

Mr. Barnes, American

By ARCHIBALD CLAVERTING GUNTER

Author of MR. BARNES OF NEW YORK, MR. POTTER OF TEXAS, THE TEENYMAN, ETC.

A Sequel to MR. BARNES OF NEW YORK

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CHAPTER I.

The Shock in the Marseilles Depot.

"I wonder if I can head off those cursed Corsican murder enthusiasts?" mutters Mr. Barnes, of New York, as he stands on the deck of the French steamer with Marseilles looming up in the heat mist ahead of him on a May morning of 1883, after the escape of the bridal party from Corsica.

There are very few passengers, Barnes' gold having sent the steamer back on her return voyage to Marseilles within two hours after her arrival at Ajaccio.

His glance is turned contemplative beyond the whirling, eddying wake of the propeller's foam toward that curious island of a semi-mediaeval race, 200 miles behind him, whose rugged mountain slopes and chestnut valleys are the home of that undying revenge that the Corsicans think is noble; that they worship, idealize and call "the Vendetta."

The representative of New York fashion, American sportsmanship and modern materialism, who has flitted to the island and plucked not only the young English lieutenant, Edwin Gerard Anstruther, but his bride, Marina, the daughter of the Paolis, from the meshes and entanglements of a feud that only ends with death, notwithstanding his reward is to be the hand of the beautiful girl he loves, emits a low, contemplative, melancholy whistle.

He mentally glances back and sees the house of Musso Danella in the moonlit chestnut groves of Bocognano, and Marina in her bride's gown, her sensitive, passionate face filled with that weird mixture of undying love and uncanny horror as she shuddered from the arms of the man she had just sworn to cleave to through life and muttered: "Antonio's murderer!" Next he remembers the strange proof that brought back the wild happiness to the bride's face as she learned there was no taint of her brother's blood on Edwin Anstruther, her husband; that her horrible belief was due to circumstantial evidence and the jealous and crafty plot of Musso Danella, her guardian, the man lying dead upon the floor of the bridal chamber, Tomasso's dagger in his heart; and then had fallen fainting into her bridegroom's arms.

With this, the mind of Mr. Barnes reverts to his desperate efforts to get the whole party to Ajaccio before the natives of the little commune of Bocognano learned they had now another to avenge, and to the death of Marina's brother on the beach in the duello had been added that of Danella, their old-time friend, and to his peasants their kind maestro and proprietor.

Additional concern makes the face of the American even more grave as he mentally hears the distant ringing of the rifles on the mountain side as the carabinieri shot old Tomasso Mondaldi, who having become an assassin, had fled as a bandit, as the party made their weird ride to the Corsican seaport.

"If no deaths had followed the appearance of Marina's husband and me in the island, perhaps the accused affair might have slumbered and died out," reflects Barnes, gloomily; "as it is, there's no telling where the devilish thing may end. If they have money enough to pursue us, holy poker, they may even include me in the scrimmage."

A little, delicately gloved hand laid upon his arm interrupts his meditation. Miss Enid Anstruther, standing beside him, looking like a joyous fashion-plate in a light Parisian traveling dress, whispers archly: "Thinking of me?" then suddenly ejaculates in almost frightened tone: "Oh, I hope not! Your face is so moody, dear." Blushes spring upon the sensitive face, and his young English fiancée whispers with a piquant pout: "Gloomy, and going to marry me in three days? That's not very complimentary, Burton."

"No, in two, if we can make quick connections for London," answers Burton, rapturously. "One day is past. But I wasn't thinking of you, young lady," he continues, tenderly, giving her delicate cheek a caressing, proprietary pinch; "I was thinking of—" "What we left behind us," shudders his vivacious betrothed. "Don't let us think of that weird horror, when—when—" The radiance of her blue eyes and the blushes on her fair cheeks suggest the rest.

"When our wedding day is so near," whispers Burton, tenderly. "I would be very happy, too, if our Corsican friends would only forget it." He checks himself, biting his lip and adds: "However, the modern world is before us. I can see the Pharos light house and the Iles des Perdues."

"Why, we are nearly at Marseilles," ejaculates Enid.

"Yes, only breakfast between us and every-day France," returns her escort. "Now just run down and direct Thompson to get your traps together and then tell Edwin to hurry Marina. They should be on deck. You know as soon as landed, we'll get right on to London. We can probably catch the morning train."

Miss Anstruther's answer makes Burton chew his moustache; she says: "If Marina is strong enough."

"Strong enough? She's got to be strong enough. We must get out of France. The further we are away from Corsica, the better. In France they don't need a reciprocity treaty to take us back to that mediaeval island. There is no telling what devilish complexion the natives of Bocognano may put upon the two dead men we left behind us. I don't want to alarm you—I wouldn't say this to Edwin or his bride—but the sooner we are out of France, the better."

"And you think that will be the end of the matter?" asks his fiancée, clinging closely to his arm as if Mr. Barnes were potent to save her from the whole Corsican race.

"Well, I think it would have been had we got away without old Tomasso killing Count Danella and the French carabinieri shooting old Tomasso. As it is—Barnes pauses suddenly and asks abruptly: "Did poor old Tomasso Mondaldi have any close relatives? Not so very close, either. Cousins, even to the second and third degree often take a hand in these barbaric feuds."

"I believe while I was there," answers Miss Anstruther, "I heard a daughter spoken of. Etheria, she was called—the betrothed, I understand, of that mediaeval young cavalier who acted as bridesman and made that awful Smoilet speech to Marina. Young Bernardo Saliceti, a member of the local governing body, ambitious to be elected to represent Corsica in the French chamber of deputies."

"Humph, a young Corsican swell betrothed to the daughter of the man killed on the mountain. Besides, I've heard the dead Musso speak of a half-brother, Corsican on the mother's side—one Corregio Cipriano Danella. De Belloc mentioned him as we rode down the mountain. Corregio lives most of the time in southern France, but has the damnable ethics of his island," mutters Burton, then he suddenly checks himself, for Edwin Anstruther is bringing his bride up the companionway to the deck.

Every time her eye lights on her bridegroom, the flush of happiness transforms the bride's face into a dream of passionate loveliness. Each time she touches the arm of Edwin



"And You Think That Will Be the End of the Matter?"

Anstruther, Barnes notes that her slight fingers cling to the young Englishman's stout muscles as if to be certain a living husband is beside her and she is not bereft. Still there is a confidence in the young Corsican lady's bearing that makes the American, who now considers himself as her physician, more hopeful of her physical strength.

"Ah, Marseilles is ahead of us, dear Dr. Barnes," she says, her dark eyes lighting up in their enthusiastic southern way. "To-morrow, Paris; the next day, London, where, Edwin tells me, you hope to be happy, happy as—"

"As I am," interjects Anstruther. "Enid has promised to make you so, hasn't she, my boy? And I'll see that she does it. No delays for trousseau; minister to the mast and sentence executed at once on that young lady who is putting her head over the taffrail to hide her blushes, which she'll pretend come from the sea air."

"Please attend to Marina's blushes, Edwin; they're enough for any man to take care of," laughs Miss Anstruther.

"Yes, and take Mrs. Anstruther in to breakfast," commands Barnes, deftly giving Marina her English name, thinking it will impress upon her that she is no more a Corsican.

"Breakfast!" says Mr. Anstruther, promptly, and leads his bride into the dining salon.

"Though I am not married, I am hungry also," remarks Enid, suggestively.

"All right, step in quick," returns Burton, but pausing at the cabin door, he whispers: "Excuse me a moment, I see an old friend forward."

"What, you are not going to sit by my side?" pouts his fiancée.

"In a minute. Order my breakfast for me."

A minute later he is standing among the few third-class passengers in the extreme bow of the boat, addressing an old Corsican, who, costumed in his

best broad-brim sombrero and silver-buttoned coat, is seated upon a hen-coop and economically eating some hard-boiled eggs and roasted chestnuts he has produced from his pockets. "You don't remember me, old Mateo," remarks Barnes, gazing at the ancient innkeeper of the auberge Il Pescatori.

"By the blessings of the saints, I do, honored Signore Barnes, of New York," replies the representative of old Corsica, his eyes lighting up with a lurid glow. "A grand duel that we arranged on the beach a year ago! All Ajaccio has been out to see where Antonio died and Marina took the oath of the vendetta. It helped business grandly. Has she killed yet?" The old man's tone is moodily eager.

"Not yet," answers Barnes, sententiously.

"Per Baccho, I saw her with another English officer in the stern a few minutes since. They say she's wedded to him. Hasn't found the man who slew her brother, but given her beauty to another of his accursed race. 'Tis shame on Corsica!" mutters the old vendettaist, disgustfully.

"I believe on the morning of that duel," interjects Burton, "you were kind enough, Mateo, to give me quite a little history of the vendetta on which you seem to be an authority; how your father, a fisherman, fell in one, and you drowned the man who killed your father."

"Ah, that memory is a pleasant one, Signore. I can always sleep in peace; my enemy had no relatives or descendants."

"But where there are relatives and descendants, the feud goes on?" The American knocks the ashes from his cigar.

"Until there are no more left, of course! Even to all who bear the name or have a drop of the blood in their veins if they are men and Corsicans," answers old Mateo, stoutly.

"Ah, but you seem quite an authority on the subject. But are these feuds ever permitted to include women as victims?" asks the American, his eyes very anxious.

"Maladetto, why not? Women produce two-thirds of the vendettas," mutters the old man, sardonically.

Mr. Barnes turns moodily away from this cruel aspect of the infernal passion of unending revenge. As he enters the dining salon and seats himself beside Miss Enid, he mutters to himself: "By Jove, am I losing my nerve?" for the thought that his delicate fiancée may possibly be drawn into the horrible blood feud has produced a new sensation in his veins.

Half an hour afterward the Ajaccio boat is pulled up alongside of the Quai Joliette in Marseilles and is discharging its few passengers and little freight into that bustling artery of modern commerce full of moving wagons, shrieking cabmen and the other ejectives of a great commercial port.

The ladies are below getting their little baggage together, assisted by Edwin, Barnes, who has already sent a waiter on shore to bring a carriage, with an after-breakfast cigar between his teeth, is pacing the deck of the vessel.

A bright, smart little telegraph boy flies up the gangplank. After asking directions of the first officer, he steps to Mr. Barnes and hands him a blue envelope.

"A wire from somebody who knew I was on this boat," thinks the American, and hastily tearing it open, reads: Burton H. Barnes.

Steamer Constantine arriving Marseilles, Ajaccio, May 28, 1883. En avant double quick! The devil is behind you. Look out for Saliceti. Details by letter. De B.

From instinct Mr. Barnes touches his hip pocket just to be sure his revolver is there. Then he paces the deck meditatively for a moment, cogitating: "Something must be happening in Corsica for that old Algerine campaigner De Belloc to send such a dispatch. Best the ladies don't see this," and tears the message up, tossing the pieces overboard. As he does so Miss Anstruther is beside him, a fluffy white parasol over her head.

"I think," says Mr. Barnes, "we'll go to London as soon as possible. We have but 20 minutes to catch the train. Ah, here's Tompson with the valises!" He takes Miss Anstruther's maid, an English girl of about 20, and rather helpless in a French-speaking country, puts her with the heavier articles of their baggage into a voiture and dispatches her to the railroad depot at once. Returning to his fiancée on the deck of the boat, he says impatiently: "Why doesn't Edwin bring Marina on deck?"

This is answered by the young Corsican bride herself. "My husband," she lingers on the word radiantly, "will be along in a minute. He is cording up our baggage, sailor fashion. All atante, I think Edwin calls it. Is it all ashore now, dear Mr. Barnes," and Marina drapes her light traveling robe with graceful hand about her pretty feet.

"Yes, as quickly as possible. Come, Enid!" and the American leads the way.

Marina waves her hand to her husband, who springs down the gangplank carrying the corded articles and cries: "Hurry, Edwin! Twenty minutes to catch the Paris train."

"Then I've got you in time!" shouts a voice from the quay that makes Barnes start and turn about.

Before them stands Miss Maud Chartris, her high, bronzed boots more bronzy than ever, the cardinal red of her long, silk stockings that outline her legs from knees to ankles even more aggressively gleaming. A pert little sunshade is over her straw-hatted head, which is adorned by two long, blonde pigtail tied with blue ribbons which she flops about defiantly. The rest of her between knees and neck is a white muslin frock and pink sash.

"Ma said I was to catch you, Edwin,

at the boat if you came on it. She wants you at her hotel, the Grand Rue Noailles. You're to look after that plumbing job in her house in London. The master plumber is robbing her."

"Awfully sorry I cannot accommodate your mother, Maud," remarks Anstruther. The carriage engaged by Barnes is standing ready for them. "We steer straight to the depot. I thought your mother was in London already."

"No, we're going back to Nice. Von Bulow is there. Between us all, ma means to marry him. How I pity the German. I'll ride up with you and tell you all about it," cries the Chartris girl, whose widowed mother sternly represses the unfortunate Maud from growing into young ladyhood and absolutely denies her birthdays till she, Lady Chartris, has captured another husband.

Already Enid and Marina are on the back seat, Anstruther steps in; Barnes likewise.

"Room for one more!" cries Maud, who springs in and kisses both of the young ladies effusively.

Already the carriage having rolled up the Boulevard des Dames and passed the Arc de Triomphe has turned into the Rue Bernard du Bois, making for the big railway station, out of which nearly all trains leave Marseilles not only for Paris, but everywhere else.

"You give my compliments to your mother, Maud," remarks the sailor, trying to cut off Maud's conversation. "Tell her to write me at my London address and I'll hoist her plumber at the yard-arm."

By this time they are at the great station. Miss Chartris skips out and the rest follow her from the carriage. Trains are ready to leave for the four quarters of the globe; the platforms are filled with hurrying passengers.

It is hard to believe a mediaeval vendetta can be inserted on such a scene. Barnes, glancing at his watch, finds they have ten minutes before the train departs; he says cheerfully but hurriedly: "Look out for the ladies, Edwin; I'll find Tompson and the rest of the baggage," and goes off to get the tickets and make the necessary arrangements.

But "look out for the ladies," is more easily said than done.

Three jabbering porters have seized their hand baggage and are carrying it in sections towards different trains that will scatter the pieces to the west and the Pyrenees, to the east and Italy.

Edwin pursues these; then Enid gives a gasp. Another porter, calling: "Arles, Tarascon and Avignon!" has pounced upon her special handbag and is rushing away with it. Miss Anstruther flies after him, leaving Maud and Marina together.

Five minutes later, Barnes returns to find Edwin supporting Marina, whose face is very pale, and whose eyes are scarcely conscious. Were it not for the stout arm about her, she would fall to the platform of the great station, under the feet of the hurrying throng.

Miss Chartris is gazing meditatively at her, chewing the blue-enameled knob of her parasol and furtively tucking something in her glove.

"What the deuce has happened to her?" asks the American.

"She is too ill to speak," answers the young husband, astounded. "What am I to do? We cannot take her on the train in this shape. She is absolutely unfit to travel. She has nearly fainted again." For Marina's eyes, seeing Edwin, close again in apparent despair.

"What produced it?" demanded Barnes. "She was the picture of health when I left her."

Here Enid runs up with her replevined handstachel.

"Do you know how this occurred?" asks Edwin, eagerly.

"Not so much as you do!" replies Miss Anstruther; "Maud, how did this happen?" She turns suspicious eyes upon Miss Chartris, who cries nervously: "What are you jumping on me for? I was only keeping Marina's handbag and umbrella, and Edwin's canes and rug, and I looked round and she'd got it in the neck!"

"Not a dagger?" shudders Enid. But a hasty inspection of Marina's white throat relieving her, Miss Anstruther cries: "Maud, how dare you use such ambiguous Americanisms! What has she got?"

"How do I know?" pouts Maud, aggressively. "She was too groggy to speak."

"It can't be paralysis!" shudders the groom, trying in vain to revive Marina.

"Not a bit," answers Barnes, after hasty examination.

"Do you think we dare put her on the train?" queries Edwin, anxiously.

"As a friend, I would say we must get her away, but—" The American pauses.

"Mercy! You have some news from Ajaccio?" Enid breaks in, trembling.

"No more news, only it is wise to be moving on. But," Burton feels the fluttering pulse of the bride, "but as a doctor, my opinion is she must remain here for a few hours at least. I'll get a carriage. Here, Tompson," he says to the maid who had followed him from the crowd in the depot, "help your mistress with the grips!"

The two gentlemen support Marina outside the station, and Maud following, says: "Take her to the Grand, our hotel. Ma's got lovely rooms there."

"Yes, it's only a short distance," remarks Barnes, "and we can make your wife comfortable at once."

The whole party soon reach the Grand hotel on the Rue Noailles. Here they are received with mixed exclamations of surprise and delight and then concern by Lady Chartris. "Marina was well, you say, only a few minutes ago and fainted at the railroad station. What produced it?" cries the English

matron, after the young Corsican lady has been taken to a bedroom and a well-recommended physician sent for. Enid staying by the patient until his arrival.

Mr. Barnes doesn't deem it wise to go into details with Lady Chartris.

"You had better descend and make yourself comfortable in the cafe, Edwin," he suggests. "Young husbands are too nervous when their wives are sick."

Taking Anstruther down with him he whispers: "Besides, did you notice whenever she looked at you she swooned again. Best keep away until you learn the true reason of this sudden attack."

"Do you think it is heart disease?" asks Edwin, distractedly.

"Not the kind you mean. I can tell you that your bride is as normally healthy as any woman in the world," answers the American. "It was some shock to the brain or nervous system, I think. The question is, what was it?"

"Can it have been anything connected with that horrible island?" queries Edwin, anxiously.

"That I'm now about to attempt to discover," observes Burton.

Meditating as to what the blow is, Barnes leaves the young English off-



"But as a Doctor, My Opinion Is She Must Remain Here for a Few Hours' Rest."

cer and comes upstairs, to interview the only witness he thinks available—the adolescent Maud. As he reaches Lady Chartris' parlor, that lady's door is slightly open, and words issue to him that make him pause outside the entrance.

"Now, Maud," says Lady Chartris, sternly, "what caused Mrs. Anstruther to faint? You were alone with her."

"Ma, I didn't do it! Sure, I didn't!" falters the girl.

"The truth, or I shall take you to my bedroom. You know what will happen to you there, if you don't tell me everything." The voice of the mother suggests awful possibilities.

"Yes, ma, I will; I'll tell you every blessed thing—don't look at me that way. Why, I was just walking round with Marina and I left her for a minute and a gentleman, French and Italian mixed, said: 'You are with Madame Anstruther.' He stumbled over the name, and I answered proudly—Marina looked awfully fetching—'You bet, she's my cousin by marriage.' Then he said: 'Give her this, with my regards,' and handed me a note. Well, I gave it to Marina and that finished her."

"Finished her?"

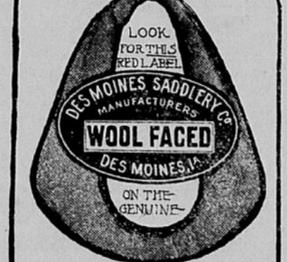
"Yes, she kind of read it in two pieces. First she drew up and looked like—like you when you think you've caught me in something awful—strong savage and horrible. And when she read the second part, then she looked like I look when I'm going to catch it."

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D. L. HOUSTON, Plaintiff, vs. L. A. SLOCUMB and R. A. SLOCUMB, Defendants.

ORIGINAL NOTICE. TO THE ABOVE NAMED DEFENDANTS: You and each of you are hereby notified that on or before the 17th day of January, 1908, a petition will be filed by the plaintiff, D. L. Houston, in the office of the Clerk of the District Court of Iowa, in and for Crawford County, asking judgment against you and each of you for the sum of \$30.00, with interest, statutory attorney's fees and costs of suit, on your two promissory notes, of Date June 22, 1903, made to H. S. Green, now owned by this plaintiff.

You are further notified that plaintiff asks for the issuing of a writ of attachment in said suit, and that Lots Numbered Ten (10), Eleven (11), and Twelve (12) in Block Numbered Nine (9), in the Incorporated town of Dow City, have been attached herein. For further particulars, you are referred to a copy of the petition, when on file. You are further notified that unless you appear hereto and defend in the forenoon of the second day of the next Term of said Court, Commencing at Des Moines, Iowa, on the 30th day of March, 1908, default will be entered against you, and judgment rendered as prayed.

Dated this 13th day of January, 1908. GEORGE McHENRY and CONNER & LALLY, Attorneys for Plaintiff.

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