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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 distress in Allah, a principality of India. The King of Allah has recently died, and because the Colonel had once saved his life he names him as his successor. Umballah, pretender to the throne of Allah, loves Kathlyn and has forged a message summoning her to her father, whom he has thrown into prison. She leaves her home in California to go to him.

On her arrival in Allah 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 forthwith. Her refusal infuriates him, but as Kathlyn's beauty and spirit have made a strong appeal to the people he yields the joint for the time being. A priest announces that no woman may rule unmarryed with the law of the state, she will be given seven days to decide.

When Kathlyn reiterates 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.

Through the pluck and resourcefulness of John Bruce, an American and fellow passenger on the boat which brought Kathlyn to Allah, and who has come to her assistance, she escapes unharmed from two ordeals. With Bruce she flees from Allah. The elephant which carries her becomes frightened and runs away, separating her from Bruce and the rest of the party.

After a ride filled with peril she takes refuge in a ruined temple. The holy men and villagers, believing her to be an ancient priestess risen from the tomb, allow her to remain as the guardian of the sacred fire. But Kathlyn's haven is also the abode of a lion, and she is forced to fly from it with the savage beast in pursuit. She escapes and finds a retreat in the jungle, only to fall into the hands of a band of slave traders.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SLAVE MARKET.

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Having decided upon the late of Kathlyn the natives set about recapturing the wild elephant. It took the best part of the morning. When this was accomplished the journey to Allah was begun. But for the days of peace and quietness of the wilderness and the consequent hardness of her flesh, Kathlyn would have suffered greatly. Half the time she was compelled to walk. There were no hounds, and it was a difficult feat to sit back of the mahout. The rough skin of the elephant had the same effect upon the calves of her legs that sandpaper would have had. Sometimes she stumbled and fell, and was rudely jerked to her feet. Only the day before they arrived was she relieved in any way; she was given a litter, and in this manner she entered the hateful city.

In giving her the litter the chief mahout had been inspired by no expression of pity; simply they desired her to appear fresh and attractive when they carried her into the slave mart.

In fitful dreams all that had happened came back to her—the story her father had told about saving the old king's life, and the grim, ironical gratitude in making Col. Hare his heir—as if such a thing could be! And then her own journey to Allah; the nightmarish durbar during which she had been crowned; the escape from the ordeals with John Bruce; the terrors of the temple of the sun; and flight from there. . . John Bruce she could still see the fire in his eyes; she could still feel the touch of his gentle yet tireless hand. Would she ever see him again?

On the way to the mart they passed under the shadow of the grim prison walls of the palace. The elephant veered off here into a side street, toward a huge square where horses and cattle and elephants were bought and sold. The litter, in charge of the chief mahout proceeded to the slave mart. Kathlyn glanced at the wall wondering: Was her father alive? Was he in some bleak cell behind that crumbling masonry? Did he know that she was here? Or was he really dead? Ah, perhaps it was better that death should have taken him—better that than having his living heart wrung by the tale of his daughter's unspeakable miseries.

Even as she sent a last lingering look at the prison and prisoner within, his head buried in his thin, wast-

ed hands, beheld her in a vision—but the happy, joyous vision, bustling about the living room of the bungalow.

And far away a younger man beheld a vision as very tenderly he gazed at Kathlyn's discarded robe, and resumed his determined quest. Often, standing beyond his evening fires, he would ask the silence, "Kathlyn where are you?" Even then he was riding fast toward Allah.

A slave mart is a rare thing these days, but at the time these scenes were being enacted there existed many of them here and there across the face of the globe. Men buy and sell men and women these times—enlightened, so they say—but they do it by legal contract or from vile hiding places.

Allaha had been a famous mart in its prime. It had drawn the agents of princes from all India, Persia, Beloochistan, Afghanistan, and even southern Russia had been rifled of their beauties to adorn the zenanas of the slothful Hindu princes.

Here the slaves were exhibited, the of Allah stood in the centre of the with a roof, but open on all sides. A bazaar, a great square platform or things intended for dalliance

She understood. Outwardly she appeared passive enough, but her soul was on fire and her eyes a brilliant as those of the circling, swooping kites, watching for that moment which was to offer some loophole. On through the noisy bazaars, the object of many a curious remark, sometimes insulted by the painted women at the windows, sometimes jested by the idlers around the merchants' booths. Vaguely she wondered if some one of her ancestors had not been terribly wicked and that she was paying the penalty.

It seemed to her, however, that a film of steel had grown over her nerves; nothing startled her; she sensed only the watchfulness she had often noted in the captivities at the farm. At length they came out into the busy mart. The old mahout congratulated himself upon the docility of his find. It would stiffen the bidding to announce that she was general. He even went so far as to pat her on the shoulders. The steel film did not cover all her nerves, so it would seem; the patted shoulder was vulnerable. She winced, for she read clearly enough what was in the mind back of that touch.

She had made her plans. To the man who had chased her, she would assume a meekness of spirit in order and torture could not wring the bidding place from him. May he be damned to the nethermost hell! Let him Durga Ram, but bury his lean hands in that treasure, and Naraka swallow Allah and all its kings. Rubies and pearls and emeralds and a far country to idle in, to be feted in to be fawned upon for his riches!

And Ramabai and his wife, Punagata, let them remain wisely in their house and meddle not with affairs of state. "A thousand rupees!" Umballah looked up with a start. Unconsciously that he wandered into the slave mart. He shrugged and would have passed on but for the strange, unusual figure standing on the platform. A golden haired woman with neck and arms like Chinese bronze and dressed in a skirt of grass! He paused.

"Two thousand rupees!" "What?" jeered the professional seller. "For an hour from Paradise? O, ye of weak hearts, what is this I hear? Two thousand rupees—for an hour fit to dwell in the zenana of heaven!"

A keen eyed Mohammedan edged closer to the platform. He stared and sucked in his breath. He found himself pulled two ways. He had no money, but he had knowledge. "Who sells this maiden?" he asked.

"Mahomed Ghori." "Which is he?" "He squats there." The Mohammedan stopped and touched the old mahout on the shoulder. "Call off this and my master will you rich."

The old sinner gingerly felt of the speaker's cotton garb. "Ah! My master must be rich to dress thee in

cotton. Where is your gold? Bid," and twinkling.

Fate overtook All, who in his mad race to Hare's camp fell and badly sprained his ankle. Morning, less from the pain than from the attendant helplessness, he was carried into the hut of a kindly ryot and there ministered to.

The Brahmin, however, filled with greed and a sly humor, reached his destination in safety. Naturally cunning, double tongued, sly, ingratiating, after the manner of all Brahmins, who will sink to any base level in order to attain their equivocal ends, his actions were unhampered by any sense of treachery toward Umballah. A Thugge's twist to the schemes of the street rat Umballah, who wore the Brahmin string, to which he had no right! The Brahmin chuckled as he paused at the edge of Bruce's camp. A lat purlie lay yonder. He approached, his outward demeanor a mixture of pride and humility.

Bruce had returned but half an hour before, mind weary, bone tired. He sat with his head in his hands, his elbows propped upon his knees. His yam heart was heavy. He had searched the bewildering jungle as one might search a plot of grass before one's door, blade by blade. A hundred times he had found traces of

"Three thousand rupees!" "The old mahout purged and smooched his palms together. Three thousand rupees, a rajah's ransom! He would own his elephant; his wife should wear shoes. Three thousand rupees! He folded his arms and walked gently to and fro.

"Five thousand rupees!" said Umballah, impelled by he knew not

what to make this bid. A ripple of surprise ran over the crowd. The regret, the powerful Durga Ram, was bidding in person for his zenana.

Kathlyn's nerves tingled with life again, and the sudden bounding of her heart stifled her. Umballah! She was surely lost. Sooner or later he would recognize her.

The mahout stood up, delighted. He was indeed fortunate. He salaamed. "Huzoor, she is gentle," he said. "The high-caste who had bid 3,000 rupees salaamed also.

"Hithness she is yours," he said. "I cannot bid against my regent." "It was the custom to mark purchased slave with the caste of her purchase. Umballah, still not recognizing her, waved her aside toward the Brahmin caste markers, one of whom daubed her forehead with a yellow triangle. Her blue eyes pierced the curious brown ones.

"The sahib at the river," she whispered in broken Hindustani. "Many rupees, bring him to the house of Durga Ram." This in case All failed.

The Brahmin's eyes twinkled. Her Hindustani was execrable, but "sahib" and "river" were plain to his understanding. There was but one sahib by the river, and he was the white hunter who had rescued the vanished queen from the ordeals. He nodded almost imperceptibly. In giving the haughty upstart a Thugge's twist. He spoke to his neighbor quietly, assigned to him his bows and brushes, rose, and made

"Follow us," said Umballah to the happy mahout. Presently he would have his bags of silver, bright

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done any good?" Bruce took out his wallet and counted out a thousand rupees in Bank of India notes. "Now, listen. Umballah must not know that I know. On your head, remember."

"Huzoor, the word of a Brahmin." "Ah, yes; but I have lived long here. Where is All?" cried Bruce, turning to one of his men. "He went into the city this morning, sahib, and has not returned."

"Come," said Bruce to the waiting Brahmin, "we'll return together." He now felt no excitement at all; it was as if he had been immersed in ice water. It was Kathlyn, not the least doubt of it, bought and sold in the slave mart. Misery, degradation. . . then he smiled. He knew Kathlyn Hare. If he did not come to her aid quickly she would be dead.

Now, when Umballah took her into his house, Kathlyn was determined to reveal her identity. She had passed through the ordeals; she had law, a queen with life and death in her hands.

"Do not touch me!" she cried lowly in English. Umballah stepped back.

"I am Kathlyn Hare, and if all the world is not made up of lies and wickedness, I am the queen you yourself made. I can speak a few words, enough to make myself known to the populace. I will make a bargain with you. I will give you five times five thousand rupees if you will deliver me safely in Peshawar. On my part I promise to say nothing, nothing!"

Umballah raised both his hands in astonishment. He knew not why that form had stirred his recollection. "You!" He laughed and clapped his hands to summon his servants. Kathlyn, realizing that it was useless to attempt to move this man, turned and started to run, but he intercepted her. "My queen, my bride that was to be, the golden hour! Five times five thousand rupees would not purchase a hair on your head. "I am your queen!" But she said it without heart.

"What! Do you believe that? Having passed the ordeals, you nullified the effect by running away. You will be whatever I choose! O, it will be legally done. You shall go with me to the council, and the four of us shall decide. Ah, you would not be my wife!"

"You shall die, Durga Ram," she replied, "and it will be the death of a pariah dog."

"Ah! Still that spirit which I loved. Why, did I not buy you without knowing who you were? Are you not mine? At this very moment I could place you in my zenana and you would ever know? And soon you would not want anyone to know."

"Are you without mercy?" "Mercy? I know not the word. But I have an ambition which surpasses all other things. My wife you shall be, or worse. But legally, always legally!" He laughed again and swiftly caught her in his arms. She struggled like a tigress, but without avail. He covered her face and neck with kisses, then thrust her aside. "Poor little fool! If you had whined and whimpered I should have let you go long since. But these horns within you a spirit I must conquer, and conquer I will!"

Kathlyn stood panting against a pillar. Had she held a weapon in her hand she would have killed him without compunction, as one crushes a poisonous viper.

"Legally! Why, all the crimes in Hind are done under that word. It is the shibboleth of the British Raj. Legally! Come."

"I will not stir!" "Then be carried," he replied, beckoning his servants. "No, no!" "Ah! Well, then, we'll ride together in the palanquin."

To struggle would reward her with nothing but shame and humiliation; so she bent her head to the inevitable. A passionate longing to be revenged upon this man began to consume her. She wanted to beat him down to his knees, to twist and crush him. But she was a woman and she had not the strength of a man.

"Behold!" cried Umballah later, as he entered the presence of the council, "behold a slave of mine!" He pushed her forward. "This day I bought her for five thousand rupees."

The council stirred nervously. "Do you not recognize her?" exultantly. "The council whispered to one another. "Legally she is mine, though she has been a queen. But by running away she has forfeited her rights to the law of the ordeals. Am I not right?"

The council nodded gravely. They had not yet wholly recovered from the bewilderment.

"On the other hand, her identity must remain a secret till I develop my plans," continued Umballah. "You are all courting a terrible reprisal," said Kathlyn. "I beg of you to kill me at once; do not prolong

(Continued on page three.)



"HALF THE TIME SHE WAS COMPELLED TO WALK."

SEE THESE SENSATIONAL PICTURES AT THE PEOPLES THEATRE