

THE GATE OF FULFILLMENT

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The Gate of Fulfillment by Knowles Ridsdale

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KNOWLES RIDSDALE

**THE GATE OF
FULFILLMENT**

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By

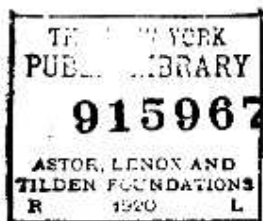
Knowles Ridsdale



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The Gate of Fulfillment

JUN 23 1930

The Gate of Fulfillment

WANTED

A secretary-companion. A refined, intelligent, broad-minded, well-educated, gentlewoman, under forty; absolutely unincumbered; of quiet tastes and domestic habits; appreciative of good surroundings, wise enough to remain permanently in a good environment, and willing to take some care of a retired, professional semi-invalid gentleman; neatness and order absolutely indispensable; nurses, school-teachers, curiosity seekers, triflers, divorcees, elderly, half-educated, heavy-footed, cumbersome persons positively must not answer. A sensible woman of equable disposition, able to read well aloud in English and in French, can find a very desirable home, beautifully located, well-equipped with modern conveniences, books, music, and suitable servants. Address in own handwriting, giving full

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particulars, qualifications, circumstances, references, and compensation expected.

M. A. L., *Boston Postscript*.

Margaret Bevington read this amazing advertisement to her friend and hostess, Helen Mayberry, as they were having tea in the garden, a wilderness of shrubbery, crimson ramblers, and Canterbury Bells.

"That's my little green gate into the forest, Helen," she said. "I'm going to answer it."

Helen, a curled-up heap of pale-blue fluffiness in the hammock, reached out a hand—"You wouldn't, dear!"

"And why not?" The slight, inscrutable smile characteristic of Mrs. Bevington in certain moods passed over her face. "Think how long I've been wishing for a little green gate to run away through; and inside the gate I'll find a white palfrey, saddled and waiting, and I, clad in a green kirtle, shall mount and ride away, in search of—of what, I wonder?"

"You shan't ride away to strange men's houses," cried Helen; "Jack will never hear of it, nor Kirke—we won't let you go, Margaret!"

"Listen, Helen;" Margaret Bevington rose and moved away along the garden path and back again before she continued; a slender woman of peculiar lissome grace, with a small head piled high with "young" gray hair, a little irregular face with a delicate square chin which had just escaped being dimpled; a pair of great gray eyes under black brows—a piquant face, full of contradictions. When she spoke her voice held you—a vibrant, full-toned voice of manifold inflections.

"Listen, Helen; some way out I must find—I can't go on with my own work; that side of my brain is fagged to death. Child, if I had to face current topics classes or give readings this fall, I should 'go mad and bite the man.' Yes, I know you and Jack want me to stay here, bless you, but we've threshed

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that out so often; idleness isn't rest for me; I must *do*—only I can't talk to any more audiences—” a shadow came into her eyes and veiled them—“and what is there for me to do, now?”

Helen sat upright in the hammock.

“But this is impossible,” she cried.

Mrs. Bevington smiled again. “And why? Here is a sick man, a querulous, morbid, scornful, disagreeable man, egotistical, selfish, and superior, I grant, but after all, I'll wager, a gentleman. He wants a dignified woman for a dignified position—why not I? It's no use, Helen; I've thought it all out. He may not want me, but I'm going to answer it.”

A note of finality in her voice seemed to end discussion.

Helen Mayberry, who had her own ways of accepting matters beyond her affectionate control, made no answer. She idly crumbed a bit of cake into a saucer, poured cream over it, and bent to place it in the grass.