



'Bridal Beginnings'



reported by a local society editor covering the event for a newspaper. I guarantee you it will make some of the more avant folk weddings seem like apple pie.

Any girl who has walked the earth has sooner or later come to some confrontation with the strange and wonderful intricacies of the bridal process. Some learned while playing with bride dolls, some a little later from the girlish tales in which the happy couple floated off into space to 'live happily ever after' and even more rounded their bridal education off by being bridesmaid to a cousin or sister.

Woe to the unfortunate lass (like me) who waits until she's found a mate and then proceeds, innocent as the newborn babe, to enter a world full of rite and superstition, customs and taboos she never knew existed in modern society. In an attempt to decide which of these customs I'd use, I made a little study into the origin of contemporary wedding customs. I became absolutely convinced that it's the lunacy in us all that keeps life interesting and I'd found too much of interest to keep it to myself.

Bear with me as I create for you some of the strange rites and customs that have contributed to our own wedding ceremony as it might have been

The bride, a charming oak tree, stood resplendent in the sunshine, her shiny green leaves and delicate acorns waving in the breeze to the beat of tribal drums. The groom stood at her side, awaiting the local official. As number one son of Sam the Speak Maker, a prominent community leader, he will undoubtedly soon attend the wedding of his brother for whose sake he has married this budding bride.

You've just read the description of a very generous brother in an animist society. These peoples believe that all objects living and non living have a soul or spirit. Since it was extremely bad luck for a younger brother to marry first, the elder brother made a temporary union with a tree, allowing the younger and already enamored brother to wed the bride of his choice. Fortunately the roots of this practice were not widespread and no real remnants are

alive in our customs today.

Man has mated in one form or another with some systematic approach, from the early cave and nomadic tribes. Even primitive man realized the effects of marriage within the immediate family and yet he only lived with his near relatives. So the practice of bridal capture arose. Something like this perhaps?

Jack Bold stole the lovely and charming Greta Granite today as his bride. Greta, the daughter of Hairy the Skin Tanner and his wife Fruitful was taken by surprise at the edge of camp by Jack as his best man Tom Foolery created a major diversion by riding into the center of camp on an antelope. We don't expect to see Greta again, as Jack's camp is a full four days ride, but we wish her all the best with the bold antelope hunter tribe.

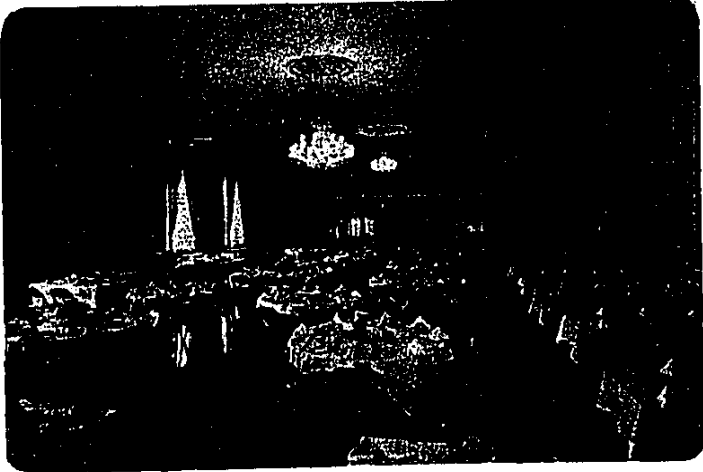
Think of that when your spouse lifts you over the threshold. The final vestage of the practice of bridal capture has sifted down through the ages as a good luck symbol shared and enjoyed by almost an entire civilization.

Our rather recently developed (as milleniums go) ethic of purity upon marriage has out of sheer necessity not always been so. The size of a family may have been on the outside thirty or less and each person had to produce. So important has childbearing ability been that in some societies a pregnancy is the only way to consummate the marriage ceremony. Unbearable scorn and rejection accompanied any male who would not have married the bride in these tribes however.

Rochelle Plump today became the property of Craig Boulder when the birth of her first child proved her to be a creative spouse. Craig, a fume hunter, has provided many skins and hides to protect the lovely Rochelle and her little one from wind and snow. Rochelle (or Rocky as her friends call her) will be welcome company to Craig's other wives. A family feast is planned as soon as Craig goes out and catches something.

The wedding industry today would be even busier if the practice of multiple wives had continued. However in most

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