

# A TALE OF RED ROSES

By  
**GEORGE  
RANDOLPH  
CHESTER**

Copyright, 1914, by the Bobbs-Merrill Co.

## SYNOPSIS

Sledge, a typical politician, becomes infatuated with Molly Marley, daughter of a street car company president. He sends her red roses.

On Molly's invitation Sledge attends a party. Before the crowd disperses Molly thanks Sledge for his kindness, and then he proposes marriage. Her refusal is treated as only temporary by Sledge.

Molly attends the governor's ball, and her attractiveness results in her climbing the dizzy heights of popularity. The notable respect accorded Sledge, however, perplexes her.

Sledge moves for the car company's resignation. He asks Marley for Molly's hand, but is refused. Having financially ruined Bert Glider, Sledge threatens to do the same to Marley.

Marley's loans are ordered called by Sledge. Feeder, who receives a salary for keeping quiet about the public fund scandal, confesses during Sledge's questioning and is roughly handled.

Molly becomes angry at her father's obvious fear of Sledge. He tells her to marry him, but she refuses and suggests a fight on Sledge, which encourages Marley.

Sledge visits Bozzam, and a heated argument arises. The chief finds Bozzam is working against him. The reorganized railway company stockholders meet. Marley presides, and Sledge is present.

The two votes of Marley and Bert Glider are sufficient to carry the amendment to the resolution for the purchase of the franchise for \$50,000 cash.

Sledge receives an announcement of the engagement of Molly and Glider. Bozzam tells Marley Sledge decided not to sell the franchise at any price, and that he is financially dead.

Sledge goes to the state capital and gets everything fixed up for the passage of a bill granting a new car company a fifty year franchise free of charge.

Marley visits the state senator at home and meets Sledge. He finds out the particulars of the bill and then wires a syndicate for best offer for controlling interest.

At her father's suggestion Molly, accompanied by Fern, visits Sledge. Delighted, Sledge again starts to lavish presents on her. Marley arranges a meeting with the chief.

Two exquisite autos are sent Molly and Fern. Sledge orders Marley to say he sent them. A quarrel arises between Glider and Molly, but he checks it quickly.

"What kind of a show is this?" asked Sledge. "Rotten!" the ticket man informed him. "It's highbrow stuff, 'Hamlet'."

"Hunh!" granted Sledge. "Any music?" "Orchestra. Ophelia sings, but you'd think she was having her teeth fixed."

"Hunh!" observed Sledge again, and walked out. Two blocks up the street, on his way to the Occident, he stopped at an automobile salesroom.

"This working?" he inquired, pointing to the shining big limousine which occupied the center of the floor.

"All it needs is gasoline," replied the salesman. "Put some red roses in that flower thing, and send it up," Sledge directed.

"About dinner time?" surmised the salesman. "Possibly I'd better send it up before, Mr. Sledge. It has some improvements your man might want to look into."

"I'll send Billy down," decided Sledge. He turned to go when, in the adjoining window, he caught sight of a little, low, colonial coupe, with seating capacity for three. It was of an exquisitely beautiful shape, with small, latticed window panes and dainty lace curtains.

He walked slowly toward it, his habitually cold gray eyes brightening, and as he stood before it he thrust his hands deep in his pockets and positively laughed aloud.

"That's our newest ladies' car," explained the salesman, following him. "The women are crazy about them. Self starting, electric lights inside, shopping flaps everywhere, adjustable satin seat coverings and all the latest boudoir improvements."

Sledge scarcely heard him. He was still laughing. Nothing he had ever seen had struck him so humorously as the "cuteness" of this car.

"It's swell!" he chuckled. "Got a red one?" "No, they're only made in black," the salesman told him. "The color effects are obtained by the cushion coverings and silk curtains."

"Put red ones in this. Got another one?" "There's one just being set up in the shop," stated the overjoyed salesman. "It's an order."

"Make that one blue." "Do you want them this afternoon?" asked the clerk, figuring that it was worth while to put off the other customer.

"Sure!" said Sledge. "Right away." "I'll get busy immediately," promised the salesman, delirious with happiness. "Where do they go?"

"Molly Marley gets the red one. The blue one's for her friend Fern. Nix on who sent 'em."

"They'll want to know," the salesman insisted. "Aw, tell 'em Frank Marley."

Just across the street was the largest jewelry shop in town, and the display in its windows gave him an idea. He strode in, asked for the proprietor and got him.

"I want a rock that weighs about a pound," he stated. "A diamond? Yes, Mr. Sledge. Something for an emblem?"

"Naw! Lady's ring—solitaire." "We have some beauties," bragged the jeweler, immediately aglow with enthusiasm. "Here is a nice little three carat stone which is flawless and perfectly cut."

"Is this the best you got?" inquired Sledge, looking into the case. "We have some larger ones unsold, but they are not usually mounted in ladies' rings," responded the jeweler, struggling between his artistic conscience and his commercialism.

"Let's see 'em." Reverently the jeweler produced from his safe a covered and locked tray, in which on white velvet reposed a dozen sparkling white stones.

Sledge poked a stuffy forefinger at the largest one. "Is this one right?" he wanted to know.

"It's a very good stone," the jeweler told him. "The next one to it, however, though a trifle smaller, is of much finer quality. In fact, we have not one in the shop of any size which I consider so perfect as this one. It's worth \$500 more than the large one."

"That'll do," Sledge decided. "Put it in a ring." "Very well," agreed the jeweler, trying to be nonchalant as he consulted a slip of paper in the edge of the tray. "This one weighs six and three-eighths carats, plus a sixteenth, Mr. Sledge. Have you the size of the ring?"

"Naw!" he returned in disgust at his own thoughtlessness. "I'll take it loose." And he slipped the stone in his waistcoat pocket.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### Molly Insists on Protecting Bert.

BERT GLIDER strode through the Marley gate and trod on the Marley porch and punched the Marley doorbell in a fine condition of many indignation, and he demanded of the emaciated butler with the intellectual brow that Molly Marley be brought into his presence at once.

He waited in the library while the butler went upstairs with that hasty message, and it was no comfort to his soul whatsoever to hear the girls devoting endless attention to an apparently pointless job of giggling.

With scant consideration for the importance of the occasion, Molly, her face flushed and her eyes glistening with moisture from her recent earnest efforts, came down when she was ready, and she was still titrating, while Fern, upstairs, could be heard in the throes of frantic laughter.

"Hello, Bert," laughed Molly, holding her hand to her jaw, and she sat down weakly. "What's the mad rush?" "What did you say to Sledge?" he sternly demanded.

Her most immediate reply to that was another half hysterical outburst. "I'm not quite sure," she giggled. "Fern and I have just been trying to recall it all, but we can only remember the funniest things."

"You've made a fool of him and of me," charged Bert nodily. "We don't deserve any credit for that," snickered Molly. "It's so easy."

"The man has taken too much for granted," went on Bert, unsoftened by all this hilarity and, indeed, made only more indignant by it. "From what your father says, Sledge seems to believe that our engagement is off and that he has been practically accepted."

Molly put her hand over her mouth to suppress a shriek and, running out into the hall, called Fern. The girls met halfway up the stairway, where Molly explained the glad news, and Bert, stalking stolidly out there, found them holding to the balustrade in order that their enjoyment of Sledge's obtuse understanding might not tumble them down the steps. He strode back

into the library and barked his shin on a rocker. Molly returned to him presently for more.

"I've been missing my red roses," she confessed. "Now I suppose I'll get some more. What else does he think?"

"Heaven knows," snapped Bert. "He says he's going to the theater with you tonight. Is that correct?" "Molly fleetingly nodded her head.

"Did you forget that you were going to the club dance with me?" he indignantly went on, feeling like shaking her.

This time Molly shook her head, her eyes gleaming with devilment, and from Fern, still on the stairway, there arose a wild peal.

Bert closed the library doors. "I forbid it," he commanded. The change in Molly was so abrupt that it startled him into barking his other shin. First of all she threw open the library doors, knowing, however, that Fern by this time was back in the boudoir.

"You may do your forbidding to Mr. Sledge," she told him, with blazing eyes. "You were thoughtful enough to consider seriously sending me to him, and now whatever follows is up to me. I am going to the theater tonight with Mr. Sledge."

"Molly, Molly, Molly!" shrieked Fern, half running and half bumping down the stairs. "Run to the window, quick, and see the parade! O-o-o-oh! It's coming here inside her just indignation for a moment, feeling intuitively that a Sledge miracle was some place in the neighborhood, and glanced out of the window, as Fern, gurgling incoherently, flashed by on her way to the door.

Up the winding driveway, one following the other, were two of the most beautiful little colonial coupes in the world, such cars as would make any girl go stark howling mad with ecstasy. They were exactly alike, except that the one in front was hung with lace and flimsy red silk curtains, and the other had blue with its duffy white. Both the cars were empty, except for the hard featured men who were driving them, looking as much out of place as a coal heaver in a lingerie bonnet.

"The blue one's mine!" exclaimed Fern, dancing up and down in a delirium of joy as Molly joined her at the door, through the bangings of which the girls now peered out in frantic impatience.

"I wonder what brings them here?" speculated Molly, dreading the worst. "I don't care!" returned Fern. "That blue car's mine, and I know it. Molly, do you really suppose it could be a present?"

"Certainly not," decided Molly promptly. "Oh, but aren't they exquisite?" "Exquisite? They're the dearest, sweetest, darlings I ever saw!" cried Fern. "The only thing that's missing is that there should be a band leading them. Say, Molly, and here she sank her voice to a giggling whisper, "I'll bet you that Sledge—"

"Certainly not!" interrupted Molly, almost fiercely, and then she, too, giggled, and the two girls scattered away from the door as the chauffeur of the red car who was the gentlemanly salesman in disguise, dismounted and came slowly up to the door.

They waited in the library with the frowning and bewildered Bert while the thin butler with the tall brow answered the bell, and they distinctly heard the chauffeur ask for Miss Marley and Miss Burbank. They waited in butler solemnly brought that message, and then, with no more trace of excitement than if they had been dragged away from a tiresome French lesson, they walked sedately into the hall.

"Miss Marley?" observed that person, nodding to the right girl. "I have the pleasure of bringing out a very beautiful little gift to yourself and Miss Burbank," and here he nodded to the other young lady, who was holding her toes to the floor by gripping them. "The red lined one is for Miss Marley and the blue one for Miss Burbank."

"I said the blue one was mine!" half shrieked Fern, unable to contain herself any longer. "I want to ride in it—now!"

Molly looked longingly past the person's shoulder out at the red curtained car, and she felt that sick, sick sensation of self abnegation clamoring within.

"Who sent them?" she asked faintly. "Your father," replied the conscienceless salesman, looking her more clearly in the eye than any honest man could have done. "If you have the time we shall be pleased to give you a lesson in running them."

Fern was halfway upstairs. "Do you want your gray coat or your furs, Molly?" she called as she went. "Something light," replied Molly, equally excited, running out to inspect the car, with the gentlemanly salesman right at her elbow and highly pleased with his job. The chauffeur in the blue car followed with bright eyes.

Fern, followed by Mina and another maid, both of them too slow to be of any service, came clattering on the porch with two afternoon coats and two bonnets selected with less discrimination than she had ever used and tossed any of them to Molly. "I'll bet it was Sledge," she whispered as she ran and popped into the blue car.

Her coupe was the first to whirl down the driveway, but the red one followed in close order. Bert stood on the edge of the porch, with his hands rammed in his pockets, and watched the end of the world. Being a young man of keen thought, however, after fifteen minutes of numbness he curled his mustache, took up the telephone and called Frank Marley.

"Did you make a present of two automobiles to the girls?" he inquired. "Did I what?" gasped Marley out of the midst of his plans for making the proposed street car consolidation worth twenty points' advance on his stock to

the up state syndicate. "I thought not," returned Bert, with a very near approach to profanity. "I didn't think you'd weaken our capital by a \$5,000 extravagance of that sort."

"I don't understand you," puzzled Marley. "Two small inclosed cars came out here about fifteen minutes ago, and the man in charge of them said that you sent them. Personally I think Sledge has been getting fresh."

"It's barely possible," agreed Marley, feeling a dangerous indignation rising within him. "Leave that to me, Bert. As Molly's father it is my affair. I'll investigate it at once."

Palpitating with all a righteous father's jealous care, Frank Marley kept the telephone busy until he located Sledge.

"I say, Sledge," he blurted. "Did you send out a couple of automobiles to my house?" "Naw, Marley," chuckled Sledge. "They're toys. You sent 'em. Do they like 'em?"

"I haven't inquired," returned Marley, still standing by his father's dignity. "Really, Mr. Sledge, you know I can't allow my daughter to receive extravagant presents of that sort from any one other than myself."

"Aw, cut it," advised Sledge. "I get you. If they don't like 'em, I'm the goat. If they do, close your trap. You sent 'em."

"Well, but—" "I say you sent 'em," insisted Sledge, with a gruff loss of his cordiality, which had been apparent in his former tones, and Marley heard the click of disconnection.

Nearly an hour later two shining little colonial coupes, the red curtained one in front, drove up to the Marley porch, where Bert Glider gloomed in the doorway. They were driven by a happy girl each and had no other occupants.

"Come and take a ride with me," Bert, hailed Molly, so full of delight that she had absolutely forgotten her quarrel with him, which was a blow indeed. "You can't drive, though."

Fern had emerged from her car. "I'm going to have my dinner here," she laughingly announced. "I think I shall go to the theater tonight in mine. Jump in Molly's car, Bert, and try it. It rides like a rocking chair."

"No, thank you," returned Bert coldly. "Those cars are going back to the salesroom. I felt sure that you, after our business arrangement of this morning, they are a present from Sledge."

"Oh, please, no!" pleaded Molly, with a heart sick glance at her red curtained car. She had loved it at sight, but now, since she had learned to know it, she adored it. "How do you know that they are from Sledge?"

"I suspected it from the beginning," he sternly informed her. "So I called up your father."

"I said they were from Sledge," cried Fern. "Molly, it was awfully crude of him, but I love him for it—don't you?" "What did father say?" demanded Molly.

"He is investigating." Molly marched straight to the telephone and called up her father. He talked to her kindly, wisely and with deliberation, also like a man who had given himself plenty of time for thought. Bert stood at her elbow, listening to one side of the conversation and peering out the other with painfully knotted intellect. Molly turned to him with calm satisfaction.

"Father says that I am to consider the cars as a gift from him," she proudly announced.

Fern executed the full figures of a minut and sang a merry tra-la-la all the way through. Molly helped her sing and dance the last figure.

"Three cheers!" she exulted. "Now we may keep our cars."

"I never intended to give mine up," Fern affirmed.

Bert walked Molly back into her father's den.

"I have nothing to say about what Fern does," he firmly announced, "but I have something to say about your conduct. You can't shut your eyes to the fact that Sledge has given you this car, and he has no right to do so."

"My father says that I am to consider the car as a gift from him," repeated Molly primly, but with a snap in her eyes.

"That is only an evasion," Bert insisted. "You have willfully misled Sledge into the belief that you intend to put yourself in the position of receiving presents from him, and either this thing must be stopped or there will be unpleasantness between you and me."

"There is one way we can head that off," Molly quietly assured him. "We can break our engagement."

"Impossible!" immediately declared Bert, frightened. "I didn't mean anything like that, Molly," and he attempted to take her hands and perform a little of the lovemaking which he had rather neglected.

"I mean it, though," she insisted, drawing her hands away from him. "Our engagement has only brought trouble to everybody concerned and has subjected me to more than one insult which I had no right to expect. If we declare it off both you and father can go right back to where you were in a business way."

"It's too late for that," he assured her, sitting down to reason it out with her on the commercial plane since she seemed to insist upon it. "I could never regain the political friendship which is necessary to my style of business. My commercial career in this city is at an end, and my social standing would be also. Knowing this, I have been in correspondence with my people in Baltimore. They have a magnificent business opening there for me, but it takes \$100,000 to obtain control of it. I laid the matter before your father, and he investigated it

our conclusion is this—if we can close up our business satisfactorily here and he can sell this place we shall have in the neighborhood of \$150,000 clear between us. You and I are to marry, go to Maryland with your father, enter into business and take up the social position to which we are entitled. When I take you there as my bride, Molly, everybody's going to be very proud of you, and I am quite sure that you will like the social atmosphere there much better than here. I've dwelt on this so often to you that it must seem like an old story, and yet this is the first time that it has seemed very near to us."

Molly felt herself wondering why this glittering promise failed to thrill her as it had used to do.

"It'll be the proudest Glider that was ever in the family when I can take you home as my wife," he went on. "It's all out and dried, Molly, and we expect to have everything closed up before our wedding day if we can hold Sledge off that long."

"And yet you scold me for helping you hold Sledge off when you couldn't do it yourselves," she retorted. "Why, you actually suggested to me that I should see what I could do with him."

"I don't like the way you're going about it," he confessed.

"You should be proud of me," she reproved him. "I think that Fern and I have done a beautiful job of it," and she began laughing. "We're going to put on our very best frocks tonight and be a credit to you. You're ungrateful," and she began to look indignant again.

"Let's forget it," offered Bert, laughing, and took her in his arms. "You're the girl for me, Molly, and there won't be any more envied couple in Maryland than we."

He kissed her and held her while he talked to her of the social triumphs which awaited them, the topic which had always pleased her most in their plans for the future. After all, they would make a splendidly matched couple. Moreover, she did owe it to her father and Bert to give them another business start.

## (To be continued.)

### MILK FED TO HOGS

Illinois Producers Fight Prices Offered by Distributing Companies.

Daymen of McHenry, Kane and Will counties, Illinois, are feeding more than half a million quarts of milk a day to the pigs on their farms since the strike of the milk producers was declared, according to George H. Keller of Batavia, the secretary of the Kane County Milk Producers' association.

The cream is being separated from the milk and shipped to Chicago and rather than sell the milk at the price offered by the various milk distributors the daymen are feeding it to the swine.

### ENGINEER BLAMED

New York Central Discharges Pilot of Wrecked Train.

Engineer Herman Hess has been dismissed by the New York Central railroad, it was learned, as a result of the wreck at Amherst, O.

He is held responsible for the disaster by the railroad. Towerman Albert Ernst, one of the chief witnesses at the federal and state inquiry into the accident, will be retained, as will Flagman Perry Beach, exonerated by General Superintendent A. S. Ingalls from the charge that he did not properly flag Hess' train.

### FOLEY KIDNEY PILLS

FOR RHEUMATISM, KIDNEYS, AND BLADDER

# CASTORIA

For Infants and Children.

Mothers Know That  
Genuine Castoria

Always  
Bears the  
Signature

of  
*Dr. J. C. Fitch*

In  
Use  
For Over  
Thirty Years  
CASTORIA

Exact Copy of Wrapper.

## GERMAN GAINS LOST BY COUNTER

French Regain Part of Vaux  
and Gaillette Wood

### AIRMEN RAID GERMAN LINES

Berlin Claims Air Raids on Scotland  
Damaged Shipyards—Russians Active on Whole of Austrian Front.

The battle for the village of Vaux, in the crown prince's drive against Verdun east of the Meuse, is still raging furiously, but the French have been victorious in a violent counter attack, the first one on a large scale thus far attempted and the most successful counter movement undertaken by the defenders as regards results.

In fighting of the most savage character the French counter attack gained steadily until they had recaptured the western part of the village and besides thrown the Germans back to the northern edge of the Gaillette wood and to the pond north of Vaux. All of these positions have been firmly held by the crown prince's infantry after their latest drive on this sector. Thus a vital part of the two-mile gain by the Germans was wrested from them by the French in the counter attack.

The report tells about a vain and costly attack west of the Meuse, when German infantry was sent forth to engage the French on the northern bank of the Forges, a small stream in the Hautcourt-Bothincourt sector. It develops from the French statement that the French had secretly evacuated the positions which formed the German objective and when the Teuton troops dashed forward they were met by a hail of fire from the southern bank of the rivulet to which the French had withdrawn two nights before. French flanking fire from Bothincourt also met the attackers who found no infantry to attack.

Four German aeroplanes were brought down by the French in the Verdun region. Thirty-one allied machines raided four German points in the German line in which eighty-three big caliber shells were thrown.

Russian artillery displayed increased activity on nearly the whole of our northeast front," says the Austrian official statement. A big drive is believed to be in progress, the statement adds.

There is strong suspicion in official circles in Russia that the sinking in daylight of the hospital ship Portugal was a deliberate act undertaken by a German officer for no other purpose than to embitter Russia and to render Turkish defection impossible.

Attempts have actually been made in this direction and it is an open secret that conversations or negotiations have been proposed to both Russia and the western powers.

The torpedoing of the ship has caused a storm of indignation throughout Russia.

For baby's croup, Willie's daily cuts and bruises, mamma's sore throat, Grandma's lameness—Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil—the household remedy. 25 and 50c.

TRY OUR FINE JOB WORK



612-2010

"I forbid it," he commanded.

into the library and barked his shin on a rocker. Molly returned to him presently for more.

"I've been missing my red roses," she confessed. "Now I suppose I'll

\$1.50  
\$2.00  
Additional  
with or

Club  
dinner

ef

ills of  
weak  
inac-

the  
cting

'S

World  
25c.