



Cossack Girl⁺

Marina⁺ Yurlova

Cossack Girl

Marina Yurlova



SOMERVILLE, MA, USA

Credits

Cossack Girl by Marina Yurlova
was originally published in 1934
by The Macaulay Company.

Cover Design and Layout
by Matthew C. Goodman

This presentation of *Cossack Girl* ©2010
by Heliograph, Inc.

ISBN: 1-930658-70-2
ISBN-13: 978-1-930658-70-7

Set in Adobe Jenson Pro.

This edition retains the original spelling and punctuation
of the Macaulay edition, which in some instances
differs from modern standards.



Heliograph, Inc.
26 Porter Street
Somerville, MA 02143
<http://www.heliograph.com>
info@heliograph.com

Contents

| | |
|---|-----|
| 1. INTERLUDE: 1915 | 1 |
| 2. THE BEGINNING OF AN ADVENTURE..... | 3 |
| 3. 'MARIA KOLESNIKOVA'..... | 13 |
| 4. PARADE..... | 23 |
| 5. THE HUT | 27 |
| 6. PATROL..... | 31 |
| 7. FORAGE | 39 |
| 8. THE DEATH OF KOSEL | 45 |
| 9. AMPUTATION | 51 |
| 10. A COLONEL AND A DOCTOR..... | 57 |
| 11. SCHEHEREZADE | 65 |
| 12. SKIRMISH..... | 71 |
| 13. DEATH IN THE SNOW..... | 77 |
| 14. THE GRAND DUKE STRIKES | 87 |
| 15. THE GRAND DUKE..... | 99 |
| 16. FAMINE AND THIRST | 109 |
| 17. INTERLUDE: 1917..... | 115 |
| 18. MURDER IN THE HILLS | 119 |
| 19. MICHAEL VERESCHENKO | 125 |
| 20. REVOLUTION: 1918..... | 133 |
| 21. PRISON IN KAZAN | 137 |
| 22. FLIGHT | 145 |
| 23. AN ASYLUM IN OMSK | 159 |
| 24. GOODBYE TO LOVE | 165 |
| 25. THE TRAIN STOPS..... | 169 |
| 26. ACROSS SIBERIA | 173 |
| 27. PROFITEER | 181 |
| 28. THE SMOLNY INSTITUTE GIRLS: 1919..... | 189 |
| 29. DEPARTURE | 197 |
| INDEX & GLOSSARY | 200 |

Illustrations

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| <i>Marlina Yurlova Today</i> | <i>Frontispiece</i> |
| <i>Armenian Refugee Children</i> | 38 |
| <i>Official Invalid Leave of Absence Granted to Marina Yurlova</i> | 50 |
| <i>Bolshevik Soldiers, 1918 & Soldiers and Civilians on a Train</i> | 98 |
| <i>An Execution in Kazan</i> | 132 |
| <i>Scenes Near Any Siberian Village During the Guerilla Warfare</i> | 168 |
| <i>After the Battle near Irkutsk</i> | 180 |
| <i>The Author Before Her Escape To Japan</i> | 199 |



Marina Yurlova In 1934

CHAPTER ONE

INTERLUDE: 1915

MIDDAY in the Southern Caucasus. For a long fortnight it had been unbearably hot. The sun had turned the whole plain to a glaring, metallic yellow, across which, like a procession of black cinders, patch after patch of scorched brush crawled away to the horizon. To the east a mountain range danced interminably in the heat haze, muttering to itself with an occasional low roll of thunder.

In the camp, like a symbol of the heat, a black cloud of flies hovered incessantly above the corral.

Drill was over for the morning. Men lay about in whatever patches of shade they could find or could manufacture. *Obied*, or mess, had been eaten. There was nothing to do.

I had wandered a little way beyond my own lines to get away from my companions, whose conversation was as wearisome to me as it seemed to be to them. There was nothing new to talk about—the rumors of battle, the gossip about home, the fears for the coming harvest, all these were as frayed as our own nerves. Nobody had the energy to sing.

My wound was paining me, but I would rather walk than sit still and let it nag. I went along, staring at the ground there was really nothing to see but the same groups of men, lying about in the same attitudes; and nothing to hear but the same listless talk. I'd almost reached the edge of the camp, when an excited babble of voices just ahead made me look up.

I quickened my pace—anything for a diversion.

About fifty men had gathered about something which I could not see distinctly; it rather seemed as if it might be a horse. As I came up, a man on the edge of the crowd caught sight of me.

“Hey, sonny,” he called, “maybe you can help us. We rather think this is Stepan of your Hundred. Make way there,” he shouted, “here’s somebody who might know.”

The crowd opened up for me, and I saw that it was a horse. It was standing there trembling and dripping with sweat; Its flanks were streaked with dried blood; there was something tied on to its back with rope.

“Take a good look, sonny. Is that Stepan by any chance?”

I took a good look; not because I wanted to, but because my eyes were fixed and staring in horror.

He was naked. He was already decomposing in the heat. One arm hung almost to the ground, for he had slipped during his ride home; there was no hand on that arm and no wrist.

They had tied him with his head towards the horse's head, and his feet dangling over the horse's rump. In the middle of his body, just below his stomach, there was a raw, red hole—black with fat flies now; from the foot that was nearest to me all the toe nails had been pulled away.

"Well," said a voice at my ear, "is it Stepan, or isn't it?"

I nodded my head dumbly. *Stepan*—who could find his way home even over the worst country.... You couldn't have found your way home now, even if you had been alive, for they had gouged your eyes out. They had done it while you were alive, too, for your mouth was twisted in agony, and your lower lip was almost bitten through. It was crusted with a dried froth of blood.

Somebody jogged my elbow roughly. "Those Kurds cut a man up pretty thoroughly. Are you sure you recognize him?"

"Yes," I said. My mouth was fixed in an idiotic grin, my eyes were still intent on him—they felt as though they would burst out of my head, but I couldn't turn them away. "Yes, I can tell it by the w-wart on his nose." I began to laugh, louder and louder; I was still staring at him; it seemed as though the world was quite filled with Stepan.

"Take the kid away," said somebody contemptuously. "He's had enough. A fine Cossack—him!" And I was led away, still laughing.

For almost a year I had been a volunteer in the Cossack Army. I was a girl, just fifteen years old.

INDEX

Anapas 170
 Araks 42, 44, 63, 84
 Ararats 103
 Babych 53, 56, 58
 Baku 50, 56-57, 59, 110-112, 115-117, 119, 121, 127, 186
 Caucasus 1, 12, 17, 71, 85, 95, 100, 112, 115, 120-121, 139, 144, 159, 165
 Cheliabinsk 143
 Czecho-Slovaks 137, 143, 145, 165
 Djoulfa 105
 Ekaterinodar 10, 12, 21, 78, 96, 181
 Enesei 168
 Erivan 42-43, 103-105
 Erzerum 82-87, 162
 Erzingan 86-88
 Golovinsky Prospekt 96, 101
 Gritsko 21-22, 27-28, 36-38, 40-41, 63
 Grusinski 98
 Harbin 156, 158, 168, 171, 175, 177-178, 181, 185
 Irkutsk 161-162, 165-168
 Kahetinsky 100
 Kalihnsky Canyon 107
 Kappel 137-139, 141, 145
 Kars 97-98
 Kazan 126, 128-131, 137, 139-142, 147, 150, 158, 186
 Kharkov 120
 Kosel 17-38, 42-49, 52, 67, 111, 133
 Kurds 2, 61-62, 64-69, 100
 Kurny 49, 55, 59-61, 64, 66-70, 72-75, 77-80, 86, 89, 105
 Lake Baikal 162, 168
 Lake Urmia 105

Lebedev 173
 Mahorka 27, 29, 32, 75, 125
 Mongol 163-166
 Nakichevan 75-79, 81
 Nevsky Prospekt 96
 Nobile Hospital 110, 119
 Petroff 173
 Petrograd 107, 127
 Raevskaya 3, 7, 10-13, 45, 48, 114, 133, 187
 Ravanduz 106
 Red Cross 14, 22, 33, 47, 59, 70, 72, 82, 103, 106-107, 117, 139, 141, 144, 158
 Rodzianko 171
 Sarakamysh 14
 Semenov 165
 Semyon 125-126
 Shusha 50
 Sivas 86-89, 95
 Smolny 171, 179
 Sokoloff 170-176, 179, 181-182
 Sotnik 42-43, 49, 59, 64, 66-69, 75-80
 Southern Caucasus 1, 12
 Stepan 1-2, 37, 39-40, 61-62
 St. George, Cross of 36, 59, 63-64, 66-67, 95, 97, 100, 155
 St. Petersburg 43, 96, 107
 Tatra 155
 Tavis 105
 Third Ekaterinodarski Polk 21-23
 Tiflis 93, 95-100, 102, 103, 106, 157, 186
 Tobolsk 171, 173
 Tomsk 159-161
 Ural 145, 146, 173
 Vladikavkaz 100, 101
 Volga 126, 137, 139
 Zlatoust 148

GLOSSARY

Astrakhan: pelt of a Persian lamb, with black curly fur.
 Babba, Babbi: woman, women.
 Barishnia: unmarried girl.
 Beshmet: Cossack uniform coat and breeches
 Boorka: huge woolen Caucasian cape which covers man and horse. So tightly woven that it is practically rain-proof.
 Cherkeskas: tight-bodied Cossack top coat.
 Divchina: little girl.
 Feldfebel: sergeant.
 Karakul: see Astrakhan
 Malyi: kiddy.
 Nagaika: whip.
 Obied: military meal or mess.
 Polk: regiment.
 Sanitar: hospital attendant, medical orderly.
 Shapka: The Kuban Cossack's winter cap, made from sheepskin, wider at the top than the bottom.
 Sotnik: Leader of the Hundred. Cossack rank.
 Stanitza: village within a Cossack host.
 Synok: sonny.
 Telega: four-wheeled cart designed for cargo rather than pasengers.
 Uriadnik: top sergeant.



Marina Yurlova served in uniform as a fighting Cossack, volunteering in 1914 at the age of 14. Though repeatedly wounded in combat, she returned to military service and repeatedly won the St. George's Cross for bravery. Through the war and revolution, Marina encountered Turks, Kurds and Reds, drove cars and trucks, fought for the Czech Legion, trekked overland across Siberia, and finally boarded a ship at Vladivostok to travel to Japan in 1919. Remarkably, whenever asked, Marina never denied she was a girl.

She distills these five years of her life into a captivating narrative, filled with observations and impressions of places and people Marina encountered in her extensive travels through Russia.

•Recommended For Adult Readers Only•

This book contains graphic descriptions and photos of war-time horrors the author witnessed during World War I and the Russian Revolution. It also contains passages that may distress members of certain ethnic or religious groups, and also describes adult situations and themes. Although it describes experiences of a teen serving in a war, it is not suitable reading for children.



Cossack Girl
Marina Yurlova
HEL 5870

