



Damsel in Green (Best of Betty Neels)

By Betty Neels

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But that was before she met the children's guardian, Julius. Afterward, she realized that even common sense and a practical nature couldn't stop her from falling in love...with a man who didn't even know she existed!

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Romance readers around the world were sad to note the passing of Betty Neels in June 2001. Her career spanned thirty years, and she continued to write into her ninetieth year. To her millions of fans, Betty epitomized the romance writer. Betty's first book, *Sister Peters in Amsterdam*, was published in 1969, and she eventually completed 134 books. Her novels offer a reassuring warmth that was very much a part of her own personality. Her spirit and genuine talent live on in all her stories.

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The church clock across the street chimed the half hour, and Miss Georgina Rodman, already walking down the corridor leading to Casualty, put on a sudden desperate turn of speed. There was a chance—a faint one—that she might arrive on duty before Staff Nurse Gregg; if she didn't, it would mean the third time late on duty in a week, and Gregg would probably report her to Sister. It would be of no use making excuses, for Gregg never needed to make excuses for herself, and couldn't understand why anyone else should either. Nurse Rodman wasted precious breath on a sigh as she ran, for her excuses were good ones—on Monday it had been the ward maid falling downstairs with that large pan of porridge; the porridge hadn't been hot, but extremely sticky; thinking about it, Georgina couldn't see how she could have ignored the girl's cries for help. She had been late on Thursday too, when she had met a rather down-trodden old lady who had been told to attend for a barium meal at seven-thirty in the morning, and didn't know where to go. It had only taken a very short time to walk with her to X-Ray—just long enough for Staff Nurse to remark triumphantly:

'Late again, Nurse! You should know better—how can you hope to set a good example to the juniors? And you waiting for the results of your Finals!'

Her tone had implied that Georgina need not expect good news. And now it was Saturday, and she was late again, for she had stopped to ask Payne the head porter how his wife was feeling; the poor soul had been ill for weeks, and Payne had been looking sad. She pulled up outside Cas swing doors and drew a breath. It was a pity that life didn't allow you time to dawdle a little on the way. She opened the doors, to find Staff Nurse Gregg waiting for her—doing the dispensary, of course, because that was her particular job in the mornings; but she had dragged the basket into the center of the room so that she wouldn't miss Georgina.

She looked pained. 'Late again, Nurse Rodman—the third time this week. I shall have to report you to Sister—there might have been a terrific emergency on.'

Georgina said, 'Yes, Staff' because it was expected of her, and went to twiddle the knobs of the sterilizers in an expert way and count the packets of dressings and instruments CSD had just sent down. The two junior nurses had already prepared the cubicles for the day. She slipped quietly in and out of them, making sure that everything was just so. The first contained a tired-looking boy, a bare, grubby foot on the stool before him, clutching his shoe and sock.

'Trodden on a rusty nail?' asked Georgina in a friendly voice. She was already busy cleaning it up.

'How did you know?' asked the boy.

'We get a great many—it's a common accident. It'll be fine in a day or two—you won't need to stop work, but I'll have to give you an injection.' She gave him a nice wide smile and went to find Staff. She wasn't a trained nurse yet—she couldn't give ATS without getting permission. Gregg gave it with the air of conferring a great

honour.

'Why didn't you leave the boy? It's nothing urgent,' she wanted to know.

'He's on night work, it would be a shame to keep him from his bed.'

Staff frowned. 'You'll never make a good nurse,' she grumbled, 'you're so impetuous.'

Georgina gave the injection, wondering why she was impetuous. Surely it was plain common sense to clear the cubicles of the minor cases as quickly as possible, otherwise there would be such a bottleneck later on in the morning. She wrote up the boy's card, filled in the day book, tidied up neatly and went into the last cubicle. Both nurses were in it, as she had guessed they would be. They grinned cheerfully at her, and the youngest and prettiest said, "Oh, George, isn't she in a foul mood?"

Georgina grinned back. 'It'll be worse if you don't get a porter to change the oxygen in Two...and there aren't any dressings in Four.' There was a hurried movement for the door and she added, 'I've seen to the dressings, but it'll look better if you report the oxygen.'

They stopped at the door. 'George,' said the nurse who had forgotten the dressings, 'we wish you were staff.'

'That's nice of you both, but I expect I've failed my State, you know.'

She turned to the tiny mirror on the wall to straighten her cap. She had fine, silky hair, and the cap needed a great many pins to keep it at a dignified angle. It was pretty hair, too, light brown and long, and she screwed it up into a severe plaited knob at the back because it was quick to do and stayed tidy that way. She looked at herself in the little square of glass while she re-planted some pins. The face that looked back at her was a good-looking one; not pretty—the nose was a trifle too large and the chin a thought too square, but the brown eyes were large and clear, like a child's; their lashes long and curling and thick. The mouth was large too, a generous mouth with corners that turned up and smiled readily. She was neither tall nor short and a little on the plump side and looked considerably younger than her twenty-three years. She gave the bib of her apron a tweak and made for the door—it was time to dish the bowls.

She had just put the last two in their appointed places when Sister appeared in the doorway. She said, 'Good morning, Nurse,' in a voice which gave Georgina no clue as to her mood. She returned the greeting and wasn't at all surprised when Sister went on, 'Come into the office, will you, Nurse Rodman?'

Georgina put the Cheatle forceps back in their jar and followed Sister across the wide expanse of Casualty to the little office. She shut the door behind her and stood in front of the desk, waiting to be told off.

'Sit down,' said Sister surprisingly. She put her hand in her pocket and handed Georgina a letter. 'I thought you would like to have this as soon as possible,' she said, and smiled. 'If you would rather open it alone, I'll go outside.'

Georgina turned the envelope over and looked at its back; it told her nothing, so she looked at the front again. 'Please don't go, Sister,' she said at last. 'If I open it quickly it won't be so bad.'

This piece of female reasoning was obviously one to which Sister could subscribe, for she nodded and said:

'That's quite true—the quicker the better.'

Georgina undid the envelope with fingers which shook a little, and read the letter therein, then she folded it tidily and put it back in its envelope. When she spoke it was in a tone of great surprise.

'I've passed,' she said.

'Well, of course you have, you silly girl,' said Sister bracingly. 'No one expected you to do otherwise.' She smiled kindly, because it wasn't all that time ago that she had felt just the same herself. 'You'd better go to Matron, hadn't you, Nurse?'

Georgina got to her feet. 'Yes, Sister, of course. Thank you for letting me come in here to read it.'

She got to the door and had the handle in her hand when she was astonished to hear Sister say, 'Congratulations, George. You deserve it.'

Everyone called her George; it was inevitable with a name like hers. The housemen probably didn't know she had another name anyway, and even an occasional consultant had occasionally addressed her so; but no Sister had ever done so before. She flashed a delighted smile across the little room. It was, she realized, a very nice compliment.

She was the last in the queue outside Matron's office—a gratifyingly long one. There was an excited and subdued hum of voices; everyone had passed; no one had let St Athel's down. They went in one by one, and came out again in turn, looking pleased and slightly unbelieving. When it was at last her turn, Georgina knocked, entered and stood, as she had stood so many times before, in front of Matron's desk, only this time she was bidden to take a chair.

Matron congratulated her with just the right mixture of motherliness, authority and friendliness and then asked:

'Have you any plans, Staff Nurse?'

Georgina gave this careful thought. She hadn't dared to plan—there was some dim idea at the back of her head that she would like to go abroad—but there was Great-Aunt Polly to think of. She said finally, 'No, Matron.'

'Splendid. I feel sure that when you have had a little more experience we shall be able to offer you a Sister's post.'

Georgina so far forgot herself as to goggle. 'Me?' she uttered, regardless of grammar. 'A Sister? Would I do?' she asked ingenuously.

Matron smiled benevolently. 'You will do very well. Think about it—I believe you have a splendid career before you.'

Georgina found herself out in the corridor again. There was no one in sight, so she felt free to execute a few skips and jumps and relieve the excitement Matron's words had engendered. Even in these days of the nursing shortage, it was a signal honour to be offered the chance of a Sister's post within half an hour of becoming State Registered. She paused by one of the tall narrow windows overlooking the busy street outside. Matron had said, 'A splendid career'. It occurred to Georgina at that moment that she didn't much care for the idea. At the back of her mind was a nebulous dream of a husband and children—an indistinct group rather like an out-of-focus family portrait hanging on some distant wall; the children indefinable in number and vague in appearance, and the man even more so, for she had no idea for whom she sought. Certainly she had not found him so far, and even if she did, she would have to wait and see if he felt the same way... Her train of thought was brought to an abrupt halt by the sound of the ambulance siren, joined within minutes by a secon...

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Sharon Self:

Do you have favorite book? When you have, what is your favorite's book? Book is very important thing for us to learn everything in the world. Each book has different aim or goal; it means that book has different type. Some people really feel enjoy to spend their time to read a book. They are reading whatever they get because their hobby is reading a book. What about the person who don't like examining a book? Sometime, person feel need book if they found difficult problem or perhaps exercise. Well, probably you'll have this Damsel in Green (Best of Betty Neels).

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Larry Moore:

Exactly why? Because this Damsel in Green (Best of Betty Neels) is an unordinary book that the inside of the book waiting for you to snap the item but latter it will jolt you with the secret that inside. Reading this book adjacent to it was fantastic author who all write the book in such wonderful way makes the content inside of easier to understand, entertaining technique but still convey the meaning totally. So , it is good for you for not hesitating having this any longer or you going to regret it. This amazing book will give you a lot of positive aspects than the other book possess such as help improving your expertise and your critical thinking technique. So , still want to hold up having that book? If I were you I will go to the reserve store hurriedly.

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