

GRAUSTARK

... By ...

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CHAPTER I.—Grenfall Lorry, a wealthy American globe trotter, stumbles into acquaintance with a charming foreign girl on the train from Denver to Washington. The pair is left behind when the flier stops for repairs in West Virginia. II.—Lorry wires ahead to hold the train. He and the unknown girl ride twenty miles at a tearing pace in a mountain coach. There is no love-making, but a near approach to it as the rolling stage tumbles the passengers about. III.—Lorry dines with the foreign party, consisting of Miss Guggenslocker, Uncle Casja and Aunt Yvonne. They are natives of Graustark, a country Lorry had never heard of before. IV.—Lorry shows the foreigners the sights of Washington. They leave for New York to sail on the Kaiser Wilhelm. Miss Guggenslocker naively calls Lorry her "ideal American" and invites him to come and see her at Edelweiss.

CHAPTER V.

SENTIMENTAL EXCHANGE.

IF Lorry slept that night, he was not aware of it. All night long he tossed and thought. Her face was everywhere. Her voice filled his ear with music never ceasing, but it was not the lulling music that invites drowsiness. He heard the clock strike the hours from 1 to 8, when he arose, thoroughly disgusted with himself. He worshiped his mother, but in several instances that morning he caught himself just in time to prevent the utterance of some sharp rejoinder to her pleasant, motherly queries. Twice she was compelled to repeat questions, his mind being so far away that he heard nothing save words that another woman had uttered, say, twenty-four hours before. His eyes were red, and there was a heavy droop to the lids. His tones were drawling and his voice strangely without warmth. His face was white and tired.

"You are not well, Grenfall," his mother said, peering anxiously into his eyes. "The trip has done you up. Now, you must take a good, long rest and recover from your vacation."

He smiled grimly.

"A man never needs a rest so much as he does at the end of his vacation, eh, mother? Well, work will be restful. I shall go to the office this morning and do three days' work before night. That will prove to you that I am perfectly well."

True to his intention, he went to the office early, virtuously inclined to work. His uncle greeted him warmly and a long conference over business affairs followed. To Lorry's annoyance and discomfiture he found himself frequently inattentive. Several important cases were pending, and in a day or two they were to go into court with a damage suit of more than ordinary consequence. Lorry senior could not repress his gratification over the return of his clever, active nephew at such an opportune time. He had felt himself unable to handle the case alone. The endurance of a young and vigorous mind was required for the coming battle in chancery.

They lunched together, the elder eager and confidential, the other respectful and absent-minded. In the afternoon the junior went over the case and renewed search for authorities and opinions, fully determined to be constant in spite of his inclination to be fickle. Late in the day he petulantly threw aside the books, curtly informed his astonished uncle that he was not feeling well, and left the office. Until dinner time he played billiards atrociously at his club; at dinner his mother sharply reproved him for flagrant inattentions; after dinner he smoked and wondered despondently. Tomor-

row she was to sail! If he could but see her once more!

At 7:30 his mother found him in the library searching diligently through the volume of the encyclopedia that contained the G's. When she asked what he was looking for, he laughed idiotically and in confusion informed her that he was trying to find the name of the most important city in Indiana. She was glancing at the books in the case when she was startled by hearing him utter an exclamation and then leap to his feet.

"Half past 7! I can make it!"

"What is the matter, Gren, dear?"

"Oh!" he ejaculated, bringing himself up with a start. "I forgot—er—yes, mother, I'll just have time to catch the train, you know. Will you kindly have Mary clean up this muss of books and so forth? I'm off, you see, to New York—for a day only, mother—back tomorrow! Important business—just remembered it, you know—ahem! Good-by, mother! Goodby!" He had kissed her and was in the hall before she fairly understood what he was talking about. Then she ran after him, gaining the hallway in time to see him pass through the street door, his hat on the side of his head, his overcoat fluttering furiously as he shoved his arms into the sleeves. The door slammed, and he was off to New York.

The train was ready to pull out when he reached the station, and it was only by a hard run that he caught the last platform, panting, but happy. Just twenty-four hours before she had left Washington, and it was right here that she had smiled and said she would expect him to come to Edelweiss. He had had no time to secure a berth in the sleeper, but was fortunately able to get one after taking the train. Grenfall went to sleep feeling both disappointed and disgusted—disappointed because of his submission to sentiment, disgusted because of the man who occupied the next section. A man who is in love and in doubt has no patience with the prosaic wretch who can sleep so audibly.

After a hasty breakfast in New York he telephoned to the steamship company's pier and asked the time of sailing for the Kaiser Wilhelm. On being informed that the ship was to cast off at her usual hour, he straightway called a cab and was soon bowling along toward the busy waterway. Directly he sat bolt upright, rigid and startled to find himself more awakened to the realization of his absurd action. Again it entered his infatuated head that he was performing the veriest schoolboy trick in rushing to a steamship pier in the hope of catching a final and at best unsatisfactory glimpse of a young woman who had appealed to his sensitive admiration. A lovesick boy could be excused for such a display of imbecility, but a man—a man of the world! Never!

"The idea of chasing down to the water's edge to see that girl is enough to make you ashamed of yourself for life, Grenfall Lorry," he apostrophized. "It's worse than any lovesick fool ever dreamed of doing. I am blushing, I'll be bound. The idiocy, the rank idiocy of the thing! And suppose she should see me staring at her out there on the pier? What would she

think of me? I'll not go another foot! I won't be a fool!"

He was excited and self-conscious and thoroughly ashamed of the trip into which his impetuous adoration had driven him. Just as he was tugging at the door in the effort to open it that he might order the driver to take him back to the hotel a sly tempter whispered something in his ear. His fancy was caught, and he listened:

"Why not go down to the pier and look over the passenger list just to see if she has been booked safely? That would be perfectly proper and sensible, and, besides, it will be a satisfaction to know that she gets off all right. Certainly! There's nothing foolish in that. * * * Especially as I am right on the way there. * * * And as I have come so far * * * there's no sense in going back without seeing whether she has secured passage. * * * I can find out in a minute and then go home. * * * There won't be anything wrong in that. And then I may get a glimpse of her before the ship leaves the pier. She must not see me, of course. Never! She'd laugh at me. How I'd hate to see her laughing at me!" Then, sinking back again with a smile of justification on his face, he muttered: "We won't turn back; we'll go right ahead. We'll be a kind of a fool, but not so foolish as to allow her to see us and recognize us as one."

Before long they arrived at the wharf, and he hurried to the office near by. The clerk permitted him to look over the list. First he ran through the first class passengers and was surprised to find that there was no such name as Guggenslocker in the list. Then he went over the second class, but still no Guggenslocker.

"Hasn't Mr. Guggenslocker taken passage?" he demanded, unwilling to believe his eyes.

"Not on the Kaiser Wilhelm, sir."

"Then, by George, they'll miss the boat!" Lorry exclaimed. "Maybe they'll be here in a few minutes."

"They can't get anything but steerage now, sir. Everything else is gone."

"Are you sure they haven't taken passage?" asked the bewildered Lorry weakly.

"You can see for yourself," answered the young man curtly.

Lorry was again in a perspiration, this time the result of a vague, growing suspicion that had forced itself into his mind. Gradually he came to the conclusion that she had fooled him, had lied to him. She did not intend to sail on the Wilhelm at all. It was all very clear to him now—that strangeness in her manner, those odd occasional smiles. What was she—an adventuress? That sweet faced girl a little ordinary coquette, a liar? He turned cold with the thought.

The clanging of bells broke upon his ears, and he knew that the great ship was about to depart. Mechanically, disconsolately, he walked out and paced the broad, crowded wharf. All was excitement. There were the rush of people, the shouts, the cheers, the puffing of tugs, the churning of water, and the Kaiser Wilhelm was off on its long voyage. Half heartedly, miserably and in a dazed condition he found a place in the front row along the rail. There were tears in his eyes, tears of anger, shame and mortification. She had played with him!

Gloomily his disappointed eyes swept along the rail of the big steamer, half interested in spite of themselves. Twice they passed a certain point on the forward deck, unconscious of a force that was attracting them in that direction. The third time he allowed them to settle for an instant on the group of faces and figures and then stray off to other parts of the ship. Some strange power drew them again to the forward deck, and this time he was startled into an intent stare. Could he believe those eyes? Surely that was her figure at

the rail—there between the two women who were waving their kerchiefs so frantically. His head began to jump up and down, doubtingly, impatiently. Why not that face be turned toward wharf as the others were? The blue coat, but not the blue jaunty sailor hat sat where the to be forgotten cap had perched, change was slight, but it was sufficient to throw him into the most feeble state of uncertainty. An insane shout to command to this young woman came over him.

The ship was slowly opening between herself and the wharf, knew that in a few moments motion would be impossible. Just was losing hope and was ready to with despair the face beneath the or hat was turned squarely in rection. A glaze obscured his numbness attacked his brain. Miss Guggenslocker!

A pair of big glasses was lent him for a second and then lowered plainly saw the smile on her face, the fluttering cambric in her hand, waved his hat and then his hand chief, obtaining from her vigorous unrestrained signs of approbation, face was wreathed in smiles, leaned far over the rail, the picture animated pleasure.

Making sure that her uncle and were not visible, he boldly placed fingers to his lips and wafted out over the water.

"Now she'll crush me!" he cried himself, regretting the rash act, praying that she had not observed.

Her handkerchief ceased fluttering an instant, and, with sinking heart, realized that she had observed. It was a moment of indecision, a part of the fair one going out, and then the little finger tips of hands went to her lips and he came back to him.

While he was still waving his kerchief, debating savagely



He boldly placed his fingers to his lips and wafted a kiss.

ously the wisdom of the act, came a part of the distant color. The blue figure faded and blended the general tone and could not be distinguished. She was gone, she had tossed him a kiss, that he should always see.

Uppermost in his bewildered was the question, Why is she the passenger list? Acting on a sudden impulse, he again sought the clerk in charge and made a thorough inspection. There was no Guggenslocker among the names. resort he asked:

"They could not have sailed on an assumed name, could they?" "I can't say as to that. What are they going?"

"Graustark." (Continued)