

# THE ADVENTURES OF KATHLYN

## By HAROLD MAC GRATH.

### SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS.

Kathlyn Hare, believing her father, Col. Hare, in peril, has summoned her, leaves her home in California to go to him in Allah, India. Umballah pretender to the throne of that principality, has imprisoned the colonel, named by the late king as his heir, because he fears the American may insist on his royal rights. Upon her arrival in Allah, Kathlyn is informed by Umballah that her father being dead, she is to be queen, and must marry him forthwith. Because of her refusal she is sentenced to undergo two ordeals with wild beasts.

John Bruce, an American and fellow passenger on the boat which brought Kathlyn to Allah, saves her life. The elephant which carries her from the scene of her trials 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, rises from the tomb, allow her to remain as the guardian of the sacred fire. But Kathlyn's navel is also the abode of a lion, and she is forced to flee 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, who bring her to Allah to the public mart. She is sold to Umballah, who, finding her still unsubmitive, throws her into the dungeon with her father.

Bruce and his friends effect the escape of Kathlyn and the colonel. Umballah's attempt to recapture them is unsuccessful, and the fugitives are given shelter in the palace of Bala Khan.

Supplied with camels and servants by that hospitable prince, the party endeavors to reach the coast, but, are overpowered by a band of brigands, and the encounter results in the colonel being delivered to Umballah. Kathlyn and Bruce escape from their captors and return to Allah, where Kathlyn learns that her father, while nominally king, is in reality a prisoner.

Kathlyn's resourcefulness and bravery are the means of rescuing him, and once more they steal away from Allah, but return broken hearted when they learn that Winnie, Kathlyn's young sister, has come to India. Umballah makes her a prisoner. She is forced to enter the palace and in turn is crowned queen of Allah.

Kathlyn, disguised as a woman doctor, succeeds in gaining admittance to Winnie's room. The joy of the sisters in the meeting is short lived, for Umballah appears and drags Kathlyn from Winnie's arms.

He orders that Kathlyn be offered as a sacrifice to the god Juggernaut. She is bound and placed in the path of the six wheeled car, but the news is carried to the colonel and his friends and they are enabled to frustrate Umballah's fiendish designs.

(Copyright, 1914, By Harold Mac Grath.)

### CHAPTER XVIII.

WHILE Bruce and two of his men carried Kathlyn out of harm's way to the shelter of the underbrush, where he liberated her, Ahmed, soldier over the brow of the hill. Umballah could be distinguished by his robes and turban, but in the moonlight Ahmed and his followers were all of a color, like cats in the dark. With mad joy in his heart Ahmed could not resist propelling the furious regent downhill, using the butt of his rifle and pretending he did not know who it was he was treating with these indignities. And Umballah could not tell who his assailant was because he was given no opportunity to turn.

"Soor!" Ahmed shouted. "Swine! Take that, and that, and that!"

Stumbling on, Umballah cried out in pain; but he did not ask for mercy.

"Soor! Tell your master, Durga Ram, how bites this gun butt as I shall tell mine the pleasure it gives me to administer it. Swine! Ha, you stumble! Up with you!"

Batter and bang! Doubtless Ahmed would have prolonged this delightful entertainment to the very steps of the palace, but a full troop of soldiers appeared at the foot of the hill, and Ahmed saw that it was now his turn to take to his heels.

"Swine!" with a parting blow which sent Umballah to his knees, "tell your master that if he harms the little Mem-Sahib in the palace he shall die! Let him remember the warnings that he has received, and let him not forget what a certain dungeon holds!"

Umballah staggered to his feet, his sight blinded with tears of pain. He was sober enough now, and Ahmed's final words rang in his ears like a cluster of bells. "What a certain dungeon holds!" Stumbling down the hill, urged by Ahmed's blows, only one thought occupied his mind; to wreak his vengeance for these indignities upon an innocent girl. But now a new fear entered his craven soul, craven as all cruel souls are. Some one knew!

He fell into the arms of his troopers and they carried him to a litter, thence to the palace. His back was covered with bruises, and but for the thickness of his cummerbund he must have died under the beating, which had been thorough and masterly.

"What a certain dungeon holds!" In his chamber Umballah called for his peg of brandy and champagne, which for some reason did not take hold as usual. For the first time in his life Durga Ram, so-called Umballah, knew what agony was. But did it cause him to think with pity of the agonies he had caused them? Not in the least.

When Ahmed rejoined his people, Kathlyn was leaning against her father's shoulder, smiling wanly.

"Where is Umballah?" cried Bruce, seizing Ahmed by the arm.

"On the way to the palace!" Ahmed laughed and told when he had accomplished.

Bruce raised his hands in anger.

"But, Sahib!" began Ahmed, not comprehending.

"And, having him in your hands, you let him go!" Ahmed stood dumfounded. His jaw sagged, his rifle slipped from his hands and fell with a clank at his feet.

"You are right, Sahib. I am an unthinking fool. May Allah forgive me!"

"We could have held him a hostage, and tomorrow morning we all could have left Allah free and unhindered! God forgive you, Ahmed for not thinking!"

In the heat of battle, Sahib, one does not always think of the morrow." But Ahmed's head fell and his chin touched his breast. That he, Ahmed, of the secret service, should let spite overshadowed forethought and to be called to account for it! He was disgraced.

"Never mind, Ahmed," said Kathlyn kindly. "What is done is done. We must find safety. We shall have to hide in the jungle tonight. And there is my

sister. You should have thought, Ahmed." "Umballah will not harm a hair in her head," replied Ahmed, lifting his head.

"Your work has filled his heart with venom," declared Bruce hotly.

"What do you mean?" demanded the Colonel.

"Ask Ramabal. Perhaps he will tell you."

"That," returned Ramabal, "is of less importance at this moment than the method to be used in liberating the daughter of Colonel Sahib. Listen. The people are angry because they were not permitted to be present at the sacrifice to Juggernaut. To pacify them Umballah will have to invent some amusement in the arena."

"But how will that aid us?" interrupted the Colonel.

"Let us say, an exhibition of wild animals, with their trainers."

"Trainers?"

"Yes. You Colonel Sahib, and you, Kathlyn Mem-Sahib, and you, Bruce Sahib, will without difficulty act the parts."

"Good!" said Ahmed bitterly. "The three of them will rush into the royal box, seize Winnie Mem-Sahib, and carry her off from under the very noses of Umballah, the Council, and the soldiers."

"My friend Ahmed is bitter," said Ramabal patiently.

"Al, al! I had Umballah in my hands and let him go! Pardon me, Ramabal; I am indeed bitter."

"But who will suggest this animal scheme to Um-

"You are right, Ramabal. So then we have wigs and beards. Go on." He was sitting cross legged and rocking back and forth.

"After the tricks are done Kathlyn Mem-Sahib will throw aside her veil and stand revealed, to Umballah, to the Council, to the populace."

Bruce jumped to his feet.

"Be patient, Bruce Sahib," reproved Ramabal. "I am not yet done."

Bruce sat down again, and Kathlyn stole a glance at his lean, unhappy face. How she longed to touch it, to smooth away the lines of care! The old camaraderie was gone; there seemed to be some invisible barrier between them now.

"She will discover herself, then," proceeded Ramabal. "Umballah will at once start to order her capture, when she shall stay him by crying that she is willing to face the arena lions. Remember, there will be a trap and a tunnel."

"And outside?" said Ahmed, still doubting.

"There will be soldiers, my men. But they will act that moment be elsewhere."

"If you have soldiers, then, why not slip them into the palace and have them take the young Mem-Sahib by force?"

"My men are not permitted to enter the palace, Ahmed. Umballah is afraid of them. To go on she will join her sister, to prove that she is no less brave."

"But the lions!"—from Bruce. From his point of

free, I will make him free also. Young men are my followers, and in the blood of the young there is much heat. My plan may appear to you weak and only chance."

"Well, Ramabal, we will try your plan, though I do so half heartedly. So many times have we escaped, only to be brought back. I am tired, in the heart, in the mind, in the body. I want to lie down somewhere and sleep for days."

Kathlyn reached out, touched his hand, and patted it. She knew. The pain and terror in his heart were not born of his own miseries, but of theirs, hers and Winnie's.

"Why doesn't my brain snap?" she queried inwardly. "Why doesn't the thread break? Why can't I cry and laugh and grow hysterical like other women?"

"I shall take charge of everything," continued Ramabal. "Your tribulations affect my own honor. None of you must be seen, however; not even you, Ahmed. I shall keep you informed. Ahmed will instruct the keepers to obey me. No harm will come to them, since no one can identify them as having been Umballah's assailants. My wife will not be molested in any way for remaining at the bungalow."

Without another word Ramabal curled himself up and went to sleep; and one by one the others followed his example. Bruce was last to close his eyes. He glanced moodily round, noted the guards patrolling the boundaries of their secluded camp, the mahout sleeping in the shadow of the elephant; and then he looked down at Kathlyn. Only a bit of her forehead was exposed. One brown, shapely hand clutched the howdah blanket. A patch of moonshine touched her temple. Slightly he stooped and laid a kiss upon the hand, then crept over to Ahmed and lay down with his back to the Mohammedan's.

After awhile the hand clutched the howdah blanket slid under and finally nestled beneath the owner's chin.

But Winnie could not sleep. Every sound brought her to an upright position; and tonight the palace seemed charged with mysterious noises. The muttering of the cockatoo, the tinkle of the fountain as the water fell into the basin, the scrape and slither of sandals beyond the lattice partitions, the rattle of a gun butt somewhere in the outer corridors—these sounds she heard. Once she thought she heard the sputter of rifle shots afar, but she was not sure.

Kit, beautiful Kit! O, they would not, could not let her die! And she had come into this land with her mind axled with fairy stories!

One of the leopards in the treasury corridors roared; and Winnie crouched into her cushions. What were they going to do to her? For she understood perfectly that she was only a prisoner and that the crown meant nothing at all so far as authority was concerned. She was the veriest puppet. What with Ahmed's disclosures and Kathlyn's advice she knew that she was nothing more than a helpless pawn in this oriental game of chess. At any moment she might be removed from the board.

She became tense again. She heard the slip-slip of sandals in the corridor, a key turn in the lock. The door opened, and in the dim light she saw Umballah.

He stood by the door, silently contemplating

ed her she must scream.

"Keep that word. Your father and sister are fools."

Winnie trembled. They were alive, Kit and her father; this man had lied. Alive! O, she would not be afraid of any ordeal now. They were alive, and more than that, they were free.

"I will keep my word when the time comes," she replied clearly.

"They are calling me Durga Ram the Mad, Be aware, then, for madness do mad things."

The door opened and shut behind him, and she heard the key turn and the outside bolt click into its socket.

They were alive and free, her loved ones! She knelt upon the cushions, her eyes uplifted.

Alone, with a torch in his shaking hand, Umballah went down into the prison, to the row of dungeons. In the door of one was a sliding panel. He pulled this back and peered within. Something lay huddled in a corner. He threw the panel back into its place, climbed the worn steps, extinguished the torch, and proceeded to his own home, a gift of his former master, standing just outside the royal confines. Once there, he had slaves anoint his bruised back and shoulders with unguents, ordered his peg, drank it, and lay down to sleep.

On the morrow he was somewhat daintied upon meeting Ramabal in the corridor leading to the throneroom, where Winnie and the Council were gathered. He started to summon the guards, but the impassive face of his enemy and the menacing hand stayed the call.

"You are a brave man, Ramabal, to enter the lion's den in this fashion. You shall never leave here alive."

Yes, Durga Ram. I shall depart as I came, a free man."

"You talk like that to me?" furiously.

"Even so. Shall I go out on the balcony and declare that I know what a certain dungeon holds?" Umballah's fury vanished, and sweat oozed from his palms.

"You?"

"Yes. I know. A truce! The people are muttering and murmuring against you because they were forbidden to attend your especial Juggernaut. Beat for both of us that they be quieted and amused."

"Ramabal, you shall never wear the crown."

"I do not want it."

"Nor shall your wife."

Ramabal did not speak.

"You shall die first!"

"Far or peace?" asked Ramabal.

"War!"

"So be it. I shall proceed to strike the first blow."

Ramabal turned and began to walk toward the window opening out upon the balcony; but Umballah bounded after him, realizing that Ramabal would do as he threatened, declare from the balcony what he knew.

"Wait! A truce for forty-eight hours."

"Agreed. I have a proposition to make before you and the Council. Let us go in."

Before the Council (started as had Umballah had at Ramabal's appearance) he explained his plan for the pacification and amusement of the people. Umballah tried to find flaws in it; but his brain, befuddled by numerous pegs and disappointments, saw nothing. And when Ramabal produced his troupe of wild animal trainers not even Winnie recognized them. But during the argument between Umballah and the Council as to the date of the festivities Kathlyn raised the corner of her veil. It was enough for Winnie. In the last few days she had learned self-control; and there was scarcely a sign that she saw Kit and her father, and they had the courage to come here in their efforts to rescue her!

It was finally arranged to give the exhibition the next day, and messengers were dispatched forthwith to notify the city and the bazaars. A dozen times Umballah eyed Ramabal's back, murder in his mind and fear in his heart. Blind fool that he had been not to have seen this man in his true light and killed him. Now, if he hired assassins, he could not trust them; his purse was again empty.

Ramabal must have felt the gaze, for once he turned and caught the eye of Umballah, approached and whispered: "Durga Ram, wherever I go I am followed by watchers who would die for me. Do not waste your money on hired assassins."

As the so-called animal trainers were departing Kathlyn managed to get at Winnie's feet a little ball of paper which the young sister maneuvered to secure without being observed. She was advised to have no fear of the lions in the arena, to be ready to join Kathlyn in the arena when she signified the moment. Winnie would have entered a den of tigers had Kathlyn so advised her.

Matters came to pass as Ramabal had planned; the night work in the arena, the clearing of the tunnel, the making of the trap, the perfecting of all the details of escape. Ahmed would be given charge of the exit, Lal Singh of the road, and All (Bruce's man) would arrange that outside the city there should be no barriers. All because Ramabal thought more of his conscience than of his ambitions for Pundita.

And when, late in the afternoon, the exhibition was over, Kathlyn stepped upon the trap, threw aside her veil, and revealed herself to the spectators. For all her darkened skin she recognized her, and a deep murmur ran round the arena. Kathlyn, knowing how volatile the people were, extended her hand toward the royal box. When the murmur died away she spoke in Hindustani:

"I will face the arena of lions!"

The murmur rose again, gaining such volume that they became roars, which the disturbed beasts took up and augmented.

Again Kathlyn made a sign for silence, and added: "Provide my sister stands at my side!"

To this Umballah said no. The multitudes shouted defiance. In the arena they were masters, even as the populace in the old days of Rome were masters of their emperors.

Winnie, comprehending that this was her cue, stepped forward in the box and signified by gesture that she would join her sister.

The roaring began again, but this time it had the quality of cheers again. A real spectacle! To face the savage African lions unarmed! A fine spectacle!

Winnie was lowered from the box, and as her feet touched the ground she ran quickly to Kathlyn's side.

"Winnie, I am standing on a trap. When it sinks be not alarmed."

"My Kit!" cried Winnie, squeezing her adored sister's hand.

The arena was cleared, and the door to the lions' dens were opened. The great, maned African lion stood for a moment blinking in the sunshine. One of them roared out his displeasure, and saw the two women. Then all of them loped toward what they supposed were to be their victims.

That night in the bazaars they said that Umballah was warning in the face of the gods. The erstwhile white queen of the yellow hair was truly a great magician. For did she not cause the earth to open up and swallow her sister and herself!

(Continued next Saturday.)



After returning to camp they discussed Ramabal's plan to free Winnie.

ballah?" inquired Bruce.

"I," Ramabal saluted.

"You will walk into the lion's den?"

"The jackal's," Ramabal corrected.

"God help me! If I only had a few men!" groaned the Colonel, raising his hands to heaven.

"You will be throwing away your life uselessly, Ramabal," said Kathlyn.

"No Umballah and I will understand each other completely."

"Ramabal," put in Ahmed, with his singular smile, do you want a crime?"

"For myself? No again. For my wife? That is a different matter."

"And the man in the dungeon?" ironically.

Ramabal suddenly faced the moon and stared long and silently at the brilliant planet. In his mind there was conflict, war between right and ambition. He seemed to have forgotten those about him, waiting anxiously for him to speak.

"Ramabal," said Ahmed craftily, "at a word from you a thousand armed men will spring into existence and within twelve hours set Pundita on your throne. Why do you hesitate to give the sign?"

Ramabal wheeled quickly.

"Ahmed, silence! I am yet an honorable man. You know and I know how far I may go. Trifle with me no more."

Ahmed salaamed deeply.

"Think not badly of me, Ramabal; but I am a man of action, and it galls me to wait."

"Are you wholly unselfish?"

It was Ahmed's turn to address mute inquiries to the moon.

"What is all this palaver about?" Bruce came in between the two men impatiently.

"God knows!" murmured the Colonel. "One thing I know, if we stand here much longer we'll all spend the rest of the night in prison."

There was wisdom in this. They marched away at once, following the path of the elephant and the loyal keepers. There was no pursuit. Soldiers with purses filled with promises are not over eager to face skilled marksmen. The Colonel and his followers, not being aware of this indecision, proposed camping in the first spot which afforded protection from the chill of night, not daring to make for the bungalow, certain that it was being watched. In this they were wise, for a cordon of soldiers (with something beside promises in their purses) surrounded the camp on the chance that its owner might hazard a return.

"Now, Ramabal, what is your plan?" asked the Colonel, as he wrapped Kathlyn in the howdah blanket. "We are to pose as animal trainers. Good. What next?"

"A trap and a tunnel."

"Ah!"

"There used to be one. A part of it caved in four or five years ago. It can be reexcavated in a night. The men who do that shall be my own. Your animals will be used. To Kathlyn Mem-Sahib your pet leopards will be as play fellows. She has the eye, and the voice, and the touch. She shall be veiled to her eyes, with a bit of ochre on her forehead. Who will recognize her?"

"The sight of you, Ramabal, will cause him to suspect."

"That remains in the air. There must be luck in it."

"If Umballah can be lured to drink his pegs?" Then, with an impatient gesture, Ahmed added: "Folly! What! Umballah and the Council will not recognize the Colonel Sahib's hair, the Mem-Sahib's golden hair?"

"In the go-down of Lal Singh, the cobbler, there are many things, even wigs and false beards," retorted Ramabal slyly.

Ahmed started, then laughed.



Winnie, comprehending that this was her cue, stepped forward to meet her sister.

view the plan was as absurd as it was impossible.

Ramabal, however, knew his people and Bruce did not.

"Always remember the trap and the tunnel, Bruce Sahib. At the entrance of the lions the trap will fall. Inside the tunnel will be the Colonel Sahib and Bruce Sahib. Outside will be Ahmed and the brave men he had with him this night. And all the road free to the gates!"

"Ah, for those thousand men!" sighed Ahmed. "I cannot forget them."

"Nor I the dungeon-keep," replied Ramabal. "I must go my own way. Of the right and wrong of it you are not concerned, Ahmed."

"By the Lord!" exclaimed the Colonel, getting up. "I begin to understand. He is alive, and they hold him there in a den, vile like mine was, Alive!"

Ramabal nodded, but Ahmed clapped his hands exultantly.

"Umballah did not put him there. It was the politics of the Council; and this is the sword, which Umballah holds over their heads. And if I summoned my thousand men, their zeal for me..."

"Pardon, Ramabal!" cried Ahmed contritely. "Pardon!"

"Ah! finally you understand?"

"Yes. You are not only a good man but a great one. If you gave the sign to your men there would be no one in yonder dungeon deep... alive!"

"They know, and I could not stay the tempest once I loosed it. There, that it all. That is the battle I have fought and won."

The Colonel reached down and offered his hand.

"Ramabal, you're a man!"

"Thanks, Sahib. And I tell you this: I love my people. I was born among them. They are simple and easily led. I wish to see them happy, but I cannot step over the dead body of one who was kind to me. And this I add: When you, my friends, are

her. "What a certain dungeon holds!" still eddied through the current of his thoughts. Money, money! He needed it; it was the only barrier between him and the end, which at last he began to see. Money, baskets and bags of it, and he dared not go near. May the fires of hell burn eternally in the bones of these greedy soldiers, his only hope!

His body ached; liquid fire seemed to have taken the place of blood in his veins. His back and shoulders were a mass of bruises. Beaten with a gun butt, driven harried, cursed—he, Durga Ram! A gun butt in the hands of a low caste! He had not only been beaten; he had been dishonored and defiled. His eyes flashed and his fingers closed convulsively, but he was sober. To take yonder harm a hair of her head!

"Your sister Kathlyn perished under the wheels of the car of Juggernaut."

Winnie did not stir. The aspect of the man fascinated her as the nearness of a cobra would have done. Vipers not only crawled in this terrible land; they walked. One stung with fangs and the other with words.

"She is dead, and tomorrow your father dies."

The dishevel appearance of the man did not in her eyes confirm this. Indeed, the longer she gazed at him the more strongly convinced she became that that he was lying. But wisely she maintained her silence.

"Dead," he repeated. "Winnie a week you shall be my wife. You know. They have told you. I want money, and by all the gods of Hind, yours shall be the hand to give it to me. Marry me, and one week after I will give you means of leaving Allah. Will you marry me?"

"Yes." The word slipped over Winnie's lips faintly. She recalled Ahmed's advice, to humor the man, to play for time; but she knew that if he touch-