

## Rasmus

### "My Captivity By Savages"

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This is the story of My Captivity By Savages, or,  
How I Learned To Fight.  
By Eliza Elizabeth Cooke, age thirteen,  
written in my own hand on this, the 23rd day of August,  
1829.  
Chapter one: Fine Day For a Flaying or,  
The Brutal Massacre of All I held Dear.

The valley that runs down the trail over the West bank  
of the glorious state of Nachez Pierce,  
was the sight of my own hideous undoing.

My family was lain waste,  
no care being taken by the natives,  
that even baby Coolige was to be spared an ounce of  
pain.  
How I came to be spared, by the grace of God, I shall  
never know.

I had been smashed in the head with a boulder over  
fourteen times by a young Indian brave.

When I awoke, through eyes still stinging from the  
smoldering decimation,  
my large, blue eyes looked up into the burning sun of  
the late summer sky.  
No sooner had I stirred, when four horsemen  
approached my wilted carcass.

In their stilted English, they told me in great detail  
how they had massacred mine own Ma and Pa,  
how my elder brother, Ham, had given no resistance to  
his own flogging,  
and how easy it had been to make my sickly sister,  
Sarah Susanna,  
whale and sob like a sea creature. [crying sounds]

I clenched my long, graceful fingers into tight fists at  
my sides,  
and turning my head away, left quietly to myself.  
[laughter]

If these human animals thought they had caught a  
nubile and willing young white slave-girl,  
they were sorely mistaken.

I felt about my waist for a weapon.  
Oftentimes, I keep sewing tools hanging from ribbons  
pinned to my dress.

"Looking for this?" The handsomest warrior asked,  
holding my sterling pinking shears up between two red  
fingers  
as he looked down from his steed at my writhing  
confusion.

Brushing a stray strand of pale yellow hair from my  
brow,  
I pretended to reach for a stray silken slipper that I had  
spied nearby,  
but swiftly darted up  
and dove between the flanks of the wild mustangs that  
stood majestically before me!

The silent commander had only to reach down to  
capture me by the hair.  
Yanking hard, he pulled me upright,  
and twisted my fair face up to meet his cold, cold gaze.

I shall never forget my realization upon that moment,  
that my freedom had thus been robbed, and that,  
although my pleasing mortal shell was intact,  
I, Eliza Elizabeth Jane Cooke, was to become  
handmaiden  
to a number of virile, half-naked nomads,  
and that this ordeal would continue fourteen years.

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