

# Sophy of Kravonia.

By ANTHONY HOPE.  
Author of "The Prisoner of Zenda."  
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## Chapter Two

SOPHY GROUCH had gone to lay a bunch of flowers on her father's grave. From the first Mrs. Brownlow had taught her this pious rite, and Mrs. Brownlow's deputy, the gardener's wife, in whose cottage Sophy lived, had seen to its punctual performance every week. Things went by law and rule at the hall, for the squire was a man of active mind and ample leisure. His household code was a marvel of efficiency and minutes. Sophy's coming and staying had developed a multitude of new clauses, under whose benevolent yet strict operation her youthful mind had been trained in the way in which Mr. Brownlow was of opinion that it should go.

Sophy's face, then, wore a grave and responsible air as she returned with steps of decorous slowness from the sacred precincts. Yet the outer manner was automatic—the result of seven years' practice. Within her mind was busy. The day was one of mark in her life. She had been told her destined future and was wondering how she would like it.

Her approach was perceived by a tall and pretty girl who lay in the meadow grass and munched a blade of it which bordered the path under the elm trees. "What a demure little witch she looks!" laughed Julia Robbins, who was much in the mood for laughter that day, greeting with responsive gleam of the eyes the sunlight which fell in speckles of radiance through the leaves above. It was a summer day, and summer was in her heart too. Yet not for the common cause with young maidens. It was no nonsense about loveliness. Lofty ambition was in the case today.

"Sophy Grouch! Sophy Grouch!" she cried in a high, merry voice. Sophy raised her eyes, but her steps did not quicken. With the same measured pace of her lanky, lean little legs she came up to where Julia lay.

"Why don't you say 'Sophy'?" she asked. "I'm the only Sophy in the village."

"Sophy Grouch! Sophy Grouch!" Julia repeated teasingly. The mark on Sophy's left cheek grew redder. Julia laughed mockingly. Sophy looked down at her, still very grave.

"You do look pretty today," she observed—"and happy."

"Yes, yes! So I tease you, don't I? But I like to see you hang out your danger signal."

She held out her arms to the little girl. Sophy came and kissed her, then sat down beside her.

"Forgive?"

"Yes," said Sophy. "Do you think it's a very awful name?"

"Oh, you'll change it some day," smiled Julia, speaking more truth than she knew. "Listen! Mother's consented, consented! I'm to go and live with Uncle Edward in London—London, Sophy, and learn elocution."

"Learn what?"

"Elo-cu-tion, which means how to talk so that people can hear you ever so far off."

"To about?"

"No. Don't be stupid. To—to be heard plainly without shouting. To be heard in a theater! Did you ever see a theater?"

"No. Only a circus. I haven't seen much."

"And then—the stage! I'm to be an actress! Fancy mother consenting at last! An actress instead of a governess! Isn't it glorious?" She paused a moment, then added, with a self-conscious laugh, "Basil's awfully angry, though."

"Why should he be angry?" asked Sophy. Her own anger was gone. She was picking daisies, and she was looking at them in her friend's golden hair. They were great friends, this pair, and Sophy was very proud of the friendship. Julia was grown up, the beauty of the village, and a lady! Now Sophy was to be no means any one of these things.

"Oh, you wouldn't understand," laughed Julia, with a blush.

the hall and be taught to help cook, and when I'm grown up I'm going to be a cook." She spoke slowly and weightily, her eyes fixed on Julia's face.

"Well, I call it a shame!" cried Julia in generous indignation. "Oh, of course it would be all right if they'd treated you properly—I mean, as if they'd meant that from the beginning. But they haven't. You've lived with Mrs. James. I know, but you've been in and out of the hall all the time, having tea in the drawing room and fruit at dessert, and—so on. And you look like a little lady and talk like one—almost. I think it's a shame not to give you a better chance. Cook?"

"Don't you think it might be rather nice to be a cook—a good cook?"

"No, I don't," answered the budding Mrs. Siddons decisively.

"People always talk a great deal about the cook," pleaded Sophy. "Mrs. Brownlow and Mrs. James are always talking about the cook—and the doctor talks about his cook, too—not always very kindly, though."

"No, it's a shame, and I don't believe I'll happen."

"Yes, it will, Mrs. Brownlow settled it today."

"There are other people in the world besides Mrs. Brownlow."

Sophy was not exactly surprised at this dictum, but evidently it gave her thought. Her long delayed "Yes" showed that as plainly as her "Oh" had a little while before marked her appreciation of the social limits of "keeping company." But she can't settle it all the same," she persisted.

"For the time she can," Julia admitted. "Oh, I wonder what'll be my first part, Tot!" She threw her pretty head back on the grass, closing her eyes. A smile of radiant anticipation hovered about her lips. The little girl rose and stood looking at her friend—the friend of whom she was so proud.

"You'll look very, very pretty," she said, with sober gravity.

"Yes, it will, Mrs. Brownlow settled it today."

Yet Sophy's march was interrupted for punctuality. A tall young man—swinging his legs on the gate that led from the avenue into the road. The ruddy boy who had been seen in the tower on the night when Sophy Grouch had grown into a tall, good looking young fellow. He was clad in what is nowadays called a blazer and check trousers and smoked a large, meerschaum pipe. His expression was gloomy. The gate was shut, and he was on the top of it. Sophy approached him with some signs of nervousness. When he saw her he greeted her moodily.

"You can't come through," he said firmly.

"Please, Mr. Basil, I must. I shall be late for tea."

"I won't let you through. There!" Sophy looked despairful. "May I climb over?"

"No," said Basil firmly, but a smile began to twitch about his lips.

"Quick now, as ever, to see the joint in a man's armor, Sophy smiled too."

"If you'd let me through I'd give you a kiss," she said, offering the only thing she had to give in all the world.

"You would? But I hate kisses."

"In fact, I hate girls all around, big and little."

"Yes, worst of all."

"Oh, said Sophy more than recording, 'I'm a girl, aren't I?'"

"Oh!"—because Julia had given quite another impression, and Sophy sought to reconcile these opposites.

The young man jumped down from the gate, with a healthy laugh at himself and at her, caught her by the arms and gave her a smacking kiss.

### FLOATING PALACES.

Galleys of the Hindoo Rajas on the Ganges River.

Notwithstanding the fact that India has for many years been under the rule of England, the conditions and manner of living have not greatly changed in many parts of it. On the Ganges river in the northwest provinces the tourist will see, as he approaches Benares at the right time, the same type of craft that carried pilgrims to this most sacred of Hindoo cities—hundreds of years ago. These are floating palaces of magnificent galleys on which Rajas journey to Benares and which serve as a test of their pious zeal.

These galleys differ hardly in a iota from the vessels used for the same purpose by Rajas who died centuries past, incrustated with gold, silver and pearl and decorated with tapestries embroidered with precious metals and jewels. These wonderful modern-art vessels lend a festive touch to the river scene. But their sumptuousness does not prevent the richest Rajas who possess one from bathing in the same water, surrounded by 500,000 poorer pilgrims, even though the sacred river is thus piously titled "the myriads of microbes." And he will still drink jars with the water in which the pilgrims have washed their bodies and drink it.

In contrast to these floating palaces are the galleys of the poorer classes. The system of caste in India imposes upon the riyerman the obligation of living on the water by his ancestors lived, so his abode looking craft is also his home. Casally he has a thatched roof, a small chapel dedicated to a secondary divinity who personifies the river on which he exists—Popular Mechanics.

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### FORTIFIED AT FIFTY.

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills Bring Health and Strength to Women at a Critical Time.

Few women reach the age of fifty without enduring much suffering and anxiety. Between the years of forty and fifty the system becomes weak and acute weaknesses arise with rheumatic attacks, pains in the back and sides, frequent headaches, nervous ailments and depression of spirits.

The secret of good health between forty-five and fifty depends upon the blood supply. If it is kept rich, red and pure, good health will be the result, and women will pass this critical stage in safety. Dr. Williams' Pink Pills help women of mature years as no other medicine can, for they make the rich, red blood that means good health and brings relief from suffering. Mrs. C. Donovan, Newcastle, N. B., says: "About two years ago I was greatly run down and very miserable. I did not know what was wrong with me. I was hardly able to drag myself about, had severe headaches and I could hardly get up. I lived or not. I had often read of what Dr. Williams' Pink Pills had done for others and I decided to try them, and I can now truthfully say I found them all they are recommended to be. Under their use my health gradually came back, my appetite returned, sleep better and felt stronger in every way, and before long I was enjoying as good health as ever. I had the ailments of growing girls and women of mature years. Sold by all medicine dealers or by mail at 50 cents a box or six boxes for \$2.50 from The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

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### WILD ELEPHANTS.

A Herd's Successful Raid on a Granary in Ceylon.

Some soldiers stationed at an outpost in Ceylon, on a Colombo paper, report a granary containing a large quantity of rice were sent off a few miles to quiet some unruly villagers, only two of the party remaining behind. No sooner had the soldiers departed than a herd of wild elephants, which had long been wandering about the neighborhood, appeared in front of the granary. Its walls were of solid brickwork, very thick, and the only opening into the building was in the center of the roof, which was reached by a ladder. On the approach of the elephants the two men clambered up into a lofty banyan tree to escape injury. Screened by the thick foliage, though unseen by the elephants, they easily saw all that went on below. The sagacious animals began operations at the corners of the building. Two powerful elephants, after putting forth every effort, but in vain, to make an impression on the building, were forced to retire exhausted. A third came forward, and, applying his trunk as a lever, he at length succeeded in dislodging a single brick. An opening once made, others of the herd advanced, and soon an entrance was obtained sufficiently large to admit them. As the whole company could not be accommodated at once they divided into small groups of three or four. After satisfying themselves they retired and gave place to others until the whole herd, upward of twenty, had made a full meal. By this time a shrill wailing sound came from one of the elephants, and those still in the granary rushed out and joined their companions. One of the first divisions, after leaving the building, had acted as sentinel while the others were taking their turn. He had perceived the troops returning from the village and gave the signal for retreat, when the whole herd, flourishing their trunks, moved rapidly into the jungle.

The soldiers found the animals had devoured the greater part of the rice, a full amount of the granary was left at them in their retreat, but they only wagged their tails as if in mockery and were soon hidden in the recesses of their native forests.

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### FOR THE EPICURE.

Three Odd Dishes That Are Not Difficult to Prepare.