. The newspapers and illustrated weeklies raged about her for awhile, elaborated the story of her struggles, the mysterious remittances which had from time to time saved her from direst poverty, her ambition, her education which by dint of hard work she had acquired. The duke accused Franz of Jugendheim. Search as they would, the duke and the chancellor never traced the source of the remittances. The duke held stubbornly that the sender of these benefactions was moved by the impulse of a guilty conscience and that this guilty conscience was in Jugendheim.

And was the girl happy with all her new grandeur, with all these lackeys and attentions and environs? Sometimes she longed for the freedom and lack care of her Dresden garret, her musician friends, the studios, the crash and glitter of the opera.

She was lovely enough to inspire fervor and homage and love in all masculine minds. She was witty and talented. Carmichael said she was one of the most beautiful women in all Europe.

She was still in the window seat when the chancellor was announced.

"Your highness," he said, "I am come to announce to you that there waits for you a high place in the affairs of the world."

"The second crown in Jugendheim?"

"Your father?"

"Yes. He leaves the matter wholly in my hands."

"It is for the good of the state. A princess like yourself must never wed an inferior."

"Would a man who was brave and kind and resourceful, but without a title—would he be an inferior?"

"Assuredly politically. And I regret to say that your marriage could never be else than a matter of politics."

"I am, then, simply a certificate of exchange?"

"The king of Jugendheim is young. I do not see how he can help loving you the moment he knows you. Who can?" And the chancellor smiled.

"But he may not be heart whole."

"He will be politically."

"Politics, politics—how I hate the word! Sometimes I regret my garret."

The chancellor wrinkled his lips.

"Will you consent to this marriage?"

"Would it do any good to reject it?"

"On the contrary, it would do Ehrenstein great harm."

"Give me a week," wearily.

"A week!" There was joy on the chancellor's face now, unmasked, unconcealed. "Oh, when the moment comes that I see the crown of Jugendheim on your beautiful head all my work shall not have been in vain. There is one thing more, your highness."

"And that?"

"There must not be so many rides in the morning with his excellency Herr Carmichael."

There was a sinister note of warning in the chancellor's voice.

The Black Eagle (Zum Schwartzstein Adler) in the Adlergasse was 200 years old and had been in the Bauer family all that time.

Had the manager, Frau Bauer, or Frau Wirtin, as she was familiarly called, been masculine she would have been lightly dubbed *Bauer VII.* She

was a widow. She was thirty-eight, plump, pretty and wise.

Tonight the main room of the tavern swam in a blue haze of smoke, which rose to the blackened rafters, hung with many and various sausages, cheeses and dried vegetables. Dishes clattered, there was a buzzing of voices, a scraping of feet and chairs, a banging of tankards.

Gretchen came in, a little better dressed than in the daytime, the change consisting of coarse stockings and shoes of leather, of which she was correspondingly proud.

"Will you want me, Frau Wirtin, for a little while tonight?" she asked.

"Till 9. Half a crown as usual."

Gretchen sought the kitchen and found an apron and cap. These half crowns were fine things to pick up occasionally, for it was only upon occasions that she worked at the Black Eagle. In an obscure corner sat the young vintner. His face brightened as he saw the goose girl. In the very corner itself was the mountaineer who possessed a Swiss watch and gave golden coins to goose girls. He was busy engaged in gnawing the leg of a chicken.

Carmichael was often a visitor at the Black Eagle. Later he stepped into the big hall in his evening clothes.

"Good evening, Frau Wirtin."

"Good evening, your excellency."

She was quite flattered when this fine young man spoke to her. "What is on your mind?"

"Many things." He saw Gretchen. "The goose girl," he murmured suddenly. "Is Gretchen one of your waitresses?"

"She comes in once in awhile. She's a good girl. I'm glad to help her."

Gretchen saw Carmichael and nodded.

"I shall be at yonder table," he said, indicating the vacant chair. Carmichael made his way to the table. Across the room he had not recognized the vintner, but now he remembered. He had crowded him against a wall

two or three days before. The vintner turned back the lid of his stein and drank slowly.

Carmichael sat down. Now, this vintner's face was something familiar. Carmichael stirred his memory. It was not in Dreiberg that he had seen him before. But where?

Gretchen arrived with the tankard, which she sat down at Carmichael's elbow.

"Will you not join me, herr?" he invited.

"Thank you," said the vintner.

Gretchen took up the empty tankard and made off. Carmichael was first to speak.

"She is the handsomest peasant I ever saw or knew."

"You know her? There was a spark in the vintner's eyes."

"Only for a few days. She interests me," Carmichael produced a pipe and lighted it.

"Ah, yes; the pretty peasant girl always interests you gentlemen." There was a note of bitterness. "Did you come here to seek her?"

"You seem to possess a peculiar interest."

The vintner flushed. "I have that right," with an air which rather mystified Carmichael.

"That explains everything. I do not recollect seeing you before in the Black Eagle."

"I am from the north; a vintner, and there is plenty of work here in the valleys late in September."

"The grape," mused Carmichael. "You will never learn how to press it as they do in France. It is wine there; it is vinegar this side of the Rhine."

"France," said the vintner moodily. "Do you think there will be any France in the future?"

Carmichael laughed. "France is an incurable cosmic malady; it will always be. It may be beaten, devastated, throttled, but it will not die."

"You are fond of France?"

"Very."

"Do you think it wise to say so here?"

"I am the American consul; nobody minds my opinions."

"The American consul," repeated the vintner.

Gretchen set the tankards down, and Carmichael put out a silver crown.

"And do not bother about the change."

"All Americans are rich," she said soberly.

The vintner laughed pleasantly.

[To be Continued]

## Summons

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE STATE OF OREGON, IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF COOS,

A. M. Hitchcock, and Emma Hitchcock,

Plaintiffs,

vs.

May Pearce, and any and all persons unknown having or claiming an interest or estate in the property made the subject of the above entitled action,

Defendants.

## SUMMONS

To May Pearce and to any and all persons having or claiming an interest or estate in the property made the subject of this suit; the above named Defendants:

IN THE NAME OF THE STATE OF OREGON, you and each of you are hereby required to appear and answer the complaint filed against you in the above entitled suit within 10 days from the date of the service of this Summons upon you, if served within Coos County or within 20 days if served within any other County in the State of Oregon, but if served by publication then on or before the last day of the time specified in the order for the publication of

this Summons which time prescribed is six weeks, and which last day of publication will be upon Thursday the 29th day of September 1910, and if you so fail to appear and answer said Complaint by said time Plaintiffs will apply to the above entitled Court for an order decreeing a Partition of real property; said order being more specifically defined as the Partitioning and setting separate and apart from the remainder of the land herein described the one fourth interests of the Defendants which said real property is described as follows:

Beginning at a point 990' West of the North-east corner of Section 36, Twp. 28, South of Range 15, West of the Willamette Meridian in Coos County, Oregon, and from said point running thence South 26 1/2', thence West 350', thence North 20 1/2', thence East 330' to the place of beginning, and containing two acres.

This Summons is published in the Bandon Recorder, a weekly newspaper published at Bandon, Coos County, Oregon for a period of six consecutive weeks, beginning with the 18th day of August 1910, and ending with the 29th day of September, 1910, pursuant to an order of publication made by an order of the Hon. John F. Hall, County Judge of Coos County Oregon and dated the 17th day of August, 1910.

C. R. Wade

Attorney for Plaintiff

The RECORDER for Job Work.



*little house-maid says have a nice parlor anyhow*

*mrs. home lover:-*

*if you do not feel able to fix up the rest of the house begin with the parlor because there you receive your guests. it will give a very comfortable feeling to have your neighbors say, "oh! mrs. home lover has such a beautiful, tasty parlor."*

*we believe you can choose from the loads of handsome parlor furniture we have recently got in, just the thing you need. we shall be glad indeed to show you our stock of parlor furnishings.*

*these things will attract you.*

*yours truly,*

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