

*My
Medley*

My Medley

Miscellaneous Memories

Juna Davies



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Introduction



These stories have accumulated over time; some stories derive from my imagination, while others record real life encounters that might possibly help the reader to observe life from other's perspectives. I'd like to dedicate this medley of stories and articles to my five children and to my husband, who has gone on to heaven.

Thanks to Becky Woods for her help with editing and technical issues.

Fiction Stories

Yassmin's Escape



Yassmin waited until all was quiet in the house. Taking care not to waken her sister, Wardiyya, she crept out of bed. She carefully wrapped her treasured radio, which had brought such hope to her life, padded it with her clothes to protect it, and placed it in the center of her bag. She dressed in her brother's *galabiyya* and *kaffiyph* and slipped out of her home.

Her farming village was located a long night's walk from the U.S. Military Training Mission outside Tabuk in northwest Arabia. She was sure she could seek help there.

She needed to be careful to find the American compound; since the military city of King Abdul Aziz was also located there, she didn't want to risk meeting any Arab soldiers. She knew what would happen should they discover her to be a girl—out alone, unescorted, and planning to leave her family.

The sky was beginning to lighten as she approached a gate. She was trying to see whether or not an American was standing guard. Suddenly the guard on duty, Sergeant Emus, called out, "Who goes there?" Yassmin rattled off her full name, "Yassmin Bint Abdullah Al Ahmed," which Sergeant Emus took to be the name of the young "boy" presenting himself. He beckoned her forward to check her out. When

she got close enough, she uttered her few, carefully selected English words, "I . . . want . . . safe. I am Christian."

The sergeant reached for his phone. "This is Sergeant Emus at the North Gate. I have a small boy here who is asking for asylum. What do I do with him? Hmm, I see. Okay, thanks."

Yassmin understood none of this, but obeying Sergeant Emus's motions, she sat down beside the guardhouse. Within minutes, a Jeep drove up and whisked Yassmin away from the North Gate.

She had mixed feelings: She had gotten safely to the American base but was apprehensive as she wondered what would happen next. The Jeep driver talked to her in English and handed her a banana and food bar. Bone tired after her long hike, she welcomed the food.

They stopped in front of a barracks and her driver escorted her into an office, saluted, and explained to an older man sitting behind a desk, "Lieutenant Bently, this is the boy Sergeant Emus sent in from the North Gate."

"Thank you, private," he responded, dismissing the young man.

The lieutenant smiled at the young Arab and asked how he happened to come to this base. He didn't understand her reply, so he made another call to a national to interpret the girl's answer.

This concerned her, but she began her story, "I am Yassmin. I am sixteen years old, the eldest daughter of Abdullah Al Ahmed." Her listeners registered some surprise at her feminine name, but she continued. "I have come here for several reasons: My father has been arranging a marriage for me with a man three times my age. He has two other wives. This plan has made me very sad. I cannot do this. I must not marry that man."

Seeing the reactions of the lieutenant, she spoke on, "I have come to believe differently from my parents. I have become a follower of Jesus. Because Jesus died to pay for my sins, I am forgiven and now have eternal life."

Glancing at the shocked look on the face of the interpreter, she continued, "I know that my life would be in danger should my relatives find out that I have become a Christian. They follow a radical

non-peaceful branch of Islam and do not allow “infidels,” as we are called, to live. Because of that concern, and to escape marriage, I’m hoping to be given asylum. I am hoping that I can eventually go to a place where I can safely be a Christian.”

The interpreter scowled. The officer behind the desk was perspiring. He asked her, “And you are planning to get into some other country?”

Yassmin answered, “I am hoping that someone will help me. Perhaps your country will grant me asylum and help me travel there. However, if it will not, I have another plan . . . because . . . she paused, “I—cannot return home!”

She stopped short, realizing the danger of exposing her contingent plan before the interpreter; a plan that included finding her way to the town of Aqaba, Jordan, which was not too far away. From there, she would travel to Eliat, Israel. Perhaps she could stay there . . . or go on to England or America.

She had presented her case. She awaited the verdict.

Lieutenant Bently said, “I will have to present your case to those in authority here at the base. It may take a day or two. Meantime, we will find you a bed in the women’s barracks.” He reached for the phone and within minutes, a young woman in uniform came to escort Yassmin to the women’s quarters. She motioned to a cot, where Yassmin was relieved to unload her baggage and lie down.

She awoke that afternoon, at first not realizing where she was. She lay quietly, rehearsing the events of the last few hours in her mind. Hope ran high in her heart and mind. Before long, the woman soldier returned, greeted her, and motioned to her that they should go eat. Together, they headed towards the mess hall.

After a shower the next morning, Yassmin donned her own *abaya* and *shayla* and gathered her belongings. She silently prayed a fervent, “Please, Lord Jesus!” and set off with the lady soldier to meet with Officer Bently again.



Yassmin anxiously watched the lieutenant and the Arab helper discussing something in English. Then the interpreter turned to Yassmin and smugly told her in Arabic, "Lieutenant Bently says these words to you, 'I am sorry to tell you this, but I am going to have to return you to your parents. We, as a foreign military force in this land, are bound by our agreement to observe the Sharia law of your land. We are not allowed to interfere with your customs. If it were up to me, I would try to help you, but my hands are tied. The United States has to honor its agreement with the Saudi government.'"

The Lieutenant seemed truly sorry as he watched the interpreter, who smirked as he translated his last comment, "We have informed your parents of your whereabouts. We will be glad to take you back to your home."

Yassmin sank into a chair and wept. Visions of what her punishment would be flooded her mind. An unmarried girl running away from home was inexcusable in her culture. She expected severe punishment, if not death, since her leaving would dishonor her family.

There was also a possibility that the interpreter might reveal her beliefs to others. Judging by his attitude, he would enjoy doing that. Even if he never revealed her Christian beliefs to others, she would forever have to hide her faith or take the consequences when she returned to her home. She also had that awful prospect of marrying the man to whom her father had promised her.

The lady soldier put a sympathetic arm around her shoulders and led her out to the Jeep that was waiting for them. A few hours later, they approached her village. She was full of apprehension, but as she left the Jeep, her parents came out to meet her with open arms! She expected, at the very least, to receive a tongue lashing from her father. However, his face seemed somehow altered! Instead of the harsh, angry countenance she expected, his face looked kind and welcoming.

Her mother rushed out, crying, "Yassmin! Yassmin!" her face wet with tears. Something was strange.

After a meal of her favorite dishes, her father took Yassmin by the hand and led her outside, away from the house. He explained, “Yassmin, something happened while you were gone . . . something miraculous. Naturally, we were concerned when we found you were missing. We sincerely asked God to protect you.

“During the night, I had a vision or a dream. Jesus came to me and told me, first of all, that you were safe. Then He told me that He was the true way of life; that He was the way to God. I have been raised in Islam, but I know now that it is the wrong path. Now I want to be a follower of Jesus!”

“Oh, father, I am a believer, too, and that is why I left,” she cried, falling into his arms.

“I have told your mother about the dream,” he continued, “and she believes with me, that God has blessed us with a special revelation.”

“Oh, thank God, Papa!”

Walking back to the house, her father concluded, “There may be dangers ahead for us, my child, but God will be with us through it all.”

He went on, “And, Yassmin, I know you were unhappy about the marriage contract. I see now that it was for my own selfish reasons that I arranged that marriage for you. It was for the money he offered me. I didn’t consider your feelings. But now I feel differently. Somehow I will cancel out that contract, and I will be your protector until God shows us a proper husband for you.”

See the End Note about this story.

