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The Man From Brodney's
 By **GEORGE BARR M'GUTCHEON**

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(Continued from page 2.)

a contest had been filed. The lineal heirs had pooled their issues and were now fighting side by side. The matter would be in chancery for months, even years. He could almost feel the gust of rage and disappointment that swept over the island, although not a word came from the lips of the sullen population. The very silence was foreboding.

He did not visit the chateau during that perplexing week. It was hard, but he resolutely kept to the path of duty, disdaining the pleasures that beckoned to him. Every day he saw and talked with Britt and Saunders. They, as well as the brisk Miss Pelham, gave him the "family news" from the chateau. It did not require extraordinary keenness on Chase's part to gather that her ladyship and Brodney had suddenly decided to engage in what he would call a mild flirtation, but what Saunders looked upon as a real attack of love.

"If I had the nerve I'd call Brodney good and hard," said Britt over his julep. "It isn't right. It isn't decent. The disappear for hours at a time, and they've always got their heads together. Poor little Drustila! She's from Boston, Chase, and can't retaliate. Besides, Deppingham wouldn't take notice if she tried. The worst of it is Deppingham has got an idea that they may try to put him out of the way—him and Drustila. Awful, isn't it? And, say, by the way, Saunders is getting to dislike you intensely."

"I can't help it if he loves the only stenographer on the island," said Chase easily. "You seem to be the only one who isn't in hot water all the time, Britt."

"Me and the princess," said Britt innocently. Chase looked up quickly, but the other's face was as straight as could be. "If you were a real gentleman you would come around once in awhile and give her something to talk to instead of about."

"Does she talk about me?" quite steadily.

"They all do. I've even heard the white handmaids discussing you in glowing terms. You're a regular martinez hero up there, my boy."

"Selim!" broke in Chase. The Arab came to the table immediately. "Don't put so much liquor in Mr. Britt's drinks after this—mostly water." Britt grinned amiably.

"I say, Britt, you're not responsible for this affair between Brodney and Lady Deppingham, are you?" demanded Chase abruptly.

"What do you mean?"

"I was just wondering if you could have put Brodney up to the game in the hope that a divorce or two might solve a very difficult problem."

"Now that you mention it, I'm going to look up the church and colonial divorce laws," said Britt noncommittally after a moment.

"Advise you to hurry," said Chase coolly. "If you can divorce and marry 'em inside of four weeks, with no court qualified to try the case nearer than India, you are a wonder."

Chase was in the habit of visiting the mines two or three times a week, during work hours. The next morning after his conversation with Britt he rode out to the mines. When he reached the brow of the last hill, overlooking the wide expanse in which the men toiled, he drew rein sharply and stared aghast at what lay before him. Five hundred half-naked brown men were congregated in the shade of the trees far to the right. By the aid of his glasses he could see that one of their number was addressing them in an earnest, violent harangue. It was Von Blitz. From time to time faint sounds of shouts came across the valley.

Chase shuddered. He knew what it meant.

"How about Allah now, Selim?" he asked sententiously.

"Allah is great, Allah is good," mumbled the Moslem youth, but without heart.

"Do you think he can save me from those dogs?" asked the master, with a kindly smile.

"Sahib, do not go among them today," implored Selim impulsively.

"They are expecting me, Selim. If I don't come they will know that I have flunked. They'll know I am afraid of them."

"Do not go today," persisted Selim doggedly. Suddenly he started, looking intently to the left along the line of the hill. Chase followed the direction of his gaze and uttered a sharp exclamation of surprise.

Several hundred yards away, outlined against the blue sky beyond the knob, stood the motionless figure of a horse and its rider—a woman in a green habit. Chase turned his horse's head and rode rapidly toward her. She

in the mood to curse her temerity.

As he came up over the slope she turned in the saddle to watch his approach. He had time to see that two women from the stables were in the rear, following her. She smiled as he drew up beside her, not noticing his unconscious frown.

"So those are the fabulous mines of Japan?" she said gayly, without other greeting. "Where is the red glow from the rubies?"

"Who gave you permission to ride so far from the chateau?" he demanded, almost harshly. She looked at him in amazement.

"Am I a trespasser?" she asked coldly.

"I beg your pardon," he said quickly. "I did not mean to offend. Don't you know that it is not safe for you to—"

"Nonsense!" she exclaimed. "I am not afraid of your shadows. Why should they disturb me?"

"Look!" He pointed to the distant assemblage. "Those are not shadows. They are men, and they are making ready to transform themselves into beasts. Before long they will strike. Von Blitz and Rasula have sunk my warships. You must understand that it is dangerous to leave the chateau on such rides as this. Come! We will start back together—at once."

"I protest, Mr. Chase, that you have no right to say what I shall do or—"

"It isn't a question of right. You are nearly ten miles from the chateau, in the most unfrequented part of the island. Some day you will not return to your friends. It will be too late to hunt for you then."

"How very thrilling!" she said, with a laugh.

"I beg of you, do not treat it so lightly," he said, so sharply that she flushed. He was looking intently in the direction of the men. She was not slow to see that their position had been discovered by the miners. "Will you come with me now?"

"It seems so absurd! But I will come, of course. I have no desire to cause you any uneasiness."

As they rode swiftly back to the tree-lined road a faint chorus of yells came to them across the valley. For some distance they rode without speaking a word to each other. They had traversed two miles of the soft dirt road before Chase discovered that Selim was the only man following them. The two men who had come out with the princess were not in sight.

"The dogs! So, you see, princess, your escort was not to be trusted," said Chase grimly.

"But they have stolen the horses," she murmured irrelevantly. "They belong to the chateau stables."

"Which direction did they take, Selim?"

"They rode off by the Carter's highway, excellency, toward Ararat."

"It may not appeal to your vanity, your highness, but it is my duty to inform you that they have gone to report our clandestine meeting."

"Clandestine! What do you mean, sir?"

"The islanders are watching me like hawks. Every time I am seen with any one from the chateau they add a fresh nail to the coffin they are preparing for me. It's really more serious than you imagine. I must therefore forbid you to ride outside of the park."

"I dare say you are right, Mr. Chase," she said at last, quite frankly. "I thank you."

"I am glad that you understand," he said simply. His gaze was set straight before him, keen, alert, anxious.

"I begin to fear, Mr. Chase," she said, with a faint smile, "that Lady Deppingham deceived me in suggesting Japan as a rest cure. It may interest you to know that the court at Rapp-Thorberg has been very gay this winter. My brother, Christobal, has been with us after two years' absence. He came with his wife from the ends of the earth, and my father forgave him in good earnest. Christobal was very disobedient in the old days. He refused to marry the girl my father chose for him. Was it not foolish of him?"

"Not if it has turned out well in the end."

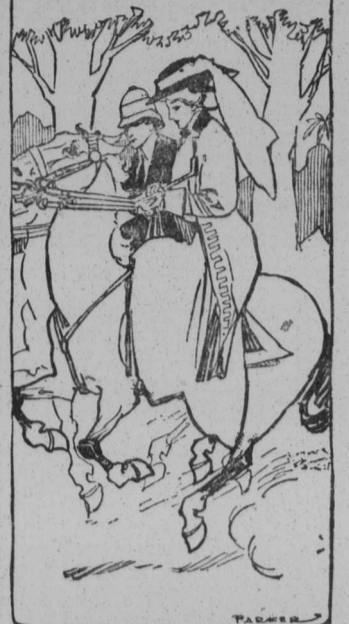
"I dare say it has—or will. She is delightful. My father loves her. And my father—the grand duke, I should say—does not love those who cross him. One is very fortunate to have been born a prince." He thought he detected a note of bitterness in this rally.

"I can conceive of no greater fortune than to have been born Prince Karl of Brabets," he said lightly. She flashed a quick glance at his face, her eyes narrowing in the effort to divine his humor.

"As I was saying," she resumed after a moment, "Lady Deppingham has lured me from sun showers into the tempest. Mr. Chase—and her face was suddenly full of real concern—"is there truly great danger?"

"I fear so," he answered. "It is only a question of time. I have tried to check this uprising, but I've failed. Last night Von Blitz, Rasula and three

ly informed me that my services were



"Will you come with me now?"

no longer required. I told them to go to—"

"I understand," she said quickly. "It required courage to tell them that." He smiled.

"They protested friendship, but I can read very well as I run. But can't we find something more agreeable to talk about? May I say that I have not seen a newspaper in three months? There must be news that you can give me. I am hungry for it."

"You poor man! No newspapers! Then you don't know what has happened in all these months?"

"Nothing since before Christmas. Would you like to see a bit of news that I clipped from the last Paris paper that came into my hands?"

"Yes," she said, vaguely disturbed. He drew forth his pocketbook and took from its interior a small bit of paper. She read it at a glance and handed it back. A faint touch of red came into her cheeks.

"How very odd! Why should you have kept that bit of paper all these months?"

"You have been married nearly three months," he said reflectively—"three months and two days, to be precise." She laughed outright, a bewitching, merry laugh that startled him.

"How accurate you would be!" she exclaimed. "It would be a highly interesting achievement, Mr. Chase, if it were only borne out by facts. You see, I have not been married so much as three minutes."

He stared at her, uncomprehending.

She went on, "Do you consider it bad luck to postpone a wedding?"

Involuntarily he drew his horse closer to hers. There was a new gleam in his eyes. Her blood leaped at the challenge they carried.

"Very bad luck," he said quite steadily, "for the bridegroom."

In an instant they seemed to understand something that had not even been considered before. She looked away, but he kept his eyes fast upon her half-turned face, finding delight in the warm tint that surged so shamelessly to her brow. He wondered if she could hear the pounding of his heart above the thud of the horses' feet.

"We are to be married in June," she said, somewhat defiantly. Some of the light died in his eyes. "Prince Karl was very ill. They thought he might die. His—his studies—his music, I mean, proved more than he could carry. It—it is not serious. A nervous breakdown," she explained haltingly. "It was necessary to postpone the marriage. He will be quite well again, they say, by June."

"I hope he may be fully recovered, for your sake," he managed to say.

"Thank you." After a long pause she turned to him again and said, "We are to live in Paris for a year or two at least."

"He is in Paris now?"

"No," she answered, and that was all. He waited, but she did not expand her confidence.

"So it is to be in June," he mused.

"In June," she said quietly. He sighed.

"I am more than sorry that you are a princess," he said boldly.

"I am quite sure of that," she said, so pointedly that he almost gasped. She was laughing comfortably, a mischievous gleam in her dark eyes. His laugh was as awkward as hers was charming.

"You do like to be flattered," he exclaimed at random. "And I shall take it upon myself to add to today's measure." He again drew forth his pocket-book. She looked on curiously. "Permit me to restore the lace handkerchief which you dropped some time ago. I've been keeping it for myself, but—"

"My handkerchief?" she gasped, her thoughts going at once to that ridiculous incident of the balcony. "It must belong to Lady Deppingham."

"Oh, it isn't the one you used on the balcony," he protested coolly. "It antedates that adventure."

"Balcony? I don't understand you," she contested.

"Then you are exceedingly obtuse."

"I never dreamed that you could see," she confessed pathetically.

"It was extremely nice in you and very presumptuous in me. But, your highness, this is the handkerchief you dropped in the castle garden six months ago. Do you recognize the perfume?"

"You are very sentimental," she said

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