

# The Brethren

By RIDER HAGGARD,

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Again the trumpets blew and the heralds called, and they led them to the doors of the chapel, which at their knocking were thrown wide. From within came the sound of women's voices singing, but it was no sad song they sang.

"The sisters of the order are still there," said Rosamund to Wulf, "and would cheer us on our road to heaven."

"Perchance," he answered. "I know not. I am amazed."

At the door the company of Moslems left them, but they crowded round the entrance as though to watch what passed. Now down the long aisle walked a single white-robed figure. It was the abbess.

"What shall we do, mother?" said Rosamund to her.

"Follow me, both of you," she said, and they followed her through the nave to the altar rails, and at a sign from her knelt down.

Now they saw that on either side of the altar stood a Christian priest. The priest to the right—it was the bishop Egbert—came forward and began to read over them the marriage service of their faith.

"They'd wed us ere we die," whispered Rosamund to Wulf.

"So be it," he answered. "I am glad."

"And I also, beloved," she whispered back.

The service went on—as in a dream the service went on, while the white-robed sisters sat in their carved chairs and watched. The rings, that were handed to them had been interchanged. Wulf had taken Rosamund to wife. Rosamund had taken Wulf to husband till death did them part.

Then the old bishop withdrew to the altar and another hooded monk came forward and uttered over them the benediction in a deep and sonorous voice, which stirred their hearts most strangely, as though some echo reached them from beyond the grave. He held his hands above them in blessing and looked upward, so that his head fell back and the light of the altar lamp fell upon his face.

It was the face of Godwin, and on his head was the tonsure of a monk.

Once more they stood before Saladin, and now their train was swelled by the abbess and sisters of the Holy Cross.

"Sir Wulf D'Arcy," said the sultan, "and you, Rosamund, my niece, Princess of Baalbec, the dregs of your cup, sweet or bitter or bittersweet, are drunk; the doom which I decreed for you is accomplished, and, according to your own rites, you are man and wife till Allah sends upon you that

death which I withhold. Because you showed mercy upon those doomed to die and were the means of mercy, I also give you mercy and with it my love and honor. Now bide here, if you will, in my freedom and enjoy your rank and wealth, or go hence, if you will, and live out your lives across the sea. The blessing of Allah be upon you and turn your souls to light. This is the decree of Yusuf Salah-ed-din, commander of the faithful, conqueror and caliph of the east."

Trembling, full of joy and wonder, they knelt before him and kissed his hand. Then, after a few swift words between them, Rosamund spoke:

"Sire, that God whom you have invoked, the God of Christian and of Moslem, the God of all the world, though the world worship him in many ways and shapes, bless and reward you for this royal deed. Yet listen to our petition. It may be that many of our faith still lie unransomed in Jerusalem. Take my lands and gems and let them be valued and their price given to pay for the liberty of some poor slaves. It is our marriage offering. As for us, we will get us to our own country."

"So be it," answered Saladin. "The lands I will take and devote the sum of them as you desire—yes, to the last bezant. The jewels also shall be valued, but I give them back to you as my wedding dower. To these men further I grant permission to bide here in Jerusalem to nurse the Christian sick, unharmed and unmolested, if so they will, and this because they sheltered you. Ho, minstrels and heralds, lead this new wed pair to the place that has been prepared for them!"

Still trembling and bewildered, they turned to go, when, lo, Godwin stood before them smiling and kissed them both upon the cheek, calling them "Beloved brother and sister."

"And you, Godwin?" stammered Rosamund.

"I, Rosamund, have also found my bride, and she is named the Church of Christ."

"Do you, then, return to England, brother?" asked Wulf.

"Nay," Godwin answered in a fierce whisper and with flashing eyes; "the cross is down, but not forever. That cross has Richard of England and many another servant beyond the seas, and they will come at the church's call. Here, brother, before all is done we may meet again in war. Till then, farewell."

So spoke Godwin and then was gone.

THE END.

the capital. As a powerful principality in the north, had conquered Graustark in the latter part of the nineteenth century, but only after a bitter war in which starvation and famine proved far more destructive than the arms of the victors. The treaty of peace and the indemnity that fell to the lot of vanquished Graustark have been discussed upon at length in at least one history.

Those who have followed that history must know, of course, that the reigning princess, Yotive, was married to a young American at the very tag end of the nineteenth century. This admirable couple met in quite romantic fashion while the young sovereign was traveling incognito through the United States of America. The American, a splendid fellow named Lorry, was so persistent in the subsequent attack upon her heart that all ancestral prejudices were swept away, and she became his bride with the full consent of her entranced subjects. The manner in which he wooed and won this young and adorable ruler forms a very attractive chapter in romance, although unmentioned in history. This being the tale of another day, it is not timely to dwell upon the interesting events which led up to the marriage of the Princess Yotive to Grenfall Lorry. Suffice it to say that Lorry won his bride against all wishes and odds and at the same time won an endless love and esteem from the people of the little kingdom among the eastern hills. Two years have passed since that notable wedding in Edelweiss.

Lorry and his wife, the princess, made their home in Washington, but spent a few months of each year in Edelweiss. During the periods spent in Washington and in travel her affairs in Graustark were in the hands of a capable, austere old diplomat, her uncle, Count Caspar Halfont. Princess Volga reigned as regent over the principality of Axphain. To the south lay the principality of Dawsbergen, ruled by young Prince Dautan, whose half brother, the deposed Prince Gabriel, had been for two years a prisoner in Graustark, the convicted assassin of Prince Lorenz of Axphain, one time suitor for the hand of Yotive.

It was after the second visit of the Lorrys to Edelweiss that a serious turn of affairs presented itself. Gabriel had succeeded in escaping from his dungeon. His friends in Dawsbergen stirred up a revolution, and Dautan was driven from the throne at Serros. On the arrival of Gabriel at the army of Dawsbergen espoused the cause of the prince it had spurned, and, three days after his escape, he was on his throne, defying Yotive and offering a price for the head of the unfortunate Dautan, now a fugitive in the hills along the Graustark frontier.

## CHAPTER II.

MAJOR GEORGE CALHOUN was a member of congress from one of the southern states. His forefathers had represented the same commonwealth, and so, it was likely, would his descendants, if there is virtue in the fitness of things and the heredity of love. While intrepid frontiersmen were opening the trails through the fertile wilds west of the Alleghenies a strong branch of the Calhoun family followed close in their footsteps. The major's great-grandfather saw the glories and the possibilities of the new territory. He struck boldly forward from the old Revolutionary grounds, abandoning the luxuries and traditions of the Carolinas for a fresh, wild life of promise. His sons and daughters became solid stones in the foundation of a commonwealth, and his grandchildren are still at work on the structure. State and national legislatures had known the Calhouns from the beginning. Battlefields had tested their valor, and drawing rooms had proved their gentility.

Major Calhoun had fought with Stonewall Jackson and won his spurs, and at the same time the heart and hand of Betty Haswell, the staunchest Confederate who ever made flags, bandages and prayers for the boys in gray. When the reconstruction came he went to congress, and later on became prominent in the United States consular service, for years holding an important European post. Congress claimed him once more in the early nineties, and there he is at this very time.

Everybody in Washington's social and diplomatic circles admired the beautiful Beverly Calhoun. According to his own loving term of identification, she was the major's "youngest." The fair southerner had seen two seasons in the nation's capital. Cupid, standing directly in front of her, had shot his darts ruthlessly and resistlessly into the passing hosts, and masculine Washington looked humbly to her for the balm that might soothe its pains. The wily god of love was fair enough to protect the girl whom he forced to be his unwilling, perhaps unconscious, ally. He held his impenetrable shield between her heart and the assaults of a whole army of suitors, high and low, great and small. It was not idle rumor that said she had declined a coronet or two, that the millions of more than one American Midas had been offered to her and that she had dealt gently but firmly with a score of hearts which had nothing but love, ambition and poverty to support them in the conflict.

The Calhouns lived in a handsome home not far from the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Grenfall Lorry. It seemed but natural that the two beautiful young women should become constant and loyal friends. Women as lovely as they have no reason to be jealous. It is only the woman who does not feel secure of her personal charms that cultivates envy. At the home of Graustark's princess Beverly met the dukes and barons from the far east. It was in the warmth of the Calhoun hospitality that Yotive formed her dearest love for the American people.

Miss Beverly was neither tall nor short. She was of that divine and indefinite height known as medium; slender, but perfectly molded; strong, but graceful—an absolutely healthy young person, whose beauty knew well how to take care of itself. Being quite heart whole and fancy free, she slept well, ate well and enjoyed every minute of life. In her blood ran the warm, eager impulses of the south; hereditary love of ease and luxury displayed itself in every emotion; the perfectly normal demand upon men's admiration was as characteristic in her as it is in any daughter of the land whose women are born to expect chivalry and homage.

A couple of years in a New York "finishing school" for young ladies had served greatly to modify Miss Calhoun's colloquial charms. Many of her delightful "way down south" phrases and mannerisms were blighted by the cold, unromantic atmosphere of a seminary conducted by two ladies from Boston who were too old to marry, too penurious to love and too prim to think that other women might care to do both. There were times, however—if she were excited or enthusiastic—when pretty Beverly so far forgot her training as to break forth with a very attractive "yo' all," "suah nough" or "go 'long now." And when the bands played "Dixie" she was not afraid to stand up and wave her handkerchief. The northerner who happened to be with her on such occasions usually found himself doing likewise before he could escape the infection.

Miss Calhoun's face was one that painters coveted deep down in their artistic souls. It never knew a dull instant; there was expression in every lineament, in every look; life, genuine life, dwelt in the mobile countenance that turned the head of every man and woman who looked upon it. Her hair was dark brown and abundant; her eyes were a deep gray and looked eagerly from between long lashes of black; her lips were red and ever willing to smile or turn plaintive as occasion required; her brow was broad and fair, and her frown was as dangerous as a smile.

As to her age, if the major admitted, somewhat indiscreetly, that all his children were old enough to vote, her mother, with the reluctance born in women, confessed that she was past twenty, so a year or two either way will determine Miss Beverly's age so far as the telling of this story is concerned. Her eldest brother, Keith Calhoun (the one with the congressional heritage), thought she was too young to marry, while her second brother, Dan, held that she soon would be too old to attract men with matrimonial intentions. Lucy, the only sister, having been happily wedded for ten years, advised her not to think of marriage until she was old enough to know her own mind.

Toward the close of one of the most brilliant seasons the capital had ever known, less than a fortnight before congress was to adjourn, the wife of Grenfall Lorry received the news which spread gloomy disappointment over the entire social realm. A dozen receptions, teas and balls were destined to lose their richest attraction, and hostesses were in despair. The princess had been called to Graustark.

Beverly Calhoun was miserably unhappy. She had heard the story of Gabriel's escape and the consequent probability of a conflict with Axphain. It did not require a great stretch of imagination to convince her that the Lorrys were hurrying off to scenes of intrigue, strife and bloodshed, and that not only Graustark, but its princess, was in jeopardy.

Miss Calhoun's most cherished hopes faded with the announcement that trouble, not pleasure, called Yotive to Edelweiss. It had been their plan that Beverly should spend the delightful summer months in Graustark, a guest at the royal palace. The original arrangements of the Lorrys were hopelessly disturbed by the late news from Count Halfont. They were obliged to leave Washington two months earlier than they intended, and they could not take Beverly Calhoun into danger ridden Graustark. The contemplated visit to St. Petersburg and other pleasures had to be abandoned, and they were in tears.

Yotive's maids were packing the trunks, and Lorry's servants were in a wild state of haste preparing for the departure on Saturday's ship. On Friday afternoon Beverly was naturally where she could do the most good and be of the least help—at the Lorrys. Self-confessedly she delayed the preparations. Respectful maidservants and respectful manservants came often to the princess' boudoir to ask questions, and Beverly just as frequently made tearful resolutions to

leave the household in peace—if such a hullabaloo could be called peace. Callers came by the dozen, but Yotive would see no one. Letters, telegrams and telephone calls almost swamped her secretary; the footman and the butler fairly gasped under the strain of excitement. Through it all the two friends sat despondent and alone in the drear room that once had been the abode of pure delight. Grenfall Lorry was off in town closing up all matters of business that could be dispatched at once. The princess and her industrious retinue were to take the evening express for New York, and the next day would find them at sea.

"I know I shall cry all summer," vowed Miss Calhoun, with conviction in her eyes. "It's just too awful for anything." She was lying back among the cushions of the divan, and her hat was the picture of cruel neglect. For three solid hours she had stubbornly withstood Yotive's appeals to remove her hat, insisting that she could not trust herself to stay more than a minute or two. "It seems to me, Yotive, that your jailers must be very incompetent or they wouldn't have let loose all this trouble upon you," she complained.

"Prince Gabriel is the very essence of trouble," confessed Yotive plaintively. "He was born to annoy people, just like the evil prince in the fairy tales."

"I wish we had him over here," the American girl answered stoutly. "He wouldn't be such a trouble, I'm sure. We don't let small troubles worry us very long, you know."

"But he's dreadfully important over there, Beverly; that's the difficult part of it," said Yotive solemnly. "You see, he is a condemned murderer."

"Then you ought to hang him or electrocute him or whatever it is that you do to murderers over there," spoke Beverly promptly.

"But, dear, you don't understand. He won't permit us either to hang or to electrocute him, my dear. The situation is precisely the reverse, if he is correctly quoted by my uncle. When Uncle Caspar sent an envoy to inform Dawsbergen respectfully that Graustark would hold it personally responsible if Gabriel were not surrendered, Gabriel himself replied, 'Graustark be hanged!'"

"How rude of him, especially when your uncle was so courteous about it! He must be a very disagreeable person," announced Miss Calhoun.

"I am sure you wouldn't like him," said the princess. "His brother, who has been driven from the throne—and from the capital, in fact—is quite different. I have not seen him, but my ministers regard him as a splendid young man."

"Oh, how I hope he may go back with his army and annihilate that old Gabriel!" cried Beverly, frowning fiercely.

"Alas," sighed the princess, "he hasn't an army, and besides he is finding it extremely difficult to keep from being annihilated himself. The army has gone over to Prince Gabriel."

"Pooh!" scoffed Miss Calhoun, who was thinking of the enormous armies the United States can produce at a day's notice. "What good is a ridiculous little army like his anyway? A battalion from Fort Thomas could beat it to!"

"Don't boast, dear," interrupted Yotive, with a wan smile. "Dawsbergen has a standing army of 10,000 excellent soldiers. With the war reserves she has twice the available force I can produce."

"But your men are so brave!" cried Beverly, who had heard their praises sung.

"True—God bless them!—but you forget that we must attack Gabriel in his own territory. To recapture him means a perilous expedition into the mountains of Dawsbergen, and I am sorely afraid, Oh, dear, I hope he'll surrender peacefully!"

"And go back to jail for life?" cried Miss Calhoun. "It's a good deal to expect of him, dear. I fancy it's much better fun kicking up a rumpus on the outside than it is kicking one's toes off against an obdurate stone wall from the inside. You can't blame him for fighting a bit."

"No, I suppose not," agreed the princess miserably. "Gren is actually happy over the miserable affair, Beverly. He is full of enthusiasm and positively aching to be in Graustark—right in the thick of it all. To hear him talk one would think that Prince Gabriel has no show at all. He kept me up till 4 o'clock this morning telling me that Dawsbergen didn't know what kind of a snag it was going up against. I have a vague idea what he means by that. His manner did not leave much room for doubt. He also said that we would jolt Dawsbergen off the map. It sounds encouraging at least, doesn't it?"

"It sounds very funny for you to say those things," admitted Beverly, "even though they come secondhand. You were not out for slang."

"Why, I'm sure they are all good English words," remonstrated Yotive.

"Oh, dear, I wonder what they are doing in Graustark this very instant. Are they fighting or—"

TO BE CONTINUED

## Beverly of Graustark

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### CHAPTER I.

Far off in the mountain lands, somewhere to the east of the setting sun, lies the principality of Graustark, serene relic of rare old feudal days. The traveler reaches the little domain after an arduous, sometimes perilous, journey from the great European capitals, whether they be north or south or west—never east. He crosses great rivers and wide plains; he winds through fertile valleys and over barren plateaus; he twists and turns and climbs among somber gorges and rugged mountains; he touches the cold clouds in one day and the placid warmth of the valley in the next. One does not go to Graustark for a pleasure jaunt. It is too far from the rest of the world, and the ways are often dangerous because of the strife among the tribes of the intervening mountains. If one hungers for excitement and peril, he finds it in the journey from the north or the south into the land of the Graustarkians. From Vienna and other places almost directly west the way is not so full of thrills, for the railroad skirts the darkest of the danger lands.

Once in the heart of Graustark, however, the traveler is charmed into dreams of peace and happiness and—paradise. The peasants and the poets sing in one voice and accord, their psalm being of never ending love.

Down in the lowlands and up in the hills the simple worker of the soil rejoices that he lives in Graustark; in the towns and villages the humble merchant and his thrifty customer unite to sing the song of peace and contentment; in the palaces of the noble the same patriotism warms its heart with thoughts of Graustark, the ancient. Prince and pauper strike hands for the love of the land, while outside the great, heartless world goes rumbling on without a thought of the rare little principality among the eastern mountains.

In point of area Graustark is but a mite in the great galaxy of nations. Glancing over the map of the world, one is almost sure to miss the infinitesimal patch of green that marks its location. One could not be blamed if he regarded the spot as a typographical or topographical illusion. Yet the people of this quaint little land hold in their hearts a love and a confidence that are not surpassed by any of the lordly monarchs who measure their patriotism by miles and millions. The Graustarkians are a sturdy, courageous race. From the faraway century when they fought themselves clear of the Tartar yoke to this very hour they have been warriors of might and valor. The boundaries of their tiny domain were kept inviolate for hundreds of years, and but one victorious foe had come down to lay siege to Edelweiss.