HER NARROW ESCAPE

By MOLLIE K. WETHERELL

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Pepita was a Mexican girl living with an aunt in southern California. Pepita was an orphan and had inherited a patch of ground, on which the two lived. Near by was another Mexican family consisting of father, mother and one son, Enrique, just coming of age. Enrique and Pepita, being neighbors and there being no other young men and women near by to divert them from each other, naturally loved.

One day a man was seen digging in a patch of ground adjoining Pepita's property. He was an American and, though roughly dressed, gave evidence of being a gentleman. Seeing Pepita standing looking at him curiously, he went over to where she was and asked for a drink of water. Pepita got it for him from a spring back of the house, and the stranger chatted with her. She asked him what he was digging the hole for, and he said he was prospecting. There had been no hunting for the precious metals there before, and Pepita did not understand what he meant.

The stranger came over occasionally after that for a drink of water or to borrow something. He said his name was Thomas Burkhalter; that he was the son of a gentleman in the east. He hadn't got on well with his father and had come out west to shift for himself. Pepita thought him very fine. After looking at his white face Enrique's brown visage was not at all attractive. Enrique noticed a change in her, but was at a loss to account for it.

One day a man came to Burkhalter's hole. He was a well dressed man and wore a diamond stickpin in his neckwear. Pepita saw him and Burkhalter standing together talking and looking over at her house. The stranger went away, and that evening Burkhalter came over to see Pepita. She asked him about the man who had visited him, but Burkhalter was uncommunicative on the subject. One thing Pepita noticed—that he was very attentive and deferential to her.

Burkhalter during the next four or five days did as much courting as is usually done in months, sometimes in years. He quite carried Pepita off her feet. She discovered that Enrique knew nothing at all about making love.

Enrique was much distressed. What could he do? But Enrique had more sense than Pepita and knew a little more about the world, though not much more. At any rate, he had sense enough to suspect that Burkhalter had some motive in devoting himself to Pepita. He went to an old rancher who had always been kind to him and told him his trouble. One day Enrique went to Grigsby, the rancher, and told him that Burkhalter had asked Pepita to marry him.

"That's all talk," said Grigsby.

"No, no," cried Enrique; "they are to be married tomorrow. Pepita doesn't wish it so soon, but the man insists. She would like to raise a little money so that she may get some new clothes to make her appear worthy of so fine a husband."

Grigsby thought. He was turning something over in his mind. At last he said:

"If Pepita is going to be married she will not need her farm. What she needs is a little cash. I will buy her property. Go and ask her for what she will sell it. But say to her that I will not buy it unless she keeps my offer a secret. You may tell her I will give her $600."

Enrique sorrowfully bore the message and returned with Pepita, who was delighted to get so much money for what was really not supposed to be worth more than half the amount offered. Grigsby drew up the papers conveying the property to Enrique and placed a mortgage on it payable to himself.

"Now," he said to Pepita, "you may tell whom you like that you have sold your farm."

In the evening Burkhalter came to see his fiancee and asked her if she would be ready for the wedding the next day. Pepita said she would and gleefully told him she had sold her property for the enormous sum of $600. Then she showed him the money she had got for it.

He stood looking at her with a blank expression for some time, then told her to put her name on the back of the check and he would ride to a town ten miles distant and draw the money. She must be ready for the ceremony by the time of his return. She did as he bade her, and, leaving her, forgetting the kiss, he departed.

Pepita waited all that day and the next for her lover, but he came not. Nor has he come to this day. Pepita's aunt at last told her that he must have gone away with the money for the farm. What should they do? Their home was sold, and they had nowhere to lay their heads.

Meanwhile Grigsby had gone to the hole Burkhalter had left with experts and had found that Burkhalter had struck a vein of ore too narrow to pay, but beginning to open up in the farm Pepita had sold.

Then came Enrique and showed her his deed to her property and told her that it was likely worth a fortune. And so it was. Grigsby furnished the means to develop it, and it was sold for a large amount. Enrique forgave Pepita, and they were married, but his wife never forgot her folly and her husband's common sense.

CAMELS IN A RAGE.

When Roused These Usually Patient Animals Fight Like Fury.

The usually patient and submissive camel, like the proverbial worm, will sometimes resent an overdose of abuse. Too dense to think of a way in which he can outwit his driver and so take him unawares, when roused to the pitch of fury he rushes at the tyrant open mouthed, and his formidable teeth and powerful jaws do serious damage.

Of this vindictiveness the camel driver is aware and of the certainty that sooner or later the camel will seek revenge. Accordingly it is customary for the person who fears his malice to throw his clothes before the camel, meanwhile hiding himself until the animal's fury has been expended in tossing and tramping on them, when the injury, real or supposed, is at once forgotten.

The camel will not identify himself with his driver or rider in the smallest way whatever. He steadily declines all advances. His eye never lights up with love or even interest at the approach of his master. Should you attempt to pat or caress him he will object in a very decided manner.

Good treatment or bad makes no difference to the camel. Life and its hard conditions are taken for granted. His view of things is far too serious. He is so absorbed and preoccupied that he has no time to waste in the gambols indulged in by all other young animals.—Harper's Weekly.

A PLEASANT MEETING.

It Is Nice to Find a Friend Who Scatters Sunshine.

"I don't like people who are always coming to me for sympathy."

"They do get tiresome, but I prefer them to the ones who come boasting of their successes and trying to make me dissatisfied with my lot."

"Oh, I don't mind that kind. They never worry me any. I am always so successful myself that I never have cause to envy them. And, speaking of success, I made $500 last week in a little real estate deal, and my boy has been making a great record in school. He's away ahead of all the other boys of his age, and my wife has a maid now who is the best girl we have ever been able to find—the best one in our neighborhood. In fact. How is your boy doing now? I heard some time ago that he was inclined to be rather wild."

"Please don't mention him. I'm afraid he is going to bring sorrow upon us. You always were lucky. I guess I'll have to lose the little home I've been paying on during the past eight years, all on the boy's account. My wife has had to quit keeping help, although her health is very poor and"—

"Well, goodby. I've got to be going. Cheer up. What's the use of being grumpy? Look at me. You'll find, if you try it, that it pays to scatter sunshine."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Story of a Nail Keg.

A hundred years ago, Jeremiah Atwater was a leading New Haven merchant, buying his supplies in Boston and receiving them by vessel. Among other goods received were several casks of nails, one of which on opening it under a layer of nails at each end was found to be filled with silver dollars. Mr. Atwater, who was a conscientious man, immediately wrote to the Boston merchant that there must be some mistake in the invoice of nails, as one of the casks contained other articles besides nails. He was promptly informed that the nails were bought for nails, sold for nails and nails they must be. Forthwith Mr. Atwater had a basin made of the silver and presented it to the Center church, where it has been used in the baptismal service from that time to the present.

Art and Nature.

Art is the revelation of man, and not merely that, but likewise the revelation of nature speaking through man. Art pre-exists in nature, and nature is reproduced in art. As vapors from the ocean floating landward and dissolved in rain are carried back in rivers to the ocean, so thoughts and the semblances of things that fall upon the soul of man in showers flow out again in living streams of art and lose themselves in the great ocean, which is nature. Art and nature are not, then, discordant, but ever harmoniously working in each other.—Longfellow's "Hyperion."

Illuminating.

While touring abroad a certain citizen of New York found this item in a list of police regulations posted up on a highway in Ireland:

"Until further notice every vehicle must carry a light when darkness begins. Darkness begins when the lights are lit."—Saturday Evening Post.

The Family Orchard.

"Could I interest you in our orange grove proposition?"

"Nope; I have already put all my money into a fruit orchard."

"Where?"

"On my wife's hat."—Houston Post.

Next Best Thing.

"Yes; I have just done Europe."

"Can you give me a list of hotels to go to?"

"No; the best I can do is to give you a list of hotels to keep away from."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Hardness of heart is a dreadful quality, but it is doubtful whether in the long run it works more damage than softness of head.—Roosevelt.

THE PENALTY OF PILLAGING

By THOMAS R. DEAN

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The army was in an exposed position. The enemy had every advantage. The general commanding had given orders to maintain the strictest discipline. Any man caught plundering must be shot without mercy. In the midst of this tension a private of the Seventeenth regiment was marched under guard to the colonel's headquarters. He was a black eyed young fellow, scarcely above the limit of height at which recruits are accepted and not a sign of a beard on his rosy cheeks.

"What is it, sergeant?" asked the colonel of the noncommissioned officer who had the young recruit in charge.

"The captain ordered me," replied the sergeant, saluting, "to bring him here to you, sir, and say that he's been pillaging."

"What's your name?" asked the colonel of the prisoner.

"Perkins, sir."

"Did you break into a house?"

"No, sir. After the firing yesterday and our advance we came upon a dwelling that had been deserted during the scrimmage. I went in and saw a bracelet. I took it."

"Took a bracelet! What did you, a soldier, want with a bracelet?"

There was no response to this. Private Perkins looked everywhere except at his commanding officer.

"Well, Perkins, do you think if I let you off this time you can leave pillaging alone?"

"I'll try, sir."

"Well, you can go back to duty; but, mind, if you're caught another time I'll have to shoot you. That's the orders, and I must obey orders as well as you. Nothing demoralizes an army so much as pillaging. We need all our discipline to stand against the enemy. Now go, and don't let me hear of your disobeying the order again."

The next day there was more fighting, more shifting of position, more houses deserted. The scrimmage had barely ceased when the colonel, standing under a tree talking with an officer, saw a man marched toward him between two of his comrades. The colonel's brow darkened, for when the three came near enough for him to see their faces he recognized the center man as Private Perkins. What troubled the officer was that if Perkins had again been caught pillaging he didn't see how he was to avoid shooting the boy.

"I'm ordered by the captain to bring this man to you, sir, and say that he's been pillaging again."

"You're the man," said the colonel to the prisoner. "I told yesterday that if you were caught pillaging again I would have to shoot you."

"Yes, sir."

"Well, what did you pillage for?"

"Couldn't help it, sir; things came too handy."

"What do you mean?"

"After the fight several of us went into a deserted house, and things were lying all about."

"What did you take?"

"A necklace."

"A necklace! What in thunder could you do with a necklace?"

No answer.

"You know what I told you."

"Yes, sir."

"And despite that and your promise not to offend again you entered houses and took gewgaws. There's no use letting you off again. You'd be cabbaging a pair of jeweled garters next time. Sergeant, go to your captain and tell him to send me a firing squad."

The sergeant saluted and was about to leave when the colonel called him and whispered to him:

"Tell the captain to have the guns loaded with blank cartridges. I don't wish to shoot this little fool. I'm only going to scare him."

"Aye, aye, sir."

When the firing squad arrived the colonel said to Private Perkins:

"By order of the general commanding I'm going to shoot you for pillaging. I let you off once. This time I deem it my duty to carry out the general's order. Where are the articles you have taken?"

The recruit put his hand in his pocket and pulled out, in addition to what he had confessed to appropriating, a turquoise finger ring, a lady's lace handkerchief, a pair of silver slipper buckles, a hatpin and three bangles and a—

"For heaven's sake!" exclaimed the colonel, "have I a soldier in my command so utterly lost to all sense of manliness as to get himself shot for these feminine baubles?"

Private Perkins looked on the ground. His lip quivered.

"Stand up there," said the colonel, placing the culprit with his back against a tree. The firing squad were aligned to face him. He was a pitiable object, evidently without enough sense to make a plea or a protest for his life. The words "Ready" and "Aim" were given, but before the order to fire came Perkins dropped.

"Sergeant," said the colonel, "sprinkle him and set him up again."

The sergeant went to the collapsed boy and loosened his uniform jacket at the throat. Then he returned to his commander and stood as though he had something of importance to communicate.

"Well, sergeant?"

"He's a girl, sir."

A SULTAN'S SEVEN BEDS.

Abdul Hamid Changed His Sleeping Place Every Night.

An interesting reminiscence of Abdul Hamid, the former sultan of Turkey, who was known as Abdul the Accursed and by several other more or less unpleasant titles, is given in the description of a visit to Yildiz Kiosk by Colonel (Count) Gleichen in the Household Brigade Magazine.

"The house was a perfect labyrinth of small rooms," he writes. "In no fewer than seven of these rooms were beds on which the sultan used to sleep—not ordinary beds, but large couches, sloping at a considerable angle from the head end downward, so that, covered with a quilt or two, his majesty could sleep in a semi-upright condition and spring up at a moment's notice to be ready for anything.

"No one knew in which of the seven rooms the sultan was going to sleep, for he changed his resting place every night for fear of hidden dangers. Along the main passage which led past many of these rooms a most ingenious arrangement existed for giving warning of the approach of any one. The floor was composed of loose planks under the carpet, so that merely to walk along it started a clanking sound which must invariably have waked a light and nervous sleeper."

OYSTER ISLANDS.

Their Growth Is Exactly Analogous to That of Coral Reefs.

Oyster islands similar to those formed of coral are found in several parts of the world. The islands in Newport river and Beaufort harbor, North Carolina, says a writer in the Century Path Magazine, have been discovered to have as base a reef to which the spawn were attached and above this layer upon layer of oysters, vegetable growth and debris brought by the action of the waves and winds, all of which finally grows high enough to rise above the surface of the water. This growth is exactly analogous to that of the coral islands of the Pacific.

The islands near the mouth of the river Tagus, in Portugal, are said to have been built up in this way also. Here, where there is such a quantity of oysters that 100,000,000 a year would scarcely be missed if they were removed, the expanse of water just beyond the river's mouth is dotted with oyster islands. As in the case of the coral reefs, which on the seaward side may be covered with living, growing coral, live oysters thrive in the same waters where the accumulation of dead generations has served to form the islands.

Muscles May Move Themselves.

Albert von Haller, a Swiss surgeon of the eighteenth century, was the first to point out that the muscles of our bodies have an automatic action. Before Haller's time it was believed that the muscles could not contract or swell up of themselves, but were drawn up by the nerves of volition. Haller discovered that this is not so, but that a muscle, if irritated, will draw itself together automatically, even when it is quite separated from the nerves, and this has since been proved to be true by a great number of experiments. So that, though it is true our nerves are the cause of our moving, because they excite the muscles and so cause them to contract, yet the real power of contraction is in the muscle itself. The body of man is full of wonders, not the least of which is this automatic power of contraction in all muscles.—Louisville Courier Journal.

The Comma.

The point on which most writers are at odds with the compositor is the comma. He is too fond of this particular punctuation point. He takes a delight in breaking up the flow of a sentence with his artificial pauses. We all say, "Why then did you do it?" in one breath. It is the compositor who says, "Why, then, did you do it?" It is possible to be too hard on the comma. It has its undeniable uses. Edward Clodd in his memoir of Grant Allen tells the story of a compositor who dissented very strongly from that writer's moral philosophy and had to "set up" an interview with Allen in which the sentence occurred, "He is happily married." He salved his conscience by printing it "He is, happily married."—London Chronicle.

A Cheerful Liar.

One time the late ameer of Afghanistan asked the English diplomatic agent at his court to give a description, amid a circle of Afghan boys, of the largest gun in England. The Englishman described the 100 ton gun, and when he had finished the ameer observed to his admiring subjects: "I have seen a gun the cartridge of which was as large as the gun which has just been described to you." It would never do for an ameer to be astonished, much less to confess himself beaten.

One Idea Developed.

Browning—How is your new club for the exchange and development of ideas getting along, old man? Greening—Not as rapidly as we had expected. So far it has developed the idea in each member that he is the only man in the bunch who has any ideas worth while.—Chicago News.

Good Qualifications.

"Mrs. Teaser would make a great baseball catcher."

"What makes you think so?"

"Why, the other night she caught her husband stealing home and put him out."—Exchange.

True men and women are all physicians to make us well.—C. A. Bartol.

FOR THE CHILDREN

The Six o'Clock Train.

The six o'clock train comes through with a bang
And a roar and a toot and a hiss and a clang.
I'm the conductor, and Trot's engineer.
She cries, "All aboard!" and I say, "All right here!"
Mother's a passenger, riding in state.
The front chair's for father. He never is late.
He comes running in, for the train makes a dash.
We stop—he jumps on—then we're off like a flash.
No matter how much it may snow, blow or rain,
Father's always in time for the six o'clock train.

—St. Nicholas.

Game of Proverbs.

Proverbs is one of the most popular games that children play. Here is the way to play it in case you do not already know how:

One player leaves the room, and while he is absent the rest fix upon some proverb. The words of this proverb are distributed among them, and each player in reply to a question asked by the guesser has to introduce his particular word. When all the words have been introduced the guesser has to guess the name of the proverb.

Here are a few familiar proverbs:

"Hear twice before you speak once."

"Half a loaf is better than no bread."

"Good wares make quick markets."

"Friends are plenty when purse is full."

"Cut your coat according to your cloth."

"A little rain lays much dust."

"Better late than never."

"Barking dogs seldom bite."

"A good word costs nothing."

"A good name is better than wealth."

"All is not gold that glitters."

"A penny saved is a penny gained."

"A friend in need is a friend indeed."

"Make hay while the sun shines."

"One good turn deserves another."

"Out of sight out of mind."

"Still water runs deep."

"Waste not, want not."

"Willful waste makes woeful want."

"Prevention is better than cure."

Cats and Chickens.

A shoemaker sat on his bench cobbling away at a pair of boots. By the fireside there was a basket partly covered with a cloth and just by the basket a kitchen chair. Two cats sat side by side on the chair carefully guarding the basket.

A visitor entered the shop, and, noticing the tender and watchful gaze of the cats, he asked, "What are the cats doing?"

"Oh, they are watching the chickens in the basket. They were just hatched."

"Really! Won't they kill the little things?"

"No; they won't hurt them. They killed a sparrow among the chickens in the yard this morning and ate it up, but they take good care of the chickens."

"That is very strange. Did you train them?"

The cobbler told the visitor that when the cats were kittens they learned they must not hurt chickens, and now they father them, keeping them, as far as possible, out of harm's way.

"Well," said the visitor, "that's as pretty a sight as ever I saw."

And the story is true.

The Rifled Treasure Chest.

A New Jersey farmer was afraid that some men who were measuring off distances on his farm were surveyors trying to make out that his property belonged to some one else, and he ran for the constable. When he got back the men were gone, but there was a hole in the ground and by the side of it the remains of a box. The farmer was astonished, but after the people in the village near by thought it over they decided that there had been a treasure in the box. The farm had been owned by a man who had been suspected of stealing money. He disappeared and the farm was sold. It is supposed at the village grocery that he had buried the money he had stolen and afterward returned to dig it up.

Conundrums.

When is it easy to read in the woods? When Dame Autumn turns the leaves.

Which is the largest room in the world? Room for improvement.

Why are the western prairies flat? Because the sun sets on them every evening.

Why is a washerwoman the greatest traveler in the world? Because she crosses the line and goes from pole to pole.

Why are the laws like the ocean? Most trouble is caused by the breakers.

When are stories like our nearest friends? When related.

The Game of Caterpillar.

As many children as there are players are arranged in a circle. One player stands in the middle of the room. The others seat themselves. The player who is standing tries to sit on the vacant chair, but he is prevented by the other players, who slip quickly from chair to chair. At one time a vacant chair is within touch of the odd player; at the next the vacancy is on the opposite side of the circle. At last he is able to secure a seat, and some other player who has lost his chair takes the center of the circle.

For the Children

A Remarkable Dog That Really Speaks Words.

There have been many so called speaking dogs—that is, dogs who have been trained to give a certain number of barks to indicate certain wants—but this remarkable dog can really speak, although its vocabulary is limited as yet to about ten words.

The wonderful gift that enables the dog to articulate was discovered quite accidentally by its owner, Herr Hermann Ebers, a German royal gamekeeper. One day the dog was begging at the table and his master asked him (in German, of course), "What will you have?" The dog answered "haben" (have), and since then has been taught eight or nine other words. His name is Don, and this word he can say very distinctly, also "ruhe" (quiet) and "hunger" (hunger). That he can really articulate has been proved not only by the fact that he does speak the words, but also by examination by scientists.

A Smart Trick.

Every child likes to do tricks, and the more mystifying the trick the better he likes to do it. I will tell you a good one to show to your friends.

Throw a ring or coin into a basin full of water and tell them you are going to recover the object with your hand, but that you will not wet it in the least.

In order so to do it will suffice to sprinkle the surface of the liquid with some powder which has no attraction for the water and will not adhere to it—something that water will not wet. Powdered lycopodium, which you will find in almost every drug store, is just the thing.

Having thrown a half handful of this preparation on the surface of the water, plunge your hand in boldly, recover your prey and show the spectators that your hand is as dry as ever it was in your life. The reason of this is that the lycopodium has formed a veritable glove around your hand and fingers, for which the water has not had the least affinity, any more than for the feathers of ducks and other water birds. You know that these may dive into the deep, even so often before your eyes and come up as dry as before, thanks to the peculiar oil secreted by their feathers.—Magical Experiments.

Conundrums.

Who is the most successful surveyor? A king, because he is monarch of all he surveys.

When is an original idea like a clock? When it strikes one.

What cannot be called a disinterested act of hospitality? Entertaining a hope.

When is a silver cup most likely to run? When it is chased.

Why is a man just imprisoned like a boat full of water? Both need bailing out.

Why is a mouse like a load of hay? Because the cat'll eat it.

Why is the first chicken of a brood like the mainmast of a ship? Because it's a little ahead of the main hatch.

When does a cow become landed property? When turned into a field.

When is a new dress older than an old one? When it is more (moire) antique.

Why is Father Time like a modern boy? Because he travels by cycles (bicycles).

Hoop Games.

The hoop race is a very good game because of the exercise derived from it. Besides being a good runner, the winner in this game must be skillful in the use of the hoop. The players should be allowed to start according to the size of their hoops, as, of course, a large hoop can be bowled faster than a small one. The one who first reaches the goal agreed upon wins the race.

Turnpikes.—This is considered the best of hoop games. The turnpike gates are two small pegs driven into the ground quite close together or two bricks placed side by side a short distance apart.

Half the players have hoops and half have charge of the gates. The players with hoops start off, trundling the hoop slowly or quickly, as they please, and they must pass the hoop through every gate. If the hoop touches either of the gateposts or goes outside them the keeper takes the hoop, while the trundler takes his place as gatekeeper.

Wind Song.

Blowing, blowing everywhere,
Blowing clouds so high in air,
Turning windmills round and round,
With such a creaking, creaking sound.

Making all the trees bend low,
Waving grass both to and fro,
Drying clothes upon the line,
And whirling leaves off tree and vine.

Tossing kites above so high,
Sailing, sailing, 'cross the sky,
Waving flags with gentle breeze
And blowing ships upon the seas.

HESTER N. Y.