



Evidently Mr. Totten did not care for the refreshment. With the most courtly of smiles, he arose and left them to their bouillon.

# THE PRINCE OF GRAUSTARK

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ES; it is quite apparent that the Blithers family intends to have a title at any cost," she said, and her eyes flashed.

"Would you like to take a few turns, Miss Guile?" he inquired, a trace of nervousness in his manner. "I think I can take you safely over the hurdles and around the bunkers." He indicated the outstretched legs along the promenade deck and the immovable groups of chatters

along the rail.

Before deciding, she shot an investigating glance into the corner. Mrs. Gaston was not only there but was engaged in conversation with the gray-mustached gentleman in a near-by chair. It required but half a glance to show that Mr. Totten was unmistakably interested in something the voluble lady had just said to him.

"No, thank you, Mr. Schmidt," said Miss Guile hastily, and then hurried over to her chair, a distinct cloud on her smooth brow. Robin, considering himself dismissed, whirled and went his way, a dark flush spreading over his face. Never, in all his life, had he been quite so out of patience with the world as on this bright sunny morning.

Miss Guile's frown deepened when her abrupt appearance at Mrs. Gaston's side caused that lady to look up with a guilty start and to break off in the middle of a sentence that had begun with: "International marriages, as a rule, are — Oh!"

Mr. Totten arose and bowed with courtly grace to the new arrival on the scene. He appeared to be immensely relieved.

"A lovely morning, Miss Guile," he said as he stooped to arrange her rug. "I hear that you were not at all disturbed by yesterday's blow."

"I was just telling Mr. Totten that you are a wonderful sailor," said Mrs.

**R**ETROSPECTIVE—Prince Robin of Graustark, traveling about the world, arrives in the Catskills to visit the Truxon Kings. W. W. Blithers, self-made multimillionaire and doting father of an only daughter, Maude, prematurely decides on the Prince as a son-in-law. He knows that Graustark is financially embarrassed as a result of the Balkan wars, and with the Blithers millions in mind he confides his domestic ambition to his wife. Blithers calls at the King villa and meets the Prince. He decides to lend Graustark \$16,000,000 and departs for New York to confer with Count Quinnox, the Graustark Minister of War. Meanwhile it is decided to give a ball at Blitherwood in honor of Prince Robin. Maude does not attend the ball, and Mr. Blithers, meeting the Prince the next day, apologizes and invites him to dinner and to be his son-in-law. Maude writes her parents that she and her former governess are going abroad, she under an assumed name, and expect to book passage on the Jupiter. Coincidentally Prince Robin plans his return to Graustark, and sails under the name R. Schmidt, to avoid publicity. He meets a mysterious Miss Guile on board and is infatuated. She discovers that he is the Prince of Graustark.

Gaston, a note of appeal in her voice. "He says his friend, Mr. Schmidt, is also a good sailor. Isn't it perfectly wonderful?"

"I can't see anything wonderful about it," said Miss Guile, fixing the ex-governess with a look that seared.

"We were speaking of this rumored engagement of the Prince of Graustark and — er — what's the name?" He glanced at his newspaper. "Miss Blithers, of course. I enquired of Mrs. — er — Gaston if she happens to know the young lady. She remembers seeing her frequently as a very small child."

"In Paris," said Mrs. Gaston. "One couldn't very well help seeing her, you know. She was the only child of the great Mr. Blithers, whose name was on every one's lips at the —"

Miss Guile interrupted. "It would be like the great Mr. Blithers to buy this toy prince for his daughter — as a family plaything or human lap-dog, or something of the sort, wouldn't it?"

Mr. Totten betrayed no emotion save amusement. Miss Guile was watching through half-closed eyes. There was a noticeable stiffening of the prim figure of Mrs. Gaston.

"I've no doubt Mr. Blithers can afford to buy the most expensive of toys for his only child. You Americans go in for the luxuries of life. What could be more extravagant than the purchase of a royal lap-dog? The only drawback I can suggest is that the Prince might turn out to be a cur, and then where would Mr. Blithers be?"

"It is more to the point to ask where Miss Blithers would be, Mr. Totten," said Miss Guile, with a smile that caused the fierce old warrior to afterwards declare to Dank that he never had seen a lovelier girl in all his life.

"Ah, but we spoke of the Prince as a lap-dog or a cur, Miss Guile, not as a watch-dog," said he.