

The King of Arcadia

In the vestibule of the diner he found the steward wrestling suavely with a late contingent of hungry ones, and explaining that the tables were all temporarily full. Ballard had broad shoulders and the Kentucky stature to match them. Looking over the heads of the others, he marked, at the farther end of the car, a table for two, with one vacant place.

"I beg your pardon—there is only one of me," he cut in; and the steward let him pass. When he had dodged the laden waiters and was taking the vacant seat he found himself confronting the young woman in the veiled hat and the gray box-coat, identified her, and discovered in a petrifying shock of astoundment that she was not Miss Elsa Craigmiles's fancied double, but Miss Craigmiles herself.

"Why, Mr. Ballard—of all people!" she cried, with a brow-lifting of genuine or well-assumed surprise. And then in mock consternation: "Don't tell me that *you* are the good-natured gentleman I drove out of his section in the sleeping-car."

"I sha'n't; because I don't know how many more there are of me," said Ballard. Then, astonishment demanding its due: "Did I only dream that you were going to Europe with the Herbert Lassleys, or——"

She made a charming little face at him.