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The Man From Brodneyn's

By GEORGE BARR M GUTCHEON

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CHAPTER XI

CHASE PERFORMS A MIRACLE

HOLLINGSWORTH CHASE now felt that he was on neutral ground with the Princess Geneva. His strange connection with the Skags will cease in a few days. After leaving Thorberg 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 attended the execution of Skags' will. He had shot wild game in South Africa with Sir John Brodneyn, chief counselor for the prisoners, and when Sir John suddenly proposed that he go out to Japan as the firm's representative he leapt 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 cases 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, writing 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 Prince Karl story would not be dormant, but he could not banish the fair face of the Princess Geneva from his thoughts during the long voyage, nor 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 Brodneyn 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 offset, not to beset, Lady Deppingham."

Chase was not in love with the proud Princess Geneva. 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 which 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 at these months. It mattered little that she was now the wife of Prince Karl of Brabetz. To him she was still the Princess Geneva of Rapp-Thorberg.

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 Geneva 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 Brabetz as the most glorious present that man had ever received.

Now she was come to the island, and so far as he had been able to see, there was no sign of the Prince Brabetz in attendance. Her uncle by marriage, an English nobleman of high degree, in gathering his friends for the long cruise evidently had left the reins of his party, for what reason Chase could not imagine. You can't drive me out of this island, old man, you have lied about me ever since I beat you up that night. You are sacrificing 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 out der warships! We are not fools! You can fool some of—"

"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 chateau. You can't believe that I seek to turn those big guns against my own clients—the clients I came out here to serve with my life's blood if necessary. But, bear me, you Dutch lobster, 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."

is to know that there's Americans wherever you goes. Selim! Selim! He was standing as straight as a corporal and his eyes were glistening with the fire of battle when Selim came up and forgot to salute, so great was his wonder at the transformation. "Get 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 my 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 Rettem, came down from his mountain retreat. He heard the sibilant hiss of the scorned Persians as he passed among them on the outskirts of the crowd. He observed the threatening attitude of the men who walked 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 saturnine 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. Afar off stood the group of women who had inspired this hatred and distrust. Behind them, despised and uncountenanced by the oriental elect, were nanced by the oriental elect, who down crowded the native women, who down in their hearts loathed the usurpers. 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 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 undertaken to discredit my motives as the agent of your London advisers. Let me say right here that the man 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 covet certain women in this town, too numerous to mention. I believe, that is lie 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. You can't drive me out of this island, old man. You have lied about me ever since I beat you up that night. You are sacrificing the best interests of these people in order to gratify a personal spite, in order to wreak a personal vengeance. You—"

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Could it be possible? But, no, she would not be writing to him. What a ridiculous thought! His hopes felt flat as the note was put into his eager hand. It was from Brit. Still he broke the seal with considerable eagerness. As he perused the somewhat lengthy message his disappointment gave way to a no uncertain 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 Brit. And I must not forget Browne. Ah, what a consolation it

Von Blitz and Rasula laughed scornfully and turned to the crowd. The latter began to harangue his fellows. "This man is a—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 Americana 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 Brodneyn. 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 probable 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 carrion as Von Blitz and Rasula. Oh, I'm not afraid of you! I know that you have written to Sir John, Rasula, asking that I be recalled. He won't recall me, rest assured, unless he throws up the case. 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 bowl of dissent from the throng brought him up sharply. His face went white, and for a moment he feared the malevolence that stared at him from all sides. He looked frequently in the direction of the distant chateau. Knives slipped from many sashes. Von Blitz was screaming with insane laughter, pointing his finger at the discredited American. While they shouted and cursed, his gaze never left the cleft 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 eyes, his laughing 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 instantly into the wall of trees. There was something in the face and voice of the American that quelled the 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



The accursed crowd parted to let Chase pass.

Call upon our governments for help. My call today has been answered, as I knew 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 shrill clamor of voices 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, eh? 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 abused 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 tonight. Now come along with me, and I'll show my hand to you. Rasula, you'd better draw in your claws.

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