

**TRUE TO THE LIFE.  
IN THREE  
VOLUMES. VOL. III**

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True to the Life. In Three Volumes. Vol. III by Anonymous

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VOL. III.

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# TRUE TO THE LIFE.

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## CHAPTER L.

"In all my past adventures  
I ne'er was set so on the tenters,  
Or taken tardy with dilemma,  
That every way I turn doth hem me,  
And with inextricable doubt  
Besets my puzzled wits about."

BUTLER.

WHEN Lady Barbara awoke on the following day she found Bell sitting up on the carpet by her side. The lady stretched herself, and gave a delicate shriek on finding how very sore and stiff all her limbs were.

"Ah, my lady, 'tis no use to cry or to moan. 'Tis my idea that these people are wicked cannibals, and that we are to be fattened up and eaten at one of their feasts. I can't make out a word they say, but I believe that's what they are after."

"But why—why," said Lady Barbara, now really sobbing—"why should you fancy anything so dreadful?"



“Well, my lady, that old woman with a handsome turban came and pinched me dreadfully—I can’t tell your ladyship all—and she said something to the other women, and one of them brought a great pitcher full of curds and whey, and held it to my mouth, so I drank it, and they grinned and nodded as if they were pleased. Oh, I am so afraid,” said Bell, with a burst of tears, “that—that I’m fatter than your ladyship, and must go first to the shambles!”

“Nonsense!” said Lady Bab, half frightened, but determined to assert her determination not to be. “They never would dare to injure a hair of *my* head. What! to think of eating Lady Barbara Westeura!!! Why, all England would rise to revenge the slightest insult offered even to my little finger!”

“Oh dear! oh dear! that’s no comfort to me, if I am to be eaten!” moaned the waiting-maid.

“You are a fool, Bell! Wait till the time comes, before you make such a hullabulloo. In the meantime I should not mind some curds and whey myself.”

No curds and whey appeared to satisfy the hunger of the lady; but a savoury smell of baked meat, such as tempted the aged nostrils of Isaac, came from the outer tent, and presently a lamb was brought in and set before Lady Barbara and Bell

by the women, who made signs that they were to eat.

"Bring knives and forks!" cried the lady in an authoritative voice, and repeated it several times, till the words mounted to a scream—Lady Barbara making the mistake so frequently committed, of believing that unknown sounds become intelligible by being uttered in a voice unpleasantly loud.

"Oh dear!" said Bell, "they *won't* understand, and the lamb is getting cold! My lady, you *must* use your fingers. I declare the nasty little beast is no bigger than a tom cat, and hasn't a bit of flesh on its bones. Poor brute! 'twas a mercy to kill it, or 'twould have been starved to death!"

"How can *I* eat with my fingers?" cried the lady.

"There, ma'am, you hold one leg and I the shoulder; we shall manage it so. 'Tis better we should touch it with our fingers, that are white and clean, than that they should put their nasty hands in our dish. Will you believe it? I saw that old woman stuff her nose with butter this morning before you were awake, my lady!"

"Butter! Snuff, you mean. I should not mind taking a pinch myself," replied the mistress.

"'Twas butter," responded the abigail solemnly, "for I saw it run down again, when she got hot, over her lip!"

"I should like to wash, Bell, order some hot water and a bath," said the lady, with perfect good faith. "After smearing my face with this horrid leg of lamb, and greasing my hands, I want both hot water and perfume."

Bell cried out her orders in a loud voice, and the Arab women came rushing in to see what was the matter. To explain in dumb show what she could not make intelligible in words, Bell stood up, and, leaning over her mistress, she went through the pantomimic show of washing her, and rubbing her with an imaginary towel; then she put something to her nose and sniffed violently, and applied it to Lady Bab's hands and arms. A consultation was held by eager, tawny faces in Arabic, and the sheik's mother presided at the parliament; the result of the deliberations will be seen in another chapter.