

Is The Secret Garden Hiding More Than Their Magical Mead Recipes?

By *DeeDee Robertson*

There seems to be something going on around The Secret Garden and Monoc Securities. One day, El was seen quickly carrying a container covered in a black cloth into the bar. It was a fairly non descript shaped box, and onlookers could not ascertain what might be contained within. Witnesses have claimed to have seen the owner, El, visiting the Gate City Monoc Securities office multiple times at different hours of the day. She has also been having more discussions with the head of security, Jormn, more frequently than normal. Their hushed tones and the general noises of business prevent the subject of their conversations from being heard, however, one patron claims that they were discussing relocating a powerful magic item.

What was in the container? Is it related to other discussions of a certain magical item? What is El and Jormn hiding?

The Fish That Paid For Dinner

A local fishing tournament took an unexpected turn Saturday when amateur angler Bobby Crane reeled in what appeared to be an ancient gold coin lodged in the mouth of a catfish near Lake Dimond.

The coin, covered in strange markings and bearing no recognizable date, was briefly displayed at Mulligan's Deli before disappearing under mysterious circumstances.

"I put it on the counter while I ordered lunch," Crane explained. "Turned around and it was gone. Nobody left the booth."

Three separate customers claim they saw the coin roll across the table on its own before vanishing.

Local historians have offered rewards for information, while conspiracy theorists insist the fish was delivering tribute to "something living beneath the lake."

The catfish was released unharmed. The coin has not been seen since.

Empty Lots Become Gardens Overnight

"Demeter Blesses You" Signs Appear Across Gate City Residents are celebrating a sudden transformation of several long-abandoned properties across Gate City.

Over the course of a single week, twelve vacant lots filled with fruit trees, vegetable gardens, berry bushes, and irrigation systems. Hand-painted wooden signs now stand at each location reading:

DEMETER BLESSES YOU
TAKE WHAT YOU NEED
LEAVE WHAT YOU CAN

The gardens contain tomatoes, squash, peppers, corn, beans, apples, peaches, and herbs. Citizens are encouraged to harvest freely.

City officials deny any knowledge of who created the gardens.

"I don't care who did it," said local resident Martha Jenkins while gathering cucumbers.

"Somebody turned eyesores into food."

Volunteers have already begun maintaining the lots, and several churches are organizing community harvest days.

Whoever planted the gardens remains anonymous.

But for the first time in years, no one in Gate City has reported going hungry.

Deer Seen Delivering Groceries

Residents in the northern neighborhoods are reporting encounters with unusually cooperative deer.

According to multiple witnesses, the animals have been carrying reusable shopping bags in their mouths and depositing them on porches.

The bags contain canned goods, bread, produce, and bottled water.

No explanation has been offered.

Wildlife officials insist deer do not normally engage in organized food distribution

Gate City Goosebumps

June 2026 2

Mysterious Fruit Appears on City Hall Steps

Employees arriving at City Hall Monday morning discovered nearly two hundred baskets of fresh fruit arranged neatly along the courthouse steps.

Each basket contained peaches, apples, pears, strawberries, and handwritten notes reading:

"Everyone deserves sweetness."

No surveillance footage captured who delivered them.

The fruit was donated to local shelters and food banks after passing inspection.

Several recipients reported the fruit tasted "better than anything from a grocery store."

One elderly woman claims a peach she received caused her arthritis pain to vanish for an entire afternoon.

Doctors have declined to comment.

Strange Harvest Moon Arrives Early

Astronomy enthusiasts are baffled after a large orange moon appeared over Gate City nearly a month ahead of schedule.

The moon reportedly looked close enough to touch and remained visible even after sunrise.

Photos taken by residents show the moon appearing significantly larger than normal.

Experts blame atmospheric conditions.

Residents blame Gate City.

Giant Rabbit Spotted Near Community Gardens

Residents visiting several of Gate City's new community gardens have reported sightings of an unusually large rabbit wandering between the rows after sunset.

Witnesses describe the animal as standing nearly four feet tall when upright, with silver-gray fur and ears "long enough to drag the ground." Despite its size, the creature reportedly moves silently and appears completely unafraid of people.

"It was eating lettuce," said local volunteer Greg Dawson. "Then it looked right at me. Not like an animal looks at you. Like a person deciding whether you were worth talking to."

Several gardeners claim crops seem healthier after the rabbit appears.

Tomatoes ripen overnight, berry bushes produce double harvests, and wilted plants recover by morning.

Children have nicknamed the creature "Mr. Hops."

Wildlife officials insist no rabbit species native to North Carolina can grow anywhere near that size.

The gardens continue to thrive, however, and many residents have begun leaving bowls of fresh vegetables near the garden entrances.

So far, every offering has disappeared by sunrise

Cats With Backpacks Suspected in Downtown Thefts

Police are investigating a string of unusual petty thefts involving groups of cats wearing tiny backpacks.

Witnesses report seeing the animals entering convenience stores, outdoor cafés, and even an unattended bank drive-through lane.

"They work in teams," claimed one shop owner. "One distracts you, one climbs a shelf, and another runs off with cash." Security footage appears to show several cats carrying dollar bills inside miniature hiking packs.

Animal Control has declined comment.

The cats have reportedly been seen delivering their spoils to an abandoned warehouse near Gleason Avenue.

Local residents suspect the operation may somehow be connected to the mysterious Cat Man sightings that have plagued the city for nearly a year.

Classified Ad

FOUND

Large bronze goat wandering near the old train yard.

Answers to "Professor."

May or may not understand English.

If claimed, please bring carrots.

Who Keeps Feeding Everyone?

For months now, food has been appearing all over Gate City.

Community gardens.

Fruit baskets.

Porch deliveries.

Anonymous donations.

Mysterious benefactors paying grocery tabs.

As a journalist, I naturally followed the money.

Except there doesn't appear to be any.

No grants.

No charity records.

No city funding.

No political campaign.

Someone is spending an enormous amount of time and resources making sure people have enough to eat and somehow leaving no paper trail.

Normally I'd suspect a publicity stunt.

Except whoever is responsible clearly doesn't want credit.

Maybe that's the strangest part.

In a world where everyone wants

followers, subscribers,

endorsements, and recognition, Gate

City's mystery gardener appears

content simply helping people.

If anyone has information regarding these activities, contact the Gate City Goosebumps office.

And if you're reading this, mysterious gardener:

Thank you.

The Farmer Who Doesn't Exist

Several residents claim a friendly older man has been appearing at community gardens offering gardening advice.

Descriptions remain remarkably consistent:

- Straw hat
- Denim overalls
- White beard
- Smells faintly of fresh soil

The problem?

Nobody knows who he is.

No property records exist matching his description.

Several people insist they have spoken with him at length, only to realize moments later that he had vanished.

One gardener claims he turned away for less than a second.

"When I looked back, he was gone. There wasn't anywhere he could have gone."

GATE CITY GOOSEBUMPS

The People's Comic of the Paranormal and Peculiar

By: I.M. Spooked

ACROSS GATE CITY, FOOD
KEEPS APPEARING OUT OF
NOWHERE. NO NAMES.
NO THANK-YOUS.
JUST KINDNESS.

Everyone
Deserves
Sweetness.

IN THE GARDENS...

DEMETER BLESSES YOU
TAKE WHAT YOU NEED
LEAVE WHAT YOU CAN

THE TOMATOES
ARE SO GOOD...
WHOEVER'S DOING
THIS IS AMAZING.

IT'S LIKE MAGIC.

ON THE PORCHES...

I DIDN'T ORDER
ANYTHING.

BUT I'LL TAKE
IT. THANK YOU,

...WHOEVER
YOU ARE.

For You

EVEN DEER ARE
GETTING INVOLVED.

A DEER JUST LEFT
A BAG OF GROCERIES
ON MY STEPS.

I'M NOT EVEN
SURPRISED
ANYMORE.

THE THEORISTS HAVE
THEIR IDEAS.

FAE
SURVIVAL
NETWORK.

TIME
TRAVELING
FOODIES.

GOVERNMENT
MIND CONTROL
THROUGH
ZUCCHINI.

WE MAY NEVER KNOW.

THE SKEPTICS?

GATE CITY
REALIST

SOMEONE
WITH MONEY
AND A KIND
HEART.

NOTHING
SUPERNATURAL
ABOUT THAT.

BUT THIS WITNESS SAW
SOMETHING DIFFERENT.

IT WASN'T A PERSON.
NOT EXACTLY. BUT IT WAS...
KIND. THAT'S WHAT I KNOW.

WHOEVER YOU ARE...

THANK YOU.

GATE CITY
IS BETTER BECAUSE
OF YOU.

DEMETER
BLESS YOU

MAYBE THE REAL MYSTERY ISN'T WHO THEY ARE...
BUT WHY THE WORLD NEEDS THEM RIGHT NOW.

HAVE A STORY IDEA? SEND IT TO GOOSEBUMPS!
WE LOVE HEARING FROM OUR READERS.

