

The Mighty **BRUTE FORCE STEELBAND**

Music to Awaken the
**BALLROOM
BEAST**

**Calypsos
Meringues
Sambas
Tangos
Pops**

by the **BRUTE FORCE STEELBAND** of Antigua

An on the scene recording at St. John's, Antigua, British West Indies

COOK

Sounds of Our Times

long play 1048



The Story of the Prince and the Princess

THE Brute Force Steelband consists of a gourd, accompanied by oildrums. Legend has it that inside the Brute Force gourd, still romping and playing, are a Prince and a Princess Cricket.

Once upon a time when they were both very young, they ran away from their leafy palaces and first encountered each other purely by accident deep in a vegetable garden outside St. Johns. Immediately, they fell in love, and decided to proceed together in disguise, as common crickets. As they wandered together day after day, footsore, weary and hungry through the garden, they came suddenly upon a small, tender and brightly coloured gourd. In the side of the gourd there was an enormous hole disappearing into the cavernous interior,—a hole large enough to crawl into. While they were watching the bright little gourd, an enormous earthworm wiggled out and disappeared into Antigua.

"Quickly, quickly!" cried Prince Cricket.

And the Prince and the Princess popped into the hole, and crawled deep into the middle of the gourd. They were tired from keeping watch night and day against predatory tropical lizards, turtles and birds; here they could rest and have something to eat.

Prince Cricket had brought a large pebble with him, and now he stuffed it into the end of the hole to keep out intruders.

"Quickly!" he said.

There in the darkness of the interior of the gourd they rested and ate, and were very, very happy. Then they fell asleep, the Prince and the Princess, side by side on a gourd seed. They slept for a very long time because there was no sound from the outside world to awaken them. As they slept, the gourd grew larger and larger and it grew around the pebble and the hole closed up.

Finally it had a long neck and fat body, and it was picked and brought to market where it was purchased at a premium price by a tall dark gourd fancier named Ethelbert Nizam. Mr. Nizam put it under his arm, and holding it tightly he ran back to his curio shop and hung it in the window in the sun, where it could dry and attract customers because of its beautiful shape and colour.

The gourd hung there for six months while the Prince and Princess slept on the seed.

Now at Christmas time in Antigua there is a Carnival, where everybody gets out into the street to sing and dance, and the steelbands play and march in parade. Of all the steelbands in Antigua, the one called the Brute Force Band was always the biggest and loudest and most powerful. And they always played the most exciting music, because they were inventive and made up tunes as they went along.

But Charles the shac-shac player in the Brute Force was bored with what he was doing. He was tired of shaking the shac-shac. He felt a strange urge to scrape something instead. On Christmas Eve, full of rum, he passed by on the sidewalk outside Mr. Nizam's curio shop and he happened to spy Mr. Nizam's beautiful gourd hanging there in the moonlight. He lurched inside.

"Mr. Nizam," said he, "that's a handsome fine cricket you've got there hanging by the gourd in the window, but I can't imagine what you're wanting with it!"



Sunset—and The Brute Force goes into action

photo: Jack Pollock, Antigua

You see, he was in a drunken delirium and he was *seeing things*. Mr. Nizam looked up and as if by magic he seemed to see a cricket hanging there, too.

"Oy!" he cried, "Take it away! I never wanted it and don't understand how it got there in the first place."

So then Mr. Ethelbert Nizam went back to reading his books and attending to his Caribbean artifacts.

When Charles the shac-shac player reached for the cricket he saw there hanging in the window beside the gourd, he grasped the gourd instead because there was no cricket. But it felt like a cricket to him anyway, and maybe he was right.

He remembered his urge to scrape something, and he took his pocket knife out and cut off some of the outer skin of the dry gourd to expose the corrugated washboard-like under surface. Taking a pencil out of his shirt he fled through the door and out into the street where he joined The Brute Force Steelband which was just coming around the corner. And there, instead of shaking the shac-shac, he started to scrape the gourd, in time with the music.

"Quickly, quickly!" cried the Prince, as he woke up to the sound of the gourd being scraped.

They have been playing with the Brute Force ever since.

Maybe this is why when the Brute Force Steelband of Antigua plays at night outdoors, the crickets keep time to the music.

E. C.

Side A:

Say Si Si
Take Me, Take Me*
Teach Me Tonight

Take Her to Jamaica
Where the Rum
Comes From*
Beastly Meringue
Now Is The Hour

Side B:

Perfidio
Carnival*
Pierconela
Man Smart,
Woman Smarter
Steelband Invention*
Gloria
Green Faced Man**
Go March

* Sung by Calypsonian
Herbert Howard

** Sung by Lord Lally of
Antigua

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