THE SEEDS OF FRIENDSHIP
by Lola Lemoreux

PREPARATION:

Four flowers of Star Point colors and some green scenery are needed. These may be artificial if you wish. Packages of flower seeds are used as favors and should be placed in a pretty basket for distribution. A place behind scenes should be arranged for the garden. If there is a door near the East, go through this; if not place a screen in a convenient place for the one who does the pantomime to enter and leave. In this secluded place are kept the flowers and the basket of seeds.

Place a table and chair on the Chapter Room floor near the door or screen. This is to be the living room where the pantomime takes place. On the table are a vase, some envelopes and paper and a seed catalog. Other items may be added to make the table attractive.

CHARACTERS:

A Reader who stands at the Matron’s station; a singer and accompanist at the piano, and a woman or girl to do the pantomime. This woman may be named after the Chapter if your Chapter has a pretty name such as Radiant, Charity, Holly, etc. If your Chapter is named for your town then call this character Gerdenia.

MUSIC:

"The Flowers That Bloom in the Spring" from Gilbert and Sullivan’s Mikado; "I’m Called Little Buttercup" from Gilbert and Sullivan’s Pinafore; Bringing in the Sheaves”; "In The Garden”; and "I Would Be True”; hymns found in any hymnal. Two other flower songs of your choice. Substitutes may be used for any of the above if you wish.

PROGRAM

Reader and Singer take their places. Gerdenia is behind scenes.

Reader:

It was early in spring. The sun was shining and the earth was coming awake after its winter sleep. Gerdenia was in her garden looking for signs of life. She loved her garden with its many varieties of beautiful flowers. This year she decided she would try to find some new species - some that she had never planted before. If only the seed catalog would come. There was the postman now. She would see if perchance the catalog had come today. Singing happily she left the garden and entered the house.

The Reader is seated. The soloist sings one verse of "The Flowers That Bloom In The Spring". Gerdenia enters as music is sung. She picks up the mail and glance through it. There is the seed catalog. She takes it eagerly and sits in her chair studying its pages carefully.

Reader:

At last! That precious catalog has arrived. Now let’s see something...
new; something different. The cosmos and the marigold looked so attractive, but no, she had those. Here were some new snap-dragon, maybe they would be different. OH, NO! Here was what she really was looking for! In big letters all over the page she read these words, "Plant a Friendship Garden this year. Have A Surprise. Even the most ardent gardener will be delighted with these lovely varieties. Watch them grow, see their brilliant colors at the height of summer." On and on went the advertisement but Gardenia was sold already. Out came the order blank. A garden of friendship. Just think! She would order five packets of friendship seeds and see what they would bring forth. She sealed the letter and hastened to the post office with it, singing happily as she went.

The Reader is seated. Soloist sings the following song, tune "Bringing In The Sheaves" as Gardenia with letter in hand leaves the room.

Sowing in the morning, sowing seeds of friendship
Sowing in the noon time and the dewey eve;
Waiting for the blossoms to come forth in glory
In the friendship garden where they grow in sheaves.

Bringing in the blooms, bringing in the blooms,
From the friendship garden where they grow in sheaves.

(Reader continues as Gardenia enters to look at mail and find the seeds.)

Time passed. The seeds arrived. How happy Gardenia was as she opened the parcel. Her seeds of friendship. Who ever thought of such an idea! Think if she planted only these five packets how many seeds she would have at the end of the season—that is, if only she tended the garden carefully. "That is just like life," mused Gardenia. "If we plant the seeds of friendship and then care for them, there will be enough and more for all those about us. And then if they in turn will sow in time, beautiful friendships will be scattered all over the earth. No more wars, no more distress, no more worries, for true friends are those who never forsake us no matter what we do." She was reminded of a song she had learned as a small child in Sunday School and she sang it softly as she went out into her garden to plant her friendship seeds.

The Reader is seated. Soloist sings softly one verse—the second—of "I Would Be True". Exit Gardenia.

Reader:

(Summer arrived in all its brightness. The seeds of friendship grew and grew and now the first one was beginning to burst its bud. Gardenia could hardly wait until the blossom opened so that she might see its color. Then one morning early she was rewarded. There was the bloom from the first packet of seeds! "How lovely, How lovely!" exclaimed Gardenia. "It is the color of the sky when all the clouds have vanished. Its petals are like thin filmy veils and the leaves like swords. The sword and the veil, now where have I heard that before? I wish I know the name of this beautiful flower." Suddenly it occurred to Gardenia that in her eagerness to order the seeds she had not finished reading the page in the catalog. Carefully she picked the flower and brought it into her home.

Enter Gardenia. She acts out the script as the Reader continues.
Reader continues:

Then she took out her catalog again to see if she could identify her flower. Yes, here it was. The flower's name was fidelity. "How appropriate for this blue blossom, and how appropriate too, in a friendship garden, for in real life no friendship could flourish without fidelity." Gardenia placed the flower carefully in a vase and went about her work.

The Reader is seated. Gardenia holds the flower in her hand while the first four lines of the song are sung, then places it in the vase and retires.

Song. Tune "Just a Faded Flower". (Another flower song may be substituted here)

It's just a friendship flower
That I'll cherish evermore,
It brings back recollections
Of happy days of yore.
One by one each lovely petal
Reminds me of my dear friends
Whose deeds of loving kindness
In a lovely blossom blends.

Reader:

The next morning as Gardenia was watering her garden she discovered a bright yellow flower gaily nodding its head in the breeze. Another seed came to life! "It reminds me of a sheaf of golden grain," mused Gardenia. "Now I wonder what this is called. Back to the catalog we go."

Enter Gardenia. She goes to the table and scans the catalog as the Reader continues.

"Well, I never! Your name, lovely flower, is Constancy. It just suits you too.
And you surely belong in a friendship garden for where would friendship be without Constancy. It wouldn't be at all, to my way of thinking."

Reader is seated. Gardenia holds the flower as the song is begun and the leaves as the last lines are sung. Soloist sings - Tune "Sweet Little Buttercup".

You're called lovely Constancy, sweet lovely Constancy
And I can really tell why!
For you have the virtue, the old-fashioned virtue
That true friendship never does shy.

Reader:

"I declare," exclaimed Gardenia the following morning. "One-a-day blend, is it?" as she found the third packet of seeds in bloom. "My you're regal and stately. You remind me of a queen. Where are your crowns and scepters? Such gorgeous white robes you wear. Now don't tell me your name, let me guess. They must be Purity or perhaps Loyalty. We'll soon find out. Good old seed catalog knows everything. I'll take one of you along with me so the rest of you may know if my guess is right!"

Enter Gardenia who goes to the catalog again as the reading continues.
Reader: Well, what do you know. Right twice! The regal bloom in the pocket of friendship seeds is known as the Purity flower though it is also called Loyalty. How nice. A queen should be pure and loyal and so should a friend. If a friend isn't loyal she isn't a friend at all. And if we do not have purity in thought and deed, we will be very poor friends to others.

Reader is seated. Gardenia leaves as song is sung. Soloist sings "Just Because of You" using the same words except that the word love where is appears in the song is called friendships. Another flower song may be substituted here if desired.

Reader: As usual Gardenia was out early to visit her garden. Today another precious bud would open. But no, there were no new flowers today. What she had expected to produce a bloom remained green as a fern. She walked away disappointed. At noon she came again and still she saw only the green. "I will wait until evening," she said, "perhaps it is a night blooming flower." So at dusk she returned hopefully. "Just a green fern," she thought. "How disappointing!" As she was about to leave she heard the voice of a neighbor singing sweetly.

Reader is seated. Soloist sings the second verse of "In the Garden".

Reader: Gardenia stood very still. It was as if an inner voice had spoken to her. "How stupid I am!" she exclaimed at the close of the song. "How little faith I have. The green is a symbol of everlasting life and hope and I have stood gazing upon it twice today without seeing it. Green is faith. And my friendship garden has this faith. We all must have it if we would have friendship.

The lights are lowered slowly. Gardenia enters with her fern and stands by the table as the last verse of "In the Garden" is sung. She reverently places the green in the vase. As the chorus is sung she leaves the room. At the close of the song the lights are brightened.

Reader: "Today," said Gardenia as she went to her garden, "I will have more faith. Only one more surprise in the friendship garden. How wonderful it has all been." Thare bobbing brightly up and down were rows of brilliant red blossoms. Gardenia was delighted. "Why they look just like cups—and they are filled with dew. How hospitable you are dear flowers, offering me refreshments the very first time I come to see you. And I know your names too. You are Love and Charity. For by now I have found out that no garden of friendship can be complete without you. You give the final touch to all true friendship. How I wish all of my friends could see this garden. Flowers of Fidelity, Constancy, Loyalty and Love surrounded by the magnificent robe of faith. How carefully I shall tend you that you may produce an abundance of seeds. Just having you for myself would be too selfish. I must share you with my friends."

All summer the friendship garden thrived. In the early fall the plants began to rest and the seeds were formed. Gardenia carefully gathered them all that not one might be lost. She placed them in attractive little packets and tied them up with bright ribbons. When all this was done, she placed them in her garden basket and took them to her many friends that they too might share with her those seeds of friendship which would again blossom into fragrant and beautiful flowers.

The Reader is seated. Gardenia enters with the basket of seeds. She passes those to all Chapter guests as the musician plays appropriate music. When Gardenia again leaves the room the Reader says:

This ends our story.