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THE ADVENTURES OF KATHLYN

By HAROLD MacGRATH

SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS

Kathlyn Hare believes her father, Col. Hare, to be in dire peril in Allahabad, a principality of India. The King of Allahabad has recently died, and because the Colonel had once saved his life he names him as his successor. Umballah, pretender to the throne of Allahabad, loves Kathlyn and has forced a message summoning her to his father, whom he has thrown into prison. She leaves her home in California to go to him. On her arrival in Allahabad she is informed by Umballah that her father is dead and that she is the queen. An elaborate durbar is arranged, the central figure of which is Kathlyn, protesting and grief-stricken. When the crown is placed upon her head Umballah announces that she is to be married to him for ever. Her refusal infuriates him, but as Kathlyn's beauty and spirit have made a strong appeal to the people he yields the point for the time being. A priest announces that no woman may rule unmarried with the laws of the state she will be given seven days to decide.

When Kathlyn, reiterate at the expiration of the week of grace, her refusal to marry Umballah she receives sentence from the supreme tribunal that she is to undergo two ordeals with wild beasts. If she survives, she is to be permitted to rule without hindrance.

John Bruce, an American and fellow passenger on the boat which brought Kathlyn to Allahabad, is hunting near Allahabad. She sends Ramabai, her body guard, to find him and tell him of her peril.

The first ordeal is arranged, and Kathlyn is placed in a cage in the jungle. A tiger is loosed, and as he is about to spring on his victim Bruce, who has reached the scene, fires on him. The first ordeal is over.

Bruce learns that in the second ordeal Kathlyn is to be placed in the arena, the prey of hungry lions. With Ramabai and Ahmed he makes his plans. Mines are laid in the arena, and when Kathlyn enters it and faces the lions Bruce springs them. During the excitement following the explosion, and while Umballah, the councillors, and the terrified populace are fleeing for their lives, he hurries to Kathlyn's side.

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CHAPTER V.

THE TEMPLE OF THE LION

Till Bruce dropped down into the arena to Kathlyn's side he had never given a thought to the possibility of the key not being the right one. Trapped—and Ahmed but a few yards away with a zennaah gharrri, ready to convey them to the camp—freedom! It took the heart out of him for a moment. The confusion all about the fall of dust, the roaring of the frightened lions which had escaped destruction, the shrill cries of the panic-stricken populace, who now looked upon the white Memsahib as the daughter of Shaitan, these dull his inventive faculties for the nonce. Here was the confusion, properly planned, and he could not make use of it. Possibly, when no further explosion shook the air, the mob and the soldiers would return out of curiosity. And then, good-by!

But the sight of a lion emerging from the murk the wrong side of the crevasse roused him thoroughly. "Save yourself!" said Kathlyn in despair; "there is no possible way of saving me. I have never in all my life injured anyone, and yet God makes me go through all this. I am mad, you are, the whole world is!"

Bruce laughed; it was that kind of laughter with which men enter battle. He drew Lal Singh's revolver and thrust one into her hand.

"Shoot at the keyhole. Leave the lion to me. With the pandemonium no one will note the shots, or if they do, will think that more explosions are on the way. I'll get you out of this nightmare; that's what I was born for!"

"Nightmare!" "There, now,"—as Kathlyn leaned dizzily against one of the supports. "I've gone through a good deal," she said. Without more ado she pressed the muzzle of the revolver into the keyhole and fired. She heard a shot behind her, another and another; but she kept firing into and about the keyhole till the revolver was empty.

A firm hand drew her aside. "The lion?" "Gone to sleep. Let me have a whack at that door." "Where's Ramabai?"

"Went back over the wall. Probably to warn Ahmed; maybe gone directly off towards camp. Anyhow, he has faith in me."

"And, O! so have I, so have I!" Bruce bore his weight savagely against the door—once, twice, thrice, and pitched forward on his knees outside. He was up instantly. He caught Kathlyn by the hand and hurried her along; and all she could think of was Winnie romping toward the canopied studio, her father half

asleep on the veranda, and the leopard cat sprawled on the divan! "Sahib! Huzori!" a voice called. "This way!" "Ahmed! Ahmed!" cried Kathlyn. "Yes, heaven born; but hurry, hurry! Umballah will return to search as soon as he can get the better of his legs. Siva take that battery that was worn out! Heaven born, you are now a queen in fact."

"I want to go home, Ahmed, home!" "Here's the gharrri. Here, Sahib! He held out a handful of cartridges toward Bruce. "These fit Lal Singh's pistols. Hurry, hurry!"

Bruce helped Kathlyn into the vehicle and jumped in beside her, and Ahmed struck the horse. The gharrri was a rickety old contrivance, every hinge creaking like some lost soul, but Ahmed had reasoned that the more dilapidated the vehicle, the less conspicuous it would be. He urged the horse. He wanted the flying mob to think that he was flying too which, indeed, he was.

The gharrri rolled and careened like a dory in a squall. A dozen times Bruce and Kathlyn were flung together, and quite unconsciously she caught hold of his lean, strong, brown hand. It would not be true to say that he was unconscious of the act.

Presently they entered the paved streets of the bazaar, and the going improved. Kathlyn leaned back. "I am Kathlyn Hare, and this is the year."

"Come now, Miss Kathlyn, no thinking; leave the whole business to me, the worry and the planning. If we can reach my elephants, all right; we'll be in Delhi within seven days. The rest of the going will be as simple as falling off a log."

That Yankee phrase did more to re-habilitate her than all his assurances.

From time to time Bruce stole a glance through the curtained window. Stragglers were hastening along close to the walls, and there were soldiers who had forgotten to bring their guns from the elephant arena. Once he heard the clatter of hoofs. A horseman ran alongside the gharrri, slowed up, peered down, and shrugged. Kathlyn shrank toward Bruce. The rider proceeded on his way. Ahmed recognized him as the ambassador from the neighboring principality, ruled by a Kumor, who was in turn ruled by the British Raj. Kathlyn could not shut out the look on his face.

By mid-afternoon the gharrri reached

the cold would awaken her, and she greeted Kathlyn with delight. All their troubles were over. They had but to mount the elephants and ride away.

"Ahmed," urged Kathlyn: "Leave the gharrri and come with us." "Let us be off," cried Bruce. "We have sixty miles to put between us and freedom in fact. We cannot make the railway. All, pack! Go to the bungalow and remain there. You will be questioned. Tell the truth."

"Surely! I kept forgetting that it's ten to one you know more about game than I do."

Silence fell upon them again. On, without pausing. Bruce was getting sleepy himself, so he began munching biscuits. Lighter and lighter grew the east; the moon dimmed, and by and by everything grew gray and the chill in the air seemed sharpest yet.

They were both awake. Sun-up they stopped by a stream

and, and a long, plowed field opened into view. Beyond this field rose a ruined wall, broken by a crumbling gate, and lounging in the gateway were soldiers. Nearby were two elephants employed in piling logs.

Rajah, perforce, slackened his gait. The soldiers became animated. Immediately the two mahouts charged their brutes toward Rajah, who stopped. He had had his sport. He swayed to an fro. One of the mahouts reached forward and clouted Rajah on the knee. He slowly knelt. The soldiers ran forward to help Kathlyn out of the howdah. At the sight of her skin their astonishment was great.

She was very weak and faint, and the increasing babel of tongues was like little triphammers beating upon her aching head. One of the soldiers gave her a drink of water. He held his canteen high, so that the water trickled into her mouth; no lips but his own must touch the nozzle, otherwise, being a Brahmin, he would be defiled. Natives instantly flocked about, jabbering in wonder. Some of the holder touched her bare arms. The soldiers drove them back angrily. Through the press a horseman pushed forward. The rider started at the strange captive, started, and uttered an astonished cry.

"The white queen of Allah, whom mine own eyes saw crowned at the Durbar there!" he murmured. "By the shroud of the prophet, what can this mean? Stop!" he called to the soldiers. Kathlyn looked duly. "Convey her to his highness the Kumor!" The prince should decide what should be done with her.

The Kumor was big and lazy and sensual. He gazed upon Kathlyn with eyes which sparkled evilly, like a cat's.

"Who is this woman?" he demanded. "Highness, she is the white queen of Allah, but who may say that she is here?" with a smile as evil as his master's.

"But how came she here?" The horseman briefly recounted the events as he had seen them in the capital of Allah.

"Who are you, maiden?" the Kumor asked in English, for, like all potentates, little or great, in India, he spoke English. It presented the delectable pastime of conspiring in two languages: for, from Bombay in two Calcutta, from Peshawar to Madras, India seethes, conspires, and takes an occasional pot shot at some poor devil of a commissioner whose only desire is to have them combine religion and sanitation.

"I am an American. Please take me to the English commissioner." Somehow inst not told her that she might not expect succor from this man with the pearls about his gross neck.

"I regret that his excellency the commissioner has gone to Bombay. Besides, I do not know that you tell the truth. Still, I can offer you what pearls and emeralds you may find to your liking."

"Your highness, there are those whose coming shortly will cause you much annoyance if you refuse to give me proper aid. There is no possible way for you to cover up my appearance here. Send me to the commissioner's bungalow, where I may wait the coming of my friends."

"Indeed!" The Kumor saw here a conflict not altogether to his liking. He was lazy, and there was the damnable, unrelenting hand of the British Raj looming in the distance. He shrugged. "Achmet, call the captain of the guard and have him convey this runaway queen to Allahabad. Surely, I may not meddle with the affairs of a friendly state." With a wave his fat, bejeweled hand he appeared to dismiss the matter from his mind.

Kathlyn was led away. The human mind can stand only so many shocks. Outside the palace courtyard stood Rajah, the howdah securely attached once more. Kathlyn was bidden to mount. A water pottle and some cakes were placed in the howdah beside her. Then a drunken mahout mounted behind Rajah's ears. The elephant did not like the feel of the man's legs, and he began to sway ominously. Nevertheless, her permitted the mahout to direct him to one of the city gates the soldiers trooping along side.

It appeared that there was a much shorter route to Allahabad. Time being essential, Bruce had had to make for the frontier blindly, as it were. The regular highway was a moderately decent road which led along the banks of one of those streams which eventually join the sacred Jumna. This, of course, was also sacred. Many Hindus were bathing in the stream. They passed by these and presently came upon a funeral pyre. Sometimes one sleeps with one's

end, and a long, plowed field opened into view. Beyond this field rose a ruined wall, broken by a crumbling gate, and lounging in the gateway were soldiers. Nearby were two elephants employed in piling logs.

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THE ELEPHANTS STARTED FORWARD, THAT RIDDEN BY BRUCE AND KATHLYN IN THE LEAD.



The Elephants Started Forward, That Ridden by Bruce and Kathlyn in the Lead.

them quickly of the menace. Years not mind his beating at all. What ever his idea was, he evidently posted to see it fulfilled. Cunningly he dashed under some branches, sweeping the mahout off his neck. The season opened and you never could get within a mile of them. "That is true. I have fished and hunted with father."

they had been adjusted around the huge barrel.

Bruce stood up, appalled. For a time he was incapable of movement. Short as the time was, it was enough to give Rajah such headway as he needed. He disappeared from sight. Bruce saw the futility of shooting at the beast. The only thing he could do was to mount up beside Ramabai and Pundita and give chase; and this he did in short order, dragging up the bruised and shak-

en mahout with him. The pursuing elephant, with this extra handicapper, never brought Rajah into sight. But the trail was clear, and they followed along the banks. A tiger, a leopard, some apes, and a herd of antelope had been down to drink during the night. Even as he looked a huge gray ape came bounding out, head on toward Rajah, who despised these foolish beasts. Perhaps the old elephant missed Ali, perhaps he was still somewhat upset by his failure to join the wild brothers the night before at any rate without warning, he set off with that shuffling gait which sometimes carried him as swiftly as a horse. An elephant never trots nor really runs according to our conception of the terms; he shuffles, scarcely lifting his feet off the ground.

The mahout yelled and belabored the elephant on the skull. Rajah did

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