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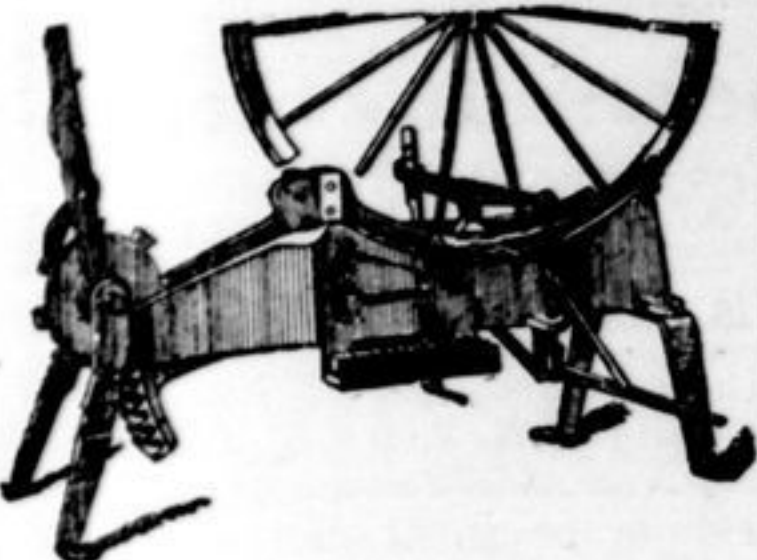
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## THE MAN FROM BRODNEY'S

Continued from page 6.  
CHAPTER X.

THE SLOUGH OF TRANQUILITY.

THREE months stole by with tantalizing slowness. The autumn passed on into winter without a change of expression in the benign face of nature. Christmas day was as hot as if it had come in mid-summer; the natives were as naked, the trees as fully clad. The six months were passing away in spite of themselves. Ten weeks were left before the worn but determined heirs could cast off their bonds and rush away to other climes. It mattered little whether they went away rich or poor. They were to go! That was the richest thing the future held out to them.  
True, they rode and played and swam and romped without restraint, but beneath all of their abandon there lurked the ever present pathos of the jail, the asylum, the detention ward.

Not until the end of January was there a sign of revolt against the ever growing, insidious condition of melancholy. As they turned into the last third of their exile they found heart to rejoice in the thought that release was coming nearer and nearer. The end of March—eight weeks off! Soon there would be but seven weeks, then six!

And all this time the islanders toiled as they had toiled for years. They reckoned in years, while the strangers cast up time's account in weeks and called them years. Each day the brown men worked in the mines piling gems into the vaults with a resolute-ness that never faltered.

From London came disquieting news for all sides to the controversy. The struggle promised to be drawn out for years, perhaps. The lonely legatees, marooned in the far south sea, began to realize that even after they had spent their six months of probation they would still have months, even years, of waiting before they could touch the fortune they laid claim to. The islanders also were vaguely awake to the fact that everything might be tied up for years despite the provisions of the will. A restless, stubborn feeling of alarm spread among them. This feeling gradually developed itself into bitter resentment. Hatred for the people who were causing this delay was growing deeper and fiercer.

Their counselor, the complacent enemy, held himself aloof from the men and women that his charges were fighting. He met the two lawyers often, but nothing passed between them that could have been regarded as the slightest breach of trust. He lived like a rajah in his shady bungalow, surrounded by the luxuries of one to whom all things are brought indistinguishable. If he had any longing for the society of women of his own race and kind, he carefully concealed it. His indifference to the subtle though unmistakable appeals of the two gentlemen in the chateau was irritating in the extreme. When he deliberately, though politely, declined their invitation to tea one afternoon their humiliation knew no bounds.

Lady Deppingham and Mrs. Browne should not be misunderstood by the reader. They loved their husbands—I am quite sure of that—but they were tired of seeing no one else, tired of talking to no one else. Moreover, in support of this one sided assertion, they experienced from time to time the most melancholy attacks of jealousy. If Mrs. Browne in plain despair went off for a day's ride with Lord Deppingham, that gentleman's wife was sick with jealousy. If Lady Agnes strolled in the moonlit gardens with Mr. Browne, the former Miss Rate of Boston could scarcely control her emotions. They shed many tears of anguish over the faithlessness of husbands, tears of hatred over the viciousness of temptresses. Their quarrels were fierce, their upbraidings characteristic, but in the end they cried and kissed and "made up."

They did not know, of course, that the wily Britt, despite his own depression, was all the while accumulating the most astounding lot of evidence to show that a decided streak of insanity existed in the two heirs.  
"If they could only be married in some way," was Britt's private lament to Saunders from time to time when despair overcame confidence.  
"I've got a ripping idea," Saunders said one day.  
"Let's have it. You're always got 'em. Why not divide with me?"  
"Can't do it just yet. I've been looking up a little matter. I'll spring it soon."  
"How long have you been working on the idea?"  
"Nearly four months," said Saunders, yawning.  
"Gad, this climate is enervating!" was Britt's caustic comment.

Saunders was heels over head in love with Miss Pelham at this time, so it is not surprising that he had some sort of an idea about marriage, no matter whom it concerned.  
Night after night the Deppinghams and Brownes gave dinners, balls, musicals, "bridges," masks and theater suppers at the chateau. First one would invite the other to a great ball, then the other would respond by giving a sumptuous dinner.  
One morning during the first week in February the steamer from Aden brought stacks of mail—the customary newspapers, magazines, novels, telegrams and letters. It was noticed that the ladyship had several hundred letters, many bearing crests or coats of arms.

At last she came to a letter of many pages covered with a scrawl that looked preposterously fashionable. Lady Agnes gave a sudden shriek and leaping to her feet, performed a dance that

set her husband and Bobby Browne to gasping.  
"She's coming!" she cried ecstatically, repeating herself a dozen times.  
"Who's coming, Aggy?" roared her husband for the sixth time.  
"The princess! Deppy, I'm going to squeeze you! I must squeeze somebody! Isn't it glorious? Now—now—now life will be worth living in this beastly place."

Her dearest friend, the princess, had written to say that she was coming to spend a month with her.  
"In her uncle's yacht, Deppy—the big one that came to Cowes last year, don't you know? Of course you do. Don't look so dazed. He's cruising for a couple of months and is to set her down here until the yacht returns from Borneo and the Philippines. She says she hopes it will be quiet here. Quiet! She hopes it will be quiet!"  
"I say, Deppingham, you can take her out walking and pick up a crownful of fresh rubies every day or so," said Browne.

"Hang it all, Browne, I'm afraid to pluck a violet these days. Every time I stoop over I feel that somebody's going to take a shot at me. I wonder why the beggars select me to shoot at. They're not always popping away at you, Browne. Why is it?"  
"It's all right so long as they don't kill you," was Browne's consoling remark.

"By Jove!" said Deppingham, starting up with a look of horror in his eyes, sudden comprehension rushing down upon him. "I wonder if they think I am you, Browne! Horrible!"  
The enemy's office hours were from 3 to 5 in the afternoon. Twice a week Miss Pelham came down from the chateau in a gayly bedecked jinrikisha to sit opposite to him in his stuffy corner of the banking house, his desk between them, her notebook trembling with expectancy. Mr. Britt generously lent the pert lady to the enemy in exchange for what he catalogued as "happy days."

Miss Pelham made it a point to look as fascinating as possible on the occasion of these interesting trips into the enemy's territory.  
The enemy, doing his duty by his clients with a determination that seemed incontestable, was the last to realize that an intrigue was shaping itself to combat his endeavors. Von Blitz, openly his friend and ally, despite their sad encounter, was the thorn which pricked the natives into a state of uneasiness and doubt as to their agent's sincerity.

They began to believe that no good could come out of the daily meetings of the three lawyers.  
It was Von Blitz who told the leading men of the island that their wives—the Persians, the Circassians, the Egyptians and the Turkish houri—were in love with the tall stranger. It was he who advised them to observe the actions, to study the moods of their women.

The German knew the condition of affairs in his own household. His overthrow at the hands of the American had cost him more than physical lacerations; his wives openly expressed an admiration for their champion. Every eye in Japan was upon him; every hand was turning against him.

It was Miss Pelham who finally took it upon herself to warn the lonely American. The look of surprise and disgust that came into his face brought her up sharply.  
"Miss Pelham," he said coldly, "will you be kind enough to carry my condolences to the ladies at court and say that I recommend reading as an antidote for the poison which idleness produces. Neither my home nor my barroom is open to ladies. If you don't mind we'll go on with this report."  
Miss Pelham flushed and looked very uncomfortable.

"You're wrong about Lady Deppingham and Mrs. Browne," she began hurriedly. "They've never said anything mean about you. It was just my miserable way of putting it. The talk comes from the islanders. Mr. Bowles has told Mr. Britt and Mr. Saunders. He thinks Von Blitz is working against you, and he is sure that all of the men are furiously jealous."  
"Perhaps there is something in what you say. I'm grateful to you for preparing me." It had suddenly come to mind that the night before he had seen a man skulking in the vicinity of the bungalow.

"I just thought I'd tell you," murmured Miss Pelham nervously. "I don't want to see you get into trouble—none of us."  
"Thank you." After a long pause he went on, lowering his voice: "Miss Pelham, I have had a hard time here in more ways than I care to speak of. May I interest you to know that I had decided to resign next month and go home. I'm a living man, and a living man objects to a living death. But my man objects to a living death. I've changed my mind. I'll stick my time out. I've got three months longer to stay, and I'll stay. If Von Blitz thinks he can drive me out, he's mistaken. I'll be here after you and your friends up there have sailed away, Miss Pelham—God bless you, you're all white—and I'll be here when Von Blitz and his wives are dancing to the tunes I play. Now let's get back to work. If Von Blitz is working in the dark, I'll compel him to show his hand. And, Miss Pelham," he concluded very slowly, "I'll promise to use a club, if necessary, to drive the Persian ladies away. So please rest easy on my account."

The next morning the town bustled with a new excitement. A trim, beautiful yacht, flying strange colors, steamed into the little harbor of Ararat. Every one knew that the yacht brought the princess who was to visit her ladyship.

The enemy came down from his bungalow, attracted by the unusual and in-

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## J. LEVINE

MOCKLER'S OLD STAND  
DURHAM

spring spectacle of a ship at anchor. A line of anxiety marked his brow. Two figures had watched his windows all night long, sinister 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 them before they saw him. Exhilaration 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.

His rugged face relaxed into a most charming, winsome smile, half diffident, half assured.  
He passed among the wives of his clients without so much as a sign of recognition, coolly indifferent to the admiring glances that sought his face. The dark, languorous eyes that flashed eager admiration a moment before now turned sullen with disappointment. He had ignored their owners.  
"I have heard that you expect a visitor," said the enemy in his most agreeable manner.  
"Won't 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 place is here."  
"The princess is to be with me for a month. We expect more sunshine than ever at the chateau," ventured her ladyship.

"I sincerely hope you may be disappointed," said he commiseratingly, fanning himself with his hat. She laughed and understood, but Deppingham was halfway out to the yacht before it became clear to him that the enemy spoke literally, not figuratively.  
The enemy sauntered back to the American bar, lonelier than ever before in his life. He now knew what it was that he had missed more than all else—woman.

Britt and Saunders were waiting for him under the awning outside.  
"Hello!" called Britt. "We saw you down there, but couldn't get near. By ginger, old man, I had no idea your Persians were so beautiful. They are oriental gems of—"  
"My Persians? 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 is so full of peril that I don't care if I look at them, handsome as you say they are. Do you know what I was thinking of as I came over here after leaving you—the most charming of women—your 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 love, not the kind we despise 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 tail desperately in love with her if I saw her oftener." Saunders blinked and gazed 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 lucky 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 palanquins 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 seat of the victoria sat Lady Deppingham.

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

men.  
"A gala day in Ararat," observed the stubby Mr. Britt. "We are to have the whole party overnight up at the chateau. Hello! By thunder, old man, she's—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 his helmet came off with a rush; a dazed smile of recognition lighted his face. The very pretty young woman in the wide 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 turned upon him with a radiant gleam in his once somber, disconsolate eyes.  
"Do you think I'd be grinning at her like a fool if I didn't? Why the dickens didn't you tell me that it was the Princess Geneva of Rapp-Thorberg who was coming?"

To be continued

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### The Distinguished Man.

It was the second time they had dined at the cafe, which was somewhat imposing with its vaulted ceiling and its German decorations of plaques and steins. A man kept walking back and forth through the room. He did this several times before he finally disappeared.  
"It seems to me," she whispered, "that I have seen that distinguished man before somewhere. Haven't I?"  
"Yes," said he. "You saw him here the night you came to dine with me. He's the head waiter."

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"Of course I admit your son is extravagant. But you must make allowances; he's young."  
"That's all right! But the more allowances I make the quicker he blows 'em."—Judge.