

The Unspeakable Turk.

By GEORGE HORTON.

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Synopsis of Preceding Chapters.
John Curtis, an American, had been in the city of Crete for some time, and had become well known to the Greeks. He had been in the city of Crete for some time, and had become well known to the Greeks. He had been in the city of Crete for some time, and had become well known to the Greeks.

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"But we two are not Turks—not Cretons. I am a Swede and my friend here is an American."
"Very sorry, gentlemen."
"But this may be a matter of life and death! A Christian lady, the betrothed of this young gentleman, is in the hands of the Turks."
"Very sorry, gentlemen. Move away from the gate, please."
Lindholm was too good a soldier not to

know what that meant. So they went to a house near by belonging to a friend of the major, and waited two whole days, during the most of which time the Swede and the American had the place to themselves, for the major and his friend were arrested and carried off before the end of the first day. They went repeatedly to the gate, demanding admittance, and were refused as often by the sentinels, until the third morning, when they were greeted by a smile and a "Hi! hi! hi!" from the sentinels, and they were permitted to enter the city.



"VERY SORRY, GENTLEMEN, BUT WE HAVE STRICT ORDERS TO ADMIT NO ONE FOR THE PRESENT."

CHAPTER XXV.
"Pity! Pity!" whined the lepers, exposing their hideousness with all the skill of subtle and unscrupulous merchants. They were all there by the roadside leading into Crete and had commenced business for the day. Curtis started at them, unable to remove his eyes from the dreadful spectacle.

Lindholm frowned nervously in his pockets with averted face and, producing two or three coppers, tossed them to the afflicted group.
"Come away," he said, pulling Curtis along. "I cannot bear to look at them."
The Turk had been telling them of the leper colony and they were not totally unprepared for this sight, yet the reality far exceeded the description.

"But you should see those who are not able to come down here and beg," exclaimed the major, "these are comparatively well off, these are comparatively well off, these are comparatively well off."
"I hope I may never see them," said Lindholm. "I hope I may never see these again."

The Swede bore the Turk no ill-will for the enforced detention. It had not lasted for long and the major had showed his guests every attention and had explained again and again that he had carried Lindholm off to save his life.

"But those who are no longer able to beg," asked the lieutenant, "do they starve?"
"Oh, no, indeed! They are living monuments to the tender-heartedness of my august master, the sultan. Each of the lepers is furnished one loaf of bread a day."
"Oh, I see," said Lindholm.

Curtis took no part in the conversation. He did not even hear what the others were saying, but walked on beside them with his eyes fixed upon the ground, like a man in a trance. Every now and then he ejaculated "Good God!" with the accent on the "good."
"At last he stopped so abruptly that the Turk, who was directly behind, nearly knocked him over."

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"Do people who are not lepers ever go into that village? To see their friends, you know, or to stop over night, or anything of that sort?"
"But someone is talking English, which, unfortunately, I do not understand."
"Oh, damn!" and he repeated the question in Harvard French.

The Turk smiled.
"Impossible. You have seen the disease. Do you think anyone would run the risk of catching it?"
Curtis strode on and became again immersed in thought, vaguely hearing the major's explanation of the fact that nearly all the lepers of Crete were Greeks.

At each side of the gate of Crete stood an English marine in red jacket and cork helmet. A business-like "Hi!" woke Curtis from his abstraction.
"I am Peter Lindholm, lieutenant of cavalry in the Swedish army," said Lindholm in English, putting a tin case into the pocket of the breast pocket of his Prince Albert coat. "Here is my card."
"One of the marines took the proffered pasteboard, glanced at it solemnly and saluted."
"And here's mine," said Curtis. "I'm an American. And this gentleman is a Turkish officer. We were coming across the country on foot and he said we were in danger of being massacred, so he took us to his house and kept us there till the English landed and here—here's my passport, too, if you can manage to read it. It's been in the water."
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Lindholm urged this cheering assurance with the insistent frequency of a man who is trying to water his own hopes.
They came into the public square, where the shells from the Hazard had fallen thickest, for here the Bashli Bazoaks had fired on the British soldiers, and yonder, rising precipitously to a height of thirty feet, was the fortified straggled from which the Turkish squad had poured a rain of bullets into the town. English sentries were now pacing to and fro up there. But the chief attraction was a sort of booth in the center of the square, for all the world like a Punch and Judy booth, and in it were hanging by the neck seven figures with black caps over their heads, and their feet tied together.

"By George, they've been hanging the ringleaders, hanging them higher than Haman!" cried Lindholm.
Curtis could not realize that those were the bodies of human beings, there was something so theatrical about their appearance; they hung so neatly in a row, and the heads all lolled one way, like heads of Brownian in an advertisement.
"Maybe they have hanged them in effigy," he suggested.
Lindholm laughed.
"Might as well be now," he replied. "But let us ask the guard where we will find the commandant. Then we shall learn something about Kostas and Panayota."
"You go," said Curtis. "I'll wait for you here." He shrank from the ingenuous explanation that Panayota was his betrothed. The very thought made him shudder.
"I can't tell him," he muttered, as he watched Lindholm forcing his way through the throng. "I must get away from him some way. By Jove, I'll run off and leave him. If I can't do any better, Good God, what an escape I've had!"
"Hi!" shouted Lindholm, so that every soul in the square turned and looked at him. He was standing up before Lindholm could see the ruddy face with his red bandanna halo floating on a sea of heads. "Hi!" called the Swede again, waving his stick in air. "Come here, quick! I've found Kostas!"
"Now, what the devil do I want of Kostas?" muttered Curtis, plunging reluctantly into the press. When he had reached Lindholm's side the Swede gripped him by the arm and pointed a long finger at one of the pantomimists in the Punch and Judy booth.
A board hung suspended from the neck of each, with a name and crime inscribed thereon in Turkish and English. Curtis read:
KOSTAKES EFFENDI,
Captain of Bashli Bazoaks,
Murder and Arson.
"It is hard for a soldier to die thus," said the Swede sadly. "But a soldier who disgraces his calling deserves such a death. Well, my friend," turning to Curtis, "half our work has been done for us, eh? Now the rest will be easy. Is it not so?"

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"She was the daughter of some friends of ours," broke in Curtis, volubly as Lindholm waved his hand toward him. "Her father, a priest, befriended us. We were shipwrecked and I stepped on some sort of a d-d thing, a kind of sea pneumonia stuck full of pins, and it poisoned me. And the priest took me in and took care of me, and the Turks swooped down on the village and murdered half the inhabitants and carried the girl and her father off. Then they killed the old man. This Kostas takes—"
"That must have been one of the chaps that we hanged last night," interrupted Lieutenant Jones.
"Just so," said Lindholm, "and now we want to know what has become of Panayota. My friend here—"
"The fact is we feel very grateful and we want to know what has become of the girl," interrupted Curtis, determined at all hazards to head off Lindholm's explanation to this civilized Englishman, who might be inclined to smile at a tale of romance.
"The commandant is out, but I think I am the very man you want to see," said the Englishman. "This gentleman, Kostas, it seems, had three wives, two Turkish women besides the Greek—"
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