

every one was watching it intently, so that less notice was taken of my abduction of the lioness than I expected. I heard of it afterwards, however.

"'Vantage,'" cried the umpire as we left the court.

"Tell me about your friend," said the Princess. "I am very much interested in him," then she added as if to herself, "Eleven years. It is marvellous."

This was the story I told the Princess, in briefest outline for we had not far to go.

Vassili had been a clerk in the bank and was engaged to Zoitza, a pretty Greek girl some ten years younger than himself. They waited and waited in hope that his promotion would come and that they would be able to be married. It came at last and he received an appointment as book-keeper in one of the provincial agencies of the bank. He went to take possession of his new post and to secure a home for his bride. On a certain date he was to return and they were to be married on the morrow.

The evening before her wedding day bad news came to Zoitza. Her lover had missed his footing on the slippery deck of the steamer which was bringing him back to her, had fallen down an open hatchway and was seriously injured. They broke the tidings as gently as they could but Zoitza naturally imagined the worst. She insisted upon going to see him at once, and they took her to the hospital where Vassili was lying.