PAUL BAEPLER is a lecturer at University College at the University of Minnesota.
He, therefore, appointed me the same day. Notwithstanding that the Dey appointed me in consequence of my former services, he had it not in his power to exempt me from paying 1000 sequins to the Hasna or public treasury, and 383 sequins, the customary fee, to the officers of the government. This is paid in consequence of being entitled to redemption by any nation whatever, who either concludes a peace or ransoms their citizens, even should it take place the next day after his appointment, besides other perquisites. The Dey himself (strange as it may seem) loaned me 500 sequins, and my generous friend, the Messrs. Skjoldebrands (the Swedish consul and brother) loaned me 500 more, which I paid as the fee to the public treasury. I must not forget to mention my obligations upon this occasion, but upon a former one when I was by no means in so eligible a situation. These worthy and generous men loaned me $5000 to purchase a prize loaded with wine, on which I made a good speculation, without any interest or reward whatever, out of pure friendship. Although they knew the risk they run, for had I died or committed any fault, real or imaginary, before they were paid, the Regency would have seized all my property as their slave, and they would have lost every dollar of their money. Such unprecedented acts of generosity ought to be recorded on the tablet of our memory forever, never to be effaced. My gratitude to them is eternal and knows no bounds. The property I accumulated enabled me to purchase the vessel, of which I took the command, when I came to Philadelphia in 1796, to bring the articles to secure the peace.

ADDITIONAL WRITINGS BY CATHCART


History of the Captivity and Sufferings of Mrs. Maria Martin

Maria Martin's gruesome account of her long imprisonment in an Algerian dungeon enjoyed the greatest popularity of any of the spurious Barbary captivity narratives. From its first printing, likely in 1807, until its last in 1818, the narrative appeared in twelve editions by nine different publishers. The writer likely derived the Martin account from a fictionalized tale that appeared seven years earlier by the same publisher and under a very similar title, The Captivity and Sufferings of Mrs. Mary Velnet, Who was Seven Years a Slave in Tripoli, three of which she was confined in a dungeon, loaded with irons, and four times put to the most cruel tortures ever invented by man. While her narrative calls Mary Velnet "an Italian lady," Maria Martin's nationality remains a question. Two pieces of evidence within the narrative, however, suggest that readers might have understood her to be an American. First, she loathes the idea of "kingdom" and feels it is an epithet that should be struck from the land. Second, her voyage home took forty-five days, sufficient sailing time to return to America.

While the North African regencies captured many Western women, none of these captives appears to have written a narrative that has survived. Two other fabricated accounts, by Mary Gerard and Viletta Laranda, as well as several American plays with female captives suggest a public fascination with female captivity, perhaps derived from the Indian captivity tradition and accounts by Mary Rowlandson, Hannah Dustan, and Mary Jemeson among others. The female Barbary captive has also survived into the twentieth century through mass-marketed fiction in such romance titles as Victoria Holt's The Captive (1983) and Sergeanne Golon's Angelique in Barbary (1961).
Having in the foregoing pages given an account of the customs and manners of the Algerines, shall now proceed to relate some particulars of my Captivity and unparalleled [sic] sufferings while a slave among them. In the year 1800, I took passage at Madeira, in the sloop Triumph, for Cadiz—the object I had in view was to visit an aged uncle, with whom I had lived in the early part of my life. Nothing worthy of record took place from the time of my departure, until within sight of the rock of Gibraltar, when a man at mast head discovered a strange sail, steering directly for us. The sail in chase was soon within hail, and proved to be an Algerine corsair, armed and full of men. Our distracted feelings at this moment, can be better imagined [sic] than described—as we possessed but feeble means to defend ourselves, to surrender quietly our persons and property was the only alternative.—The corsair came along side, and in less than three minutes, more than half of her crew boarded us, sword in hand.—From this moment I must date the commencement of my sufferings.—The barbarians were no sooner on board, than they began their favorite work, cutting, maiming [sic] and literally butchering, all that they found on deck. Having succeeded in clearing the deck of the sloop's people, they closed the hatches upon those who had sought shelter below, and took charge of our vessel, altering her course.

From the time of our capture they gave us nothing to subsist on but a few mouldy biscuit, and a few quarts of stinking slimy water. On the eighth day they came to anchor in the harbour of Algiers—the hatches were now taken off and those below permitted once more to breathe fresh air, and to witness the cheering rays of the sun. In a few moments after our arrival, we were successively boarded by more than one hundred boats from the shore, filled with men, women and children, who, apparently, strived to surpass each other in abusing us—the women (by whom I flattered myself I should be more humanely treated) would not unfrequently accost me with the epithet "Cheffi Oji" (christian bitch!) These people were not only permitted, but encouraged to rob us of whatever they pleased—and to have resisted, would have been al-
most instant death—one took away my necklace, another my ring, and a third
divested me of my shoes—the men were stripped of their cloathes, and in re-
turn, a few old duds were given them, hardly sufficient to cover them.

The commander of the corsair having now returned from the city, where he
had been since our arrival, gave orders for the hooping of the sloop nearer the
city. The orders of the commander were immediately executed, and in a few
moments after, several boats were along side to take us on shore. The landing
place was thronged with spectators, whose curiosity to view us, had brought
them there, and by whom we were treated worse if possible than by those on
board the sloop—he or she would think themselves fortunate indeed who
could have an opportunity to level a blow at, or spit in the face of a Christian.

From the shore, we were conducted to the slave market, a place where all
slaves are disposed of to the highest bidders. The bashaw, who had been sent
for, and made acquainted with our capture, in a few moments arrived, to select
from among us the usual number allowed him.—The bashaw is a short thick
jugi contained, then of the rotten beef which accompanied it—but to taste,
was all that I could do—"nought but extreme hunger (said I to myself) can

compel me to partake of such nauseous food." After sometime contemplating
upon the miseries which were likely long to attend me, I went to work with my
jackknife [sic] (which I was to use as a substitute for scissors.) Being but a poor
tayloress, the garment which I patched up, would I doubt not, have suffered
considerably in a comparison with those made by the ingenious workmen of
my own country.—However, as my orders were "work or be punished," I
spared no pains in the performance of my work. At the siting of the sun, the
old Turk again visited my cell, and demanded my work, upon being presented
with which, he left me, locking the doors after him. Hunger, I must now con-
fess, compelled me to taste again of the beef, and to take a draught of the water,
it was with much difficulty I succeeded in swallowing either. I next sought for
something on which I might repose my wearied limbs during the night—I
could find nothing but a few branches of the callabash tree, which probably
were conveyed there for that purpose.

The succeeding morning, at sun-rise, my old attendant again visited me,
bringing with him a like quantity of beef and water as before, and of no better
quality. By signs he represented to me that my work on that day was to be the
same as on the day preceding—in this way did he continue to visit me during
my confinement in this desolate and dreary hovel, which, according to my cal-
culation, was nearly twelve months.

Early one morning the old Turk entered, accompanied by the Mate of the
unfortunate vessel in which I was captured, who accosted me with "well
madam, I have had the good fortune to become the favorite of our master (the
bashaw) and have perhaps been better treated than any other of our unfortu-
unate ship's company—through my intercession, you are this day to be re-
moved to a much more comfortable apartment than the one which you now
occupy."—I thanked him for the great favor which he had rendered me, and
promised him reward in case we should be so fortunate as to visit our native
country once more.

The old Turk now made signs for me to follow him, which I gladly did, be-
lieving it not in his power to render my situation more deplorable than what it
had been from the time of my capture. At the door of my apartment I found a
guard of soldiers, who were sent to conduct me to my lodgings—the old Turk
led the way, commanding us to follow—he took a circuitous rout round the
city, and halted at the door of an old decayed castle, on entering of which, by
passing several narrow entries, in which lighted torches were burning, as they
contained no windows. At the extremity of one of those dark winding entries,
a large iron door presented itself to view—it was unlocked, and I commanded
to enter—I found myself in a large spacious room, tolerably decent [sic] and
comfortable, it however contained no furniture but an old matross [sic], a stool, and a small oak table—my attendants left me as soon as they had secured the doors.

The day being now far spent, and being much fatigued, I sought repose upon the matross [sic], and had the satisfaction soon to fall into a sound sleep, from which I did not awake until late the next morning, when I was suddenly aroused by the unbarring of the door of my apartment.—I arose hastily, and soon had the satisfaction to see my deliverer, the mate, enter, bringing with him a cup of coffee, a loaf of new baked bread, and a slice of ham.—"I have come madam (said he) this morning to present you with something, which to life, leave no plans unpracticed to aid my escape, which he said he thought was practicable, since the whole care of me had been entrusted to him. —I thanked my liberation, but if unsuccessful in this, he would, at the hazard of his own life, leave no plans unpracticed to aid my escape—tomorrow morning I may possibly be enabled to inform you of the precise time when the ship will depart—keep "up good spirits, madam, and hope for the best—adieu for the present."—On saying this, the mate left me, his situation would not permit his continuing longer as it might have given rise to suspicion.

Through the whole of this day nought but mingled emotions of joy and
grief invaded my mind—I could neither lie down, sit or stand still—the prospects before me, of a successful escape, would for a moment afford the most pleasing sensations—I would fancy myself half seas over and sometimes at the very door of my father's house, but when I contemplated upon the possibility of detection and the nature of the punishment that would most assuredly be inflicted in such a case, my joy would be turned into grief. Night approached, but alas, I felt no inclination to slumber, my eyes I could not close, too impatient did I feel for the arrival of a moment, which, alas, proved the most disagreeable of my life.

Never did I witness the break of day with more pleasure than on the succeeding morning—the sun arose and shone with uncommon brilliancy—"Heaven quicken the footsteps of my friend,"—was my prayer—the doors of my apartment at length resounded—delightful sound!—The mate entered, and addressed me thus—“Madam, as usual, I have brought your breakfast, and through the goodness of God, may it be the last meal that you ever eat beneath the roof of a tyrant! This night, madam, will be either the most happy or the most wretched and unfortunate of our lives!—"Ere the rising of tomorrow's sun, we shall be either the most happy persons on earth, or the most wretched in existence."—“Heaven preserve me[ ]" (cried I) and swooned!—When I recovered, I found myself supported by my friend, who continued thus—"Fortitude, madam, is essentially necessary in this our important undertaking, if we have none of this, we cannot expect to succeed—were I not almost positive of success, never should I attempt any thing so hazardous, and which would inevitably prove destructive to our liberties forever, in case of detection.—This night, madam, the ship will sail, wind and weather permitting, every thing is prepared on board for our reception, about midnight I shall close, too impatient did I feel for the arrival of a moment, which, alas, proved the most disagreeable of my life.

Never did I witness the break of day with more pleasure than on the succeeding morning—the sun arose and shone with uncommon brilliancy—"Heaven quicken the footsteps of my friend,"—was my prayer—the doors of my apartment at length resounded—delightful sound!—The mate entered, and addressed me thus—“Madam, as usual, I have brought your breakfast, and through the goodness of God, may it be the last meal that you ever eat beneath the roof of a tyrant! This night, madam, will be either the most happy or the most wretched and unfortunate of our lives!—"Ere the rising of tomorrow's sun, we shall be either the most happy persons on earth, or the most wretched in existence."—“Heaven preserve me[ ]" (cried I) and swooned!—When I recovered, I found myself supported by my friend, who continued thus—"Fortitude, madam, is essentially necessary in this our important undertaking, if we have none of this, we cannot expect to succeed—were I not almost positive of success, never should I attempt any thing so hazardous, and which would inevitably prove destructive to our liberties forever, in case of detection.—This night, madam, the ship will sail, wind and weather permitting, every thing is prepared on board for our reception, about midnight I shall close, too impatient did I feel for the arrival of a moment, which, alas, proved the most disagreeable of my life.

About midnight my friend appeared, and in a low tone of voice, desired me to tread lightly and follow him—terror and darkness compelled me to take hold of the skirts of his coat, and was in this way re-conducted out of the dismal mansion, from whence we repaired with the utmost precipitancy on board the ship.

The Officers of the ship met us on deck and conducted us into the cabin, where we were solicited to partake of some refreshment.—"Give yourself no uneasiness, madam, (said the captain) in three weeks, if the wind favours us, we will land you in a christian country,"—then turning to his mate "go (said he) and order the windless manned immediately, for it is time we were under way."

The orders of the commander were immediately executed, and in less than half an hour, I had the pleasure to discover the ship in motion. Fortune at this moment seemed to favour us—we were blessed with a good breeze and the wind favourable.

At day-break, land could but just be perceived, but to our sorrow we at this instant perceived the wind shifting and getting a-head—at sun-rise, it was completely so!—Alas! alas! I could at this moment read my fate in the countenances of all on board!—they gazed!—they pitied!—they wept. In vain were the attempts of my friend to lull my fears—poor man! his countenance exhibited too much proof of the agitation of his own mind!—I now became like one distracted!—going on deck and finding the ship within plain sight of the city, and still losing ground, was about to throw myself overboard, when the mate perceiving my intentions, interfered. Being strongly solicited by the captain, I again returned to the cabin, where I continued until I could distinctly hear the yells of the barbarians on shore, and in a few moments after, I heard the motion of oars along side!—Alas! O heavens! what were my feelings at this moment!—I fainted! . . . and recovered alas but to behold myself once more in the power of my unfeeling enemies!—they bound the mate and myself hand and foot, and carried us on shore—soon after, we were summoned to appear before the bashaw and his court to hear our sentences read, my friend being represented as having forfeited the confidence of his majesty, the court gave it as their opinion that for such a crime the criminal ought to suffer death. It now remaining for the bashaw to determine how and when he should suffer, he ordered him to be impanneled the succeeding day at sun-rise, and as is customary, in presence of all the slaves in the kingdom—my unfortunate friend heard the sentence read with a great deal of composure, it was interpreted by the French consul, in reply to which my friend observed, that "if I suffer thus inhumanly, it is a consolation that I suffer for no other crime than that of attempting to liberate from unjust and cruel slavery an innocent woman."

With regard to myself, the court gave it as their opinion that I ought to be kept in close confinement, fed on bread and water, and denied the privileges allowed other slaves. The bashaw concurring, I was hurried off to my prison which had been built expressly for the purpose and of which the following is a description.
It was built of rough stone, and the walls were about 8 feet in breadth, it contained but one small window, with large iron gratings, and which afforded so little light that I could hardly discern an object four feet from me. My furniture consisted of a three legged stool and a gallon jug, which was filled once a fortnight with water.

God of heaven!—what were my feelings when I observed, on the 11th day of my confinement in this dismal cell, two smiths enter with their hammers, bringing along with them chains in abundance. They no sooner entered than they began the barbarous work of chaining me; an enormous collar was fixed round my neck, and another still larger round my waste [sic], to both of these was attached a large iron chain, the end of which, was fixed to a ring in the wall. This ring was five feet from the ground, and only allowed me to sit down on the stool above mentioned. They next riveted [sic] two iron rings around each of my wrists, to each of which a chain was fixed.

In this situation they left me, helpless and wretched, preyed on by all the torture of thought, that continually suggested the most gloomy, the most dreadful images. My fortitude after some time, began to revive; I glowed with the desire of convincing the world I was capable of suffering what man had never suffered before. Often did I reflect how much happier I was in innocence, than the malefactor doomed to suffer the pangs of death, the ignominy and the horrors of internal guilt.

The enormous iron round my neck pained me, and prevented motion. The chains that descended from the neck collar were obliged to be supported first with one hand, and then with the other, for if thrown behind, they would have strangled me, and, if hanging forwards, occasioned most excessive headaches. The little sleep I could have in such a situation may easily be supposed, and at length body and mind sunk under this accumulation of miserable sufferings, and I fell ill of a burning fever. Reason, fortitude, heroism, all the noble qualities of the mind, decay when the corporeal faculties are diseased, and the remembrance of my sufferings at this dreadful moment, still agitates, still enflames my blood; so as almost to prevent an attempt to describe what they were. Yet hope had not totally forsaken me. Deliverance seemed possible, especially should peace ensue.

I continued ill about two months, and was so reduced at last, that I had scarcely strength to lift the water jug to my mouth. What must the sufferings of a female be who is confined in a dungeon so damp, so dark, so horrible, without bed or straw, her limbs loaded as mine were, with no refreshment but dry mouldy bread, without so much as a drop of broth, without a consoling friend, and who under all these afflictions, trust for her recovery to the efforts of nature alone.

Sickness itself is sufficient to humble the mightiest mind; what then is sickness with such addition of torment? The burning fever, the violent headaches, my neck swelled and inflamed with the irons, enraged me almost to madness. The fever and the fetters, together feed my body so that it appeared like one continued wound. — The irons every where round my body, and their weight was insupportable; nor could I imagine it was possible I should habituate myself to them, or to endure them long enough to expect deliverance. A thousand reasons convinced me it was necessary to end my sufferings. I shall not enter into theological disputes: let those who blame me imagine themselves in my situation; or rather let them first actually endure my miseries, and then let the reason.

As I had passed nearly two years in this dismal cell I began to despair of ever again enjoying my liberty. In one of my most serious hours, as I was sitting meditating upon the various scenes of my life, the doors of my dungeon I suddenly heard unbarring—the doors of my dungeon for the last time resounded!

A Turkish officer at this moment entered, and gave me to understand that my liberty had been purchased by my country. — Heavens! what joy did I feel on this occasion, it was a long time before I could be convinced of the truth of what was told me, nor would I believe it until a smith entered to take off my irons.

For some weeks after I first obtained my freedom, I was generally absent in mind, and deep in thought. This was a habit I acquired in prison, and the objects of sight appeared but as the visions of sleep. I often stopped in the streets, stared around me, doubted my own existence, and bit my finger, in order to convince myself that I was really awake and alive.

Three weeks after my liberation from the bitterest captivity ever experienced by man, I embarked once more to visit my native country, with a view of which, after a long and tedious passage of 45 days, my eyes were once more regained. My friends had received the disagreeable news of my captivity, and dispersed of ever again seeing me. Before I conclude, it may be well to mention, that my friend the mate who was to suffer agreeable to the orders of the bashaw, the night preceding bribed his keepers and escaped to Morocco, where he took passage in an English vessel, and returned in safety to his friends.

FINIS.