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The Man From Brodney's

By George Barr McCutcheon

(Chapter X Continued)

The next morning the town bustled with a new excitement. A trim, beautiful yacht, brilliant colors, gleamed in the little harbor of Ararat. Every one knew that the yacht brought the princess who was to visit her father.

The enemy came down from his bungalow, attracted by the unusual and important spectacle of a ship at anchor. A line of guests marked his bow. Two figures had watched his windows all night long, slender shadows that always met his eye when it penetrated the gloom of the moonlit forest.

Lord and Lady Deppingham were on the pier before him. Excitement and joy illumined her face. Her eyes were sparkling with anticipation. He could almost see that she trembled in her eagerness. He came quite close to her before they saw him. Excitement no doubt was responsible for the very agreeable smile of recognition that she bestowed upon him. The enemy could do no less than go to them with his pleasantest acknowledgment.

"In regard to my relaxed into a most serene, winsome smile, half diffident, half assured."

He passed among the wives of his guests without so much as a sign of recognition, coolly indifferent to the admiring glances that sought his face. The dark, languorous eyes that flashed silver animation with disappointment. He did not know that they were his own.

"I have heard that you expect a visit," said the enemy in his most agreeable manner.

"What you go aboard with us?" asked Deppingham, at a loss for anything better to say. The enemy shook his head and smiled.

"You are very good, but I believe my face is here."

"The princess is to be with me for a month. We expect more sunshine than we at the chateau," ventured her ladyship.

"I sincerely hope you may be disappointed," said he commiseratingly, smiling himself with his fist. She laughed and understood, but Deppingham was halfway out to the yacht before it became clear to him that the enemy looked literally, not figuratively.

The enemy sauntered back to the American bar, bolder than ever before in his life. He now knew what it was that he had missed more than all else.

Britt and Saunders were waiting for him under the awning outside.

"Hello," called Britt. "We saw you own there, but couldn't get near. By gosh, old man, I had no idea your features were so beautiful. They are beautiful gems."

"My features? What the devil do you mean, Britt? Come in and sit down. I want to talk to you fellows."

"See here, this talk about these women has got to be stopped. It's dangerous for you, and it's dangerous for me. It's so full of peril that I don't care to look at them, handsome as you say they are. Do you know what I was thinking of as I came over here after leaving one of the most charming of women, my Lady Deppingham? I was thinking what a wretched famine there is in women. I'm speaking of women like Lady Deppingham and Mrs. Browne, neither of whom I know, and yet I've known them all my life—the kind of women we live, not the kind we desire or pity. Don't you see? I'm hungry for the very sight of a woman."

"You see, Miss Pelham often enough," said Saunders surlily. The enemy was making a pitcher of lemonade.

"My dear Saunders, you are quite right. I do see Miss Pelham often enough. In my present frame of mind I'd fall desperately in love with her if I saw her often." Saunders blinked and glared at him through his pale eyes.

"My word," he said. "Then he got up abruptly and stalked out of the room. Britt laughed immoderately.

"He's a inky dog," reflected the enemy. "You see, he loves her, Britt—he loves little Miss Pelham. Do you know what that means? It means everything is worth while. Hello! Here he is back! Come in, Saunders. Here's your lemon."

Saunders was excited. He stopped in the doorway, but looked over his shoulder into the street.

"Come along," he exclaimed. "They are going up to the chateau, the princess and her party. My word, she's ripping."

At the corner they stopped to await the procession of palm-trees and jinrikishas which had started from the pier. The smart English victoria from the chateau, drawn by Wyckholme's thoroughbreds, was coming on in advance of the foot brigade. In the rear sat the victoria set Lady Deppingham and one who evidently was the princess. Opposite to them sat two older but no less smart looking women.

A gala day in Ararat," observed the sturdy Mr. Britt. "We are to have the whole party overnight up at the chateau. Hello! By thunder, old man, she's speaking to you!" He turned in astonishment to look at his companion's face.

The enemy was staring, transfixed, at the young woman in white who sat

beside Lady Deppingham. He seemed paralyzed for the moment. Then he, helmet came off with a rush, a dazed smile of recognition lighted his face. The very pretty young woman in the white hat was leaning forward and smiling at him, a startled, uncertain look in her eyes. Lady Deppingham was glancing open mouthed from one to the other.

"I must be dreaming," murmured the enemy.

Britt took him by the arm. "Do you know her?" he asked. The enemy



His helmet came off with a rush, a dazed smile of recognition lighted his face.

CHAPTER XI

CHASE PERFORMS A MIRACLE.

HOLLINGSWORTH CHASE now felt that he was on neutral ground with the Princess Genevra. His strange connection with the Skaggs will easily be explained. After leaving Thorsberg he went directly to Paris; thence, after ten days, to London, where he hoped to get on as a staff correspondent for one of the big dailies. One day at the Savage club he listened to a recital of the amazing conditions which attend the execution of Skaggs will. He had shot wild game in South Africa with Sir John Brodney, chief counsel for the islanders, and when Sir John suddenly proposed that he go to Japan as the firm's representative he leaped at the chance.

In truth Rasula was more than glad to have the services of an American. He had heard Wyckholme talk of the manner in which civil causes were tried in the United States, and he felt that one Yankee on the scene was worth ten Englishmen at home.

The good looking Mr. Chase, with light under the dread of exposure as an international jackass, welcomed the opportunity to get as far away from civilization as possible. He knew that the Princess Genevra would not be dormant, but he could not launch the fair face of the Princess Genevra from his thoughts during the long voyage north would it be stretching the point to say that his day dreams were of her as he sat and smoked in his bungalow porch.

Before Chase left London Sir John Brodney bluntly cautioned him against the dangers that lurked in Lady Deppingham's eyes.

"She won't leave you a peg to stand on, Chase. If you seek an encounter," he said, "she's pretty and she's clever, and she's made fools of better men than you, my boy. I don't say she's a bad lot, because she's too smart for that. Remember, my boy, you are going out there to offend, not to beset, Lady Deppingham."

"Chase was not in love with the proud Princess Genevra. He denied that to himself a hundred times a day as he sat in his bungalow and smoked the situation over.

He had proved to himself quite beyond a doubt that he was not in love, when, like a bolt from a clear sky, she stepped out of the oblivion into him he had cast her to smile upon him without warning. It was most unfair. Her smile had been one of the most difficult obstacles to overcome in the effort to return a fair and final verdict.

Could anything be more miraculous than that she should come to the unheard of island of Japat, unless possibly, that he should be there when she came? She was there for him to look upon and love and lose, just as he had dreamed all these months. It mattered little that she was now the wife of Prince Karl of Brabatz. To him she was still the Princess Genevra of Rapp-Thorsberg.

Now she was coming to the island, and so far as he had been able to see, there was no sign of the Prince Brabatz in attendance. Her uncle by marriage, an English nobleman of high degree, gathering his friends for the long cruise evidently had left the prince out of his party, for what reason Chase could not imagine. To say that the omission was gratifying to the tall American would be too simple a statement. There is no telling to what heights his thoughts might have carried him on that sultry afternoon if he had not been harshly checked by the arrival of a messenger from the chateau. His blood leaped with anticipation.

"Could it be possible? But, no, she would not be writing to him. What a ridiculous thought! His hopes fell flat as the note was put into his eager hand. It was from Britt.

Still he broke the seal with considerable eagerness. As he perused the somewhat lengthy message his dis-appointment gave way to a no longer form of excitement. With its conclusion he was on his feet, his eyes gleaming with enthusiasm.

"By George," he exclaimed. "What luck! Things are coming my way with a vengeance. I'll do it this very night, thanks to Britt. And I must not forget Brodney. Ah, what a consolation it is to know that there are Americans here—here one goes, Selim, Selim!"

He was standing as straight as a cor-geon and his eyes were gleaming with the fire of battle when Selim came up and forgot to salute so great was his wonder at the transformation. "Get word to the men that I want every mother's son of 'em to attend a meeting in the market place tonight at 9. Very important, tell 'em. Tell Von Blitz that he's got to be there. I'm going to show him and his picturesque friend, Rasula, that I am here to stay. And Selim tell that messenger to wait. There's an answer."

Long before 9 o'clock the men of Japat began to gather in the market and trading place. Hollingsworth Chase, attended by Selim, came down from his mountain retreat. He heard in this town too numerous to mention I believe. That is the No. 3. They are all beautiful, my friends, but I wouldn't have one of 'em as a gift.

"For the past few nights my home has been watched. I want to announce to you that if I see anybody hanging around the bungalow after today I'm going to put a bullet through him just as I would through a dog. Now, to come down to Von Blitz, old man. You have lied about me ever since I beat you up that night. You're scoffing at the best interests of these people in order to gratify a personal spite, in order to wreak a personal vengeance. You—"

Von Blitz, foaming with rage, broke in. "I suppose you will call on der warships? We are not fools! You can fool some of 'em."

"Now, see here, Von Blitz, I'll show whether I can call out a warship whenever I need one. I have never intended to ask naval help except in case of an attack by our enemies up at the harbor. You can't believe that I seek to turn those big guns against my own people. The ethics I came out here to serve with my life's blood if necessary. But hear me, you Dutch impostor, I can have a British man-of-war here in ten hours to take you off this island and hang you from a yardarm on the charge of conspiracy against the crown."

In his leather pocketbook lay the ever present reminder that she could be no more than a dream to him. It was the clipping from a Paris newspaper announcing that the Princess Genevra was to wed Prince Karl during the Christmas holidays.

He had seen the Christmas holidays come and go with the certain knowledge in his heart that they had given her to Brabatz as the most glorious present that man had ever received.

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Von Blitz and Rasula laughed scornfully and turned to the crowd. The latter began to harangue his fellows.

"This man is a —" he began.

"A bluff" prompted Von Blitz, glaring at his tall accuser.

"A bluff" went on Rasula. "He can do none of these things. Nor can the Americans at the chateau. I know that they are liars. They—"

"I'll make you pay for that, Rasula. Your time is short. Men of Japat, I don't want to serve you unless you trust me."

A dozen voices cried: "We don't trust you, dog of a Christian, son of a snake!" Von Blitz glowed with satisfaction.

"One moment, please. Rasula knows that I came out here to represent Sir John Brodney. He knows how I am regarded in London. He is jealous because I have not listened to his chatter. I am not responsible for the pro-tracted delay in settling the estate. If you are not very careful you will ruin every hope for success that you may have had in the beginning. The crown will take it out of your hands. You've got to show yourselves worthy of handling the affairs of this company. You can't do it if you listen to such chatter as Von Blitz and Rasula. Oh, I'm not afraid of you! I know that you have written to Sir John, Rasula, asking that he recalled. He won't recall me, rest assured unless he throws up the use. I have his own letters to prove that he is satisfied with my work out here. I am satisfied that there are enough fair minded men in this crowd to protect me. They will stand by me in the end. I call upon—"

But a howl of dissent from the throng brought him up sharply. His face went white, and for a moment he feared the malcontent who stared at him from all sides. He looked frequently in the direction of the distant chateau. Knives slipped from many

the sibilant hiss of the scorned Per-shaus as he passed among them on the outskirts of the crowd. He observed the threatening attitude of the men who waited and watched. He saw the white, ugly face of Von Blitz quivering with triumph. He felt the breath of disaster upon his cheek. And yet he walked among them without fear, his head erect, his eyes defiant.

The market place was a large open tract in the extreme west end of the town, some distance removed from the business street and the pier. Through a break in the foothills the chateau was plainly discernible, the sea being obscured from view by the dense forest that crowned the cliffs.

Chase made his way boldly to the nearest platform, exchanging bows with the surprised Von Blitz and the sturdiest Rasula, who stood quite near. The men of Japat slowly drew close in as he mounted the platform from where he stood looking out over those bronze faces he could pick out the scowling husbands who hated him because their wives hated them. A far off stand the crowd, knowing that all implied this hatred and distrust. He hid them, despised and uncountenanced by the oriental elect, were crowded the native women who down in their hearts loathed the Europeans. It was Chase's hope that the husbands of these simple women would ultimately stand at his side in the fight for supremacy and they were vastly in the majority. If he could convince these men that his dealings with them were honest, Von Blitz could go hang.

He faced the crowd, knowing that all there were against him. "Von Blitz," he called suddenly. The German started and stepped back involuntarily, as if he had been reprimanded.

"I've called this meeting in order to give you a chance to say to my face some of the things you are saying behind my back. Thank God all of you men understand English. I want you to hear what Von Blitz has to say in public; and then I want you to hear what I say to him. Von Blitz and Rasula and others, I hear, have an detoken to discredit my motives as the agent of your London advisers. Let me say right here that the man who says that I have played you false in the slightest degree is a liar—a — liar, if you prefer it that way. You have been told that I am selling you out to the lawyers for the opposition. That is lie No. 1. You have been led to believe that I make false reports to your London solicitors. Lie No. 2. You have been poisoned with the story that I convert certain women sashes. Von Blitz was screaming with insane laughter, pointing his finger at the disreputable American. While they shouted and cursed, his gaze never left the chief in the hills. He did not attempt to cry them down. The effort would have been in vain. Suddenly a wild, happy light came into his anxious, searching eyes. He gave a mighty shout and raised his hands, commanding silence.

Selim, clinging to his side, also had seen the skyrocket which arose from the chateau and dropped almost in stantly into the wall of trees.

There was something in the face and riotous disorder.

"You fools!" he shouted. "Take warning! I have told you that I would not turn the guns of England and America against you unless you turned against me. I am your friend, but by the great Mohammed you'll pay for my life with every one of your own. If you resort to violence, listen! Today I learned that my life was threatened. I sent a message in the air to the nearest battleship. There is not an hour in the day or night that I or the people in the chateau cannot open upon our governments or upon my call today has been answered, as I know it would be. There is always a warship near at hand, my friends. It is for you to say whether a storm of shot and shell."

Von Blitz leaped upon a platform and shouted madly: "Fools! Don't believe him! He cannot bring der ships here! He lies, he lies! He!"

At that moment a shell-chamber of violence arose in the distance, the cries of women and children. Chase's heart gave a great bound of joy. He knew what it meant.

Chase pointed his finger at Von Blitz and shouted:

"I can't do it! There's a British warship standing off the harbor now and her guns are trained—"

But he did not complete the astounding, stupefying sentence. The women were screaming:

"The warship, the warship! Fly, fly!"

In a second the entire assemblage was racing furiously, doubtfully, yet fearfully toward the pier. Von Blitz and Rasula shouted in vain. They were left with Chase who smiled triumphantly upon their ghastly faces.

"Gentlemen, they are not deceived. There is a warship out there. You came near to showing your hand to-night. Now come along with me, and I'll show my hand to you. Rasula, could better draw in your claws. You're entitled to some consideration. But Von Blitz, Jacob, you are standing on very thin ice. I can have you shot tomorrow morning."

Von Blitz sputtered and snarled. "It is all a lie! It is a trick!" He would have drawn his revolver had not Rasula grasped his arm. The native lawyer dragged him off toward the pier, half doubting his own senses.

Just outside the harbor plainly distinguishable in the moonlight, lay a great cruiser, her searchlights whipping the sky and sea with long white flashes.

The gaping, awestruck crowd in the street parted to let Chase pass through on his way to the bungalow. His man-ner was that of a medieval conqueror. He looked neither to right nor to left.

"It's more like a Christian Endeavor meeting than it was ten minute ago," he was saying to himself, all the time wondering when some reckless misadventurer would hurt a knife at his back. He gravely winked his eye in the direction of the chateau. "Good old Britt!" he muttered in his exultation.

CHAPTER XII

THE LANTERN ABOVE.

CHASE sat for hours on his porch that night gazing down upon the chateau. Lights gleamed in a hundred of its windows. The bitterness of his own isolation, the ostracism that circumstance had forced upon him, would have been maddening on this night had not all rancor been tempered by the glorious achievement in the market place. He wondered if the princess knew what he had dared and what he had accomplished in the early hours of the night. He wondered if they had pointed out his solitary fight to her—if now and then she bestowed a casual glance upon that twinkling star of his. The porch lantern hung almost directly above his head.

The chateau was indeed the home

of revelry. The pent up, struggling spirits of those who had dwelt therein for months in solitude arose in the wild stampede for freedom. All petty differences between Lady Deppingham and Drusilla Browne, and they were quite common now, were forgotten in the whirlwind of relief that came with the strangers from the yacht. Mrs. Browne's good looking, eager husband revealed in the prospect of this delicious night, this almost Arabian night. He was swept off his feet by the radiant princess, the Scheherazade of his boyhood dreams. His little heart thumped as it had not done since he was a boy. The Duchess of N. and the handsome Marchioness of B came into his tired, hungry life at a moment when it most needed the light. It was he who fairly dragged Lady Agnes aside and proposed the banquet, the dance, the concert—everything—and it was he who carried out the hundred spasmodic instructions that she gave.

Late in the night, long after the dinner and the dance, the tired but happy company flopped to the picturesque hanging garden for rest and the last refreshment.

The hanging garden was a wonderfully constructed open air passageway suspended between the chateau itself and the great cliff in whose shadow it stood. The cliff towered at least 200 feet above the roof of the spreading chateau, a veritable stone wall that extended for a mile or more in either direction.

Near the chateau there was a real waterfall, reminding one in no small sense of the misty coils at Lunterbrunnen or Giesbach. The swift stream, which obtained life from these falls, big and little, ran along the base of the cliff for some distance and was then diverted by means of a deep, artificial channel into an almost complete circuit of the chateau, forming the most of it speed along at the foot of the upper terrace, a wide torrent that washed between solid walls of masonry, which rose to a height of not less than ten feet on either side. There were two drawbridges, seldom used, but always practicable. A small stationary bridge crossed the vicious stream immediately below the hanging garden and led to the ladders by which one ascended to the caverns that ran far back into the mountain.

Two big black irregular holes in the face of the cliff marked the entrance to these deep, rambling caves, wonderful caverns wrought by the convulsions of the dead volcano, cracks made by these splintering earthquakes when the island was new.

The garden hung high between the building and the cliff, swung by a score of great steel cables. These cables were riveted soundly in the solid rock of the cliff at one end and fastened as safely to the stone walls of the chateau at the other. It swung stanchly from its moorings with the constancy of a suspension bridge and trembled at the slightest touch.

It was at least a hundred feet square. The floor was covered with a foot or more of soil, in which the rich grass and plants of the tropics flourished. Cool fountains sprayed the air at either end of the green inclosure. The illusion was complete.

The chateau crowd parted to let Chase pass through on his way to the bungalow. His manner was that of a medieval conqueror. He looked neither to right nor to left.

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