



Drawn by J. R. Shaver

MISTAKEN IDENTITY

AUNT MARY: Bobby, how do you like your new little brother?
BOBBY: That thing my little brother? Oh, Aunt Mary, he must be mistaken!

A PERSIAN FAIRY TALE

BY MADGE C. JENISON

(The writer obtained the substance of this tale from an American missionary to Persia.)

LONG, long ago, in those days when men were yet at times the victims of fraud and treachery, a man had a wife named Kadajah. The bonds of Hymen had not long been tied before Kadajah proved herself a frightful scold. Day and night her tongue ran as slick as a fiddle-stick, and always out of tune. Life with her became shortly so unbearable that the man took her by the hair of her head and cast her into a well-hole.

For a day he enjoyed sweet peace, and then there arose from the pit such a commotion as brought the man running to the edge.

"Alas! Alas!" cried a piteous voice from the darkness.

The man seated himself easily on the edge of the pit; the voice was not Kadajah's.

"What's up?" he inquired with interest.

The voice grew high, and shrill with excitement.

"It's me. It's a dragon. Have pity, I beseech you! Rescue me! I am alone with a dreadful creature who harangues me day and night."

"Oh, that!" interrupted the man. "That's only a scold. That's Kadajah," and he went on about his business.

The dragon did not cease for many days to implore help; but the man, from being deceived in a wife, had grown wary, and thought a well as good a place for a dragon as any.

At length the dragon promised that if it

were released it would make the man grand vizir of the kingdom.

"But how can you do that?" said the man, who believed himself adapted to high life.

"I will place myself at the gate of the king's palace," said the dragon, "and I will devour all those who go out and those who come in. Then will the king issue a proclamation which will promise the man who rids the land of its affliction the hand of his daughter, in marriage, and the staff of his grand vizir. When you hear the proclamation, you can come, and I will go away."

The man was much pleased with this plan, and he hastened to pull the dragon from the pit. Everything happened as the dragon prophesied; the man became grand vizir; he had the princess for his bride; and his fame as a magician went through the land.

It was not difficult to conduct a magician business; until the third moon his prosperity continued. Then he was summoned in hot haste to the court of a neighboring king.

"Oh, man, live forever!" said the courier from the neighboring kingdom. "A dragon has seated itself at the gate of my lord's palace, and devours without ceasing all those who go forth and those who enter in. What may be done? Thy great name, oh, most excellent, has no power, and at its sound the monster licks its lips as if it hungered for your bones."

The man was at his wit's end. If he went, he judged that the dragon would do no less than make an end of him, and his princess would be left a widow. If he refused to go, the magician business would be bankrupt, and some one else would become grand vizir. After much thought, he hit upon a plan. Seating himself upon a snow-white palfrey, he gathered about him enough retinue to make his appearance imposing, and rode away to the neighboring kingdom. The dragon saw the retinue from afar off and began to spit fire in a most disconcerting manner. And when it saw the man seated upon the snow-white palfrey, it bellowed until the earth shook as with palsy, and fell upon him with an air of the keenest relish.

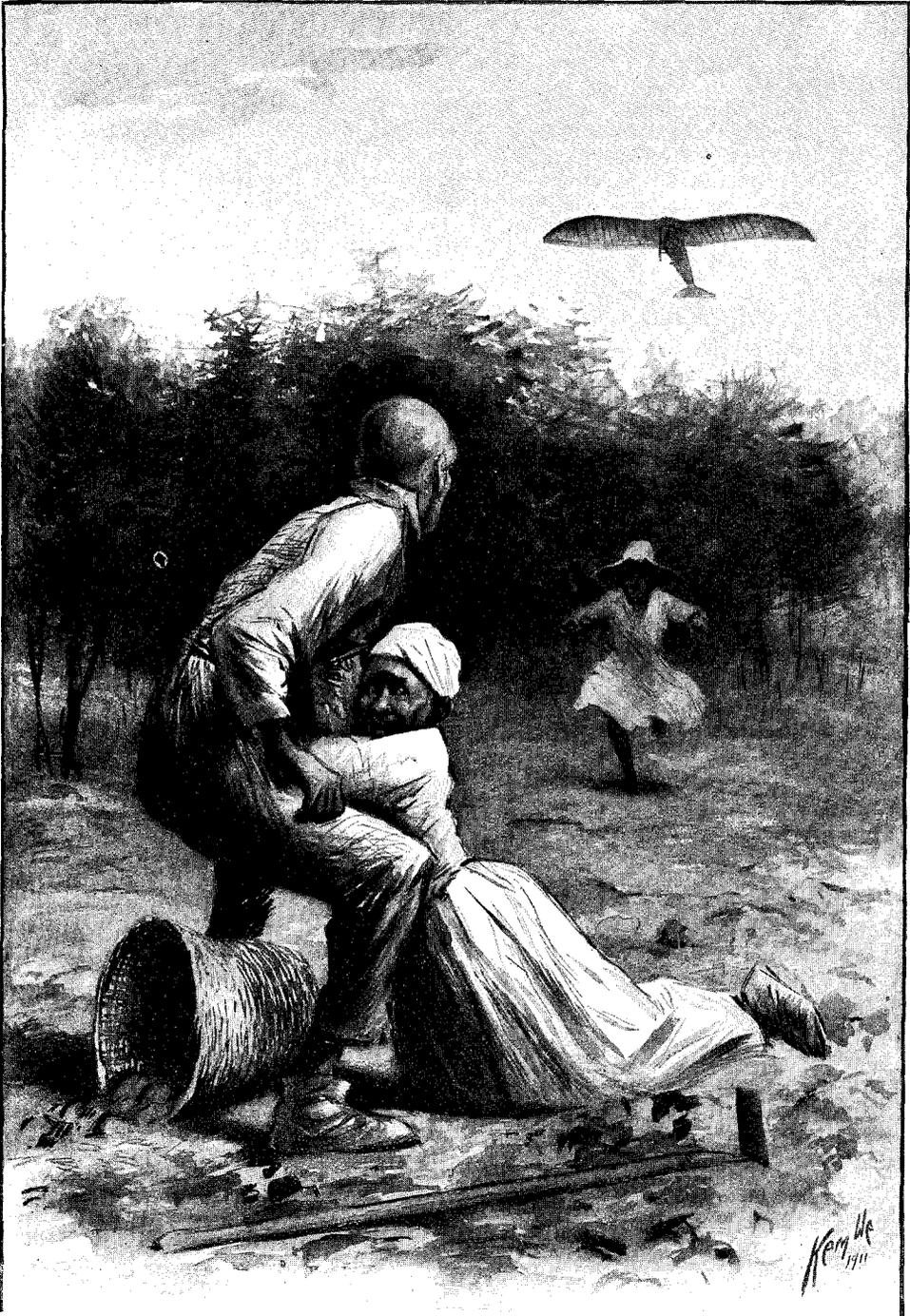
"Stop!" cried the man, nonchalantly lighting a cigarette at the dragon's breath. "I have let Kadajah out of the well-hole, and she is coming this way as fast as she can."

"Is she a good runner?" asked the dragon.

"She is," replied the man, whereupon the dragon fell back hastily.

After a moment, the man removed his cigarette, and used his hands for a speaking-trumpet. "If I hear where you are, I'll send her your way," he shouted.

MORAL: Some men have the ability to use their misfortunes as stepping-stones to success.



Drawn by E. W. Kemble

A "SIGN" IN THE SKY

"Bow down, Melinda. It am de ang'l Gab'l fo' shuah!"