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The Girl from the Marsh Croft

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THE GIRL OF THE MOORS

Based on the novel

by Selma Lagerlf.

Servant sale at town square.

Too young, she can't do the job.

Redheads talk too much.

Those who neglect their own clothes
will neglect cattle just as much.

- You don't like to work!

- What?

You never to stay at a farm.

Every year, I find you here.

Two people make a meeting. Some owner's
can't treat their servants right.

C'mon!

- I'd sure like to work for him.

- I know you would!

I will go immediately.

Are you looking for a maid?

Yes, indeed.

- What's your name?

- Helga.

You're quite young.

And you're not strong yet.

- But it'll be enough for a maid.

- That's not what I'm here for.

- What's with her?

- Her?

She won't find a job.

Not on a respectable farm.

- No farmer will take her.

- That's Helga Christmann.

- She used to work at the Marshland Farm.

- She worked for Peter Nolde.

- She had to leave that farm.

- Once Nolde was married.

- Oh, so it's her?

- Yes.

- How long did you work?

- 3 years.

- What can you do?

- Household chores and field work.

You won't need to do field work.

Where have you been last?

I was with Jens Willgraff.
- I will talk to him.
- He's at the tribunal today.
Leave the window closed!
Or else you should be
stricken with my gout.
The judge wants those windows
to be opened.
Really?
He suffocates from
all those dusty files.
Did this foul trial
get up his nose?
Defamation, cattle stealing,
legacy hunting, forgery.
The judge is not the only one
who has had it with all these trials.
I can imagine.
I'm looking for Jens Willgraff?
Willgraff!
He was just here.
You and your pranks.
My pranks?
What is it, Karsten Dittmar?
Somebody who is looking
for himself!
I need some information.
Later. At the tavern, with a nice jug.
Alright.
There's only one thing left.
The judge will hurry up.
He, himself has had it, with all this.
The judge
knows what's important.
Money, it's always the money...
This court will now hear
the case..
Of Helga Christmann,
unmarried maid..
From the Marshland Farm,
against Peter Nolde, farmer,
married.
That's me.
- Did the plaintiff not show?

- She's outside, crying.
She's probably ashamed.
Now it's too late!
C'mon in.
C'mon!
Why are you standing
around outside?
You called in the court,
you will only make things worse
if you don't defend yourself now.
So, Helga Christmann,
you filed a suit
against the father of your child,
born on December 5.
Yes.
You claim that the father
of your child is
Peter Nolde.
Yes.
I'm not the father.
It's easy to name your former
employer as the father.
You're sure to get your
money that way.
But...
do you stand by your testimony?
You don't want to answer?
He's the father.
Because Nolde denies..
You will have to testify under oath.
Peter Nolde, are you ready
to take an oath?
Yes.
You are aware of
the meaning of the oath?
You know
committing perjury is a major sin,
heavily punished.
Yes.
For a married man,
it is a sore temptation
to clear himself of all this
under oath.
After this reminder,

would you still
like to go under oath?
I want to.
On the Bible.
He can't vow! He should not vow!
Don't interrupt.
She's scared of losing
her lawsuit.
Peter Nolde,
rest your right hand on this Bible
and repeat after me.
"I swear by God,"
"omnipotent and all-knowing..."
"I swear by God,"
"omnipotent and all-knowing..."
"that the maid, Helga
Christmann and I, never..."
"that the maid, Helga
Christmann and I, never..."
What does she want with the Bible?
She doesn't want to vow?
Silence!
Let justice take it's course.
You can't change anything now.
He can't swear.
I renounce everything!
He is the child's father.
But I can't let my child
have a perjurer
as its father.
He can't swear.
Let it be as you said, Helga.
The charge is to be withdraw.
Are you satisfied with that?
It's for the better.
Thank you, Helga.
You did a good deed.
- What did he say?
- "A good deed".
He said "a good deed".
She didn't seem like this kind of girl.
Don't you want to get in?
I can give you a lift.
Have fun, with her.

Shut up, idiot.
You would be happy,
to have a daughter like her.
So, Karsten Dittmar,
how about a drink?
You wanted to ask me something.
No, it's nothing.
I made up my mind.
I will think this through
before choosing a maid.
Ok, some other time then.
Karsten, when you're passing the bailiff,
give Gertrud my best regards.
I'll pass it on.
Tell her; I hope she will order that
wedding jewellery real soon.
The one she saw at my place!
Why don't you take care of
the horse before you start unloading?
If the servant won't do his job...
The master has to
leave his horse waiting. I know!
Gertrud!
Since when does the bailiff's daughter
have to uncouple all by herself?
If the servant won't do his job...
She will grow up to be
competent woman.
But, I won't let
you leave just yet.
Hello!
Where are you coming from?
From the market,
from court or from the maid market?
All at once.
But the most important bit is coming up.
What is it?
That thing between the two of us.
Father, Karsten will
have lunch with us.
Oh yeah?
Alright then.
Hello, Karsten.
Your father will never forgive me

for being born on a small farm.
He will get accustomed to you,
just wait and see.
Our feelings only matter to us.
Nothing will get between us.
If that guy is the only one
to separate me from you...
We can have lunch in peace!
It's ok, Gertrud.
As long as your father won't invite me,
I'll prefer to eat at home.
It is time to decide
if he's going to get
married or not.
Karsten would be a lucky man,
but the bailiff wants
his daughter to marry a rich man.
Don't you think?
Maybe you should visit
the bailiff and talk to him.
But you never say a word anyway.
She's rich,
she's beautiful and she loves him.
If those 2 don't get married,
it's your fault.
It would be so wonderful!
Marriage, it's like bacon.
If it's meager, it still tastes good,
but it isn't real bacon.
Hello, Mother.
Hello, Karsten.
Hello, Father.
Dinner is almost ready, Karsten.
Gertrud sends her regards to you.
You met her?
So, how did her father treat you?
He's not too happy.
The important thing is that
Gertrud is happy.
She will have her way, eventually.
Did you find me a maid?
There were no suitable maids
on that market.
But then I went to the court.

- The court?

- Yes.

A girl had a lawsuit.

At first, nobody liked her,
she has a bad reputation.

But then...

the judge himself
shook her hand.

Who was it?

Helga Christmann,
from the Marshland Farm.

If the fog
cover the swamp again today...

Yes.

With the fog...

Voices cover the swamp
calling for those who
are wandering outside.

I wonder where Helga is?

This has woodworms all over it.

Good for nothing.

These here...

these will make good shoes.

What are you carving into it?

This sign will bring luck.

Wearing these, you won't get lost
and you won't sink in the swamp.

Are you selling them at a higher price?

You can't sell these.

If you do, the sign
loses it's power.

Who did you do them for?

These can only be used by those
who carry the sign
inside of themselves.

What is it?

Why aren't you going home?

I'm afraid to enter.

You showed so much
courage in the courthouse,
and now you're scared
of your own parents?

They expect me to bring home
the money is was supposed to receive.

Stop crying.
Many people have greater problems than you.
I don't think so.
Nobody wants to have
anything to do with me.
That's rubbish!
Why do you think I'm here?
My Mother wants to see you,
she wants to ask you
to work as a maid for us.
But...
does she know...
She knows as much about you
as everybody else.
What are you doing?
I know I have to leave this place,
to run away from the shame.
You are going to get away,
you'll come to us
the Dittmar Farm.
Are you still afraid
to go see your parents?
C'mon.
- Tomorrow, you'll come to us.
- Yes.
Thank you very much.
Good evening.
You finally arrived, Helga!
Come here.
Take a seat.
I saved some soup for you.
You can eat it right now.
I won't get the money.
I canceled the lawsuit.
We already know, Helga.
Somebody who was in court
came to see us.
Here, these shoes are for you.
For me?
What's that sign?
Father says it'll bring you luck.
I have something for you too.
I got a new job,
as a maid for the Dittmars.

What is it?
Why aren't you joining
us for lunch?
Are we treating you that bad?
I've never been so well off.
Seeing you,
one might think that isn't true.
You hide and crawl away
like you weren't one of us.
I talked to my Mother.
If you want,
we could
take care of your child.
No, the child is staying
at my mother's sister.
She says, I'm too
young to raise a child.
She says, I've
got nothing to do with it.
But it's not only the child...
I'm missing.
Well, I probably can't help you then.
Gertrud!
Karsten!
I've been to
the Marshland Farm, yesterday.
Your home is beautiful, Helga,
when summer hits the swamp.
At night,
fog fills the trenches.
The rushes are getting hard.
You can smell it,
throughout the entire swamp
and you hear voices,
if you listen carefully enough.
Say it ain't so, Helga?
Your parents would take you back, Helga
if you wanted to return.
No, I can't,.. I can't!
I've got a job, here.
You know, Karsten,
I've got good news for you.
I talked to Father.
Did he say yes?

Tomorrow, he wants to see the farm

I'm going to get married on.

What if he doesn't like it?

He will like it.

You can count on that!

Then, he'll arrange the marriage
with your parents.

Gertrud!

Mother is going to be surprised!

- Helga!

- Yes?

Mrs. Dittmar?

- I want to ask you a favor.

- Go on!

I wanted to ask, if I
visit home, one night.

To the swamp? Quickly then,
else you'll be walking at night.

Thank you very much!

Don't forget to give the horses
their water, before you leave.

Mother!

- Hello, Gertrud!

- Hello, ma'am!

It's not what you're used to,
but it's cozy too

don't you think?

The only thing the Dittmar Farm
is missing is a wife for Karsten,
and I decided to fix that.

You deserve a good fresh cup of coffee!

Don't, Mother,

let Helga do the coffee.

I sent her home.

She wanted to visit her parents.

I can help!

Where do you keep the coffee?

Here.

I would have loved
to hear what you think about Helga.

- You have a new maid?

- Yes, Helga Christmann.

She's here, now?

From the Marshland Farm.

It's nothing serious, Helga.
Don't worry about me.
You will have to leave now,
it's getting dark outside.
I know,
I have to leave now.
If only you'd tell me
what's wrong with you.
Nothing. Nobody can help me.
Are you homesick?
You're much better off
than here with us.
Good night, Mother.
Good night.
- Be careful when crossing the swamp.
- Yes, Mother.
How nice of you
to bring me home.
Karsten...
You're almost as loquacious
as your father.
Say something.
You know, Gertrud,
if I wouldn't have to chauffeur...
Then what?
Then I would have free hands...
To talk?
Well, here you go...
What are doing, Helga?
Are you keeping secrets?
- I didn't do anything wrong.
- Really?
But still you're startled?
You wanted to grab something to eat.
Don't you get enough?
That's why you're crying.
I won't cry anymore.
Why's that?
No, I won't cry anymore.
What are you doing by the stove,
in the middle of the night?
I was scattering ashes,
that's why I won't cry anymore.
What's this nonsense?!

Ashes are stopping your tears?
Yes, of course.
When you take ashes
from your stove at home
and bring it to a stranger's home...
One isn't homesick anymore.
Yes.
Right now, here,
it's like in the swamp.
Do you want to jinx this house?
Don't talk so loud.
Somebody might hear us.
Who's going to hear us?
Everybody's sleeping.
There some that never sleep,
they see everything we do,
and they hear everything we say.
Do you really believe
in these ghost stories?
Jens Uhr says it's all true.
The boatman? Who fascinates
the stupid with his stories?
Everybody knows,
that you have to believe.
But, Helga,
you've already stayed
with strangers before.
Did you never get homesick before?
Yes.
All the time.
- And you didn't apply your remedy?
- No.
I never thought about it.
You can only do it once.
Afterwards, you can never leave
the new home,
because one will always
look back on it.
And why did you
scatter your ashes
on our stove?
Well, you sure seem happy today!
It's almost like
you've won the lottery.

One who does not ask,
won't need to wait for answers.
Be sure to talk a little
once the bailiff arrives.
Did you say something?
Not saying much,
works great for marriage,
but you can't marry your
children like that.
They're already here.
C'mon!
Come on, already.
Say something.
Please enter and look around.
Beautiful cattle.
Yes. One ox, five cows,
and the calves are over there.
My father could be friendlier.
Yours? Mine too!
Our horses.
This is Hans.
My husband's favorite
dialog partner.
Hurry to the baking oven,
and go see if your cake's ready.
Nobody is starving on our farm.
My mother has woven
all this by herself.
This one was made
by my grandmother.
Our grandchildren
can still use those.
Everything is at its best. I like that.
From this yard, you can see the fields.
What did he say?

He said:

I can well believe it.
The meadows are yours too?
It's beautiful here.
What are you doing?
It's like
it's really your marriage.
I'm part of the farm.

You would have taken our Karsten too,
if you could have had him.
How can you say that?
Karsten Dittmar and me!
Have a seat!
- Coffee, please!
- Coming right up!
Tomorrow, we can set up the
marriage contract,
if you like.
And we'll publish
the banns of marriage.
If we can come to an agreement.
We've already agreed
on everything long ago.
We'll take your Gertrud,
even if she has nothing.
Isn't that right, Father?
You see, my father things the same.
Anyway, the contract will
feature an extensive list
of everything
she takes with her.
In 4 weeks we'll marry and...
I hope you made good coffee.
She has gotten really pretty,
since she's with us.
How much milk do you want?
When smiling,
you look a lot nicer, Helga.
Leave it!
I'll pour the coffee.
Helga made the cake.
- Really?
- Yes.
One day, she'll make
her husband to be, very happy.
A woman who's been in court?
What are you doing?
Why are you always running away?
I want to know why Miss Gertrud
has a grudge against me?
Come on, let's have some coffee.
Maybe it's because I have a child.

Don't take everything so seriously.

I can't see why you're taking
this thing so seriously?

It's all natural
that I choose the maids myself,
when I come here.

Yesterday, you had no problem
with Helga being here.

I changed my mind.

I can't just sent Helga
away like that.

Where is she supposed to go?

If you want me to join you
here as your wife,
you can't refuse
my very first request.

You may be right, Gertrud.

I'll tell her to leave.

Have a safe trip home!

I need to tell you something.

Nothing. Get back to work.

What are you looking for?

Somebody took the knife,
I'm supposed to cut some pinewood.

Here, take my knife.

Just put it back in my pocket
when you're done.

You know, Helga...

I've...

Nothing!

Mother, Gertrud wants Helga to leave.

I want you to know,

I want Helga to stay.

Really?

But if Gertrud wants it...

We have no reason to
fire the maid?

- But Karsten!

- No, Mother!

Gertrud doesn't understand this.

I don't know

if you're in the right.

Rigth?

Helga has a right to stay here.

That's for sure.
Come and sit with me.
Put that away for now.
Help me here with these beans.
I need to talk to you.
Your hands are small!
They don't keep me from working.
When Karsten gets married,
I won't be in charge
of this farm anymore.
Things are bound to change then.
Of course!
I'll do my best
to satisfy the young misses.
You seem to like Karsten a lot.
You know, Helga,
Gertrud, she doesn't
know you like we do.
But in 4 weeks,
she'll be in charge.
The heart is always stupid,
when it's in love.
Often, jealousy comes up,
and that's no good,
in a newlywed couple.
I understand.
When the misses arrives,
in 4 weeks,
I'll leave this farm.
I will take care of you.
Anybody want to join us?
We're headed for the church.
My father has already left,
but you can take Helga.
Do you want get a ride to church?
They're waiting outside.
I don't want to go to the church.
What's that bundle for?
- My belongings.
- What?
I want to leave
before Miss Gertrud arrives.
Really?
Apparently somebody told you.

But I'm telling you to stay!
Go ahead!
Let's go, we're already late.
Your belongings remain here.
Who told Helga to leave?
You don't want to respect
Gertrud's wish?
Gertrud can say whatever she wants,
I'm in charge and Helga stays.
I don't know
why you're so angry about this.
She should leave
because she has a child?
That's nonsense. She stays.
I'll take her to church on my carriage.
For everyone to see.
Come!
Get up. You don't want to?
I can't drive to church
with you.
I can't show up there with you.
Isn't Karsten coming to liturgy?
Be quiet, come.
Why are you running away from me?
I can't come to church with you.
It's not good!
Do you think I forgot
that you scattered
ashes on our stove?
Ashes...
This is not good.
This can't end well.
I watched your horses, Karsten.
You're here too, Helga!
Stay. Get up, c'mon.
- Should I give you a ride to church, Jens?
- No.
I don't go to church.
Church is for those who wait.
Mothers waiting for children,
the elderly for their death
and brides for their sweethearts.
You too,
have a bride waiting for you in church..

And you're running out
into the marshland...
I think it's better
you walk on your own from here on.
The church filled,
everybody is looking at us,
and in two days
you're going to get married.
You're coming with me.
In front of everybody.
The door has opened.
I have to go.
Your bride is coming.
You're staying.
- Get in, Gertrud.
- Yes, Father.
Didn't you see me?
I thought the maid was to leave.
I want to know what's going on.
Is she leaving, yes or no?
- But you can't just...
- It's not too late, Karsten.
Maybe we misinterpreted
our feelings for each other.
If you insist, Gertrud,
I can't keep her.
C'mon, Karsten, get up!
Lunch is going cold.
You see, this time,
Father invited you.
Stop, Karsten, not like this.
You're with us today,
let's go to the tavern.
- It's your bachelor party!
- There's no escape!
Let him go, Gertrud!
- Goodbye, Gertrud!
- Goodbye, Karsten!
C'mon, you're paying!
Father!
You'll have to get home on your own.
Coming.
I'll be back later tonight.
Enough guys, I'm done for tonight

I'll go home and sleep.
C'mon!
The day after tomorrow,
you can sleep all you want.
Sleep? And what else do you wish for?
Yes, you'll do that in 2 days.
We will all have another drink!
But that's really the last one.
C'mon! Music!
Where's Hannie?
She has to sing.
Hannie, sing for us!
This sure is a fun place!
- Schnapps!
- And beer!
Hey, look!
Karsten, wake up!
What are you thinking about?
His bride, who else?
What is it?
Oh, it's not you!
What do you want boy?
What is it?
Deducting the last two leases.
Karsten, you've finally arrived!
You're late for breakfast.
All the others are
already working the fields.
I came home late last night.
Can you please seam up my vest?
I tore it, when I got
caught somewhere.
Caught by loads of beer, you mean?
Looks a lot like
a scuffle, to me.
I wouldn't know.
The guys did to me
whatever they wanted.
From one tavern to the next,
always pouring drinks,
schnapps and beer.
I don't know where I've been
and what I've done.
It was a cursed night, yesterday.

Full moon,
turns everybody into wild animals.
They say a cow gave birth
to a five-legged calf,
and by the river
somebody was stabbed to death.
That's horrible!
Always with the knives!
Apparently
it started in the sailor's bar,
and there were
farmers involved to.
And then?
Nothing.
This morning, they found the body
next to the river.
By the river?
A piece of the knife
stuck in the victim's skull.
I have to get going.
Into the marsh.
You haven't even
touched your coffee.
I have to get going too.
Stay a little longer.
A five-legged calf?
That is a bad omen!
That trench over there
is too shallow,
the water won't drain off.
Tomorrow,
we'll have to dry it out and dig deeper.
The day of my wedding?
It's not that urgent.
But the weather might change.
Yes, alright.
I didn't want you to work
on my wedding day.
When we meet the priest,
tell him that he should make
Karsten look good in his sermon.
Honest, sincere and hardworking.
Don't forget "hardworking".
He'll know what I mean.

What about you?
Shouldn't he say anything about you?
He can't praise me enough.
The money, the farm,
cattle and fields.
But I don't want Karsten
to look unimportant next to me.
Would you like me to help you?
Do you want me to help you?
Help? No.
I don't need any help.
It's nothing, not even worth it.
What are you standing there?
Take this...
Take the milk outside.
There's nobody around here.
Nobody who would need it.
Isn't the bowl
empty every morning?
That's probably the goat
or some animal from
the swamp drinking the milk.
You probably picked that up
on the Dittmar Farm?
As if there were no more ghosts just
because there's goats roaming the swamps?
Do you really think
there's a ghost,
in our house?
Who else going to help us?
What are you going
to say to when he arrives?
Don't be silly,
she going to say Yes.
"Yes"? That's sparse!
On her wedding day,
the bride can't talk
to the groom
before he has made his speech.
He can talk,
he gets a whole speech!
What is he going to say?
The bride awaits the groom.
She hands him a flower out of

the her bridal crown.

- But first he recites his speech.

- Naturally.

Listen.

The groom walks up to the bride

and he says:

"Gertrud Gerhart,."

"I, Karsten Dittmar,

have come to ask you"

"if you want to be my woman."

Does he really say "woman"?

That's funny!

It's an old tradition

me and Karsten,

we want to keep it alive.

All my best wishes, Karsten,

all my best wishes.

Mother...

Is something wrong, my boy?

It's nothing.

Did you forget something?

It's nothing.

Let's go!

They're probably waiting for us.

I waited for you. I wanted to

wish you luck.

Why didn't you come to the farm?

Thank you, Helga.

- Do you have something to tell her?

- No.

No, it's nothing.

When I married your mother,

we drive along this very road,

me and my father.

My father drove me

to your mother.

Today, I'll do the same for you.

Maybe you think of this,

one day,

when you're in my shoes.

- Do you have something to tell me?

- Yes.

You're all too good to me.

Father, I have to tell
you something horrible!
You don't have to tell me,
I know already.
But I'm happy
that you decided to talk.
When Gertrud grabs
the bridal crown...
To hand a flower to the groom...
That's when the music
should start playing.
They're coming!
He is going to say: "Gertrud Gerhart",
"I, Karsten Dittmar, have come..."
Gertrud Gerhart,
I, Karsten Dittmar,
have come to tell you...
that I have
to call off my proposal,
because I killed a man,
after I got drunk.
I don't know his name,
or what he looks like,
and how it happened,
but it had to be me.
You don't know
if you killed a man?
All I know,
is that they found a piece of a knife
in his head and that
my knife is broken.
It has not yet been proven,
that Karsten is the culprit.
But obviously you demand
that we re-schedule the wedding
until we know the truth.
I think...
Karsten, knows what he is doing.
Gertrud is right, Father,
it doesn't make any
sense to call off the wedding.
You could have come clean earlier.
You didn't have
to drag us into this.

Go right to the tribunal
and notify them.
I want to see Mother,
before I join you in court.
- The wedding is off.
- They called it off?
He killed a man.
He says he doesn't remember,
but the blade of his knife
is broken in half.
The blade of his knife?
A lovely groom,
this Karsten Dittmar is, isn't he?
Yes, I agree.
Gertrud was lucky that the
wedding was canceled.
He got so drunk,
he can't remember what he did!
Maybe he didn't do it.
I have to talk to Karsten Dittmar.
It's not here anymore.
Miss Gertrud,
you must come with me
and go see Karsten.
He's innocent, it's all my fault.
He gave me his knife to
cut the pinewood and I broke it.
The very same knife?
But Miss Gertrud,
Karsten is not a killer!
Come with me!
Don't tell him I was here,
you have to meet him by yourself
and tell him that
everything's going to be alright.
That you love him,
even if he's guilty.
Did you know it was me
who wanted to send you home?
Yes, I knew
it couldn't have been Karsten
or his parents
that wanted me out of there.
But come on!

My carriage!
It wasn't you.
When I arrived at the courthouse,
they already had a culprit,
a sailor.
You didn't kill that man
by the river.
Now you can sit
at your wedding table,
next to your wife Gertrud.
I'm sorry about how I behaved
this morning.
I came to tell you...
I want to say
that I will always support you
even if you...
It's wonderful that you came, but...
I don't want you to think
that I'm better than I really am.
Helga told me
that you're innocent.
She was the one
who sent me here,
to straighten everything out.
Helga wants us to work things out?
Because she loves you.
Nobody on earth can love you
as much as she does.
And you're telling me this?
Yes.
Because I,
Gertrud Gerhart, am not going to be
humiliated by some other woman.
I just wanted to tell you:
You have no idea
how much I appreciate your friendship.
Gertrud left?
Mother,
what would you say if I were to bring
you a different daughter-in-law?
I'm fine with every woman,
who loves you as much as
a good wife should love her husband.
Tell Father I'm going to see Helga.

Karsten is visiting Helga.
What do you say?
I'll say that; Now
I probably won't have to
say anything for quite some time.
I'm going to shut up again.
Here you are, Helga!
I wanted to tell you,
the wedding is canceled.
But you had everything set up already?
Yes, that's why my mother,
still wants me to get married,
but not to Gertrud.
Because from today on
I know that I love someone else,
and that someone, is you.
Me?
Yes.
So I came to ask
the girl from the Marshland Farm
if she wants to be my wife.
Why are you running away from me, Helga?
- Are you scared of me?
- No.
I think I am.
But why?
Because...
I love you so much!