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BORN AMONG BRIGANDS

Mrs. Tsilka's Story of her Baby

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Mrs. Katerina Stefanovna Tsilka is a Bulgarian by birth, and was educated in America at Northfield Seminary, later graduating from the Training School for Nurses of the Presbyterian Hospital in New York City. After serving some time at her profession in America, she was married to the Rev. Gregory Tsilka, an Albanian by birth, who was graduated from the Union Theological Seminary in New York. Returning to Turkey, they began their missionary work at Kortcha in Albania. On September 3, 1901, Mrs. Tsilka, with Miss Stone, was captured by Macedonian brigands.

IT was a winter night, the 3d of January, 1902. The sky was beautiful and bright with a myriad of twinkling stars. Gigantic mountains towered on both sides of a mountain path which wound itself along a murmuring brook.

A mysterious party was moving cautiously and rapidly along the narrow trail. Three men in single file, about sixty or seventy feet ahead, watched for any danger, ready to signal for retreat if necessary. Four or five men followed, then two horses, whose riders were carefully wrapped in long black *kepes* (mountaineer coats of padded goats' hair). Heavy hoods covered their heads, hiding half of their faces. Each horse was led by a guard. On each side of both riders also marched other guards holding fast to their saddles. This was to protect the riders from unexpected falls. Close behind the horses more men followed, and then about ninety or 100 feet behind was the rear-guard, consisting of two or three men. There were also a number of scouts who, shadow-like, appeared and disappeared among the trees. The whole party, except the scouts, moved in single file. They wore black *kepes*. Daggers hung from their belts. Each man had a revolver on his left, and a loaded gun, firmly held in his right hand. Cartridge-belts crossed their breasts and surrounded their waists. Their steps were light. Only their heavy breathing was heard as they climbed the mountain side. No talk, no cough-

ing, no sneezing was allowed. The dead silence was occasionally broken by the clink of some dagger hitting against a gun. Now and then a whistle was heard, a signal at which every man instantly took position to fire; but, thank God, there was no occasion for firing that night. This peculiar party moved on and on for ten hours. Suddenly it halted in a ravine. The riders dismounted and sat down, while the others proceeded to smoke cigarettes. One of these riders was Miss Ellen M. Stone, captured on the 3d of September, and dragged through the mountains in this fashion, now exactly four months. The second rider was myself, her companion in misery. The armed men were, of course, the brigands who caught us.

After a few moments' rest, the signal was given to proceed, the journey now being no longer by a path, but up the untraveled mountain side, over shrubs and thorns and stones. We had to climb on foot, for it was impossible to hold on in the saddle. For me, walking was not to be thought of: how could it be expected of a woman who was awaiting the advent of her little one any day or night, and who had traveled ten hours in the wintry cold night on the rough mountains? Now for the first time I had no fear of the brigands, for they could do nothing worse than kill me, and I cared not whether I lived or died. When they ordered us to climb I sat down and refused to move.

"Go," I said, "and leave me here to die in peace. It is wicked and outrageous to drive about a woman in my condition."

Two strong arms lifted me and dragged me up the fearful mountain side. I had no strength to speak or cry, I had no hope left. After a time, I do not know how long, we reached a peculiar little hut among trees and rocks.

Two or three men inspected it cautiously, and finding it deserted, forced the door open. Miss Stone and I sat down outside until they were ready to ask us in. The hut was constructed on an elevation projecting between two lofty mountains. Streamlets of water oozed out from the cracks of the rocks. The ground was covered with heavy frost; it was very cold. Soon a blazing fire from the hut reflected itself on the opposite mountain side. Now we were motioned to enter. My feet were numb with cold, but I was suffering so much with the pain of fatigue that I did not sit near the fire to get warm. I looked for a place to lie down and rest my aching back. In a corner near the fire some straw was spread. A log was given me for a pillow. A *kepe* was then spread over the straw, and this was to be my bed. I lay down half-dead with exhaustion and pain. Miss Stone sat near the fire and talked with the brigands, who were drying their foot wrappings, and then she lay down beside me. They stretched themselves every which way on the part of the floor not occupied by us. Only one stood guard. The fire burned brightly, the smoke floated like a cloud around the room, and found its way out through the cracks, for there was no chimney. The men slept and snored heavily. I turned and twisted, but no position was comfortable. I sat up in bed and looked around. Four stone walls and a thatched roof shining with soot inclosed the little room. On either side stood two tremendous wine casks;* one was old and broken, the other smelled of fresh wine. A small wooden tub and a gourd stood near at hand. These were all the belongings of our hut. The smoke blinded my eyes, and the tears began to run down my cheeks. I wished there was a chimney, for the smoke was oppressive. How the brigands did snore! I looked at Miss Stone, lying close by my side. She was sound asleep. Her pretty, small hands were laid one on top of the other, under her cheek; they were black with dust and smoke. I smiled as I looked at her, but my smile soon disappeared, for a fearful pain shot through my back. Again I turned and looked at Miss

Stone; I both pitied and envied her. "She is tired, but she can sleep at least." A pair of black eyes attracted my attention. The guard was closely watching me from his dark corner. I became nervous and turned my back to him.

"Why don't you sleep?" Miss Stone said. "Lie down, childie."

I did so, but another pain, worse than the previous, forced me to get up again. I thought I was too tired to rest. "That wretched saddle nearly broke my back last night," I said. Miss Stone went sound asleep again. The men snored as usual, the guards changed.

Some one pushed the door open, and to my surprise it was daylight. Presently the brigands began to stir. Some got up, sat around the fire, opened their knapsacks, and proceeded to breakfast on dry bread and cheese. Others slept on. Those who finished breakfasting went to sleep again.

Now it was some time after midday. All were asleep again except the guard. I was getting more and more miserable. The guard turned and looked at me thoughtfully, then stepped near the chief brigand and whispered something in his ear.

He at once sat up, rubbed his eyes, looked toward me, and finally addressed me:

"Madam, you had better lie down and sleep; to-night we have a long journey to make."

I broke into tears and sobs.

"How can I travel? My hour has come! What will become of my dear baby? They will kill it as soon as it comes into the world."

At this Miss Stone wakened.

"Why do you cry, childie?"

No answer was necessary. She understood it all. She turned and spoke to the chief. She said it was impossible for me to travel that night.

"We must," he said. "We must leave this place; it is dangerous."

"Kill me if you wish it, but I do not move from this hut to-night. If I die, let me die here and not on the road," I said.

He again lay down, but not to sleep. He became anxious; he twisted and turned and watched me closely. His heart was touched. He was human, after all.

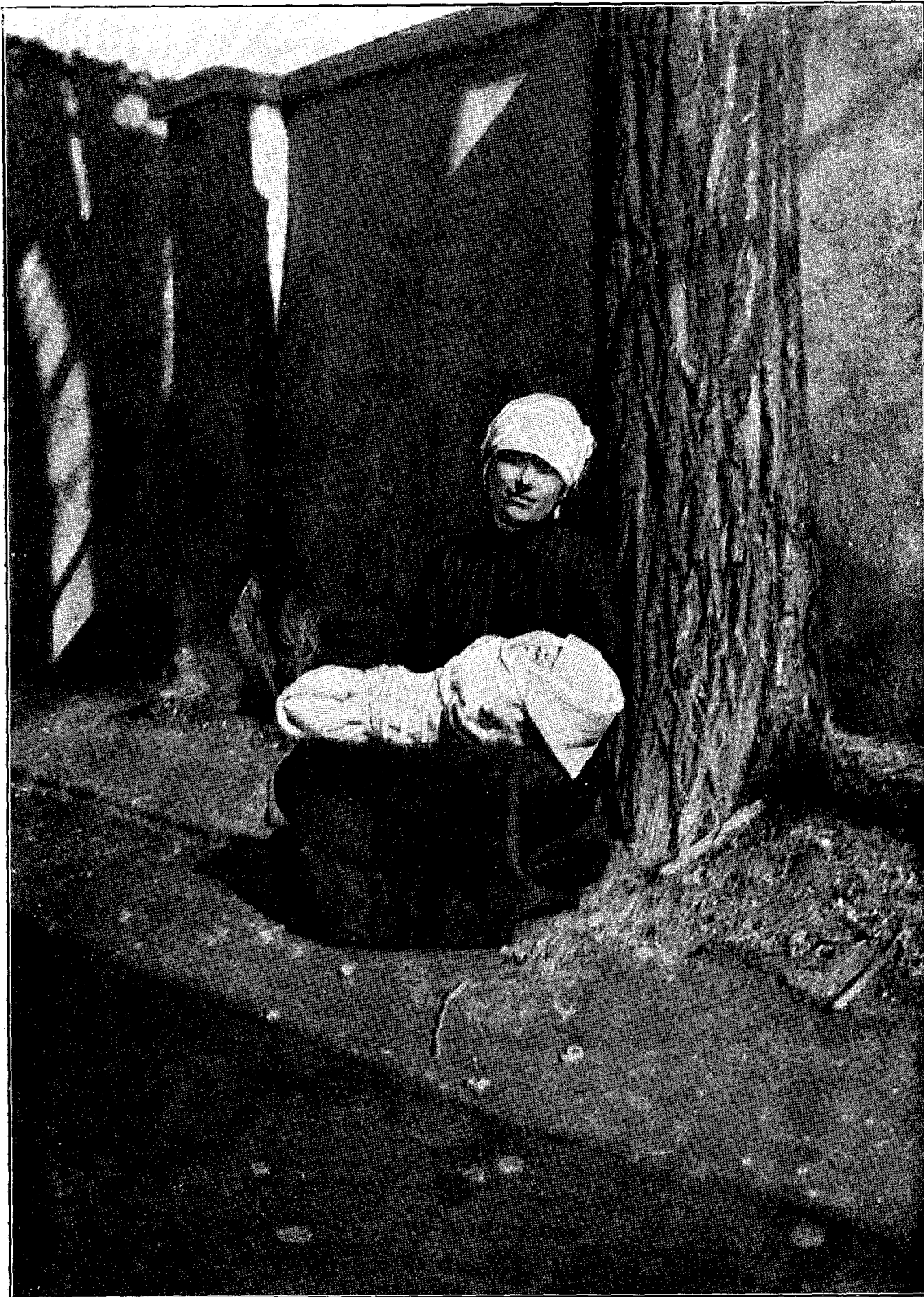
"If madam wishes, we shall all go out and leave you alone," he said somewhat gently.

"Yes," I said very quickly and positively.

He then touched each man, until they all were sitting up rubbing their eyes, trying to awaken and see what was going on.

"Hasten," he said. The men were on their feet and at once disappeared. Miss Stone and I were left alone.

* It is the custom for the people in that region to have their wine cellars near the vineyards, far from their dwellings.



THE MOTHER AND HER BABY

The first picture of them ever taken

The hours dragged slowly. My agony was intolerable. Miss Stone was getting more and more nervous. She dreaded my fate. No bed, no clothes, no convenience of any kind, not even water. Fire was all we had, but in spite of it the room was very cold, for there were big open spaces all around the thatched roof. I had on two thick pairs of stockings and heavy boots, but still my feet were cold.



MME. TSILKA AND HER BABY AS THEY APPEARED DURING
THEIR CAPTIVITY

husband, and tell him how dearly I loved them this four months. My heart ached with pain when I thought of their sorrow and grief for me, and especially when they should hear that I had died under such circumstances.

A gentle hand touched the door. A woman! What a surprise. We had longed to see a woman for the last four months. How happy we both were to see one again. A woman! Evidently the brigands had taken her from some hut, and against her will brought her to us for the emergency. She was an old woman, perhaps fifty or sixty years of age. Her face was pleasant, her features regular, though lacking intelligence. It was difficult to ascertain what race she belonged to, for she was black with smoke and dirt. The spaces between her heavy wrinkles were embedded with dirt, accumulated there for months, and perhaps years. The gray hair hung loosely over her forehead and eyebrows. Her head was covered with a kerchief which had been white once upon a time. She also wore a black garment so patched that there was very little left of the original. Half of a sleeve and the collar were entirely gone. Her feet were bare and chapped from the cold and exposure.

She looked at us with

"No," I said, "I shall never pull through. If I survive the pain, the cold will kill me."

Then I decided to leave my message to my husband and mother. I asked Miss Stone to give my engagement and wedding rings to my

great surprise and reverence. Our ways and clothes were a mystery to her. She looked at us as if to say, "What creatures these mortals be!" She had never seen other people outside her family. The poor woman ap-

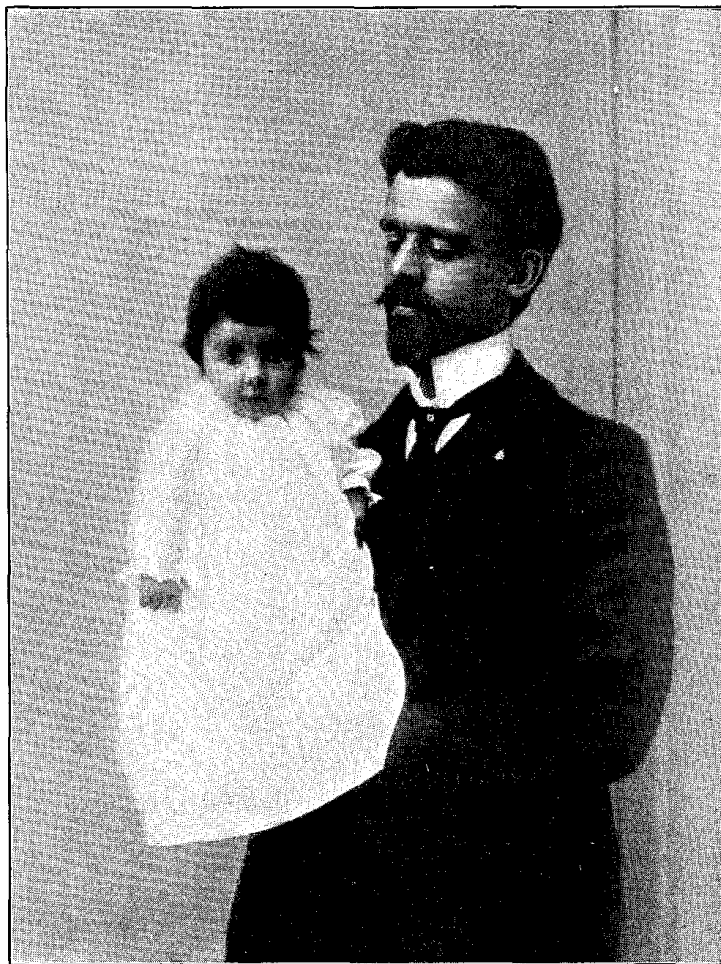
peared frightened by the brigands, who had strongly forbidden her to talk to us on any subject, except concerning the one thing for which she was brought to us. The first thing she did was to fetch a dish of water. She asked me in the most matter-of-fact way to drink some of the water, and also to be sprinkled with it. "Do," she said. "It is sacred water." I, however, refused very politely. Failing in her first attempt to bring relief, she then produced a tin box, in which she wished me to blow *very hard*. I laughed in spite of my trouble. She was a good little woman. I asked her to sit by the fire and rest, and told her that when I needed her I would call for her.

Now it was twilight; silence reigned, broken only by the whistling of the wind and the slow steps of the guard outside. The fire was blazing, the wood crackled as the heat approached it. The back of the room was in shadow and darkness. At the farther end of the fire sat the good old woman, nursing her knees and shaking her head as a sign of approaching calamity.

Miss Stone sat on a log opposite the woman. She kept the fire going and prayed in her heart. Her face was sad, but full of "blessed assurance." She had on her head a dark kerchief as a protection from both the cold and the soot which fell from the roof. Her garments, of a dark, coarse homespun, had been sewn by her own fingers. I often heard her say, "Childie, what can I do to help you?" but there was nothing with which to do anything. We had no medicine, not even a hot drink of any kind.

I was standing now with both hands tightly clutched at the rings of the wine cask. My strength was gone, and yet there was no one to help me.

The thought passed my mind like a flash: "Where is my mother? Where is my husband? Why am I so far from my dear ones? Oh, so far, I do not know how far! They certainly think of me. They grieve for the lost one. Oh, mother, where are you? Oh, God, help me!" The pain, aggravated by the previous night's long and rough ride, was intolerable. I wished for rest, I wanted death, for to die is to rest from all suffering. "Pray for me, Miss Stone," I cried.



THE BABY AND HER FATHER

At 10 P.M. all was over. Both women were alive with excitement. The old woman was wrapping the crying infant, for we had been able to make a few simple clothes for the little one. During the first months of our captivity we felt as though we should go insane from idleness. Finally Miss Stone suggested that we ask the chief for some material out of which to be making baby's dresses. He consented to give us what they had—ten yards of cheese cloth, and about six yards of heavy white woolen homespun cloth. The gauze they used for the purpose of cleaning their weapons, and the heavy cloth for foot wrappings. We were both as happy as children over these materials, and proceeded at once to cut out the garments. They supplied us with thread and needles, even with thimbles. Out of the cheese cloth we made shirts and dresses for baby. The dresses had five or six tucks at the bottom, all hemstitched and feather-stitched. The shirts were made the same way. Out of the coarse cloth I cut blankets for baby and hemstitched them all around and in the middle. All the feather-stitching was done with heavy white spool thread. We took very

short stitches, in order to get as much work out of it as possible. When all the ends and seams were feather-stitched, we began over again making new rows of feather-stitching. In such wonderful garments we dressed my baby when it was born.

Now while the old woman was at work Miss Stone stood smiling, chattering and repeating over and over again, "Blessed girl, blessed girl, it is a blessed girl!" putting the emphasis on "blessed." She certainly was a blessing to us during the long, dreary hours afterwards. The old *baba* (midwife), with an air of pride and satisfaction, was squatted near the fire warming the newcomer.

"You must have some kind of hot drink," said Miss Stone, "but there is nothing to make it of."

Finally we thought of barley. The brigands had some for their horses. We could cook it, and it would be a nice drink. The brigands brought an old black copper kettle. They hung the handle on a green stick, and rested the two ends of the stick on two high stones on each side of the fire. Our barley cooked quickly, and soon I had a nice hot drink. We found it so good that it became the fashion among the brigands afterwards. They liked it very much; besides it was so cheap and easy to get.

My baby was still crying; it had not yet recovered from the cold shock.

My poor baby! My darling, what is to become of you? Will these men spare you when you disobey their "Sht! Keep still!" Babies and their cries are the sweetest charm in the world, but the most undesirable things among brigands.

"Where are they?" I thought. "They must be holding council somewhere as to how to take away my poor baby."

The door was pushed open. The youngest brigand walked in. He looked somewhat shy.

"Is it a boy?" he asked.

"A blessed girl," was Miss Stone's quick answer.

He frowned. I thought I understod why he frowned.

A knife passed through my heart, as we say in Bulgaria.

"Well," he said, "if it were a boy, we would make a brigand of him, but a girl does not make a good brigand, although there are stories told of girls who became *voivodi* (leaders of brigands)." He hesitated a little and said: "I don't know, after all, we may make her the daughter of the *cheta* (band)."

After a few more similar remarks he picked up the gourd, filled it with wine which he

drew from the wine cask at my head, spattering some of the wine in my face as he drew it, for the faucet was near my head, and started for the door with the words, "I shall take this wine to the *cheta*. We must drink the health of the little brigand." Poor excuse for a drink!

Two or three hours later the chief himself appeared. He was tall, heavily built, and dark. His eyes were fierce at other times, but now they were downcast. He said nothing; he stood in front of the fire and seemed deep in thought. Every time the baby cried or grunted he was startled; he was not used to that sort of thing. Everybody in the room was silent except the baby. To break the oppressive silence Miss Stone picked up the infant and handed it to the chief (this is just like Miss Stone). At first he appeared confused and embarrassed, but as he watched the little helpless morsel in his strong arms a smile passed over his face. I was anxious, I watched his expression, I read his thoughts, I waited for results. And, sure enough, his smiles lasted longer, he bent his head closer to baby's face. He was no more a brigand to me, but a brother, a father, a protector to my baby. He now made up his mind to have a good time, so he sat down by the fire and began to warm baby's feet. My heart jumped with joy, I was relieved.

"He means to spare my child. He can do it, he is the chief." His voice was deep and somewhat melodious, and now it was the sweetest music in my ears, for he spoke of baby; he was concerned that the baby should not catch cold. He sprang to his feet, gave the infant back to Miss Stone, and asked her for a list of things necessary for the mother in the line of food.

"I shall give these orders and shall soon return."

True to his word, he came back again.

"Now," he said, addressing Miss Stone and the old woman, "you lie down to sleep. As for baby, I shall sit down here and keep her warm."

The old *baba* lay down on the ground and soon began to breathe heavily. She felt quite at home, for her home was no better than our hut. Miss Stone, like a heroine, did all she could to make me warm and comfortable, and then lay down on the bare earth near my feet. She soon fell asleep, for she was very tired. As for me, sleep did not seem to come. I was watching my baby. I wanted to know its fate during the night, but I must have fallen asleep, for I jumped up frightened. "Where is baby?" I whispered to myself.

I looked around the room. The two women were asleep. The chief sat near the fire with his back turned to me, and his head nodding with sleep. Baby was sweetly resting in this man's strong arms. I looked at him. I examined him well. There was the revolver on his side, there the fatal dagger, and there, too, the little baby gently cuddled in those iron-like arms. I both smiled and wept with joy. I thanked God for the gentleness in this man.

Is it possible? Is this the same man I saw only a few months ago so mercilessly stabbing a poor victim to death?

Is he the same man who not long ago bragged and threatened our lives? Yes, he is the very same. Who wrought this change in him? Nobody but the little wee baby. Morning came, the chief was no longer shy. He patronized the baby. He called her by many pet names. She was "the little brigand, the daughter of the *cheta*," but his favorite was *Kas-metche* (good luck). He did all he could to make us happy and comfortable. He kept the fire going, he boiled barley, cooked chicken, and made himself as useful as he

could. This same man forgot all about danger outside. This little wee thing had stolen his heart. He was thinking and talking of nothing else but of the little *Kasmetche*. He laughed, he joked, he appeared as happy as though it were his own baby.

Now we were treated more like free people and not as captives; that is, we were spoken to.

The *voivoda* (chief) now asked me if the rest of the men could come to see the baby and congratulate me. Of course I was only too glad to have them come, and see what they would say, how they would act. It was dark now. We made no preparations for the reception. We had no lamps to trim, no refreshments to serve, no chairs to arrange. The party of brigands came unannounced. Most of them were tall, striking fellows. Each one as he entered shook hands with me, congratulated me, and stood back so as to make room for the others.

The rest followed in the same way until there were two long rows of fully armed men crowded into the little room. They rested on their guns, gazed at the blazing fire, and made some pretty speeches while baby was passed from man to man. In a corner behind them stood timidly the good old *baba*. Miss Stone was the queen of the occasion. She talked to them, she laughed with them, she made them feel perfectly at home. The mother was radiant; she forgot that she lay in straw, she only thought that her baby was safe. What a picture! What

a reception! Are these brigands and these captives? What a transformation, all because of a baby! The brigands appeared very jolly. One said that they must give baby presents. He himself offered to make her a pair of sandals. Another one said he would make her a whistle, and the chief offered to make her a brigand's outfit.

"What are you going to call her?" one asked.

"Ellena," I said, "in honor of my mother and of Miss Ellen M. Stone."

"Do you know," said another, "no *cheta* has ever had a baby born

among them. This is an extraordinary event for us. We shall immortalize her name. It shall be written on our guns. Ellena shall be written on our guns."

Another brigand spoke out: "This mother makes me think of Mary, the mother of Christ. She, too, lay in straw, and it was about this time of the year."

"No," said another, "this is a martyr; no woman has suffered as she has."

Then they all turned and looked at me with great pity. After giving baby a hearty kiss they bade us good-night and disappeared out in the darkness. I believe they had a great discussion that night, whether it was wise to preserve the life of the newcomer or not.

It was the second day after baby's birth. The sunbeams peeped in the hut through the many cracks and holes. Two brigands were with us now, both to guard and to wait on us. One was stretched along the fire, and the



THE BABY AND GLADYS HOUSE, THE DAUGHTER OF MR. J. H. HOUSE, SENIOR MISSIONARY AT SALONICA

other sat against the door. The room was dark as in the night, except for the sun's rays that crept through the holes. The smoky roof and the many spider webs became monotonous to my eye; I longed for light, for sunshine. The sunshine is so near and yet so far. It is outside the door. If they would only open the door just a little bit. It seemed to me as if I should go insane in such darkness. I became nervous, desperate.

"Please open that door, I want to see the sunshine. Nobody can see us in this mountain."

"Oh, yes," they said, "only it is very cold."

They opened the door, and there was the glorious sunshine, there the mountain side with dry, brown oak leaves. I was feasting now on a small patch of nature's beauty, and it was so sweet. The chief walked in.

"We shall have to travel to-night," he said. "It is very unsafe here, but do not worry. We shall make you very comfortable for the journey. We shall carry you in a box, and as for the baby, one of us will carry it. They will begin to make the box very soon."

Of course all I had to say was, "Very well."

The men as well as Miss Stone were making preparations for the journey. "Klink, klink" was heard outside. The box was being made of planks. Toward night the weather changed. It became chilly, and soon the snow was falling very rapidly. My good old *baba* had been home and returned to bid us good-by and give her present to baby. The present consisted of a dark red cap decorated with one silver coin and a piece of garlic. The garlic is used as a preventive against evil eye. She also gave baby a plaid handkerchief, such as you see among the working Italians. After spitting on her finger and placing it in baby's mouth, she took her departure. As the evening approached fears began to creep into my heart. I was not able to turn on my side as yet; even my cough caused me great pain. How am I to stand a whole night's jarring on a box on horseback? And poor baby, how is she going to nurse?

Miss Stone was asked to get everything ready. Very soon we heard much talking outside. All the brigands were together discussing the question, whether the horses were strong enough to carry such heavy loads, especially my horse. Finally a long wooden box, just like a coffin, was brought into the hut. It suggested death, and I was to be the corpse. My eyes filled with tears. Many men came in to see how I was to be placed in it.

I became indignant. "Go out," I said. "Only two men are necessary to place me in it."

The bottom of the box was spread with a rug of ours, and a half of an old dirty quilt. I was then lifted by two men and placed in it, and then covered with the other half of the quilt. One of the brigands tried to lift the box, but it was very heavy. "Useless," he said. "It is too heavy. This horse is not strong enough. It will drop somewhere on the road, and then—" he looked questioningly.

Many rushed in to see what was the trouble. They all tried lifting me, and all came to the same conclusion, that it was too heavy.

"What is to be done? The *potera* (pursuers, soldiers) are in search of us. They are not far from us."

"We must fly," said the chief, "or else we are all lost."

They again turned their faces toward the box. I was the obstacle. They did not know what to do with me, how to dispose of me. I covered my face and wept aloud in the box. The chief again glanced at me and spoke:

"Well, we shall have to leave her here with one of us, and let both be disguised in peasant's clothes. If the army find them they will take them for villagers living here. And now, Miss," turning to Miss Stone, "you must come with us."

I never shall forget the shock and expression on Miss Stone's face. She was both frightened and indignant.

"No," she said, "I don't part from *Gospoja* (the Mrs.)."

The sight was tragic. I shall never forget how two of the brigands, the youngest, stood for us. They said: "We shall stay here one more night. If danger comes we shall fight, even if we die. To-morrow we send for strong horses, make the box lighter, and *Gospoja* will be better able to travel by to-morrow night."

All agreed. I was taken out of the box and again placed on my old straw. That night both Miss Stone and I wept, we felt so badly. Baby cried, too. The next day was spent in the same way as the day before. Night came again. Strong horses were brought, and my box was made shorter, which reduced its weight considerably. Baby was prepared for the journey in the following way. Next to the skin she had a gauze shirt. A napkin was wrapped around her thighs and legs. Then a layer of cotton on top of that. Thick woolen cloth was used to keep her feet warm and well protected. Several woolen blankets were used in wrapping her from neck to feet. Her hands were tied down by her side next to her shirt. Over all these a big blanket was wrapped around

her, one corner projecting so as to fall over the head and protect it from the wind and snow. She had on the cap which the *baba* gave her. One of the brigands came into the hut and rehearsed his part in carrying baby. I suggested that he had better give his gun to somebody else to carry. "No," he said, "if I lose my gun I may lose both baby and myself." I felt uneasy to have them carry baby. I still feared that they might choke her if she cried at some dangerous place. Miss Stone understood my feelings, and offered herself to carry the baby. Some kind of sling was prepared for the purpose, a square piece of cloth with a string on each corner. Baby was placed in it, and then the strings were tied around Miss Stone's neck and waist. It hung something like a hammock in front of her. Four pieces of sugar were tied in four different places in a thin cloth for baby to suck on the way whenever she cried. Now all was ready. I was again placed in the box, and four men took me out of the hut to the horse and at once began loading the poor animal. The box with me in it was fastened on one side of the clumsy saddle, and the other side had to be balanced with logs of wood and stones. It was a very heavy and bulky load. My horse was started while Miss Stone and baby were being fixed. As the path was very narrow and steep the box began to slide back and almost drag on the ground. I felt it did not balance well, but it was so dark that the men could not see. The horse was excited and climbed very fast, the men could hardly control it. I heard them say, "Hold on the box, it is going to upset. It is going down the hill. Hold on, hold on!" Crash went the box against a tree. I felt as though my brains were knocked out. Five or six men grouped like bees around my horse and prevented an accident. We proceeded again on the rough journey, the box hitting here against a tree, there against a stone, and many times I fell on the ground as the horse stumbled. I thought that if I were a little stronger I would get out and walk, but such a thing was impossible. I was so tortured and frightened that I could not even cry. In the hands of brigands this cold night, they may soon get tired of me and throw me down into some river or over a precipice. Yes, in the hands of men who care nothing about me. And there is baby crying. O Misery, where is thy end? My baby, my precious darling, you are cold and hungry, but your mother is tightly strapped in a box; she can't come to you, she dare not speak. The poor thing had sucked all the sugar we had for her, now she was crying very hard.

"Oh, please, please," I broke into tears, "give me my baby. Let me nurse it. It will die!" No answer came. "Please, I want to see the chief." No answer again, although the men were near my horse. Miss Stone's horse was much ahead, so that I could not hear baby's cry distinctly, but mothers' ears are sharp. I heard the pathetic cry of my darling. "Oh, God, my heart will burst!" From where I got strength I do not know, but I pushed at the ropes tied around the box, and raised myself in a sitting position. It was blowing and snowing, and the men rushed to me and ordered me to lie down and cover myself. I was defiant. "My baby please. Oh, give it to me. I can nurse it here. O Chief, please, please give me my baby."

My wish at last was granted. I seized the little ball (it looked like a ball) and pressed her to my heart. She appeared as if she understood it all. She nursed, and she sobbed. Only three days in the world and so much trouble! While I was nursing her two or three brigands took their *kepes* off their backs, hung them on their guns, and made something like a tent around us. Baby was again taken to Miss Stone. I lay in the box, and the journey proceeded. Now we had traveled seven hours. My horse was so tired that he made several attempts to lie down.

"Drive," said the chief to the brigands. "Don't let the horse lie down. We are lost if this horse gives out."

The journey went on over stones, rocks, and steep hillsides, and the men were tired, they could not *krepi* (support) my horse; they began to linger behind in spite of the chief's *haida* (hasten). Dawn was breaking. We all had to hide before it was daylight. Another gigantic effort by both men and horses, and the destination was reached. My face was covered as I lay in the box. I felt the ropes being unfastened. Many hands were lifting and carrying the box. I felt as though it was passed through a narrow door and then through another one, and with a jerk the box landed on the ground. My face was uncovered, and I found myself in a room similar to our previous one, except for the wine casks. We had the same kind of walls and roof and no chimney. We did not know when it was day and when night; it was always dark. Baby cried a good deal when we arrived here. I had no strength to amuse it. Miss Stone was sitting near the fire and singing baby to sleep (in a whispering tone).

"Oh," she said, "if I only had a rocking-chair, how I would put this baby to sleep."

I laughed, for it struck me very funny to be

thinking of a rocking-chair when we did not have even the simplest stool to sit on. Here I had chills and fever the first day, but the next day I was well again (comparatively speaking). After two days we had to run away again, for the *potera* were upon us. To carry me in a box was too much trouble for the men. They filled two bags of straw, fastened them on either side of the saddle, and I rode on top of those. The journey was short this time, about two hours. From now on our journeys were shorter; we simply moved from place to place.



Now it was a month since baby was born. We

were in a miserably cold and smoky hut. Miss Stone and I had bad colds and coughed incessantly. Baby coughed, too. The tears were running down our cheeks from the smoke and also from the cough. We were lying down to sleep. The room was full of brigands, and the odor was very bad. That night I cried bitterly. It seemed as if I could not endure it any longer. A man stepped near us and threw a letter to Miss Stone, which she at once proceeded to read. I could not wait to have it read.

“Is the money paid?” I asked excitedly.

“Yes,” said one of the brigands.

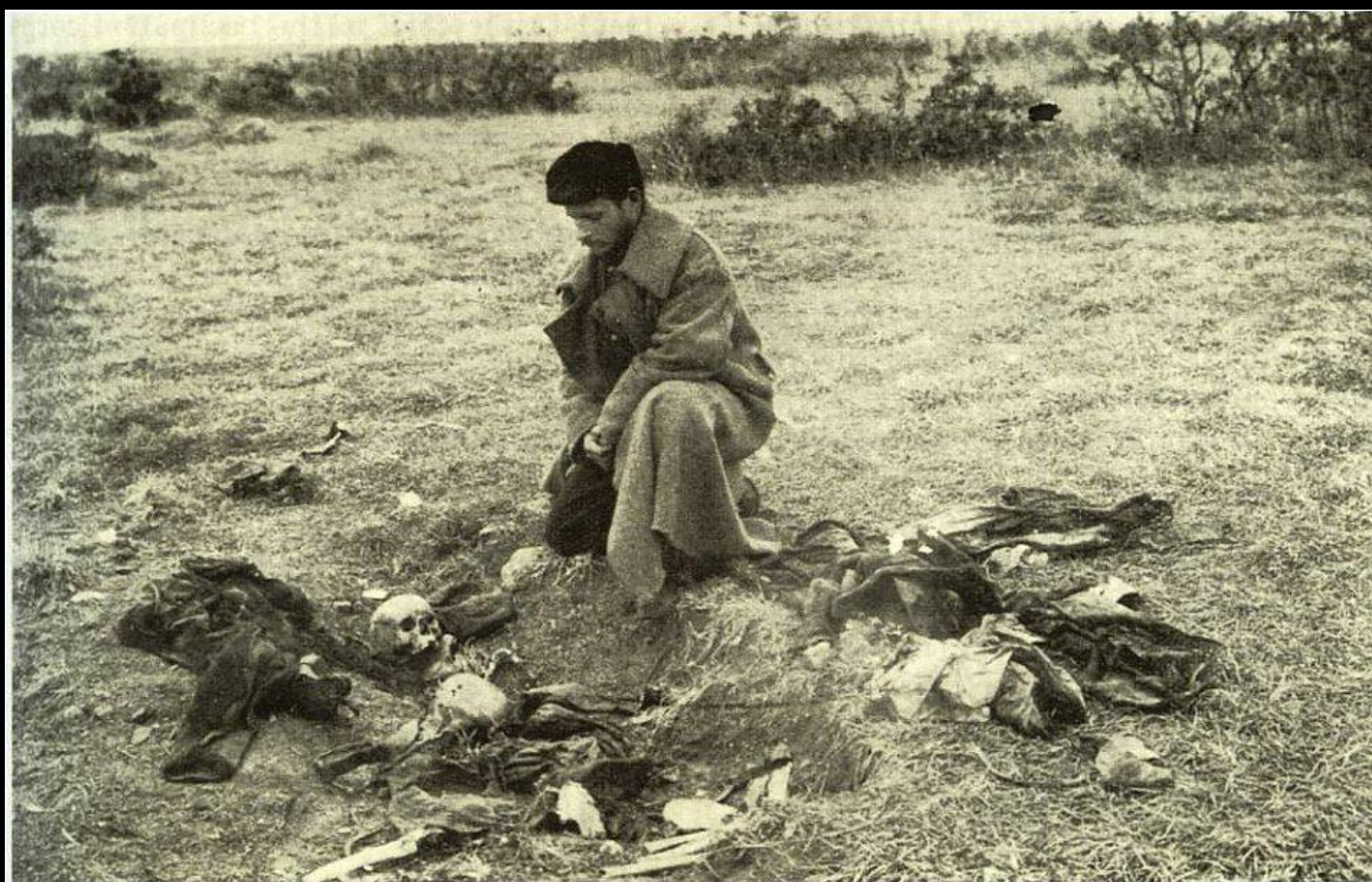
The happiness we felt was too great to be expressed in words.

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Voivode Dimiter Madjarov before the remains of two comrades in arms killed in the battle of Ferres