ROSALIND AT RED GATE

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ILLUSTRATIONS BY RAY WALTERS

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"Well, He Can Hardly Find Her Here"

CHAPTER I.

A Telegram from Paul Stoddard.

Stoddard's telegram was brought to me on the Chicago train, just at four o'clock Tuesday afternoon, the 5th of June. I am thus explicit, for all the matters hereafter described turn upon the receipt of Stoddard's message, which was, in its own terrible enough in itself, but the more when events of paper that blow about the world, the forerunner of confusion and trouble.

My friend, Mr. John Gilmartin, had gone abroad for the summer with his family and had invited me to use his house at Annandale that I might enjoy its seclusion and comfort while writing my book on "Russian Rivers."

If John Gilmartin had not taken his family abroad with him when he went to Turkey to give the sultan's eight-score lessons in bridge building, if I had not accepted his kind offer of the house at Annandale for the summer, and if Paul Stoddard had not sent me that telegram, I should never have written this narrative. But such was the predestined sum of it. I took from the boy I was chatting and with the waiter from the excellent steamer stopping the play, read this message:

Stoddard, Chicago, June 5.

Meet Miss Patricia Blodgett Annandale station. Are twenty things happen and conduct her to St. Agatha's school, where she is expected. Her will explain difficulties. I have entered her at your expense. Wire acceptance. Her will be grateful. Immediate response. Call me collect.

WINCHESTER.

To say that I was angry when I read this message is to belittle the truth. I read and re-read it with growing heat. I had accepted Glenarm's offer of the house at Annandale because it promised peace, and now I was ordered by telegraph to meet a strange person of whom I had never heard. Heiss to her story, and render my sympathy and aid. I glanced at my watch. It was already after four. "Delayed in transmission" was stamped across the telegraph form—I learned later that it had lain half the day in Annandale, New York—so that I was now face to face with the situation, and without opportunity to fling his orders back to Stoddard if I wanted to. Nor did I even know Stamford from Stamford, and I am not yet clear in my mind—being an Irishman with rather vague notions of American geography—whether Connecticut is north or south of Massachusetts.

"Ijima!"

I called my Japanese boy from the boathouse, and he appeared, paint brush in hand.

"Order the double trap, and tell them to hurry."

I reflected, as I picked up my coat and walked toward the house, that if any one but Paul Stoddard had sent me such a message I should most certainly have ignored it, but I knew him as a man who did not make demands or impose obligations lightly. As the founder and superior of the Protestant religious Order of the Brothers of Bethlehem he was, I knew, an exceedingly busy man. His religious house was in the Virginia mountains, but he spent much time in quiet, humble service in city slums, in lumber camps, in the mines of Pennsylvania, and occasionally he appeared like a prophet from the wilderness in some great church of New York, and preached with a marvelous eloquence to wondering throngs.

The trap swung into the arched driveway and I bade the coachman make haste to the Annandale station. The handsome bays were soon treading swiftly toward the village, while I drew on my gloves and considered the situation. A certain Miss Holbrook, of whose existence I had been utterly ignorant an hour before, was about to arrive at Annandale. A clergyman, whom I had not seen for two years, had telegraphed me from a town in Connecticut to meet this person, conduct her to St. Agatha's school—just closed for the summer, as I knew—and to volunteer my services in difficulties that were darkly indicated in a telegram of 35 words. The sender of the message I knew to be a serious character, and a gentleman of distinguished social connections. The name of the lady signified nothing except that she was unknown, and as Stoddard's acquaintance was among all sorts and conditions of men I could assume nothing more than that the unknown had appealed to him as a priest and that he had sent her to Lake Annandale to chase off the burdens of the world in the conventional air of St. Agatha's.

The Chicago express whizzed for Annandale just as we passed the edge of the village. It passed a crawling freight and was come before we reached the station. I jumped out and ran through the waiting room to the platform where the agent was gathering up the mail bags, while an assistant loaded a truck with trunks. I glanced about, and the moment was an important one in my life. Standing quite alone beside several pieces of hand baggage was a lady—unmistakably a lady—wearing fabrics upon an umbrella, and bobbing under her arm a magazine. She was clad in brown, from bonnet to shoes, the umbrella and magazine cover alone of blue tint, and even the softness near yet her cheek the same note of color. There was no doubt whatever as to her identity; I did not hesitate a moment; the lady in brown was Miss Holbrook, and she was an old lady, a dear, bewildering old lady, and as I stepped toward her, her eyes brightened—they, too, were brown!—and she put out her brown-gloved hand with a gesture so frank and cordial that I was won at once.

"Mr. Donovan—Mr. Laurence Donovan—I am glad of it!"

"Miss Holbrook—I am equally confident!" I said. "I am sorry to be late, but Father Stoddard's message was delayed."

"You are kind to respond at all," she said, her wonderful eyes upon me, "but Father Stoddard said you would not fail me."

"He is a man of great faith! But I have a trap waiting. We can talk more comfortably at St. Agatha's."

"Yes, we are to go to the school. Father Stoddard kindly arranged it. It is quite secluded, he assured me."

"You will not be disappointed, Miss Holbrook. It seclusion is what you seek."

I picked up the brown bag and turned away, but she waited and glanced about. Her "we" had puzzled me, perhaps she had brought a maid, and I followed her glance toward the window of the telegraph office.

"Oh, Helen, my niece, Helen Holbrook, is with me. I wished to give some instructions to my housekeeper at home. Father Stoddard may not have explained—that it is partly on Helen's account that I am coming here."

"No, he explained nothing—merely gave me my instructions," I laughed. "He gives orders in a most militant fashion."

In a moment I had been presented to the niece and had noted that she was considerably above her aunt's height; that she was dark, with eyes that seemed quite black in certain lights, and that she bowed, as her aunt presented me, without offering her hand and responded my salute in a voice musical, deep and full and agreeable to hear.

She took their checks from her purse, and I called the porter and arranged for the transfer of their baggage to St. Agatha's. We were soon in the trap with the bays carrying us at a lively clip along the lake road.

"There's a summer resort somewhere on the lake, how far is that from the school?" asked the girl.

"That's Port Annandale. It's two or three miles from St. Agatha's," I replied. "On this side and all the way to the school there are farms. Port Annandale has resorts."

"Of course we shall see nothing of it," said the younger Miss Holbrook with finality.

I sought to read for my course from between the two women, but were quite useless. The little brown girl was interested and responsive enough, the curled toward her have with undisguised affection as we talked, but I caught several times a look of interrogation in her face, and the look that Time had not touched authored in lines of anxiety and care. The girl's manner toward her aunt was wholly kind and sympathetic.

"I'm sure it will be delightful here, Aunt Pat. Wild roses and lilac water! I'm quite in love with the pretty lake already."

This was my first introduction to the diminutive of Patricia, and it seemed very fitting, and as delightful as the dear little woman herself. She might have caught my smile as the niece so addressed her for the first time and she smiled back at me in her charming fashion.

"You are an Irishman, Mr. Donovan, and Pat must sound natural."

"Oh, all who love Aunt Patricia call her Aunt Pat!" exclaimed the girl.

"Then Miss Holbrook undoubtedly hears it often," said I, and was at once sorry for my bit of blarney, for the tears shone suddenly in the dear brown eyes, and the niece resumed the summer landscape as a topic, and talked of the Glenarm place, whose stone wall we were now passing, to if we drove into the grounds of St. Agatha's and up to the main entrance of the school, where a sister in the brown garb of her order stood waiting.

I first introduced myself to Sister Margaret, who was in charge, and then presented the two ladies who were to be her guests. Sister Margaret said just the right thing to every one, and I was glad to find her so capable a person, fully able to care for these exiles without aid from my side of the wall.

"Helen, if you will see our things disposed of I will detain Mr. Donovan a few minutes," said Miss Holbrook.

"Or I can come again in an hour—I am your near neighbor," I remarked, thinking she might wish to rest from her journey.

"I am quite ready," she replied, and I bowed to Helen Holbrook and to Sister Margaret, who went out, followed by the maid. "Miss Pat—you will pardon me if I begin at once to call her by this name, but it fits her so aptly. It is so much a part of her that I cannot resist—Miss Pat you offer hospitality without fuss, placed it on the table and sat down in a window seat whence the nearer shore of the lake was visible across the strip of shaded lawn.

"Will you come close the door? the maid, and when I come back to the window she began at once.

"It is not pleasant, as you must understand, to confide to a stranger an intimate and painful family trouble, but Father Stoddard assured me I to grant Hank with you.

"That is the best way, if there is a possibility that I may be of service," I said in the gentlest tone I could command. "But tell me no more than you wish. I am whole of your service without explanation."

"It is in reference to my brother, he has caused me a great deal of trouble. When we talked last partly two years ago—he tried to a great extent to kill a considerable sum, a large fortune. A part of it we did recover, but the remainder, amounting to [illegible] was still in excess with the stipulation that I was to make a further personal inquiry into matters at the end of two years, so it is the anxiety. I was quite clear, for with my much older sister, who lived with me, I had discussed the matter and we had left the business in New York, the bank continued to prosper [illegible] then it collapsed suddenly. The loss was all paid, but Arthur disappeared—there were unpleasant rumors.

She paused a moment, and looked out of the window toward the lake. I saw her clasped hands tighten, but she went on bravely.

"That was seven years ago. Since then Henry has located on the final division of the property. My father had a high sense of honor and he stipulated that if either of his sons should be guilty of any dishonorable act he should forfeit his half of the $1,000,000. Henry insists that Arthur has forfeited his rights and that the amount withheld should be paid to him now, but his conduct has been such that I feel I should serve him ill to say him so large a sum of money. Moreover, I owe something to his daughter—to Helen. Owing to her father's reckless life I have had her under her home with me for several years. She is a noble girl, and very beautiful—you must have seen, Mr. Donovan, that she is an unusually beautiful girl."

"Yes," I assented.

"And better than that," she said, with feeling, "she is a lovely character."

I nodded, touched to see how completely Helen Holbrook filled and satisfied her aunt's life. Miss Pat continued her story.

"My brother first sought to frighten me into a settlement by menacing my own peace, and now he includes Helen in his animosity. My house at Rutland was set on fire a month ago; they thieves entered it and I was drilled to leave. We arranged to go abroad, but when we got to the steamer we found Henry waiting with a threat to follow us if I did not accede to his demands. It was Father Stoddard who suggested this place, and we came by a circuitous route, passing here and there to see whether we were followed. You can imagine how distressing—how wretched all this has been."

"Yes, it is a sad story, Miss Holbrook. But you are not likely to be molested here. You have a lake on one side, a high wall shuts off the road, and I beg you to accept me as your near neighbor and protector. The servants at Mr. Glenarm's house have been with him for several years and are undoubtedly trustworthy. It is not likely that your brother will find you here, but if he should—we will deal with that situation when the time comes!"

"You are very reassuring, no doubt we shall not need to call on you. And I hope you understand," she continued, "that it is not to keep the money that I wish to avoid my brother, that if it were wise to make this further division at this time and it were for his good, I should be glad to give him all—every penny of it."

"Pardon me, but the other brother—he has not made similar demands—you do not fear him?" I inquired, with some hesitation.

"No—no!" And a tremulous smile played about her lips. "Poor Arthur! He must be dead. He ran away after the bank failure and I have never heard from him since. He and Henry were very unlike, and I always felt more closely attached to Arthur. He was not brilliant, like Henry; he was gentle and quiet in his ways, and father was often impatient with him. Henry has been very bitter toward Arthur and has appealed to me on the score of Arthur's ill-doing. It took all his own fortune, he says, to save Arthur and the family name from disgrace."

She was remarkably composed throughout this recital, and I marveled at her more and more. Now, after a moment's silence, she turned to me with a smile.

"We have been annoyed in another way. It is so ridiculous that I hesitate to tell you of it—"

"Pray do not—you need tell me nothing more, Miss Holbrook."

"It is best for you to know. My niece has been annoyed the past year by the attentions of a young man whom she greatly dislikes and whose persistence distresses her very much indeed."

"Well, he can hardly find her here, and if he should—"

Miss Holbrook folded her arms upon her knees and smiled, bending toward me.

"Oh!" she exclaimed; "he isn't a violent person, Mr. Donovan. He's silly, absurd, idiotic! You need fear no violence from him."

"And of course your niece is not interested—he's not a fellow to appeal to her imagination."

"That is quite true, and then in present unhappy circumstances, with her father heading over her like a menace, marriage is far from her thoughts. She feels that even if she were attached to a man and wished to marry, she could not. I wish she did not feel so; I should be glad to see her married and settled in her own home. It's a very dreadful thing, as you can understand, for brother and sister and father and child to be arrayed against one another."

I wished to guide the talk into cheerfuller channels before leaving. Miss Pat seemed amused by the thought of the unwelcome suitor, and I determined to leave her with some word in reference to him.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

HOME TOWN HELPS

VALUE OF THE SHADE TREES

Wanton Destruction of These Protectors of Good Roads is Denounced by an Enthusiast.

"Perhaps no other agency," he says, "has contributed so much to the development of naturally beautiful districts in New England as what is in upcountry parlance called the co-operative. He is a big man in his town and with his brothers on the board controls the finances, schools, roads and all matters of town government and improvement.

"His one great achievement while in office is to cut down all the shade trees or whatever might grow to be shade trees along the roads. He as a rule knows nothing of road building, and believing that the only way to get rid of water is to dry it up, instead of constructing his road of material other than garden loam, crowning it to shed water, grading his ditches to avoid the usual pools left to soak into the road, opening sluices to let the water run away from the side ditches, he simply cuts the trees down and waits for his mud bed to dry up. In the course of time it does dry up and then, except during or immediately after rains when it is a mass of mud, it is a bed of dust and all summer is a hot and stifling desert road, an exhibit of ignorance and incompetency.

"The best preserved country roads that have to bear the heavy motor traffic of the present day are those with ample shade. If a road cannot be oiled it needs moisture. The shade except in very dry periods will retain sufficient moisture to preserve the elasticity of the road surface. There is no danger of mud if the road is properly constructed.

"If you can't build your roads with asphalt or oil, kill your selectmen and plant some shade trees. Make your town comfortable for yourself and your family and so attractive by its good roads and shady ways that the stranger will buy the worthless half of your farm for twice what any farmer would pay for your entire property, land, buildings, stock and mortgage."—A Writer in the Manchester Union.

AN IDEA OF AN IDEAL CITY

Description Evidently Comes From One Who Has Carefully Thought the Matter Out.

The ideal city should be laid out with carefully selected sites for public buildings, schools, colleges, churches, amusement halls, residential areas, business houses, factories, interborough transportation lines and passenger and freight terminals; also docks, bridges, ferries and tunnels, when water courses enter into the problem; and along with all the rest the matter of the distribution of parks and parkways requires judicious consideration. All of the above should be located in such relation to each other and the surroundings as to provide the people with the safest, most convenient and most satisfying accommodations and, at the same time, present a highly pleasing and artistic appearance.

The large parks should be in the outskirts and should be left in as natural a state as practicable with their native forest trees. Such paths and lanes as are required, with their bridges, resting nooks, etc., should be judiciously treated to conform, as far as possible, with the natural surroundings. The parks throughout the body of the city, instead of being large and few in number, should be of medium size, plentiful, well distributed and connected, together with numerous parkways of liberal width. This arrangement would give all parts of the city convenient access to the park spaces, which, being thus arranged in a continuous system, could, when once entered, be traversed throughout without leaving it, if desired.—Charles W. Barnaby, in Cassier's Magazine.

City Growth.

With the full realization of the sustained movement of population toward the cities, there must come a fresh sense of the importance of the problems of urban life and government in this country. These are economic, social, moral and political. All phases of them become intensified and exigent as the cities increase in size. The growing congestion in urban areas undoubtedly is a factor in the increased cost of living, as Mr. Marsh, executive secretary of the New York committee on congestion of population, has recently shown. . . . . The requirements of city government all the time become more sweeping, and the necessary expenditures for public education and the public welfare continually increase.

Municipal administration in all its departments must be invested with increased importance in this country as the cities of the land gain in bulk and in political influence. The vast significance of a possible failure in city government cannot possibly be ignored in America, with present or ban tendencies prevailing in the future as in the past. Unless the cities can be governed efficiently, honestly and with a single-minded concern for the common good, all must fall and American democracy go down finally in shame and ignominy.

ONLOOKER

By WILBUR D. NESBIT

Mister Jimmyerat

Wellsoh, Mistah Jimmyerat, you up an' stop your fun.
Ev tell me dat 'cigarette-time is got us to a twine.
Yo' "low yo' gonna do enough" of yo git a lots o' shine
Ev yo' see how you' mamsi'll have to sit a mighty while.
But how about yo' bedtime-stuff? I wish you' tell me dat!
Ev dat's dat de sun rise dey won't sit down Jimmy-cat.

Lawsh, Mistah Jimmyerat, do way yo' talk lee me.
You mean de reason o' de thing ca pluck-up plum lots lef'
Yo' show me how de hens gin' gwine to make me wait all day.
Ev how sounds all dat he gwine to up en rise mah pay.
I wish yo' go ca talk to him; he say right off de bat
Ns matter how de hickshaw go, wuh ain' gwine Jimmyerat.

Dwgwsh, Mistah Jimmyerat, yo' had me pulled bad
Ev aaile' yo' de questions dat yo' answered to de crowd.
Yo' "low yo' gonna step up en take de po' man's grocery bill
Ev chop it seem to two-yo' ain't talk wid po'ful will.
I wish yo' sue dat grocery man, an 'show him as to dat—
Ev tell me how he on mah way, dat ain' gone Jimmyerat.

Jesus, Mistah Jimmyerat! Yo' 'low yo' lam de frusts
Ev whack dese cooperations twell de lar' one o' 'em burts.
I shoby hollered fo' yo', en I stamp dat hallick right.
Ev I sot up en showed yo' twell de dar come lickelim sight.
But how about de milk man, sub-de chillun ca de cat.
Dey want to know, sho'nuf, yo' see, milk ain' gone Jimmyerat.

Wellsoh, Mistah Jimmyerat! Dis day yo' pass me by;
Yo' ain' got no mo' twinkles in de eidges o' yo' eye.
Yo' ain' a-lookin up lee me en shakin hofe mah hain'e
Ev sarlo' dat de kentry wait lee fine out how I stan'e.
But let dat go. Dey dess can shine—I wish yo' answer dat
How is it dat de coal man ain' done gone Jimmyerat.

Mean Thing.

"I got the loveliest present," declared the young lady with the enthusiastic manner. "It was the finest Christmas I ever knew."

"And what," asks the lady of the icy smile, "did you get?"

"On Christmas morning," narrates the first lady, "I arose with the crimsoning of the dawn and pattered downstairs in my bare feet to the parlor, where the Christmas tree had been arranged. As I am to be married the first of the year, and Jack and I will need lots of things for our house, what do you suppose I found in my stockings?"

"I believe my query covered that point."

"A ton of coal."

Stung by the evidence of photoerratic parentage, the lady of the icy smile remarked:

"Which naturally brings up the question of which is heavier, a ton of coal or a ton of—"

"A ton of feathers?"

"No. A ton of feet."

The Democratic Trouble.

"I confess," says the eminent leader, "that I don't know what to do about the nominations."

"Can't figure out who to nominate for president?" asks the friend.

"No. Can't figure out who not to nominate for vice-president."

Settled the Question.

He talked of choosing a career,
He daily would to shine—
And Father said, "as sweet you fear
And so be good in work!"

Eve's Winter Furs.

"It was very comfortable for Adam and Eve to dress in fig leaves in the summer," says the higher critic, "but what did they do in winter?"

"Trust Eve to get her outfit from the fig tree," answers the steadfast one.

Its Last Request.

The famous hunter had just bagged his first pair on the African plains.

"There is just one request I would make," he sighed. "Please do not simplify the spelling of my name when you send your report in to your publishers."

Meredith Nesbit