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By Edgar Rice Burroughs
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THE BARSOOMIAN CHRONICLES
by ALAN HOWARD

NO.IV - "ALL IN THE FAMILY"

As is very well known, in every Barsoomian chronicle to reach our planet, the leading character marries one of no less rank than royalty. It was therefore, with considerable asperity that Carthuvian, the son of Carthoris, learned from his son, Carthulan, that the boy wanted to marry Dalla, the daughter of the Chief Thoatkeeper.

"Never!" shouted Carthuvian, "Oh that your mother was alive. She could always talk sense into you. You know that you are betrothed to Levia, the daughter of the Jed of Zodanga."

"But I don't love her!" said Carthulan.

"What does love have to do with it? Your revered ancestor, the Warlord, desires this alliance as an aid to pacifying the ever perverse and truculent Zodangans."

"Oh, damn my revered ancestor," wailed Carthulan, nearly in tears from anger and frustration. "He certainly got the girl he wanted. Why should I be any different."

"Tell you what," said Carthuvian, "why don't you bring the girl around to me, and we will talk this out."

"I'll do it, but it won't do any good."

The next day Carthulan ushered Dalla into the the presence of his father. She was a pretty little lady indeed.

"How do you do, you pretty little lady," said Carthuvian.

"Oh Carthulan, by the way, the Warlord is paying a state visit to Cathol, and he especially requested your presence in his entourage. You will have to leave right away to join him at his palace. You just leave this pretty little lady with me, and I'm sure we can work something out by the time you return."

"Now my dear—", said Carthuvian, as his son reluctantly took his leave.

The following week Carthulan returned to find Dalla installed in the household as his father's wife.

And so, Carthulan married the Zodangan princess, and she was squint-eyed, and a termagant. It served him right—never introduce your best girl to your widowed father.