

# Captain Brabazon

BY B. M. CROKER

## A Military Romance of South Africa

### CHAPTER II—(Continued.)

Here Esme laughed hysterically, and at once brought the whole storm upon her unkindly head, and acted as a kind of lightning-conductor to Mrs. Brabazon's wrath.

"You laugh! You dare to laugh, miss! But it is only what I could expect from you. I believe you were in his confidence, and knew all about it. I'm sure you encouraged him in his abominable conduct. You and he have always been a heavy trial to me. You had a letter this morning; be so good as to hand it over."

"I cannot, Mrs. Brabazon," replied Esme, tremulously; "it is private," glancing appealingly at her stepmother.

"And full of abuse of me, no doubt. Well, you may keep it," making virtue of necessity, "and make much of it, for it is the last you will receive! Every other I find in the post bag I shall burn. Mark my words! Into the fire it goes."

"Florin and Gussie," said Esme, timidly, glancing from her brother to her sister, "are neither of you going to say anything? Won't you speak for Teddy?" she asked, pleadingly, "for it is to be left to me? Mrs. Brabazon, surely you cannot forget that Teddy is our brother, and will always be so as long as he lives. He is not dead to us—at least, he is not dead to me—and I hope he will be spared for the next fifty years. I think it only right and honorable to tell you that I will never give him up, that I shall write to him and receive his letters, and meet him and speak to him whenever I get the chance! His being a soldier makes no difference whatever; he is my brother all the same. It was not his fault he could not pass; he did try, and he wanted so much to be a soldier."

"What do you say to this tirade, Augusta?" demanded Mrs. Brabazon, turning on Gussie with a portentous frown. "I think it is all very dreadful about Ted, of course," she stammered; "but he is my brother," looking hard at Esme, as though endeavoring to borrow some of her spirit.

"And you, Florin?" demanded Mrs. Brabazon, in an awful, hollow voice.

"Oh, if you want my opinion," returned that gentleman, carefully stirring his tea, "I think Ted is a confounded ass, and has made a regular fool of himself, and all that sort of thing, and it's no end of a bore. I would pass him now if I met him in the street," pulling up his collar as he spoke, and feeling that he was a very important, dignified, illustrious young man.

"Oh, Flo!" exclaimed his youngest sister, reproachfully.

"Now, you have your brother's opinion, Esme, the opinion of the head of the house, I hope you are satisfied," said Mrs. Brabazon, with malicious triumph. "You see he is, as usual, quite of my way of thinking! If Teddy had behaved respectfully, I know that Florin would have done something for him, and used his interest with his influential friends; he has always been such a good, generous brother."

"Thus Teddy fell into disgrace with his family; his name was erased from the family roll, and written down instead in nearly everyone's black book."

Two years passed by, and during these two years there have been some little changes even at Baronsford. Esme was now nineteen, prettier than ever, but stiff and shy in general society. Gussie, on the contrary, seemed born for the social circle, was always the center of a little knot of swains on these occasions, and had played havoc with the affections of several susceptible young men. Mrs. Brabazon still frequented stately houses and stately dinner tables, and had saved a sum of money that would have made Miss Jane exclaim "most unaccountable," had she seen her banker's book. Time has not stood still with Teddy. Here is his last letter. It lies on the school room table beside Esme:

"From Troop Sergeant Brown, York, to Miss E. Brabazon:

"My Dear Esme—Always the culprit! you need not tell me that. I've written to you at least ten times in imagination; long letters, too, but I suppose that does not count. I have news for you, good news. You know that for a long time I was instructor in the riding school, and now I am promoted to be troop sergeant, which, by the way, I suppose is Greek to you, old lady; but I dare say your mind can grasp the word 'promotion.' I am getting up the ladder at last. The colonel hinted to me the other day that if I went on as I had commenced he would be happy to recommend me for a commission; so we begin to see daylight. I hope to see you early in the autumn, before we embark for foreign service; we are next on the roster. I shall come down and lie perdue at Mother Swaffer's; it would never do for you to be seen parading about in public with a sergeant of lancers. It will be a case of 'meet me by moonlight alone,' but that will be better than nothing. Only fancy, Esme, I've not spoken to a lady for two years. Give my love to Gussie and Aunt Jane. Do you know that she sent me £25 lately in a very crabbled little letter? Never mind, she shall be proud of me yet."

"Your affectionate brother,

"TEDDY B."

### CHAPTER III.

"She hasn't been here, has she?" panted Gussie, thrusting an eager, red face inside the school room door. "No," with a gesture of relief, "I see she has not," now introducing her whole person in walking costume; tossing off her hat as she subsided into the nearest chair, and altogether presenting an aspect of the wildest excitement. "I thought I'd be the first. I ran," putting her hand to her side. "Such news!"

"Upon my word, Gussie," said her sister, gazing at her with calm, dispassionate eyes, "you only want a personal attendant, and a few straws in your hair, to look a complete snuff."

"But you haven't heard my news! You

don't know what I have to tell you!" returned Miss Brabazon, exultingly.

"Your news," contemptuously, "I know the style so well! Mrs. Bell has got a new bonnet, and all Maxton is shaken to its center. You are about to inform me that Lady Louisa has had a fit, or—could it be that Mr. Vashon has again made you an offer of his hand and heart?"

"You are getting quite hot, I declare! quite hot!" cried Gussie, rubbing her hands ecstatically. "It's a wedding in the family, but I am not to be the victim."

"No?" in an accent of surprise; "then it must be Flo?"

"No, no, no," each no louder than its predecessor.

"You don't mean to say that Mrs. Brabazon—" with a gesture of horror.

"Not Mrs. Brabazon," laughing and still rubbing her hands, "though I would not mind if it were! I would give her away with pleasure. Try again."

"Then there's no one left but Aunt Jane," said Esme, looking at her sister dubiously.

"And pray, what do you call yourself, my dear?" inquisitively; "it is you—yes, who are going to be married. Now, then," folding her arms, putting out her under lip, and shaking her fringe with a gesture of decision.

"I?" pausing and surveying her sister with bewildered eyes, her mouth slightly parted. After a silence of a clear fifty seconds she found speech. "Only that I know that you are almost a teetotaler, your whole appearance and conversation would warrant the suspicion that you had been visiting the Barley Mow!"

"Barley Mow or not, you are going to be married, Miss Esme Brabazon!"

"Well, if I am, it is certainly the first I have heard of it," ironically, "which is curious, not to say unusual. And pray who is to be the happy bridegroom? Have I the pleasure of knowing him, even by sight?"

"No, you have not," exultantly. "Yes, yes!" hurriedly, in answer to the expression of her companion's face. "I'm quite sure and perfectly serious, although it sounds quite too unaccountable, as Aunt Jane would say; but," clearing her throat, "you are aware that Uncle George is dead?"

"Well, considering that I've known that fact for quite three weeks, and that I am at present making my mourning, your news is something astonishing," sarcastically. "Uncle George is dead; I'm going to be married! Do try and think of something else, or is it a new game?"

"Be quiet, Esme; you are just as bad as Teddy. The will has been found, after a long search, in a coat pocket—of all places! and particulars have come by the afternoon post. Mr. Bell has been over to Byford and brought our letters—"

"But to the point, my good girl, if there is one!"

"The point is that he has left two hundred a year to Sopp and the parrot, twenty pounds to each of us for a mourning ring—"

"And this has turned your head," broke in her sister. "How I wish he had left us the money instead!"

"Do let me finish," cried Gussie, with an angry little stamp. "I want to be the first to tell you! I've kept the last as a kind of plum; listen," gesticulating excitedly. "All his money in the funds, forty thousand pounds, goes to you and Miss Brabazon; and here is the cream of the whole thing, provided—you marry—each—other within six months of his decease. Now, is not that news for you? What do you call that but a wedding in the family?" she demanded triumphantly of her sister, who stood staring at her with pale, wide-eyed astonishment.

"It is not true. I don't believe it. It's a joke," she said at last, in a faint voice, gazing at Gussie with a look of horrified incredulity.

"It's quite, quite true; beautifully, delightfully true!" returned the young lady. "Come and let us have a dance of jubilee, humming a waltz, and seizing her stupefied sister around her waist, and beginning to whirl her about the room."

"Stop, stop, stop, Gussie!" she cried, breathlessly; "are you in your right senses?" holding her fast, and gazing into her flushed face and sparkling eyes. "Are you serious? Just let me look at you!" drawing her toward the window.

"Perfectly serious," she panted, "and nearly out of my mind with joy. You will have a nice little house in town, a victoria for the park, lots of dances and dinners, at which your older sister, charming Miss Brabazon, will be the piece de resistance."

"Poor old gentleman! I always thought he was odd; very queer, indeed," returned her sister, slowly.

"Miles is in Burma, I believe," said Gussie. "I wonder what he will think of this legacy!"

"Think—what every one must think," returned Esme, decidedly, "that Uncle George was mad!"

"Not a bit of it, my dear. I grant you he was odd, eccentric. Mrs. B. once wanted Aunt Jane and Flo to have him looked after and locked up, but it would have been utter nonsense. Because a man wears queer clothes and devours hot curries and Arabian and Persian love tales, it does not naturally follow that he is a lunatic. He was perfectly well able to manage his affairs, and was very sharp about money."

"Well, it's no business of mine," said Esme, shrugging her shoulders; "only I'm sorry he made such a foolish will."

"Foolish will!" cried Gussie. "What do you mean? It's a beautiful will. Don't tell me that you are not going to marry Miles Brabazon—not going to jump at him and the legacy?"

"I certainly am not. What a way you talk! Jumping indeed! getting rather red, and stooping to pick up her scattered work. 'I would not marry him on any account, nor he me; we are not crazy. We have not, as the French say, 'spiders in our garrets,' like poor old Uncle George."

"He will marry you fast enough, once he sees you," observed Gussie, decisively. "I don't know anyone as pretty anywhere, though you are my own sister, and I say it, as should not. Everybody thinks you are the prettiest girl in Thornshire," boastfully.

"The prettiest girl in Thornshire" took not the least notice of this brilliant compliment, but began to shake out, fold up and put away her unfortunate work, evidently incapacitated for any further industry that afternoon.

### CHAPTER IV.

Let us now adjourn to British Burma, and pay a visit to the other legatee, Captain Miles Brabazon. A single flight of imagination will land us in Rangoon, without undergoing forty days' torture on the high seas.

"I only wish I had your luck, that's all! But I always knew you were born with a silver spoon in your mouth, and that Dame Fortune had her eye on you."

The speaker, a young man in polo costume, long boots and dangerous looking spurs, was sitting on a teak-wood table in an easy, degenerate attitude, with his cap on the side of his close-cropped sandy head, a polo stick in one hand.

The gentleman upon whom Dame Fortune was supposed to "have her eye"—also in polo garb—was sunk in the depths of a Bombay chair, an expression of growing dissatisfaction upon his naturally gay and good-looking countenance. He held a large blue letter in his hand, and the ground around him was littered with papers and envelopes; evidently the European mail had just come in. The young man with the boots and spurs is Mr. Gee, the other Captain Brabazon, both officers in the Royal Marchers, at present luxuriating in the climate of British Burma. They are friends, and partners in the straggling wooden bungalow in which we find them.

"Luck, indeed," growled Captain Brabazon, angrily, crumpling up the letter and thrusting it into his breast pocket, "I see no luck in it; quite the other way!"

"Will you listen to him!" cried Mr. Gee. "Have you not always had enough for your modest wants?"

"That's because they were modest," returned the other, promptly.

"Have you not had the best of health, even in this beastly climate? which is enough to undermine the constitution of a rhinoceros! Have you not had speedy promotion? Haven't you youth?" pausing a second for breath.

"Go on; don't shrink! Why not say beauty at once?" suggested his companion, encouragingly.

"Well, I'll even go as far as that," generously, "though that was not what I was going to remark; but everyone knows, yourself included, that you're a good-looking fellow, and quite one of our show men. And you have actually the cheek to sit there calmly and tell me to my face that you are not a lucky fellow, when bank on the top of all this comes a thumping legacy of forty thousand pounds. I only wish I had half your complaint, that's all!"

"I wish to goodness you had," returned the other, sulkily. "You seem to forget, my clever and very sanguine friend, that I've only a half share in the booty, a half share and a better half. Sounds like a pun, eh? You have overlooked one little detail, matrimony, and that if I don't marry this girl within six months all the coin goes to a college in Calcutta. Did you ever know such an old hunk?"

Now standing up, walking to the doorway and leaning against one of the posts, Why the mischief could he not divide the money and leave us each half?" he demanded, angrily, of his friend.

"Ay, why, indeed?" rejoined Mr. Gee. "If all came of my tipping him a ten-pound note!"

"Your grandmother!" ejaculated Mr. Gee, with a laugh of the rudest incredulity.

"Great-grandmother, if you like, but it's a fact! When the old chap came home from India, with pots of money, he was awfully afraid of being set upon by hordes of needy relations. A bright idea struck him. He hastily retired to a shady suburb in London and set up as a pauper. In other words, sent round a begging letter for a little help, to keep him from want in his old age. Rather grim kind of joke, eh?"

"Rather," returned Mr. Gee, admiringly; "and not a bad idea."

"Any old fellow who was capable of that would be capable of anything, this will inclusive," exclaimed his nephew, emphatically. "However, to go on with my story. Mrs. Adrian Brabazon, my future stepmother-in-law, pleaded poverty; Aunt Jane made no excuse of any kind, doubtless she smelled a rat; and I, being just then rather flush of coin, sent him a tenner, with a promise to do what I could, for, after all, he was my father's brother, and I could not let the old beggar starve," apologetically.

(To be continued.)

### The Gift that Fritz Sent.

When good-natured, easy-going Fritz asked his American wife to go downtown and pick out some little present for his sister in Germany he sighed. He had squandered his fortune, but his sister still had hers, which careful Teutonic management had aided and swelled to a beautiful degree. The American wife knew nothing of her sister-in-law, but she fully appreciated the limitations of her own finances as well as the difficulty of sending a gift so far as Germany, so she went to repository for woman's work and discovered there a dainty bag of chamol leather embroidered with wreaths of forget-me-nots and emblazoned with the one word "Money," to indicate its use as a secret purse to be worn about the neck for safety in traveling.

It seemed an innocuous little gift, but Fritz nearly went into hysterics of delight when he beheld it. "Ach! the very thing," he gasped. "I would not write and ask her—no! but 'Money' and 'forget-me-not,' ach! it is the most beautiful reminder!"

At that the American wife protested and would fain have withheld the present, but Fritz was firm. "It was sent to Germany at Christmas. Last week a lovely substantial check came in acknowledgment. The old lady had appreciated and understood the gentle hint, and hereby hangs a fruitful suggestion!"

The Adams homestead at Quincy, Mass., has been restored under the direction of the Quincy Historical Society.

### PLOT IN GOEBEL CASE

WITNESS SAYS NEGROES WERE TO COMMIT MURDER.

Sergt. Golden's Story of Conspiracy to Kill Democrats in Kentucky—Witnesses and Lawyers at the Trial Are in Fear of Assassination.

The trials of Caleb Powers and other Republicans for the alleged assassination of William Goebel are almost certain to involve Kentucky in the worst feud ever known in the State. Already the Republicans of London have publicly announced that no Democrat can ever make a public speech in that town. According to a correspondent a leading Republican of London said: "If a Democrat comes to London to make a speech a committee will wait on him and tell him that he cannot make a Democratic speech there, and if he insists he will be shot as soon as he rises to begin his address."

The examining trial of Caleb Powers was continued at Frankfort Monday before Judge Moore. F. Wharton Golden went on the stand for cross examination by the defense. Golden, in his testimony Saturday, told of the alleged plot to kill Goebel. During the hearing he said: "John Powers told me they had two niggers here to kill Goebel. They were Hockersmith and Dick Combs." The morning of the shooting, continued Golden, "John Powers said to me, 'Goebel is going to be killed this morning.' I said: 'This must not be done. We must go and see Caleb.' John Powers saw him; I didn't."

Golden, who claims to have been a friend to Secretary of State Caleb Powers and his brother, John Powers, for years, gave testimony that was particularly damaging to John Powers, but he also brought in the names of many others, including Charles Finley, W. H. Culton and Claimant Governor Taylor, in his story of the bringing of the mountaineers to Frankfort previous to the assassination. Mr. Taylor, however, was not directly implicated. Golden's testimony tended to show that a plan was made to bring several hundred "regular mountain feudists" to Frankfort, who, if necessary, as Golden pressed it, "go into the legislative hall and kill off enough Democrats to make it our way." The testimony did not show that the alleged plot to kill Goebel was part of the original plan, nor did it contain the names of those who conceived that idea. It did show, however, that Caleb Powers gave Golden money with which to pay the way of the feudists to Frankfort.

Witnesses and lawyers figuring in the trial of the Goebel suspects are living in daily fear of assassination. Col. Jack Chinn has received many threatening letters, while Attorney Campbell, chief prosecuting counsel, says he does not expect to be allowed to live through the trial. It is now alleged by the prosecution that the murder of Goebel was the result of a plot, cunningly executed. The plot, it is said, involves Chief Justice Hazlerigg and Judge Poynter, of the Court of Appeals. The State asserts it can show that it was the purpose of the plotters to kill Goebel Monday instead of Tuesday, but on that day he was surrounded by so many friends as he walked into the State House that it was impossible to get a good shot at him.

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