

The Princess Priscilla's Fortnight, by

Elizabeth von Arnim

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Editorial note: We now know that "Elizabeth and Her German Garden" was written by Elizabeth von Arnim (1866-1941). Born Mary Annette Beauchamp in Australia, she grew up in England and married a German, Count Henning August von Arnim-Schlagenthin. After the couple moved to his country estate she began writing children's books. Many of her early books were published "By the Author of 'Elizabeth and Her German Garden'," and later she published as simply "Elizabeth."

THE PRINCESS PRISCILLA'S FORTNIGHT

BY THE AUTHOR OF "ELIZABETH AND HER GERMAN GARDEN"

1905

"Oft habe ich die Welt durchwandert, und habe immer gesehen, wie das Grosse am Kleinlichen scheitert, und das Edle von dem ätzenden Gift des Alltäglichen zerfressen wird." FRITZING, "Erlebtes und Erlittenes."

I

Her Grand Ducal Highness the Princess Priscilla of Lothen-Kunitz was up to the age of twenty-one a most promising young lady. She was not only poetic in appearance beyond the habit of princesses but she was also of graceful and appropriate behaviour. She did what she was told; or, more valuable, she did what was expected of her without being told. Her father, in his youth and middle age a fiery man, now an irritable old gentleman who liked good food and insisted on strictest etiquette, was proud of her on those occasions when she happened to cross his mind. Her mother, by birth an English princess of an originality uncomfortable and unexpected in a royal lady that continued to the end of her life to crop up at disconcerting moments, died when Priscilla was sixteen. Her sisters, one older and one younger than herself, were both far less pleasing to look upon than she was, and much more difficult to manage; yet each married a suitable prince and each became a credit to her House, while as for Priscilla,--well, as for Priscilla, I propose to describe her dreadful conduct.