

A Son of the Immortals

"Sometimes," said Alec during their talk that evening, "it is the expected that happens."

"I suppose," said Joan musingly, "that the unlucky little Principality ought to prosper under a popular Government—unless——" She paused, and her husband was quick to interpret her thought.

"Unless they obtain the right sort of King," he cried.

"Perhaps that is impossible since you are here, dear," she said softly.

"Is that bee still buzzing in your bonnet?" he laughed. "I agree with you, Joan; it was a pity I let go so promptly."

She lifted her startled eyes to his. "Oh, Alec!" she cried, "you don't mean it!"

"I do, sweetheart," he said with a marked seriousness that puzzled her. "It was sheer selfishness that drove me from Kosnovia. I honestly believe I should have cracked up under the weight of empire; but just fancy what a wonderful Queen you would have made!"

"Oh, don't be stupid," she cried. "You almost frightened me."

Alec's mother put in a gentle word. "If ever either of you is tempted to regret the loss of a throne, you ought to devote half an hour to reading the history of Kosnovia," she said. "You are happy, and that is what you would never have been in the Balkans. A curse rests on that unlucky land. Never a Delgrado or Obrenovitz has reigned a decade