A Child Wife

By EMILY B. PARKHURST

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The daughters of all good families in India must be married. It would be a public disgrace as well as a crime against the Hindoo religion for an Indian family of good rank to keep a daughter unmarried. Since it is difficult for their parents to find husbands for them the daughters are made away with. Those of high birth, called rajpoots, are put to death by men especially employed to do so. The British government having passed laws against these murders, the parents of those girls who have not found husbands have resorted to a method of marrying them in name, though not in fact. There are a number of Brahmans, old and decrepid, called Kulian Brahmans, who go about with the object of hiring themselves out to go through the ceremony of the "seven steps" with young girls upon being paid for doing so. After marriage they leave the country and never see their young wives again.

In Allahabad there lived one of these rajpoot men who had a daughter over twelve years old.

In the next house lived another family, in which there was one son, aged eighteen. The two children had been brought up together, and their childish friendship had grown into love. The parents of the youth were very proud of him and destined him to marry some girl who should be not only of high caste, but whose parents would be able to bestow on her great wealth.

One evening after it was dark he was walking in the compound (garden) about his father's house when he heard a low call from the compound of the next house. Going to the fence he descried the crouching figure of his sweetheart, evidently suffering from some great misfortune.

"What is it, dear girl?" he said, springing over the fence and taking her in his arms.

"I am to die."

"To die!"

"Yes. Today a man—a horrible looking man—came to the house and talked with my father. I had been told to go on an errand, doubtless that I should be away at the time and not hear what passed between my father and this man. But I had not yet gone. I have been suspecting that, not being married, I would soon be made away with in some fashion, though father and mother have tried to keep the awful knowledge from me. So when I saw this frightful creature come to the house I concealed myself behind a bamboo screen and heard every word."

She gave way to her feeling and was unable to proceed. Her lover kissed her again and again, begging her to tell him all.

"My father bargained with the man for a hundred rupees to strangle me."

"When, where?"

"Tomorrow night father is to take me out for a walk by the river, when this man is to come upon us suddenly as if to rob, seize me and after he has killed me throw my body into the river."

The agony of the youth was equal to that of the girl. Both knew that their separation and her death were not to be prevented. It would be of no avail for her to refuse to go to walk with her father or to try in any way to escape her fate. The young man dare not disobey the commands of his parents. Should he fly with the girl the sleuths of the Indian police would follow and surely capture them. They spent what time that remained for them together, not laying plans to prevent the calamity, but weeping in each other's arms. At last the girl heard her mother calling her, and after one clinging embrace she ran into the house.

The next afternoon an old man leaning heavily on his staff stopped at the house and asked for a bit of bread and a little wine. The girl, who was to die that night—knowing the secret, though her parents were not aware that she knew it—went to the cupboard by her father's order and brought the refreshment.

"Is your daughter married?" asked the visitor.

"No," replied her father. "We have no husband for her."

"But you cannot keep a girl like that longer. Our religion forbids."

"No," whispered the father; "we shall not keep her longer."

The look that accompanied the words was not lost on the old man.

"How much will you give me to marry her?"

"You are a Kulian?"

"I am."

"I will gladly give you your price if it be not too much."

"What say you to a hundred rupees?"

"I will give it gladly."

The girl was listening, and hope sprang up in her heart. She loitered near till she saw her father count out the money to the old man and then swooned.

When she came to herself she was told that she was to be married to the visitor. Death, which had been so near, seemed worse to her than living in separation from her lover, and she gladly went with her father and the old man that the ceremony should be performed. After it was ended the husband went away, and it was understood that he was never to return.

From that day the young lover was missed. Long after his love received from him the means to take her to America. He and the old husband were one.

Tragic Joking.

Oswald's friends were always on the lookout for some ruse. He once notified them that on New Year's day he should get the best of them all in some joke, and New Year's morning each received this notice, "Remember." They were on their guard.

As they were leaving a house where they had breakfasted Oswald slipped on the steps and fell on his back on the sidewalk. His friends rushed to his assistance, but paused before they reached him.

"This is his ruse," some one said.

Clearly the man who was so proud of his talent for mimicry was bent on deceiving them all into thinking him a dying man, for he lay there moaning pitifully, his face drawn and twisted as if with terrible pain.

His friends stood around and made jokes and puns and hummed lines of comic songs, assuring him all the while that they were not deceived by his acting. At last he gave a hoarse, mournful cry, looked at them sadly and then ceased to moan or writhe. In a never to be forgotten moment of horror and sorrow his friends realized that Oswald was dead.—"Souvenirs d'un Vieux Libraire."

Caught the Old Sailor.

It was a clever lawyer in a Boston court who took advantage of the nautical knowledge he possessed to work upon the mind of a juryman who did not seem to show much comprehension of a case of suing a street railway for damages.

The dull member was an old sailor, who, though doubtless very keen of perception along some lines, was nevertheless rather slow in his understanding of the points involved in the case being tried, says the New York Journal. The lawyer noticed this and made his strike with this particular man. Approaching the jury box, he addressed himself to this one juryman and said:

"Mr. Juryman, I will tell you how it happened. The plaintiff was in command of the outward bound open car and stood in her starboard channels. Along came the inward bound closed car, and just as their bows met she jumped the track, sheered to port and knocked the plaintiff off and ran over him."

The sailor was all attention after this version of the affair and joined in a $5,000 verdict for the injured man.

The Clinching Argument.

A young man representing a well known make of motorcar had called, discussed intelligently the points of the automobile he was endeavoring to sell, had given a flawless demonstration—

But the prospective amateur motorist before mortgaging his house still wanted to be thoroughly convinced, and so he said. "What you say about your car may be all right. The engine runs very nicely, and it looks good to me, but tell me one thing—have you ever sold any of these cars to your own personal friends?"

The salesman smiled. "Have I? Why, three months ago I was engaged to a girl, and I sold one of these identical cars to my prospective father-in-law!"

"Did you marry the girl?"

"Yes, indeed! I've now got the girl, a contented father-in-law and an enthusiastic customer as well."

He made the sale.—Life.

Mules and Kindness.

"In the fifteen years that I have been connected with societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals in this and other cities I never have received a complaint alleging cruelty to a mule," said the humane looking man. "That immunity of mules from harsh treatment is an interesting question. Why are they immune? There are plenty of mules, even in New York. Does nobody beat them? Does nobody underfeed them? If not, why not? Does a mule show such a decided ability for taking care of himself that his owner is afraid to abuse him, or do men beat mules and escape punishment because the persons who witness the beating think it is only a mule and not worth bothering about? What is the explanation of that phase of the mule question anyhow?"—New York Press.

To Rest His Eyes.

The people who quit reading "just to rest their eyes" might take a hint by inference from the reply made by an old illiterate. A passing man found him apparently deeply interested in a paper.

On looking close it became apparent that his paper was upside down, and he was asked forthwith why he held it thus.

His reply almost knocked the questioner out. It was:

"Just to rest my eyes!"

A Reversal.

"I suppose you talked a lot of nonsense to your wife before you were married."

"Yes," answered Mr. Meekton. "Before we were married she thought my nonsense sensible. Now when I try to talk sense she thinks it's nonsense."—Exchange.

Inspiring Air.

He—So you think married life ought to be one grand, sweet song? She—Yes. He—And what air would you prefer for this matrimonial song? She—A millionaire!

Reciprocal Help.

Doctor—Well, my good woman, what do you want? Beggar—A quarter, doctor. Give me a quarter and I'll tell everybody that you helped me.

Death is the golden key that opens the palace of eternity.—Milton.

THE KING'S GRANT.

By F. TOWNSEND SMITH.

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Henry VII., victor in the wars of the roses, having been crowned king of England, was about to march from Bosworth field to London to assume the government of the kingdom. He called to him young Wilfred Boyington, who had fought bravely during the battle, and said to him:

"There is an estate some twenty leagues from here that belonged to one of the stanchest adherents of our enemy and is therefore forfeit. Its owner, Sir Charles Beachurst, lies dead yonder among the slain."

Then, directing the young man to kneel, the king laid his sword on his shoulder and said:

"Rise, Sir Wilfred, and take possession of this forfeited estate."

"Now?" asked the young man, astonished.

"Now if you like, but do not fail to join us before we march."

"And that is"—

"Tomorrow at cockcrow."

Furnished with a parchment signed and sealed by the king, Sir Wilfred rode to the Beachurst estate. The recent owner's widow was so overcome by grief at her husband's death, of which she had just heard, that she could not see him. She therefore sent her daughter Ethelreda, a girl of nineteen and fair to look upon. Sir Wilfred showed her the king's grant. Beyond a shiver there was no indication of her feelings.

"The king's will is indisputable," she said calmly. "The estate is yours."

The young man was about to withdraw when the girl said to him:

"May it please you to inspect your estate?"

Sir Wilfred had no especial desire to see his new domain at that time, but to be shown about by this girl, whose presence affected him with a desire to know her better, was another matter. "I must join the king at dawn tomorrow," he said. "Meanwhile I would be pleased if you will show me as much of the estate as there is time to see."

The lady retired and presently appeared in the courtyard, where she mounted a horse that stood ready for her, and the two, followed by attendants, rode away to inspect the estate.

"The estate is very large," said Sir Wilfred after they had ridden miles in one direction.

"It is," she replied. "You possess a noble domain. It belonged to a Saxon baron and was given by the Conqueror to one of his adherents. I have always felt that an injustice was done which some day we would be called upon to expiate."

Sir Wilfred said nothing. These transfers from the weaker to the stronger were in those days common, and he had no idea of giving up so splendid an estate from any qualms of conscience. But he revered the innocence of the girl from whom he was to take it, thinking that if she desired to win him to decline it she should have taken him over a part of it, letting him believe that it was a small estate.

And still they rode on. The sun went down, but the full moon rose. Under the soft twin light of night and day Ethelreda was very beautiful. Sir Wilfred had no thought of turning back. To ride over an estate fit rather for a duke than a knight in company with so beautiful a companion was delightful. Once and only once he had evidence of the struggle going on within her. He caught a ray of moonlight reflected from a tear.

Men are less prone to realize their feelings than women. Sir Wilfred was falling in love, but he was not aware of it—at least he was not aware that he was falling in love with Ethelreda. He supposed he was enchanted by this splendid estate. So he rode, conscious only of a faint regret in his heart that he was to dispossess so gentle a being as she who rode beside him, but not a whit bent on resigning the property. Suddenly in passing through a hamlet a bell struck the hour of midnight.

Sir Wilfred was astonished. So happy had he been that when the bell began its strokes he supposed it would strike the hour of 9, when all good people were supposed to be in their homes. He drew rein suddenly.

"How far have we come from your castle?" he asked Ethelreda.

"Twenty leagues."

"Twenty leagues! And I rode twenty from the camp! Forty leagues! Heavens! Four hours to ride forty leagues! No horse will do it! I am ruined! The king will scorn my excuses!"

The last few words were a moan.

"But you possess a fine estate," said Ethelreda.

"I would give it all for a horse capable of taking me back to camp by sunrise."

"Done!" said Ethelreda, throwing off her lethargy. "A knight cannot go back on his word. On a farm near by is the 'white horse,' the pride of our family, the fleetest in all the country around. Give up the king's grant and I will conduct you to his stable."

Sir Wilfred took out the parchment, hesitated but one moment, then tore it in pieces. Ethelreda put spurs to her horse, and he followed her. She soon stopped at a barn and led forth a milk white steed. Sir Wilfred mounted him and went like the wind to camp, reaching it just as the troops were beginning to move.

Thus by an artifice of a young girl a fine estate was saved. But Sir Wilfred acquired it at last, for he could never forget the girl who had outwitted him, and as soon as he could get away he paid her a second visit and in time won her for his wife.

[illegible]

General Jackson, while on one of his journeys to Tennessee about the time of the nullification excitement arrived at a Virginian village in a very impatient state of mind, both with public affairs and with the state of the roads. The president was entertained as a guest at the house of a lady in the village, and, although he tried to be polite, the state of vexation which he was in affected him visibly.

His hostess at the supper table was much alarmed to see the general swallowing with great rapidity a cup of almost boiling hot tea.

"Wait—wait, general!" exclaimed the lady. "Let me give you some cold water."

"No, thank you, ma'am," said the general, continuing to drink.

"But I don't see how you can drink that boiling hot tea without scalding yourself."

"No wonder you can't, ma'am," said Jackson. "I am scalding myself."

"But, sir, why do you"—

"Good gracious, ma'am!" exclaimed the general. "Don't you see that I want to scald myself?"

The lady refrained from making any further suggestions as to her distinguished guest's comfort.

Mercury Laden Swords.

Inserting running mercury in the backs of swords was a comparatively common practice among the Italian, French and Spanish swordmakers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but it was more of a fancy than anything else, for it never came into general use. It was not, of course, used for rapiers or the lighter kind of swords, but for the heavier cutting swords. The method was to cast the blade rather broader at the back than usual, with a hollow running down it. This was half filled with quicksilver and sealed up. The idea was that when a blow was struck with such a sword the quicksilver would fly to the point and so increase the weight of the blow. This theoretical advantage, however, did not at all counterbalance the general clumsiness of the weapon and its unhandiness in guarding, and so the mercurial swords, as they were called, from which their ingenious inventor hoped so much, were rather military curiosities than practical successes.

Tale of Two Fish.

A story is related of a Manchester fisherman who once tried to lure the dainty trout from some of the nearby brooks. The fisherman did not get a bite in the brooks. He drove back to Manchester rather disheartened and went to a restaurant to get something to eat. He asked the restaurant keeper if he had any trout and received an affirmative reply. He ordered some of the trout for his supper and then told the proprietor that he might put two or three of the uncooked fish in his fish basket out at the door, as he didn't care to go home and receive the raillery of his friends. The proprietor of the restaurant told one of the clerks to carry out the order, and it was supposed to have been done faithfully.

But the clerk was not very alert, and when the fisherman got home and opened up the fish basket to his astonished wife there reposed two fine salt mackerel, and the fisherman has not got through explaining yet.—Manchester Union.

A Little Too Much.

"A wife has a right to expect much of her husband," remarked the philosophically inclined person musingly.

"Yes, I suppose she has," replied the meek appearing man with wilted looking whiskers. "I suppose she has, but when she expects him to live up, steadily and without swerving, to the motto on her first husband's tombstone I somehow think she is expecting more than she really ought to expect from a common, everyday, earthly man."

Her Nationality.

When small Sigrid made her first appearance in an American school, says Harper's Magazine, she was asked the usual puzzling questions, one of which was:

"What is your nationality, Sigrid?"

"Sigrid tossed her flaxen braids. "I'm an American of Norwegian design," she said promptly.

Discretion.

"You say you left the house this morning and then went back. Don't you know that's unlucky?"

"It would have been a blamed sight unluckier for me if I hadn't gone back."

"Why so?"

"My wife called me."—Lippincott's Magazine.

A Family Affair.

Casey's wife was at the hospital where she had undergone a serious operation a few days before.

Mrs. Kelley called to inquire as to Mrs. Casey's condition.

"Is she restin' quietly?" Mrs. Kelley asked.

"No, but I am," said Casey.—Exchange.

His Earthly Task.

"Do you think the deacon will be entirely happy in the hereafter?"

"Why not?"

"I fear the good man will feel lonely with no church mortgage to lift."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Felt Good.

"Don't you honestly believe there is more good than evil in the world?"

"Ah! You've found a dollar you didn't know you had, haven't you?"—Chicago Record-Herald.

It takes a sthrong man to be mean. Whin I give a tip 'tis not because I want to, but because I'm afraid of what the waiter 'll think.—Mr. Dooley.

HER SURPRISE.

By THOMAS R. [illegible]

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There is no place where men—and women, too—will sooner sink to the brute level than in a lumber camp.

Miss Margaret Storms of St. Louis was the daughter of an owner of lumber property in Wisconsin. She was city born and bred and had never been in a wild country in her life. But one winter she took it into her head to go with her father to his lumber property, and, although he told her that the people were very rough and she would not like to be among them, she was possessed with a desire to go, and she did.

From the moment of her arrival she seemed to delight in the wild woods and showed no disinclination for the rude lumber folk she met there. She was eager to go about and in order to be able to travel on the surface of the snow asked for some one to teach her to walk in snowshoes. A guide named Jim Hogan, a tall, strapping son of the woods, was recommended to her as an expert snowshoe and skee teacher. Jim had physical beauty enough to captivate a dozen women. He had a profusion of curly black hair, large brown eyes, an oval face, shaved except for a drooping mustache, and the figure of an Apollo Belvedere. He was perfectly fearless and thoroughly versed in woodcraft.

But here the guide's qualifications as a lady killer ceased. He could read and write, but if he had ever read anything he had no ability to impart it to others. He had little fancy for women and was rather annoyed at their attentions. Indeed, he kept himself as much as possible away from the settlements to avoid them.

Strange as it may appear, Miss Storms, who had been educated in the best schools, came under the spell of this ignorant woodsman. But it should not appear so improbable when we remember that the early kings of England could neither read nor write. True, their queens were just as ignorant, but there is ample evidence that they loved their husbands. At any rate, the lumber capitalist's daughter, skimming over the snow with her teacher, became bewitched. Possibly she possessed an emotional nature. Possibly her fancy was fired by seeing his graceful figure threading its way before her through the interminable woods. Be the cause what it may, she came to feel that life would be a wretched existence without her Hogan.

It happened that the daughter of the storekeeper of the camp found more favor in Hogan's eyes than Miss Storms. This girl, Anna Woodson, was also a city girl, but not of the class of Miss Storms. Perhaps the fact that she was nearer Hogan's level gave her his preference. He had become aware that Miss Storms was infatuated with him and that Miss Woodson really loved him. He did not break with either, fearing trouble with her he discarded. He disliked especially to break with Miss Storms, for her father was paying him a handsome sum each week for his daughter's instruction.

One day Miss Storms was driving in her father's buggy when she overtook Jim Hogan and Miss Woodson walking side by side. Influenced by a sudden impulse, induced by jealousy, Miss Storms as she passed the couple gave her rival a cut with her whip, leaving a red welt on her cheek.

There was no opportunity to resent the insult then and there, for in a moment Miss Storms was beyond reach. Miss Woodson burned for an opportunity to get her fingers in Miss Storms' hair and so expressed herself to Mr. Hogan. Terrified at being the cause of a fracas between the two women, he told her that if she attacked her rival he would leave the camp and neither girl would hear from him again.

Miss Woodson, fearing that he would keep his word, yet not being able to restrain her thirst for revenge, chose a middle course. She secretly sent a challenge to Miss Storms to fight a duel. The feelings that induced this city girl who had been carefully reared to fight a duel with another girl in a lumber camp cannot be analyzed. Was it the influence of the wild ways among which she had fallen? Was it hate for her rival? Was it a return to the brute instincts which some scientists aver were once common with us all? Whatever the motives, the challenge was accepted.

Unfortunately seconds were necessary. Indeed, some one was needed to bear the challenge. The bearer told her most intimate friend, who in turn told her most intimate friend. This included two intimate friends beside the principals, who knew of the affair. But as each intimate friend had one or more intimate friends within a few hours after the challenge had passed the coming duel was known of all over the camp.

Hogan fled.

One of Mr. Storms' managing men informed him of the situation, and when the next train left Miss Storms was on it.

A few years later Miss Storms married a professor of Greek literature in one of the universities. She took a fancy to go on her wedding trip to her father's lumber camp. While there she bribed a lumberman to walk the man for whom she had been willing to unsex herself and risk her life past the cabin occupied by herself and her husband. Hogan walked by with the lumberman, and the professor's wife observed him from behind a curtain.

"Oh, heavens!" she exclaimed. "How could I have done it?"

SARAH'S [illegible]

By [illegible]

[Copyright, [illegible]]

Zeph Smith, bachelor, [illegible] island farmer, [illegible] for him. In a farmhouse [illegible] the highway from [illegible] lived Sarah White. Sarah was [illegible] maid and lived with her [illegible] mother.

One day Zeph lounged over to the other house and found Sarah [illegible] rags for a new carpet.

"Sarah, I think we [illegible] get married," he said.

It was sudden, and Sarah [illegible] needle. It was sudden, and [illegible] blushed. Then she recovered her needle and looked up to reply.

"Well, Zeph, if you think best—"

When Zeph went home and told his sister that he was to be married [illegible] she asked him when he [illegible] plied.

"Oh, I can't say as to that, but it will come about some time."

After a year or so and after the neighbors had decided that there would be no match Zeph went over and spent an evening with his fiancee. It was popcorn night, and as they [illegible] and ate he casually inquired:

"Sarah, we 're going to get married some day, ain't we?"

"I dunno," she replied.

"But of course we are. I asked [illegible] a whole year ago, and you said [illegible] and I shall hold you to it, [illegible] Sarah, but I think a heap of [illegible]

At the end of another year [illegible]

[illegible]

"Do you want money?" he [illegible] whispered.

Zeph replied that he did.

"Have you ever heard of [illegible] Kidd?"

Zeph acknowledged his guilt.

"Do you know that he buried [illegible] sands of dollars within [illegible] yard?"

Zeph's mouth opened [illegible] eyes bung out.

"And I've got some of the [illegible] Look at these!"

[illegible]

"And—and where?" gasped [illegible] after a long lull.

"We'll dig them up [illegible] [illegible] yet, you [illegible] [illegible] White?"

"Why, I'm going to marry [illegible]"

"Yes, but that's [illegible] come off?"

"Oh, some time or other. No [illegible] about it."

"There isn't, eh! No hurry [illegible] picked up these coins beside a big [illegible] just above high water and [illegible] there are boxes [illegible] rock! No hurry when the [illegible] may grab the whole thing! [illegible] go over and buy the land from [illegible] man myself!"

"Say, say, you hold on," [illegible] Zeph. "I won't let you buy it [illegible] I say I'm going to marry her—"

"But you can't wait a year or a month. You can't wait another day! Parties may land by that big rock [illegible] hour, and if they do—"

But Zeph was taking the horses from the plow. He mounted one and [illegible] for the barn. By the time the peddler reached the house one had been [illegible] to a buggy and the farmer [illegible] the house donning his Sunday [illegible] he came out he said:

"I'll get Sarah and drive to the preacher's and have the knot tied. You wait here."

Sarah was skimming milk, but [illegible] got a hustle on her, and horse, buggy and the two loving hearts disappeared in the direction of the village in a cloud of dust. Then the peddler mounted his wagon and drove in the opposite direction. Zeph has [illegible] in vain for that treasure, but all [illegible] that he has found a good wife [illegible] peddler lied, of course, but [illegible] wouldn't lie to [illegible] for life?