

**MABEL GORDON:
A NOVEL**

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Mabel Gordon: a novel by R. K. D.

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R. K. D.

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A NOVEL.

By R. K. D. *1891*

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TO MY MOTHER,

TO WHOM, UNDER GOD, I OWE THE SAFE GUIDANCE OF
MY YOUTH; AND

TO THE MEMORY OF MY DAUGHTER,

WHO WAS IN CHARACTER A PERFECT MODEL OF MY HEROINE,
THIS LITTLE WORK IS

GRATEFULLY AND LOVINGLY DEDICATED

BY

THE AUTHOR

PREFACE

READER, my work is before you; if it only beguiles a lonely hour I shall be glad. If it serves to strengthen the faith of anyone, then "love's labor" will not have been lost. If, also, someone should find pleasure in criticising that which the writer, while painfully conscious of his inability to tell this story perfectly, yet has done so with care, somebody will be happy, and to give happiness to even one heart is cause for gladness.

R. K. D.

MABEL GORDON

CHAPTER I.

'Twas not the place to look for a high-bred, handsome young man, yet Allan Harvey leaned against Farmer Gordon's fence, though he was evidently not interested in the growing crops, and the flood of melody poured forth from the throat of a mocking-bird perched upon a tree near by, fell on unheeding ears.

"What can keep her so late?" he said. "Ah, there she comes," and with a brightening face he started forward to meet a slender, almost childish-looking girl who came with light, quick steps across the field.

In one hand she held her sunbonnet, a way she had of carrying it instead of on her head, as was evidenced by patches of freckles she hated, and which gave her brother cause for fun at her expense. In the other she carried a basket of strawberries.

"Little loiterer," said he as they met, "I've waited for you till my patience was almost gone."

"Why did you wait at all?" she asked.

"I wanted to see my little comrade particularly," he replied. "I came by your home and talked with the dear mother a while. She told me you had gone to take something nice to old Mrs. Jones and would not be out late. I would have gone to meet you had I known what route you'd take; whether the road or the path by your old nurse's house; your feet naturally gravitate that way."
