



Author with one of his clients, oil-rich sheik Ismail.

“I BUY BRIDES FOR ARAB SHEIKS”

by TREVOR L. M. MAYNARD

It may seem incredible, but hundreds of

THE UNUSUAL advertisement shown on the opposite page caused much comment and conjecture when it first appeared in the classified columns of a national newspaper a few weeks ago. Many readers wondered if it was a gag, a Hollywood publicity stunt or some kind of come-on sucker gimmick.

Believe me, it was none of those things. I know, because I am the man who placed the ad. I am the authorized representative for several sheiks and I have placed many such advertisements in the newspapers of a dozen countries during the last several years.

It's all part of my business as a buying agent—as a large-scale buyer of European and North and South American brides for oil-rich Arabian sheiks.

“You can't be serious—you must be joking!” is the reaction I generally get from people when I tell them what I do for a living.

But I'm completely serious; and a business that nets me more than \$35,000 a year—free and clear after all my globe-trotting expenses are paid—can hardly be considered a joke by anyone!

In the seven years since I first went into the bride-buying business in 1956, I have “bought” over one hundred—117, to be exact—beautiful girls and women on the wide-open marriage markets of the Western World.

My fee is ten percent of the sum the buyer pays his chosen bride as a marriage settlement. That ten percent runs between \$5,000 and \$10,000 a crack. Anyone with a pencil and a scrap of paper can figure up roughly what I have grossed, and at the same time see the kind of prices my Middle Eastern clients are ready, willing and eager to pay to add a Western bride to their harem collections.

“Do you actually mean to say that Western women are willing to become harem inmates merely for money?” countless astounded individuals have asked me.

The answer to that is—are you kidding?

The advertisement reproduced on these pages brought replies from more than 300 avid applicants within 72 hours after it was first published. Within a week, the postman had brought over a thousand replies and the end was still not in sight.

“It's pretty much the same story whenever—and wherever—I place one of my advertisements. I invariably receive a flood of replies, and I could easily fill a hundred times as many bride-buying orders as I have on my books.

Needless to say, I get all kinds of letters—and the following are excerpts from some entirely typical specimens.

First of all, there is the reply from the essentially romantic female:

“Dear Boxholder,

“I am 22, blonde and blue-eyed. My measurements are 38-26-38. I have always dreamed of marrying an Arab sheik and living with him in the desert . . .”

Then there are the letters from less romantic and more mercenary babes:

“Dear Sir:

“If one of your clients is looking for a curvaceous, 23-year-old redhead—and is willing to put \$50,000 into the bank in my name—I'm just the girl he's looking for . . .”

Then again, there are the dames who use high-pressure, hard-sell sex techniques in an effort to get in on the gravy:

“Dear Advertiser:

“I have enclosed several photographs of myself in the nude. You can tell your customers that I have everything it takes—

and know how to use it all . . .”

"Girl chosen should speak at least one language besides

When the replies to the advertisements I place come in, I read each and every one of them over very carefully. Some, of course, I can immediately discard because the applicants simply do not meet the requirements of my clients. It is not unusual for middle-aged women or girls as young as 14 to

Ad which author placed recently in national newspaper drew bags full of mail from all over the United States.

ARAB SHEIKS

write in. Other applicants send photographs of themselves—and these instantly reveal that they do not possess the physical attributes necessary.

Long experience has taught me how to spot applicants who are less obviously—but nonetheless equally—undesirable. Women give away a great deal of information about themselves in the way in which they word their letters. It is usually possible to detect when an applicant is a harpy, a fortune-hunter or just a cheap tart or call-girl looking for an easy way to make some money. It is also generally possible to sense when an applicant is a neurotic or a potential trouble-maker.

In any event, having culled out those letters that fit a particular client's bill, I forward them to him, together with the photographs that have been enclosed by the women. He then chooses the ones in which he is interested and notifies me to proceed with my usual routine.

I get in touch with the women and arrange interviews with them. Usually, I travel to their places of residence although I have, on occasion, arranged for their transportation to wherever I happened to be staying.

These interviews are perhaps the most delicate and difficult phases of my work. It is first of all necessary for me to explain the facts of Middle Eastern life to each girl.

I begin by telling the girl that her

marriage will be governed by Moham-medan law. Her prospective husband is allowed to have four wives—and an unlimited number of concubines—at any one time. He can divorce his wives simply by saying "I divorce thee" three times—and he can divorce and marry as many times as he pleases, as long as he does not have more than four wives at any given time.

"Thus, your marriage may last for years—or only a few days," I tell each girl bluntly. Actually, most of my clients keep their Western wives for an average of two years—and then, tiring of them, go through the divorce ritual and go again into the marriage market for fresh replacements.

It is also necessary to explain that Westerners or not, the wives of most Middle Eastern sheikhs are required to live in harems. Admittedly, many of these harems are luxurious, up-to-the-minute residences, but even so harem-life places an infinite number of restrictions on the women who reside in them.

"You will not be allowed even to speak to any other man without your husband's permission," I continue. "You may raise no objections about his actions, no matter what he may do . . ."

Then, I discuss the sexual aspects of marriage to a Middle Eastern sheikh. I explain that my clients are all men who relish exotic and *outré* fillips in their sexual activities.

"In the West, some of their most

highly favored practices are considered perversions," I tell each girl frankly. "If you have any sexual inhibitions and do not believe that you can overcome or ignore them, you had best abandon any idea of marriage to a sheikh."

Beyond this, it is necessary to make it clear that a wife must resign herself to the idea that she is by no means the only woman in her husband's life.

"There will be three other wives—and innumerable concubines," I tell the prospective brides. "In addition, your husband is free to amuse himself with prostitutes and in brothels if he so desires. You engage in sexual intercourse with him only when he wants, and when he sends for you. And bear in mind that there will be occasions when he sends not only for you, but for one or more of the other wives and some of the concubines all at the same time . . ."

Many applicants signify their desire to drop out of the running long before I reach this point in the interview. Those who are still interested are given a rigorous investigation by a reliable private detective agency which I retain for this purpose.

When the detective agency's reports are all in, I again arrange interviews with the three or four girls who appear to be the best qualified. It is then up to me to choose the one who is most fitted and most likely to please my client.

Having made the choice, I notify my client by cable. He then arranges for the appropriate transfer of funds to a bank in the city in which his bride-to-be lives. The sum representing the marriage settlement is placed in escrow—it is payable to the girl's account as soon as the marriage has been solemnized. In addition, my clients transfer enough money to provide the girl with an appropriate trousseau and to pay her transportation to the Middle East.

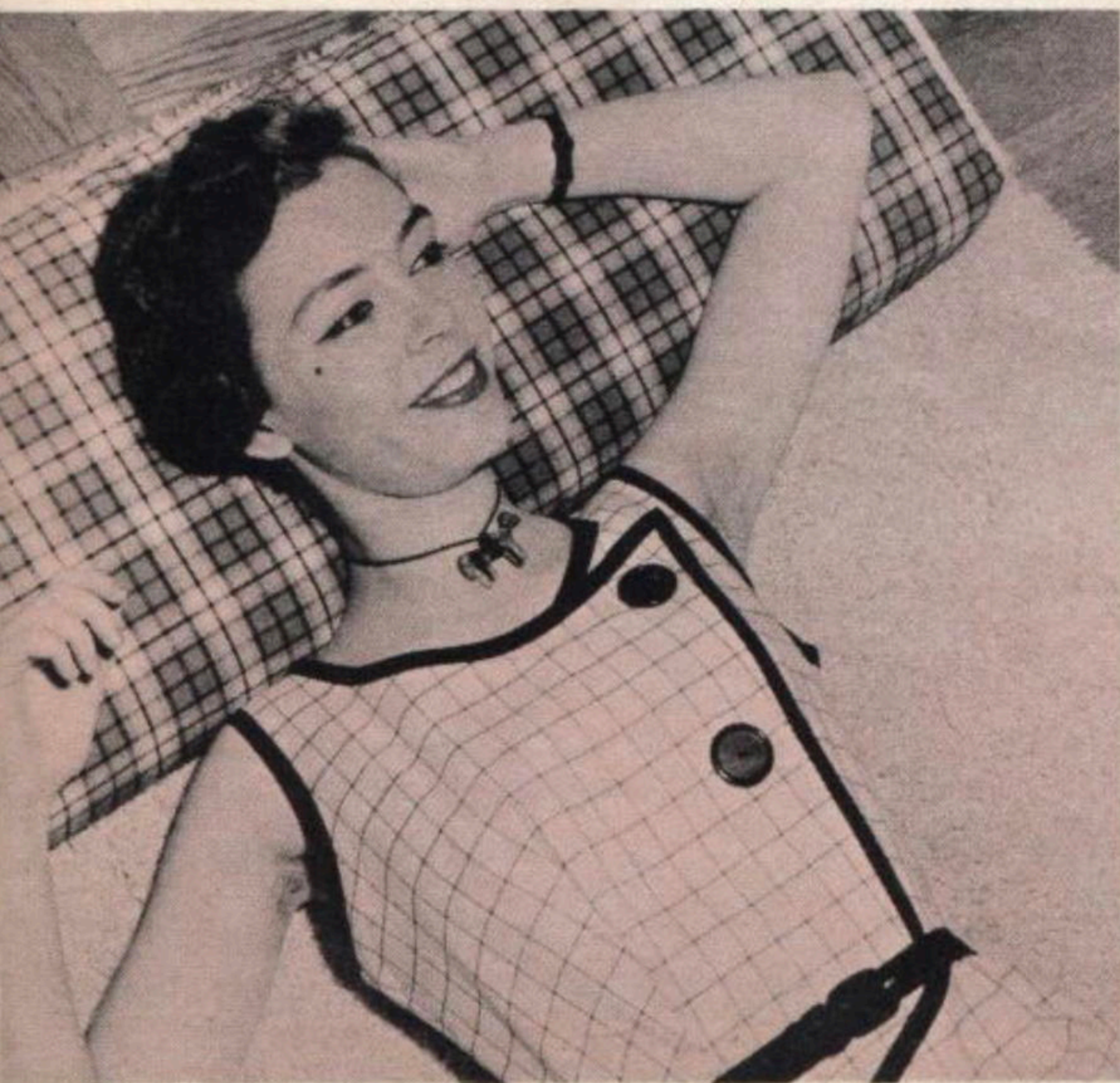
Once the bride has arrived and the marriage ceremony has taken place, I receive my fee—which, as I've said before, is a sum equivalent to ten percent of the marriage settlement.

That, in short, is how my business operates—how I "buy" brides for Arab sheiks.

I GOT INTO the business purely by accident. In 1956, I was travelling in the Middle East as the sales representative for a British manufacturing concern. In the course of my work, I came into contact with many wealthy sheiks—men whose six-figure annual incomes came from oil royalties.

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Annette Morceau, attractive young Swiss girl, was obtained by author for Sheik Ismail bin Mohamet in 1958. At right, Annette meets the Sheik on her arrival. Purchase price was \$250,000!



One of them, Sheik Suleiman bin Hamid al Khalil, gave me an exceptionally large order. In the course of our conversations, he'd mentioned—half-jokingly, I thought at first—that he would like to add a young European bride to his harem.

"I have married and divorced a total of 27 wives—and I have three now," he told me. "But I have never had a Western wife—and the thought of having one excites and intrigues me . . ."

I'd already learned that Western wives had become the ultimate in status-symbols among the oil-rich sheiks of the Middle East, but I was hardly prepared for the request Sheik Suleiman made of me during our last meeting.

"When you return to England, try and find me an 18 or 19 year old bride," he asked. "I shall settle 20,000 pounds (\$56,000) on her when she marries me . . ."

I got back to London and took the first of my advertisements—more for laughs than for any other reason. I was astounded at the response it drew and, to make a long story short, I got Sheik Suleiman his bride. She was Pamela Bates, a lovely, taffy-haired girl of 18, who married Suleiman, was divorced by him 14 months later and returned to London to enjoy her wealth.

My biggest surprise, however, came when Sheik Suleiman sent me 2,000 pounds—\$5,600—which, he insisted, was due to me as my fee. He also recommended me very highly to some of his fellow-sheiks, and I was swamped with

requests for Western brides. The opportunity was too good to miss—and I quit my job and went into the bride-buying business on a full time basis.

I made money right from the start, but my biggest fee came in 1958, when I received \$25,000 from Sheik Ismail bin Mohamet of Kuwait. Although Sheik Ismail was then 72, he wanted a young Western bride desperately.

"I will pay \$250,000 for one," he told me in his quavering voice during one of my by-then regular bride-business trips to the Middle East. "She must be young, fresh and beautiful . . ."

"And a virgin?" I asked.

"No, that is not necessary," Sheik Ismail replied. "In fact, I would prefer one who does not need to be taught everything by me . . ."

I found the girl for Sheik Ismail in Geneva, Switzerland. She was a doe-eyed beauty of 19 whose innocent face belied the fact that she was already the mistress of a 56-year-old Swiss industrialist.

Her name was Annette Morceau, and she was of French-Swiss descent. A passionate little voluptuary, she came to my hotel and insisted on proving to me that there was very little she needed to be taught about sex. After spending a night with her, I could recommend her without reservation to my client, Sheik Ismail—but I naturally told him nothing of how I had learned so much about Annette Morceau's qualifications.

"I will please your client, you can be sure of that," Annette declared.

Evidently, she did please Sheik Ismail. He settled the agreed \$250,000

on her and paid my ten percent fee. Annette remained his wife for almost three years—and then, the old sheik became very ill. Annette prevailed upon him to divorce her on his deathbed, and this made her free to return to Switzerland after he died.

A shrewd little schemer, Annette changed her name as soon as she returned to Switzerland. Drawing on the \$250,000 nest-egg she had in a Geneva bank, she began touring the Continent, posing as the orphaned daughter of a wealthy family. She played the role convincingly and, in late 1962, she married an extremely wealthy Belgian businessman of 65. Presumably, she will inherit at least a sizeable portion of his fortune when he dies.

Annette Morceau was exceptional in many ways—but basically, she was no different than any of the thousands of women who have replied to my advertisements in Europe, North and South America. The majority of them are bored with their humdrum existences, tired of working for a living and eager to obtain a large sum of money all in one big, sudden chunk. These are the motives and reasons for responding to the ads—and for offering to marry my Middle Eastern clients who seek Western brides for their harems.

Some—and, it would seem, most—of the brides I have "bought" for my clients fare well in the harems. At least, they manage to accustom themselves to the bizarre social and sexual customs and activities that prevail. Others apparently regret having married their sheiks soon after the wedding cere-

mony—but they somehow manage to stick it out until their husbands weary of them and divorce them.

So far, none of the brides I have bought have caused any real trouble to their husbands. More than half—61 by last count—have given birth to children in harems. Of these, 46 were divorced subsequently by their husbands, and all agreed to leave their children behind when they returned to their own countries.

I suppose the purchased brides realize the basics involved—and accept them. They know what they are getting themselves into—and they understand that they are status-symbols to their Arab husbands, costly baubles to be enjoyed briefly and then sent on their way or, in a manner of speaking, traded off for new models. The money they receive as marriage settlements appears to compensate them fully for

everything.

I've been criticized—and even sneered at—for being in the bride-buying business. A few times, I have even been called a procurer, a *maquereau*—a pimp.

The two or three men who have said this to me in the last seven years have gotten a fist where it did them the least good. The women—well, hell, what can you do but laugh in their faces? Women who take this view are only trying to regain a shred of self-respect for their sisters—and for their sex as a whole.

After all, every woman instinctively appreciates what I know—that I do not actually "buy" brides for my clients. I merely act as an intermediary, as a broker between the buyers—and the young women who are so very willing and eager to sell themselves to the highest bidder! ♦ ♦ ♦