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The Adventures of Kathlyn

By Harold MacGrath

Baldpate and shrikecock with the sound. The lion roared again; this time at the insulting echoes. For a few minutes the noise was deafening. A rumble as of distant thunder, and the storm died away.

By and by she peered cautiously. She saw the lion crossing the open space between the temple and the jungle. She saw him pause, bend his head, then lope away in the direction taken by Rajah.

To Kathlyn it seemed that she had no longer anything to do with the body of Kathlyn Hare. The soul of another had stepped into this wearied flesh of hers and now directed its physical manifestations, while her own spirit stood gratefully and passively aloof. Nothing could happen now; the world had grown still and calm. The spirit drew the sleeves of the robe snugly about her arms and laid Kathlyn's head upon them and drew her down into a profound slumber.

Half a mile to the north of the ruined temple there lay, all unsuspected by Kathlyn, a village—a village belonging solely to the poor, villager-ryots or tillers of the soil. The poor in Asia know but two periods of time, for rarely do they possess such a thing as a watch or a clock: sunset and sunrise. Perhaps the man of the family may sit awhile at dusk on his mud doortill, with his bubbling water pipe (if he has one), and watch the stars slowly swing across the arch.

A pinch of very bad tobacco is slowly consumed; then he enters the hut, flings himself upon his matting (perhaps a cotton rug, more likely a bundle of woven water reeds), and sleeps. No one wakes him: habit rouses him at dawn. He scrubs his teeth with a fibrous stick. It is a part of his religious belief to keep his teeth clean. The East Indian (Hindu or Mohammedan) has the whitest, soundest teeth in the world if the betelnut is but temperately used.

Beyond this village lay a ruined city, now inhabited by cobras and slinking jackals.

Dawn. A few dung fires smoldered. From the doorway of one of the mud huts came a lean man, his naked torso streaked with wet ashes, his matted hair hanging in knots and tangles on his emaciated shoulders. His aspect was exceedingly filthy; he was a holy man, which in this mad country signifies physical debasement, patience, and fortitude such as would have adorned any other use. A human lamprey, sticking himself always at the thin and meager board of the poor, a vile parasite, but holy!

The holy man directed his steps to the narrow, beaten pathway which led to the temple, where, every morning, he performed certain rites which the poor, benighted ryots believed would some day restore the ruined city and the prosperity which attends fat harvests. The holy man had solemnly declared that it would take no less than ten years to bring about this miracle. And the villagers fell down with their foreheads in the dust. He

where natives were coming and going with water in goatskins and jars and copper vessels, he fell upon his face, rose to his knees, and poured handfuls of dust upon his head.

"Al, al!" he called. "It is almost done, my children. The first sign has come from the gods. I have brought you in human form the ancient priest-ess!" And he really believed he had. "O, my children, my little ones, my kids! I have brought her who will now attend to the sacred fires; for these alone will restore the city as of old, the fat corn, the plenteous fruit. Since the coming of the lion two rains ago the leopard and the striped one have forsaken their lairs. One bullock a month is better than fire, together with the kids and the children. Al! More dust."

Naturally the villagers set down their water skins and jars and copper vessels and looked about this exceptional holy man. They wanted to believe him, but for years nothing had happened but the advent of the lion, whence no one exactly knew, though the holy man had not been backward in claiming it was due to his nearness to the god Vishnu.

They followed him eagerly to the temple. What they beheld transfixed them. A woman with skin like the petals of the lotus and hair like corn sat in the sacred sarcophagus and braided her hair, gazing the while toward the bright sun.

The intake of many breaths produced a sound. Kathlyn turned instantly toward this sound, for a moment expecting the return of the Mon. Immediately holy man and villagers threw themselves upon the ground, striking their foreheads against the damp clay. The alien spirit still ruled the substance; Kathlyn eyed them in mild astonishment, not at all alarmed.

"Al!" shrieked the holy man, springing to his feet. "Al! She is our ancient priestess, rising from her tomb of centuries! Al, al! O, thou unholy children, to doubt my word! Behold! Henceforth she shall share the temple with the lion, and later she will give us prosperity, and my name shall ever be in your households!"

Having secured a priestess, he was now determined that he should not lose her. The future was rosy indeed, and when he took his next pilgrimage to holy Benares they would bestrew his pathway with lotus flowers.

"Wood to start the sacred fires!" he commanded.

The villagers flew to obey his orders. He was indeed a holy man. Not in the memory of the oldest had a miracle such as this happened. Upon their return with wood and embers the holy man built the fire, handing a lighted torch to Kathlyn and signifying for her to touch the tinder. The spirit in Kathlyn told her that these people meant her no immediate harm, so she stepped out of the sarcophagus and applied the torch. The moment the flames began to crackle the villagers prostrated themselves again, and the holy man besmeared his bony chest with more ashes.

A second holy man appeared upon the scene, wanting in breath. His jaw dropped and his eyes started to leave their sockets. Knowing his ilk so thoroughly well, he flung himself down before the braider and beat his forehead upon the ground; not in any chastened spirit, but because he had overslept that morning. This glory might have been his! Al, al!

Later the two conferred. During the day they should guard the priestess, because, having taken human form, she might some day tire of this particular temple. At night she would be well guarded by the lion.

Several awe-stricken women came forward with bowls of cooked rice and fruits and a new copper drinking vessel. These they reverently placed at Kathlyn's feet.

Gradually the spirit which had comforted Kathlyn withdrew, and at length Kathlyn became keenly alive. It entered her mind clearly that these poor, foolish people really believed her a celestial being, and so long as they laid no hand upon her she was not alarmed. She had recently passed through too many terrors to be disturbed by a bit of kindness, even if stirred into being by a religious fanaticism.

Kathlyn ate.

By pairs the villagers departed, and soon none remained save her self-appointed guardians, the two holy men. Kathlyn felt a desire to explore this wonderful temple. She discovered what must have been the inner shrine. The chamber was filled with idols; here and there a bit of gold leaf, centuries old, glistened upon the bronze, the clay, the wood. The caste mark on the largest idol's head was a polished ruby, overlooked doubtless during the looting. She swept the dust from the jewel with the tip of her finger, and the dull fire sent a shiver of delight over her. She was still a woman.

As she wandered farther in her foot touched something and she looked down. It was a bone; in fact, the foot was strewn with bones. She quickly discerned, much to her relief, that none of these bones were human. This was, or had been, the den of the lion. There was an acrid, unpleasant odor, so she hurried back to the braider. Vaguely she comprehended that she must keep the fire replenished from time to time in order to pacify the two holy men. At night it would feed off any approach of the lion.

Bruce, indeed! At that very moment he was rushing out of Kumar's presence, wild to be off toward the road to Allah, since Kathlyn had not been seen upon it. He found where Rajah had veered off into the jungle again, and followed the trail tirelessly. But it was to be his misfortune all ways to arrive too late.

To Kathlyn the day passed with nothing more than the curiosity of the natives to disturb her. They brought her cotton blankets which she arranged in the sarcophagus. There were worse beds in the world than this; at least it shielded her from the bitter night wind.

She ate again at sundown and bulle-dug the sacred fire and tried to plan some manner of escape; for she did not propose to be a demigoddess any longer than was necessary. From Pundita she had learned many words and a few phrases in Hindustani, and she ventured to speak them to the holy men, who seemed quite delighted. They could understand her, but she on her part could make little or nothing of their jabbering. Nevertheless, she pretended.

Finally the holy men departed, after having indicated the sacred fire and the wood beside it. This fire pleased Kathlyn mightily. While it burned brightly the lion would not prowl in her immediate vicinity. She wondered where this huge cat had come from, since she knew her natural history well enough to know the African lions did not inhabit this part of the globe. Doubtless it had escaped from some private menagerie.

The mrs. then, giving her confidence, she did not get into the sarcophagus, but wandered about, building in her fancy the temple as it had stood in its prime. The ceilings had been magnificently carved, no two subjects alike; and the walls were of marble and jasper and porphyry. A magic continent this Asia in its heyday.

When her forefathers had been rude barbarians, sailing the north seas or sacrificing in Druidical rites, there had been art and culture here such as has never been surpassed. India, of splendid pagodas, or brave warriors and gallant kings! Alas, how the might had fallen! About her, penury, meanness, hypocrisy, uncleanness, thievery, and unbridled passions. . . . What was that? Her heart missed a beat. That pad-pad; that sniffling noise!

She whirled about, knocking over an idol. It came down with a crash and, being of clay, lay in shards at her feet. (Unfortunately it was the holy of holies in this temple.) How she



Kathlyn Becomes the Vestal in the Ruined Temple.

gained the shelter of the sarcophagus she never knew, but gain it she did, and covered down within. She could hear the beast trotting round and round, sniffing and rumbling in his throat. Then the roaring of the preceding night was repeated. The old fellow evidently could not find those other lions who roared back at him so valiantly. Evidently fire had no terrors for him. For an hour or more he patrolled the portico, and all this time Kathlyn did not stir, hardly daring to breathe for fear he might undertake to peer into the sarcophagus.

Silence. A low roar from the inner shrine told her that for the present she was safe. Tomorrow she must fly, whither did not matter. Toward four o'clock she fell into a dose and was finally awakened by the sound of voices raised in anger.

Poor sheep! They had discovered the shattered idol. It did not matter at all that the return of their ancient goddess was to bring back prosperity. She had broken their favorite idol. Damnation would come in a devil's wink that night.

The holy man who had missed the chance of claiming the miraculous appearance of Kathlyn as a work of his own now saw an opportunity to rehabilitate himself in the eyes of those who had made his holiness a comfortable existence. With a piece of the idol in his hand he roused Kathlyn and shook the clay before her face, jabbering violently. Kathlyn understood readily enough. She had unwittingly committed a sacrilege.

The natives gathered about and menaced her. Kathlyn rose, standing in the sarcophagus, and extended her hands for silence. She was frightened, but it would never do to let them see it. What Hindustani she knew used in this case by no manner of use. But we human beings can, by facial expression and gesture, make known our messages with understandable clearness. From her gestures, then, the holy men gathered that she could recreate the god. She pointed toward the sun and counted on her fingers.

The premier holy man, satisfied that he understood Kathlyn's gestures, turned to the justly angered villagers and explained that with his aid their priestess would, in five years, recreate

Vishnu in all his beauty. Instantly the villagers prostrated themselves.

"Poor things!" murmured Kathlyn. The holy men sent the natives away, for it was not meet that they should witness magic in the making. They then squatted in the clay court and curiously waited for her to begin. There was a well in the inner shrine. To this she went with caution. The lion was evidently foraging in the jungle. Kathlyn filled the copper vessel with water and returned. Next, she gathered up what pieces of the idol she could find and placed them together. Here was her model. She then approached one of the fakirs and signified that she had need of his knife. He demurred at first, but at length consented to part with it. She dug up a square piece of clay. In fine, she felt more like the Kathlyn of old than she had since completing the leopard in her outdoor studio. It occupied her thoughts, at least part of them, for she realized that maybe her life depended upon her skill in reproducing the hideous idol.

As the two old hypocrites saw the clay take form and shape and the mocking face gradually appear, they were assured that Kathlyn was indeed the ancient priestess; and deep down in their souls they experienced something of the awe they had often inspired in the poor, trusting ryot.

Kathlyn had talent bordering on genius. The idol was an exact replica of the original one; more, there was a subtle beauty now where before there had been a frank repulsiveness. It satisfied the holy men, and the unveiling was greeted by the villagers with such joy that Kathlyn forgave them and could have wept over them. She had made a god for them, and they fell down and worshipped it.

Five more days passed. On the afternoon of the fifth day Kathlyn was feeding the fire. The holy men sat in the court at their devotions. Kathlyn turned from the fire to see them rise and flee in terror. She in turn fled, for the lion stood between her and the sarcophagus! The lion roared, lashing his tail. The many recent commotions within and without the temple had finally roused his ire. He heated between the holy men and Kathlyn, and finally concluded that she in the fluttering robes would be the most desirable.

There was no particular hurry; besides, he was not hungry. The cat in him wanted to play. He loped after Kathlyn easily. At any time he chose a few swift bounds would bring him to her side.

Beyond the temple lay the same stream by which, miles away, Kathlyn had seen the federal pyre and about which she had had so weird a fantasy. If this stream was deep there was a chance for life.

CHAPTER VII. "Truce Water."

When Kathlyn came to the river she swerved toward the broadest part of it. Twice she stumbled over boulders, but rose pluckily and, bruised and breathless, plunged into the water. It was swift running and shoulder deep, and she was forced to swim strongly to gain the opposite shore. She dragged herself up to the bank and, once there, looked back. What she saw rather astonished her. She could not solve the riddle at first.

The lion seemed to be struggling with some invisible opponent. He stood knee deep in the sands, tugging and pulling. He began to roar. Even as Kathlyn gazed she saw his chest touch the sand and his swelling flanks sink lower. Fascinated, she could not withdraw her gaze. How his mighty shoulders heaved and pulled! But down, down, lower and lower, till nothing but the great maned head remained in view. Then that was drawn down; the sand filled the animal's mouth and stopped his roaring; lower, lower. . . .

Quickness! The spot where he had disappeared stirred and glistened and shuddered, and then the eternal blankness of sand.

She was not, then, to die! Should she return to the temple? Would they not demand of her the restoration of the lion? She must go on, whither she knew not. She regretted the peace of the temple in the daytime. She could see the dome where she stood. Like Ishmael, she must go on, forever and forever. Was God watching over her? Was it his hand which stayed the onslaught of the beast and defeated the baser schemes of man? Was there to be a haven at the end? She smiled wanly. What more was to beset her path she knew not, nor cared just then, since there was to be a haven at the end.

Perhaps prescience brought to her mind's eye a picture: she saw her father, and Bruce, and Winnie, and her sweetheart, and they seemed to be teasing her from the end of a long table, under the blue California sky. This vision renewed her strength. She proceeded onward.

She must have followed the river at least a mile when she spied a raft moored to a clump of trees. Here she saw a way of saving her weary limbs many a rugged mile. She forded the stream, freed the raft and poled out into the middle of the stream.

It happened that the Mohammedan hunters who owned the raft were at this moment swinging along toward the temple. On the shoulders of two rested a pole from which dangled the lifeless body of a newly killed leopard. They were bringing it in as a gift to the headman of the village, who was a thoroughgoing Mohammedan, and who held in contempt Hinduism and all its amazing ramifications.

The white priestess was indeed a puzzle; for, while the handful of Mohammedans in the village were fanatical in their belief in the true prophet and his Koran, and put little faith in miracles and still less in holy men who performed them, the advent of the white priestess deeply mystified them. There was no getting around this: she was there; with their own eyes they saw her. There might be something in Hinduism after all.

When the hunters arrived at the portico of the temple they found two greatly terrified holy men, shrieking their "Al! Al!" in lamentation and beating their foreheads against the earth.

"Holy men, what is wrong?" asked one of the hunters, respectfully.

"The lion has killed our priestess; the sacred fires must die again! Al! Al!"

"Where is the lion?"

"They fled toward the river, and there he has doubtless destroyed her, for in evil Siva, represented by the lion, is more powerful than Vishnu, re-incarnated in our priestess. Al! Al! She is dead and we are undone!"

"Come," said the chief huntsman. "Let us run to the river and see what these queer gods are doing. We'll present the skin of Siva to our master!" He laughed.

The leopard carriers deposited their burden and all started off at a dog-trot. They had always been eager regarding this lion. In the temple he was inviolable; but at large, that was a different matter.

Arriving at the river brink, they saw the footprints of the lion on the wet sand which ran down to the water. To leap from this spot to the water was not possible for any beast of the jungle. Yet the lion had vanished completely, as though he had been given wings. They stood about in awe till one of the older hunters knelt, reached out, and dug his hand into the innocent looking sand. Instantly he leaped to his feet and jumped back.

"The sucking sand!" he cried. "To the raft!"

They skirted the dangerous quicksands and dashed along the banks to discover that their raft was gone. Vishnu, then, as reincarnated, required solid transportation, after the manner of human beings? They became angry. A raft was a raft, substantial, necessary; and there was no reason why a god who had ten thousand temples for his own should stoop to rob a poor man of his wherewithal to travel in safety.

"The mugger!" exclaimed one, "let the high priestess beware of the mugger, for he is strong enough to tip over the raft!"

Nearly every village which lies close to a stream has its family crocodile. He is very sacred and thrives comfortably upon suicides and the dead which are often cast into the river to be purified. The Hindus are a suicidal race; the reverse of the occidental conception, suicide is a quick and glorious route to heaven.

The current of the stream carried Kathlyn along at a fair pace; all she had to do was to pole away from the numerous sand bars and such boulders as lifted their rugged heads above the water.

Round a bend the river widened and grew correspondingly sluggish. She sounded with her pole. Something hideous beyond words arose—a fat, aged, crafty crocodile. His corrugated snout was thrust quickly over the edge of the raft. She struck at him wildly with the pole, and in a fury he rushed the raft, upsetting Kathlyn.

The crocodile sank and for a moment lost sight of Kathlyn, who waded frantically to the bank, up which she scrambled. She turned in time to see the crocodile's fearful eyes staring up at her from the water's edge. He presently slid back into his slimy bed; a few yellow bubbles, and he was gone.

Kathlyn's heart became suddenly and unaccountably swollen with rage; she became primordial; she wanted to hurt, maim, kill. Childishly she stooped and picked up heavy stones which she hurled into the water. The instinct to live flamed so strongly in her that the crust of civilization fell away like mist before the sun, and for a long time the pure savage (which lies dormant in us all) ruled her. She would live, live, live: she would live

to forget this oriental inferno through which she was passing.

She ran toward the jungle, all unconscious of the stone she still held in her hand. She lost all sense of time and compass; and so ran in a half circle, coming out at the river again.

The Indian twilight was rising in the east when she found herself again looking out upon the water, the stone still clutched tightly. She gazed at the river, then at the stone, and again at the river. The stone dropped with a thud at her feet. The savage in her had not abated in the least; only her body was terribly worn and weakened and the robe, muddled and torn, enveloped her like a veil of ice. Above her the lonely yellow sky; below her the sickly river; all about her silence which held a thousand sentences. Which way should she go? Where could she possibly find shelter for the night?

The chill roused her finally and she swung her arms to renew the circulation. Next by she saw a tree in the

crook of which reposed a platform, and upon this platform sat a shrine. A few withered flowers hung about the gross neck of the idol, and withered flowers lay scattered at the base of the tree. There was also a bundle

of dry rushes which some devotee had forgotten. At least, yonder platform would afford safety through the night. So, with the last bit of strength at her command, she gathered up the rushes and climbed to the platform, arranging her bed behind the idol. She covered her shoulders with the rushes and drew her knees up to her chin. She had forgotten her father, Bruce, the happy days in a far country; she had had but a single thought, to sleep.

What the want of sleep could not perform exhaustion could, and presently she lay still.

Thus, she neither saw nor heard the pious pilgrims who were on their way to Allah to pray in that temple known to offer protection against wild beasts. Fortunately, they did not observe her.

The pilgrim is always a pilgrim in India; it becomes, one might say, a fascinating kind of sport. To most of them, short pilgrimages are as tame as rabbits would be to the hunter of lions. They will walk from Bombay to Benares, from Madras to Lhasa, begging and bragging all the way. Eventually they become semi-holy, distinguished citizens in a clutter of mud huts.

They deposited some corn and fruit at the foot of the tree and departed, leaving Kathlyn in peace. But later, when the moon poured its white, cold radiance over her face it awakened her, and it took her some time to realize where she was.

Below, belly deep in the river, stood several water buffaloes, their sweeping horns glistening like old ivory in the moonshine. Presently a leopard stole down to the brink and lapped the water greedily, from time to time throwing a hasty, apprehensive glance over his sleek shoulders. The buffaloes never stirred; where they were it was safe. Across the river a bulky shadow moved in the night, and a fat, brown bear took his tithe of the water. The leopard snarled and slunk off. The bear washed his face, possibly sticky with purloined wild honey, and betook himself back to his lair.

Kathlyn suddenly became aware of the fact that she was a spectator of a scene such as few human beings are permitted to see; true water where the wild beasts do not kill each other. She grew so interested that she forgot her plight. The tree stood only a few feet from the water, so she saw everything distinctly.

Later, when his majesty the tiger made his appearance dramatically, the buffalo simply moved closer together, presenting a formidable frontage of horns.

Never had Kathlyn seen such an enormous beast. From his great padded paws to his sloping shoulders he stood easily four feet in height, and his stripes were almost as broad as her hand. He drank, doubtless, eying the buffalo speculatively; some other time. Then he, too, sat on his haunches and washed his face, but with infinite gracefulness. It occurred to the watcher that, familiar as she was with the habits of wild beasts, never had she witnessed a tiger or a lion enact this domestic scene. Either they were always pacing their cages, gawking far over the heads of those who watched them, or they slept. Even when they finished a meal of raw meat they merely licked their chops; there was no toilet.

Here, however, was an elaborate toilet. The great cat licked his paws, drew them across his face; then licked his beautiful sides, purring; for the night was so still and the beast was so near that she could see him quite plainly. He stretched himself, took another drink, and trotted off to the jungle.

Then came a herd of elephants, for each species seemed to have an appointed time. The buffalo emerged and fled away into the dark. The elephants plunged into the water, squealing, making sport, squirting water over their backs and rolling, head under; and they buffeted one another amiably, and there was a baby who seemed to get in everybody's way and the grownups treated him shabbily. By and by, too, trotted off. Then came wild pigs, and furtive antelope, and foalish, chattering apes.

At last the truce water became deserted and Kathlyn lay down again, only to be surprised by a huge ape who stuck his head up over the edge of the platform. The surprise was mutual. Kathlyn pushed the idol toward him. The splash of it in the water scared off the unwelcome guest, and then Kathlyn lay down and slept.

A day or so later Bruce arrived at the temple. Day after day he had hung to the trail, picking it up here and losing it there. He found Rajah, the elephant, the howdah gone, and only the ornamental headpiece discovered to Bruce that he had found his rogue. Rajah was docile enough; he had been domesticated so long that his freedom rather irked him.

Bruce elicited from the mourning holy men the amazing adventure in all its details. Kathlyn had disappeared in the jungle and not even the tried hunters could find her. She was lost. Bruce, though in his heart of hearts he believed her dead, took up the trail again. But many weary weeks were to pass ere he learned that she lived.

He shook his fist toward Allah. "O, Durga Ram, one of these fine days you and I shall square accounts!"

Kathlyn had just completed for herself a dress of grass. Three years before she had learned the trick from the natives of Hawaii. The many days of hardship had made her thinner, but never had she been so hardy, so clear-eyed, so quick and lithe in her actions. She had lived precariously, stealing her food at dusk from the fields of the ryots; sugar cane, raw vegetables, plantains, mangoes. Some- times she rested—

land where there were white people; but each morning found her hesitant. Behind her tree there was a clearing, then a jumble of thick growing trees; beyond those was another clearing, upon which stood a deserted elephant stockade. The grass had grown rank in it for want of use. She was in the act of putting on grass sandals when she saw, to her dismay, the approach of men and elephants. Two elephants were ridden by mahouts. Two other elephants were being led toward the stockade, evidently new captives. They proceeded passively, however, for elephants submit to captivity with less real trouble than any other wild beast. Kathlyn crouched low in the grass and waited till men and elephants entered the stockade; then she ran quickly toward her haven, the platform in the tree. She never went very far from this, save in search of food. She had also recovered the idol and set it back in its place. It was not, fortunately, a much frequented spot. It was for the benefit of the occasional pilgrim, the ryots having shrines more conveniently situated.

She nestled down among her rushes and waited. She could not see the stockade from where she now was, but she could hear shouts from the mahouts.

Recently she had discovered a leopard's lair near the stockade and was very careful to avoid it, much as she wanted to seize the pretty cubs and run away with them. By this time she knew the habits, fears, and hatreds of these people of the jungle, and she scrupulously attended to her affairs as they attended to theirs. Sometimes the great striped tiger prowled about the base of the tree, sharpened his claws on the bark, but he never attempted to ascend to the platform. Perhaps he realized the uselessness of investigation, since the platform made it impossible for him to see what was up there. But always now, to and from the truce water, he paused, looked up, circled the tree, and went away mystified.

Only the grass-eating beasts came down to water that night, and Kathlyn understood by this that the men and the elephants were still in the stockade.

bered in order that she might break the oppressive silence which always surrounded her.

She kept carefully out of the way of all human beings, so she had lost all hope of succor from the brown people, who had become so hateful to her as the scavengers of the jungle. There was something to admire in the tiger, the leopard, the wild elephant; but she placed all natives (perhaps wrongly) in a class with the jackals and hyenas.

Tanned deeply by wind and sun, Kathlyn was darker than many a native woman. Often she thought of Bruce, but hope of his fading her had long since died within her. Bruce might when she climbed to her platform she vowed she would start again the next morning; south, toward the

land where there were white people; but each morning found her hesitant. Behind her tree there was a clearing, then a jumble of thick growing trees; beyond those was another clearing, upon which stood a deserted elephant stockade. The grass had grown rank in it for want of use. She was in the act of putting on grass sandals when she saw, to her dismay, the approach of men and elephants. Two elephants were ridden by mahouts. Two other elephants were being led toward the stockade, evidently new captives. They proceeded passively, however, for elephants submit to captivity with less real trouble than any other wild beast. Kathlyn crouched low in the grass and waited till men and elephants entered the stockade; then she ran quickly toward her haven, the platform in the tree. She never went very far from this, save in search of food. She had also recovered the idol and set it back in its place. It was not, fortunately, a much frequented spot. It was for the benefit of the occasional pilgrim, the ryots having shrines more conveniently situated.

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The following morning she went down to the stream to bathe; at the same time the parent leopards came for drink. They had not cared to seek their lair during the night on account of the fires; and, worrying over their cubs, they were not in the most agreeable mood.

Kathlyn saw their approach in time to reach her platform. They snarled about the tree, and the male climbed up as far as the platform. Kathlyn reached over with a stout club and slouted the brute on his tender nose.

A shot broke the silence and a bullet spat angrily against the tree trunk. Two cubs fled. Immediately there came a squealing and trumpeting from the stockade.

This is what had happened: The chief mahout had discovered the cubs and had taken them into the stockade just as another hunter had espied the parent leopards. The rifle shot had frightened one of the wild elephants. With a mighty plunge he had broken the chain which held him prisoner to the decoy elephant and pushed through the rotten stockade, heading straight for the river.

Kathlyn saw his bulk as it crashed straight through the brush. It shuffled directly toward her tree. The ground about was of clay, merging into sand as it sloped toward the river. The frantic runaway slipped, crashed against the tree trunk, recovered himself, and went splashing into the water.

Kathlyn was flung headlong and only the water saved her from severe bodily harm. When she recovered her senses she was surrounded by a group of very much astonished Mohammedans.

They jabbered and gesticulated to one another and she was conducted to the stockade. She understood but two words—"Allah" and "live."

(To be continued.)



In the Shadow of Danger.

was a Brahmin; the caste string hung about his neck; he was indeed holy, he who could dwell on the fat of the land, in maharajahs' courts. The least that can be said is that he performed his duties scrupulously.

So, then, the red rim of the March sun shouldered up above the rolling jungle as he came into the beaten clay court which fronted the temple. The lion stalked off at night, rarely appearing in the daytime. Once a month he was given a bullock, for he kept tiger and leopard away, and the villagers dwelt in peace. The lion had escaped from Allah, where the species were kept as an additional sport. Since he had taken up his abode in the temple there had been fewer thefts from the cattle sheds.

The holy men was about to assume his squatting posture in the center of the court, as usual, when from out of the sarcophagus rose languidly a form, shrouded in white. The form stretched its lovely arms, white as alabaster, and presently the hands rubbed a pair of sleepy eyes. Then the form sat down within the sarcophagus, laid its arms on the rim and wearily hid its face in them.

The watcher was the most dumfounded holy man in all India. For the first time in his hypocritical life he found faith in himself, in his puerile rites. He had conjured up yonder spirit, unaided alone. He rose, turned, and never a holy man faster. When he arrived, passing had veiled, at the village wall.