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**Roberta of Roseberry  
Gardens**

**Duncan Frances**

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**Title: Roberta of Roseberry Gardens**

**Author: Duncan Frances**

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“Her bright hair glowed against the dark hedge”

ROBERTA  
OF  
ROSEBERRY GARDENS

BY  
FRANCES DUNCAN  
AUTHOR OF  
"MY GARDEN DOCTOR"



ILLUSTRATED BY  
JANE DONALD

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**ROBERTA OF ROSEBERRY GARDENS**

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# Roberta of Roseberry Gardens

## CHAPTER ONE

**R**OSEBERRY GARDENS is an adorable place of a May morning. The brown old earth fairly sings with colour.

The flat ploughed land, which a few days ago stretched acre after acre in a dull monotony of nursery squares, has changed as suddenly as if the old earth were Cinderella and May were the Fairy Godmother. The commonplace has vanished. In its stead is a wonderful garden laid out on a splendid scale: a great parterre, where broad grassy paths separate wide beds of radiant colour: white, through all the shades of rose to deepest crimson, and from white again through all the yellows to flame colour and deepest orange. The only green is that of the wide paths, the young foliage of oaks in the distance, and the smooth, close-clipped hemlock hedge

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that divides the azalea plantation from the drive.

The peculiar charm of it all is that these parterres of brilliant marvellous colour are not dominated by a mansion, a huge, impressive pile which might seem to say, with a patronizing wave of the hand toward the garden's richness—"Oh, yes, very handsome. These are *my* clothes; this is *my* setting—a fairly suitable accompaniment to *my* magnificence!"

At Roseberry Gardens the plants are in possession: It is the flaming azaleas, the magnolias, and all the lovely host that are the masters. As for buildings, there is an unpretentious little affair, low and almost dingy, scarcely to be noticed if it were not for the brilliant magnolia at its door. Behind it stretches a long, low packing shed, and in its side white-washed greenhouses bury their heads. "Merely for our caretakers and nurses," say the gardens.

Instead of the lady of the manor walking along the broad paths surveying her possessions, it would be elderly workmen in blue blouse and overalls that one would meet of a May morning, probably each with a bit of a limp, for rheuma-