

# TRUXTON KING

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SYNOPSIS

CHAPTER I.—Truxton King arrives in Edelweiss, capital of Graustark, and meets the beautiful niece of Spantz, a gunmaker. II.—King does a favor for Prince Robin, the young ruler of the country, whose guardian is John Tullis, an American. III.—Baron Danglars, minister of police, interviews King and warns him against Olga, the gunmaker's niece. IV.—King invades the royal park, meets the prince and is presented to the lady's fascinating Aunt Lorraine. V.—The committee of ten, conspirators against the prince, meets in an underground chamber, where the girl Olga is disclosed as one who is to kill Prince Robin with a bomb. VI.—John Tullis calls on the beautiful Countess Ingomede, who warns him that her hated and notorious old husband, Count Marlaux, is conspiring against the prince. VII, VIII, IX and X.—King visits the house of the witch of Ganlock gap and meets the royal household there. He sees an eye gleaming through a crack in a door and while searching for the person he is overpowered and dragged into a lift. He is confronted by Count Marlaux and then taken to the underground den of the committee of ten. XI.—Olga defends King before the committee of anarchists.

XII.—Lorraine is brought to the den and thrown into the same room with King. XIII.—King falls a jailer, dons his clothing and disguised, carries Lorraine into a boat at night in which several of the anarchists are about to depart.

XIV.—King manages to get Lorraine, whom he loves, ashore, and they hide in a freight car.

XV.—Olga waits on a street corner with a bomb to kill Prince Robin as he passes in a parade. King and Lorraine are carried off into the country in the car. They start back in an ox cart and warn the prince when almost in front of the girl Olga.

XVI.—The bomb is thrown, but the prince escapes to the castle. Marlaux is in control of the city.

XVII and XVIII.—King goes to the castle to notify Tullis of the prince's danger, Tullis being absent in the hills with a force of soldiers. He finds Tullis.

XIX.—King returns to the castle again, risking his life. XX.—Tullis with reinforcements, overpowers the Marlaux soldiery and rescues the castle and the prince from the count's grasp. Marlaux is killed.

from the common to the gates. It was a strange coincidence that Marlaux should have chosen this day for his culminating assault on the castle. The skirmish at daybreak had hurried his arrangements no doubt, but none the less were his plans complete. The explosives had been laid during the night. The fuses reached to the mouth of the tunnel across the common. As he swept up the avenue at the head of his command, hawk faced and with glittering eyes, he snarled the command that put fire to the fuses.

A moment later his vanguard streamed through the aperture and faced the deadly fire from the driveway. At last they began to advance across the grassy meadow. When one man fell under the fire of the guardmen another rushed into his place. Three times the indomitable Graustarkian drove them back and as often did Marlaux among them up again, exalted by the example he set.

"Gah, he is a soldier!" cried Truxton. "Hello! There's my friend Brutus. He's no coward either. Here's a try for you, Brutus!" He dropped to his knee and took deliberate aim at the frenzied henchman. The discovery that there were three bullets in Brutus' breast when he was picked up long afterward did not affect the young man's contention that his was the one that had found the heart.

The fall of Brutus urged the Iron Count to greater fury. His horse had been shot from under him. He was on his feet, calling to his men to follow him as he moved toward the stubborn row of green and red. Bullets hissed about his ears, but he gave no heed to them.

The commander of the guard gave the command to fall back slowly toward the castle. Firing at every step, they crossed the parade ground and then made a quick dash for the shelter of the long balconies. Marlaux, down in the parade ground, was fairly pushing his men into the jaws of death.

Truxton King's chance to pay his debt to Vos Engo came after one of the fiercest, most determined charges. The young count had been fighting desperately for some time. His weakness seemed to have disappeared. As the foe fell back in the face of desperate resistance Vos Engo sprang down the steps and rushed after them, calling others to join him in the attempt to complete the rout. Near the edge of the terrace he stopped. His leg gave way under him, and he fell to the ground. Truxton saw him fall. He leaped over the low balustrade, dropping his hot rifle, and dashed across the terrace to his rival's assistance. A hundred men shot at him.

"It's my turn!" shouted the American. "I'll square it up if I can. Then we're even!"

He seized the wounded man in his strong arms, threw him over his shoulder and staggered toward the steps.

"Release me, curse you!" shrieked Vos Engo, striking his rescuer in the face with his fist.

"I'm saving you for another day," said King as he dropped behind the balustrade with his burdened wife. There were other witnesses to Truxton's rash act. In a lofty window of the north wing crouched a white faced girl and a grim old man. The latter held a rifle in his tense though feeble old hands. Now and then the old man would sight his rifle and fire. The girl who crouched beside him was there to designate a certain figure in the ever changing mass of humanity on the bloody parade ground. Her clear eyes sought for and found Marlaux; her unwavering finger pointed him out to the old marksman.

She saw Vos Engo fall. Then a tall, well known figure sprang into view, dashing toward her wounded lover. Her heart stopped beating. With her hands to her temples she leaned far over the window ledge and



"YOU ARE SHOT!" SHE CRIED. "TRUXTON! TRUXTON!"

screamed—screamed words that would have filled Truxton King with an endless joy could he have heard them above the rattle of the rifles.

The corner of the building had shut out the picture. It was impossible for her to know that the man and his burden had reached the balcony in safety. Even now they might be lying on the terrace, riddled by bullets.

The old man roused her from the stupor of dread. He called her name. Dully she responded. Standing bolt upright in the window, she sought out the figure of Marlaux and pointed rigidly.

"Ah," groaned the old man, "they will not be driven back this time! They will not be denied. It is the last charge! God, how they come! Our men will be annihilated in—Where is he? Now! Ah, I see! Yes, that is he! He is near enough now. I cannot miss him!"

Marlaux was leading his men up to the terrace. At the top of the terrace the Iron Count suddenly stopped. His long body stiffened and he crumpled like a reed. A score of heavy feet trampled on the fallen leader, but he did not feel the impact.

A bullet from the north wing had crashed into his brain.

"At last!" shrieked the old man at the window. "Come, Miss Tullis; my work is done."

"He is dead, your grace?" in low, awed tones.

"Yes, my dear," said the Duke of Perse, a smile of relief on his face. "Come, let me escort you to the prince. You have been most courageous."

A group of terrified women were huddled in the far corner of a nearby room. The Duke of Perse held open the door for Lorraine Tullis, but she did not enter. When he turned to call she was halfway down the post flight of stairs, racing through the powder smoke toward the landing below.

At every step she was screaming in the very agony of gladness: "Stand firm! Hold them! Help is coming! Help is coming!"

A last look through the window at the end of the hall had revealed to her the most glorious of visions.

Red and green troops were pouring through the dismantled gateway, their horses surging over the ugly ground rife and debris as if possessed of the fabled wings.

Her brother was out there, and all was well. She was crying the joyous news from the head of the grand stairway when Truxton King caught sight of her.

He was powder stained and grimy. There was blood on his face and shirt front.

"You are shot!" she cried, clutching the post at the bend in the stairs. "Truxton! Truxton!"

"Not even scratched!" he shouted as he reached her side. "It's not my— He stopped short even as he held out his arms to clasp her to his breast. "It's some one else's blood," he finished resolutely. She swayed toward him, and he caught her in his arms.

"I love you—oh, I love you, Truxton!" she cried over and over again. He was faint with joy. His kisses spoke the adoration he would have cried out to her if emotion had not clogged his throat.

"Eric," she whispered at last, drawing back in his arms and looking up into his eyes with a great pity in her own. "Is he—is he dead, Truxton?"

Leaderless between the deadly fray, the mercenaries gave up the fight after a brief stand at the terrace. The prince resigned again.

## CHAPTER XXI.

"YOU WILL BE MRS. KING." It was late in the day when Truxton King was summoned to the devastated state chamber to be made a baron, and the prince completed the American's reward by presenting him with an ancient gold seal ring, one of the crown jewels.

Late that night it was reported at the castle that a large force of men were camped on the opposite side of the river. A hundred campfires were gleaming against the distant uplands.

"The Grand Duke Paulus!" exclaimed Count Halfont. "Thank God he did not come a day earlier. We owe him nothing today, but yesterday—ah, he could have demanded much of us!"

In one of the wrecked approaches to the terrace, surrounded by fragments of stone and confronted by ugly destruction, sat a young man and a slender girl. There were no lights near them. The shadows were black and forbidding.

His arm was about her; her head nestled securely against his shoulder, and her slim hands were willing prisoners in one of his.

She was saying: "Truxton, dear, I did not love Eric Vos Engo. I just thought it was love. I never really knew what love was until you came into my life. That's what made it so hard. I had let him believe that I might care for him some day. And I did like him. So I—"

"You will never, never know how happy I am, Lorraine!" he breathed into her ear.

"I hope I shall always bring happiness to you, Truxton," she murmured, faint with the joy of loving.

"You will make me very unhappy if you don't marry me tomorrow."

"I will marry you, Truxton, when we get to New York," she said, but not very firmly. He saw his advantage.

He held her close for a long time, his face buried in her hair. "Listen, darling! Won't you say you'll be my wife before I leave Graustark? I want you so much. I can't go away without you."

She hesitated. "When are you going, Truxton? You—you haven't told me."

It was what he wanted. "I am going next Monday," he said promptly. As a matter of fact, he had forgotten the day of the week they were now living in.

"Monday? Oh, dear!"

"Will you?"

"I—I must cable home first," she faltered.

"That's a mere detail, darling. Cable afterward. It will beat us home by three weeks. They'll know we're coming."

"I must ask John, really I must, Truxton," she protested faintly.

"Hurry!" he shouted—in a whisper. "He is so desperately in love he won't think of refusing anything we ask. Shall we set it for Saturday?"

They set it for Saturday without consulting John Tullis and then fell to discussing him. "He is very much in love with her," she said wistfully.

"And she loves him, Lorraine. They will be very happy. She's wonderful!"

"Well, so is John. He's the most wonderful man in all this world."

"I am sure of it," he agreed unanimously. "I saw him talking with her and the Duke of Perse as I came out awhile ago. They were going to the duke's rooms up there. The duke will offer no objections. He'll permit his daughter to select his next son-in-law."

"I shall be sorry to leave Graustark," she said dreamily after a long period of silent retrospection. "I've had the happiest year of my life here."

"I've had the busiest month of my life here. I'll never again say that the world is a dull place. I shudder when I think of what might have happened to you, my princess sweetheart, if I hadn't come to Edelweiss. I would not have found you." Feeling her trembling in his arms, he went on with whimsical good humor: "You would have been eaten up by the ore long before this, or perhaps you would have succeeded in becoming a countess."

"As it is, I shall be a baroness."

"In Graustark, but not in New York. That reminds me. You'll be more than a baroness—more than a princess. You will be a queen. Don't you catch the point? You will be Mrs. King."

The Grand Duke Paulus was distinctly annoyed. He had traveled many miles, endured quite a number of hardships, and all to no purpose. When dawn came his emissaries returned from the city with the lamentable information that the government had righted itself, that Marlaux's sensational revolution was at an end and that the regents would be highly honored if his excellency could overlook the distressingly chaotic conditions at court and condescend to pay the castle a visit.

The grand duke resolved that he would visit the castle in a very informal way, extend his congratulations and offer his services, which he knew would be declined with thanks. Incidentally he would mention the bond

issue; also he would find the opportunity to suggest to the ministry that his government still was willing to make large grants and stupendous promises if any sort of arrangement could be made by which the system might be operated in conjunction with branch lines of the imperial roads.

And so it was that at midday he rode in pomp and splendor through the city gates, attended by his staff and a rather overpowering bodyguard.

The grand duke, with all the arrogance of a real personage, was late. It was not for him to consider the conditions that distressed the court of Graustark—not at all. He was a grand duke and he would take his own time in paying his respects. When he finally presented himself at the castle doors a sleepy group of attendants actually yawned in his presence.

No one had slept during the night just passed. Excitement and the suffering of others had denied slumber to one and all, even to those who had not slept for many days and nights. Now the reaction was upon them. Relaxation had succeeded tenseness.

When the grand duke entered the great, somber throne room he was confronted by a punctiliously polite assemblage, but every eyelid was as heavy as lead and as prone to sink.

The prince sat far back in the great chair of his ancestors, his sturdy legs sticking straight out in front of him. The grand duke advanced between the respectful lines and knelt at the foot of the throne.

"Arise, your highness," piped Bobby, with a quick glance at Count Halfont. It was a faint, faraway voice that uttered the gracious command. "Graustark welcomes the Grand Duke Paulus. It is my pleasure to—to—" A helpless look came into his eyes. He looked everywhere for support. The grand duke saw that he had forgotten the rehearsed speech and smiled benignly as he stepped forward and kissed the hand that had been extended somewhat uncertainly.

"My most respectful homage to your majesty. The felicitations of my emperor and the warmest protestations of friendship from his people."

With this as a prologue he engaged himself in the ever pleasurable task of delivering a long congratulatory address. After five minutes of high sounding platitudes he again turned to the prince. It was then that he received his first shock.

Prince Robin was sound asleep. His head was slipping sideways along the satin back of the big chair, and his chin was very low in the laces at his neck. The grand duke coughed emphatically, cleared his throat and grew very red in the face.

The court of Graustark was distinctly dismayed.

"His majesty appears to have—ahem—gone to sleep," remarked the grand duke tartly, interrupting himself to address the prime minister.

"He is very tired, your excellency," said Count Halfont, very much distressed. "Pray consider what he has been through during the day."

"Ah, my dear count, do not apologize for him. I quite understand. Ahem, ahem!" Still, he was very red in the face.

"I will awaken him, your excellency," said the prime minister, edging toward the throne.

"Not at all, sir!" protested the visitor. "Permit him to have his sleep out, sir. I will not have him disturbed. Who am I that I should defeat the claims of nature? It is my pleasure to wait until his majesty's nap is over. Then he may dismiss us, but not until we have cried 'Long live the prince!'"

For awhile they stood in awkward silence, this notable gathering of men and women. Then the prime minister in hushed tones suggested that it would be eminently proper under the circumstances for all present to be seated. He was under the impression that his serene highness would sleep long and soundly.

Stiff backed and uncomfortable, the court sat and waited. No one pretended to conceal the blissful yawns that would not be denied. A drowsy, ineffably languid feeling took possession of the entire assemblage.

The prime minister sat at the foot of the throne and nodded in spite of himself. John Tullis, far back near the wall, had his head on his hand, bravely fighting off the persistent demon. Prince Danton of Dawsbergen was sound asleep.

The grand duke was wide awake. He saw it all and was equal to the occasion. After all, he was a kindly old gentleman and, once his moment of mortification was over, he was not above charity.

Bobby's poor little head had slipped over to a most uncomfortable position against the arm of the chair. Putting his finger to lips, the grand duke tipped carefully up to the throne. With very gentle hands he lifted Bobby's head and, infinitely tender, stuffed a throne cushion behind the curly head. A splendid smile in his eyes, he tipped back to his chair.

As he passed Count Halfont, who had risen, he whispered:

"Dear little man! I do not forget, my lord, that I was once a boy. God bless him!"

Then he sat down, conscious of a fine feeling of goodness, folded his arms across his expansive chest and allowed his beaming eyes to rest upon



"DEAR LITTLE MAN! GOD BLESS HIM!"

the sleeping boy far back in the chair of state. Incidentally he decided to delay a few days before taking up the bond question with the ministry. The grand duke was not an ordinary diplomat.

In one of the curtained windows, far removed from the throne, sat Truxton King and Lorraine Tullis.

All about them people were watching the delicate little scene, smiling drowsily at the grand duke's tender comedy. No one was looking at the two in the curtained recess. Her hand was in his; her head sank slowly toward his inviting shoulder. Her heavy lids drooped lower and lower, refusing to obey the slender will that argued against complete surrender. At last her soft, regular breathing told him that she was asleep. Awaiting his opportunity, he tenderly kissed the soft brown hair, murmured a gentle word of love and settled his own head against the thick cushions.

Everywhere they dozed and nodded. The grand duke smiled and blinked his little eyes. He was very wide awake.

That is how he happened to see the prince move restlessly and half open his sleep bound eyes. The grand duke leaned forward with his hand to his ear and listened. He had seen the boy's lips move. From dreamland came Bobby's belated "Good night!"

THE END.

## Mining for Gold in Curry

Last week marked the beginning of actual work on Cunniff's beach, by what is now known as the Idaho Blacksand Gold Saving Co. The company is composed of Berkeley, Cal., capital, and have taken into the company, C. H. Helling, who has been experimenting with black sand here the past year, and who holds a lease on that portion of the beach adjoining Cunniff's place. One member of the company, Mr. Ferrell, arrived last week, and has men at work getting out the foundation timbers for large vats and tanks,

besides a building 30x70 feet. The sand will be brought to the machine by means of a steam shovel. The grey sand will first be separated from the black, then the latter will be treated by a secret process, known only to Mr. Johnson, one member of the company.

The samples of sand taken from here some time ago, by Mr. Johnson, proved highly satisfactory, and he is due to arrive here this week with all necessary machinery. The water from Gibson and Cunniff creeks will be brought on the beach, which will insure ample water for a large plant. Gold Beach Globe.

32-71 Attorney for Plaintiff

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