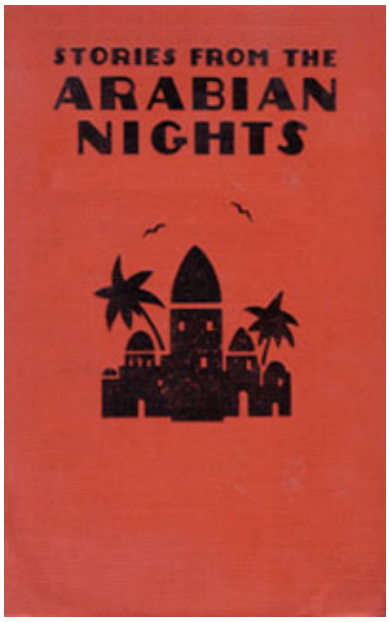

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E. DIXON. Cambridge, Xmas, 1893.

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THE KING OF PERSIA AND THE PRINCESS OF THE SEA.

There once was a king of Persia, who at the beginning of his reign had distinguished himself by many glorious and successful conquests, and had afterwards enjoyed such profound peace and tranquillity as rendered him the happiest of monarchs. His only occasion for regret was that he had no heir to succeed him in the kingdom after his death. One day, according to the custom of his royal predecessors during their residence in the capital, he held an assembly of his courtiers, at which all the ambassadors and strangers of renown at his court were present. Among these there appeared a merchant from a far-distant country, who sent a message to the king craving an audience, as he wished to speak to him about a very important matter. The king gave orders for the merchant to be instantly admitted; and when the assembly was over, and all the rest of the company had retired, the king inquired what was the business which had brought him to the palace.

'Sire,' replied the merchant, 'I have with me, and beg your majesty to behold, the most beautiful and charming slave it would be possible to find if you searched every corner of the earth; if you will but see her, you will surely wish to make her your wife.'

The fair slave was, by the king's commands, immediately brought in, and no sooner had the king beheld a lady whose beauty and grace surpassed anything he had ever imagined, than he fell passionately in love with her, and determined to marry her at once. This was done.

So the king caused the fair slave to be lodged in the next finest apartment to his own, and gave particular orders to the matrons and the women-slaves appointed to attend her, that they should dress her in the richest robe they could find, and carry her the finest pearl necklaces, the brightest diamonds, and other the richest precious stones, that she might choose those she liked best.

The King of Persia's capital was situated in an island; and his palace, which was very magnificent, was built upon the sea-shore; his window looked towards the sea; and the fair slave's, which was pretty near it, had also the same prospect, and it was the more pleasant on account of the sea's beating almost against the foot of the wall.

At the end of three days the fair slave, magnificently dressed, was alone in her chamber, sitting upon a sofa, and leaning against one of the windows that faced the sea, when the king, being informed that he might visit her, came in. The slave hearing somebody walk in the room, immediately turned her head to see who it was. She knew him to be the king; but without showing the least surprise, or so much as rising from her seat to salute or receive him, she turned back to the window again as if he had been the most insignificant person in the world.

The King of Persia was extremely surprised to see a slave of so beauteous a form so very ignorant of the world. He attributed this to the narrowness of her education, and the little care that had been taken to instruct her in the first rules of civility. He went to her at the window, where, notwithstanding the coldness and indifference with which she had just now received him, she suffered herself to be admired, kissed and embraced as much as he pleased, but answered him not a word.

'My dearest life,' said the king, 'you neither answer, nor by any visible token give me the least reason to believe that you are listening to me. Why will you still keep to this obstinate silence, which chills me? Do you mourn for your country, your friends, or your relations? Alas! is not the King of Persia, who loves and adores you, capable of comforting, and making you amends for the loss of everything in the world?'

But the fair slave continued her astonishing reserve; and keeping her eyes still fixed upon the ground, would neither look at him nor utter a word; but after they had dined together in absolute silence, the king went to the women whom he had assigned to the fair slave as her attendants, and asked them if they had ever heard her speak.

One of them presently made answer, 'Sire, we have neither seen her open her lips, nor heard her speak any more than your majesty has just now; we have rendered her our services; we have combed and dressed her hair, put on her clothes, and waited upon her in her chamber; but she has never opened her lips, so much as to say, That is well, or, I like this. We have often asked, Madam, do you want anything? Is there anything you wish for? Do but ask and command us: but we have never been able to draw a word from her. We cannot tell whether her silence proceeds from pride, sorrow, stupidity, or dumbness; and this is all we can inform your majesty.'

The King of Persia was more astonished at hearing this than he was before: however, believing the slave might have some reason for sorrow, he endeavoured to divert and amuse her, but all in vain. For a whole year she never afforded him the pleasure of a single word.

At length, one day there were great rejoicings in the capital, because to the king and his silent slave-queen there was born a son and heir to the kingdom. Once more the king endeavoured to get a word from his wife. 'My queen,' he said, 'I cannot divine what your thoughts are; but, for my own part, nothing would be wanting to complete my happiness and crown my joy but that you should speak to me one single word, for something within me tells me you are not dumb: and I beseech, I conjure you, to break through this long silence, and speak but one word to me; and after that I care not how soon I die.'

At this discourse the fair slave, who, according to her usual custom, had hearkened to the king with downcast eyes, and had given him cause to believe not only that she was dumb, but that she had never laughed in her life, began to smile a little. The King of Persia perceived it with a surprise that made him break forth into an exclamation of joy; and no longer doubting but that she was going to speak, he waited for that happy moment with an eagerness and attention that cannot easily be expressed.

At last the fair slave, breaking her long-kept silence, thus addressed herself to the king: 'Sire,' said she, 'I have so many things to say to your majesty, that, having once broken silence, I know not where to begin. However, in the first place, I think myself in duty bound to thank you for all the favours and honours you have been pleased to confer upon me, and to implore Heaven to bless and prosper you, to prevent the wicked designs of your enemies, and not to suffer you to die after hearing me speak, but to grant you a long life. Had it never been my fortune to have borne a child, I was resolved (I beg your majesty to pardon the sincerity of my intention) never to have loved you, as well as to have kept an eternal silence; but now I love you as I ought to do.'

The King of Persia, ravished to hear the fair slave speak, embraced her tenderly. 'Shining light of my eyes,' said he, 'it is impossible for me to receive a greater joy than what you have now given me.'

The King of Persia, in the transport of his joy, said no more to the fair slave. He left her, but in such a manner as made her perceive that his intention was speedily to return: and being willing that his joy should be made public, he sent in all haste for the grand vizier. As soon as he came, he ordered him to distribute a thousand pieces of gold among the holy men of his religion, who had made vows of poverty; as also among the hospitals and the poor, by way of returning thanks to Heaven: and his will was obeyed by the direction of that minister.

After the King of Persia had given this order, he returned to the fair slave again. 'Madam,' said he, 'pardon me for leaving you so abruptly, but I hope you will indulge me with some conversation, since I am desirous to know several things of great consequence. Tell me, my dearest soul, what were the powerful reasons that induced you to persist in that obstinate silence for a whole year together, though you saw me, heard me talk to you, and ate and drank with me every day.'

To satisfy the King of Persia's curiosity, 'Think,' replied the queen, 'whether or no to be a slave, far from my own country, without any hopes of ever seeing it again,--to have a heart torn with grief at being separated for ever from my mother, my brother, my friends, and my acquaintance,--are not these sufficient reasons for my keeping a silence your majesty has thought so strange and unaccountable? The love of our native country is as natural to us as that of our parents; and the loss of liberty is insupportable to every one who is not wholly destitute of common sense, and knows how to set a value on it.'

'Madam,' replied the king, 'I am convinced of the truth of what you say; but till this moment I was of opinion that a person beautiful like yourself, whom her evil destiny had condemned to be a slave, ought to think herself very happy in meeting with a king for her master.'

'Sire,' replied the fair slave, 'whatever the slave is, there is no king on earth who can tyrannise over her will. But when this very slave is in nothing inferior to the king that bought her, your majesty shall then judge yourself of her misery, and her sorrow, and to what desperate attempts the anguish of despair may drive her.'

The King of Persia, in great astonishment, said 'Madam, can it be possible that you are of royal blood? Explain the whole secret to me, I beseech you, and no longer increase my impatience. Let me instantly know who are your parents, your brothers, your sisters, and your relations; but, above all, what your name is.'

'Sire,' said the fair slave, 'my name is Gulnare, Rose of the Sea; and my father, who is now dead, was one of the most potent monarchs of the ocean. When he died, he left his kingdom to a brother of mine, named Saleh, and to the queen, my mother, who is also a princess, the daughter of another powerful monarch of the sea. We enjoyed a profound peace and tranquillity through the whole kingdom, till a neighbouring prince, envious of our happiness, invaded our dominions with a mighty army; and penetrating as far as our capital, made himself master of it; and we had but just time enough to save ourselves in an impenetrable and inaccessible place, with a few trusty officers who did not forsake us in our distress.

'In this retreat my brother contrived all manner of ways to drive the unjust invader from our dominions. One day "Sister," said he, "I may fail in the attempt I intend to make to recover my kingdom; and I shall be less concerned for my own disgrace than for what may possibly happen to you. To prevent it, and to secure you from all accident, I would fain see you married first: but in the miserable condition of our affairs at present, I see no probability of matching you to any of the princes of the sea; and therefore I should be very glad if you would think of marrying some of the princes of the earth I am ready to contribute all that lies in my power towards it; and I am certain there is not one of them, however powerful, but would be proud of sharing his crown with you."

'At this discourse of my brother's, I fell into a violent passion. "Brother," said I, "you know that I am descended, as well as you, by both father's and mother's side, from the kings and queens of the sea, without any mixture of alliance with those of the earth; therefore I do not intend to marry below myself, any more than they did. The condition to which we are reduced shall never oblige me to alter my resolution; and if you perish in the execution of your design, I am prepared to fall with you, rather than to follow the advice I so little expected from you."

'My brother, who was still earnest for the marriage, however improper for me, endeavoured to make me believe that there were kings of the earth who were nowise inferior to those of the sea. This put me into a more violent passion, which occasioned him to say several bitter words that stung me to the quick. He left me as much dissatisfied with myself as he could possibly be with me; and in this peevish mood I gave a spring from the bottom of the sea up to the island of the moon.

'Notwithstanding the violent displeasure that made me cast myself upon that island, I lived content in retirement. But in spite of all my precautions, a person of distinction, attended by his servants, surprised me sleeping, and carried me to his own house, and wished me to marry him. When he saw that fair means would not prevail upon me, he attempted to make use of force; but I soon made him repent of his insolence. So at last he resolved to sell me; which he did to that very merchant who brought me hither and sold me to your majesty. This man was a very prudent, courteous, humane person, and during the whole of the long journey, never gave me the least reason to complain.

'As for your majesty,' continued Queen Gulnare, 'if you had not shown me all the respect you have hitherto paid, and given me such undeniable marks of your affection that I could no longer doubt of it, I hesitate not to tell you plainly that I should not have remained with you. I would have thrown myself into the sea out of this very window, and I would have gone in search of my mother, my brother, and the rest of my relations; and, therefore, I hope you will no longer look upon me as a slave, but as a princess worthy of your alliance.'

After this manner Queen Gulnare discovered herself to the King of Persia, and finished her story. 'My charming, my adorable queen,' cried he, 'what wonders have I heard! I must ask a thousand questions concerning those strange and unheard-of things which you have related to me. I beseech you to tell me more about the kingdom and people of the sea, who are altogether unknown to me. I have heard much talk, indeed, of the inhabitants of the sea, but I always looked upon it as nothing but a tale or fable; but, by what you have told me, I am convinced there is nothing more true; and I have a very good proof of it in your own person, who are one of them, and are pleased to condescend to be my wife; which is an honour no other inhabitant on the earth can boast of besides myself. There is one thing yet which puzzles me; therefore I must beg the favour of you to explain it; that is, I cannot comprehend how it is possible for you to live or move in the water without being drowned. There are very few amongst us who have the art of staying under water; and they would surely perish, if, after a certain time, they did not come up again.'

'Sire,' replied Queen Gulnare, 'I shall with pleasure satisfy the King of Persia. We can walk at the bottom of the sea with as much ease as you can upon land; and we can breathe in the water as you do in the air; so that instead of suffocating us, as it does you, it absolutely contributes to the preservation of our lives. What is yet more remarkable is, that it never wets our clothes; so that when we have a mind to visit the earth, we have no

occasion to dry them. Our common language is the same as that of the writing engraved upon the seal of the great prophet Solomon, the son of David.

'I must not forget to tell you, further, that the water does not in the least hinder us from seeing in the sea; for we can open our eyes without any inconvenience; and as we have quick, piercing sight, we can discern any object as clearly in the deepest part of the sea as upon land. We have also there a succession of day and night; the moon affords us her light, and even the planets and the stars appear visible to us. I have already spoken of our kingdoms; but as the sea is much more spacious than the earth, so there are a greater number of them, and of greater extent. They are divided into provinces; and in each province there are several great cities, well peopled. In short, there are an infinite number of nations, differing in manners and customs, just as upon the earth.

'The palaces of the kings and princes are very sumptuous and magnificent. Some of them are of marble of various colours; others of rock-crystal, with which the sea abounds, mother of pearl, coral, and of other materials more valuable; gold, silver, and all sorts of precious stones are more plentiful there than on earth. I say nothing of the pearls, since the largest that ever were seen upon earth would not be valued amongst us; and none but the very lowest rank of citizens would wear them.

'As we can transport ourselves whither we please in the twinkling of an eye, we have no occasion for any carriages or riding-horses; not but what the king has his stables, and his stud of sea-horses; but they are seldom made use of, except upon public feasts or rejoicing days. Some, after they have trained them, take delight in riding them, and show their skill and dexterity in races; others put them to chariots of mother-of-pearl, adorned with an infinite number of shells of all sorts, of the brightest colours. These chariots are open; and in the middle there is a throne upon which the king sits, and shows himself to his subjects. The horses are trained up to draw by themselves; so that there is no occasion for a charioteer to guide them. I pass over a thousand other curious particulars relating to these marine countries, which would be very entertaining to your majesty; but you must permit me to defer it to a future leisure, to speak of something of much greater consequence. I should like to send for my mother and my cousins, and at the same time to desire the king my brother's company, to whom I have a great desire to be reconciled. They will be very glad to see me again, after I have related my story to them, and when they understand I am wife to the mighty king of Persia. I beseech your majesty to give me leave to send for them: I am sure they will be happy to pay their respects to you; and I venture to say you will be extremely pleased to see them.'

'Madam,' replied the King of Persia, 'you are mistress; do whatever you please; I will endeavour to receive them with all the honours they deserve. But I would fain know how you would acquaint them with what you desire, and when they will arrive, that I may give orders to make preparation for their reception, and go myself in person to meet them.'

'Sire,' replied the Queen Gulnare, 'there is no need of these ceremonies; they will be here in a moment; and if your Majesty will but look through the lattice, you shall see the manner of their arrival.'

Queen Gulnare then ordered one of her women to bring her a brazier with a little fire. After that she bade her retire, and shut the door. When she was alone, she took a piece of aloes out of a box, and put it into the brazier. As soon as she saw the smoke rise, she repeated some words unknown to the King of Persia, who from a recess observe with great attention all that she did. She had no sooner ended, than the sea began to be disturbed. At length the sea opened at some distance; and presently there rose out of it a tall, handsome young man, with moustaches of a sea-green colour; a little behind him, a lady, advanced in years, but of a majestic air, attended by five young ladies, nowise inferior in beauty to the Queen Gulnare.

Queen Gulnare immediately went to one of the windows, and saw the king her brother, the queen her mother, and the rest of her relations, who at the same time perceived her also. The company came forward, borne, as it were, upon the surface of the waves. When they came to the edge, they nimbly, one after another, sprang up to

the window, from whence Queen Gulnare had retired to make room for them. King Saleh, the queen her mother, and the rest of her relations, embraced her tenderly, with tears in their eyes, on their first entrance.

After Queen Gulnare had received them with all imaginable honour, and made them sit down upon a sofa, the queen her mother addressed herself to her: 'Daughter,' said she, 'I am overjoyed to see you again after so long an absence; and I am confident that your brother and your relations are no less so. Your leaving us without acquainting anybody with it involved us in inexpressible concern; and it is impossible to tell you how many tears we have shed upon that account. We know of no other reason that could induce you to take such a surprising step, but what your brother told us of the conversation that passed between him and you. The advice he gave you seemed to him at that time very advantageous for settling you handsomely in the world, and very suitable to the then posture of our affairs. If you had not approved of his proposal, you ought not to have been so much alarmed; and, give me leave to tell you, you took the thing in a quite different light from what you ought to have done. But no more of this; we and you ought now to bury it for ever in oblivion: give us an account of all that has happened to you since we saw you last, and of your present situation; but especially let us know if you are satisfied.'

Queen Gulnare immediately threw herself at her mother's feet; and after rising and kissing her hand, 'I own,' said she, 'I have been guilty of a very great fault, and I am indebted to your goodness for the pardon which you are pleased to grant me.' She then related the whole of what had befallen her since she quitted the sea.

As soon as she had acquainted them with her having been sold to the King of Persia, in whose palace she was at present; 'Sister,' said the king her brother, 'you now have it in your power to free yourself. Rise, and return with us into my kingdom, that I have reconquered from the proud usurper who had made himself master of it.'

The King of Persia, who heard these words from the recess where he was concealed, was in the utmost alarm. 'Ah!' said he to himself, 'I am ruined; and if my queen, my Gulnare, hearkens to this advice, and leaves me, I shall surely die.' But Queen Gulnare soon put him out of his fears.

'Brother,' said she, smiling, 'I can scarce forbear being angry with you for advising me to break the engagement I have made with the most puissant and most renowned monarch in the world. I do not speak here of an engagement between a slave and her master; it would be easy to return the ten thousand pieces of gold that I cost him; but I speak now of a contract between a wife and a husband, and a wife who has not the least reason to complain. He is a religious, wise, and temperate king. I am his wife, and he has declared me Queen of Persia, to share with him in his councils. Besides, I have a child, the little Prince Beder. I hope then neither my mother, nor you, nor any of my cousins, will disapprove of the resolution or the alliance I have made, which will be an equal honour to the kings of the sea and the earth. Excuse me for giving you the trouble of coming hither from the bottom of the deep, to communicate it to you, and for the pleasure of seeing you after so long a separation.'

'Sister,' replied King Saleh, 'the proposal I made you of going back with us into my kingdom was only to let you see how much we all love you, and how much I in particular honour you, and that nothing in the world is so dear to me as your happiness.'

The queen confirmed what her son had just spoken, and addressing herself to Queen Gulnare, said, 'I am very glad to hear you are pleased; and I have nothing else to add to what your brother has just said to you. I should have been the first to have condemned you, if you had not expressed all the gratitude you owe to a monarch that loves you so passionately, and has done such great things for you.'

When the King of Persia, who was still in the recess, heard this he began to love her more than ever, and resolved to express his gratitude in every possible way.

Presently Queen Gulnare clapped her hands, and in came some of her slaves, whom she had ordered to bring

in a meal: as soon as it was served up, she invited the queen her mother, the king her brother, and her cousins, to sit down and take part of it. They began to reflect, that without asking leave, they had got into the palace of a mighty king, who had never seen nor heard of them, and that it would be a great piece of rudeness to eat at his table without him. This reflection raised a blush in their faces; in their emotion their eyes glowed like fire, and they breathed flames at their mouths and nostrils.

This unexpected sight put the King of Persia, who was totally ignorant of the cause of it, into a dreadful consternation. Queen Gulnare suspecting this, and understanding the intention of her relations, rose from her seat, and told them she would be back in a moment. She went directly to the recess, and recovered the King of Persia from his surprise.

'Sir,' said she, 'give me leave to assure you of the sincere friendship that the queen my mother and the king my brother are pleased to honour you with: they earnestly desire to see you, and tell you so themselves: I intended to have some conversation with them by ordering a banquet for them, before I introduced them to your majesty, but they are very impatient to pay their respects to you: and therefore I desire your majesty would be pleased to walk in, and honour them with your presence.'

'Madam,' said the King of Persia, 'I should be very glad to salute persons that have the honour to be so nearly related to you, but I am afraid of the flames that they breathe at their mouths and nostrils.'

'Sir,' replied the queen, laughing, 'you need not in the least be afraid of those flames, which are nothing but a sign of their unwillingness to eat in your palace, without your honouring them with your presence, and eating with them.'

The King of Persia, encouraged by these words, rose up, and came out into the room with his Queen Gulnare. She presented him to the queen her mother, to the king her brother, and to her other relations, who instantly threw themselves at his feet, with their faces to the ground. The King of Persia ran to them, and lifting them up, embraced them one after another. After they were all seated, King Saleh began: 'Sir,' said he to the King of Persia, 'we are at a loss for words to express our joy to think that the queen my sister should have the happiness of falling under the protection of so powerful a monarch. We can assure you she is not unworthy of the high rank you have been pleased to raise her to; and we have always had so much love and tenderness for her, that we could never think of parting with her to any of the puissant princes of the sea, who often demanded her in marriage before she came of age. Heaven has reserved her for you, Sir, and we have no better way of returning thanks to it for the favour it has done her, than by beseeching it to grant your majesty a long and happy life with her, and to crown you with prosperity and satisfaction.'

'Certainly,' replied the King of Persia, 'I cannot sufficiently thank either the queen her mother, or you, Prince, or your whole family, for the generosity with which you have consented to receive me into an alliance so glorious to me as yours.' So saying, he invited them to take part of the luncheon, and he and his queen sat down at the table with them. After it was over, the King of Persia conversed with them till it was very late; and when they thought it time to retire, he waited upon them himself to the several rooms he had ordered to be prepared for them.

Next day, as the King of Persia, Queen Gulnare, the queen her mother, King Saleh her brother, and the princesses their relations, were discoursing together in her majesty's room, the nurse came in with the young Prince Beder in her arms. King Saleh no sooner saw him, than he ran to embrace him; and taking him in his arms, fell to kissing and caressing him with the greatest demonstration of tenderness. He took several turns with him about the room, dancing and tossing him about, when all of a sudden, through a transport of joy, the window being open, he sprang out, and plunged with him into the sea.

The King of Persia, who expected no such sight, set up a hideous cry, verily believing that he should either see the dear prince his son no more, or else that he should see him drowned; and he nearly died of grief and

affliction. 'Sir,' said Queen Gulnare (with a quiet and undisturbed countenance, the better to comfort him), 'let your majesty fear nothing; the young prince is my son as well as yours, and I do not love him less than you do. You see I am not alarmed; neither in truth ought I to be so. He runs no risk, and you will soon see the king his uncle appear with him again, and bring him back safe and sound. For he will have the same advantage his uncle and I have, of living equally in the sea and upon the land.' The queen his mother and the princesses his relations confirmed the same thing; yet all they said had no effect on the king's fright, from which he could not recover till he saw Prince Beder appear again before him.

The sea at length became troubled, when immediately King Saleh arose with the young prince in his arms, and holding him up in the air, he re-entered at the same window he went out at. The King of Persia being overjoyed to see Prince Beder again, and astonished that he was as calm as before he lost sight of him, King Saleh said, 'Sir, was not your majesty in a great fright, when you first saw me plunge into the sea with the prince my nephew?'

'Alas! Prince,' answered the King of Persia, 'I cannot express my concern. I thought him lost from that very moment, and you now restore life to me by bringing him again.'

'I thought as much,' replied King Saleh, 'though you had not the least reason to apprehend any danger; for, before I plunged into the sea with him I pronounced over him certain mysterious words, which were engraven on the seal of the great Solomon, the son of David. We do the same to all those children that are born in the regions at the bottom of the sea, by virtue of which they receive the same privileges that we have over those people who inhabit the earth. From what your majesty has observed, you may easily see what advantage your son Prince Beder has acquired by his birth, for as long as he lives, and as often as he pleases, he will be at liberty to plunge into the sea, and traverse the vast empires it contains in its bosom.'

Having so spoken, King Saleh, who had restored Prince Beder to his nurse's arms, opened a box he had fetched from his palace in the little time he had disappeared. It was filled with three hundred diamonds, as large as pigeons' eggs, a like number of rubies of extraordinary size, as many emerald wands, each half a foot long, and thirty strings or necklaces of pearl, consisting each of ten feet. 'Sir,' said he to the King of Persia, presenting him with this box, 'when I was first summoned by the queen my sister, I knew not what part of the earth she was in, or that she had the honour to be married to so great a monarch. This made us come empty handed. As we cannot express how much we have been obliged to your majesty, I beg you to accept this small token of gratitude, in acknowledgment of the many particular favours you have been pleased to show her.'

It is impossible to express how greatly the King of Persia was surprised at the sight of so much riches, enclosed in so little compass. 'What! Prince,' cried he, 'do you call so inestimable a present a small token of your gratitude? I declare once more, you have never been in the least obliged to me, neither the queen your mother nor you. Madam,' continued he, turning to Gulnare, 'the king your brother has put me into the greatest confusion; and I would beg of him to permit me to refuse his present, were I not afraid of disobliging him; do you therefore endeavour to obtain his leave that I may be excused accepting it.'

'Sir,' replied King Saleh, 'I am not at all surprised that your majesty thinks this present so extraordinary. I know you are not accustomed upon earth to see precious stones of this quality and quantity: but if you knew, as I do, the mines whence these jewels were taken, and that it is in my power to form a treasure greater than those of all the kings of the earth, you would wonder we should have the boldness to make you a present of so small a value. I beseech you, therefore, not to regard it in that light, but on account of the sincere friendship which obliges us to offer it to you not to give us the mortification of refusing it.' This obliged the King of Persia to accept the present, for which he returned many thanks both to King Saleh and the queen his mother.

A few days after, King Saleh gave the King of Persia to understand that the queen his mother, the princesses his relations and himself, could have no greater pleasure than to spend their whole lives at his court; but that having been so long absent from their own kingdom, where their presence was absolutely necessary, they

begged of him not to take it ill if they took leave of him and Queen Gulnare. The King of Persia assured them he was very sorry that it was not in his power to return their visit in their own dominions; but he added, 'As I am verily persuaded you will not forget Queen Gulnare, but come and see her now and then, I hope I shall have the honour to see you again more than once.'

Many tears were shed on both sides upon their separation. King Saleh departed first; but the queen his mother, and the princesses his relations, were fain to force themselves in a manner from the embraces of Queen Gulnare, who could not prevail upon herself to let them go. This royal company were no sooner out of sight than the King of Persia said to Queen Gulnare, 'Madam, I should have looked with suspicion upon the person that had pretended to pass those off upon me for true wonders, of which I myself have been an eye-witness from the time I have been honoured with your illustrious family at my court. But I cannot refuse to believe my own eyes; and shall remember it as long as I live, and never cease to bless Heaven for sending you to me, instead of to any other prince.'

PRINCE BEDER AND THE PRINCESS GIAUHARA.

Young Prince Beder was brought up and educated in the palace under the care of the King and Queen of Persia. He gave them great pleasure as he advanced in years by his agreeable manners, and by the justness of whatever he said; King Saleh his uncle, the queen his grandmother, and the princesses his relations, came from time to time to see him. He was easily taught to read and write, and was instructed in all the sciences that became a prince of his rank.

When he arrived at the age of fifteen he was very wise and prudent. The king, who had almost from his cradle discovered in him these virtues so necessary for a monarch, and who moreover began to perceive the infirmities of old age coming upon himself every day, would not wait till death gave him possession of the throne, but purposed to resign it to him. He had no great difficulty to make his council consent to it; and the people heard this with so much the more joy, because they considered Prince Beder worthy to govern them. They saw that he treated all mankind with that goodness which invited them to approach him; that he heard favourably all who had anything to say to him; that he answered everybody with a goodness that was peculiar to him; and that he refused nobody anything that had the least appearance of justice.

The day for the ceremony was appointed. In the midst of the whole assembly, which was larger than usual, the King of Persia, then sitting on his throne, came down from it, took the crown from off his head, put it on that of Prince Beder, and having seated him in his place, kissed his hand, as a token that he resigned his authority to him. After which he took his place among the crowd of viziers and emirs below the throne.

Hereupon the viziers, emirs, and other principal officers, came immediately and threw themselves at the new king's feet, taking each the oath of fidelity according to their rank. Then the grand vizier made a report of various important matters, on which the young king gave judgment with admirable prudence and sagacity that surprised all the council. He next turned out several governors convicted of mal-administration, and put others in their place, with wonderful and just discernment. He at length left the council, accompanied by the late king his father, and went to see his mother, Queen Gulnare. The queen no sooner saw him coming with his crown upon his head, than she ran to him, and embraced him with tenderness, wishing him a long and prosperous reign.

The first year of his reign King Beder acquitted himself of all his royal functions with great care. Above all, he took care to inform himself of the state of his affairs, and all that might in any way contribute towards the happiness of his people. Next year, having left the administration to his council, under the direction of the old king his father, he went out of his capital, under pretext of diverting himself with hunting; but his real intention was to visit all the provinces of his kingdom, that he might reform all abuses there, establish good order and discipline everywhere, and take from all ill-minded princes, his neighbours, any opportunities of attempting any thing against the security and tranquillity of his subjects, by showing himself on his frontiers.

It required no less than a whole year for this young king to carry out his plans. Soon after his return, the old king his father fell so dangerously ill that he knew at once he should never recover. He waited for his last moment with great tranquillity, and his only care was to recommend the ministers and other lords of his son's court to remain faithful to him: and there was not one but willingly renewed his oath as freely as at first. He died, at length, to the great grief of King Beder and Queen Gulnare, who caused his corpse to be borne to a stately mausoleum, worthy of his rank and dignity.

The funeral ended, King Beder found no difficulty in complying with that ancient custom in Persia to mourn for the dead a whole month, and not to be seen by anybody during all that time. He would have mourned the death of his father his whole life, had it been right for a great prince thus to abandon himself to grief. During this interval the queen, mother to Queen Gulnare, and King Saleh, together with the princesses their relations, arrived at the Persian court, and shared their affliction, before they offered any consolation.

When the month was expired, the king could not refuse admittance to the grand vizier and the other lords of his court, who besought him to lay aside his mourning, to show himself to his subjects, and take upon him the administration of affairs as before.

He showed such great reluctance at their request, that the grand vizier was forced to take upon himself to say to him; 'Sir, neither our tears nor yours are capable of restoring life to the good king your father, though we should lament him all our days. He has undergone the common law of all men, which subjects them to pay the indispensable tribute of death. Yet we cannot say absolutely that he is dead, since we see him in your sacred person. He did not himself doubt, when he was dying, but that he should revive in you, and to your majesty it belongs to show that he was not deceived.'

King Beder could no longer oppose such pressing entreaties: he laid aside his mourning; and after he had resumed the royal habit and ornaments, he began to provide for the necessities of his kingdom and subjects with the same care as before his father's death. He acquitted himself with universal approbation: and as he was exact in maintaining the ordinances of his predecessor, the people did not feel they had changed their sovereign.

King Saleh, who had returned to his dominions in the sea with the queen his mother and the princesses, no sooner saw that King Beder had resumed the government, at the end of the month than he came alone to visit him; and King Beder and Queen Gulnare were overjoyed to see him.

One evening when they rose from table, they talked of various matters. King Saleh began with the praises of the king his nephew, and expressed to the queen his sister how glad he was to see him govern so prudently, all of which had acquired him great reputation, not among his neighbours only, but more remote princes. King Beder, who could not bear to hear himself so well spoken of, and not being willing, through good manners, to interrupt the king his uncle, turned on one side to sleep, leaning his head against a cushion that was behind him.

'Sister,' said King Saleh, 'I wonder you have not thought of marrying him ere this: if I mistake not, he is in his twentieth year; and, at that age, no prince like him ought to be suffered to be without a wife. I will think of a wife for him myself, since you will not, and marry him to some princess of our lower world that may be worthy of him.'

'Brother,' replied Queen Gulnare, 'I have never thought of it to this very moment, and I am glad you have spoken of it to me. I like your proposing one of our princesses; and I desire you to name one so beautiful and accomplished that the king my son may be obliged to love her.'

'I know one that will suit,' replied King Saleh, softly; 'but I see many difficulties to be surmounted, not on the lady's part, as I hope, but on that of her father. I need only mention to you the Princess Giauhara, daughter of

the king of Samandal.'

'What?' replied Queen Gulnare, 'is not the Princess Giauhara yet married? I remember to have seen her before I left your palace; she was then about eighteen months old, and surprisingly beautiful, and must needs be the wonder of the world. The few years she is older than the king my son ought not to prevent us from doing our utmost to bring it about. Let me but know the difficulties that are to be surmounted, and we will surmount them.'

'Sister,' replied King Saleh, 'the greatest difficulty is, that the King of Samandal is insupportably vain, looking upon all others as his inferiors: it is not likely we shall easily get him to enter into this alliance. For my part, I will go to him in person, and demand of him the princess his daughter; and, in case he refuses her, we will address ourselves elsewhere, where we shall be more favourably heard. For this reason, as you may perceive,' added he, 'it is as well for the king my nephew not to know anything of our design, lest he should fall in love with the Princess Giauhara, till we have got the consent of the King of Samandal, in case, after all, we should not be able to obtain her for him.' They discoursed a little longer upon this point, and, before they parted, agreed that King Saleh should forthwith return to his own dominions, and demand the Princess Giauhara of the King of Samandal her father, for the King of Persia his nephew.

Now King Beder had heard what they said, and he immediately fell in love with the Princess Giauhara without having even seen her, and he lay awake thinking all night. Next day King Saleh took leave of Queen Gulnare and the king his nephew. The young king, who knew the king his uncle would not have departed so soon but to go and promote his happiness without loss of time, changed colour when he heard him mention his departure. He resolved to desire his uncle to bring the princess away with him: but only asked him to stay with him one day more, that they might hunt together. The day for hunting was fixed, and King Beder had many opportunities of being alone with his uncle, but he had not the courage to open his mouth. In the heat of the chase, when King Saleh was separated from him, and not one of his officers and attendants was near, he alighted near a rivulet; and having tied his horse to a tree, which, with several others growing along the banks, afforded a very pleasing shade, he laid himself down on the grass. He remained a good while absorbed in thought, without speaking a word.

King Saleh, in the meantime, missing the king his nephew, began to be much concerned to know what had become of him. He therefore left his company to go in search of him, and at length perceived him at a distance. He had observed the day before, and more plainly that day, that he was not so lively as he used to be; and that if he was asked a question, he either answered not at all, or nothing to the purpose. As soon as King Saleh saw him lying in that disconsolate posture, he immediately guessed he had heard what passed between him and Queen Gulnare. He hereupon alighted at some distance from him, and having tied his horse to a tree, came upon him so softly, that he heard him say to himself:

'Amiable princess of the kingdom of Samandal, I would this moment go and offer you my heart, if I knew where to find you.'

King Saleh would hear no more; he advanced immediately, and showed himself to King Beder. 'From what I see, nephew,' said he, 'you heard what the queen your mother and I said the other day of the Princess Giauhara. It was not our intention you should have known anything, and we thought you were asleep.'

'My dear uncle,' replied King Beder, 'I heard every word, but was ashamed to disclose to you my weakness. I beseech you to pity me, and not wait to procure me the consent of the divine Giauhara till you have gained the consent of the King of Samandal that I may marry his daughter.'

These words of the King of Persia greatly embarrassed King Saleh. He represented to him how difficult it was, and that he could not well do it without carrying him along with him; which might be of dangerous consequence, since his presence was so absolutely necessary in his kingdom. He begged him to wait. But

these reasons were not sufficient to satisfy the King of Persia.

'Cruel Uncle,' said he, 'I find you do not love me so much as you pretended, and that you had rather see me die than grant the first request I ever made you.'

'I am ready to convince your majesty,' replied King Saleh, 'that I would do anything to serve you; but as for carrying you along with me, I cannot do that till I have spoken to the queen your mother. What would she say of you and me? If she consents, I am ready to do all you would have me, and I will join my entreaties to yours.'

'If you do really love me,' replied the King of Persia impatiently, 'as you would have me believe you do, you must return to your kingdom immediately, and carry me along with you.'

King Saleh, finding himself obliged to yield to his nephew, drew from his finger a ring, on which were engraven the same mysterious names that were upon Solomon's seal, that had wrought so many wonders by their virtue. 'Here, take this ring,' said he, 'put it upon your finger, and fear neither the waters of the sea, nor their depth.'

The King of Persia took the ring, and when he had put it on his finger, King Saleh said to him, 'Do as I do.' At the same time they both mounted lightly up into the air, and made towards the sea which was not far distant, whereinto they both plunged.

The sea-king was not long in getting to his palace with the King of Persia, whom he immediately carried to the queen's apartment, and presented him to her. The King of Persia kissed the queen his grandmother's hands, and she embraced him with great joy. 'I do not ask you how you are,' said she to him; 'I see you are very well, and I am rejoiced at it; but I desire to know how is my daughter, your mother, Queen Gulnare?'

The King of Persia told her the queen his mother was in perfect health. Then the queen presented him to the princesses; and while he was in conversation with them, she left him, and went with King Saleh, who told her how the King of Persia was fallen in love with the Princess Giauhara, and that he had brought him along with him, without being able to hinder it.

Although King Saleh was, to do him justice, perfectly innocent, yet the queen could hardly forgive his indiscretion in mentioning the Princess Giauhara before him. 'Your imprudence is not to be forgiven,' said she to him: 'can you think that the King of Samandal, whose character is so well known, will have greater consideration for you than the many other kings he has refused his daughter to with such evident contempt? Would you have him send you away with the same confusion?'

'Madam,' replied King Saleh, 'I have already told you it was contrary to my intention that the king, my nephew, should hear what I related of the Princess Giauhara to the queen my sister. The fault is committed; I will therefore do all that I can to remedy it. I hope, madam, you will approve of my resolution to go myself and wait upon the King of Samandal, with a rich present of precious stones, and demand of him the princess, his daughter, for the King of Persia, your grandson. I have some reason to believe he will not refuse me, but will be pleased at an alliance with one of the greatest potentates of the earth.'

'It were to have been wished,' replied the queen, 'that we had not been under a necessity of making this demand, since the success of our attempt is not so certain as we could desire; but since my grandson's peace and content depend upon it, I freely give my consent. But, above all, I charge you, since you well know the temper of the King of Samandal, that you take care to speak to him with due respect, and in a manner that cannot possibly offend him.'

The queen prepared the present herself, composed of diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and strings of pearl; all of

which she put into a very neat and very rich box. Next morning, King Saleh took leave of her majesty and the King of Persia, and departed with a chosen and small troop of officers and other attendants. He soon arrived at the kingdom and the palace of the King of Samandal, who rose from his throne as soon as he perceived him; and King Saleh, forgetting his character for some moments, though knowing whom he had to deal with, prostrated himself at his feet, wishing him the accomplishment of all his desires. The King of Samandal immediately stooped to raise him up, and after he had placed him on his left hand, he told him he was welcome, and asked him if there was anything he could do to serve him.

'Sir,' answered King Saleh, 'though I should have no other motive than that of paying my respects to the most potent, most prudent, and most valiant prince in the world, feeble would be my expressions how much I honour your majesty.' Having, spoken these words, he took the box of jewels from one of his servants and having opened it, presented it to the king, imploring him to accept it for his sake.

'Prince,' replied the King of Samandal, 'you would not make me such a present unless you had a request to propose. If there be anything in my power, you may freely command it, and I shall feel the greatest pleasure in granting it. Speak, and tell me frankly wherein I can serve you.'

'I must own,' replied King Saleh, 'I have a boon to ask of your majesty; and I shall take care to ask nothing but what is in your power to grant. The thing depends so absolutely on yourself, that it would be to no purpose to ask it of any other. I ask it then with all possible earnestness, and I beg of you not to refuse it me.'

'If it be so,' replied the King of Samandal, 'you have nothing to do but acquaint me what it is, and you shall see after what manner I can oblige when it is in my power.'

'Sir,' said King Saleh, 'after the confidence your majesty has been pleased to encourage me to put in your goodwill, I will not dissemble any longer. I came to beg of you to honour our house with your alliance by the marriage of your honourable daughter the Princess Giauhara, and to strengthen the good understanding that has so long subsisted between our two crowns.'

At these words the King of Samandal burst out laughing falling back in his throne against a cushion that supported him, and with an imperious and scornful air, said to King Saleh: 'King Saleh, I have always hitherto thought you a prince of great sense; but what you say convinces me how much I was mistaken. Tell me, I beseech you, where was your discretion, when you imagined to yourself so great an absurdity as you have just now proposed to me? Could you conceive a thought only of aspiring in marriage to a princess, the daughter of so great and powerful a king as I am? You ought to have considered better beforehand the great distance between us, and not run the risk of losing in a moment the esteem I always had for your person.'

King Saleh was extremely nettled at this affronting, answer, and had much ado to restrain his resentment; however, he replied, with all possible moderation, 'God reward your majesty as you deserve! I have the honour to inform you, I do not demand the princess your daughter in marriage for myself; had I done so your majesty and the princess ought to have been so far from being offended, that you should have thought it an honour done to both. Your majesty well knows I am one of the kings of the sea as well as yourself; that the kings, my ancestors, yield not in antiquity to any other royal families; and that the kingdom I inherit from them is no less potent and flourishing than it has ever been. If your majesty had not interrupted me, you had soon understood that the favour I ask of you was not for myself, but for the young King of Persia, my nephew, whose power and grandeur, no less than his personal good qualities, cannot be unknown to you. Everybody acknowledges the Princess Giauhara to be the most beautiful person in the world: but it is no less true that the young King of Persia, my nephew, is the best and most accomplished prince on the land. Thus the favour that is asked being likely to redound both to the honour of your majesty and the princess your daughter, you ought not to doubt that your consent to an alliance so equal will be unanimously approved in all the kingdoms of the sea. The princess is worthy of the King of Persia, and the King of Persia is no less worthy of her. No king or prince in the world can dispute her with him.'

The King of Samandal would not have let King Saleh go on so long after this rate, had not the rage he put him in deprived him of all power of speech. It was some time before he could find his tongue, so much was he transported with passion. At length, however, he broke into outrageous language, unworthy of a great king. 'Dog!' cried he, 'dare you talk to me after this manner, and so much as mention my daughter's name in my presence? Can you think the son of your sister Gulnare worthy to come in competition with my daughter? Who are you? Who was your father? Who is your sister? And who your nephew? Was not his father a dog, and a son of a dog, like you? Guards, seize the insolent wretch, and cut off his head.'

The few officers that were about the King of Samandal were immediately going to obey his orders, when King Saleh, who was nimble and vigorous, got from them before they could draw their sabres; and having reached the palace gate, he there found a thousand men of his relations and friends, well armed and equipped, who had just arrived. The queen his mother having considered the small number of attendants he took with him, and, moreover, foreseeing the bad reception he would probably have from the King of Samandal, had sent these troops to protect and defend him in case of danger, ordering them to make haste. Those of his relations who were at the head of this troop had reason to rejoice at their seasonable arrival, when they beheld him and his attendants come running in great disorder and pursued. 'Sir,' cried his friends, the moment he joined them, 'what is the matter? We are ready to revenge you: you need only command us.'

King Saleh related his case to them in as few words as he could, and putting himself at the head of a large troop, he, while some seized on the gates, re-entered the palace as before. The few officers and guards who had pursued him being soon dispersed, he re-entered the King of Samandal's apartment, who, being abandoned by his attendants, was soon seized. King Saleh left sufficient guards to secure his person, and then went from apartment to apartment, in search of the Princess Giauhara. But that princess, on the first alarm, had, together with her women, sprung up to the surface of the sea, and escaped to a desert island.

While this was passing in the palace of the King of Samandal, those of King Saleh's attendants who had fled at the first menaces of that king put the queen mother into terrible consternation upon relating the danger her son was in. King Beder, who was by at that time, was the more concerned, in that he looked upon himself as the principal author of all the mischief: therefore, not caring to abide in the queen's presence any longer, he darted up from the bottom of the sea; and, not knowing how to find his way to the kingdom of Persia, he happened to light on the island where the Princess Giauhara had taken refuge.

The prince, not a little disturbed in mind, went and seated himself under the shade of a large tree. Whilst he was endeavouring to recover himself, he heard somebody talking, but was too far off to understand what was said. He arose and advanced softly towards the place whence the sound came, where, among the branches, he perceived a most beautiful lady. 'Doubtless,' said he, within himself, stopping and considering her with great attention, 'this must be the Princess Giauhara, whom fear has obliged to abandon her father's palace.' This said, he came forward, and approached the princess with profound reverence. 'Madam,' said he, 'a greater happiness could not have befallen me than this opportunity to offer you my most humble services. I beseech you, therefore, madam, to accept them, it being impossible that a lady in this solitude should not want assistance.'

'True, my lord,' replied Giauhara very sorrowfully, 'it is not a little extraordinary for a lady of my rank to be in this situation. I am a princess, daughter of the King of Samandal, and my name is Giauhara. I was in my father's palace, when all of a sudden I heard a dreadful noise: news was immediately brought me that King Saleh, I know not for what reason, had forced his way into the palace, seized the king my father, and murdered all the guards that made any resistance. I had only time to save myself, and escaped hither from his violence.'

At these words of the princess, King Beder began to be concerned that he had quitted his grandmother so hastily, without staying to hear from her an explanation of the news that had been brought her. But he was, on the other hand, overjoyed to find that the king, his uncle, had rendered himself master of the King of

Samandal's person, not doubting but that he would consent to give up the princess for his liberty. 'Adorable princess,' continued he, 'your concern is most just, but it is easy to put an end both to that and to your father's captivity. You will agree with me when I tell you that I am Beder, King of Persia, and King Saleh is my uncle; I assure you, madam, he has no design to seize upon the king your father's dominions; his only intent is to obtain his consent that I may have the honour and happiness of being his son-in-law. I had already given my heart to you, and now, far from repenting of what I have done, I beg of you to be assured that I will love you as long as I live. Permit me, then, beauteous princess! to have the honour to go and present you to the king my uncle; and the king your father shall no sooner have consented to our marriage, than King Saleh will leave him sovereign of his dominions as before.'

This declaration of King Beder did not produce the effect he expected. When the princess heard from his own mouth that he had been the occasion of the ill-treatment her father had suffered, of the grief and fright she had endured, and especially the necessity she was reduced to of flying her country, she looked upon him as an enemy with whom she ought to have nothing whatever to do.

King Beder, believing himself arrived at the very pinnacle of happiness, stretched forth his hand, and taking that of the princess' stooped down to kiss it, when she, pushing him back, said, 'Wretch, quit that form of a man, and take that of a white bird, with a red bill and feet.' Upon her pronouncing these words, King Beder was immediately changed into a bird of that sort, to his great surprise and mortification. 'Take him,' said she to one of her women, 'and carry him to the Dry Island.' This island was only one frightful rock, where there was not a drop of water to be had.

The waiting-woman took the bird, and in executing her princess's orders had compassion on King Beder's destiny. 'It would be a great pity,' said she to herself, 'to let a prince, so worthy to live, die of hunger and thirst. The princess, so good and gentle, will, it may be, repent of this cruel order when she comes to herself: it were better that I carried him to a place where he may die a natural death.' She accordingly carried him to a well-frequented island, and left him in a charming plain, planted with all sorts of fruit trees, and watered by several rivulets.

Let us return to King Saleh. After he had sought a good while for the Princess Giauhara, and ordered others to seek for her, to no purpose, he caused the King of Samandal to be shut up in his own palace, under a strong guard; and having given the necessary orders for governing the kingdom in his absence, he returned to give the queen his mother an account of what he had done. The first thing he asked upon his arrival was of the whereabouts of the king his nephew, and he learned with great surprise and vexation that he had disappeared.

'News being brought me,' said the queen, 'of the danger you were in at the palace of the King of Samandal, whilst I was giving orders to send other troops to avenge you, he disappeared. He must have been frightened at hearing of your being in so great danger, and did not think himself in sufficient safety with us.'

This news exceedingly afflicted King Saleh, who now repented of his being so easily wrought upon by King Beder as to carry him away with him without his mother's consent. Whilst he was in this suspense about his nephew, he left his kingdom under the administration of his mother, and went to govern that of the King of Samandal, whom he continued to keep under great vigilance, though with all due respect to his rank.

The same day that King Saleh returned to the kingdom of Samandal, Queen Gulnare, mother to King Beder, arrived at the court of the queen her mother. The princess was not at all surprised to find her son did not return the same day he set out, it being not uncommon for him to go further than he proposed in the heat of the chase; but when she saw that he returned neither the next day, nor the day after, she began to be alarmed. This alarm was increased when the officers, who had accompanied the king, and were obliged to return after they had for a long time sought in vain for both him and his uncle, came and told her majesty they must of necessity have come to some harm, or be together in some place which they could not guess, since they could hear no tidings of them. Their horses, indeed, they had found, but as for their persons, they knew not where to

look for them. The queen, hearing this, had resolved to dissemble and conceal her affliction, bidding the officers to search once more with their utmost diligence; but in the mean time, saying nothing to anybody, she plunged into the sea, to satisfy herself as to the suspicion she had that King Saleh must have carried away his nephew along with him.

This great queen would have been more affectionately received by the queen her mother, had she not, upon first sight of her, guessed the occasion of her coming. 'Daughter,' said she, 'I plainly perceive you are not come hither to visit me; you come to inquire after the king your son; and the only news I can tell you will augment both your grief and mine. I no sooner saw him arrive in our territories, than I rejoiced; yet, when I came to understand he had come away without your knowledge, I began to share with you the concern you must needs feel.' Then she related to her with what zeal King Saleh went to demand the Princess Giauhara in marriage for King Beder, and what had happened, till her son disappeared. 'I have sent diligently after him,' added she, 'and the king my son, who is but just gone to govern the kingdom of Samandal, has done all that lay in his power. All our endeavours have hitherto proved unsuccessful, but we must hope nevertheless to see him again, perhaps when we least expect it.'

Queen Gulnare was not satisfied with this hope; she looked upon the king her dear son as lost, and lamented him bitterly, laying all the blame upon the king his uncle. The queen her mother made her consider the necessity of not yielding too much to her grief. 'The king your brother,' said she, 'ought not, it is true, to have talked to you so imprudently about that marriage, nor ever have consented to carry away the king my grandson, without acquainting you first; yet, since it is not certain that the King of Persia is absolutely lost, you ought to neglect nothing to preserve his kingdom for him: lose, then, no more time, but return to your capital; your presence there will be necessary, and it will not be hard for you to preserve the public peace, by causing it to be published that the King of Persia was gone to visit his grandmother.'

Queen Gulnare yielded. She took leave of the queen her mother, and was back in the palace of the capital of Persia before she had been missed. She immediately despatched persons to recall the officers she had sent after the king, and to tell them she knew where his majesty was, and that they should soon see him again. She also governed with the prime minister and council as quietly as if the king had been present.

To return to King Beder, whom the Princess Giauhara's waiting-woman had carried and left in the island before mentioned; that monarch was not a little surprised when he found himself alone, and under the form of a bird. He felt yet more unhappy that he knew not where he was, nor in what part of the world the kingdom of Persia lay. He was forced to remain where he was, and live upon such food as birds of his kind were wont to eat, and to pass the night on a tree.

A few days after, a peasant that was skilled in taking birds with nets chanced to come to the place where he was; when perceiving so fine a bird, the like of which he had never seen before, he began greatly to rejoice. He employed all his art to catch him, and at length succeeded. Overjoyed at so great a prize, which he looked upon as of more worth than all the other birds, because so rare, he shut it up in a cage, and carried it to the city. As soon as he was come into the market, a citizen stops him, and asked him how much he wanted for that bird.

Instead of answering, the peasant asked the citizen what he would do with him in case he should buy him? 'What wouldst thou have me to do with him,' answered the citizen, 'but roast and eat him?'

'If that be the case,' replied the peasant, 'I suppose you would think me very well paid if you gave me the smallest piece of silver for him. I set a much higher value upon him, and you should not have him for a piece of gold. Although I am advanced in years, I never saw such a bird in my life. I intend to make a present of him to the king; he will know the value of him better than you.'

Without staying any longer in the market, the peasant went directly to the palace, and placed himself exactly

before the king's apartment. His majesty, being at a window where he could see all that passed in the court, no sooner cast his eyes on this beautiful bird, than he sent an officer to buy it for him. The officer, going to the peasant, asked him how much he wanted for that bird. 'If it be for his majesty,' answered the peasant, 'I humbly beg of him to accept it of me as a present, and I desire you to carry it to him.' The officer took the bird to the king, who found it so great a rarity that he ordered the same officer to take ten pieces of gold, and carry them to the peasant, who departed very well satisfied. The king ordered the bird to be put into a magnificent cage, and gave it seed and water in rich vessels.

His majesty being then ready to go hunting, had not time to consider the bird, therefore had it brought to him as soon as he came back. The officer brought the cage, and the king, that he might better see the bird, took it out himself, and perched it upon his hand. Looking earnestly at it, he asked the officer if he had seen it eat. 'Sir,' replied the officer, 'your majesty may observe the vessel with his food is still full, and he has not touched any of it.' Then the king ordered him meat of various sorts, that he might take what he liked best.

The table being spread, and dinner served up just as the king had given these orders, the bird, flapping his wings, hopped off the king's hand, and flew on to the table, where he began to peck the bread and victuals, sometimes on one plate, and sometimes on another. The king was so surprised, that he immediately sent the officer to desire the queen to come and see this wonder. The officer related it to her majesty, and she came forthwith: but she no sooner saw the bird, than she covered her face with her veil, and would have retired. The king, surprised at her proceeding, asked the reason of it.

'Sir,' answered the queen, 'your majesty will no longer be surprised when you understand that this bird is not, as you take it, a bird, but a man.'

'Madam,' said the king, more astonished than before, 'you are making fun of me; you shall never persuade me that a bird can be a man.'

'Sir,' replied the queen, 'far be it from me to make fun of your majesty; nothing is more certain than what I have had the honour to tell you. I can assure your majesty it is the King of Persia, named Beder, son of the celebrated Gulnare, princess of one of the largest kingdoms of the sea, nephew of Saleh, king of that kingdom, and grandson of Queen Farasche, mother of Gulnare and Saleh; and it was the Princess Giauhara, daughter of the King of Samandal, who thus metamorphosed him into a bird.' That the king might no longer doubt of what she affirmed, she told him the whole story, how and for what reason the Princess Giauhara, had thus revenged herself for the ill-treatment of King Saleh towards the king of Samandal, her father.

The king had less difficulty in believing this assertion of the queen in that he knew her to be a skilful magician, one of the greatest in the world. And as she knew everything which took place, he was always by her means timely informed of the designs of the kings his neighbours against him, and prevented them. His majesty had compassion on the King of Persia, and earnestly besought his queen to break the enchantment, that he might return to his own form.

The queen consented to it with great willingness. 'Sir,' said she to the king, 'be pleased to take the bird into your room, and I will show you a king worthy of the consideration you have for him.' The bird, which had ceased eating, and attended to what the king and queen said, would not give his majesty the trouble to take him, but hopped into the room before him; and the queen came in soon after, with a vessel full of water in her hand. She pronounced over the vessel some words unknown to the king, till the water began to boil, when she took some of it in her hand, and, sprinkling a little upon the bird, said, 'By virtue of these holy and mysterious words I have just pronounced, quit that form of a bird, and reassume that which thou hast received from thy Creator.'

The words were scarcely out of the queen's mouth, when, instead of a bird, the king saw a young prince. King Beder immediately fell on his knees, and thanked God for the favour that had been bestowed upon him. Then

he took the king's hand, who helped him up, and kissed it in token of gratitude; but the king embraced him with great joy. He would then have made his acknowledgments to the queen, but she had already retired to her apartment. The king made him sit at the table with him, and, after dinner was over, prayed him to relate how the Princess Giauhara could have had the inhumanity to transform into a bird so amiable a prince as he was; and the King of Persia immediately told him. When he had done, the king, provoked at the proceeding of the princess, could not help blaming her. 'It was commendable,' said he, 'in the Princess of Samandal to feel hurt at the king her father's ill-treatment; but to carry her vengeance so far, and especially against a prince who was not guilty, was what she will never be able to justify herself for. But let us have done with this discourse, and tell me, I beseech you, in what I can further serve you.'

'Sir,' answered King Beder, 'my obligation to your majesty is so great, that I ought to remain with you all my life to testify my gratitude; but since your majesty sets no limits to your generosity, I entreat you to grant me one of your ships to transport me to Persia, where I fear my absence, which has been but too long, may have occasioned some disorder, and that the queen my mother, from whom I concealed my departure, may be dead of grief, under the uncertainty whether I am alive or dead.'

The king granted what he desired with the best grace imaginable, and immediately gave orders for equipping one of his largest ships, and the best sailor in his numerous fleet. The ship was soon furnished with all its crew, provisions, and ammunition; and as soon as the wind became fair, King Beder embarked, after having taken leave of the king, and thanked him for all his favours.

The ship sailed before the wind for ten days; on the eleventh day the wind changed, and becoming very violent, there followed a furious tempest. The ship was not only driven out of its course, but so violently tossed, that all its masts went by the board; and driving along at the pleasure of the wind, it at length struck against a rock and split open.

The greater part of the people were instantly drowned. Some few were saved by swimming, and others by getting on pieces of the wreck. King Beder was among the latter, and, after having been tossed about for some time by the waves and currents, he at length perceived himself near the shore, and not far from a city that seemed large. He exerted his remaining strength to reach the land, and was at length fortunate to come so near as to be able to touch the ground with his feet. He immediately abandoned his piece of wood, which had been of so great service to him; but when he came near the shore he was greatly surprised to see horses, camels, mules, asses, oxen, cows, bulls, and other animals crowding to the shore to oppose his landing. He had the utmost difficulty to conquer their obstinacy and force his way; but at length he succeeded, and sheltered himself among the rocks till he had recovered his breath, and dried his clothes in the sun.

When the prince advanced to enter the city, he met with the same opposition from these animals, who seemed to want to make him understand that it was dangerous to proceed.

King Beder, however, got into the city soon after, and saw many fair and spacious streets, but was surprised to find no man there. This made him think it was not without cause that so many animals had opposed his passage. Going forward, nevertheless, he observed several shops open, which gave him reason to believe the place was not so destitute of inhabitants as he imagined. He approached one of these shops, where several sorts of fruits were exposed to sale, and saluted very courteously an old man that was sitting there.

The old man, who was busy about something, lifted up his head, and seeing a youth who had an appearance of grandeur, started, and asked him whence he came, and what business had brought him there. King Beder satisfied him in a few words; and the old man further asked him if he had met anybody on the road. 'You are the first person I have seen,' answered the king; 'and I cannot comprehend how so fine and large a city comes to be without inhabitants.'

'Come in, sir; stay no longer upon the threshold,' replied the old man, 'or peradventure some misfortune may

happen to you. I will satisfy your curiosity at leisure, and give you the reason why it is necessary you should take this precaution.'

King Beder would not be bidden twice: he entered the shop, and sat down by the old man. The latter knew he must want food, therefore immediately presented him with what was necessary to recover his strength; and although King Beder was very anxious to know why he had taken the precaution to make him enter the shop, the old man nevertheless would not tell him anything till he had done eating, for fear the sad things he had to relate might take away his appetite. At last he said to him, 'You have great reason to thank God you got hither without any misfortune.'

'Alas! why?' replied king Beder, very much surprised and alarmed.

'Because,' answered he, 'this city is called the City of Enchantments, and is governed not by a king, but by a queen, who is a notorious and dangerous sorceress. You will be convinced of this,' added he, 'when you know that these horses, mules, and other animals that you have seen are so many men, like you and me, whom she has transformed by her diabolical art. And when young men like you enter the city, she has persons stationed to stop and bring them, either by fair means or force, before her. She receives them in the most obliging manner; she caresses them, regales them, and lodges them magnificently. But she does not suffer them long to enjoy this happiness. There is not one of them whom she has not transformed into some animal or bird at the end of forty days. You told me all these animals opposed your landing and entering, the city. This was the only way they could make you comprehend the danger you were going to expose yourself to, and they did all in their power to save you.'

This account exceedingly afflicted the young King of Persia. 'Alas!' cried he, 'to what extremities has my ill-fortune reduced me! I am hardly freed from one enchantment, which I look back upon with horror, but I find myself exposed to another much more terrible.' This gave him occasion to relate his story to the old man more at length, and to acquaint him with his birth, quality, his falling in love with the Princess of Samandal, and her cruelty in changing him into a bird the very moment he had seen her and declared his love to her.

When the prince came to speak of his good fortune in finding a queen who broke the enchantment, the old man, to encourage him, said, 'Notwithstanding all I told you of the magic queen, that ought not to give you the least disquiet, since I am generally beloved throughout the city, and am not unknown to the queen herself, who has much respect for me; therefore it was singularly fortunate that you addressed yourself to me rather than elsewhere. You are secure in my house, where I advise you to continue, if you think fit; and provided you do not stray from hence, I dare assure you you will have no just cause to complain; so that you are under no sort of constraint whatsoever.'

King Beder thanked the old man for his kind reception, and the protection he was pleased so readily to afford him. He sat down at the entrance of the shop, where he no sooner appeared than his youth and handsome looks drew the eyes of all that passed that way. Many stopped and complimented the old man on his having acquired so fine a slave, as they imagined the king to be; and they were the more surprised, because they could not comprehend how so beautiful a youth could escape the queen's knowledge. 'Believe not,' said the old man, 'that this is a slave; you all know that I am not rich enough. He is my nephew, son of a brother of mine that is dead; and as I had no children of my own, I sent for him to keep me company.'

They congratulated his good fortune in having so fine a young man for his relation; but could not help telling him they feared the queen would take him from him. 'You know her well,' said they, 'and you cannot be ignorant of the danger to which you are exposed, after all the examples you have seen. How grieved would you be if she should serve him as she has done so many others that we know of!'

'I am obliged to you,' replied the old man, 'for your good will towards me, and I heartily thank you for your care; but I shall never entertain the least thought that the queen will do me any injury, after all the kindness

she has professed for me. In case she happens to hear of this young man, and speaks to me about him, I doubt not she will cease to think of him, so soon as she comes to know he is my nephew.'

The old man was exceedingly glad to hear the commendations they bestowed on the young King of Persia. He became as fond of him as if he had been his own son. They had lived about a month together, when, King Beder sitting at the shop-door, after his ordinary manner, Queen Labe (so was this magic queen named) happened to come by with great pomp. The young king no sooner perceived the guards coming before her, than he arose, and, going into the shop, asked the old man what all that show meant. 'The queen is coming by,' answered he, 'but stand still and fear nothing.'

The queen's guards, clothed in purple uniform, and well armed and mounted, marched in four files, with their sabres drawn, to the number of a thousand, and every one of their officers, as they passed by the shop, saluted the old man: then followed a like number habited in brocaded silk, and better mounted, whose officers did the old man the like honour. Next came as many young ladies on foot, equally beautiful, richly dressed, and set off with precious stones. They marched gravely, with half pikes in their hands; and in the midst of them appeared Queen Labe, on a horse glittering with diamonds, with a golden saddle, and a harness of inestimable value. All the young ladies saluted the old man as they passed by him; and the queen, struck with the good mien of King Beder, stopped as soon as she came before the shop. 'Abdallah' (so was the old man named), said she to him, 'tell me, I beseech thee, does that beautiful and charming slave belong to thee? and is it long that thou hast been in possession of him?'

Abdallah, before he answered the queen, threw himself on the ground, and rising again, said, 'Madam, it is my nephew, son of a brother I had, who has not long been dead. Having no children, I look upon him as my son, and sent for him to come and comfort me, intending to leave him what I have when I die.'

Queen Labe, who had never yet seen any one to compare with King Beder, thought immediately of getting the old man to abandon him to her. 'Father,' quoth she, 'will you not oblige me so far as to make me a present of this young man? Do not refuse me, I conjure you; and I swear by the fire and the light, I will make him so great and powerful that no individual in the world ever arrived at such good fortune. Although my purpose were to do evil to all mankind, yet he shall be the sole exception. I trust you will grant me what I desire, more on the account of the friendship I know you have for me, than for the esteem you know I always had, and shall ever have for you.'

'Madam,' replied the good Abdallah, 'I am infinitely obliged to your majesty for all your kindness, and the honours you propose to do my nephew. He is not worthy to approach so great a queen, and I humbly beseech your majesty to excuse him.'

'Abdallah,' replied the queen, 'I all along flattered myself you loved me; and I could never have thought you would have given me so evident a token of your slighting my request. But I here swear once more by the fire and light, and even by whatsoever is most sacred in my religion, that I will pass on no farther till I have conquered your obstinacy. I understand very well what raises your apprehensions; but I promise you shall never have any occasion to repent having obliged me in so sensible a manner.'

Old Abdallah was exceedingly grieved, both on his own account and King Beder's, for being in a manner forced to obey the queen. 'Madam,' replied he, 'I would not willingly have your majesty entertain an ill opinion of the respect I have for you, and my zeal always to do whatever I can to oblige you. I put entire confidence in your royal word, and I do not in the least doubt but you will keep it. I only beg of your majesty to delay doing this great honour to my nephew till you shall again pass this way.'

'That shall be to-morrow,' said the queen, who inclined her head, as a token of being pleased, and so went forward towards her palace.

When Queen Labe and all her attendants were out of sight, the good Abdallah said to King Beder, 'Son, (for so he was wont to call him, for fear of some time or other betraying him when he spoke of him in public), 'it has not been in my power, as you may have observed, to refuse the queen what she demanded of me with so great earnestness, for fear I might force her to employ her magic both against you and myself openly or secretly, and treat you, as much from resentment to you as to me, with more signal cruelty than all those she has had in her power before. But I have some reason to believe she will treat you well, as she promised, on account of that particular esteem she professes for me. This you may have seen by the respect shown, and the honours paid me by all her court. She would be a fiendish creature indeed, if she should deceive me; but she shall not deceive me unrevenged, for I know how to be even with her.'

These assurances, which appeared very doubtful, were not sufficient to raise King Beder's spirits. 'After all you have told me of this queen's wickedness,' replied he, 'you cannot wonder if I am somewhat fearful to approach her: I might, it may be, make little of all you could tell me of her, did I not know by experience what it is to be at the mercy of a sorceress. The condition I was in, through the enchantment of the Princess Giauhara, and from whence I was delivered only to enter almost immediately into another, has made me look upon such a fate with horror.

'Son,' replied old Abdallah, 'do not afflict yourself; for though I must own there is no great faith to be put in the promises and oaths of so perfidious a queen, yet I must withal tell you that her power extends not to me. She knows it well herself; and that is the reason, and no other, that she pays me such great respect. I can quickly hinder her from doing you the least harm, if she should be perfidious enough to attempt it. You may depend upon me; and, provided you follow exactly the advice I shall give you before I hand you over to her, she shall have no more power over you than she has over me.'

The magic queen did not fail to pass by the old man's shop the next day, with the same pomp as the day before, and Abdallah waited for her with great respect. 'Father,' cried she, stopping just before him, 'you may judge of my impatience to have your nephew with me, by my punctual coming to put you in mind of your promise. I know you are a man of your word, and I cannot think you will break it with me.'

Abdallah, who fell on his face as soon as he saw the queen approaching, rose up when she had done speaking; and as he wanted nobody to hear what he had a mind to say to her, he advanced with great respect as far as her horse's head, and then said softly, 'Powerful queen! I am persuaded your majesty will not be offended at my seeming unwillingness to trust my nephew with you yesterday, since you cannot be ignorant of the reasons I had for it; but I implore you to lay aside the secrets of that art which you possess in so wonderful a degree. I regard my nephew as my own son; and your majesty would reduce me to despair if you should deal with him as you have done with others.'

'I promise you I will not,' replied the queen; 'and I once more repeat the oath I made yesterday, that neither you nor your nephew shall have any cause to be offended with me. I see plainly,' added she, 'you are not yet well enough acquainted with me; you never saw me yet but through a veil; but as I find your nephew worthy of my friendship, I will show you I am not in any way unworthy of his.' With that she threw off her veil and showed King Beder, who came near her with Abdallah, incomparable beauty.

But King Beder was little charmed. 'It is not enough,' said he within himself, 'to be beautiful; one's actions ought to correspond.'

Whilst King Beder was making these reflections, with his eyes fixed on Queen Labe, the old man turned towards him, and taking him by the arm, presented him to her majesty. 'Here he is, madam,' said he, 'and I beg of your majesty once more to remember he is my nephew, and to let him come and see me sometimes.' The queen promised he should; and to give a further mark of her gratitude, she caused a bag of a thousand pieces of gold to be given him. He excused himself at first from receiving them, but she insisted absolutely upon it, and he could not refuse her. She had caused a horse to be brought (as richly harnessed as her own) for the

King of Persia.

When King Beder was mounted, he would have taken his place behind the queen, but she would not suffer him, and made him ride on her left hand. She looked at Abdallah, and after having made him an inclination with her head, she set forward on her march.

Instead of observing a satisfaction in the people's faces at the sight of their sovereign, King Beder took notice that they looked at her with contempt, and even cursed her. 'The sorceress,' said some, 'has got a new subject to exercise her wickedness upon: will Heaven never deliver the world from her tyranny?' 'Poor stranger!' cried out others, 'thou art much deceived if thou thinkest thine happiness will last long. It is only to render thy fall most terrible that thou art raised so high.' This talk gave King Beder to understand that Abdallah had told him nothing but the truth of Queen Labe: but as it now depended no longer on himself to escape the mischief, he committed himself to divine Providence and the will of Heaven respecting his fate.

The magic queen arrived at her palace; she alighted, and giving her hand to King Beder, entered with him, accompanied by her women and the officers. She herself showed him all her apartments, where there was nothing to be seen but massy gold, precious stones, and furniture of wonderful magnificence. Then she led him out into a balcony, from whence he observed a garden of surprising beauty. King Beder commended all he saw, but so that he might not be discovered to be any other than old Abdallah's nephew. They discoursed of indifferent matters, till the queen was informed that dinner was upon the table.

The queen and King Beder arose, and sat down at the table, which was of massy gold, and the dishes of the same metal. They began to eat, but drank hardly at all till the dessert came, when the queen caused a cup to be filled for her with excellent wine. She took it and drank to King Beder's health; and then, without putting it out of her hand, caused it to be filled again, and presented it to him. King Beder received it with profound respect, and by a very low bow signified to her majesty that he in return drank to her health.

At the same time ten of Queen Labe's women entered with musical instruments, with which they made an agreeable concert. At length both began so to be heated with wine, that King Beder forgot he had to do with a magic queen, and looked upon her only as the most beautiful queen he ever saw.

Next morning the women who had served the king presented him with fine linen and a magnificent robe. The queen likewise, who was more splendidly dressed than the day before, came to receive him, and they went together to her apartments, where they had a good repast brought them, and spent the remainder of the day in walking in the garden, and in various other amusements.

Queen Labe treated King Beder after this manner for forty days, as she had been accustomed to do to all the others. The fortieth night she arose without making any noise and came into his room; but he was awake, and perceiving she had some design upon him, watched all her motions. She opened a chest, from whence she took a little box full of a certain yellow powder; taking some of the powder, she laid a train of it across the chamber, and it immediately flowed in a rivulet of water, to the great astonishment of King Beder. He trembled with fear, but still pretended to sleep, that the sorceress might not discover he was awake.

Queen Labe next took up some of the water in a vessel, and poured it into a basin, where there was flour, with which she made a paste, and kneaded it for a long time: then she mixed with it certain drugs, which she took from different boxes, and made a cake, which she put into a covered baking-pan. As she had taken care first of all to make a good fire, she took some of the coals, and set the pan upon them; and while the cake was baking, she put up the vessels and boxes in their places again; and on her pronouncing certain words, the rivulet, which ran along the end of the room, appeared no more. When the cake was baked, she took it off the coals, and carried it into her room, without the least suspicion that he had seen anything of what she had done.

King Beder, whom the pleasures and amusements of a court had made forget his good host Abdallah, began

now to think of him again, and believed he had more than ordinary occasion for his advice, after all he had seen the queen do that night. As soon as he was up, therefore, he expressed a great desire to go and see his uncle, and begged her majesty to permit him. 'What! my dear Beder,' cried the queen, 'are you then already tired, I will not say with living in so superb a palace as mine is, where you must find so many pleasures, but with the company of a queen who is so fond of you as I am?'

'Great queen!' answered King Beder, 'how can I be tired of so many favours and graces as your majesty perpetually heaps upon me? I must own, however, it is partly for this reason, that, my uncle loving me so tenderly, as I well know he does, and I having been absent from him now forty days, without once seeing him, I would not give him reason to think that I consent to remain longer without seeing him.'

'Go,' said the queen, 'you have my consent; but do not be long before you return.' This said, she ordered him a horse richly caparisoned, and he departed.

Old Abdallah was overjoyed to see King Beder; he embraced him tenderly, and King Beder did the same. As soon as they had sat down, 'Well,' said Abdallah to the king, 'how have you been, and how have you passed your time with that infidel sorceress?'

'Hitherto,' answered King Beder, 'I must needs own she has been extraordinarily kind to me, but I observed something last night which gives me just reason to suspect that all her kindness hitherto is but dissimulation.' He related to Abdallah how and after what manner he had seen her make the cake; and then added, 'Hitherto, I must needs confess I had almost forgotten, not only you, but all the advice you gave me concerning the wickedness of this queen; but this last action of hers gives me reason to fear she does not intend to observe any of her promises or solemn oaths to you. I thought of you immediately, and I esteem myself happy in that I have obtained permission to come to you.'

'You are not mistaken,' replied old Abdallah with a smile, which showed he did not himself believe she would have acted otherwise, 'nothing is capable of obliging a treacherous person to amend. But fear nothing. I know the way to make the mischief she intends for you fall upon herself. You are alarmed in time; and you could not have done better than to have recourse to me. It is her ordinary practice to keep her lovers only forty days, and after that time, instead of sending them home, to turn them into animals, to stock her forests and parks; but I thought of measures yesterday to prevent her doing you the same harm. The earth has borne this monster long enough, and it is now high time she should be treated as she deserves.'

So saying, Abdallah put two cakes into King Beder's hands, bidding him keep them to make use of as he should direct. 'You told me,' continued he, 'the sorceress made a cake last night; it was for you to eat, depend upon it; but take great care you do not touch it. Nevertheless, do not refuse to receive it when she offers it you; but instead of tasting it, break off part of one of the two I shall give you, unobserved, and eat that. As soon as she thinks you have swallowed it, she will not fail to attempt transforming you into some animal, but she will not succeed; when she sees that she will immediately turn the thing into a joke, as if what she had done was only to frighten you. But she will conceal a mortal grief in her heart, and think she omitted something in the composition of her cake. As for the other cake, you shall make a present of it to her and press her to eat it; which she will not refuse to do, were it only to convince you she does not mistrust you, though she has given you so much reason to mistrust her. When she has eaten of it, take a little water in the hollow of your hand, and throwing it in her face, say, "Quit that form you now wear, and take that of such and such an animal" as you think fit; which done, come to me with the animal, and I will tell you what you shall do afterwards.'

King Beder thanked Abdallah in the most expressive terms, and took his leave of him and returned to the palace. Upon his arrival, he understood that the queen waited for him with great impatience in the garden. He went to her, and she no sooner perceived him, than she came in great haste to meet him. 'My dear Beder!' said she, 'it seems ages since I have been separated from you. If you had stayed ever so little longer, I was preparing to come and fetch you.'

'Madam,' replied King Beder, 'I can assure your majesty I was no less impatient to rejoin you; but I could not refuse to stay a little longer with an uncle that loves me, and had not seen me for so long a time. He would have kept me still longer, but I tore myself away from him, to come where love calls me. Of all he prepared for me, I have only brought away this cake, which I desire your majesty to accept.' King Beder had wrapped up one of the two cakes in a handkerchief very neatly, took it out, and presented it to the queen, saying, 'I beg your majesty to accept it.'

'I do accept it with all my heart,' replied the queen, 'and will eat it with pleasure for your and your good uncle's sake; but before I taste it, I desire you for my sake to eat a piece of this, which I have made for you during your absence.'

'Fair queen,' answered King Beder, receiving it with great respect, I cannot sufficiently acknowledge the favour you do me.'

King Beder then artfully substituted in the place of the queen's cake the other which old Abdallah had given him, and having broken off a piece, he put it in his mouth, and cried, while he was eating, 'Ah! queen, I never tasted anything so charming in my life.'

Being near a cascade, as the sorceress saw him swallow one bit of the cake, and ready to eat another, she took a little water in the palm of her hand, throwing it in the king's face, said, 'Wretch! quit that form of a man, and take that of a vile horse, blind and lame.'

These words not having the desired effect, the sorceress was strangely surprised to find King Beder still in the same form, and that he only started for fear. Her cheeks reddened; and as she saw that she had missed her aim, 'Dear Beder,' cried she, 'this is nothing; recover yourself. I did not intend you any harm; I only did it to see what you would say.'

'Powerful queen,' replied King Beder, 'persuaded as I am that what your majesty did was only to divert yourself, yet I could not help being surprised. But, madam,' continued he, 'let us drop this, and since I have eaten your cake, would you do me the favour to taste mine?'

Queen Labe, who could not better justify herself than by showing this mark of confidence in the King of Persia, broke off a piece of his cake, and ate it. She had no sooner swallowed it than she appeared much troubled, and remained as it were motionless. King Beder lost no time, but took water out of the same basin, and throwing it in her face, cried, 'Abominable sorceress! quit that form of a woman, and be turned instantly into a mare.'

The same instant Queen Labe was transformed into a very beautiful mare; and her confusion was so great to find herself in that condition, that she shed tears in great abundance, which perhaps no mare before had ever been known to do. She bowed her head to the feet of King Beder, thinking to move him to compassion; but though he could have been so moved, it was absolutely out of his power to repair the mischief he had done. He led her into the stable belonging to the palace, and put her into the hands of a groom, to bridle and saddle; but of all the bridles which the groom tried upon her, not one would fit her. This made him cause two horses to be saddled, one for the groom, and the other for himself; and the groom led the mare after him to old Abdallah's.

Abdallah, seeing at a distance King Beder coming with the mare, doubted not but he had done what he advised him. 'Hateful sorceress!' said he immediately to himself in a transport of joy, 'Heaven has at length punished thee as thou deservest.' King Beder alighted at Abdallah's door, and entered the shop, embracing and thanking him for all the signal services he had done him. He related to him the whole matter, and told him that he could find no bridle fit for the mare. Abdallah, who had one for every horse, bridled the mare himself, and as soon as King Beder had sent back the groom with the two horses, he said to him, 'My lord, you have no

reason to stay any longer in this city: mount the mare, and return to your kingdom. I have but one thing more to recommend to you; and that is, if you should ever happen to part with the mare, be sure not to give up the bridle.' King Beder promised to remember it; and having taken leave of the good old man, he departed.

The young King of Persia no sooner got out of the city, than he began to reflect with joy on the deliverance he had had, and that he had the sorceress in his power, who had given him so much cause to tremble. Three days after he arrived at a great city, where, entering the suburbs, he met a venerable old man. 'Sir,' said the old man, stopping him, 'may I presume to ask from what part of the world you come?' The king stopped to tell him, and as they were discoursing together, an old woman came up; who, stopping likewise, wept and sighed bitterly at the sight of the mare.

King Beder and the old man left off discoursing, to look at the old woman, whom the king asked what cause she had to lament so much, 'Alas! sir,' replied she, 'it is because your mare resembles so perfectly one my son had, which I still mourn the loss of on his account. I should think yours were the same, did I not know she was dead. Sell her to me, I beseech you: I will give you more than she is worth, and thank you too.'

'Good woman,' replied King Beder, 'I am heartily sorry I cannot comply with your request: my mare is not to be sold.'

'Alas! sir,' continued the old woman, 'do not refuse me this favour. My son and I will certainly die with grief if you do not grant it.'

'Good mother,' replied the king, 'I would grant it with all my heart, if I was disposed to part with so good a beast; but if I were so disposed, I believe you would hardly give a thousand pieces of gold for her, and I could not sell her for less.'

'Why should I not give so much?' replied the old woman: 'if that be the lowest price, you need only say you will take it, and I will fetch you the money.'

King Beder, seeing the old woman so poorly dressed, could not imagine she could find the money; therefore to try her, he said, 'Go, fetch me the money, and the mare is yours.' The old woman immediately unloosed a purse she had fastened to her girdle, and desiring him to alight, bade him tell over the money, and in case he found it came short of the sum demanded, she said her house was not far off, and she could quickly fetch the rest.

The surprise of King Beder, at the sight of this purse, was not small. 'Good woman,' said he, 'do you not perceive I have been bantering you all this while? I assure you my mare is not to be sold.'

The old man, who had been witness to all that was said, now began to speak. 'Son,' quoth he to King Beder, 'it is necessary you should know one thing, which I find you are ignorant of; and that is, that in this city it is not permitted to any one to tell a lie, on any account whatsoever, on pain of death. You cannot refuse taking this good woman's money, and delivering your mare, when she gives you the sum according to the agreement; and this you had better do without any noise, than expose yourself to what may happen.'

King Beder, sorely afflicted to find himself thus trapped by his rash offer, alighted with great regret. The old woman stood ready to seize the bridle, and immediately unbridled the mare, and taking some water in her hand, from a stream that ran in the middle of the street, she threw it in the mare's face, uttering these words, 'Daughter, quit that strange shape, and re-assume thine own.' The transformation was effected in a moment, and King Beder, who swooned as soon as he saw Queen Labe appear, would have fallen to the ground, if the old man had not caught him.

The old woman, who was mother to Queen Labe, and had instructed her in all her magic secrets, had no

sooner embraced her daughter, than to show her fury, she whistled. Immediately rose a genie of gigantic form and stature. This genie took King Beder on one shoulder, and the old woman with the magic queen on the other, and transported them in a few minutes to the palace of Queen Labe in the City of Enchantments.

The magic queen immediately fell upon King Beder, 'Is it thus, ungrateful wretch,' said she, 'that thou and thy unworthy uncle repay me for all the kindnesses I have done for you? I shall soon make you both feel what you deserve.' She said no more, but taking water in her hand, threw it in his face with these words, 'Come out of that shape, and take that of a vile owl.' These words were followed by the effect, and immediately she commanded one of her women to shut up the owl in a cage, and give him neither meat nor drink.

The woman took the cage, and without regarding what the queen ordered, gave him both meat and drink; and being old Abdallah's friend, she sent him word privately how the queen had treated his nephew, and of her design to destroy both him and King Beder, that he might give orders to prevent it and save himself.

Abdallah knew no common measures would do with Queen Labe: he therefore did but whistle after a certain manner, and there immediately arose a vast giant, with four wings, who, presenting himself before him, asked what he wanted. 'Lightning,' said Abdallah to him (for so was the genie called), 'I command you to preserve the life of King Beder, son of Queen Gulnare. Go to the palace of the magic queen, and transport immediately to the capital of Persia the compassionate woman who has the cage in custody, so that she may inform Queen Gulnare of the danger the king her son is in, and the occasion he has for her assistance. Take care not to frighten her when you come before her and tell her from me what she ought to do.'

Lightning immediately disappeared, and got in an instant to the palace of the magic queen. He instructed the woman, lifted her up into the air, and transported her to the capital of Persia, where he placed her on the terrace near the apartment where Queen Gulnare was. She went downstairs to the apartment, and she there found Queen Gulnare and Queen Farasche her mother lamenting their misfortunes. She made them a profound obeisance and they soon understood the great need that King Beder was in of their assistance.

Queen Gulnare was so overjoyed at the news, that rising from her seat, she went and embraced the good woman, telling her how much she was obliged to her for the service she had done.

Then immediately going out, she commanded the trumpets to sound, and the drums to beat, to acquaint the city that the King of Persia would suddenly return safe to his kingdom. She then went again, and found King Saleh her brother, whom Queen Farasche had caused to come speedily thither by a certain fumigation. 'Brother,' said she to him, 'the king your nephew, my dear son, is in the City of Enchantments, under the power of Queen Labe. Both you and I must go to deliver him, for there is no time to be lost.'

King Saleh forthwith assembled a powerful body of his marine troops, who soon rose out of the sea. He also called to his assistance the genies, his allies, who appeared with a much more numerous army than his own. As soon as the two armies were joined, he put himself at the head of them, with Queen Farasche, Queen Gulnare, and the princesses. They then lifted themselves up into the air, and soon poured down on the palace and City of Enchantments, where the magic queen, her mother, and all the adorers of fire, were destroyed in an instant.

Queen Gulnare had ordered the woman who brought her the news of Queen Labe's transforming and imprisoning her son to follow her closely, and bade her go, and in the confusion, seize the cage, and bring it to her. This order was executed as she wished, and Queen Gulnare was no sooner in possession of the cage than she opened it and took out the owl, saying, as she sprinkled a little water upon him, 'My dear son, quit that strange form, and resume thy natural one of a man.'

In a moment Queen Gulnare no more saw the hideous owl, but King Beder her son. She immediately embraced him with an excess of joy. She could not find in her heart to let him go; and Queen Farasche was

obliged to force him from her in her turn. After her, he was likewise embraced by the king his uncle and his relations.

Queen Gulnare's first care was to look out for old Abdallah, to whom she had been indebted for the recovery of the King of Persia. When he was brought to her, she said, 'My obligations to you, sir, have been so great, that there is nothing in my power that I would not freely do for you, as a token of my acknowledgment. Do but tell me in what I can serve you.'

'Great queen,' replied Abdallah, 'if the lady whom I sent to your majesty will but consent to the marriage I offer her, and the King of Persia will give me leave to reside at his court, I will spend the remainder of my days in his service.'

Then the queen turned to the lady, who was present, and finding that she was not averse to the match proposed, she caused them to join hands, and the King of Persia and she took care of their welfare.

This marriage occasioned the King of Persia to speak thus to the queen: 'Madam,' said he, 'I am heartily glad of this match which your majesty has just made. There remains one more, which I desire you to think of.'

Queen Gulnare did not at first comprehend what marriage he meant; but after a little considering, she said, 'Of yours, you mean, son? I consent to it with all my heart.' Then turning, and looking on her brother's sea attendants, and the genies who were still present, 'Go,' said she, 'and traverse both sea and land, to find out the most lovely and amiable princess, worthy of the king my son, and come and tell us.'

'Madam,' replied King Beder, 'it is to no purpose for them to take all that pains. You have no doubt heard that I have already given my heart to the Princess of Samandal. I have seen her, and do not repent of the present I then made her. In a word, neither earth nor sea, in my opinion, can furnish a princess like her. It is true that she treated me in a way that would have extinguished any affection less strong than mine. But I hold her excused; she could not treat me with less rigour, after I had had the king her father imprisoned. But it may be the King of Samandal has changed his mind; and his daughter the princess may consent to love me when she sees her father has agreed to it.'

'Son,' replied Queen Gulnare, 'if only the Princess Giauhara can make you happy, it is not my design to oppose you. The king your uncle need only have the King of Samandal brought, and we shall soon see whether he be still of the same untractable temper.'

Strictly as the King of Samandal had been kept during his captivity by King Saleh's orders, yet he always had great respect shown him, and was become very familiar with the officers who guarded him. King Saleh caused a chafing-dish of coals to be brought, into which he threw a certain composition, uttering at the same time some mysterious words. As soon as the smoke began to arise, the palace shook, and immediately the King of Samandal, with King Saleh's officers, appeared. The King of Persia cast himself at the King of Samandal's feet, and kneeling said, 'It is no longer King Saleh that demands of your majesty the honour of your alliance for the King of Persia; it is the King of Persia himself that humbly begs that boon; and I am sure your majesty will not persist in being the cause of the death of a king who can no longer live if he does not share life with the amiable Princess Giauhara.'

The King of Samandal did not long suffer the King of Persia to remain at his feet. He embraced him and obliging him to rise, said, 'I should be very sorry to have contributed in the least to the death of a monarch who is so worthy to live. If it be true that so precious a life cannot be preserved without my daughter, live, sir,' said he, 'she is yours. She has always been obedient to my will, and I cannot think she will now oppose it.' Speaking these words, he ordered one of his officers, whom King Saleh had permitted to be about him, to go and look for the Princess Giauhara, and bring her to him immediately.

The princess had remained where the King of Persia had left her. The officer soon perceived her, and brought her with her women. The King of Samandal embraced her, and said, 'Daughter, I have provided a husband for you; it is the King of Persia you see there, the most accomplished monarch at present in the universe. The preference he has given you over all other Princesses obliges us both to express our gratitude.'

'Sir,' replied the Princess Giauhara, 'your majesty well knows I never have presumed to disobey your will in anything; I shall always be ready to obey you; and I hope the King of Persia will forget my ill-treatment of him, and consider it was duty, not inclination, that forced me to it.'

The wedding was celebrated in the palace of the City of Enchantments, with the greater solemnity in that all the lovers of the magic queen, who resumed their original forms as soon as ever that queen ceased to live, came to return their thanks to the King of Persia, Queen Gulnare, and King Saleh. They were all sons of kings or princes, or persons of high rank.

King Saleh at length conducted the King of Samandal to his dominions, and put him in possession of them. The King of Persia returned to his capital with Queen Gulnare, Queen Farasche, and the princesses; and Queen Farasche and the princesses continued there till King Saleh came to reconduct them to his kingdom under the waves of the sea.

THE THREE PRINCES AND THE PRINCESS NOURONNIHAR.

There was once a sultan of India who had three sons. These, with the princess his niece, were the ornaments of his court. The eldest of the princes was called Houssain, the second Ali, the youngest Ahmed, and the princess his niece, Nouronnihar. The Princess Nouronnihar was the daughter of the younger brother of the sultan, to whom the sultan in his lifetime allowed a considerable revenue. But that prince had not been married long before he died, and left the princess very young. The sultan, out of brotherly love and friendship, took upon himself the care of his niece's education, and brought her up in his palace with the three princes, where her singular beauty and personal accomplishments, joined to a sprightly disposition and irreproachable conduct, distinguished her among all the princesses of her time.

The sultan, her uncle, proposed to get her married, when she arrived at a proper age, to some neighbouring prince, and was thinking seriously about it, when he perceived that the three princes his sons had all fallen in love with her. He was very much concerned, owing to the difficulty he foresaw whether the two younger would consent to yield to their elder brother. He spoke to each of them apart; and after having remonstrated on the impossibility of one princess being the wife of three persons, and the troubles they would create if they persisted, he did all he could to persuade them to abide by a declaration of the princess in favour of one of them; or to suffer her to be married to a foreign prince. But as he found them obstinate, he sent for them all together, and said to them, 'Children, since I have not been able to persuade you no longer to aspire to marry the princess your cousin; and as I have no inclination to force her to marry any of you, I have thought of a plan which will please you all, and preserve union among you, if you will but follow my advice. I think it would be best, if every one travelled separately into a different country, so that you might not meet each other: and as you know I delight in every thing that is rare and singular, I promise my niece in marriage to him that shall bring me the most extraordinary curiosity; and for travelling expenses, I will give each of you a sum befitting your rank and the purchase of the curiosity you search.'

As the three princes were always submissive and obedient to the sultan's will, and each flattered himself that fortune would favour him, they all consented. The sultan gave them the money he promised; and that very day they issued orders in preparation for their travels, and took leave of the sultan, that they might be ready to set out early the next morning. They all went out at the same gate of the city, each dressed like a merchant, attended by a trusty officer dressed like a slave, all well mounted and equipped. They went the first day's journey together; and slept at the first inn, where the road divided into three different tracks. At night when they were at supper together, they agreed to travel for a year, and to make that inn their rendezvous; that the

first that came should wait for the rest; that as they had all three taken leave together of the sultan, they should all return together. The next morning by break of day, after they had embraced and wished each other good success, they mounted their horses, and each took a different road.

Prince Houssain, the eldest brother, who had heard wonders of the extent, strength, riches, and splendour of the kingdom of Bisnagar, bent his course towards the Indian coast; and, after three months travelling with different caravans, sometimes over deserts and barren mountains, and sometimes through populous and fertile countries, he arrived at Bisnagar, the capital of the kingdom of that name and the residence of its king. He lodged at a khan appointed for foreign merchants; and having learnt that there were four principal quarters where merchants of all sorts kept their shops, in the midst of which stood the castle, or rather the king's palace, as the centre of the city, surrounded by three courts, and each gate two leagues distant from the other, he went to one of these quarters the next day.

Prince Houssain could not see this quarter without admiration. It was large, and divided into several streets, all vaulted and shaded from the sun, and yet very light. The shops were all of the same size and proportion; and all that dealt in the same sort of merchandise, as well as the craftsmen, lived in one street.

The multitude of shops stocked with the finest linens from several parts of India, some painted in the brightest colours, with men, landscapes, trees, and flowers; silks and brocades from Persia, China, and other places; porcelain from Japan and China, foot carpets of all sizes,--all this surprised him so much that he knew not how to believe his own eyes; but when he came to the shops of the goldsmiths and jewellers (for those two trades were exercised by the same merchants), he was dazzled by the lustre of the pearls, diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and other precious stones exposed for sale. But if he was amazed at seeing so many riches in one place, he was much more surprised when he came to judge of the wealth of the whole kingdom by considering that except the Brahmins and ministers of the idols, who profess a life retired from worldly vanity, there was not an Indian, man or woman, through the extent of that kingdom, who did not wear necklaces, bracelets, and ornaments about their legs and feet, made of pearls and other precious stones.

Another thing Prince Houssain particularly admired was the great number of rose-sellers, who crowded the streets; for the Indians are such lovers of that flower, that not one will stir without a nosegay in his hand, or a garland on his head; and the merchants keep them in pots in their shops, so that the air of the whole quarter, however large, is perfectly perfumed.

After Prince Houssain had run through the quarter, street by street, his thoughts fully occupied by the riches he had seen, he was very much tired, and a merchant civilly invited him to sit down in his shop. He accepted the offer; but had not been seated long before he saw a crier pass by with a piece of carpet on his arm, about six feet square, and cry it at thirty purses. The prince called to the crier, and asked to see the carpet, which seemed to him to be valued at an exorbitant price, not only for its size, but the meanness of the stuff. When he had examined it well, he told the crier that he could not comprehend how so small and poor a piece could be priced so high.

The crier, who took him for a merchant, replied, 'Sir, if this price seems so extravagant to you, your amazement will be greater when I tell you I have orders to raise it to forty purses, and not to part with it for less.'

'Certainly,' answered Prince Houssain, 'it must have something very extraordinary about it, which I know nothing of.'

'You have guessed right, sir,' replied the crier, 'and will own as much when you come to know that whoever sits on this piece of carpet may be transported in an instant wherever he desires to go without being stopped by any obstacle.'

At this the Prince of the Indies, considering that the principal motive of his journey was to carry some singular curiosity home to the sultan his father, thought that be could not meet with anything which could give him more satisfaction. 'If the carpet,' said he to the crier, 'has the virtue you assign it, I shall not think forty purses too much but shall make you a present besides.'

'Sir,' replied the crier, 'I have told you the truth; and it will be an easy matter to convince you of it, as soon as you have made the bargain for forty purses, by experiment. But as I suppose you have not so much with you, and that I must go with you to the khan where you lodge, with the leave of the master of the shop we will go into his back shop, and I will spread the carpet; and when we have both sat down, and you have formed the wish to be transported into your room at the khan, if we are not transported thither it shall be no bargain. As to your present, as I am paid for my trouble by the seller, I shall receive it as a favour, and be very much obliged to you for it.'

The prince accepted the conditions, and concluded the bargain; and having obtained the master's leave, they went into his back shop; they both sat down on the carpet, and as soon as the prince wished to be transported into his room at the khan, he found himself and the crier there, and as he wanted no more convincing proof of the virtue of the carpet, he counted to the crier forty purses of gold, and gave him twenty pieces for himself.

In this manner Prince Houssain became the possessor of the carpet, and was overjoyed that on his arrival at Bisnagar he had found so rare a treasure, which he never doubted would gain him the Princess Nouronnihar. In short he looked upon it as an impossible thing for the princes, his younger brothers, to meet with anything to compare with it. It was in his power, by sitting on this carpet, to be at the place of rendezvous that very day; but as he was obliged to wait for his brothers, as they had agreed, and as he was curious to see the King of Bisnagar and his court, and to learn about the laws, customs, and religion of the kingdom, he chose to make a longer abode there.

It was a custom of the King of Bisnagar to give audience to all strange merchants once a week; and Prince Houssain, who remained incognito, saw him often; and as he was handsome, clever, and extremely polite, he easily distinguished himself among the merchants, and was preferred before them all by the sultan, who asked him about the Sultan of the Indies, and the government, strength, and riches of his dominions.

The rest of his time the prince spent in seeing what was most remarkable in and about the city; and among other things he visited a temple, all built of brass. It was ten cubits square, and fifteen high; and the greatest ornament to it was an idol of the height of a man, of massy gold: its eyes were two rubies, set so artificially, that it seemed to look at those who looked at it, on whichever side they turned. Besides this, there was another not less curious, in a village in the midst of a plain of about ten acres, which was a delicious garden full of roses and the choicest flowers, surrounded with a small wall breast high, to keep the cattle out. In the midst of this plain was raised a terrace, a man's height, so nicely paved that the whole pavement seemed to be but one single stone. A temple was erected in the middle of this terrace, with a dome about fifty cubits high, which might be seen for several leagues round. It was thirty cubits long, and twenty broad, built of red marble, highly polished. The inside of the dome was adorned with three rows of fine paintings, in good taste: and there was not a place in the whole temple but was embellished with paintings, bas-reliefs, and figures of idols from top to bottom.

Every night and morning there were ceremonies performed in this temple, which were always succeeded by sports, concerts, dancing, singing, and feasts. The ministers of the temple and the inhabitants of the place had nothing to live on but the offerings of pilgrims, who came in crowds from the most distant parts of the kingdom to perform their vows.

Prince Houssain was also spectator of a solemn feast, which was celebrated every year at the court of Bisnagar, at which all the governors of provinces, commanders of fortified places, all the governors and judges of towns, and the Brahmins most celebrated for their learning, were obliged to be present; and some

lived so far off that they were four months in coming. This assembly, composed of innumerable multitudes of Indians, met in a plain of vast extent, as far as the eye could reach. In the centre of this plain was a square of great length and breadth, closed on one side by a large scaffolding of nine stories, supported by forty pillars, raised for the king and his court, and those strangers whom he admitted to audience once a week. Inside, it was adorned and furnished magnificently; and on the outside were painted fine landscapes, wherein all sorts of beasts, birds, and insects, even flies and gnats, were drawn as naturally as possible. Other scaffolds of at least four or five stories, and painted almost all alike, formed the other three sides.

On each side of the square, at some little distance from each other, were ranged a thousand elephants, sumptuously harnessed, each having upon his back a square wooden castle, finely gilt, in which were musicians and actors. The trunks, ears, and bodies of these elephants were painted with cinnabar and other colours, representing grotesque figures.

But what Prince Houssain most of all admired was to see the largest of these elephants stand with his four feet on a post fixed into the earth, two feet high, playing and beating time with his trunk to the music. Besides this, he admired another elephant as big, standing on a board, which was laid across a strong beam about ten feet high, with a great weight at the other end which balanced him, while he kept time with the music by the motions of his body and trunk.

Prince Houssain might have made a longer stay in the kingdom and court of Bisnagar, where he would have seen other wonders, till the last day of the year, whereon he and his brothers had appointed to meet. But he was so well satisfied with what he had seen, and his thoughts ran so much upon the Princess Nouronnihar, that he fancied he should be the more easy and happy the nearer he was to her. After he had paid the master of the khan for his apartment, and told him the hour when he might come for the key, without telling him how he should go, he shut the door, put the key on the outside, and spreading the carpet, he and the officer he had brought with him sat down on it, and, as soon as he had wished, were transported to the inn at which he and his brothers were to meet, where he passed for a merchant till they came.

Prince Ali, the second brother, travelled into Persia with a caravan, and after four months' travelling arrived at Schiraz, which was then the capital of the kingdom of Persia, and having on the way made friends with some merchants, passed for a jeweller, and lodged in the same khan with them.

The next morning, while the merchants were opening their bales of merchandise, Prince Ali took a walk into that quarter of the town where they sold precious stones, gold and silver work, brocades, silks, fine linens, and other choice and valuable merchandise, which was at Schiraz called the bezestein. It was a spacious and well-built place, arched over, and supported by large pillars; along the walls, within and without, were shops. Prince Ali soon rambled through the bezestein, and with admiration judged of the riches of the place by the prodigious quantities of most precious merchandise there exposed to view.

But among all the criers who passed backwards and forwards with several sorts of things to sell, he was not a little surprised to see one who held in his hand an ivory tube about a foot in length and about an inch thick, and cried it at thirty purses. At first he thought the crier mad, and to make sure, went to a shop, and said to the merchant, who stood at the door, 'Pray, sir, is not that man mad? If he is not, I am very much deceived.'

'Indeed, sir,' answered the merchant, 'he was in his right senses yesterday, and I can assure you he is one of the ablest criers we have, and the most employed of any when anything valuable is to be sold; and if he cries the ivory tube at thirty purses, it must be worth as much, or more, for some reason or other which does not appear. He will come by presently, and we will call him; in the meantime sit down on my sofa and rest yourself.'

Prince Ali accepted the merchant's obliging offer, and presently the crier passed by. The merchant called him by his name; and pointing to the prince, said to him, 'Tell that gentleman, who asked me if you were in your right senses, what you mean by crying that ivory tube, which seems not to be worth much, at thirty purses: I

should be very much amazed myself, if I did not know you were a sensible man.'

The crier, addressing himself to Prince Ali, said, 'Sir, you are not the only person that takes me for a madman on account of this tube; you shall judge yourself whether I am or no, when I have told you its peculiarity. First, sir,' pursued the crier, presenting the ivory tube to the prince, 'observe that this tube is furnished with a glass at both ends; by looking through one of them you see whatever object you wish to behold.'

'I am,' said the prince, 'ready to make you all proper reparation for the scandal I have thrown on you, if you will make the truth of what you say appear'; and as he had the ivory tube in his hand, he said, 'Show me at which of these ends I must look.' The crier showed him, and he looked through, wishing at the same time to see the sultan, his father. He immediately beheld him in perfect health, sitting on his throne, in the midst of his council. Afterwards, as there was nothing in the world so dear to him, after the sultan, as the Princess Nouronnihar, he wished to see her, and saw her laughing, and in a pleasant humour, with her women about her.

Prince Ali needed no other proof to persuade him that this tube was the most valuable thing, not only in the city of Schiraz, but in all the world; and he believed that, if he should neglect it, he would never meet again with such another rarity. He said to the crier, 'I am very sorry that I should have entertained so bad an opinion of you, but hope to make you amends by buying the tube, so tell me the lowest price the seller has fixed upon it. Come with me, and I will pay you the money.' The crier assured him that his last orders were to take no less than forty purses; and, if he disputed the truth of what he said, he would take him to his employer. The prince believed him, took him to the khan where he lodged, counted out the money, and received the tube.

Prince Ali was overjoyed at his bargain; and persuaded himself that, as his brothers would not be able to meet with anything so rare and marvellous, the Princess Nouronnihar would be his wife. He thought now of visiting the court of Persia incognito, and seeing whatever was curious in and about Schiraz, till the caravan with which he came returned back to the Indies. When the caravan was ready to set out, the prince joined them, and arrived without any accident or trouble at the place of rendezvous, where he found Prince Houssain, and both waited for Prince Ahmed.

Prince Ahmed took the road to Samarcand; and the day after his arrival there went, as his brothers had done, into the bezestein. He had not walked long before he heard a crier, who had an artificial apple in his hand, cry it at five-and-thirty purses. He stopped the crier, and said to him, 'Let me see that apple, and tell me what virtue or extraordinary property it has, to be valued at so high a rate.'

'Sir,' said the crier, putting it into his hand, 'if you look at the outside of this apple, it is very ordinary; but if you consider the great use and benefit it is to mankind, you will say it is invaluable. He who possesses it is master of a great treasure. It cures all sick persons of the most mortal diseases, fever, pleurisy, plague, or other malignant distempers; and, if the patient is dying, it will immediately restore him to perfect health; and this is done after the easiest manner in the world, merely by the patient smelling the apple.'

'If one may believe you,' replied Prince Ahmed, 'the virtues of this apple are wonderful, and it is indeed valuable: but what ground has a plain man like myself, who may wish to become the purchaser, to be persuaded that there is no deception or exaggeration in the high praise you bestow on it?'

'Sir,' replied the crier, 'the thing is known and averred by the whole city of Samarcand; but, without going any further, ask all these merchants you see here, and hear what they say; several of them would not have been alive this day if they had not made use of this excellent remedy. It is the result of the study and experience of a celebrated philosopher of this city, who applied himself all his life to the knowledge of plants and minerals, and at last performed such surprising cures in this city as will never be forgotten; but he died suddenly himself, before he could apply his own sovereign remedy, and left his wife and a great many young children behind him in very indifferent circumstances; to support her family, and provide for her children, she has

resolved to sell it.'

While the crier was telling Prince Ahmed the virtues of the artificial apple, a great many persons came about them, and confirmed what he said; and one among the rest said he had a friend dangerously ill, whose life was despaired of, which was a favourable opportunity to show Prince Ahmed the experiment. Upon which Prince Ahmed told the crier he would give him forty purses if he cured the sick person by letting him smell at it.

The crier, who had orders to sell it at that price, said to Prince Ahmed, 'Come, sir, let us go and make the experiment, and the apple shall be yours; it is an undoubted fact that it will always have the same effect as it already has had in recovering from death many sick persons whose life was despaired of.'

The experiment succeeded, and the prince, after he had counted out to the crier forty purses, and the other had delivered the apple to him, waited with the greatest impatience for the first caravan that should return to the Indies. In the meantime he saw all that was curious in and about Samarcand, especially the valley of Sogda, so called from the river which waters it, and is reckoned by the Arabians to be one of the four paradises of this world, for the beauty of its fields and gardens and fine palaces, and for its fertility in fruit of all sorts, and all the other pleasures enjoyed there in the fine season.

At last Prince Ahmed joined the first caravan that returned to the Indies, and arrived in perfect health at the inn where the Princes Houssain and Ali were waiting for him.

Prince Ali, who was there some time before Prince Ahmed, asked Prince Houssain, who got there first, how long he had been there; he told him three months: to which he replied, 'Then certainly you have not been very far.'

'I will tell you nothing now,' said Prince Houssain, 'but only assure you I was more than three months travelling to the place I went to.'

'But then,' replied Prince Ali, 'you made a short stay there.'

'Indeed, brother,' said Prince Houssain, 'you are mistaken: I resided at one place over four or five months, and might have stayed longer.'

'Unless you flew back,' replied Prince Ali again, 'I cannot comprehend how you can have been three months here, as you would make me believe.'

'I tell you the truth,' added Prince Houssain, 'and it is a riddle which I shall not explain till our brother Ahmed comes; then I will let you know what curiosity I have brought home from my travels. I know not what you have got, but believe it to be some trifle, because I do not see that your baggage is increased.'

'And pray what have you brought?' replied Prince Ali, 'for I can see nothing but an ordinary piece of carpet, with which you cover your sofa, and as you seem to make what you have brought a secret, you cannot take it amiss that I do the same.'

'I consider the rarity which I have purchased,' replied Prince Houssain, 'to excel all others whatever, and should not have any objection to show it you, and make you agree that it is so, and at the same time tell you how I came by it, without being in the least apprehensive that what you have got is better. But we ought to wait till our brother Ahmed arrives, that we may all communicate our good fortune to each other.'

Prince Ali would not enter into a dispute with Prince Houssain, but was persuaded that, if his perspective glass were not preferable, it was impossible it should be inferior, and therefore agreed to wait till Prince Ahmed arrived, to produce his purchase.

When Prince Ahmed came, they embraced and complimented each other on the happiness of meeting together at the place they set out from. Then Prince Houssain, as the elder brother, said, 'Brothers, we shall have time enough hereafter to entertain ourselves with the particulars of our travels: let us come to that which is of the greatest importance for us to know; let us not conceal from each other the curiosities we have brought home, but show them, that we may do ourselves justice beforehand and see to which of us the sultan our father may give the preference.

'To set the example,' continued Prince Houssain, 'I will tell you that the rarity which I have brought from my travels to the kingdom of Bisnagar, is the carpet on which I sit, which looks but ordinary and makes no show; but, when I have declared its virtues to you, you will be struck with admiration, and will confess you never heard of anything like it. Whoever sits on it as we do, and desires to be transported to any place, be it ever so far off, is immediately carried thither. I made the experiment myself before I paid down the forty purses, and when I had fully satisfied my curiosity at the court of Bisnagar, and had a mind to return, I made use of no other means than this wonderful carpet for myself and servant, who can tell you how long we were coming hither. I will show you both the experiment whenever you please. I expect you to tell me whether what you have brought is to be compared to this carpet.'

Here Prince Houssain ended, and Prince Ali said, 'I must own, brother, that your carpet is one of the most surprising things imaginable, if it has, as I do not doubt in the least, that property you speak of. But you must allow that there may be other things, I will not say more, but at least as wonderful, in another way; and to convince you there are, here is an ivory tube, which appears to the eye no more a rarity than your carpet. It cost me as much, and I am as well satisfied with my purchase as you can be with yours; and you will be so just as to own that I have not been cheated, when you know by experience that by looking at one end you see whatever you wish to behold. Take it,' added Prince Ali, presenting the tube to him, 'make trial of it yourself.'

Prince Houssain took the ivory tube from Prince Ali, and clapped that end to his eye which Prince Ali showed him, to see the Princess Nouronnihar, and to know how she was, when Prince Ali and Prince Ahmed, who kept their eyes fixed upon him, were extremely surprised to see his countenance change suddenly with extraordinary pain and grief. Prince Houssain would not give them time to ask what was the matter, but cried out, 'Alas! princes, to what purpose have we undertaken long and fatiguing journeys? In a few moments our lovely princess will breathe her last. I saw her in her bed, surrounded by her women and attendants, who were all in tears. Take the tube, behold for yourselves the miserable state she is in.'

Prince Ali took the tube out of Prince Houssain's hand and after he had looked, presented it to Prince Ahmed.

When Prince Ahmed saw that the Princess Nouronnihar's end was so near, he addressed himself to his two brothers, and said, 'Princes, the Princess Nouronnihar, the object of all our vows, is indeed at death's door; but provided we make haste and lose no time, we may preserve her life.' Then he took out the artificial apple, and showing it to the princes his brothers, said to them, 'This apple which you see here cost as much as either the carpet or tube. The opportunity now presents itself to show you its wonderful virtue. Not to keep you longer in suspense, if a sick person smells it, though in the last agonies, it restores him to perfect health immediately. I have made the experiment, and can show you its wonderful effect on the Princess Nouronnihar, if we make all haste to assist her.'

'If that is all,' replied Prince Houssain, 'we cannot make more haste than by transporting ourselves instantly into her room by the means of my carpet. Come, lose no time; sit down on it by me; it is large enough to hold us all three: but first let us give orders to our servants to set out immediately, and join us at the palace.'

As soon as the order was given, Prince Ali and Prince Ahmed went and sat down by Prince Houssain, and all three framed the same wish, and were transported into the Princess Nouronnihar's chamber.

The presence of the three princes, who were so little expected, frightened the princess's women and

attendants, who could not comprehend by what enchantment three men should be among them; for they did not know them at first, and the attendants were ready to fall upon them, as people who had got into a part of the palace where they were not allowed to come; but they presently recollected and found their mistake.

Prince Ahmed no sooner saw himself in Nouronnihar's room, and perceived the princess dying, than he rose off the tapestry, as did also the other two princes, and went to the bed-side, and put the apple under her nose. Some moments after, the princess opened her eyes, and turned her head from one side to another, looking at the persons who stood about her; she then rose up in the bed, and asked to be dressed, just as if she had awaked out of a sound sleep. Her women informed her, in a manner that showed their joy, that she was obliged to the three princes her cousins, and particularly to Prince Ahmed, for the sudden recovery of her health. She immediately expressed her joy to see them, and thanked them all together, and afterwards Prince Ahmed in particular, and they then retired.

While the princess was dressing, the princes went to throw themselves at the sultan their father's feet, and pay their respects to him. The sultan received and embraced them with the greatest joy, both for their return and for the wonderful recovery of the princess his niece, whom he loved as if she had been his own daughter, and who had been given over by the physicians. After the usual compliments, the princes presented each the curiosity which he had brought: Prince Houssain his carpet, which he had taken care not to leave behind him in the princess's chamber; Prince Ali his ivory tube, and Prince Ahmed the artificial apple; and after each had commended his present, when they put it into the sultan's hands, they begged him to pronounce their fate, and declare to which of them he would give the Princess Nouronnihar for a wife, according to his promise.

The Sultan of the Indies having kindly heard all that the princes had to say, without interrupting them, and being well informed of what had happened in relation to the Princess Nouronnihar's cure, remained some time silent, as if he were thinking what answer he should make. At last he broke silence, and said to them in terms full of wisdom, 'I would declare for one of you, my children, with a great deal of pleasure, if I could do so with justice; but consider whether I can. It is true, Prince Ahmed, the princess my niece is obliged to your artificial apple for her cure, but let me ask you, whether you could have been so serviceable to her if you had not known by Prince Ali's tube the danger she was in, and if Prince Houssain's carpet had not brought you to her so soon?

'Your tube, Prince Ali, informed you and your brothers that you were likely to lose the princess your cousin, and so far she is greatly obliged to you. You must also grant that that knowledge would have been of no service without the artificial apple and the carpet.

'And for you, Prince Houssain, consider that it would have been of little use if you had not been acquainted with the princess's illness by Prince Ali's tube, and Prince Ahmed had not applied his artificial apple. Therefore, as neither the carpet, the ivory tube, nor the artificial apple has the least preference one over the other, but, on the contrary, there is a perfect equality, I cannot grant the princess to any one of you, and the only fruit you have reaped from your travels is the glory of having equally contributed to restore her to health.

'If this be true,' added the sultan, 'you see that I must have recourse to other means to determine with certainty in the choice I ought to make among you, and as there is time enough between this and night, I will do it to-day. Go, and get each of you a bow and arrow, and repair to the great plain outside the city, where the horses are exercised. I will soon come to you, and I declare I will give the Princess Nouronnihar to him that shoots the farthest.

'I do not, however, forget to thank you all in general, and each in particular, for the presents you brought me. I have a great many rarities in my museum already, but nothing that comes up to the carpet, the ivory tube, and the artificial apple, which shall have the first place among them, and shall be preserved carefully, not only for show, but to make an advantageous use of them upon all occasions.'

The three princes had nothing to say against the decision of the sultan. When they were out of his presence, they each provided themselves with a bow and arrow, which they delivered to one of their officers, and went to the plain appointed, followed by a great concourse of people.

The sultan did not make them wait long; and as soon as he arrived, Prince Houssain, as the eldest, took his bow and arrow, and shot first. Prince Ali shot next, and much beyond him; and Prince Ahmed last of all; but it so happened, that nobody could see where his arrow fell; and, notwithstanding all the search of himself and everybody else, it was not to be found far or near. And though it was believed that he shot the farthest, and that he therefore deserved the Princess Nouronnihar, it was necessary that his arrow should be found, to make the matter evident and certain; so, notwithstanding his remonstrances, the sultan determined in favour of Prince Ali, and gave orders for preparations to be made for the wedding, which was celebrated a few days afterwards with great magnificence.

PRINCE AHMED AND THE FAIRY.

Prince Houssain would not honour the feast with his presence; he could scarcely endure to see the princess in the arms of Prince Ali, who, he said, did not deserve her better or love her more than himself. He left the court, and, renouncing all right of succession to the crown, turned dervish, and put himself under the discipline of a famous sheik, who had gained a reputation for his exemplary life, and had taken up his abode, together with his disciples, whose number was great, in an agreeable solitude.

Prince Ahmed did not assist at Prince Ali's and the Princess Nouronnihar's wedding, any more than his brother Houssain, but did not renounce the world as he had done. He could not imagine what had become of his arrow, so he stole away from his attendants, and resolved to search for it, that he might not have anything to reproach himself with. With this intention, he went to the place where the Princes Houssain's and Ali's were gathered up, and going straight forward from thence, looked carefully on both sides of him. He went so far, that at last he began to think his labour was in vain; yet he could not help going forwards, till he came to some steep, craggy rocks, which would have obliged him to return, had he been ever so anxious to proceed. They were situated in a barren country, about four leagues distant from whence he set out. When Prince Ahmed came near these rocks, he perceived an arrow, which he picked up, looked earnestly at it, and was in the greatest astonishment to find it was the same he shot. 'Certainly,' said he to himself, 'neither I nor any man living could shoot an arrow so far'; and finding it laid flat, not sticking into the ground, he judged that it had rebounded from the rock. 'There must be some mystery in this,' said he to himself again, 'and it may be to my advantage. Perhaps fortune, to make me amends for depriving me of what I thought the greatest happiness of my life, may have reserved a greater blessing for my comfort.' As these rocks were full of sharp points and crevices between them, the prince, full of these thoughts, entered a cavity, and looking about, cast his eyes on an iron door, which seemed to have no lock. He feared it was fastened; but pushing against it, it opened, and discovered an easy descent, but no steps. He walked down with his arrow in his hand. At first he thought he was going into a dark place, but presently a quite different light succeeded that which he had come out of. Coming upon a spacious square, fifty or sixty paces distant, he perceived a magnificent palace; but he had not time to look at it, for at the same moment a lady of majestic air, and of a beauty to which the richness of her clothes and the jewels which adorned her person added nothing, advanced as far as the porch, attended by a troop of ladies, of whom it was difficult to distinguish which was the mistress.

As soon as Prince Ahmed perceived the lady, he hastened to pay his respects; and the lady, on her part, seeing him coming, was beforehand with him. Raising her voice, she said, 'Come near, Prince Ahmed; you are welcome.'

It was no small surprise to the prince to hear himself named in a palace he had never heard of, though so near his father's capital, and he could not comprehend how he should be known to a lady who was a stranger to him. At last he returned the lady's salutation, by throwing himself at her feet, and rising up again, said to her, 'Madam, I return you a thousand thanks for welcoming me to a place where I had reason to believe my

imprudent curiosity had made me penetrate too far. But, madam, may I, without being guilty of rudeness, presume to ask you how you know me? and why you, who live in the same neighbourhood should be so little known by me?'

'Prince,' said the lady, 'let us go into the hall; there I will gratify your request.'

After these words, the lady led Prince Ahmed into the hall, the noble structure of which, and the gold and azure which embellished the dome, and the inestimable richness of the furniture, appeared to him so wonderful that he had never in his life beheld anything like it, and believed that nothing was to be compared to it. 'I can assure you,' replied the lady, 'that this is but a small part of my palace, and you will say so when you have seen all the apartments.' Then she sat down on a sofa; and when the prince at her entreaty had seated himself, she said, 'You are surprised, you say, that I should know you, and not be known by you; but you will no longer be surprised when I inform you who I am. You cannot be ignorant that the world is inhabited by genies as well as men: I am the daughter of one of the most powerful and distinguished of these genies, and my name is Pari Banou: therefore I know you, the sultan your father, the princes your brothers, and the Princess Nouronnihar. I am no stranger to your love or your travels, of which I could tell you all the circumstances, since it was I myself who exposed for sale the artificial apple which you bought at Samarcand, the carpet which Prince Houssain met with at Bisnagar, and the tube which Prince Ali brought from Schiraz. This is sufficient to let you know that I am not unacquainted with anything that relates to you. The only thing I have to add is, that you seemed to me worthy of a still better fortune than that of marrying the Princess Nouronnihar. I was present when you drew your arrow, and foresaw it would not go beyond Prince Houssain's. I took it in the air, and made it strike against the rocks near which you found it. It is in your power to avail yourself of this favourable opportunity.'

As the fairy Pari Banou pronounced these words Prince Ahmed began to consider that the Princess Nouronnihar could never be his, and that the fairy Pari Banou excelled her infinitely in beauty and agreeableness, and, so far as he could judge from the magnificence of the palace where she resided, in immense riches. 'Madam,' replied he, 'should I, all my life, have had the happiness of being your slave, I should think myself the happiest of men. Pardon me my boldness, and do not refuse to admit into your court a prince who is entirely devoted to you.'

'Prince,' answered the fairy, 'as I have been a long time my own mistress, and am not dependent on my parents' consent, it is not as a slave that I would admit you into my court, but as my husband, pledging your faith to me. I am, as I said, mistress here; and must add, that the same customs are not observed among fairies as among other ladies.'

Prince Ahmed made no answer, but was so full of gratitude that he thought he could not express it better than by coming to kiss the hem of her garment. 'Then,' answered the fairy, 'you are my husband, and I am your wife. But as I suppose,' continued she, 'that you have eaten nothing to-day, a slight repast shall be served up for you while preparations are making for our wedding feast this evening, and then I will show you the apartments of my palace, and you shall judge if this hall is the smallest part of it.'

Some of the fairy's women who came into the hall with them, and guessed her intentions, immediately went out, and returned presently with some excellent meat and wine.

When Prince Ahmed had eaten and drunk as much as he wanted, the fairy Pari Banou took him through all the rooms, where he saw diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and all sorts of fine jewels, intermixed with pearls, agate, jasper, porphyry, and all kinds of the most precious marbles; not to mention the richness of the furniture, everything was in such profusion, that the prince acknowledged that there could not be anything in the world that could come up to it. 'Prince,' said the fairy, 'if you admire so much my palace, which is indeed very beautiful, what would you say to the palaces of the chiefs of our genies, which are much more beautiful, spacious, and magnificent? I could also charm you with my garden; but we will leave that till another time.

Night draws near, and it will be time for supper.'

The next hall into which the fairy led the prince, where the cloth was laid for the feast, was the only room the prince had not seen, and it was not in the least inferior to the others. He admired the infinite number of wax candles perfumed with amber which formed an agreeable and pleasant sight. A large sideboard was set out with all sorts of gold plate, so finely wrought that the workmanship was much more valuable than the weight of the gold. Several beautiful women richly dressed, whose voices were ravishing, began a concert, accompanied with all kinds of the most harmonious instruments he had ever heard. When they had sat down to table, the fairy Pari Banou took care to help Prince Ahmed to most delicious meats, which the prince had never heard of, but found so nice that he commended them in the highest terms, saying that they far surpassed those among men. He found also the same excellence in the wines, which neither he nor the fairy tasted till the dessert was served up, which consisted of the choicest sweetmeats and fruits.

After the dessert, the fairy Pari Banou and Prince Ahmed rose from the table, which was immediately carried away, and sat on a sofa with cushions of fine silk, curiously embroidered with all sorts of large flowers, at their backs, and a great number of genie and fairies danced before them.

The days following the wedding were a continual feast, which the fairy Pari Banou, who could do it with the utmost ease, knew how to diversify by new dishes, new concerts, new dances, new shows, and new diversions; which were all so extraordinary, that Prince Ahmed, if he had lived a thousand years among men, could not have imagined.

At the end of six months, Prince Ahmed, who always loved and honoured the sultan his father, felt a great desire to know how he was; and as that desire could not be satisfied without his absenting himself to go and hear it in person, he mentioned it to the fairy, and desired she would give him leave.

This discourse alarmed the fairy, and made her fear it was only an excuse to leave her.

'My queen,' replied the prince, 'if you are offended at the leave I asked, I entreat you to forgive me, and I will make all the reparation I can. I did not do it with any intention of displeasing you, but from a motive of respect towards my father, whom I wish to free from the affliction in which my long absence must have overwhelmed him; indeed I have reason to think he believes me dead.'

'Prince,' said she, 'I am so fully convinced that I can depend upon your sincerity, that I grant you leave to go, on condition that your absence shall not be long.'

Prince Ahmed would have thrown himself at the fairy's feet, to show his gratitude; but she prevented him.

'Prince,' said she, 'go when you please; but first do not take it amiss if I give you some advice how you shall conduct yourself where you are going. First, I do not think it proper for you to tell the sultan your father of our marriage, nor what I am, nor the place where you are settled. Beg him to be satisfied with knowing that you are happy, and that you desire no more; and let him know that the sole end of your visit is to make him easy about your fate.'

She appointed twenty horsemen, well mounted and equipped, to attend him. When all was ready, Prince Ahmed took leave of the fairy, embraced her, and renewed his promise to return soon. Then his horse, which was as beautiful a creature as any in the Sultan of the Indies' stables, was brought, and he mounted him with an extraordinary grace, which gave great pleasure to the fairy, and after he had bid her a last adieu, set out on his journey.

As it was not a great way to his father's capital, Prince Ahmed soon arrived there. The people, glad to see him again, received him with acclamations, and followed him in crowds to the sultan's palace. The sultan received

and embraced him with great joy; complaining at the same time with a fatherly tenderness, of the affliction his long absence had been to him; which he said was the more grievous, since as fortune had decided in favour of Prince Ali his brother, he was afraid he might have committed some act of despair.

'Sir,' replied Prince Ahmed, 'your majesty knows that when I shot my arrow the most extraordinary thing that ever befell anybody happened to me, that in so large and level a plain it should not be possible to find my arrow. Though thus vanquished, I lost no time in vain complaints; but to satisfy my perplexed mind, I gave my attendants the slip, and returned back again alone to look for my arrow. I sought all about the place where Prince Houssain's and Prince Ali's arrows were found, and where I imagined mine must have fallen; but all my labour was in vain, until after having gone four leagues, to that part of the plain where it is bounded by rocks, I perceived an arrow. I ran and took it up, and knew it to be the same which I had shot. Far from thinking your majesty had done me any injustice in declaring for my brother Prince Ali, I interpreted what had happened to me quite otherwise, and never doubted but there was a mystery in it to my advantage; the discovery of which I ought not to neglect, and which I found out without going further from the spot. But as to this mystery, I beg your majesty to let me remain silent, and that you will be satisfied to know from my own mouth that I am happy and contented. This was the only motive which brought me hither; the only favour I ask of your majesty is to give me leave to come often and pay you my respects, and inquire after your health.'

'Son,' answered the Sultan of the Indies, 'I cannot refuse you the leave you ask me; but I would much rather you would resolve to stay with me. At least tell me where I may hear of you, if you should fail to come, or when I may think your presence necessary.'

'Sir,' replied Prince Ahmed, 'what your majesty asks of me is part of the mystery I spoke of. I beg of you to give me leave to remain silent on this head; for I shall come so frequently where my duty calls, that I am afraid I shall sooner be thought troublesome than be accused of negligence in my duty.'

The Sultan of the Indies pressed Prince Ahmed no more; but said to him, 'Son, I penetrate no further into your secrets, but leave you at your liberty. I can only tell you, that you could not do me a greater pleasure than to come and by your presence restore to me the joy I have not felt for a long time, and that you will always be welcome when you come.'

Prince Ahmed stayed but three days at the sultan his father's court, and on the fourth returned to the fairy Pari Banou, who received him with great joy, as she did not expect him so soon.

A month after Prince Ahmed's return from paying a visit to his father, as the fairy Pari Banou had observed that since the time that the Prince gave her an account of his journey and his conversation with his father, in which he asked his leave to come and see him from time to time, he had never spoken of the sultan, as if there had been no such person in the world, whereas before he was always speaking of him, she said to him one day, 'Tell me, prince, have you forgotten the sultan your father? Do you not remember the promise you made to go and see him from time to time? For my part, I have not forgotten what you told me at your return, and put you in mind of it. Pay him another visit to-morrow, and after that go and see him once a month, without speaking to me, or waiting for my leave. I readily consent.'

Prince Ahmed went the next morning with the same attendants as before, but much finer, and himself more magnificently mounted, equipped, and dressed, and was received by the sultan with the same joy and satisfaction. For several months he constantly paid him visits, and always in a richer and more brilliant equipage.

At last some viziers, the sultan's favourites, who judged of Prince Ahmed's grandeur and power by the figure he made, abused the liberty the sultan gave them of speaking to him, to make him jealous of his son. They represented to him that it was but common prudence to know where the prince had retired, and how he could afford to live at such a rate, since he had no revenue or income assigned him; that he seemed to come to court

only to brave him; and that it was to be feared he might stir up the people's favour and dethrone him.

The Sultan of the Indies was so far from thinking that Prince Ahmed could be capable of so wicked a design as his favourites would make him believe, that he said to them, 'You are mistaken; my son loves me, and I am assured of his tenderness and fidelity. Be it as it will, I do not believe my son Ahmed is so wicked as you would persuade me he is; however, I am obliged to you for your good advice, and do not doubt that it proceeds from a good intention.'

The Sultan of the Indies said this that his favourites might not know the impression their hints had made on his mind. He was, however, so much alarmed that he resolved to have Prince Ahmed watched, unknown to his grand vizier. For this end he sent for a sorceress, who was introduced by a private door into his room. 'My son Ahmed comes to my court every month; but I cannot learn from him where he resides, and I do not wish to force his secret out of him; but I believe you are capable of satisfying my curiosity, without letting him, or any of my court, know anything of the matter. You know that at present he is here with me, and is used to go away without taking leave of me, or any of my court. Go immediately out on the road, find out where he retires, and bring me word.'

The magician left the sultan, and knowing the place where Prince Ahmed found his arrow, went thither and hid herself near the rocks, so that nobody could see her.

The next morning Prince Ahmed set out by daybreak, without taking leave either of the sultan or of any of his court, according to custom. The magician, seeing him coming, followed him with her eyes, till all of a sudden she lost sight of him and his attendants.

The steepness of the rocks formed an insurmountable barrier to men, whether on horseback or on foot, so that the magician judged that there were but two ways; the prince had retired either into some cavern, or into some place underground, the abode of genies or fairies. When she thought the prince and his attendants were out of sight, she came out of the place where she had hidden herself, and went direct to the hollow where she had seen them go in. She entered it, and proceeded to the spot where it terminated in many windings, looking carefully about on all sides. But notwithstanding all her diligence she could perceive no opening, nor the iron gate which Prince Ahmed discovered. For this door was to be seen by and opened to none but men, and only to men whose presence was agreeable to the fairy Pari Banou, and not at all to women.

The magician, who saw it was in vain for her to search any further, was obliged to be satisfied with the discovery she had made, and returned to give the sultan an account. When she had told him what she had done, she added, 'Your majesty may easily understand, after what I have had the honour to tell you, that it will be no difficult matter to give you the satisfaction you desire concerning Prince Ahmed's conduct. To do this, I only ask time, and that you will have patience, and give me leave to do it without inquiring what measures I intend to take.'

The sultan was very well pleased with the magician's conduct, and said to her, 'Do as you think fit: I will wait patiently,' and to encourage her, he made her a present of a diamond of great value, telling her it was only an earnest of the ample reward she should receive when she had done him that important service, which he left to her management.

As Prince Ahmed, after he had obtained the fairy Pari Banou's leave to go to the Sultan of the Indies' court, never failed once a month, and the magician knew the time, she went a day or two before to the foot of the rock where she had lost sight of the prince and his attendants, and waited there with a plan she had formed.

The next morning Prince Ahmed went out as usual at the iron gate with the same attendants as before, and passed by the magician, whom he knew not to be such. Seeing her lie with her head on the rock, complaining as if she were in great pain, he pitied her, turned his horse about and went and asked her what was the matter,

and what he could do to relieve her.

The artful sorceress, without lifting up her head, looked at the prince, and answered in broken words and sighs, as if she could hardly fetch her breath, that she was going to the city, but on the way thither was taken with so violent a fever that her strength failed her, and she was forced to stop and lie down, far from any habitation, and without any hope of assistance.

'Good woman,' replied Prince Ahmed, 'you are not so far from help as you imagine. I am ready to assist you, and to convey you where you shall not only have all possible care taken of you, but where you will find a speedy cure; only get up, and let one of my people take you.'

At these words, the magician, who pretended illness only to know where the prince lived, did not refuse the kind offer he made her so freely, and to show her acceptance rather by action than by word, she made many affected efforts to get up, pretending that her illness prevented her. At the same time two of the prince's attendants alighted off their horses, helped her up, and set her behind another. They mounted their horses again, and followed the prince, who turned back to the iron gate, which was opened by one of his retinue who rode before. When he came into the outer court of the fairy's palace, without dismounting, he sent to tell her he wanted to speak to her.

The fairy Pari Banou came with all haste, not knowing what made Prince Ahmed return so soon. Not giving her time to ask him, he said, 'My princess, I desire you would have compassion on this good woman,' pointing to the magician, who was taken off the horse by two of his retinue: 'I found her in the condition you see, and promised her the assistance she stands in need of. I commend her to your care, and am persuaded that you will not abandon her.'

The fairy Pari Banou, who had her eyes fixed upon the pretended sick woman all the time that the prince was talking, ordered two of the women who followed her to take her from the two men that held her up, and carry her into the palace, and take as much care of her as they could.

Whilst the two women executed the fairy's commands, she went up to Prince Ahmed, and whispering in his ear said, 'Prince, I commend your compassion, which is worthy of you, but give me leave to tell you that I am afraid it will be but ill rewarded. This woman is not so ill as she pretends to be; and I am very much mistaken if she is not sent hither on purpose to cause you great trouble. But do not be concerned, let what will be devised against you; be persuaded that I will deliver you out of all the snares that may be laid for you. Go and pursue your journey.'

This discourse of the fairy's did not in the least alarm Prince Ahmed. 'My princess,' said he, 'as I do not remember I ever did, or designed to do, anybody an injury, I cannot believe anybody can have a thought of doing me one; but if they have, I shall not forbear doing good whenever I have an opportunity.' So saying, he took leave of the fairy, and set out again for his father's capital, where he soon arrived, and was received as usual by the sultan, who restrained himself as much as possible, to disguise the trouble arising from the suspicions suggested by his favourites.

In the meantime, the two women to whom the fairy Pari Banou had given her orders carried the magician into a very fine apartment, richly furnished. First they set her down upon a sofa, with her back supported with a cushion of gold brocade, while they made a bed, the quilt of which was finely embroidered with silk, the sheets of the finest linen, and the coverlid cloth of gold. When they had put her into bed (for the old sorceress pretended that her fever was so violent that she could not help herself in the least), one of the women went out and soon returned again with a china cup in her hand full of a certain liquor, which she presented to the magician, while the other helped her to sit up. 'Drink this,' said she, 'it is the water of the fountain of lions, and a sovereign remedy against all fevers whatsoever. You will find the effect of it in less than an hour's time.'

The magician, to dissemble the better, took it after a great deal of entreaty, as if she was very much averse to having it, but at last taking the china cup, and shaking her head, as if she did great violence to herself, swallowed the liquor. When she had lain down again, the two women covered her up. 'Lie quiet,' said she who brought her the china cup, 'and get a little sleep if you can; we will leave you, and hope to find you perfectly cured when we come an hour hence.'

The magician, who came not to act a sick part long, but only to discover Prince Ahmed's retreat, and what made him leave his father's court, being fully satisfied in what she wanted to know, would willingly have declared that the potion had had its effects then, so great was her desire to return to the sultan, and inform him of the success of her commission; but as she had been told that the potion did not operate immediately, she was forced to await the women's return.

The two women came again at the time they said they should, and found the magician up and dressed, and seated on the sofa; when she saw them open the door she cried out, 'Oh, the admirable potion! it has wrought its cure much sooner than you told me it would, and I have waited a long time with impatience, to desire you to take me to your charitable mistress to thank her for her kindness, for which I shall always be obliged to her. Being thus cured as by a miracle, I had rather not lose time, but continue my journey.'

The two women, who were fairies as well as their mistress, after they had told the magician how glad they were that she was cured so soon, walked before her, and conducted her through several apartments into a large hall, the most richly and magnificently furnished of all the palace.

Pari Banou was seated in this hall, on a throne of massy gold, attended on each hand by a great number of beautiful fairies, all richly dressed. At the sight of so much majesty, the magician was so dazzled, that after she had prostrated herself before the throne, she could not open her lips to thank the fairy, as she proposed. However, Pari Banou saved her the trouble, and said to her, 'Good woman, I am glad I had the opportunity of obliging you, and to see you are able to pursue your journey. I will not detain you, but perhaps you may not be displeased to see my palace; follow my women, and they will show it to you.'

The old sorceress, who had not power nor courage to say a word, prostrated herself a second time, with her head on the carpet that covered the foot of the throne, and so took her leave, and was conducted by the two fairies through all the apartments which were shown to Prince Ahmed on his first arrival there. But what surprised her most of all was, that the two fairies told her that all she saw and admired so much was a mere sketch of their mistress's grandeur and riches, and that in the extent of her dominions she had so many palaces that they could not tell the number of them, all of different architecture, equally magnificent and superb. They led her at last to the iron gate at which Prince Ahmed brought her in, and after she had taken her leave of them, and thanked them for their trouble, they opened it, and wished her a pleasant journey.

After the magician had gone a little way, she turned back again to observe the door and know it again, but all in vain, for, as was before observed, it was invisible to her and all other women. Except in this, she was very well satisfied with her work, and posted away to the sultan. When she came to the capital, she went by a great many by-ways to the private door of the palace. The sultan being informed of her arrival, sent for her into his apartment and perceiving a melancholy look on her countenance, he thought she had not succeeded, and said to her, 'By your looks I guess that you have not made the discovery I expected from you.'

'Sir,' replied the magician, 'your majesty must give me leave to represent that you ought not to judge by my looks whether or no I have acquitted myself well as regards the commands you were pleased to honour me with. The melancholy you observe proceeds from another cause than the want of success.'

Then the magician related to the Sultan of the Indies the whole story of all that happened from beginning to end.

When the magician had ended, she said, 'What does your majesty think of these unheard-of riches of the fairy? Perhaps you will say you rejoice at the good fortune of Prince Ahmed your son. For my part, sir, I beg of your majesty to forgive me if I take the liberty to say that I think otherwise, and that I shudder when I consider the misfortunes which may happen to you. And this is the cause of the melancholy which you perceived. I would believe that Prince Ahmed, by his own good disposition, is incapable of undertaking anything against your majesty; but who can say that the fairy, by the influence she already has over him, may not inspire him with a dangerous design of dethroning your majesty, and seizing the crown of the Indies? This is what your majesty ought to consider serious and of the utmost importance.'

Though the Sultan of the Indies was very sure that Prince Ahmed's natural disposition was good, yet he could not help being uneasy at the remarks of the old sorceress, and said, 'I thank you for the pains you have taken, and your wholesome caution. I am so aware of the great importance it is to me, that I shall take advice upon it.'

He had been consulting with his favourites, when he was told of the magician's arrival. He ordered her to follow him to them. He acquainted them with what he had learnt, and communicated to them also the reason he had to fear the fairy's influence over the prince, and asked them what measures they thought most proper to prevent so great a misfortune. One of the favourites, taking upon himself to speak for the rest, said, 'Your majesty knows who must be the author of this mischief. In order to prevent it, now that he is in your court, and in your power, you ought not to hesitate to put him under arrest: I will not say take away his life, for that would make too much noise; but make him a close prisoner while he lives.' This advice all the other favourites unanimously applauded.

The magician, who thought it too violent, asked the sultan leave to speak, which being granted, she said, 'Sir, I am persuaded that the zeal of your councillors for your majesty's interest makes them propose arresting Prince Ahmed: but they will not take it amiss if I suggest to your and their consideration, that if you arrest the prince, you must also detain his retinue. But they are all genies. Do they think it will be so easy to surprise, seize, and secure their persons? Will they not disappear, by the property they possess of rendering themselves invisible, and transport themselves instantly to the fairy, and give her an account of the insult offered to her husband? And can it be supposed she will let it go unrevenged? But it would be better, if, by any other means which might not make so great a noise, the sultan could secure himself against any ill designs Prince Ahmed may have against him, and not involve his majesty's honour. If his majesty has any confidence in my advice, as genies and fairies can do things impracticable to men, he will touch Prince Ahmed's honour, and engage him, by means of the fairy, to procure certain advantages. For example, every time your majesty takes the field you are obliged to go to a great expense, not only in pavilions and tents for yourself and army, but likewise in mules and camels, and other beasts of burden, to carry their baggage. Might you not request him to use his interest with the fairy to procure you a tent which might be carried in a man's hand, and which should be large enough to shelter your whole army?

'I need say no more to your majesty. If the prince brings such a tent, you may make a great many other demands of the same nature, so that at last he may sink under the difficulties and the impossibility of executing them, however fertile in invention the fairy who has enticed him from you by her enchantments may be; so that in time he will be ashamed to appear, and will be forced to pass the rest of his life with his fairy, excluded from any connection with this world; and then your majesty will have nothing to fear, and cannot be reproached with so detestable an action as the shedding of a son's blood, or confining him in a prison for life.'

When the magician had finished her speech, the sultan asked his favourites if they had anything better to propose; and finding them all silent, determined to follow the magician's advice, as the most reasonable and the most suited to his mild manner of government.

The next day, when the prince came into his father's presence and had sat down by him, after a conversation

on different subjects, the sultan said, 'Son, when you came and dispelled those clouds of melancholy which your long absence had brought upon me, you made the place you had chosen for your retreat a mystery to me. I was satisfied with seeing you again, and knowing that you were content with your condition, without wishing to penetrate into your secret, which I found you did not care I should. I know not what reason you had thus to treat a father. I know your good fortune; I rejoice with you, and very much approve of your conduct in marrying a fairy so worthy of your love, and so rich and powerful, as I am informed. Powerful as I am, it was not possible for me to have procured so great a match for you. Now that you are raised to so high a rank as to be envied by everybody but a father like me, I not only desire you to preserve the good understanding we have lived in hitherto, but to use all your credit with your fairy to obtain for me her assistance when I want it. I therefore will make a trial this day.

'I am persuaded you could easily procure from her a pavilion that might be carried in a man's hand, yet which would extend over my whole army; especially when you let her know it is for me. Though it may be a difficult thing, she will not refuse you. All the world knows that fairies are capable of doing the most extraordinary things.'

Prince Ahmed never expected that the sultan his father would have asked a thing which, at first sight, appeared to him so difficult, not to say impossible. Though he knew not absolutely how great the power of genies and fairies was, he doubted whether it extended so far as to furnish a tent such as his father desired. Moreover, he had never asked anything like it of the fairy Pari Banou, but was satisfied with her continual kindness; therefore he was in the greatest embarrassment what answer to make. At last he replied, 'If, sir, I have concealed from your majesty what happened to me and what course I took after finding my arrow, the reason was that I thought it was of no great importance to you to be informed of them; and though I know not how this mystery has been revealed to you, I cannot deny that your information is correct. I have married the fairy you speak of. I love her, and am persuaded she loves me. But I can say nothing as to the influence your majesty believes I have over her. It is what I have not yet made any experiment of or thought of, and should be very glad if you would dispense with my undertaking it, and let me enjoy the happiness of loving and being beloved with all the disinterestedness I proposed to myself. But the demand of a father is a command upon every child who, like me, thinks it his duty to obey him in everything. And though it is with the greatest reluctance imaginable, I will not fail to ask my wife the favour your majesty desires, but will not promise to obtain it; and if I should not have the honour to come again to pay you my respects, that shall be the sign that I have not had success: but I desire you to forgive me beforehand, and consider that you yourself have reduced me to this extremity.'

'Son,' replied the Sultan of the Indies, 'I should be very sorry that what I ask of you should prevent my ever seeing you again. Go, only ask her. Think with yourself, that as you love her, you could refuse her nothing; therefore, if she loves you, she will not deny your request.'

All this discourse of the Sultan of the Indies could not persuade Prince Ahmed, who would rather he had asked anything than the risk of displeasing his dear Pari Banou; and so great was his vexation, that he left the court two days sooner than usual.

When he returned, the fairy, to whom he had always before appeared with a cheerful countenance, asked him the reason of the alteration; and finding that instead of answering her, he inquired after her health to avoid satisfying her, she said to him, 'I will answer your question when you have answered mine.' The prince declined it a long time, protesting that nothing was the matter with him; but the more he denied it, the more she pressed him, and said, 'I cannot bear to see you in this condition: tell me what makes you so uneasy, that I may remove the cause of it, whatever it may be; for it must be very extraordinary if it is out of my power.'

Prince Ahmed could not long withstand the fairy. 'Madam,' said he, 'God prolong the sultan my father's life, and bless him to the end of his days. I left him alive, and in perfect health: therefore that is not the cause of the melancholy you perceive in me. The sultan has imposed upon me the disagreeable task of worrying you. You

know the care I have taken, with your approbation, to conceal from him my happiness at home with you. How he has been informed of it I cannot tell.'

Here the fairy Pari Banou interrupted Prince Ahmed, and said, 'But I know. Remember what I told you of the woman who made you believe she was ill, on whom you took so much compassion. It is she who has acquainted the sultan your father with what you took so much care to hide from him. I told you that she was no more sick than you or I, for, after the two women whom I charged to take care of her had given her the water sovereign against all fevers, which, however, she had no occasion for, she pretended that the water had cured her, and was brought to take leave of me, that she might go sooner to give an account of the success of her undertaking. She was in so much haste that she would have gone away without seeing my palace, if I had not, by bidding my two women show it her, given her to understand that it was worth her seeing. But go on and tell me what is the necessity your father has imposed on you which has made you feel troublesome to me, which I desire you will be persuaded you can never be.'

'Madam,' pursued Prince Ahmed, 'you may have observed that hitherto I have never asked you any favour, for what, after the possession of so kind a wife, can I desire more? I know how great your power is, but I have taken care not to make trial of it. Consider then, I beg you, that it is not me, but the sultan my father, who, indiscreetly, as I think, asks of you a pavilion large enough to shelter him, his court, and his army, from the violence of the weather, when he takes the field, and yet small enough for a man to carry in his hand. Once more remember it is not I, but the sultan my father who asks this favour.'

'Prince,' replied the fairy, smiling, 'I am sorry that so small a matter should disturb you, and make you so uneasy. I see plainly two things have contributed towards it: one is, the law you have imposed upon yourself, to be content with loving me and being beloved by me, and to deny yourself the liberty of asking me the least favour that might try my power. The other, I do not doubt, whatever you may say, was that you thought what your father asked of me was out of my power. As to the first, I commend you for it, and shall love you the better, if possible; and for the second, I must tell you that what the sultan your father asks of me is a trifle; and upon occasion, I can do much more difficult things. Therefore be easy, and persuaded that, far from feeling worried, I shall always take great pleasure in whatever you can desire me to do for your sake.' Then the fairy sent for her treasurer, to whom she said 'Nourgihan' (which was her name), 'bring me the largest pavilion in my treasury.' Nourgihan returned presently with a pavilion, which could not only be held but concealed in the palm of the hand when it was closed, and presented it to her mistress, who gave it to Prince Ahmed to look at.

When Prince Ahmed saw the pavilion, which the fairy called the largest in her treasury, he fancied she was joking, and his surprise appeared in his face. Pari Banou burst out laughing. 'What! Prince,' cried she, 'do you think I jest with you? You will see presently that I am in earnest. Nourgihan' said she to her treasurer, taking the tent out of Prince Ahmed's hands, 'go and set it up, that the prince may judge whether the sultan his father will think it large enough.'

The treasurer immediately went out from the palace, and carried it to such a distance that when she had set it up one end reached to the palace. The prince, so far from thinking it small, found it large enough to shelter two armies as numerous as that of the sultan his father; and then said to Pari Banou, 'I ask my princess a thousand pardons for my incredulity: after what I have seen, I believe there is nothing impossible to you.'

'You see,' said the fairy, 'that the pavilion is larger than your father may have occasion for; but you are to observe that it becomes larger or smaller, according to the army it is to cover, without being touched.'

The treasurer took down the tent again, reduced it to its first size, and brought it and put it into the prince's hands. He took it, and next day mounted his horse and went with the usual attendants to the sultan his father.

The sultan, who was persuaded that such a tent as he asked for was beyond all possibility, was in great surprise at the prince's diligence. He took the tent and admired its smallness. But when he had set it up in the

great plain, and found it large enough to shelter an army twice as large as he could bring into the field, his amazement was so great that he could not recover himself. As he thought this might be troublesome in use, Prince Ahmed told him that its size would always be proportionate to his army.

To outward appearance the sultan expressed great obligation to the prince his son for so noble a present, desiring him to return his thanks to the fairy Pari Banou; and to show what a value he set on it, he ordered it to be carefully laid up in his treasury. But within himself he became more jealous than ever; considering that by the fairy's assistance the prince his son might perform things that were infinitely above his own power, notwithstanding his greatness and riches; and, therefore, more intent upon his ruin, he went to consult the magician again, who advised him to request the prince to bring him some of the water of the fountain of lions.

In the evening, when the sultan was surrounded as usual by all his court, and the prince came to pay his respects among the rest, he said to him: 'Son, I have already expressed how much I am obliged to you for the present of the tent you have procured me, which I look upon as the most valuable thing in my treasury; but you must do one thing more for me. I am informed that the fairy your wife makes use of a certain water, called the water of the fountain of lions, which cures all sorts of fevers, even the most dangerous; and as I am perfectly sure that my health is dear to you, I do not doubt that you will ask her for a bottle of that water for me, and bring it me as a sovereign remedy, which I may make use of when I have occasion. Do me this service, and complete the duty of a good son towards a tender father.'

Prince Ahmed, who had believed that the sultan his father would have been satisfied with so singular and useful a tent as that which he had brought, and that he would not have imposed any new task upon him which might hazard the fairy's displeasure; was thunderstruck at this new request, notwithstanding the assurance she had given him of granting him whatever lay in her power. After a long silence, he said, 'I beg of your majesty to be assured that there is nothing I would not undertake to prolong your life, but I wish it might not be by means of my wife. For this reason I dare not promise to bring the water. All I can do is to assure you I will ask her; but it will be with as great reluctance as when I asked for the tent.'

The next morning Prince Ahmed returned to the fairy Pari Banou, and related to her sincerely and faithfully all that had passed at the sultan his father's court, from the giving of the tent, which he told her he received with the utmost gratitude, to the new request he had charged him to make, and when he had done, he added: 'but, my princess, I only tell you this as a plain account of what passed between me and my father. I leave you to your own discretion to gratify or reject this new desire. It shall be as you please.'

'No, no,' replied the fairy Pari Banou, 'whatever advice the magician can give him (for I see that he hearkens to her), he shall find no fault with you or me. There is a great deal of wickedness in this demand, as you will understand by what I am going to tell you. The fountain of lions is situated in the middle of a court of a great castle, the entrance into which is guarded by four fierce lions, two of which sleep while the other two are awake alternately. But let not that frighten you. I will give you means to pass by them without any danger.'

The fairy Pari Banou was at that time hard at work with her needle; and as she had by her several balls of thread, she took up one, and presenting it to Prince Ahmed, said, 'First take this ball of thread; I will tell you presently the use of it. In the second place, you must have two horses; one you will ride yourself, and the other you will lead, which must be loaded with a sheep cut into four quarters, and killed to-day. In the third place, you must be provided with a bottle, which I will give you, to bring the water in. Set out early to-morrow morning, and when you have passed the iron gate, throw before you the ball of thread, which will roll till it comes to the gates of the castle. When it stops, as the gates will be open, you will see the four lions. The two that are awake will, by their roaring, wake the other two. Be not frightened, but throw each of them a quarter of the sheep, and then clap spurs to your horse, and ride to the fountain. Fill your bottle without alighting, and then return with the same speed. The lions will be so busy eating that they will let you pass.'

Prince Ahmed set out the next morning at the time appointed by the fairy, and followed her directions

carefully. When he arrived at the gates of the castle, he distributed the quarters of the sheep among the four lions, and passing through the midst of them with haste, got to the fountain, filled his bottle, and returned as safe and sound as he went. When he was a little distance from the castle gates, he turned round; and perceiving two of the lions coming after him, he drew his sabre, and prepared for defence. But as he went forward, he saw one of them turned off the road, and showed by his head and tail that he did not come to do him any harm, but only to go before him, and that the other stayed behind to follow. He therefore put his sword again into its scabbard. Guarded in this manner he arrived at the capital of the Indies; but the lions never left him till they had conducted him to the gates of the sultan's palace; after which they returned the way they came, though not without frightening all that saw them, who fled or hid themselves, though they walked gently, and showed no signs of fierceness.

A great many officers came to attend the prince while he dismounted, and conducted him to the apartments of the sultan, who was at that time conversing with his favourites. He approached the throne, laid the bottle at the sultan's feet, kissed the rich carpet which covered the footstool, and rising, said, 'I have brought you, sir, the health-giving water which your majesty so much desired to keep in your treasury; but at the same time wish you such health that you may never have occasion to make use of it.'

After the prince had finished speaking, the sultan placed him on his right hand, and then said, 'Son, I am very much obliged to you for this valuable present; also for the great danger you have exposed yourself to upon my account, which I have been informed of by the magician who knows the fountain of lions; but do me the pleasure,' continued he, 'to tell me by what incredible power you have been preserved.'

'Sir,' replied Prince Ahmed, 'I have no share in the compliment your majesty is pleased to make me; all the honour is due to the fairy my wife; I merely followed her good advice.' The sultan showed outwardly all the demonstrations of joy, but secretly became more and more jealous, retired into an inner apartment, and sent for the magician.

After conferring with her, the sultan next day said to the prince, in the midst of all his courtiers, 'Son, I have one thing more to ask of you; after which, I shall expect nothing more from your obedience, nor your influence with your wife. This request is, to bring me a man not above a foot and a half high, whose beard is thirty feet long, who carries upon his shoulders a bar of iron of five hundredweight which he uses as a quarterstaff, and who can speak.'

Prince Ahmed, who did not believe that there was such a man in the world as his father described, would gladly have excused himself; but the sultan persisted in his demand, and told him that the fairy could do more incredible things.

Next day the prince returned to the subterranean kingdom of Pari Banou, to whom he told his father's new demand, which, he said, he looked upon as more impossible than the first two; 'for,' added he, 'I cannot imagine that there is or can be such a man in the world: either he has a mind to try whether I am silly enough to go and seek him; or if there is such a man, he seeks my ruin. How can he suppose that I should get hold of a man so small, armed as he describes? What arms could I make use of to reduce him to submission?'

'Do not affright yourself, prince,' replied the fairy; 'you ran a risk in fetching the water of the fountain of lions for your father; but there is no danger in finding this man. It is my brother, Schaibar, who is so far from being like me, though we both had the same father, that he is of so violent a nature that nothing can prevent his giving gory marks of his resentment for a slight offence; yet, on the other hand, he is so good as to oblige any one in whatever they desire. He is made exactly as the sultan your father has described him; and he has no other arms than a bar of iron five hundred pounds in weight, without which he never stirs, and which makes him respected. I will send for him, and you shall judge of the truth of what I tell you; and prepare not to be frightened when you see him.'

'What! my queen,' replied Prince Ahmed, 'do you say Schaibar is your brother? Let him be ever so ugly or deformed, I shall love and honour him, and consider him as my nearest relation.'

The fairy ordered a gold chafing-dish to be set with a fire in it under the porch of her palace, with a box of the same metal. Taking some incense out of this, and throwing it into the fire, there arose a thick cloud of smoke.

Some moments after, the fairy said to Prince Ahmed, 'Prince, here comes my brother; do you see him?'

The prince immediately perceived Schaibar, who was but a foot and a half high, coming gravely with his heavy bar on his shoulder; his beard, thirty feet long, supported itself before him, and a pair of thick moustaches were tucked up to his ears, almost covering his face: his eyes were very small, like a pig's, and sunk deep in his head, which was of an enormous size, and on which he wore a pointed cap: besides all this, he had a hump behind and before.

If Prince Ahmed had not known that Schaibar was Pari Banou's brother, he would not have been able to look at him without fear; but knowing beforehand who he was, he waited for him with the fairy, and received him without the least concern.

Schaibar, as he came forward, looked at the prince with an eye that might have chilled his soul in his body, and asked Pari Banou who that man was.

To which she replied: 'He is my husband, brother; his name is Ahmed; he is son to the Sultan of the Indies. The reason why I did not invite you to my wedding was that I was unwilling to divert you from the expedition you were engaged in, and from which I heard with pleasure that you returned victorious; on his account I have taken the liberty now to send for you.'

At these words, Schaibar, looking at Prince Ahmed with a favourable eye, which however diminished neither his fierceness nor his savage look, said, 'Is there anything, sister, in which I can serve him? he has only to speak. It is enough for me that he is your husband.'

'The sultan his father,' replied Pari Banou, 'has a curiosity to see you, and I desire he may be your guide to the Sultan's court.'

'He need but lead the way; I will follow him,' replied Schaibar.

'Brother,' replied Pari Banou, 'it is too late to go to-day, therefore stay till to-morrow morning; and in the meantime, as it is desirable that you should know all that has passed between the Sultan of the Indies and Prince Ahmed since our marriage, I will tell you this evening.'

Next morning, after Schaibar had been informed of all that was proper for him to know, he set out with Prince Ahmed, who was to present him to the sultan. When they arrived at the gates of the capital, the people no sooner saw Schaibar than they ran and hid themselves in their shops and houses, and shut their doors; while others took to their heels, and communicated their fear to all they met, who did not wait to look behind them, but ran too; insomuch that Schaibar and Prince Ahmed, as they went along, found all the streets and squares deserted, till they came to the palace, where the porters, instead of preventing Schaibar from entering, also ran away; so that the prince and he advanced without any obstacle to the council-hall, where the sultan was seated on his throne giving audience. Here likewise the officers, at the approach of Schaibar, abandoned their posts.

Schaibar, carrying his head erect, went fiercely up to the throne, without waiting to be introduced by Prince Ahmed, and accosted the Sultan of the Indies in these words:

'You have asked for me, see, here I am: what do you want with me?'

The sultan, instead of answering, clapt his hands before his eyes, and turned away his head, to avoid the sight of so terrible an object. Schaibar was so much provoked at this uncivil and rude reception, after the Sultan had given him the trouble to come so far, that he instantly lifted up his iron bar, and saying, 'Speak then,' let it fall on his head, and killed him before Prince Ahmed could intercede in his behalf. All that he could do was to prevent his killing the grand vizier, who sat not far from him on his right hand, representing to him that he had always given the sultan his father good advice.

'These are they then,' said Schaibar, 'who gave him bad advice;' and as he pronounced these words, he killed all the other viziers on the right and left, flatterers and favourites of the sultan, who were Prince Ahmed's enemies. Every time he struck, he killed some one or other, and none escaped but they who, not rendered motionless by fear, saved themselves by flight.

When this terrible execution was over, Schaibar came out of the council-hall into the midst of the court-yard with the iron bar on his shoulder, and looking at the grand vizier, who owed his life to Prince Ahmed, he said, 'I know there is a certain sorceress, who is a greater enemy of the prince my brother-in-law than all those base favourites I have chastised; let her be brought to me at once.' The grand vizier immediately sent for her, and as soon as she was brought, Schaibar said, knocking her down with his iron bar, 'Take the reward of thy pernicious counsel, and learn to feign illness again:' and left her dead on the spot.

After this he said, 'This is not enough; I will treat the whole city in the same manner, if they do not immediately acknowledge Prince Ahmed my brother-in-law for their sultan, and Sultan of the Indies.' Then all that were present made the air ring with the repeated acclamations of 'Long life to Sultan Ahmed'; and immediately afterwards he was proclaimed throughout the whole town Schaibar made him be clothed in the royal vestments, installed him on the throne, and after he had made all do homage and fidelity to him, went and fetched his sister Pari Banou, whom he brought with great pomp, and made her acknowledged Sultaness of the Indies.

As for Prince Ali and Princess Nouronnihar, as they had no hand in the conspiracy against Prince Ahmed, nor knew of any such conspiracy, Prince Ahmed assigned them a considerable province, with its capital, where they spent the rest of their lives. Afterwards he sent an officer to Prince Houssain to acquaint him with the change, and to make him an offer of whichever province he liked best; but that prince thought himself so happy in his solitude that he bade the officer return the Sultan his brother thanks for his kindness, assuring him of his submission; and saying that the only favour he desired was leave to live retired in the place he had made choice of for his retreat.

PRINCE CAMARALZAMAN AND THE PRINCESS OF CHINA.

About twenty days' sail from the coast of Persia, in the Islands of the Children of Khaledan, there lived a king who had an only son, Prince Camaralzaman. He was brought up with all imaginable care; and when he came to a proper age, his father appointed him an experienced governor and able tutors. As he grew up he learned all the knowledge which a prince ought to possess, and acquitted himself so well that he charmed all that saw him, and particularly the sultan his father.

When the prince had attained the age of fifteen years, the sultan, who loved him tenderly, and gave him every day new marks of his affection, had thoughts of giving him a still greater one, by resigning to him his throne, and he acquainted his grand vizier with his intentions. 'I fear,' said he, 'lest my son should lose in the inactivity of youth those advantages which nature and education have given him; therefore, since I am advanced in age, and ought to think of retirement, I have thoughts of resigning the government to him, and passing the remainder of my days in the satisfaction of seeing him reign. I have undergone the fatigue of a crown a long while, and think it is now proper for me to retire.'

The grand vizier did not wholly dissuade the sultan from such a proceeding, but sought to modify his intentions. 'Sir,' replied he, 'the prince is yet but young, and it would not be, in my humble opinion, advisable to burden him with the weight of a crown so soon. Your majesty fears, with great reason, his youth may be corrupted in indolence, but to remedy that do not you think it would be proper to marry him? Your majesty might then admit him to your council, where he would learn by degrees the art of reigning, and so be prepared to receive your authority whenever in your discernment you shall think him qualified.'

The sultan found this advice of his prime minister highly reasonable, therefore he summoned the prince to appear before him at the same time that he dismissed the grand vizier.

The prince, who had been accustomed to see his father only at certain times, without being sent for, was a little startled at this summons; when, therefore, he came before him, he saluted him with great respect, and stood with his eyes fixed on the ground.

The sultan perceiving his constraint, said to him in a mild way, 'Do you know, son, for what reason I have sent for you?'

The prince modestly replied, 'God alone knows the heart; I shall hear it from your majesty with pleasure.'

'I sent for you,' said the sultan, 'to inform you that I have an intention of providing a proper marriage for you; what do you think of it?'

Prince Camaralzaman heard this with great uneasiness: it so surprised him, that he paused and knew not what answer to make. After a few moments' silence, he replied, 'Sir, I beseech you to pardon me if I seem surprised at the declaration you have made to me. I did not expect such proposals to one so young as I am. It requires time to determine on what your majesty requires of me.'

Prince Camaralzaman's answer extremely afflicted his father. He was not a little grieved to see what an aversion he had to marriage, yet would not charge him with disobedience, nor exert his paternal authority. He contented himself with telling him he would not force his inclinations, but give him time to consider the proposal.

The sultan said no more to the prince: he admitted him into his council, and gave him every reason to be satisfied. At the end of the year he took him aside, and said to him, 'My son, have you thoroughly considered what I proposed to you last year about marrying? Will you still refuse me that pleasure I expect from your obedience, and suffer me to die without it?'

The prince seemed less disconcerted than before, and was not long answering his father to this effect: 'Sir, I have not neglected to consider your proposal, but after the maturest reflection find myself more confirmed in my resolution to continue as I am, so that I hope your majesty will pardon me if I presume to tell you it will be in vain to speak to me any further about marriage.' He stopped here, and went out without staying to hear what the sultan would answer.

Any other monarch would have been very angry at such freedom in a son, and would have made him repent it, but the sultan loved him, and preferred gentle methods before he proceeded to compulsion. He communicated this new cause of discontent to his prime minister. 'I have followed your advice,' said he, 'but Camaralzaman is further than ever from complying with my desires. He delivered his resolution in such free terms that it required all my reason and moderation to keep my temper. Tell me, I beseech you, how I shall reclaim a disposition so rebellious to my will?'

'Sir,' answered the grand vizier, 'patience brings many things about that before seemed impracticable, but it may be this affair is of a nature not likely to succeed in that way. Your majesty would have no cause to

reproach yourself if you gave the prince another year to consider the matter. If, in this interval he returns to his duty, you will have the greater satisfaction, and if he still continues averse to your proposal when this is expired, your majesty may propose to him in full council that it is highly necessary for the good of the state that he should marry, and it is not likely he will refuse to comply before so grave an assembly, which you honour with your presence.'

The year expired, and, to the great regret of the sultan, Prince Camaralzaman gave not the least proof of having changed his mind. One day, therefore, when there was a great council held, the prime vizier, the other viziers, the principal officers of the crown, and the generals of the army being present, the sultan began to speak thus to the prince: 'My son, it is now a long while since I have expressed to you my earnest desire to see you married; and I imagined you would have had more consideration for a father, who required nothing unreasonable of you, than to oppose him so long. But after so long a resistance on your part, which has almost worn out my patience, I have thought fit to propose the same thing once more to you in the presence of my council. I would have you consider that you ought not to have refused this, not merely to oblige a parent; the well-being of my dominions requires it; and the assembly here present joins with me to require it of you. Declare yourself, then; that, according to your answer, I may take the proper measures.'

The prince answered with so little reserve, or rather with so much warmth, that the sultan, enraged to see himself thwarted in full council, cried out, 'Unnatural son! have you the insolence to talk thus to your father and sultan?' He ordered the guards to take him away, and carry him to an old tower that had been unoccupied for a long while, where he was shut up, with only a bed, a little furniture, some books, and one slave to attend him.

Camaralzaman, thus deprived of liberty, was nevertheless pleased that he had the freedom to converse with his books, and that made him look on his imprisonment with indifference. In the evening he bathed and said his prayers; and after having read some chapters in the Koran, with the same tranquility of mind as if he had been in the sultan's palace, he undressed himself and went to bed, leaving his lamp burning by him all the while he slept.

In this tower was a well, which served in the daytime for a retreat to a certain fairy, named Maimoune, daughter of Damriat, king or head of a legion of genies. It was about midnight when Maimoune sprang lightly to the mouth of the well, to wander about the world after her wonted custom, where her curiosity led her. She was surprised to see a light in Prince Camaralzaman's chamber, and entered, without stopping, over the slave who lay at the door.

Prince Camaralzaman had but half-covered his face with the bedclothes, and Maimoune perceived the finest young man she had seen in all her rambles through the world. 'What crime can he have committed,' said she to herself, 'that a man of his high rank can deserve to be treated thus severely?' for she had already heard his story, and could hardly believe it.

She could not forbear admiring the prince, till at length, having kissed him gently on both cheeks and in the middle of the forehead without waking him, she took her flight into the air. As she mounted high to the middle region, she heard a great flapping of wings, which made her fly that way; and when she approached, she knew it was a genie who made the noise, but it was one of those that are rebellious. As for Maimoune, she belonged to that class whom the great Solomon compelled to acknowledge him.

This genie, whose name was Danhasch, knew Maimoune, and was seized with fear, being sensible how much power she had over him by her submission to the Almighty. He would fain have avoided her, but she was so near him that he must either fight or yield. He therefore broke silence first.

'Brave Maimoune,' said he, in the tone of a suppliant, 'swear to me that you will not hurt me; and I swear also on my part not to do you any harm.'

'Cursed genie,' replied Maimoune, 'what hurt canst thou do me? I fear thee not; but I will grant thee this favour; I will swear not to do thee any harm. Tell me then, wandering spirit, whence thou comest, what thou hast seen, and what thou hast done this night.'

'Fair lady,' answered Danhasch, 'you meet me at a good time to hear something very wonderful. I come from the utmost limits of China, which look on the last islands of this hemisphere. But, charming Maimoune,' said Danhasch, who so trembled with fear at the sight of this fairy that he could hardly speak, 'promise me at least that you will forgive me, and let me go on after I have satisfied your demands.'

'Go on, go on, cursed spirit,' replied Maimoune; 'go on and fear nothing. Dost thou think I am as perfidious an elf as thyself, and capable of breaking the solemn oath I have made? Be sure you tell nothing but what is true, or I shall clip thy wings, and treat thee as thou deservest.'

Danhasch, a little heartened at the words of Maimoune, said, 'My dear lady, I will tell you nothing but what is strictly true, if you will but have the goodness to hear me. The country of China, from whence I come, is one of the largest and most powerful kingdoms of the earth. The king of this country is at present Gaiour, who has an only daughter, the finest maiden that ever was seen in the world since it was a world. Neither you nor I, nor your class nor mine, nor all our respective genies, have expressions strong enough, nor eloquence sufficient to describe this brilliant lady. Any one that did not know the king, father of this incomparable princess would scarcely be able to imagine the great respect and kindness he shows her. No one has ever dreamed of such care as his to keep her from every one but the man who is to marry her: and, that the retreat which he has resolved to place her in may not seem irksome to her, he has built for her seven palaces, the most extraordinary and magnificent that ever were known.

'The first palace is of rock crystal, the second of copper, the third of fine steel, the fourth of brass, the fifth of touchstone, the sixth of silver, and the seventh of massy gold. He has furnished these palaces most sumptuously, each in a manner suited to the materials that they are built of. He has filled the gardens with grass and flowers, intermixed with pieces of water, water- works, fountains, canals, cascades, and several great groves of trees, where the eye is lost in the prospect, and where the sun never enters, and all differently arranged. King Gaiour, in a word, has shown that he has spared no expense.

'Upon the fame of this incomparable princess's beauty, the most powerful neighbouring kings sent ambassadors to request her in marriage. The King of China received them all in the same obliging manner; but as he resolved not to compel his daughter to marry without her consent, and as she did not like any of the suitors, the ambassadors were forced to return as they came: they were perfectly satisfied with the great honours and civilities they had received.'

'"Sir," said the princess to the king her father, "you have an inclination to see me married, and think to oblige me by it; but where shall I find such stately palaces and delicious gardens as I have with your majesty? Through your good pleasure I am under no constraint, and have the same honours shown to me as are paid to yourself. These are advantages I cannot expect to find anywhere else, to whatsoever husband I should give my hand; men love ever to be masters, and I do not care to be commanded."

'At last there came an embassy from the most rich and potent king of all. This prince the King of China recommended to his daughter as her husband, urging many powerful arguments to show how much it would be to her advantage to accept him, but she intreated her father to dispense with her accepting him for the same reasons as before, and at last lost all the respect due to the king her father: "Sir," said she, in anger, "talk to me no more of this or any other match, unless you would have me plunge this poniard in my bosom, to deliver myself from your importunities."

'The king, greatly enraged, said "Daughter, you are mad, and I must treat you as such." In a word, he had her shut up in a single apartment of one of his palaces, and allowed her only ten old women to wait upon her and

keep her company, the chief of whom had been her nurse. And in order that the kings his neighbours, who had sent embassies to him on this account, might not think any more of her, he despatched envoys to them severally, to let them know how averse his daughter was to marriage; and as he did not doubt that she was really mad, he charged them to make known in every court that if there were any physician that would undertake to come and cure her, he should, if he succeeded, marry her for his pains.

'Fair Maimoune,' continued Danhasch, 'all that I have told you is true; and I have not failed to go every day regularly to contemplate this incomparable beauty, to whom I would be very sorry to do the least harm, notwithstanding my natural inclination to mischief. Come and see her, I conjure you; it would be well worth your while; I am ready to wait on you as a guide, and you have only to command me. I doubt not that you would think yourself obliged to me for the sight of a princess unequalled for beauty.'

Instead of answering Danhasch, Maimoune burst out into violent laughter, which lasted for some time; and Danhasch, not knowing what might be the occasion of it, was astonished beyond measure. When she had laughed till she could laugh no more, she cried, 'Good, good, very good! you would have me believe all you have told me: I thought you intended to tell me something surprising and extraordinary, and you have been talking all this while of a mad woman. What would you say, cursed genie, if you had seen the beautiful prince that I have just come from seeing? I am confident you would soon give up the contest, and not pretend to compare your choice with mine.'

'Agreeable Maimoune,' replied Danhasch, 'may I presume to ask you who is this prince you speak of?'

'Know,' answered Maimoune, 'the same thing has happened to him as to your princess. The king his father would have married him against his will; but, after much importunity, he frankly told him he would have nothing to do with a wife. For this reason he is at this moment imprisoned in an old tower which I make my residence, and whence I came but just now from admiring him.'

'I will not absolutely contradict you,' replied Danhasch; 'but, my pretty lady, you must give me leave to be of opinion, till I have seen your prince, that no mortal upon earth can come up to the beauty of my princess.'

'Hold thy tongue, cursed sprite,' replied Maimoune. 'I tell thee once more that that can never be.'

'I will not contend with you,' said Danhasch; 'but the way to be convinced whether what I say is true or false is to accept the proposal I made you to go and see my princess, and after that I will go with you to your prince.'

'There is no need I should take so much pains' replied Maimoune; 'there is another way to satisfy us both; and that is for you to bring your princess, and place her in my prince's room; by this means it will be easy for us to compare them together and determine the dispute.'

Danhasch consented to what Maimoune had proposed, and determined to set out immediately for China upon that errand. But Maimoune told him she must first show him the tower whither he was to bring the princess. They flew together to the tower, and when Maimoune had shown it to Danhasch, she cried, 'Go, fetch your princess, and do it quickly, for you shall find me here: but listen, you shall pay the wager if my prince is more beautiful than your princess, and I will pay it if your princess is more beautiful than my prince.'

Danhasch left Maimoune, and flew towards China, whence he soon returned with incredible speed, bringing the fair princess along with him, asleep. Maimoune received him, and introduced him into the tower of Prince Camaralzaman, where they placed the princess still asleep.

At once there arose a great contest between the genie and the fairy about their respective beauty. They were some time admiring and comparing them without speaking: at length Danhasch broke silence, and said to Maimoune, 'You see, as I have already told you, my princess is handsomer than your prince; now, I hope, you

are convinced of it.'

'Convinced of it!' replied Maimoune; 'I am not convinced of it, and you must be blind if you cannot see that my prince is far handsomer. The princess is fair, I do not deny; but if you compare them together without prejudice, you will quickly see the difference.'

'Though I should compare them ever so often,' said Danhasch, 'I could never change my opinion. I saw at first sight what I see now, and time will not make me see differently: however, this shall not hinder my yielding to you, charming Maimoune, if you desire it.'

'Yield to me as a favour? I scorn it,' said Maimoune: 'I would not receive a favour at the hand of such a wicked genie; I refer the matter to an umpire, and if you will not consent I shall win by your refusal.'

Danhasch no sooner gave his consent than Maimoune stamped with her foot; the earth opened, and out came a hideous, humpbacked, squinting, and lame genie, with six horns on his head, and claws on his hands and feet. As soon as he had come forth, and the earth had closed up, he, perceiving Maimoune, cast himself at her feet, and then rising up on one knee asked her what she would please to do with him.

'Rise, Caschcasch,' said Maimoune, 'I brought you hither to determine a difference between me and Danhasch. Look there, and tell me, without partiality, which is the handsomest of those two that lie asleep, the young man or the young lady.'

Caschcasch looked at the prince and princess with great attention, admiration and surprise; and after he had considered them a good while, without being able to determine which was the handsomer, he turned to Maimoune, and said, 'Madam, I must confess I should deceive you and betray myself, if I pretended to say that one was a whit handsomer than the other: the more I examine them, the more it seems to me that each possesses, in a sovereign degree, the beauty which is betwixt them. But if there be any difference, the best way to determine it is to awaken them one after the other, and by their conduct to decide which ought to be deemed the most beautiful.'

This proposal of Caschcasch's pleased equally both Maimoune and Danhasch. Maimoune then changed herself into a gnat, and leaping on the prince's neck stung him so smartly that he awoke, and put up his hand to the place; but Maimoune skipped away, and resumed her own form, which, like those of the two genies, was invisible, the better to observe what he would do.

In drawing back his hand, the prince chanced to let it fall on that of the Princess of China, and on opening his eyes, was exceedingly surprised to perceive a lady of the greatest beauty. He raised his head and leaned on his elbow, the better to consider her. She was so beautiful that he could not help crying out, 'What beauty! my heart! my soul!' In saying which he kissed her with so little caution that she would certainly have been awaked by it, had she not slept sounder than ordinary, through the enchantment of Danhasch.

He was going to awaken her at that instant, but suddenly refrained himself. 'Is not this she,' said he, 'that the sultan my father would have had me marry? He was in the wrong not to let me see her sooner. I should not have offended him by my disobedience and passionate language to him in public, and he would have spared himself the confusion which I have occasioned him.'

The prince began to repent sincerely of the fault he had committed, and was once more upon the point of waking the Princess of China. 'It may be,' said he, recollecting himself, 'that the sultan my father has a mind to surprise me with this young lady. Who knows but he has brought her himself, and is hidden behind the curtains to make me ashamed of myself. I will content myself with this ring, as a remembrance of her.'

He then gently drew off a fine ring which the princess had on her finger, and immediately put on one of his

own in its place. After this he fell into a more profound sleep than before through the enchantment of the genies.

As soon as Prince Camaralzaman was in a sound sleep, Danhasch transformed himself, and went and bit the princess so rudely on the lip that she forthwith awoke, started up, and opening her eyes, was not a little surprised to see a beautiful young prince. From surprise she proceeded to admiration, and from admiration to a transport of joy.

'What,' cried she, 'is it you the king my father has designed me for a husband? I am indeed most unfortunate for not knowing it before, for then I should not have made him so angry with me. Wake then, wake!'

So saying, she took Prince Camaralzaman by the arm and shook him so that he would have awaked, had not Maimoune increased his sleep by enchantment. She shook him several times, and finding he did not wake, she seized his hand, and kissing it eagerly, perceived he had a ring upon his finger which greatly resembled hers, and which she was convinced was her own, by seeing she had another on her finger instead of it. She could not comprehend how this exchange could have been made. Tired with her fruitless endeavours to awaken the prince, she soon fell asleep.

When Maimoune saw that she could now speak without fear of awaking the princess, she cried to Danhasch, 'Ah, cursed genie dost thou not now see what thy contest has come to? Art thou not now convinced how much thy princess is inferior to my prince? But I pardon thee thy wager. Another time believe me when I assert anything.' Then turning to Caschcasch, 'As for you,' said she, 'I thank you for your trouble; take the princess, you and Danhasch, and convey her back whence he has taken her.' Danhasch and Caschcasch did as they were commanded, and Maimoune retired to her well.

Prince Camaralzaman on waking next morning looked to see if the lady whom he had seen the night before were there. When he found she was gone, he cried out, 'I thought indeed this was a trick the king my father designed to play me. I am glad I was aware of it.' Then he waked the slave, who was still asleep, and bade him come and dress him, without saying anything. The slave brought a basin and water, and after he had washed and said his prayers, he took a book and read for some time.

After this, he called the slave, and said to him, 'Come hither, and look you, do not tell me a lie. How came that lady hither, and who brought her?'

'My lord,' answered the slave with great astonishment, 'I know not what lady your highness speaks of.'

'I speak,' said the prince, 'of her that came, or rather, that was brought hither.'

'My lord,' replied the slave, 'I swear I know of no such lady; and how should she come in without my knowledge, since I lay at the door?'

'You are a lying rascal,' replied the prince, 'and in the plot to vex and provoke me the more.' So saying, he gave him a box on the ear which knocked him down; and after having stamped upon him for some time, he at length tied the well-rope under his arms, and plunged him several times into the water, neck and heels. I will drown thee,' cried he, 'if thou dost not tell me speedily who this lady was, and who brought her.'

The slave, perplexed and half-dead, said within himself, 'The prince must have lost his senses through grief.' 'My lord, then,' cried he, in a suppliant tone, 'I beseech your highness to spare my life, and I will tell you the truth.'

The prince drew the slave up, and pressed him to tell him. As soon as he was out of the well, 'My lord,' said he trembling, 'your highness must perceive that it is impossible for me to satisfy you in my present condition; I

beg you to give me leave to go and change my clothes first.'

'I permit you, but do it quickly,' said the prince, 'and be sure you conceal nothing.'

The slave went out, and having locked the door upon the prince, ran to the palace just as he was. The king was at that time in discourse with his prime vizier, to whom he had just related the grief in which he had passed the night on account of his son's disobedience and opposition to his will. The minister endeavoured to comfort his master by telling him that the prince himself had given him good cause to be angry. 'Sir,' said he, 'your majesty need not repent of having treated your son after this sort. Have but patience to let him continue a while in prison, and assure yourself his temper will abate, and he will submit to all you require.'

The grand vizier had just made an end of speaking when the slave came in and cast himself at the king's feet. 'My lord,' said he, 'I am very sorry to be the messenger of ill news to your majesty, which I know must create you fresh affliction. The prince is distracted, my lord; and his treatment to me, as you may see, too plainly proves it.' Then he proceeded to tell all the particulars of what Prince Camaralzaman had said to him, and the violence with which he had been treated.

The king, who did not expect to hear anything of this afflictive kind, said to the prime minister, 'This is very melancholy, very different from the hopes you gave me just now: go immediately, without loss of time, see what is the matter, and come and give me an account.'

The grand vizier obeyed instantly; and coming into the prince's chamber, he found him sitting on his bed in good temper, and with a book in his hand, which he was reading.

After mutual salutations, the vizier sat down by him, and said, 'My lord, I wish that a slave of yours were punished for coming to frighten the king your father.'

'What,' replied the prince, 'could give my father alarm? I have much greater cause to complain of that slave.'

'Prince,' answered the vizier, 'God forbid that the news which he has told your father concerning you should be true; indeed, I myself find it to be false, by the good temper I observe you in.'

'It may be,' replied the prince, 'that he did not make himself well understood; but since you are come, who ought to know something of the matter, give me leave to ask you who was that lady who was here last night?'

The grand vizier was thunderstruck at this question; however, he recovered himself and said, 'My lord, be not surprised at my astonishment at your question. Is it possible that a lady, or any other person in the world, should penetrate by night into this place, without entering at the door and walking over the body of your slave? I beseech you, recollect yourself, and you will find it is only a dream which has made this impression on you.'

'I give no ear to what you say,' said the prince, raising his voice; 'I must know of you absolutely what is become of the lady; and if you hesitate to obey me, I shall soon be able to force you to obey me.'

At these stern words the grand vizier began to be in greater confusion than before, and was thinking how to extricate himself. He endeavoured to pacify the prince by good words, and begged of him, in the most humble and guarded manner, to tell him if he had seen this lady.

'Yes, yes,' answered the prince, 'I have seen her, and am very well satisfied you sent her. She played the part you had given her admirably well, for I could not get a word out of her. She pretended to be asleep, but I was no sooner fallen into a slumber than she arose and left me. You know all this; for I doubt not she has been to make her report to you.'

'My lord,' replied the vizier, 'nothing of this has been done which you seem to reproach me with; neither your father nor I have sent this lady you speak of; permit me therefore to remind your highness once more that you have only seen this lady in a dream.'

'Do you come to affront and contradict me,' said the prince in a great rage, 'and to tell me to my face that what I have told you is a dream?' At the same time he took him by the beard, and loaded him with blows as long as he could stand.

The poor grand vizier endured with respectful patience all the violence of his lord's indignation, and could not help saying within himself, 'Now am I in as bad a condition as the slave, and shall think myself happy if I can, like him, escape from any further danger.' In the midst of repeated blows he cried out for but a moment's audience, which the prince, after he had nearly tired himself with beating him, consented to give.

'I own, my prince,' said the grand vizier, dissembling, 'there is something in what your highness suspects; but you cannot be ignorant of the necessity a minister is under to obey his royal master's orders; yet, if you will but be pleased to set me at liberty, I will go and tell him anything on your part that you shall think fit to command me.'

'Go then,' said the prince, 'and tell him from me that if he pleases I will marry the lady he sent me. Do this quickly, and bring me a speedy answer.' The grand vizier made a profound reverence, and went away, not thinking himself altogether safe till he had got out of the tower, and shut the door upon the prince.

He came and presented himself before the king, with a countenance that sufficiently showed he had been ill-used, which the king could not behold without concern. 'Well,' said the king, 'in what condition did you find my son?'

'Sir,' answered the vizier, 'what the slave reported to your majesty is but too true.' He then began to relate his interview with Camaralzaman, how he flew into a passion upon his endeavouring to persuade him it was impossible that the lady he spoke of should have got in; the ill-treatment he had received from him; how he had been used, and by what means he made his escape.

The king, the more concerned as he loved the prince with excessive tenderness, resolved to find out the truth of this matter, and therefore proposed himself to go and see his son in the tower, accompanied by the grand vizier.

Prince Camaralzaman received the king his father in the tower with great respect. The king sat down, and, after he had made his son the prince sit down by him, put several questions to him, which he answered with great good sense. The king every now and then looked at the grand vizier, as intimating that he did not find his son had lost his wits, but rather thought he had lost his.

The king at length spoke of the lady to the prince. 'My son,' said he, 'I desire you to tell me what lady it was that came here, as I have been told.'

'Sir,' answered Camaralzaman, 'I beg of your majesty not to give me more vexation on that head, but rather to oblige me by letting me have her in marriage: this young lady has charmed me. I am ready to receive her at your hands with the deepest gratitude.'

The king was surprised at this answer of the prince, so remote, as he thought, from the good sense he had shown before. 'My son,' said he to him, 'you fill me with the greatest astonishment imaginable by what you now say to me; I declare to you by my crown, that is to devolve upon you after me, I know not one word of the lady you mention; and if any such has come to you, it was altogether without my knowledge. But how could she get into this tower without my consent? For whatever my grand vizier told you, it was only to

appease you: it must therefore be a mere dream; and I beg of you not to believe otherwise, but to recover your senses.'

'Sir,' replied the prince, 'I should be for ever unworthy of your majesty's favour, if I did not give entire credit to what you are pleased to say; but I humbly beseech you at the same time to give a patient hearing to what I shall say to you, and then to judge whether what I have the honour to tell you be a dream or not.'

Then Prince Camaralzaman related to the king his father after what manner he had been awakened, and the pains he took to awaken the lady without effect, and how he had made the exchange of his ring with that of the lady: showing the king the ring, he added, 'Sir, your majesty must needs know my ring very well, you have seen it so often. After this, I hope you will be convinced that I have not lost my senses, as you have been almost made to believe.'

The king was so perfectly convinced of the truth of what his son had been telling him, that he had not a word to say, remaining astonished for some time, and not being able to utter a syllable.

'Son,' at length replied the king, 'after what I have just heard, and what I see by the ring on your finger, I cannot doubt but that you have seen this lady. Would I knew who she was, and I would make you happy from this moment, and I should be the happiest father in the world! But where shall I find her, and how seek for her? How could she get in here without my consent? Why did she come? These things, I must confess, are past my finding out.' So saying, and taking the prince by the hand, 'Come then, my son,' he said, 'let us go and be miserable together.'

The king then led his son out of the tower, and conveyed him to the palace, where he no sooner arrived than in despair he fell ill, and took to his bed; the king shut himself up with him, and spent many a day in weeping, without attending to the affairs of his kingdom.

The prime minister, who was the only person that had admittance to him, came one day and told him that the whole court, and even the people, began to murmur at not seeing him, and that he did not administer justice every day as he was wont to do. 'I humbly beg your majesty, therefore,' proceeded he, 'to pay them some attention; I am aware your majesty's company is a great comfort to the prince, but then you must not run the risk of letting all be lost. Permit me to propose to your majesty to remove with the prince to the castle in a little island near the port, where you may give audience to your subjects twice a week only; during these absences the prince will be so agreeably diverted with the beauty, prospect, and good air of the place, that he will bear them with the less uneasiness.'

The king approved this proposal; and after the castle, where he had not resided for some time, had been furnished, he removed thither with the prince; and, excepting the times that he gave audience, as aforesaid, he never left him, but passed all his time by his son's pillow, endeavouring to comfort him in sharing his grief.

Whilst matters passed thus, the two genies, Danhasch and Caschcasch, had carried the Princess of China back to the palace where the king her father had shut her up.

When she awoke the next morning, and found by looking to the right and left that Prince Camaralzaman was not by, she cried out with a loud voice to her women. Her nurse, who presented herself first, desired to be informed what she would please to have, and if anything disagreeable had happened to her.

'Tell me,' said the princess, 'what is become of the young man whom I love with all my soul?'

'Madam,' replied the nurse, 'we cannot understand your highness, unless you will be pleased to explain yourself.'

'A young man, the best and most amiable,' said the princess 'whom I could not awake; I ask you where he is?'

'Madam,' answered the nurse, 'your highness asks these questions to jest with us. I beseech you to rise.'

'I am in earnest,' said the princess, 'and I must know where this young man is.'

'Madam,' insisted the nurse, 'how any man could come without our knowledge we cannot imagine, for we all slept about the door of your chamber, which was locked, and I had the key in my pocket.'

At this the princess lost all patience, and catching her nurse by the hair of her head, and giving her two or three sound cuffs, she cried, 'You shall tell me where this young man is, old sorceress, or I will beat your brains out.'

The nurse struggled to get from her, and at last succeeded; when she went immediately, with tears in her eyes, to complain to the queen her mother, who was not a little surprised to see her in this condition, and asked who had done this.

'Madam,' began the nurse, 'you see how the princess has treated me; she would certainly have murdered me, if I had not had the good fortune to escape out of her hands.' She then began to tell what had been the cause of all that violent passion in the princess. The queen was surprised to hear it, and could not guess how she came to be so senseless as to take that for a reality which could be no other than a dream. 'Your majesty must conclude from all this, madam,' continued the nurse, 'that the princess is out of her senses. You will think so yourself if you go and see her.'

The queen ordered the nurse to follow her; and they went together to the princess's palace that very moment.

The Queen of China sat down by her daughter's bed-side, immediately upon her arrival in her apartment; and after she had informed herself about her health, she began to ask what had made her so angry with her nurse, that she should have treated her in the manner she had done. 'Daughter,' said she, 'this is not right; and a great princess like you should not suffer herself to be so transported by passion.'

'Madam,' replied the princess, 'I plainly perceive your majesty is come to mock me; but I declare I will never let you rest till you consent I shall marry the young man. You must know where he is, and therefore I beg of your majesty to let him come to me again.'

'Daughter,' answered the queen, 'you surprise me; I know nothing of what you talk of.' Then the princess lost all respect for the queen: 'Madam,' replied she, 'the king my father and you persecuted me about marrying, when I had no inclination; I now have an inclination, and I will marry this young man I told you of, or I will kill myself.'

Here the queen endeavoured to calm the princess by soft words. 'Daughter,' said she, 'how could any man come to you?' But instead of hearing her, the princess interrupted her, and flew out into such violence as obliged the queen to leave her, and retire in great affliction to inform the king of all that had passed.

The king hearing it had a mind likewise to be satisfied in person; and coming to his daughter's apartment, asked her if what he had just heard was true. 'Sir,' replied the princess, 'let us talk no more of that; I only beseech your majesty to grant me the favour that I may marry the young man. He was the finest and best made youth the sun ever saw. I entreat you, do not refuse me. But that your majesty may not longer doubt whether I have seen this young man, whether I did not do my utmost to awake him, without succeeding, see, if you please, this ring.' She then reached forth her hand, and showed the king a man's ring on her finger. The king did not know what to make of all this; but as he had shut her up as mad, he began to think her more mad than ever: therefore, without saying anything more to her, for fear she might do violence to herself or somebody

about her, he had her chained, and shut up more closely than before, allowing her only the nurse to wait on her, with a good guard at the door.

The king, exceedingly concerned at this indisposition of his daughter, sought all possible means to get her cured. He assembled his council, and after having acquainted them with the condition she was in, 'If any of you,' said he, 'is capable of undertaking her cure, and succeeds, I will give her to him in marriage, and make him heir to my dominions and crown after my decease.'

The desire of marrying a handsome young princess, and the hopes of one day governing so powerful a kingdom as that of China, had a strange effect on an emir, already advanced in age, who was present at this council. As he was well skilled in magic, he offered to cure the king's daughter, and flattered himself he should succeed.

'I consent,' said the king, 'but I forgot to tell you one thing, and that is, that if you do not succeed you shall lose your head. It would not be reasonable that you should have so great a reward, and yet run no risk on your part; and what I say to you,' continued the king, 'I say to all others that shall come after you, that they may consider beforehand what they undertake.'

The emir, however, accepted the condition, and the king conducted him to where the princess was. She covered her face as soon as she saw them come in, and cried out, 'Your majesty surprises me by bringing with you a man whom I do not know, and by whom my religion forbids me to let myself be seen.'

'Daughter,' replied the king, 'you need not be scandalized, it is only one of my emirs who is come to demand you in marriage.'

'It is not, I perceive, the person that you have already given me, and whose faith is plighted by the ring I wear,' replied the princess; 'be not offended that I will never marry any other.'

The emir expected the princess would have said or done some extravagant thing, and was not a little disappointed when he heard her talk so calmly and rationally; for then he understood what was really the matter. He dared not explain himself to the king, who would not have suffered the princess to give her hand to any other than the person to whom he wished to give her with his own hand. He therefore threw himself at his majesty's feet, and said, 'After what I have heard and observed, sir, it will be to no purpose for me to think of curing the princess, since I have no remedies suited to her malady, for which reason I humbly submit my life to your majesty's pleasure.' The king, enraged at his incapacity and the trouble he had given him, caused him immediately to be beheaded.

Some days afterwards, his majesty, unwilling to have it said that he had neglected his daughter's cure, put forth a proclamation in his capital, to the effect that if there were any physician, astrologer, or magician, who would undertake to restore the princess to her senses, he need only come, and he should be employed, on condition of losing his head if he miscarried. He had the same published in the other principal cities and towns of his dominions, and in the courts of the princes his neighbours.

The first that presented himself was an astrologer and magician, whom the king caused to be conducted to the princess's prison. The astrologer drew forth out of a bag he carried under his arm an astrolabe, a small sphere, a chafing dish, several sorts of drugs for fumigations, a brass pot, with many other things, and desired he might have a fire lighted.

The princess demanded what all these preparations were for.

'Madam,' answered the astrologer, 'they are to exorcise the evil spirit that possesses you, to shut him up in this pot, and throw him into the sea.'

'Foolish astrologer,' replied the princess, 'I have no occasion for any of your preparations, but am in my perfect senses, and you alone are mad. If your art can bring him I love to me, I shall be obliged to you; otherwise you may go about your business, for I have nothing to do with you.'

'Madam,' said the astrologer, 'if your case be so, I shall desist from all endeavours, believing that only the king your father can remedy your disaster.' So putting up his apparatus again, he marched away, very much concerned that he had so easily undertaken to cure an imaginary malady.

Coming to give an account to the king of what he had done, he began thus boldly: 'According to what your majesty published in your proclamation, and what you were pleased to confirm to me yourself, I thought the princess was distracted, and depended on being able to recover her by the secrets I have long been acquainted with, but I soon found that your majesty alone is the physician who can cure her, by giving her in marriage the person whom she desires.'

The king was very much enraged at the astrologer, and had his head cut off upon the spot. Not to make too long a story of it, a hundred and fifty astrologers, physicians, and magicians all underwent the same fate, and their heads were set up on poles on every gate of the city.

The Princess of China's nurse had a son whose name was Marzavan, and who had been foster-brother to the princess, and brought up with her. Their friendship was so great during their childhood, and all the time they had been together, that they treated each other as brother and sister as they grew up, even some time after their separation.

This Marzavan, among other studies, had from his youth been much addicted to judicial astrology, geomancy, and the like secret arts, wherein he became exceedingly skilful. Not content with what he had learned from masters, he travelled as soon as he was able to bear the fatigue, and there was hardly any person of note in any science or art but he sought him in the most remote cities, and kept company with him long enough to obtain all the information he desired, so great was his thirst after knowledge.

After several years' absence in foreign parts on this account, he returned to the capital city of his native country, China, where seeing so many heads on the gate by which he entered, he was exceedingly surprised; and coming home he demanded for what reason they had been placed there, but more especially he inquired after the princess his foster-sister, whom he had not forgotten. As he could not receive an answer to one inquiry without the other, he heard at length a general account with much sorrow, waiting till he could learn more from his mother, the princess's nurse.

Although the nurse, mother to Marzavan, was very much taken up with the princess, she no sooner heard that her dear son had returned than she found time to come out, embrace him, and converse with him a little. Having told him, with tears in her eyes, what a sad condition the princess was in, and for what reason the king her father had shut her up, he desired to know of his mother if she could not procure him a private sight of her royal mistress, without the king's knowing it. After some pause, she told him she could say nothing for the present, but if he would meet her the next day at the same hour, she would give him an answer.

The nurse knowing that none could approach the princess but herself without leave of the officer who commanded the guard at the gate, addressed herself to him, who she knew had been so lately appointed that he could know nothing of what had passed at the court of China. 'You know,' said she to him, 'I have brought up the princess, and you may likewise have heard that I had a daughter whom I brought up along with her. This daughter has since been married; yet the princess still does her the honour to love her, and would fain see her, but without anybody's perceiving her coming in or out.'

The nurse would have gone on, but the officer cried, 'Say no more; I will with pleasure do anything to oblige the princess; go and fetch your daughter, or send for her about midnight, and the gate shall be open to you.'

As soon as night came, the nurse went to look for her son Marzavan, and having found him, she dressed him so artificially in women's clothes that nobody could know he was a man. She carried him along with her, and the officer verily believing it was her daughter, admitted them together.

The nurse, before she presented Marzavan, went to the princess, and said, 'Madam, this is not a woman I have brought to you; it is my son Marzavan in disguise, newly arrived from his travels, and he having a great desire to kiss your hand, I hope your highness will admit him to that honour.'

'What! my brother Marzavan,' said the princess, with great joy: 'come hither,' cried she, 'and take off that veil; for it is not unreasonable, surely, that a brother and a sister should see each other without covering their faces.'

Marzavan saluted her with profound respect, when she, without giving him time to speak, cried out, 'I am rejoiced to see you returned in good health, after so many years' absence without sending the least account all the while of your welfare, even to your good mother.'

'Madam,' replied Marzavan, 'I am infinitely obliged to your highness for your goodness in rejoicing at my health: I hoped to have heard a better account of yours than what to my great affliction I am now witness of. Nevertheless, I cannot but rejoice that I am come seasonably enough to bring your highness that remedy of which you stand so much in need; and though I should reap no other fruit of my studies and long voyage, I should think myself fully recompensed.'

Speaking these words, Marzavan drew forth out of his pocket a book and other things, which he judged necessary to be used, according to the account he had had from his mother of the princess's illness. The princess, seeing him make all these preparations, cried out, 'What! brother, are you then one of those that believe me mad? Undeceive yourself and hear me.'

The princess then began to relate to Marzavan all the particulars of her story, without omitting the least circumstance, even to the ring which was exchanged for hers, and which she showed him.

After the princess had done speaking, Marzavan, filled with wonder and astonishment, continued for some time with his eyes fixed on the ground, without speaking a word; but at length he lifted up his head and said, 'If it be as your highness says, which I do not in the least doubt, I do not despair of procuring you the satisfaction you desire; but I must first entreat your highness to arm yourself with patience for some time longer, till I shall return after I have travelled over kingdoms which I have not yet visited; and when you hear of my return, be assured that the object of your wishes is not far off.' So saying, Marzavan took leave of the princess, and set out next morning on his intended journey.

He travelled from city to city, from province to province, and from island to island, and in every place he passed through he could hear of nothing but the Princess Badoura (which was the Princess of China's name), and her history.

About four months afterwards, Marzavan arrived at Torf, a seaport town, great and populous, where he no more heard of the Princess Badoura, but where all the talk was of Prince Camaralzaman, who was ill, and whose history very much resembled hers. Marzavan was extremely delighted to hear this, and informed himself of the place where the prince was to be found. There were two ways to it; one by land and sea, the other by sea only, which was the shortest way.

Marzavan chose the latter, and embarking on board a merchant ship, he arrived safe in sight of the capital; but, just before it entered the port, the ship struck against a rock through the unskilfulness of the pilot, and foundered. It went down in sight of Prince Camaralzaman's castle, where were at that time the king and his grand vizier.

Marzavan could swim very well, and immediately on the ship's sinking cast himself into the sea, and got safe to the shore under the castle, where he was soon relieved by the grand vizier's order. After he had changed his clothes and been well treated, and had recovered, he was introduced to the grand vizier, who had sent for him.

Marzavan being a young man of good air and address, this minister received him very civilly; and when he heard him give such just and fitting answers to what was asked of him, conceived a great esteem for him. He also gradually perceived that he possessed a great deal of knowledge, and therefore said to him, 'From what I can understand, I perceive you are no common man; you have travelled a great way: would to God you had learned any secret for curing a certain sick person, who has greatly afflicted this court for a long while!'

Marzavan replied that if he knew what malady it was, he might perhaps find a remedy for it.

Then the grand vizier related to him the whole story of Prince Camaralzaman from its origin, and concealed nothing; his birth, his education, the inclination the king his father had to see him married early, his resistance and extraordinary aversion to marriage, his disobeying his father in full council, his imprisonment, his pretended extravagancies in prison, which were afterwards changed into a violent madness for a certain unknown lady, who, he pretended, had exchanged a ring with him; though, for his part, he verily believed there was no such person in the world.

Marzavan gave great attention to all the grand vizier said; and was infinitely rejoiced to find that, by means of his shipwreck, he had so fortunately lighted on the person he was looking after. He saw no reason to doubt that Prince Camaralzaman was the man, and the Princess of China the lady; therefore, without explaining himself further to the vizier, he desired to see him, that he might be better able to judge of his illness and its cure. 'Follow me,' said the grand vizier, 'and you will find the king with him, who has already desired that I should introduce you.'

The first thing that struck Marzavan on entering the prince's chamber was to find him upon his bed languishing, and with his eyes shut. Although he saw him in that condition, and although the king his father was sitting by him, he could not help crying out, 'Was there ever a greater resemblance!' He meant to the Princess of China; for it seems the princess and prince were much alike.

The words of Marzavan excited the prince's curiosity so far that he opened his eyes and looked at him. Marzavan, who had a ready wit, laid hold of that opportunity, and made his compliment in verse extempore: but in such a disguised manner, that neither the king nor grand vizier understood anything of the matter. However, he represented so nicely what had happened to him with the Princess of China, that the prince had no reason to doubt that he knew her, and could give him tidings of her. This made him so joyful, that the effects of it showed themselves in his eyes and looks.

After Marzavan had finished his compliment in verse which surprised Prince Camaralzaman so agreeably, his highness took the liberty to make a sign to the king his father, to go from the place where he was, and let Marzavan sit by him.

The king, overjoyed at this alteration, which gave him hopes of his son's speedy recovery, quitted his place, and taking Marzavan by the hand, led him to it. Then his majesty demanded of him who he was, and whence he came. And upon Marzavan's answering that he was a subject of China and came from that kingdom, the king cried out, 'Heaven grant that you may be able to cure my son of this profound melancholy, and I shall be eternally obliged to you; all the world shall see how handsomely I will reward you.' Having said thus, he left the prince to converse at full liberty with the stranger, whilst he went and rejoiced with the grand vizier.

Marzavan leaning down to the prince, spoke low in his ear, thus: 'Prince,' said he, 'it is time you should cease to grieve. The lady for whom you suffer is the Princess Badoura, daughter of Gaiour, King of China. This I can assure your highness from what she has told me of her adventure, and what I have learned of yours. She

has suffered no less on your account than you have on hers.' Here he began to relate all that he knew of the princess's story, from the night of their extraordinary interview.

He omitted not to acquaint him how the king had treated those who had failed in their pretensions to cure the princess of her indisposition. 'But your highness is the only person,' added he, 'that can cure her effectually, and may present yourself without fear. However, before you undertake so great a voyage, I would have you perfectly recovered, and then we will take such measures as are necessary. Think then immediately of the recovery of your health.'

This discourse had a marvellous effect on the prince. He found such great relief that he felt he had strength to rise, and begged leave of his father to dress himself, with such an air as gave the old king incredible pleasure.

The king could not refrain from embracing Marzavan, without inquiring into the means he had used to produce this wonderful effect, and soon after went out of the prince's chamber with the grand vizier to publish this agreeable news. He ordered public rejoicings for several days together, and gave great largesses to his officers and the people, alms to the poor, and caused the prisoners to be set at liberty throughout his kingdom. The joy was soon general in the capital and every corner of his dominions.

Prince Camaralzaman, though extremely weakened by almost continual want of sleep and long abstinence from almost all food, soon recovered his health. When he found himself in a condition to undertake the voyage, he took Marzavan aside, and said, 'Dear Marzavan, it is now time to perform the promise you have made me. I burn with impatience to see the charming princess, and if we do not set out on our journey immediately I shall soon relapse into my former condition. One thing still troubles me,' continued he, 'and that is the difficulty I shall meet with in getting leave of my father to go. This would be a cruel disappointment to me, if you do not contrive a way to prevent it. You see he scarcely ever leaves me.'

At these words the prince fell to weeping: and Marzavan said, 'I foresaw this difficulty; let not your highness be grieved at that, for I will undertake to prevent it. My principal design in this voyage was to deliver the Princess of China from her malady, and this from all the reasons of mutual affection which we have borne to each other from our birth, besides the zeal and affection I otherwise owe her; and I should be wanting in my duty to her, if I did not do my best endeavour to effect her cure and yours, and exert my utmost skill. This then is the means I have contrived to obtain your liberty. You have not stirred abroad for some time, therefore let the king your father understand you have a mind to take the air, and ask his leave to go out on a hunting party for two or three days with me. No doubt he will grant your request; when he has done so, order two good horses to be got ready, one to mount, the other to change, and leave the rest to me.'

Next day Prince Camaralzarnan took his opportunity. He told the king he was desirous to take the air, and, if he pleased, would go and hunt for two or three days with Marzavan. The king gave his consent, but bade him be sure not to stay out above one night, since too much exercise at first might impair his health, and a too long absence create his majesty uneasiness. He then ordered him to choose the best horses in his stable, and himself took particular care that nothing should be wanting. When all was ready, his majesty embraced the prince, and having recommended the care of him to Marzavan, he let him go. Prince Camaralzaman and Marzavan were soon mounted, when, to amuse the two grooms that led the fresh horses, they made as if they would hunt, and so got as far off the city and out of the road as was possible. When night began to approach, they alighted at a caravansera or inn, where they supped, and slept till about midnight; then Marzavan awakened the prince without awakening the grooms, and desired his highness to let him have his suit, and to take another for himself, which was brought in his baggage. Thus equipped, they mounted the fresh horses, and after Marzavan had taken one of the groom's horses by the bridle, they set out as hard as their horses could go.

At daybreak they were in a forest, where, coming to the meeting of four roads, Marzavan desired the prince to wait for him a little, and went into the forest. He then killed the groom's horse, and after having torn the prince's suit, which he had put off, he besmeared it with blood and threw it into the highway.

The prince demanded his reason for what he had done. He told his highness he was sure the king his father would no sooner find that he did not return, and come to know that he had departed without the grooms, than he would suspect something, and immediately send people in quest of them. 'They that come to this place,' said he, 'and find these blood-stained clothes, will conclude you are devoured by wild beasts, and that I have escaped to avoid the king's anger. The king, persuading himself that you are dead will stop further pursuit, and we may have leisure to continue our journey without fear of being followed. I must confess,' continued Marzavan, 'that this is a violent way of proceeding, to alarm an old father with the death of his son, whom he loves so passionately; but his joy will be the greater when he hears you are alive and happy.'

'Brave Marzavan,' replied the prince,' I cannot but approve such an ingenious stratagem, or sufficiently admire your conduct: I am under fresh obligations to you for it.'

The prince and Marzavan, well provided with cash for their expenses, continued their journey both by land and sea, and found no other obstacle but the length of time which it necessarily took up. They, however, arrived at length at the capital of China, where Marzavan, instead of going to his lodgings, carried the prince to a public inn. They tarried there incognito for three days to rest themselves after the fatigue of the voyage; during which time Marzavan caused an astrologer's dress to be made for the prince. The three days being expired, the prince put on his astrologer's habit; and Marzavan left him to go and acquaint his mother, the Princess Badoura's nurse, of his arrival, to the end that she might inform the Princess.

Prince Camaralzaman, instructed by Marzavan as to what he was to do, and provided with all he wanted as an astrologer, came next morning to the gate of the king's palace, before the guards and porters, and cried aloud, 'I am an astrologer, and am come to effect a cure on the estimable Princess Badoura, daughter of the most high and mighty monarch Gaiour, King of China, on the conditions proposed by his majesty, to marry her if I succeed, or else to lose my life for my fruitless and presumptuous attempt.'

Besides the guards and porters at the gate, this drew together a great number of people about Prince Camaralzaman. No physician, astrologer, nor magician had appeared for a long time, deterred by the many tragic examples of ill success that appeared before their eyes; it was therefore thought that there were no more men of these professions in the world, or that there were no more so mad as those that had gone before them.

The prince's good mien, noble air, and blooming youth made everybody that saw him pity him. 'What mean you, sir,' said some that were nearest to him, 'thus to expose a life of such promising expectation to certain death? Cannot the heads you see on all the gates of this city deter you from such an undertaking? Consider what you do: abandon this rash attempt, and be gone.'

The prince continued firm, notwithstanding all these remonstrances; and as he saw nobody come to introduce him, he repeated the same cry with a boldness that made everybody tremble. Then they all cried, 'Let him alone, he is resolved to die; God have mercy upon his youth and his soul!' He then proceeded to cry out a third time in the same manner, when the grand vizier came in person, and introduced him to the King of China.

As soon as the prince came into the king's presence, he bowed and kissed the ground. The king, who, of all that had hitherto presumptuously exposed their lives on this occasion, had not seen one worthy to cast his eyes upon, felt real compassion for Prince Camaralzaman on account of the danger he was about to undergo. But as he thought him more deserving than ordinary, he showed him more honour, and made him come and sit by him. 'Young man,' said he, 'I can hardly believe that you, at this age, can have acquired experience enough to dare attempt the cure of my daughter. I wish you may succeed; and would give her to you in marriage with all my heart, with the greatest joy, more willingly than I should have done to others that have offered themselves before you; but I must declare to you at the same time, with great concern, that if you do not succeed in your attempt, notwithstanding your noble appearance and your youth you must lose your head.'

'Sir,' replied the prince, 'I am under infinite obligations to your majesty for the honour you design me, and the

great goodness you show to a stranger; but I desire your majesty to believe that I would not have come from so remote a country as I have done, the name of which perhaps may be unknown in your dominions, if I had not been certain of the cure I propose. What would not the world say of my fickleness, if, after such great fatigues and dangers as I have undergone on this account, I should abandon the enterprise? Even your majesty would soon lose that esteem you have conceived for me. If I must die, sir, I shall die with the satisfaction of not having lost your esteem after I have merited it. I beseech your majesty therefore to keep me no longer impatient to display the certainty of my art.'

Then the king commanded the officer who had the custody of the princess to introduce Prince Camaralzaman into her apartment: but before he would let him go, he reminded him once more that he was at liberty to renounce his design; yet the prince paid no heed, but, with astonishing resolution and eagerness, followed the officer.

When they came to a long gallery, at the end of which was the princess's apartment, the prince, who saw himself so near the object of the wishes which had occasioned him so many tears, pushed on, and got before the officer.

The officer, redoubling his pace, with much ado got up with him. 'Whither away so fast?' cried he, taking him by the arm; 'you cannot get in without me: and it would seem that you have a great desire for death thus to run to it headlong. Not one of all those many astrologers and magicians I have introduced before made such haste as yourself to a place whither I fear you will come but too soon.'

'Friend,' replied the Prince, looking earnestly at the officer, and continuing his pace, 'this was because none of the astrologers you speak of were so sure of their art as I am of mine: they were certain, indeed, that they would die if they did not succeed, but they had no certainty of their success. On this account they had reason to tremble on approaching the place whither I go, and where I am sure to find my happiness.' He had just spoken these words as he was at the door. The officer opened it, and introduced him into a great hall, whence was an entrance into the princess's chamber, divided from it only by a piece of tapestry.

Prince Camaralzaman stopt before he entered, speaking softly to the officer for fear of being heard in the princess's chamber. 'To convince you,' said he, 'that there is neither presumption, nor whim, nor youthful conceit in my undertaking, I leave it to your own desire whether I should cure the princess in your presence, or where we are, without going any further?'

The officer was amazed to hear the prince talk to him with such confidence: he left off insulting him, and said seriously, 'It is no matter whether you do it here or there, provided the business is done: cure her how you will, you will get immortal honour by it, not only in this court, but over all the world.'

The prince replied, 'It will be best then to cure her without seeing her, that you may be witness of my skill: notwithstanding my impatience to see a princess of her rank, who is to be my wife, yet, out of respect to you, I will deprive myself of that pleasure for a little while.' He was furnished with everything suitable for an astrologer to carry about him; and taking pen, ink, and paper out of his pocket, he wrote a letter to the princess.

When the prince had finished his letter, he folded it up, and enclosed in it the princess's ring, without letting the officer see what he did. When he had sealed it, he gave it to him: 'There, friend,' said he, 'carry it to your mistress; if it does not cure her as soon as she reads it, and sees what is inclosed in it, I give you leave to tell everybody that I am the most ignorant and impudent astrologer that ever was, is, or shall be.'

The officer, entering the Princess of China's chamber, gave her the packet he received from Prince Camaralzaman. 'Madam,' said he, 'the boldest astrologer that ever lived, if I am not mistaken, has arrived here, and pretends that on reading this letter and seeing what is in it you will be cured; I wish he may prove neither

a liar nor an impostor.'

The Princess Badoura took the letter, and opened it with a great deal of indifference, but when she saw the ring, she had not patience to read it through; she rose hastily, broke the chain that held her, ran to the door and opened it. She knew the prince as soon as she saw him, and he knew her; they at once embraced each other tenderly, without being able to speak for excess of joy: they looked on one another a long time, wondering how they met again after their first interview. The princess's nurse, who ran to the door with her, made them come into her chamber, where the Princess Badoura gave the prince her ring, saying, 'Take it; I cannot keep it without restoring yours, which I will never part with; neither can it be in better hands.'

The officer immediately went to tell the King of China what had happened. 'Sir,' said he, 'all the astrologers and doctors who have hitherto pretended to cure the princess were fools in comparison with the last. He made use neither of schemes nor spells or perfumes, or anything else, but cured her without seeing her.' Then he told the king how he did it. The monarch was agreeably surprised at the news, and going forthwith to the princess's chamber embraced her: he afterwards embraced the prince, and, taking his hand, joined it to the princess's.

'Happy stranger,' said the king, 'whoever you are, I will keep my word, and give you my daughter to marry; though, from what I see in you, it is impossible for me to believe that you are really what you appear to be, and would have me believe you.'

Prince Camaralzaman thanked the king in the most humble tones, that he might the better show his gratitude. 'As for my person,' said he, 'I must own I am not an astrologer, as your majesty very judiciously guessed; I only put on the habit of one, that I might succeed more easily in my ambition to be allied to the most potent monarch in the world. I was born a prince, and the son of a king and queen; my name is Camaralzaman; my father is Schahzaman, who now reigns over the islands that are well known by the name of the Islands of the Children of Khaledan.' He then told him his history.

When the prince had done speaking, the king said to him, 'This history is so extraordinary that it deserves to be known to posterity; I will take care it shall be; and the original being deposited in my royal archives, I will spread copies of it abroad, that my own kingdoms and the kingdoms around me may know it.'

The marriage was solemnized the same day, and the rejoicings for it were universal all over the empire of China. Nor was Marzavan forgotten: the king immediately gave him an honourable post in his court, and a promise of further advancement; and held continual feastings for several months, to show his joy.

THE LOSS OF THE TALISMAN.

Soon after his marriage Prince Camaralzaman dreamt one night that he saw his father Schahzaman on his death-bed, and heard him speak thus to his attendants: 'My son, my son, whom I so tenderly loved, has abandoned me.' He awoke with a great sigh, which aroused the princess, who asked him the cause of it. Next morning the princess went to her own father, and finding him alone kissed his hand and thus addressed herself to him: 'Sir, I have a favour to beg of your majesty; it is that you will give me leave to go with the prince my husband to see King Schahzaman, my father-in-law.'

'Daughter,' replied the king, 'though I shall be very sorry to part with you for so long a time, your resolution is worthy of you: go, child, I give you leave, but on condition that you stay no longer than a year in King Schahzaman's court.'

The princess communicated the King of China's consent to Prince Camaralzaman, who was transported with joy to hear it.

The King of China gave orders for preparations to be made for the journey; and when all things were ready, he accompanied the prince and princess several days' journey on their way. They parted at length with great weeping on all sides: the king embraced them, and having desired the prince to be kind to his daughter, and to love her always, he left them to proceed on their journey, and, to divert his thoughts, hunted all the way home.

Prince Camaralzaman and the Princess Badoura travelled for about a month, and at last came to a meadow of great extent, planted with tall trees, forming an agreeable shade. The day being unusually hot, Camaralzaman thought it best to encamp there. They alighted in one of the finest spots, and the prince ordered his servants to pitch their tents, and went himself to give directions. The princess, weary with the fatigue of the journey, bade her women untie her girdle, which they laid down by her, and when she fell asleep, her attendants left her by herself.

Prince Camaralzaman having seen all things in order came to the tent where the princess was sleeping; he entered, and sat down without making any noise, intending to take a nap himself; but observing the princess's girdle lying by her, he took it up, and looked at the diamonds and rubies one by one. In doing this, he saw a little purse hanging to it, sewed neatly on to the stuff, and tied fast with a ribbon; he felt it, and found there was something solid inside it. Desirous to know what it was, he opened the purse, and took out a cornelian, engraven with unknown figures and characters. 'This cornelian,' said the prince to himself, 'must be something very valuable, or my princess would not carry it with so much care.' It was Badoura's talisman, which the Queen of China had given her daughter as a charm, to keep her, as she said, from any harm as long as she had it about her.

The prince, the better to look at the talisman, took it out to the light, the tent being dark; and while he was holding it up in his hand, a bird darted down from the air and snatched it away from him.

Imagine the concern and grief of Prince Camaralzaman when he saw the bird fly away with the talisman. He was more troubled at it than words can express, and cursed his unseasonable curiosity, by which his dear princess had lost a treasure that was so precious and so much valued by her.

The bird having got her prize settled on the ground not far off, with the talisman in her mouth. The prince drew near, in hopes she would drop it; but, as he approached, the bird took wing, and settled again on the ground further off. Camaralzaman followed, and the bird, having swallowed the talisman, took a further flight: the prince still followed; the further she flew, the more eager he grew in pursuing her. Thus the bird drew him along from hill to valley, and valley to hill all day, every step leading him further away from the field where he had left his camp and the Princess Badoura; and instead of perching at night on a bush where he might probably have taken her, she roosted on a high tree, safe from pursuit. The prince, vexed to the heart for taking so much pains to no purpose, thought of returning to the camp; 'but,' said he to himself, 'which way shall I return? Shall I go down the hills and valleys which I passed over? Shall I wander in darkness? and will my strength bear me out? How dare I appear before my princess without her talisman?' Overwhelmed with such thoughts, and tired with the pursuit, he lay down under a tree, where he passed the night.

He awoke the next morning before the bird had left the tree, and, as soon as he saw her on the wing, followed her again that whole day, with no better success, eating nothing but herbs and fruits all the way. He did the same for ten days together, pursuing the bird, and keeping his eye upon her from morning to night, always lying under the tree where she roosted. On the eleventh day the bird continued flying, and came near a great city. When the bird came to the walls, she flew over them and the prince saw no more of her; so he despaired of ever recovering the Princess Badoura's talisman.

Camaralzaman, whose grief was beyond expression, went into the city, which was built by the seaside, and had a fine port; he walked up and down the streets without knowing where he was, or where to stop. At last he came to the port, in as great uncertainty as ever what he should do. Walking along the river-side, he perceived the gate of a garden open, and an old gardener at work. The good man looked up and saw that he was a

stranger and a Mussulman, so he asked him to come in, and to shut the door after him.

Camaralzaman entered, and, as the gardener bade him shut the door, demanded of the gardener why he was so cautious.

'Because,' replied the old man, 'I see you are a stranger newly arrived, and a Mussulman, and this city is inhabited for the most part by idolaters, who have a mortal aversion to us Mussulmans, and treat those few of us that are here with great barbarity. I suppose you did not know this, and it is a miracle that you have escaped as you have thus far, these idolaters being very apt to fall upon the Mussulmans that are strangers, or to draw them into a snare, unless those strangers know how to beware of them.'

Camaralzaman thanked the honest gardener for his advice, and the safety he offered him in his house: he would have said more, but the good man interrupted him, saying, 'You are weary, and must want to refresh yourself. Come in and rest.' He conducted him into his little hut, and after the prince had eaten heartily of what he set before him, he requested him to relate how he came there.

Camaralzaman complied with his request, and when he had ended his story, he asked him which was the nearest way to the king his father's territories; 'for it is in vain,' said he, 'for me to think of finding my princess where I left her, after wandering eleven days from the spot. Ah!' continued he, 'how do I know she is alive?' and so saying, he burst into tears.

The gardener replied that there was no possibility of his going thither by land, the roads were so difficult and the journey so long; besides, he must necessarily pass through the countries of so many barbarous nations that he would never reach his father's. It was a year's journey from the city where he was to any country inhabited only by Mussulmans; the quickest passage for him would be to go to the Isle of Ebony, whence he might easily transport himself to the Isles of the Children of Khaledan: a ship sailed from the port every year to Ebony, and he might take that opportunity of returning to those islands. 'The ship departed,' said the gardener, 'but a few days ago: if you had come a little sooner you might have taken your passage in it. If you will wait the year round until it makes the voyage again, and will stay with me in my house, such as it is, you will be as welcome to it as to your own.'

Prince Camaralzaman was glad he had met with such a place of refuge, in a place where he had no acquaintances. He accepted the offer, and lived with the gardener till the time came that the ship was to sail to the Isle of Ebony. He spent his time in working all day in the garden, and all night in sighs, tears and complaints, thinking of his dear Princess Badoura.

We must leave him in this place, to return to the princess, whom we left asleep in her tent.

The princess slept a long time, and, when she awoke, wondered that Prince Camaralzaman was not with her; she called her women, and asked them if they knew where he was. They told her they saw him enter the tent, but did not see him go out again. While they were talking to her, she took up her girdle, found the little purse open, and the talisman gone. She did not doubt but that Camaralzaman had taken it to see what it was, and that he would bring it back with him. She waited for him impatiently till night, and could not imagine what made him stay away from her so long.

When it was quite dark, and she could hear no news of him, she fell into violent grief; she cursed the talisman, and the man that made it. She could not imagine how her talisman should have caused the prince's separation from her: she did not however lose her judgment, and came to a courageous decision as to what she should do.

She only and her women knew of the prince's being gone; for his men were asleep in their tents. The princess, fearing they would betray her if they had any knowledge of it, moderated her grief, and forbade her women to say or do anything that might create the least suspicion. She then laid aside her robe, and put on one of Prince

Camaralzaman's, being so like him that next day, when she came out, his men took her for him.

She commanded them to pack up their baggage and begin their march; and when all things were ready, she ordered one of her women to go into her litter, she herself mounting on horseback, and riding by her side.

They travelled for several months by land and sea; the princess continuing, the journey under the name of Camaralzaman. They took the Isle of Ebony on their way to the Isles of the Children of Khaledan. They went to the capital of the Isle of Ebony, where a king reigned whose name was Armanos. The persons who first landed gave out that the ship carried Prince Camaralzaman, who was returning from a long voyage and was driven in there by a storm, and the news of his arrival was presently carried to the court.

King Armanos, accompanied by most of his courtiers, went immediately to meet the prince, and met the princess just as she was landing, and going to the lodging that had been taken for her. He received her as the son of a king who was his friend, and conducted her to the palace, where an apartment was prepared for her and all her attendants, though she would fain have excused herself, and have lodged in a private house. He showed her all possible honour, and entertained her for three days with extraordinary magnificence. At the end of this time, King Armanos, understanding that the princess, whom he still took for Prince Camaralzaman, talked of going on board again to proceed on her voyage, charmed with the air and qualities of such an accomplished prince as he took her to be, seized an opportunity when she was alone, and spoke to her in this manner: 'You see, prince, that I am old, and cannot hope to live long; and, to my great mortification, I have not a son to whom I may leave my crown. Heaven has only blest me with one daughter, the Princess Haiatalnefous whose beauty cannot be better matched than with a prince of your rank and accomplishments. Instead of going home, stay and marry her from my hand, with my crown, which I resign in your favour. It is time for me to rest, and nothing could be a greater pleasure to me in my retirement than to see my people ruled by so worthy a successor to my throne.'

The King of the Isle of Ebony's generous offer to bestow his only daughter in marriage, and with her his kingdom, on the Princess Badoura, put her into unexpected perplexity. She thought it would not become a princess of her rank to undeceive the king, and to own that she was not Prince Camaralzaman, but his wife, when she had assured him that she was he himself, whose part she had hitherto acted so well. She was also afraid refuse the honour he offered her, lest, as he was much bent upon the marriage, his kindness might turn to aversion and hatred, and he might attempt something even against her life. Besides, she was not sure whether she might not find Prince Camaralzaman in the court of King Schahzaman his father.

These considerations, added to the prospect of obtaining a kingdom for the prince her husband, in case she found him again, determined her to accept the proposal of King Armanos, and marry his daughter; so after having stood silent for some minutes, she with blushes, which the king took for a sign of modesty, answered, 'Sir, I am infinitely obliged to your majesty for your good opinion of me, for the honour you do me, and the great favour you offer me, which I cannot pretend to merit, and dare not refuse.

'But, sir,' continued she, 'I cannot accept this great alliance on any other condition than that your majesty will assist me with your counsel, and that I do nothing without first having your approbation.'

The marriage treaty being thus concluded and agreed on, the ceremony was put off till next day. In the mean time Princess Badoura gave notice to her officers, who still took her for Prince Camaralzaman, of what she was going to do so that they might not be surprised at it, assuring them that the Princess Badoura consented. She talked also to her women, and charged them to continue to keep the secret.

The King of the Isle of Ebony, rejoicing that he had got a son-in- law so much to his satisfaction, next morning summoned his council, and acquainted them with his design of marrying his daughter to Prince Camaralzaman, whom he introduced to them; and having made him sit down by his side, told them he resigned the crown to the prince, and required them to acknowledge him for king, and swear fealty to him.

Having said this, he descended from his throne, and the Princess Badoura, by his order, ascended it. As soon as the council broke up, the new king was proclaimed through the city, rejoicings were appointed for several days, and couriers despatched all over the kingdom to see the same ceremonies observed with the same demonstrations of joy.

As soon as they were alone, the Princess Badoura told the Princess Haiatalnefous the secret, and begged her to keep it, which she promised faithfully to do.

'Princess,' said Haiatalnefous, 'your fortune is indeed strange, that a marriage, so happy as yours was, should be shortened by so unaccountable an accident. Pray heaven you may meet with your husband again soon, and be sure that I will religiously keep the secret committed to me. It will be to me the greatest pleasure in the world to be the only person in the great kingdom of the Isle of Ebony who knows what and who you are, while you go on governing the people as happily as you have begun. I only ask of you at present to be your friend.' Then the two princesses tenderly embraced each other, and after a thousand expressions of mutual friendship lay down to rest.

While these things were taking place in the court of the Isle of Ebony, Prince Camaralzaman stayed in the city of idolaters with the gardener, who had offered him his house till the ship sailed.

One morning when the prince was up early, and, as he used to do, was preparing to work in the garden, the gardener prevented him, saying, 'This day is a great festival among the idolaters, and because they abstain from all work themselves, so as to spend the time in their assemblies and public rejoicings, they will not let the Mussulmans work. Their shows are worth seeing. You will have nothing to do to-day: I leave you here. As the time approaches in which the ship is accustomed to sail for the Isle of Ebony, I will go and see some of my friends, and secure you a passage in it.' The gardener put on his best clothes, and went out.

When Prince Camaralzaman was alone, instead of going out to take part in the public joy of the city, the solitude he was in brought to his mind, with more than usual violence, the loss of his dear princess. He walked up and down the garden sighing and groaning, till the noise which two birds made on a neighbouring tree tempted him to lift up his head, and stop to see what was the matter.

Camaralzaman was surprised to behold a furious battle between these two birds, fighting one another with their beaks. In a very little while one of them fell down dead at the foot of a tree; the bird that was victorious took wing again, and flew away.

In an instant, two other large birds, that had seen the fight at a distance, came from the other side of the garden, and pitched on the ground one at the feet and the other at the head of the dead bird: they looked at it some time, shaking their heads in token of grief; after which they dug a grave with their talons, and buried it.

When they had filled up the grave with the earth they flew away, and returned in a few minutes, bringing with them the bird that had committed the murder, the one holding one of its wings in its beak, and the other one of its legs; the criminal all the while crying out in a doleful manner, and struggling to escape. They carried it to the grave of the bird which it had lately sacrificed to its rage, and there sacrificed it in just revenge for the murder it had committed. They killed the murderer with their beaks. They then opened it, tore out the entrails, left the body on the spot unburied, and flew away.

Camaralzaman remained in great astonishment all the time that he stood beholding this sight. He drew near the tree, and casting his eyes on the scattered entrails of the bird that was last killed, he spied something red hanging out of its body. He took it up, and found it was his beloved Princess Badoura's talisman, which had cost him so much pain and sorrow and so many sighs since the bird snatched it out of his hand. 'Ah, cruel monster!' said he to himself, still looking at the bird, 'thou tookest delight in doing mischief, so I have the less reason to complain of that which thou didst to me: but the greater it was, the more do I wish well to those that

revenged my quarrel on thee, in punishing thee for the murder of one of their own kind.'

It is impossible to express Prince Camaralzaman's joy: 'Dear princess,' continued he to himself, 'this happy minute, which restores to me a treasure so precious to thee, is without doubt a presage of our meeting again, perhaps even sooner than I think.'

So saying, he kissed the talisman, wrapped it up in a ribbon, and tied it carefully about his arm. Till now he had been almost every night a stranger to rest, his trouble always keeping him awake, but the next night he slept soundly: he rose somewhat later the next morning than he was accustomed to do, put on his working clothes, and went to the gardener for orders. The good man bade him root up an old tree which bore no fruit.

Camaralzaman took an axe, and began his work. In cutting off a branch of the root, he found that his axe struck against something that resisted the blow and made a great noise. He removed the earth, and discovered a broad plate of brass, under which was a staircase of ten steps. He went down, and at the bottom saw a cavity about six yards square, with fifty brass urns placed in order around it, each with a cover over it. He opened them all, one after another, and there was not one of them which was not full of gold-dust. He came out of the cave, rejoicing that he had found such a vast treasure: he put the brass plate over the staircase, and rooted up the tree against the gardener's return.

The gardener had learned the day before that the ship which was bound for the Isle of Ebony would sail in a few days, but the exact time was not yet fixed. His friend promised to let him know the day, if he called upon him on the morrow; and while Camaralzaman was rooting up the tree, he went to get his answer. He returned with a joyful countenance, by which the prince guessed that he brought him good news. 'Son,' said the old man (so he always called him, on account of the difference of age between him and the prince), 'be joyful, and prepare to embark in three days, for the ship will then certainly set sail: I have arranged with the captain for your passage.'

'In my present situation,' replied Camaralzaman, 'you could not bring me more agreeable news; and in return, I have also tidings that will be as welcome to you; come along with me, and you shall see what good fortune heaven has in store for you.'

The prince led the gardener to the place where he had rooted up the tree, made him go down into the cave, and when he was there showed him what a treasure he had discovered, and thanked Providence for rewarding his virtue, and the labour he had done for so many years.

'What do you mean?' replied the gardener: 'do you imagine I will take these riches as mine? They are yours: I have no right to them. For fourscore years, since my father's death, I have done nothing but dig in this garden, and could not discover this treasure, which is a sign that it was destined for you, since you have been permitted to find it. It suits a prince like you, rather than me: I have one foot in the grave, and am in no want of anything. Providence has bestowed it upon you, just when you are returning to that country which will one day be your own, where you will make a good use of it.'

Prince Camaralzaman would not be outdone in generosity by the gardener. They had a long dispute about it. At last the prince solemnly protested that he would have none of it, unless the gardener would divide it with him and take half. The good man, to please the prince, consented; so they parted it between them, and each had twenty-five urns.

Having thus divided it, 'Son,' said the gardener to the prince, 'it is not enough that you have got this treasure; we must now contrive how to carry it so privately on board the ship that nobody may know anything of the matter, otherwise you will run the risk of losing it. There are no olives in the Isle of Ebony, and those that are exported hence are wanted there; you know I have plenty of them; take what you will; fill fifty pots, half with the gold dust, and half with olives, and I will get them carried to the ship when you embark.'

Camaralzaman followed this good advice, and spent the rest of the day in packing up the gold and the olives in the fifty pots, and fearing lest the talisman, which he wore on his arm, might be lost again, he carefully put it into one of the pots, marking it with a particular mark, to distinguish it from the rest. When they were all ready to be shipped, the prince retired with the gardener, and talking together, he related to him the battle of the birds, and how he had found the Princess Badoura's talisman again. The gardener was equally surprised and joyful to hear it for his sake.

Whether the old man was quite worn out with age, or had exhausted himself too much that day, he had a very bad night; he grew worse the next day, and on the third day, when the prince was to embark, was so ill that it was plain he was near his end. As soon as day broke, the captain of the ship came in person with several seamen to the gardener's; they knocked at the garden-door, and Camaralzaman opened it to them. They asked him where the passenger was that was to go with him. The prince answered, 'I am he; the gardener who arranged with you for my passage is ill, and cannot be spoken with: come in, and let your men carry those pots of olives and my baggage aboard. I will only take leave of the gardener, and follow you.'

The seamen took up the pots and the baggage, and the captain bade the prince make haste, for the wind being fair they were waiting for nothing but him.

When the captain and his men were gone, Camaralzaman went to the gardener, to take leave of him, and thank him for all his good offices: but he found him in the agonies of death, and had scarcely time to bid him rehearse the articles of his faith, which all good Mussulmans do before they die, when the gardener expired in his presence.

The prince being under the necessity of embarking immediately hastened to pay the last duty to the deceased. He washed his body, buried him in his own garden (for the Mahometans had no cemetery in the city of the idolaters, where they were only tolerated), and as he had nobody to assist him it was almost evening before he had put him in the ground. As soon as he had done it he ran to the water- side, carrying with him the key of the garden, intending, if he had time, to give it to the landlord; otherwise to deposit it in some trusty person's hand before a witness, that he might leave it when he was gone. When he came to the port, he was told the ship had sailed several hours before he came and was already out of sight. It had waited three hours for him, and the wind standing fair, the captain dared not stay any longer.

It is easy to imagine that Prince Camaralzaman was exceedingly grieved to be forced to stay longer in a country where he neither had nor wished to have any acquaintance: to think that he must wait another twelvemonth for the opportunity he had lost. But the greatest affliction of all was his having let go the Princess Badoura's talisman, which he now gave over for lost. The only course that was left for him to take was to return to the garden to rent it of the landlord, and to continue to cultivate it by himself, deploring his misery and misfortunes. He hired a boy to help him to do some part of the drudgery; and that he might not lose the other half of the treasure, which came to him by the death of the gardener, who died without heirs, he put the gold-dust into fifty other pots, which he filled up with olives, to be ready against the time of the ship's return.

While Prince Camaralzaman began another year of labour, sorrow and impatience, the ship, having a fair wind, continued her voyage to the Isle of Ebony, and happily arrived at the capital.

The palace being by the sea-side, the new king, or rather the Princess Badoura, espying the ship as she was entering the port, with all her flags flying, asked what vessel it was; she was told that it came annually from the city of the idolaters, and was generally richly laden.

The princess, who always had Prince Camaralzaman in her mind amidst the glories which surrounded her, imagined that the prince might be on board, and resolved to go down to the ship and meet him. Under presence of inquiring what merchandise was on board, and having the first sight of the goods, and choosing

the most valuable, she commanded a horse to be brought, which she mounted, and rode to the port, accompanied by several officers in waiting, and arrived at the port just as the captain came ashore. She ordered him to be brought before her, and asked whence he came, how long he had been on his voyage, and what good or bad fortune he had met with: if he had any stranger of quality on board, and particularly with what his ship was laden.

The captain gave a satisfactory answer to all her demands; and as to passengers, assured her that there were none but merchants in his ship, who were used to come every year and bring rich stuffs from several parts of the world to trade with, the finest linens painted and plain, diamonds, musk, ambergris, camphor, civet, spices, drugs, olives, and many other articles.

The Princess Badoura loved olives extremely: when she heard the captain speak of them, she said, 'Land them, I will take them off your hands: as to the other goods, tell the merchants to bring them to me, and let me see them before they dispose of them, or show them to any one else.'

The captain, taking her for the King of the Isle of Ebony, replied, 'Sire, there are fifty great pots of olives, but they belong to a merchant whom I was forced to leave behind. I gave him notice myself that I was waiting for him, and waited a long time; but as he did not come, and the wind was good, I was afraid of losing it, and so set sail.'

The princess answered, 'No matter; bring them ashore; we will make a bargain for them.'

The captain sent his boat aboard, and in a little time it returned with the pots of olives. The princess demanded how much the fifty pots might be worth in the Isle of Ebony. 'Sir,' said the captain, 'the merchant is very poor, and your majesty will do him a singular favour if you give him a thousand pieces of silver.'

'To satisfy him,' replied the princess, 'and because you tell me he is poor, I will order you a thousand pieces of gold for him, which do you take care to give him.' The money was accordingly, paid, and the pots carried to the palace in her presence.

Night was drawing on when the princess withdrew into the inner palace, and went to the Princess Haiatalnefous' apartment, ordering the fifty pots of olives to be brought thither. She opened one, to let the Princess Haiatalnefous taste them, and poured them into a dish. Great was her astonishment when she found the olives mingled with gold-dust. 'What can this mean?' said she, 'it is wonderful beyond comprehension.' Her curiosity increasing, she ordered Haiatalnefous' women to open and empty all the pots in her presence; and her wonder was still greater, when she saw that the olives in all of them were mixed with gold-dust; but when she saw her talisman drop out of that into which the prince had put it, she was so surprised that she fainted away. The Princess Haiatalnefous and her women restored the Princess Badoura by throwing cold water on her face. When she recovered her senses, she took the talisman and kissed it again and again; but not being willing that the Princess Haiatalnefous's women, who were ignorant of her disguise, should hear what she said, she dismissed them.

'Princess,' said she to Haiatalnefous, as soon as they were gone, 'you, who have heard my story, surely guessed that it was at the sight of the talisman that I fainted. This is the talisman, the fatal cause of my losing my dear husband Prince Camaralzaman; but as it was that which caused our separation, so I foresee it will be the means of our meeting again soon.'

The next day, as soon as it was light, she sent for the captain of the ship; and when he came she spoke to him thus: 'I want to know something more of the merchant to whom the olives belong, that I bought of you yesterday. I think you told me you had left him behind you in the city of the idolaters: can you tell me what he is doing there?'

'Yes, sire,' replied the captain, 'I can speak on my own knowledge. I arranged for his passage with a very old gardener, who told me I should find him in his garden, where he worked under him. He showed me the place, and for that reason I told your majesty he was poor. I went there to call him. I told him what haste I was in, spoke to him myself in the garden, and cannot be mistaken in the man.'

'If what you say is true,' replied the Princess Badoura, 'you must set sail this very day for the city of idolaters, and fetch me that gardener's man, who is my debtor; else I will not only confiscate all your goods and those of your merchants, but your and their lives shall answer for his. I have ordered my seal to be put on the warehouses where they are, which shall not be taken off till you bring me that man. This is all I have to say to you; go, and do as I command you.'

The captain could make no reply to this order, the disobeying of which would be a very great loss to him and his merchants. He told them about it, and they hastened him away as fast as they could after he had laid in a stock of provisions and fresh water for his voyage. They were so diligent, that he set sail the same day. He had a prosperous voyage to the city of the idolaters, where he arrived in the night. When he was as near to the city as he thought convenient, he would not cast anchor, but let the ship ride off the shore; and going into his boat, with six of his stoutest seamen, he landed a little way off the port, whence he went directly to Camaralzaman's garden.

Though it was about midnight when he arrived there, the prince was not asleep. His separation from the fair Princess of China his wife afflicted him as usual. He cursed the minute in which his curiosity tempted him to touch the fatal girdle.

Thus did he pass those hours which are devoted to rest, when he heard somebody knock at the garden door. He ran hastily to it, half-dressed as he was; but he had no sooner opened it, than the captain and his seamen took hold of him, and carried him by force on board the boat, and so to the ship, and as soon as he was safely lodged, they set sail immediately, and made the best of their way to the Isle of Ebony.

Hitherto Camaralzaman, the captain, and his men had not said a word to one another; at last the prince broke silence, and asked the captain, whom he recognized, why they had taken him away by force? The captain in his turn demanded of the prince whether he was not a debtor of the King of Ebony?

'I the King of Ebony's debtor!' replied Camaralzaman in amazement; 'I do not know him, I never had anything to do with him in my life, and never set foot in his kingdom.'

The captain answered, 'You should know that better than I; you will talk to him yourself in a little while: till then, stay here and have patience.'

Though it was night when he cast anchor in the port, the captain landed immediately, and taking Prince Camaralzaman with him hastened to the palace, where he demanded to be introduced to the king.

The Princess Badoura had withdrawn into the inner palace; however, as soon as she had heard of the captain's return and Camaralzaman's arrival, she came out to speak to him. As soon as she set her eyes on the prince, for whom she had shed so many tears, she knew him in his gardener's clothes. As for the prince, who trembled in the presence of a king, as he thought her, to whom he was to answer for an imaginary debt, it did not enter into his head that the person whom he so earnestly desired to see stood before him. If the princess had followed the dictates of her inclination, she would have run to him and embraced him, but she put a constraint on herself, believing that it was for the interest of both that she should act the part of a king a little longer before she made herself known. She contented herself for the present with putting him into the hands of an officer, who was then in waiting, with a charge to take care of him till the next day.

When the Princess Badoura had provided for Prince Camaralzaman, she turned to the captain, whom she was

now to reward for the important service he had done her. She commanded another officer to go immediately and take the seal off the warehouse where his and his merchants' goods were, and gave him a rich diamond, worth much more than the expense of both his voyages. She bade him besides keep the thousand pieces of gold she had given him for the pots of olives, telling him she would make up the account with the merchant herself.

This done, she retired to the Princess of the Isle of Ebony's apartment, to whom she communicated her joy, praying her to keep the secret still. She told her how she intended to manage to reveal herself to Prince Camaralzaman, and to give him the kingdom.

The Princess of the Isle of Ebony was so far from betraying her, that she rejoiced and entered fully into the plan.

The next morning the Princess of China ordered Prince Camaralzaman to be apparelled in the robes of an emir or governor of a province. She commanded him to be introduced into the council, where his fine person and majestic air drew all the eyes of the lords there present upon him.

The Princess Badoura herself was charmed to see him again, as handsome as she had often seen him, and her pleasure inspired her to speak the more warmly in his praise. When she addressed herself to the council, having ordered the prince to take his seat among the emirs, she spoke to them thus: 'My lords, this emir whom I have advanced to the same dignity with you is not unworthy the place assigned him. I have known enough of him in my travels to answer for him, and I can assure you he will make his merit known to all of you.'

Camaralzaman was extremely amazed to hear the King of the Isle of Ebony, whom he was far from taking for a woman, much less for his dear princess, name him, and declare that he knew him, while he thought himself certain that he had never seen him before in his life. He was much more surprised when he heard him praise him so excessively. Those praises, however, did not disconcert him, though he received them with such modesty as showed that he did not grow vain. He prostrated himself before the throne of the king, and rising again, 'Sire,' said he, 'I want words to express my gratitude to your majesty for the honour you have done me: I shall do all in my power to render myself worthy of your royal favour.'

From the council-board the prince was conducted to a palace, which the Princess Badoura had ordered to be fitted up for him; where he found officers and domestics ready to obey his commands, a stable full of fine horses, and everything suitable to the rank of an emir. Then the steward of his household brought him a strong box full of gold for his expenses.

The less he understood whence came his great good fortune, the more he admired it, but never once imagined that he owed it to the Princess of China.

Two or three days after, the Princess Badoura, that he might be nearer to her, and in a more distinguished post, made him high treasurer, which office had lately become vacant. He behaved himself in his new charge with so much integrity, yet obliging everybody, that he not only gained the friendship of the great but also the affections of the people, by his uprightness and bounty.

Camaralzaman would have been the happiest man in the world, if he had had his princess with him. In the midst of his good fortune he never ceased lamenting her, and grieved that he could hear no tidings of her, especially in a country where she must necessarily have come on her way to his father's court after their separation. He would have suspected something had the Princess Badoura still gone by the name of Camaralzaman, but on her accession to the throne she changed it, and took that of Armanos, in honour of the old king her father-in-law. She was now known only by the name of the young King Armanos. There were very few courtiers who knew that she had ever been called Camaralzaman, which name she assumed when she arrived at the court of the Isle of Ebony, nor had Camaralzaman so much acquaintance with any of them

yet as to learn more of her history.

The princess fearing he might do so in time, and desiring that he should owe the discovery to herself only, resolved to put an end to her own torment and his; for she had observed that as often as she discoursed with him about the affairs of his office, he fetched such deep sighs as could be addressed to nobody but her. She herself also lived under such constraint that she could endure it no longer.

The Princess Badoura had no sooner made this decision with the Princess Haiatalnefous, than she took Prince Camaralzaman aside, saying, 'I must talk with you about an affair, Camaralzaman, which requires much consideration, and on which I want your advice. Come hither in the evening, and leave word at home that you will not return; I will take care to provide you a bed.'

Camaralzaman came punctually to the palace at the hour appointed by the princess; she took him with her into the inner apartment, and having told the chief chamberlain, who was preparing to follow her, that she had no occasion for his service, and that he should only keep the door shut, she took him into a different apartment.

When the prince and princess entered the chamber she shut the door, and, taking the talisman out of a little box, gave it to Camaralzaman, saying, 'It is not long since an astrologer presented me with this talisman; you being skilful in all things, may perhaps tell me its use.'

Camaralzaman took the talisman, and drew near a lamp to look at it. As soon as he recollected it, with an astonishment which gave the princess great pleasure, 'Sire,' said he to the princess, 'your majesty asked me what this talisman is good for. Alas! it is only good to kill me with grief and despair, if I do not quickly find the most charming and lovely princess in the world to whom it belonged, whose loss it occasioned by a strange adventure, the very recital of which will move your majesty to pity such an unfortunate husband and lover, if you would have patience to hear it.'

'You shall tell me that another time,' replied the princess; 'I am very glad to tell you I know something of it already; stay here a little, and I will return to you in a moment.'

At these words she went into her dressing-room, put off her royal turban, and in a few minutes dressed herself like a woman; and having the girdle round her which she wore on the day of their separation, she entered the chamber.

Prince Camaralzaman immediately knew his dear princess, ran to her, and tenderly embraced her, crying out, 'How much I am obliged to the king, who has so agreeably surprised me!'

'Do not expect to see the king any more,' replied the princess, embracing him in her turn, with tears in her eyes; 'you see him in me: sit down, and I will explain this enigma to you.'

They sat down, and the princess told the prince the resolution she came to, in the field where they encamped the last time they were together, as soon as she perceived that she waited for him to no purpose; how she went through with it till she arrived at the Isle of Ebony, where she had been obliged to marry the Princess Haiatalnefous, and accept the crown which King Armanos offered her as a condition of the marriage: how the princess, whose merit she highly extolled, had kept the secret, and how she found the talisman in the pots of olives mingled with the gold dust, and how the finding it was the cause of her sending for him to the city of the idolaters.

The Princess Badoura and Prince Camaralzaman rose next morning as soon as it was light, but the princess would no more put on her royal robes as king; she dressed herself in the dress of a woman, and then sent the chief chamberlain to King Armanos, her father-in- law to desire he would be so good as to come to her apartment.

When the king entered the chamber, he was amazed to see there a lady who was unknown to him, and the high treasurer with her, who was not permitted to come within the inner palace. He sat down and asked where the king was.

The princess answered, 'Yesterday I was king, sir, and to-day I am the Princess of China, wife of the true Prince Camaralzaman, the true son of King Schahzaman. If your majesty will have the patience to hear both our stories, I hope you will not condemn me for putting an innocent deceit upon you.' The king bade her go on, and heard her discourse from the beginning to the end with astonishment. The princess on finishing it said to him, 'Sir, in our religion men may have several wives; if your majesty will consent to give your daughter the Princess Haiatalnefous in marriage to Prince Camaralzaman, I will with all my heart yield up to her the rank and quality of queen, which of right belongs to her, and content myself with the second place. If this precedence was not her due, I would, however, give it her, after she has kept my secret so generously.'

King Armanos listened to the princess with astonishment, and when she had done, turned to Prince Camaralzaman, saying, 'Son, since the Princess Badoura your wife, whom I have all along thought to be my son-in-law, through a deceit of which I cannot complain, assures me that she is willing, I have nothing more to do but to ask you if you are willing to marry my daughter and accept the crown, which the Princess Badoura would deservedly wear as long as she lived, if she did not quit it out of love to you.'

'Sir,' replied Prince Camaralzaman, 'though I desire nothing so earnestly as to see the king my father, yet the obligation I am under to your majesty and the Princess Haiatalnefous are so weighty, I can refuse her nothing.' Camaralzaman was proclaimed king, and married the same day with all possible demonstrations of joy.

Not long afterwards they all resumed the long interrupted journey to the Isles of the Children of Khaledan, where they were fortunate enough to find the old King Schahzaman still alive and overjoyed to see his son once more; and after several months' rejoicing, King Camaralzaman and the two queens returned to the Island of Ebony, where they lived in great happiness for the remainder of their lives.

THE STORY OF ZOBEIDE TOLD BY HERSELF

The following story is one of the strangest that ever was heard. Two black dogs long dwelt with me in my house, and were very affectionately disposed towards me. These two black dogs and myself were sisters, and I shall acquaint you by what strange accident they came to be metamorphosed. After our father's death, the estate that he left was equally divided among us. My two sisters and myself stayed with our mother, who was still alive, and when she died she left each of us a thousand sequins. As soon as we received our portions, the two elder (for I am the youngest), being married, followed their husbands and left me alone. Some time after, my eldest sister's husband sold all that he had, and with that money and my sister's portion they both went into Africa, where her husband, by riotous living, spent all; and finding himself reduced to poverty, he found a pretext for divorcing my sister, and sent her away.

She returned to this city, and, having suffered incredible hardships by the way, came to me in so lamentable a condition that it would have moved the hardest heart to compassion. I received her with all the tenderness she could expect, and on my inquiring into the cause of her sad condition, she told me with tears how inhumanly her husband had dealt with her. I was so much concerned at her misfortune that it drew tears from my eyes: I clothed her with my own apparel, and spoke to her thus: 'Sister, you are the elder, and I esteem you as my mother: during your absence, God has blessed the portion that fell to my share, and the employment I follow of feeding and bringing up silk-worms. Assure yourself that there is nothing I have but is at your service, and as much at your disposal as my own.'

We lived very comfortably together for some months; and one day as we were discoursing together about our third sister, and wondering we heard no news of her, she came home in as bad a condition as the elder; her husband had treated her after the same manner: and I received her likewise with the same affection as I had

done the other.

Some time after, my two sisters, on the ground that they would not be an expense to me, told me they intended to marry again. I answered them, that if their putting me to expense was all the reason they might lay those thoughts aside, and be very welcome to stay with me; for what I had would be sufficient to maintain us all three in a manner suitable to our condition. 'But,' said I, 'I rather believe you have a mind to marry again. If you do, I am sure it will very much surprise me: after the experience you have had of the small satisfaction there is in marriage, is it possible you dare venture a second time? You know how rare it is to meet with a husband that is a really honest man. Believe what I say, and let us live together as comfortably as we can.' All my persuasion was in vain; they were resolved to marry, and so they did. But after some months were past they came back again, and begged my pardon a thousand times for not following my advice. 'You are our youngest sister,' said they, 'and much wiser than we; but if you will vouchsafe to receive us once more into your house and account us your slaves, we shall never commit such a fault again.' My answer was, 'Dear sisters, I have not altered my mind with respect to you since we last parted from one another; come again and take part of what I have.' Upon this I embraced them again, and we lived together as we did formerly.

We continued thus a whole year in perfect love and tranquillity; and seeing that God had increased my small stock, I projected a voyage by sea, to hazard somewhat by trade. To this end I went with my two sisters to Balsora, where I bought a ship ready fitted for sea, and laded her with such merchandise as I brought from Bagdad. We set sail with a fair wind, and soon cleared the Persian gulf; and when we got into the ocean we steered our course to the Indies, and on the twentieth day saw land. It was a very high mountain, at the foot of which we saw a great town, and having a fresh wind we soon reached the harbour, where we cast anchor.

I had not patience to stay till my sisters were ready to go with me, but went ashore in the boat by myself; and, making directly for the gate of the town, I saw there a great number of men on guard, some sitting and others standing, with sticks in their hands; and they had all such dreadful countenances that it frightened me; but perceiving they had no motion, not so much as with their eyes, I took courage, and went nearer, and then found they were all turned into stone. I entered the town and passed through the several streets, wherein men stood everywhere in various attitudes, but all motionless and petrified. On that side where the merchants lived I found most of the shops shut, and in such as were open I likewise found the people petrified. I looked up to the chimneys, but saw no smoke; which made me conjecture that the inhabitants both within and without were all turned into stone.

Being come into a vast square in the heart of the city, I perceived a great gate covered with plates of gold, the two doors of which stood open, and a curtain of silk stuff seemed to be drawn before it; I also saw a lamp hanging over the gate. After I had well considered, I made no doubt but that it was the palace of the prince who reigned over that country; and being very much astonished that I had not met with one living creature, I went thither in hopes to find some one. I entered the gate, and was still more surprised when I saw none but the guards in the porches, all petrified, some standing, some sitting, and some lying.

I crossed over a large court where I saw a stately building just before me, the windows of which were enclosed with gates of massive gold: I supposed it to be the queen's apartment, and went into a large hall, where there stood several black chamberlains turned into stone. I went from thence into a room richly hung and furnished, where I perceived a lady. I knew it to be the queen by the crown of gold that hung over her head, and a necklace of pearls about her neck, each of them as big as a nut; I went up close to her to view it, and never beheld a finer sight.

I stood some time and admired the riches and magnificence of the room; but above all, the footcloth, the cushions and the sofas, which were all lined with Indian stuff or gold, with pictures of men and beasts in silver admirably executed.

I went out of the chamber where the petrified queen was, and passed through several other apartments richly

furnished, and at last came into a vast room, where was a throne of massive gold, raised several steps above the floor and enriched with large emeralds, and a bed upon the throne of rich stuff embroidered with pearls. What surprised me more than all the rest was a sparkling light which came from above the bed. Being curious to know from whence it came, I mounted the steps, and lifting up my head, I saw a diamond, as big as the egg of an ostrich, lying upon a low stool; it was so pure that I could not find the least blemish in it, and it sparkled so brightly that I could not endure the lustre of it when I saw it by daylight.

On each side of the bed's head there stood a lighted torch, but for what use I could not comprehend; however, it made me imagine that there was some living creature in this place, for I could not believe that these torches continued thus burning of themselves.

The doors being all open, or but half shut, I surveyed some other apartments that were as fine as those I had already seen. I looked into the offices and store-rooms, which were full of infinite riches, and I was so much taken with the sight of all the wonderful things that I forgot myself; and did not think of my ship or my sisters; my whole design was to satisfy my curiosity. Meantime night came on, which put me in mind that it was time to retire. I was for returning by the way I came in, but I could not find it; I lost myself among the apartments; and finding I was come back again to that large room where the throne, the couch, the large diamond, and the torches stood, I resolved to take my night's lodging there, and to depart the next morning betimes, to get aboard my ship. I laid myself down upon the couch, not without some dread of being alone in a desolate place; and this fear hindered my sleep.

About midnight I heard a voice like that of a man reading the Koran, after the same manner and in the same tone as we read in our mosques. Being extremely glad to hear it, I got up immediately, and, taking a torch in my hand to light me, I passed from one chamber to another on that side where the voice came from: I came to a door, where I stood still, nowise doubting that it came from thence. I set down my torch upon the ground, and looking through a window I found it to be an oratory. In short, it had, as we have in our mosques, a niche that shows where we must turn to say our prayers; there were also lamps hung up, and two candlesticks with large tapers of white wax burning.

I saw a little carpet laid down, like those we have to kneel upon when we say our prayers, and a comely young man sat upon this carpet, reading with great devotion the Koran, which lay before him upon a desk. At the sight of this I was transported with wonder. I wondered how it came to pass that he should be the only living creature in a town where all the people were turned into stones, and I did not doubt but that there was something in it very extraordinary.

The door being only half shut, I opened it and went in, and standing upright before the niche, I said this prayer aloud: 'Praise be to God, who has favoured us with a happy voyage, and may He be graciously pleased to protect us in the same manner until we arrive again in our own country. Hear me, O Lord, and grant my request.'

The young man cast his eyes upon me, and said, 'My good lady, pray let me know who you are, and what has brought you to this desolate city; and, in return, I will tell you who I am, what happened to me, why the inhabitants of this city are reduced to that state you see them in, and why I alone am safe and sound in the midst of such a terrible disaster.'

I told him in few words from whence I came, what made me undertake the voyage, and how I had safely arrived at the port after twenty days' sailing; and when I had done I prayed him to fulfil his promise, and told him how much I was struck by the frightful desolation which I had seen in all places as I came along.

'My dear lady,' said the young man, 'have patience for a moment.' At these words he shut the Koran, put it into a rich case, and laid it in the niche. I took that opportunity of observing him, and perceived so much good-nature and beauty in him that I felt strange emotion. He made me sit down by him; and before he began

his discourse I could not forbear saying to him, 'Sir, I can scarcely have patience to wait for an account of all those wonderful things that I have seen since the first time I came into your city; and my curiosity cannot be satisfied too soon: therefore pray, sir, let me know by what miracle you alone are left alive among so many persons that have died in so strange a manner.'

'Madam,' said the young man, 'you have given me to understand that you have a knowledge of the true God by the prayer you have just now addressed to Him. I will acquaint you with the most remarkable effect of His greatness and power. You must know that this city was the metropolis of a mighty kingdom, over which the king, my father, did reign. He, his whole court, the inhabitants of the city, and all his other subjects were magi, worshippers of fire, and of Nardoun, the ancient king of the giants, who rebelled against God.

'And though I had an idolatrous father and mother, I had the good fortune in my youth to have a governess who was a good Mussulman; I learned the Koran by heart, and understood the explanation of it perfectly. "Dear prince," would she oftentimes say, "there is but one true God; take heed that you do not acknowledge and adore any other." She taught me to read Arabic, and the book she gave me to practice upon was the Koran. As soon as I was capable of understanding it, she explained to me all the heads of this excellent book, and infused piety into my mind, unknown to my father or anybody else. She happened to die, but not before she had instructed me in all that was necessary to convince me of the truth of the Mussulman religion. After her death I persisted with constancy in this belief; and I abhor the false god Nardoun, and the adoration of fire.

'It is about three years and some months ago that a thundering voice was heard, all of a sudden, so distinctly, through the whole city that nobody could miss hearing it. The words were these: "Inhabitants, abandon the worship of Nardoun, and of fire, and worship the only God that shows mercy."

'This voice was heard for three years successively, but nobody was converted: so on the last day of the year, at four o'clock in the morning, all the inhabitants were changed in an instant into stone, every one in the same condition and posture they happened to be then in. The king, my father, had the same fate, for he was metamorphosed into a black stone, as he is to be seen in this palace; and the queen, my mother, had the like destiny.

'I am the only person that did not suffer under that heavy judgment, and ever since I have continued to serve God with more fervency than before. I am persuaded, dear lady, that He has sent you hither for my comfort, for which I render Him infinite thanks; for I must own that this solitary life is very unpleasant.'

'Prince,' said I, 'there is no doubt that Providence hath brought me into your port to present you with an opportunity of withdrawing from this dismal place. The ship that I came in may in some measure persuade you that I am in some esteem at Bagdad, where I have also left a considerable estate; and I dare engage to promise you sanctuary there, until the mighty Commander of the Faithful, who is vice-regent to our Prophet, whom you acknowledge, shows you the honour that is due to your merit. This renowned prince lives at Bagdad, and as soon as he is informed of your arrival in his capital, you will find that it is not vain to implore his assistance. It is impossible you can stay any longer in a city where all the objects you see must renew your grief: my vessel is at your service, where you may absolutely command as you think fit.' He accepted the offer, and we discoursed the remaining part of the night about our sailing.

As soon as it was day we left the palace, and came aboard my ship, where we found my sisters, the captain, and the slaves, all very much troubled at my absence. After I had presented my sisters to the prince, I told them what had hindered my return to the vessel the day before, how I had met with the young prince, his story, and the cause of the desolation of so fine a city.

The seamen were taken up several days in unlading the merchandise I had brought with me, and embarking instead all the precious things in the palace, jewels, gold and money. We left the furniture and goods, which consisted of an infinite quantity of plate, etc., because our vessel could not carry it, for it would have required

several vessels more to carry all the riches to Bagdad that we might have chosen to take with us.

After we had laden the vessel with what we thought fit, we took such provisions and water aboard as were necessary for our voyage (for we had still a great deal of those provisions left that we had taken in at Balsora): at last we set sail with a wind as favourable as we could wish.

The young prince, my sisters and myself enjoyed ourselves for some time very agreeably; but alas! this good understanding did not last long, for my sisters grew jealous of the friendship between the prince and me, and maliciously asked me one day what we should do with him when we came to Bagdad. I perceived immediately why they put this question to me; therefore, resolving to put it off with a jest, I answered them, 'I will take him for my husband'; and upon that, turning myself to the prince, 'Sir,' said I, 'I humbly beg of you to give your consent; for as soon as we come to Bagdad I design to do you all the service that is in my power and to resign myself wholly to your commands.'

The prince answered, 'I know not, madam, whether you be in jest or no; but for my own part I seriously declare, before these ladies your sisters, that from this moment I heartily accept your offer, as my lady and mistress. Nor will I pretend to have any power over your actions.' At these words my sisters changed colour, and I could perceive afterwards that they did not love me as formerly.

We had come into the Persian Gulf, not far from Balsora, where I hoped, considering the fair wind, we might arrive the day following; but in the night, when I was asleep, my sisters watched their time and threw me overboard. They did the same to the prince, who was drowned. I swam for some minutes in the water; but by good fortune, or rather miracle, I soon felt ground. I went towards a black place, that, so far as I could discern in the dark, seemed to be land, and actually was a flat on the coast. When day came, I found it to be a desert island, lying about twenty miles from Balsora. I soon dried my clothes in the sun; and as I walked along I found several sorts of fruit, and likewise fresh water, which gave me some hope of preserving my life.

I laid myself down in the shade and soon after I saw a winged serpent, very large and long, coming towards me, wriggling to the right and to the left, and hanging out his tongue, which made me think he was ill. I arose, and saw a larger serpent following him, holding him by the tail, and endeavouring to devour him. I had compassion on him, and instead of flying away, I had the boldness and courage to take up a stone that by chance lay by me, and threw it with all my strength at the great serpent, whom I hit on the head, and killed him. The other, finding himself at liberty, took to his wings and flew away. I looked a long while after him in the air, as an extraordinary thing; but he flew out of sight, and I lay down again in another place in the shade, and fell asleep.

When I awoke, judge how surprised I was to see by me a black woman, of lively and agreeable looks, who held, tied together in her hand, two dogs of the same colour. I sat up and asked her who she was. 'I am,' said she, 'the serpent whom you delivered not long since from my mortal enemy. I knew not how to acknowledge the great kindness you did me, but by doing what I have done. I knew the treachery of your sisters, and, to revenge you on them, as soon as I was set at liberty by your generous assistance I called several of my companions together, fairies like myself. We have carried into your storehouses at Bagdad all your lading that was in your vessel, and afterwards sunk it.

'These two black dogs are your sisters, whom I have transformed into this shape. But this punishment is not sufficient; for I will have you treat them after such a manner as I shall direct.'

At those words the fairy took me fast under one of her arms, and the two dogs in the other, and carried me to my house in Bagdad, where I found in my storehouses all the riches which were laden on board my vessel. Before she left me she delivered the two dogs, and told me, 'If you will not be changed into a dog as they are, I order you to give each of your sisters every night a hundred lashes with a rod, for the punishment of the crime they have committed against your person and the young prince whom they drowned.' I was forced to

promise that I would obey her order. For many months I whipped them every night, though with regret. I gave evidence by my tears with how much sorrow and reluctance I must perform this cruel duty.

Now the fairy had left with me a bundle of hair, saying withal that her presence would one day be of use to me; and then, if I only burnt two tufts of this hair, she would be with me in a moment, though she were beyond Mount Caucasus.

Desirous at length to see the fairy and beg her to restore the two black dogs, my sisters, to their proper shape, I caused fire one day to be brought in, and threw the whole bundle of hair into it. The house began to shake at that very instant, and the fairy appeared in the form of a lady very richly dressed.

I besought her, with every form of entreaty I could employ, to restore my sisters to their natural shape, and to release me from the cruel duty that I had always unwillingly performed.

The fairy at length consented, and desired a bowl of water to be brought; she pronounced over it some words which I did not understand, and then sprinkled the water upon the dogs. They immediately became two ladies of surprising beauty, and I recognised in them the sisters to whose human form I had so long been a stranger. They soon after married the sons of kings, and lived happily for the rest of their lives.

THE STORY OF THE KING'S SON.

I was scarcely past my infancy when the king my father perceived that I was endowed with a great deal of sense, and spared nothing in improving it; he employed all the men in his dominions that excelled in science and art to be constantly about me. No sooner was I able to read and write than I learned the Koran from the beginning to the end by heart; that admirable book which contains the foundation, the precepts, and the rules of our religion; and that I might be thoroughly instructed in it, I read the works of the most approved authors, by whose commentaries it had been explained. I added to this study that of all the traditions collected from the mouth of our Prophet by the great men that were contemporary with him. I was not satisfied with the knowledge of all that had any relation to our religion, but made also a particular search into our histories. I made myself perfect in polite learning, in the works of poets, and in versification. I applied myself to geography, chronology, and to speak our Arabic tongue in its purity. But one thing which I was fond of and succeeded in to a special degree was to form the characters of our written language, wherein I surpassed all the writing masters of our kingdom that had acquired the greatest reputation.

Fame did me more honour than I deserved, for she not only spread the renown of my talents through all the dominions of the king my father, but carried it as far as the Indian court, whose potent monarch, desirous to see me, sent an ambassador with rich presents to demand me of my father, who was extremely glad of this embassy for several reasons; he was persuaded that nothing could be more commendable in a prince of my age than to travel and visit foreign courts, and he was very glad to gain the friendship of the Indian sultan. I departed with the ambassador, but with no great retinue, because of the length and difficulty of the journey.

When we had travelled about a month, we discovered at a distance a great cloud of dust, and under that we very soon saw fifty horsemen, well armed, that were robbers, coming towards us at full gallop.

As we had ten horses laden with baggage and presents that I was to carry to the Indian sultan from the king my father, and my retinue was but small, these robbers came boldly up to us. Not being in a position to make any resistance, we told them that we were ambassadors belonging to the Sultan of the Indies, and hoped they would attempt nothing contrary to that respect which is due to him, thinking by this means to save our equipage and our lives.

But the robbers most insolently replied, 'For what reason would you have us show any respect to the sultan your master? We are none of his subjects, nor are we upon his territories.'

Having spoken thus, they surrounded and fell upon us. I defended myself as long as I could, but finding myself wounded, and seeing the ambassador with his servants and mine lying on the ground, I made use of what strength was yet remaining in my horse, who was also very much wounded, separated myself from the crowd, and rode away as fast as he could carry me; but he happened all of a sudden to give way under me, through weariness and loss of blood, and fell down dead. I got rid of him in a trice, and finding that I was not pursued, it made me judge that the robbers were not willing to quit the booty they had got.

Here you see me alone, wounded, destitute of help, and in a strange country: I durst not betake myself to the high road, lest I might fall again into the hands of these robbers. When I had bound up my wound, which was not dangerous, I walked on for the rest of the day, and arrived at the foot of a mountain, where I perceived a passage into a cave: I went in, and stayed there that night with little satisfaction, after I had eaten some fruits that I gathered by the way.

I continued my journey for several days without finding any place of abode; but after a month's time, I came to a large town, well inhabited, and situated so advantageously, as it was surrounded with several rivers, that it enjoyed perpetual spring.

The pleasant objects which then presented themselves to my eyes afforded me joy, and suspended for a time the sorrow with which I was overwhelmed to find myself in such a condition. My face, hands and feet were black and sunburnt; and, owing to my long journey, my shoes and stockings were quite worn out, so that I was forced to walk bare-footed, and, besides, my clothes were all in rags. I entered into the town to learn where I was, and addressed myself to a tailor that was at work in his shop; who, perceiving by my air that I was a person of more note than my outward appearance bespoke me to be, made me sit down by him, and asked me who I was, from whence I came, and what had brought me thither? I did not conceal anything that had befallen me.

The tailor listened with attention to my words; but after I had done speaking, instead of giving me any consolation, he augmented my sorrow.

'Take heed,' said he, 'how you discover to any person what you have now declared to me; for the prince of this country is the greatest enemy that the king your father has, and he will certainly do you some mischief when he comes to hear of your being in this city.'

I made no doubt of the tailor's sincerity, when he named the prince, and returned him thanks for his good advice: and as he believed I could not but be hungry, he ordered something to be brought for me to eat, and offered me at the same time a lodging in his house, which I accepted. Some days after, finding me pretty well recovered from the fatigue I had endured by a long and tedious journey, and reflecting that most princes of our religion applied themselves to some art or calling that might be serviceable to them upon occasion, he asked me if I had learnt anything whereby I might get a livelihood, and not be burdensome to any one? I told him that I understood the laws, both divine and human; that I was a grammarian and poet; and, above all, that I understood writing perfectly.

'By all this,' said he, 'you will not be able, in this country, to purchase yourself one morsel of bread; nothing is of less use here than those sciences: but if you will be advised by me,' said he, 'dress yourself in a labourer's frock; and since you appear to be strong and of a good constitution, you shall go into the next forest and cut fire-wood, which you may bring to the market to be sold; and I can assure you it will turn to such good account that you may live by it, without dependence upon any man: and by this means you will be in a condition to wait for the favourable moment when Heaven shall think fit to dispel those clouds of misfortune that thwart your happiness, and oblige you to conceal your birth. I will take care to supply you with a rope and a hatchet.'

The fear of being known, and the necessity I was under of getting a livelihood, made me agree to this

proposal, notwithstanding all the hardships that attended it. The day following the tailor bought me a rope, a hatchet, and a short coat, and recommended me to some poor people who gained their bread after the same manner, that they might take me into their company. They conducted me to the wood, and the first day I brought in as much upon my head as earned me half a piece of gold, which is the money of that country; for though the wood is not far distant from the town, yet it was very scarce there, for few or none would be at the trouble to go and cut it. I gained a good sum of money in a short time, and repaid my tailor what he had advanced for me.

I continued this way of living for a whole year; and one day, when by chance I had gone farther into the wood than usual, I happened to light on a very pleasant place, where I began to cut down wood; and in pulling up the root of a tree, I espied an iron ring, fastened to a trap-door of the same metal. I took away the earth that covered it, and having lifted it up, saw stairs, down which I went, with my axe in my hand.

When I came to the bottom of the stairs, I found myself in a large palace, which put me into great consternation, because of a great light which appeared as clear in it as if it had been above ground in the open air. I went forward along a gallery supported by pillars of jasper, the base and capitals of massy gold; but seeing a lady of a noble and free air and extremely beautiful coming towards me, my eyes were taken off from beholding any other object but her alone.

Being desirous to spare the lady the trouble of coming to me, I made haste to meet her; and as I was saluting her with a low bow, she asked me, 'What are you, a man or a genie?'

'A man, madam,' said I: 'I have no correspondence with genies.'

'By what adventure,' said she, fetching a deep sigh, 'are you come hither? I have lived here these twenty-five years, and never saw any man but yourself during that time.'

Her great beauty, and the sweetness and civility wherewith she received me, emboldened me to say to her, 'Madam, before I have the honour to satisfy your curiosity, give me leave to tell you that I am infinitely pleased with this unexpected meeting, which offers me an occasion of consolation in the midst of my affliction; and perhaps it may give me an opportunity to make you also more happy than you are.' I gave her a true account by what strange accident she saw me, the son of a king, in such a condition as I then presented to her eyes; and how fortune directed that I should discover the entrance into that magnificent prison where I had found her according to appearances in an unpleasant situation.

'Alas! prince,' said she, sighing once more, 'you have just cause to believe this rich and pompous prison cannot be otherwise than a most wearisome abode; the most charming place in the world being no way delightful when we are detained there contrary to our will. You have heard of the great Epitimarus, King of the Isle of Ebony, so called from that precious wood, which it produces in abundance: I am the princess his daughter.

'The king, my father, had chosen for me a husband, a prince that was my cousin; but in the midst of the rejoicing at the court, before I was given to my husband, a genie took me away. I fainted at the same moment, and lost my senses; and when I came to myself again, I found myself in this place. I was for a long time inconsolable, but time and necessity have accustomed me to the genie. Twenty-five years, as I told you before, I have continued in this place; where, I must confess, I have everything that I can wish for necessary to life, and also everything that can satisfy a princess fond of dress and fashions.

'Every ten days,' continued the princess, 'the genie comes hither to see me. Meanwhile, if I have occasion for him by day or night, as soon as I touch a talisman which is at the entrance into my chamber, the genie appears. It is now the fourth day since he was here, and I do not expect him before the end of six more; so, if you please, you may stay five days and keep me company, and I will endeavour to entertain you according to your

rank and merit.'

I thought myself too fortunate in having obtained so great a favour without asking it to refuse so obliging an offer. The princess made me go into a bath, which was the most sumptuous that could be imagined; and when I came forth, instead of my own clothes, I found another very costly suit, which I did not esteem so much for its richness as because it made me look worthy to be in her company. We sat down on a sofa covered with rich tapestry, with cushions to lean upon of the rarest Indian brocade; and soon after she covered a table with several dishes of delicate meats. We ate together, and passed the remaining part of the day with much satisfaction.

The next day, as she contrived every means to please me, she brought in, at dinner, a bottle of old wine, the most excellent that ever was tasted; and out of complaisance she drank some part of it with me. When my head grew hot with the agreeable liquor, 'Fair princess,' said I, 'you have been too long thus buried alive: follow me, and enjoy the real day, from which you have been deprived so many years, and abandon this false light that you have here.'

'Prince,' replied she, with a smile, 'stop this discourse; if out of ten days you will grant me nine, and resign the last to the genie, the fairest day that ever was would be nothing in my esteem.'

'Princess,' said I, 'it is the fear of the genie that makes you speak thus; for my part, I value him so little that I will break his talisman in pieces. Let him come, I will expect him; and how brave or redoubtable soever he be, I will make him feel the weight of my arm: I swear, solemnly that I will extirpate all the genies in the world, and him first.' The princess, who knew the consequences, conjured me not to touch the talisman; 'for that would be a means,' said she, 'to ruin both you and me: I know what belongs to genies better than you.' The fumes of the wine did not suffer me to hearken to her reasons; but I gave the talisman a kick with my foot, and broke it in several pieces.

The talisman was no sooner broken, than the palace began to shake, and was ready to fall with a hideous noise like thunder, accompanied with flashes of lightning and a great darkness. This terrible noise in a moment dispelled the fumes of my wine, and made me sensible, but too late, of the folly I had committed. 'Princess,' cried I, 'what means all this?'

She answered in a fright, and without any concern for her own misfortune, 'Alas! you are undone, if you do not escape immediately.'

I followed her advice, and my fears were so great that I forgot my hatchet and cords. I had scarcely got to the stairs by which I came down, when the enchanted palace opened, and made a passage for the genie: he asked the princess, in great anger, 'What has happened to you, and why did you call me?'

'A qualm,' said the princess, 'made me fetch this bottle which you see here, out of which I drank twice or thrice, and by mischance made a false step, and fell upon the talisman, which is broken, and that is all.'

At this answer the furious genie told her, 'You are a false woman, and a liar: how came that axe and those cords there?'

'I never saw them till this moment,' said the princess. 'Your coming in such an impetuous manner has, it may be, forced them up in some place as you came along, and so brought them hither without your knowing it.'

The genie made no other answer but reproaches and blows of which I heard the noise. I could not endure to hear the pitiful cries and shouts of the princess, so cruelly abused; I had already laid off the suit she made me put on, and taken my own, which I had laid on the stairs the day before, when I came out of the bath; I made haste upstairs, distracted with sorrow and compassion, as I had been the cause of so great a misfortune. For by

sacrificing the fairest princess on earth to the barbarity of a merciless genie, I was become the most criminal and ungrateful of mankind. 'It is true,' said I, 'she has been a prisoner these twenty-five years; but, liberty excepted, she wanted nothing that could make her happy. My folly has put an end to her happiness, and brought upon her the cruelty of an unmerciful monster.' I let down the trap- door, covered it again with earth, and returned to the city with a burden of wood, which I bound up without knowing what I did, so great was my trouble and sorrow.

My landlord, the tailor, was very much rejoiced to see me. 'Your absence,' said he, 'has disquieted me very much, because you had entrusted me with the secret of your birth, and I knew not what to think; I was afraid somebody had discovered you: God be thanked for your return.' I thanked him for his zeal and affection, but not a word durst I say of what had passed, nor the reason why I came back without my hatchet and cords.

I retired to my chamber, where I reproached myself a thousand times for my excessive imprudence. 'Nothing,' said I, 'could have paralleled the princess's good fortune and mine had I forborne to break the talisman.'

While I was thus giving myself over to melancholy thoughts, the tailor came in. 'An old man,' said he, 'whom I do not know, brings me here your hatchet and cords, which he found in his way, as he tells me, and understood from your comrades that you lodge here; come out and speak to him, for he will deliver them to none but yourself.'

At this discourse I changed colour, and began to tremble. While the tailor was asking me the reason, my chamber door opened, and the old man appeared to us with my hatchet and cords. This was the genie, the ravisher of the fair princess of the Isle of Ebony, who had thus disguised himself, after he had treated her with the utmost barbarity. 'I am a genie,' said he, 'son of the daughter of Eblis, prince of genies. Is not this your hatchet, and are not these your cords?'

After the genie had put the question to me, he gave me no time to answer, nor was it in my power, so much had his terrible aspect disordered me. He grasped me by the middle, dragged me out of the chamber, and mounting into the air, carried me up to the skies with such swiftness that I was unable to take notice of the way he carried me. He descended again in like manner to the earth, which on a sudden he caused to open with a stroke of his foot, and so sank down at once, where I found myself in the enchanted palace, before the fair princess of the Isle of Ebony. But alas, what a spectacle was there! I saw what pierced me to the heart; this poor princess was weltering in her blood upon the ground, more dead than alive, with her cheeks bathed in tears.

'Perfidious wretch,' said the genie to her; pointing at me, 'who is this?'

She cast her languishing eyes upon me, and answered mournfully, 'I do not know him; I never saw him till this moment.'

'What!' said the genie, 'he is the cause of thy being in the condition thou art justly in, and yet darest thou say thou dost not know him?'

'If I do not know him,' said the princess, 'would you have me tell a lie on purpose to ruin him?'

'Oh then,' continued the genie, pulling out a scimitar, and presenting it to the princess, 'if you never saw him before, take the scimitar and cut off his head.'

'Alas!' replied the princess, 'my strength is so far spent that I cannot lift up my arm, and if I could, how should I have the heart to take away the life of an innocent man?'

'This refusal,' said the genie to the princess, 'sufficiently informs me of your crime.' Upon which, turning to

me, 'And thou,' said he, 'dost thou not know her?'

I should have been the most ungrateful wretch, and the most perfidious of all mankind, if I had not shown myself as faithful to the princess as she was to me who had been the cause of her misfortunes; therefore I answered the genie, 'How should I know her?'

'If it be so,' said he, 'take the scimitar and cut off her head: on this condition I will set thee at liberty, for then I shall be convinced that thou didst never see her till this very moment, as thou sayest.'

'With all my heart,' replied I, and took the scimitar in my hand.

But I did it only to demonstrate by my behaviour, as much as possible, that as she had shown her resolution to sacrifice her life for my sake, I would not refuse to sacrifice mine for hers. The princess, notwithstanding her pain and suffering, understood my meaning, which she signified by an obliging look. Upon this I stepped back, and threw the scimitar on the ground. 'I should for ever,' said I to the genie, 'be hateful to all mankind were I to be so base as to murder a lady like this, who is ready to give up the ghost: do with me what you please, since I am in your power; I cannot obey your barbarous commands.'

'I see,' said the genie, 'that you both outbrave me, but both of you shall know, by the treatment I give you, what I am capable of doing.' At these words the monster took up the scimitar and cut off one of her hands, which left her only so much life as to give me a token with the other that she bid me adieu for ever, the sight of which threw me into a fit. When I was come to myself again, I expostulated with the genie as to why he made me languish in expectation of death. 'Strike,' cried I, 'for I am ready to receive the mortal blow, and expect it as the greatest favour you can show me.' But instead of agreeing to that, 'Look you,' said he, 'how genies treat their wives whom they suspect: she has received you here, and were I certain that she had put any further affront upon me, I would put you to death this minute: but I will be content to transform you into a dog, ape, lion, or bird. Take your choice of any of these; I will leave it to yourself.'

These words gave me some hope to mollify him. 'Oh genie,' said I, 'moderate your passion, and since you will not take away my life, give it me generously; I shall always remember you, if you pardon me, as one of the best men in the world.'

'All that I can do for you,' said he, 'is, not to take your life: do not flatter yourself that I will send you back safe and sound; I must let you feel what I am able to do by my enchantments.' So saying, he laid violent hands on me, and carried me across the vault of the subterranean palace, which opened to give him passage. Then he flew up with me so high that the earth seemed to be only a little white cloud; from thence he came down like lightning, and alighted upon the ridge of a mountain.

There he took up a handful of earth, and pronounced, or rather muttered, some words which I did not understand, and threw it upon me. 'Quit the shape of a man,' said he to me, 'and take on you that of an ape.' He vanished immediately, and left me alone, transformed into an ape, overwhelmed with sorrow in a strange country, and not knowing whether I was near or far from my father's dominions.

I went down from the top of the mountain and came into a plain, which took me a month's time to travel through, and then I came to the seaside. It happened to be then a great calm, and I espied a vessel about half a league from the shore. Unwilling to lose this good opportunity, I broke off a large branch from a tree, which I carried with me to the seaside, and set myself astride upon it, with a stick in each hand to serve me for oars.

I launched out in this posture, and advanced near the ship. When I was near enough to be known, the seamen and passengers that were upon the deck thought it an extraordinary sight, and all of them looked upon me with great astonishment. In the meantime I got aboard, and laying hold of a rope, I jumped upon the deck, but having lost my speech, I found myself in great perplexity; and indeed the risk I ran then was nothing less than

when I was at the mercy of the genie.

The merchants, being both superstitious and scrupulous, believed I should occasion some mischief to their voyage if they received me; 'therefore,' said one, 'I will knock him down with a handspike'; said another, 'I will shoot an arrow through him'; said a third, 'Let us throw him into the sea.' Some of them would not have failed to do so, if I had not got to that side where the captain was. I threw myself at his feet, and took him by the coat in a begging posture. This action, together with the tears which he saw gush from my eyes, moved his compassion; so that he took me under his protection, threatening to be revenged on him that would do me the least hurt; and he himself made very much of me, while I on my part, though I had no power to speak, showed all possible signs of gratitude by my gestures.

The wind that succeeded the calm was gentle and favourable, and did not change for fifty days, but brought us safe to the port of a fine city, well peopled, and of great trade, the capital of a powerful State, where we came to anchor.

Our vessel was speedily surrounded with an infinite number of boats full of people, who came to congratulate their friends upon their safe arrival, or to inquire for those they had left behind them in the country from whence they came, or out of curiosity to see a ship that came from a far country.

Amongst the rest, some officers came on board, desiring to speak with the merchants in the name of the sultan. The merchants appearing, one of the officers told them, 'The sultan, our master, hath commanded us to acquaint you that he is glad of your safe arrival, and prays you to take the trouble, every one of you, to write some lines upon this roll of paper. You must know that we had a prime vizier who, besides having a great capacity to manage affairs, understood writing to the highest perfection. This minister is lately dead, at which the sultan is very much troubled; and since he can never behold his writing without admiration, he has made a solemn vow not to give the place to any man but to him who can write as well as he did. Many people have presented their writings, but, so far, nobody in all this empire has been judged worthy to supply the vizier's place.'

Those merchants that believed they could write well enough to aspire to this high dignity wrote one after another what they thought fit. After they had done, I advanced, and took the roll out of the gentleman's hand; but all the people, especially the merchants, cried out, 'He will tear it, or throw it into the sea,' till they saw how properly I held the roll, and made a sign that I would write in my turn; then they were of another opinion, and their fear turned into admiration. However, since they had never seen an ape that could write, nor could be persuaded that I was more ingenious than other apes, they tried to snatch the roll out of my hand; but the captain took my part once more. 'Let him alone,' said he; 'suffer him to write. If he only scribbles the paper, I promise you that I will punish him on the spot. If, on the contrary, he writes well, as I hope he will, because I never saw an ape so clever and ingenious and so quick of apprehension, I do declare that I will own him as my son; I had one that had not half the wit that he has.' Perceiving that nobody opposed my design, I took the pen and wrote six sorts of hands used among the Arabians, and each specimen contained an extemporary verse or poem in praise of the sultan. My writing did not only excel that of the merchants, but, I venture to say, they had not before seen any such fair writing in that country. When I had done, the officers took the roll, and carried it to the sultan.

The sultan took little notice of any of the other writings, but he carefully considered mine, which was so much to his liking that he said to the officers, 'Take the finest horse in my stable, with the richest harness, and a robe of the most sumptuous brocade to put upon that person who wrote the six hands, and bring him hither to me.' At this command the officers could not forbear laughing. The sultan grew angry at their boldness, and was ready to punish them, till they told him, 'Sir, we humbly beg your majesty's pardon; these hands were not written by a man, but by an ape.'

'What do you say?' said the sultan. 'Those admirable characters, are they not written by the hands of a man?'

'No, sir,' replied the officers; 'we do assure your majesty that it was an ape, who wrote them in our presence.'

The sultan was too much surprised at this not to desire a sight of me, and therefore said, 'Bring me speedily that wonderful ape.'

The officers returned to the vessel and showed the captain their order, who answered that the sultan's commands must be obeyed. Whereupon they clothed me with that rich brocade robe and carried me ashore, where they set me on horseback, whilst the sultan waited for me at his palace with a great number of courtiers, whom he gathered together to do me the more honour.

The cavalcade having begun, the harbour, the streets, the public places, windows, terraces, palaces, and houses were filled with an infinite number of people of all sorts, who flocked from all parts of the city to see me; for the rumour was spread in a moment that the sultan had chosen an ape to be his grand vizier; and after having served for a spectacle to the people, who could not forbear to express their surprise by redoubling their shouts and cries, I arrived at the palace of the sultan.

I found the prince on his throne in the midst of the grandees; I made my bow three times very low, and at last kneeled and kissed the ground before him, and afterwards sat down in the posture of an ape. The whole assembly admired me, and could not comprehend how it was possible that an ape should understand so well how to pay the sultan his due respect; and he himself was more astonished than any one. In short, the usual ceremony of the audience would have been complete could I have added speech to my behaviour: but apes never speak, and the advantage I had of having been a man did not allow me that privilege.

The sultan dismissed his courtiers, and none remained by him but the chief of the chamberlains, a young slave, and myself. He went from his chamber of audience into his own apartment, where he ordered dinner to be brought. As he sat at table he gave me a sign to come near and eat with them: to show my obedience I kissed the ground, stood up, sat down at table, and ate with discretion and moderation.

Before the table was uncovered, I espied a writing-desk, which I made a sign should be brought me: having got it, I wrote upon a large peach some verses after my way, which testified my acknowledgment to the sultan, which increased his astonishment. When the table was uncovered, they brought him a particular liquor, of which he caused them to give me a glass. I drank, and wrote upon it some new verses, which explained the state I was reduced to after many sufferings. The sultan read them likewise, and said, 'A man that was capable of doing so much would be above the greatest of men.'

The sultan caused them to bring in a chess-board, and asked me, by a sign, if I understood the game, and would play with him. I kissed the ground, and laying my hand upon my head, signified that I was ready to receive that honour. He won the first game, but I won the second and third; and perceiving he was somewhat displeased at it, I made a poem to pacify him; in which I told him that two potent armies had been fighting furiously all day, but that they made up a peace towards the evening, and passed the remaining part of the night very peaceably together upon the field of battle.

So many circumstances appearing to the sultan far beyond whatever any one had either seen or known of the cleverness or sense of apes, he determined not to be the only witness of those prodigies himself; but having a daughter, called the Lady of Beauty, on whom the chief of the chamberlains, then present, waited, 'Go,' said the sultan to him, 'and bid your lady come hither: I am desirous she should share my pleasure.'

The chamberlain went, and immediately brought the princess, who had her face uncovered; but she had no sooner come into the room than she put on her veil, and said to the sultan, 'Sir, your majesty must needs have forgotten yourself: I am very much surprised that your majesty has sent for me to appear among men.'

'Nay, daughter,' said the sultan, 'you do not know what you say: here is nobody but the little slave, the

chamberlain your attendant and myself, who have the liberty to see your face; and yet you lower your veil, and blame me for having sent for you hither.'

'Sir,' said the princess, 'your majesty shall soon understand that I am not in the wrong. That ape you see before you, though he has the shape of an ape, is a young prince, son of a great king; he has been metamorphosed into an ape by enchantment. A genie, the son of the daughter of Eblis, has maliciously done him this wrong, after having cruelly taken away the life of the Princess of the Isle of Ebony, daughter to the King Epitimarus.'

The sultan, astonished at this discourse, turned towards me and asked no more by signs, but in plain words if it was true what his daughter said? Seeing I could not speak, I put my hand to my head to signify that what the princess spoke was true. Upon this the sultan said again to his daughter, 'How do you know that this prince has been transformed by enchantments into an ape?'

'Sir,' replied the Lady of Beauty, 'your majesty may remember that when I was past my infancy, I had an old lady to wait upon me; she was a most expert magician, and taught me seventy rules of magic, by virtue of which I can transport your capital city into the midst of the sea in the twinkling of an eye, or beyond Mount Caucasus. By this science I know all enchanted persons at first sight. I know who they are, and by whom they have been enchanted. Therefore do not be surprised if I should forthwith relieve this prince, in spite of the enchantments, from that which hinders him from appearing in your sight what he naturally is.'

'Daughter,' said the sultan, 'I did not believe you to have understood so much.'

'Sir,' replied the princess, 'these things are curious and worth knowing, but I think I ought not to boast of them.'

'Since it is so,' said the sultan, 'you can dispel the prince's enchantment.'

'Yes, sir,' said the princess, 'I can restore him to his first shape again.'

'Do it then,' said the sultan; 'you cannot do me a greater pleasure, for I will have him to be my vizier, and he shall marry you.'

'Sir,' said the princess, 'I am ready to obey you in all that you may be pleased to command me.'

The princess, the Lady of Beauty, went into her apartment, from whence she brought in a knife, which had some Hebrew words engraven on the blade; she made the sultan, the master of the chamberlains, the little slave, and myself, go down into a private court of the palace, and there left us under a gallery that went round it. She placed herself in the middle of the court, where she made a great circle, and within it she wrote several words in Arabic characters, some of them ancient, and others of those which they call the characters of Cleopatra.

When she had finished and prepared the circle as she thought fit, she placed herself in the centre of it, where she began spells, and repeated verses out of the Koran. The air grew insensibly dark, as if it had been night and the whole world about to be dissolved; we found ourselves struck with a panic, and this fear increased the more when we saw the genie, the son of the daughter of Eblis, appear on a sudden in the shape of a lion of a frightful size.

As soon as the princess perceived this monster, 'You dog,' said she, 'instead of creeping before me, dare you present yourself in this shape, thinking to frighten me?'

'And thou,' replied the lion, 'art thou not afraid to break the treaty which was solemnly made and confirmed between us by oath, not to wrong or to do one another any hurt?'

'Oh! thou cursed creature!' replied the princess, 'I can justly reproach thee with doing so.'

The lion answered fiercely, 'Thou shalt quickly have thy reward for the trouble thou hast given me to return.' With that he opened his terrible throat, and ran at her to devour her, but she, being on her guard, leaped backward, got time to pull out one of her hairs and, by pronouncing three or four words, changed it into a sharp sword, wherewith she cut the lion through the middle in two pieces.

The two parts of the lion vanished, and the head only was left, which changed itself into a large scorpion. Immediately the princess turned herself into a serpent, and fought the scorpion, who finding himself worsted, took the shape of an eagle, and flew away; but the serpent at the same time took also the shape of an eagle that was black and much stronger, and pursued him, so that we lost sight of them both.

Some time after they had disappeared, the ground opened before us, and out of it came forth a cat, black and white, with her hair standing upright, and mewing in a frightful manner; a black wolf followed her close, and gave her no time to rest. The cat, being thus hard beset, changed herself into a worm, and being nigh to a pomegranate that had accidentally fallen from a tree that grew on the side of a canal which was deep but not broad, the worm pierced the pomegranate in an instant, and hid itself. The pomegranate swelled immediately, and became as big as a gourd, which, mounting up to the roof of the gallery, rolled there for some space backwards and forwards, fell down again into the court, and broke into several pieces.

The wolf, which had in the meanwhile transformed itself into a cock, fell to picking up the seeds of the pomegranate one after another, but finding no more, he came towards us with his wings spread, making a great noise, as if he would ask us whether there were any more seeds. There was one lying on the brink of the canal, which the cock perceived as he went back, and ran speedily thither, but just as he was going to pick it up, the seed rolled into the river, and turned into a little fish.

The cock jumped into the river and was turned into a pike that pursued the small fish; they continued both under water for over two hours, and we knew not what had become of them. All of a sudden we heard terrible cries, which made us tremble, and a little while after we saw the genie and princess all in flames. They threw flashes of fire out of their mouths at each other, till they came to close quarters; then the two fires increased, with a thick burning smoke, which mounted so high that we had reason to fear it would set the palace on fire. But we very soon had a more urgent reason for fear, for the genie, having got loose from the princess, came to the gallery where we stood, and blew flames of fire upon us. We should all have perished if the princess, running to our assistance, had not by her cries forced him to retire, and defend himself against her; yet, notwithstanding all her exertions, she could not hinder the sultan's beard from being burnt, and his face spoiled, nor the chief of the chamberlains from being stifled and burnt on the spot. The sultan and I expected nothing but death, when we heard a cry of 'Victory, victory!' and on a sudden the princess appeared in her natural shape, but the genie was reduced to a heap of ashes.

The princess came near to us that she might not lose time, called for a cupful of water, which the young slave, who had received no damage, brought her. She took it, and after pronouncing some words over it, threw it upon me, saying, 'If thou art become an ape by enchantment, change thy shape, and take that of a man, which thou hadst before.' These words were hardly uttered when I became a man as I was before.

I was preparing to give thanks to the princess, but she prevented me by addressing herself to her father, thus: 'Sir, I have gained the victory over the genie, as your majesty may see; but it is a victory that costs me dear. I have but a few minutes to live, and you will not have the satisfaction of making the match you intended; the fire has pierced me during the terrible combat, and I find it is consuming me by degrees. This would not have happened had I perceived the last of the pomegranate seeds, and swallowed it as I did the others, when I was changed into a cock; the genie had fled thither as to his last entrenchment, and upon that the success of the combat depended, without danger to me. This slip obliged me to have recourse to fire, and to fight with those mighty arms as I did between heaven and earth, in your presence; for, in spite of all his redoubtable art and

experience, I made the genie know that I understood more than he. I have conquered and reduced him to ashes, but I cannot escape death, which is approaching.'

The sultan suffered the princess, the Lady Or Beauty, to go on with the recital of her combat, and when she had done he spoke to her in a tone that sufficiently testified his grief: 'My daughter,' said he, 'you see in what condition your father is; alas! I wonder that I am yet alive!' He could speak no more, for his tears, sighs and sobs made him speechless; his daughter and I wept with him.

In the meantime, while we were vieing with each other in grief the princess cried, 'I burn! I burn!' She found that the fire which consumed her had at last seized upon her whole body, which made her still cry 'I burn,' until death had made an end of her intolerable pains. The effect of that fire was so extraordinary that in a few moments she was wholly reduced to ashes, like the genie.

How grieved I was at so dismal a spectacle! I had rather all my life have continued an ape or a dog than to have seen my benefactress thus miserably perish. The sultan, being afflicted beyond all that can be imagined, cried out piteously, and beat himself on his head, until being quite overcome with grief, he fainted away, which made me fear for his life. In the meantime the officers came running at the sultan's cries, and with very much ado brought him to himself again. There was no need for him and me to give them a long narrative of this adventure, in order to convince them of their great loss. The two heaps of ashes, into which the princess and the genie had been reduced, were sufficient demonstration. The sultan was hardly able to stand, but had to be supported till he could get to his apartment.

When the news of the tragical event had spread through the palace and the city, all the people bewailed the misfortune of the princess, the Lady of Beauty, and were much affected by the sultan's affliction. Every one was in deep mourning for seven days, and many ceremonies were performed. The ashes of the genie were thrown into the air, but those of the princess were gathered into a precious urn to be kept, and the urn was set in a stately tomb which was built for that purpose on the same place where the ashes had lain.

The grief which the sultan felt for the loss of his daughter threw him into a fit of illness, which confined him to his chamber for a whole month. He had not fully recovered strength when he sent for me: 'Prince,' said he, 'hearken to the orders that I now give you; it will cost you your life if you do not put them into execution.' I assured him of exact obedience, upon which he went on thus: 'I have constantly lived in perfect felicity, and was never crossed by any accident: but by your arrival all the happiness I possessed is vanished; my daughter is dead, her attendant is no more, and it is through a miracle that I am yet alive. You are the cause of all those misfortunes, for which it is impossible that I should be comforted; therefore depart from hence in peace, without farther delay, for I myself must perish if you stay any longer: I am persuaded that your presence brings mischief along, with it. This is all I have to say to you. Depart, and beware of ever appearing again in my dominions; no consideration whatsoever shall hinder me from making you repent of it.' I was going to speak, but he stopped my mouth with words full of anger; and so I was obliged to leave his palace, rejected, banished, an outcast from the world, and not knowing what would become of me. And so I became a hermit.

THE FIRST VOYAGE OF SINBAD THE SAILOR.

My father left me a considerable estate, the best part of which I spent in riotous living during my youth; but I perceived my error, and reflected that riches were perishable, and quickly consumed by such ill managers as myself. I further considered that by my irregular way of living I had wretchedly misspent my time which is the most valuable thing in the world. Struck with those reflections, I collected the remains of my furniture, and sold all my patrimony by public auction to the highest bidder. Then I entered into a contract with some merchants, who traded by sea: I took the advice of such as I thought most capable to give it me; and resolving to improve what money I had, I went to Balsora and embarked with several merchants on board a ship which we jointly fitted out.

We set sail, and steered our course towards the East Indies, through the Persian Gulf, which is formed by the coasts of Arabia Felix on the right, and by those of Persia on the left, and, according to common opinion, is seventy leagues across at the broadest part. The eastern sea, as well as that of the Indies, is very spacious: it is bounded on one side by the coasts of Abyssinia, and is 4,500 leagues in length to the isles of Vakvak. At first I was troubled with sea-sickness, but speedily recovered my health, and was not afterwards troubled with that disease.

In our voyage we touched at several islands, where we sold or exchanged our goods. One day, whilst under sail, we were becalmed near a little island, almost even with the surface of the water, which resembled a green meadow. The captain ordered his sails to be furled, and permitted such persons as had a mind to do so to land upon the island, amongst whom I was one.

But while we were diverting ourselves with eating and drinking, and recovering ourselves from the fatigue of the sea, the island on a sudden trembled, and shook us terribly.

They perceived the trembling of the island on board the ship, and called us to re-embark speedily, or we should all be lost, for what we took for an island was only the back of a whale. The nimblest got into the sloop, others betook themselves to swimming; but for my part I was still upon the back of the whale when he dived into the sea, and had time only to catch hold of a piece of wood that we had brought out of the ship to make a fire. Meanwhile, the captain, having received those on board who were in the sloop, and taken up some of those that swam, resolved to use the favourable gale that had just risen, and hoisting his sails, pursued his voyage, so that it was impossible for me to regain the ship.

Thus was I exposed to the mercy of the waves, and struggled for my life all the rest of the day and the following night. Next morning I found my strength gone, and despaired of saving my life, when happily a wave threw me against an island. The bank was high and rugged, so that I could scarcely have got up had it not been for some roots of trees, which fortune seemed to have preserved in this place for my safety. Being got up, I lay down upon the ground half dead until the sun appeared; then, though I was very feeble, both by reason of my hard labour and want of food, I crept along to look for some herbs fit to eat, and had the good luck not only to find some, but likewise a spring of excellent water, which contributed much to restore me. After this I advanced farther into the island, and came at last into a fine plain, where I perceived a horse feeding at a great distance. I went towards him, between hope and fear, not knowing whether I was going to lose my life or save it. Presently I heard the voice of a man from under ground, who immediately appeared to me, and asked who I was. I gave him an account of my adventure; after which, taking me by the hand, he led me into a cave, where there were several other people, no less amazed to see me than I was to see them.

I ate some victuals which they offered me, and then asked them what they did in such a desert place. They answered that they were grooms belonging to King Mihrage, sovereign of the island, and that every year they brought thither the king's horses. They added that they were to get home to-morrow, and had I been one day later I must have perished, because the inhabited part of the island was at a great distance, and it would have been impossible for me to have got thither without a guide.

Next morning they returned with their horses to the capital of the island, took me with them, and presented me to King Mihrage. He asked me who I was, and by what adventure I came into his dominions? And, after I had satisfied him he told me he was much concerned for my misfortune, and at the same time ordered that I should want for nothing, which his officers were so generous and careful as to see exactly fulfilled.

Being a merchant, I frequented the society of men of my own profession, and particularly inquired for those who were strangers, if perhaps I might hear any news from Bagdad, or find an opportunity to return thither, for King Mihrage's capital was situated on the edge of the sea, and had a fine harbour, where ships arrived daily from the different quarters of the world. I frequented also the society of the learned Indians, and took delight in hearing them discourse; but withal I took care to make my court regularly to the king, and

conversed with the governors and petty kings, his tributaries, that were about him. They asked me a thousand questions about my country, and I, being willing to inform myself as to their laws and customs, asked them everything which I thought worth knowing.

There belonged to this king an island named Cassel. They assured me that every night a noise of drums was heard there, whence the mariners fancied that it was the residence of Degial. I had a great mind to see this wonderful place, and on my way thither saw fishes of one hundred and two hundred cubits long, that occasion more fear than hurt, for they are so timid that they will fly at the rattling of two sticks or boards. I saw likewise other fishes, about a cubit in length, that had heads like owls.

As I was one day at the port after my return, a ship arrived, and as soon as she cast anchor, they began to unload her, and the merchants on board ordered their goods to be carried into the warehouse. As I cast my eye upon some bales, and looked at the name, I found my own, and perceived the bales to be the same that I had embarked at Balsora. I also knew the captain; but being persuaded that he believed me to be drowned, I went and asked him whose bales they were. He replied: 'They belonged to a merchant of Bagdad, called Sinbad, who came to sea with us; but one day, being near an island, as we thought, he went ashore with several other passengers upon this supposed island, which was only a monstrous whale that lay asleep upon the surface of the water; but as soon as he felt the heat of the fire they had kindled on his back to dress some victuals he began to move, and dived under water: most of the persons who were upon him perished, and among them unfortunate Sinbad. Those bales belonged to him, and I am resolved to trade with them until I meet with some of his family, to whom I may return the profit.'

'Captain,' said I, 'I am that Sinbad whom you thought to be dead, and those bales are mine.'

When the captain heard me speak thus, 'O heaven,' said he, 'whom can we ever trust now-a-days? There is no faith left among men. I saw Sinbad perish with my own eyes, and the passengers on board saw it as well as I, and yet you tell me you are that Sinbad. What impudence is this! To look at you, one would take you to be a man of honesty, and yet you tell a horrible falsehood, in order to possess yourself of what does not belong to you.'

'Have patience, captain,' replied I; 'do me the favour to hear what I have to say.'

'Very well,' said he, 'speak; I am ready to hear you.' Then I told him how I escaped, and by what adventure I met with the grooms of King Mihrage, who brought me to his court.

He was soon persuaded that I was no cheat, for there came people from his ship who knew me, paid me great compliments, and expressed much joy to see me alive. At last he knew me himself, and embracing me, 'Heaven be praised,' said he, 'for your happy escape; I cannot enough express my joy for it: there are your goods; take and do with them what you will.' I thanked him, acknowledged his honesty, and in return offered him part of my goods as a present, which he generously refused.

I took out what was most valuable in my bales, and presented it to King Mihrage, who, knowing my misfortune, asked me how I came by such rarities. I acquainted him with the whole story. He was mightily pleased at my good luck, accepted my present, and gave me one much more considerable in return. Upon this I took leave of him, and went aboard the same ship, after I had exchanged my goods for the commodities of that country. I carried with me wood of aloes, sandal, camphor, nutmegs, cloves, pepper, and ginger. We passed by several islands, and at last arrived at Balsora, from whence I came to this city, with the value of one hundred thousand sequins. My family and I received one another with transports of sincere friendship. I bought slaves and fine lands, and built me a great house. And thus I settled myself, resolving to forget the miseries I had suffered, and to enjoy the pleasures of life.

THE SECOND VOYAGE OF SINBAD THE SAILOR

I designed, after my first voyage, to spend the rest of my days at Bagdad; but it was not long ere I grew weary of a quiet life. My inclination to trade revived. I bought goods suited to the commerce I intended, and put to sea a second time, with merchants of known probity. We embarked on board a good ship, and after recommending ourselves to God, set sail. We traded from island to island, and exchanged commodities with great profit. One day we landed on an island covered with several sorts of fruit trees, but so unpeopled, that we could see neither man nor beast upon it. We went to take a little fresh air in the meadows, and along the streams that watered them. Whilst some diverted themselves with gathering flowers, and others with gathering fruits, I took my wine and provisions, and sat down by a stream betwixt two great trees, which formed a curious shape. I made a very good meal, and afterwards fell asleep. I cannot tell how long I slept, but when I awoke the ship was gone.

I was very much surprised to find the ship gone. I got up and looked about everywhere, and could not see one of the merchants who landed with me. At last I perceived the ship under sail, but at such a distance that I lost sight of her in a very little time.

I leave you to guess at my melancholy reflections in this sad condition. I was ready to die with grief: I cried out sadly, beat my head and breast, and threw myself down upon the ground, where I lay some time in a terrible agony. I upbraided myself a hundred times for not being content with the produce of my first voyage, that might well have served me all my life. But all this was in vain, and my repentance out of season.

At last I resigned myself to the will of God; and not knowing what to do, I climbed up to the top of a great tree, from whence I looked about on all sides to see if there was anything that could give me hope. When I looked towards the sea, I could see nothing but sky and water, but looking towards the land I saw something white; and, coming down from the tree, I took up what provision I had left and went towards it, the distance being so great that I could not distinguish what it was.

When I came nearer, I thought it to be a white bowl of a prodigious height and bigness; and when I came up to it I touched it, and found it to be very smooth. I went round to see if it was open on any side, but saw it was not, and that there was no climbing up to the top of it, it was so smooth. It was at least fifty paces round.

By this time the sun was ready to set, and all of a sudden the sky became as dark as if it had been covered with a thick cloud. I was much astonished at this sudden darkness, but much more when I found it was occasioned by a bird, of a monstrous size, that came flying toward me. I remembered a fowl, called roc, that I had often heard mariners speak of, and conceived that the great bowl, which I so much admired, must needs be its egg. In short, the bird lighted, and sat over the egg to hatch it. As I perceived her coming, I crept close to the egg, so that I had before me one of the legs of the bird, which was as big as the trunk of a tree. I tied myself strongly to it with the cloth that went round my turban, in hopes that when the roc flew away next morning she would carry me with her out of this desert island. And after having passed the night in this condition, the bird really flew away next morning, as soon as it was day, and carried me so high that I could not see the earth. Then she descended all of a sudden, with so much rapidity that I lost my senses; but when the roc was settled, and I found myself upon the ground, I speedily untied the knot, and had scarcely done so when the bird, having taken up a serpent of a monstrous length in her bill, flew away.

The place where she left me was a very deep valley, encompassed on all sides with mountains, so high that they seemed to reach above the clouds, and so full of steep rocks that there was no possibility of getting out of the valley. This was a new perplexity, so that when I compared this place with the desert island from which the roc brought me, I found that I had gained nothing by the change.

As I walked through this valley I perceived it was strewn with diamonds, some of which were of surprising bigness. I took a great deal of pleasure in looking at them; but speedily I saw at a distance such objects as very much diminished my satisfaction, and which I could not look upon without terror; they were a great number

of serpents, so big and so long that the least of them was capable of swallowing an elephant. They retired in the day-time to their dens, where they hid themselves from the roc, their enemy, and did not come out but in the night-time.

I spent the day in walking about the valley, resting myself at times in such places as I thought most suitable. When night came on I went into a cave, where I thought I might be in safety. I stopped the mouth of it, which was low and straight, with a great stone, to preserve me from the serpents, but not so exactly fitted as to hinder light from coming in. I supped on part of my provisions, but the serpents, which began to appear, hissing about in the meantime, put me into such extreme fear that you may easily imagine I did not sleep. When day appeared the serpents retired, and I came out of the cave trembling. I can justly say that I walked a long time upon diamonds without feeling an inclination to touch any of them. At last I sat down, and notwithstanding my uneasiness, not having shut my eyes during the night, I fell asleep, after having eaten a little more of my provisions; but I had scarcely shut my eyes when something that fell by me with great noise awakened me. This was a great piece of fresh meat, and at the same time I saw several others fall down from the rocks in different places.

I had always looked upon it as a fable when I heard mariners and others discourse of the valley of diamonds, and of the stratagems made use of by some merchants to get jewels from thence; but now I found it to be true. For, in reality, those merchants come to the neighbourhood of this valley when the eagles have young ones, and throwing great joints of meat into the valley, the diamonds, upon whose points they fall, stick to them; the eagles, which are stronger in this country than anywhere else, pounce with great force upon those pieces of meat, and carry them to their nests upon the top of the rocks to feed their young with, at which time the merchants, running to their nests, frighten the eagles by their noise, and take away the diamonds that stick to the meat. And this stratagem they make use of to get the diamonds out of the valley, which is surrounded with such precipices that nobody can enter it.

I believed till then that it was not possible for me to get out of this abyss, which I looked upon as my grave; but now I changed my mind, for the falling in of those pieces of meat put me in hopes of a way of saving my life.

I began to gather together the largest diamonds that I could see, and put them into the leathern bag in which I used to carry my provisions. I afterwards took the largest piece of meat I could find, tied it close round me with the cloth of my turban, and then laid myself upon the ground, with my face downward, the bag of diamonds being tied fast to my girdle, so that it could not possibly drop off.

I had scarcely laid me down before the eagles came. Each of them seized a piece of meat, and one of the strongest having taken me up, with a piece of meat on my back, carried me to his nest on the top of the mountain. The merchants fell straightway to shouting, to frighten the eagles; and when they had obliged them to quit their prey, one of them came to the nest where I was. He was very much afraid when he saw me, but recovering himself, instead of inquiring how I came thither, he began to quarrel with me, and asked why I stole his goods. 'You will treat me,' replied I, 'with more civility when you know me better. Do not trouble yourself; I have diamonds enough for you and myself too, more than all the other merchants together. If they have any, it is by chance; but I chose myself in the bottom of the valley all those which you see in this bag'; and having spoken those words, I showed them to him. I had scarcely done speaking, when the other merchants came trooping about us, much astonished to see me; but they were much more surprised when I told them my story. Yet they did not so much admire my stratagem to save myself as my courage to attempt it.

They took me to the place where they were staying all together, and there having opened my bag, they were surprised at the largeness of my diamonds, and confessed that in all the courts where they had been they had never seen any that came near them. I prayed the merchant to whom the nest belonged (for every merchant had his own), to take as many for his share as he pleased. He contented himself with one, and that too the least of them; and when I pressed him to take more, without fear of doing me any injury, 'No,' said he, 'I am very

well satisfied with this, which is valuable enough to save me the trouble of making any more voyages to raise as great a fortune as I desire.'

I spent the night with those merchants, to whom I told my story a second time, for the satisfaction of those who had not heard it. I could not moderate my joy when I found myself delivered from the danger I have mentioned. I thought I was in a dream, and could scarcely believe myself to be out of danger.

The merchants had thrown their pieces of meat into the valley for several days, and each of them being satisfied with the diamonds that had fallen to his lot, we left the place next morning all together, and travelled near high mountains, where there were serpents of a prodigious length, which we had the good fortune to escape. We took ship at the nearest port and came to the Isle of Roha, where the trees grow that yield camphor. This tree is so large, and its branches so thick, that a hundred men may easily sit under its shade. The juice of which the camphor is made runs out from a hole bored in the upper part of the tree, is received in a vessel, where it grows thick, and becomes what we call camphor; and the juice thus drawn out the tree withers and dies.

There is in this island the rhinoceros, a creature less than the elephant, but greater than the buffalo; it has a horn upon its nose about a cubit long; this horn is solid, and cleft in the middle from one end to the other, and there are upon it white lines, representing the figure of a man. The rhinoceros fights with the elephant, runs his horn into him, and carries him off upon his head; but the blood of the elephant running into his eyes and making him blind, he falls to the ground, and then, strange to relate, the roc comes and carries them both away in her claws to be food for her young ones.

Here I exchanged some of my diamonds for good merchandise. From thence we went to other isles, and at last, having touched at several trading towns of the main land, we landed at Balsora, from whence I went to Bagdad. There I immediately gave great alms to the poor, and lived honourably upon the vast riches I had gained with so much fatigue.

THE THIRD VOYAGE OF SINBAD THE SAILOR.

The pleasures of the life which I then led soon made me forget the risks I had run in my two former voyages; but, being then in the flower of my age I grew weary of living without business; and hardening myself against the thought of any danger I might incur, I went from Bagdad, with the richest commodities of the country, to Balsora: there I embarked again with the merchants. We made a long voyage, and touched at several ports, where we drove a considerable trade. One day, being out in the main ocean, we were attacked by a horrible tempest, which made us lose our course. The tempest continued several days, and brought us before the port of an island, where the captain was very unwilling to enter; but we were obliged to cast anchor there. When we had furled our sails the captain told us that this and some other neighbouring islands were inhabited by hairy savages, who would speedily attack us; and though they were but dwarfs, yet our misfortune was that we must make no resistance, for they were more in number than the locusts; and if we happened to kill one of them they would all fall upon us and destroy us.

This discourse of the captain put the whole company into a great consternation; and we found very soon, to our cost, that what he had told us was but too true; an innumerable multitude of frightful savages, covered all over with red hair, and about two feet high, came swimming towards us, and in a little time encompassed our ship. They spoke to us as they came near, but we understood not their language; they climbed up the sides of the ship with an agility that surprised us. We beheld all this with mortal fear, without daring to offer to defend ourselves, or to speak one word to divert them from their mischievous design. In short, they took down our sails, cut the cable, and, hauling to the shore, made us all get out, and afterwards carried the ship into another island, from whence they had come. All travellers carefully avoided that island where they left us, it being very dangerous to stay there, for a reason you shall hear anon; but we were forced to bear our affliction with patience.

We went forward into the island, where we found some fruits and herbs to prolong our lives as long as we could; but we expected nothing but death. As we went on we perceived at a distance a great pile of building, and made towards it. We found it to be a palace, well built, and very lofty, with a gate of ebony with double doors, which we thrust open. We entered the court, where we saw before us a vast apartment with a porch, having on one side a heap of men's bones, and on the other a vast number of roasting spits. We trembled at this spectacle, and, being weary with travelling, our legs failed under us: we fell to the ground, seized with deadly fear, and lay a long time motionless.

The sun had set, and whilst we were in the lamentable condition just mentioned, the gate of the apartment opened with a great noise, and there came out the horrible figure of a black man, as high as a tall palm tree. He had but one eye, and that in the middle of his forehead, where it looked as red as a burning coal. His fore-teeth were very long and sharp, and stood out of his mouth, which was as deep as that of a horse; his upper lip hung down upon his breast; his ears resembled those of an elephant, and covered his shoulders; and his nails were as long and crooked as the talons of the greatest birds. At the sight of so frightful a giant we lost all our senses, and lay like men dead.

At last we came to ourselves, and saw him sitting in the porch, looking at us. When he had considered us well, he advanced towards us, and laying his hand upon me, he took me up by the nape of my neck, and turned me round as a butcher would do a sheep's head. After having viewed me well, and perceiving me to be so lean that I had nothing but skin and bone, he let me go. He took up all the rest, one by one, and viewed them in the same manner; and the captain being the fattest, he held him with one hand, as I might a sparrow, and thrusting a spit through him, kindled a great fire, roasted, and ate him in his apartment for his supper. This being done, he returned to his porch, where he lay and fell asleep, snoring louder than thunder. He slept thus till morning. For our parts, it was not possible for us to enjoy any rest; so that we passed the night in the most cruel fear that can be imagined. Day being come, the giant awoke, got up, went out, and left us in the palace.

When we thought him at a distance, we broke the melancholy silence we had kept all night, and every one grieving more than another, we made the palace resound with our complaints and groans. Though there were a great many of us, and we had but one enemy, we had not at first the presence of mind to think of delivering ourselves from him by his death.

We thought of several other things, but determined nothing; so that, submitting to what it should please God to order concerning us, we spent the day in running about the island for fruit and herbs to sustain our lives. When evening came, we sought for a place to lie down in, but found none; so that we were forced, whether we would or not, to return to the palace.

The giant failed not to come back, and supped once more upon one of our companions; after which he slept, and snored till day, and then went out and left us as formerly. Our condition was so very terrible that several of my comrades designed to throw themselves into the sea, rather than die so strange a death. Those who were of this mind argued with the rest to follow their example; upon which one of the company answered that we were forbidden to destroy ourselves; but even if it were lawful, it was more reasonable to think of a way to rid ourselves of the barbarous tyrant who designed so cruel a death for us.

Having thought of a project for that end, I communicated the same to my comrades, who approved it. 'Brethren,' said I, 'you know there is a great deal of timber floating upon the coast; if you will be advised by me, let us make several rafts that may carry us, and when they are done, leave them there till we think fit to make use of them. In the meantime we will execute the design to deliver ourselves from the giant, and if it succeed, we may stay here with patience till some ship pass by to carry us out of this fatal island; but if it happen to miscarry, we will speedily get to our rafts, and put to sea. I confess, that by exposing ourselves to the fury of the waves, we run a risk of losing our lives; but if we do, is it not better to be buried in the sea than in the entrails of this monster, who has already devoured two of us?' My advice was relished, and we made rafts capable of carrying three persons each.

We returned to the palace towards evening, and the giant arrived a little while after. We were forced to see another of our comrades roasted. But at last we revenged ourselves on the brutish giant thus. After he had made an end of his cursed supper, he lay down on his back, and fell asleep. As soon as we heard him snore, according to his custom, nine of the boldest among us, and myself, took each of us a spit, and putting the points of them into the fire till they were burning hot, we thrust them into his eye all at once, and blinded him. The pain occasioned him to make a frightful cry, and to get up and stretch out his hands in order to sacrifice some of us to his rage, but we ran to places where he could not find us; and after having sought for us in vain, he groped for the gate, and went out, howling dreadfully.

We went out of the palace after the giant, and came to the shore, where we had left our rafts, and put them immediately into the sea. We waited till day in order to get upon them, in case the giant came towards us with any guide of his own species; but we hoped that if he did not appear by sunrise, and gave over his howling, which we still heard, he would die; and if that happened to be the case, we resolved to stay in the island, and not to risk our lives upon the rafts. But day had scarcely appeared when we perceived our cruel enemy, accompanied by two others almost of the same size leading him, and a great number more coming before him with a very quick pace.

When we saw this, we made no delay, but got immediately upon our rafts, and rowed off from the shore. The giants, who perceived this, took up great stones, and running to the shore entered the water up to their waists, and threw so exactly that they sank all the rafts but that I was upon, and all my companions, except the two with me, were drowned. We rowed with all our might, and got out of the reach of the giants; but when we got out to sea, we were exposed to the mercy of the waves and winds, and tossed about, sometimes on one side, and sometimes on another, and spent that night and the following day under a cruel uncertainty as to our fate; but next morning we had the good luck to be thrown upon an island, where we landed with much joy. We found excellent fruit there, that gave us great relief, so that we pretty well recovered our strength.

In the evening we fell asleep on the bank of the sea, but were awaked by the noise of a serpent as long as a palm tree, whose scales made a rustling as he crept along. He swallowed up one of my comrades, notwithstanding his loud cries and the efforts he made to rid himself from the serpent, which shook him several times against the ground, and crushed him; and we could hear him gnaw and tear the poor wretch's bones, when we had fled a great distance from him. Next day we saw the serpent again, to our great terror, and I cried out, 'O heaven, to what dangers are we exposed! We rejoiced yesterday at having escaped from the cruelty of a giant and the rage of the waves, and now are we fallen into another danger altogether as terrible.'

As we walked about we saw a large tall tree, upon which we designed to pass the following night, for our security; and having satisfied our hunger with fruit, we mounted it accordingly. A little while after, the serpent came hissing to the root of the tree, raised itself up against the trunk of it, and meeting with my comrade, who sat lower than I, swallowed him at once, and went off.

I staid upon the tree till it was day, and then came down, more like a dead man than one alive, expecting the same fate as my two companions. This filled me with horror, so that I was going to throw myself into the sea; but nature prompting us to a desire to live as long as we can, I withstood this temptation to despair, and submitted myself to the will of God, who disposes of our lives at His pleasure.

In the meantime I gathered together a great quantity of small wood, brambles, and dry thorns, and making them up into faggots made a great circle with them round the tree, and also tied some of them to the branches over my head. Having done thus, when the evening came I shut myself up within this circle, with this melancholy piece of satisfaction, that I had neglected nothing which could preserve me from the cruel destiny with which I was threatened. The serpent failed not to come at the usual hour, and went round the tree, seeking for an opportunity to devour me, but was prevented by the rampart I had made, so that he lay till day, like a cat watching in vain for a mouse that has retreated to a place of safety. When day appeared he retired, but I dared not to leave my fort until the sun arose.

I was fatigued with the toil he had put me to, and suffered so much from his poisonous breath that, death seeming preferable to me than the horror of such a condition. I came down from the tree, and not thinking on the resignation I had made to the will of God the preceding day, I ran towards the sea, with a design to throw myself into it headlong.

God took compassion on my desperate state, for just as I was going to throw myself into the sea, I perceived a ship at a considerable distance. I called as loud as I could, and taking the linen from my turban, displayed it that they might observe me. This had the desired effect; all the crew perceived me, and the captain sent his boat for me. As soon as I came aboard, the merchants and seamen flocked about me to know how I came to that desert island; and after I had told them of all that befell me, the oldest among them said they had several times heard of the giants that dwelt in that island, that they were cannibals and ate men raw as well as roasted; and as to the serpents, he added, there were abundance in the isle that hid themselves by day and came abroad by night. After having testified their joy at my escaping so many dangers, they brought me the best of what they had to eat; and the captain, seeing that I was all in rags, was so generous as to give me one of his own suits.

We were at sea for some time, touched at several islands, and at last landed at that of Salabat, where there grows sanders, a wood of great use in physic. We entered the port, and came to anchor. The merchants began to unload their goods, in order to sell or exchange them. In the meantime the captain came to me, and said, 'Brother, I have here a parcel of goods that belonged to a merchant who sailed some time on board this ship; and he being dead, I intend to dispose of them for the benefit of his heirs, when I know them.' The bales he spoke of lay on the deck, and showing them to me, he said, 'There are the goods; I hope you will take care to sell them, and you shall have a commission.' I thanked him that he gave me an opportunity to employ myself, because I hated to be idle.

The clerk of the ship took an account of all the bales, with the names of the merchants to whom they belonged; and when he asked the captain in whose name he should enter those he gave me the charge of, 'Enter them,' said the captain, 'in the name of Sinbad the sailor.' I could not hear myself named without some emotion, and looking steadfastly on the captain, I knew him to be the person who, in my second voyage, had left me in the island where I fell asleep by a brook, and set sail without me, and without sending to look for me. But I could not remember him at first, he was so much altered since I saw him.

And as for him, who believed me to be dead, I could not wonder at his not knowing me. 'But, captain,' said I, 'was the merchant's name to whom those goods belonged Sinbad?'

'Yes,' replied he, 'that was his name; he came from Bagdad, and embarked on board my ship at Balsora. One day, when we landed at an island to take in water and other refreshments, I know not by what mistake I set sail without observing that he did not re-embark with us; neither I nor the merchants perceived it till four hours after. We had the wind in our stern and so fresh a gale that it was not then possible for us to tack about for him.'

'You believe him then to be dead?' said I.

'Certainly,' answered he.

'No, captain,' said I; 'look upon me, and you may know that I am Sinbad, whom you left in that desert island. I fell asleep by a brook, and when I awoke I found all the company gone.'

The captain, having considered me attentively, knew me at last embraced me, and said, 'God be praised that fortune has supplied my defect. There are your goods, which I always took care to preserve and to make the best of at every port where I touched. I restore them to you, with the profit I have made on them.' I took them from him, and at the same time acknowledged how much I owed to him.

From the Isle of Salabat we went to another, where I furnished myself with cloves, cinnamon, and other spices. As we sailed from that island we saw a tortoise that was twenty cubits in length and breadth. We observed also a fish which looked like a cow, and gave milk, and its skin is so hard that they usually make bucklers of it. I saw another which had the shape and colour of a camel. In short, after a long voyage, I arrived at Balsora, and from thence returned to this city of Bagdad, with so much riches that I knew not what I had. I gave a great deal to the poor, and bought another great estate in addition to what I had already.

THE FOURTH VOYAGE OF SINBAD THE SAILOR.

The pleasures I took after my third voyage had not charms enough to divert me from another. I was again prevailed upon by my passion for traffic and curiosity to see new things. I therefore settled my affairs, and having provided a stock of goods fit for the places where I designed to trade, I set out on my journey. I took the way of Persia, of which I travelled over several provinces, and then arrived at a port, where I embarked. We set sail, and having touched at several ports of the mainland and some of the eastern islands, we put out to sea, and were overtaken by a sudden gust of wind that obliged the captain to furl his sails, and to take all other necessary precautions to prevent the danger that threatened us. But all was in vain; our endeavours had no effect, the sails were torn into a thousand pieces, and the ship was stranded; so that a great many of the merchants and seamen were drowned, and the cargo lost.

I had the good fortune, with several of the merchants and mariners, to get a plank, and we were carried by the current to an island which lay before us: there we found fruit and spring water, which preserved our lives. We stayed all night near the place where the sea cast us ashore, without consulting what we should do, our misfortune had dispirited us so much.

Next morning, as soon as the sun was up, we walked from the shore, and advancing into the island, saw some houses, to which we went; and as soon as we came thither we were encompassed by a great number of black men, who seized us, shared us among them, and carried us to their respective habitations.

I and five of my comrades were carried to one place; they made us sit down immediately, and gave us a certain herb, which they made signs to us to eat. My comrades, not taking notice that the black men ate none of it themselves, consulted only the satisfying of their own hunger, and fell to eating with greediness: but I, suspecting some trick, would not so much as taste it, which happened well for me; for in a little time I perceived my companions had lost their senses, and that when they spoke to me they knew not what they said.

The black men fed us afterwards with rice, prepared with oil of cocoanuts, and my comrades, who had lost their reason, ate of it greedily. I ate of it also, but very sparingly. The black men gave us that herb at first on purpose to deprive us of our senses, that we might not be aware of the sad destiny prepared for us; and they gave us rice on purpose to fatten us, for, being cannibals, their design was to eat us as soon as we grew fat. They did accordingly eat my comrades, who were not aware of their condition; but my senses being entire, you may easily guess that instead of growing fat, as the rest did, I grew leaner every day. The fear of death under which I laboured turned all my food into poison. I fell into a languishing illness which proved my safety, for the black men having killed and eaten up my companions, seeing me to be withered, lean, and sick, deferred my death till another time.

Meanwhile, I had a great deal of liberty, so that there was scarcely any notice taken of what I did, and this gave me an opportunity one day to get at a distance from the houses, and to make my escape. An old man who saw me, and suspected my design, called to me as loud as he could to return, but instead of obeying him, I redoubled my pace, and quickly got out of sight. At that time there was none but the old man about the houses, the rest being away, and not to come home till night, which was pretty usual with them; therefore, being sure that they could not come in time to pursue me, I went on till night, when I stopped to rest a little, and to eat some of the provisions I had taken care to bring; but I speedily set forward again, and travelled seven days, avoiding those places which seemed to be inhabited, and living for the most part upon cocoanuts,

which served me for both meat and drink. On the eighth day I came near the sea, and all of a sudden saw white people like myself, gathering pepper, of which there was great plenty in that place. This I took to be a good omen, and went to them without any scruple.

The people who gathered pepper came to meet me as soon as they saw me, and asked me in Arabic who I was, and whence I came. I was overjoyed to hear them speak in my own language, and satisfied their curiosity by giving them an account of my shipwreck, and how I fell into the hands of the black men. 'Those black men,' replied they, 'are cannibals, and by what miracle did you escape their cruelty?' I told them the same story I now tell you, at which they were wonderfully surprised.

I stayed with them till they had gathered their quantity of pepper, and then sailed with them to the island from whence they came. They presented me to their king, who was a good prince. He had the patience to hear the relation of my adventures, which surprised him, and he afterwards gave me clothes, and commanded care to be taken of me.

The island was very well peopled, plentiful in everything, and the capital was a place of great trade. This agreeable retreat was very comfortable to me after my misfortune, and the kindness of this generous prince towards me completed my satisfaction. In a word, there was not a person more in favour with him than myself; and, in consequence, every man in court and city sought to oblige me, so that in a very little time I was looked upon rather as a native than a stranger.

I observed one thing which to me appeared very extraordinary. All the people, the king himself not excepted, rode their horses without bridle or stirrups. This made me one day take the liberty to ask the king how that came to pass. His majesty answered, that I talked to him of things which nobody knew the use of in his dominions. I went immediately to a workman, and gave him a model for making the stock of a saddle. When that was done, I covered it myself with velvet and leather, and embroidered it with gold. I afterwards went to a locksmith, who made me a bridle according to the pattern I showed him, and then he made me also some stirrups. When I had all things completed, I presented them to the king, and put them upon one of his horses. His majesty mounted immediately, and was so pleased with them, that he testified his satisfaction by large presents to me. I could not avoid making several others for his ministers and the principal officers of his household, who all of them made me presents that enriched me in a little time. I also made some for the people of best quality in the city, which gained me great reputation and regard.

As I paid court very constantly to the king, he said to me one day, 'Sinbad, I love thee; and all my subjects who know thee treat thee according to my example. I have one thing to demand of thee, which thou must grant.'

'Sir,' answered I, 'there is nothing but I will do, as a mark of my obedience to your majesty, whose power over me is absolute.'

'I have a mind thou shouldst marry,' replied he, 'that so thou mayst stay in my dominion, and think no more of thy own country.'

I dared not resist the prince's will, and so he gave me one of the ladies of his court, a noble, beautiful, and rich lady. The ceremonies of marriage being over, I went and dwelt with the lady, and for some time we lived together in perfect harmony. I was not, however, very well satisfied with my condition, and therefore designed to make my escape on the first occasion, and to return to Bagdad, which my present settlement, how advantageous soever, could not make me forget.

While I was thinking on this, the wife of one of my neighbours, with whom I had contracted a very close friendship, fell sick and died. I went to see and comfort him in his affliction, and finding him swallowed up with sorrow, I said to him as soon as I saw him, 'God preserve you and grant you a long life.'

'Alas!' replied he, 'how do you think I should obtain that favour you wish me? I have not above an hour to live.'

'Pray,' said I, 'do not entertain such a melancholy thought; I hope it will not be so, but that I shall enjoy your company for many years.'

'I wish you,' said he, 'a long life; but for me my days are at an end, for I must be buried this day with my wife. This is a law which our ancestors established in this island, and always observed inviolably. The living husband is interred with the dead wife, and the living wife with the dead husband. Nothing can save me; every one must submit to this law.'

While he was entertaining me with an account of this barbarous custom, the very hearing of which frightened me cruelly, his kindred, friends and neighbours came in a body to assist at the funerals. They put on the corpse the woman's richest apparel, as if it had been her wedding-day, and dressed her with all her jewels; then they put her into an open coffin, and lifting it up, began their march to the place of burial. The husband walked at the head of the company, and followed the corpse. They went up to a high mountain, and when they came thither, took up a great stone, which covered the mouth of a very deep pit, and let down the corpse, with all its apparel and jewels. Then the husband, embracing his kindred and friends, suffered himself to be put into another open coffin without resistance, with a pot of water, and seven little loaves, and was let down in the same manner as they let down his wife. The mountain was pretty long, and reached to the sea. The ceremony being over, they covered the hole again with the stone, and returned.

It is needless to say that I was the only melancholy spectator of this funeral, whereas the rest were scarcely moved at it, the practice was so customary to them. I could not forbear speaking my thoughts on this matter to the king. 'Sir,' said I, 'I cannot but wonder at the strange custom in this country of burying the living with the dead. I have been a great traveller, and seen many countries, but never heard of so cruel a law.'

'What do you mean, Sinbad?' said the king; 'it is a common law. I shall be interred with the queen, my wife, if she die first.'

'But, sir,' said I, 'may I presume to ask your majesty if strangers be obliged to observe this law?'

'Without doubt,' replied the king, smiling at my question; 'they are not exempted, if they are married in this island.'

I went home very melancholy at this answer, for the fear of my wife dying first, and my being interred alive with her, occasioned me very mortifying reflections. But there was no remedy: I must have patience, and submit to the will of God. I trembled, however, at every little indisposition of my wife; but alas! in a little time my fears came upon me all at once, for she fell ill, and died in a few days.

You may judge of my sorrow; to be interred alive seemed to me as deplorable an end as to be devoured by cannibals. But I must submit; the king and all his court would honour the funeral with their presence, and the most considerable people of the city would do the like. When all was ready for the ceremony, the corpse was put into a coffin, with all her jewels and magnificent apparel. The cavalcade began, and, as second actor in this doleful tragedy, I went next to the corpse, with my eyes full of tears, bewailing my deplorable fate. Before I came to the mountain, I addressed myself to the king, in the first place, and then to all those who were round me, and bowing before them to the earth to kiss the border of their garments, I prayed them to have compassion upon me. 'Consider,' said I, 'that I am a stranger, and ought not to be subject to this rigorous law, and that I have another wife and child in my own country.' It was to no purpose for me to speak thus, no soul was moved at it; on the contrary, they made haste to let down my wife's corpse into the pit, and put me down the next moment in an open coffin, with a vessel full of water and seven loaves. In short, the fatal ceremony being performed, they covered up the mouth of the pit, notwithstanding the excess of my grief and my

lamentable cries.

As I came near the bottom, I discovered, by help of the little light that came from above, the nature of this subterranean place; it was a vast long cave, and might be about fifty fathoms deep. I immediately smelt an insufferable stench proceeding from the multitude of corpses which I saw on the right and left; nay, I fancied that I heard some of them sigh out their last. However, when I got down, I immediately left my coffin, and, getting at a distance from the corpses, lay down upon the ground, where I stayed a long time, bathed in tears. Then reflecting on my sad lot, 'It is true,' said I, 'that God disposes all things according to the decrees of His providence; but, poor Sinbad, art not thou thyself the cause of thy being brought to die so strange a death? Would to God thou hadst perished in some of those tempests which thou hast escaped! Then thy death had not been so lingering and terrible in all its circumstances. But thou hast drawn all this upon thyself by thy cursed avarice. Ah! unfortunate wretch, shouldst thou not rather have stayed at home, and quietly enjoyed the fruits of thy labour?'

Such were the vain complaints with which I made the cave echo, beating my head and breast out of rage and despair, and abandoning myself to the most afflicting thoughts. Nevertheless, I must tell you that, instead of calling death to my assistance in that miserable condition, I felt still an inclination to live, and to do all I could to prolong my days. I went groping about, with my nose stopped, for the bread and water that was in my coffin, and took some of it. Though the darkness of the cave was so great that I could not distinguish day and night, yet I always found my coffin again, and the cave seemed to be more spacious and fuller of corpses than it appeared to me at first. I lived for some days upon my bread and water, which being all used up at last I prepared for death.

As I was thinking of death, I heard something walking, and blowing or panting as it walked. I advanced towards that side from whence I heard the noise, and upon my approach the thing puffed and blew harder, as if it had been running away from me. I followed the noise, and the thing seemed to stop sometimes, but always fled and blew as I approached. I followed it so long and so far that at last I perceived a light resembling a star; I went on towards that light, and sometimes lost sight of it, but always found it again, and at last discovered that it came through a hole in the rock large enough for a man to get out at.

Upon this I stopped some time to rest myself, being much fatigued with pursuing this discovery so fast. Afterwards coming up to the hole I went out at it, and found myself upon the shore of the sea. I leave you to guess the excess of my joy; it was such that I could scarce persuade myself of its being real.

But when I had recovered from my surprise, and was convinced of the truth of the matter, I found that the thing which I had followed and heard puff and blow was a creature which came out of the sea, and was accustomed to enter at that hole to feed upon the dead carcasses.

I examined the mountain, and perceived it to be situated betwixt the sea and the town, but without any passage or way to communicate with the latter, the rocks on the side of the sea were so rugged and steep. I fell down upon the shore to thank God for this mercy, and afterwards entered the cave again to fetch bread and water, which I did by daylight, with a better appetite than I had done since my interment in the dark hole.

I returned thither again, and groped about among the biers for all the diamonds, rubies, pearls, gold bracelets, and rich stuffs I could find. These I brought to the shore, and, tying them up neatly into bales with the cords that let down the coffins, I laid them together upon the bank to wait till some ship passed by, without fear of rain, for it was not then the season.

After two or three days I perceived a ship that had but just come out of the harbour and passed near the place where I was. I made a sign with the linen of my turban, and called to them as loud as I could. They heard me, and sent a boat to bring me on board, when the mariners asked by what misfortune I came thither. I told them that I had suffered shipwreck two days ago, and made shift to get ashore with the goods they saw. It was

happy for me that those people did not consider the place where I was, nor inquire into the probability of what I told them; but without any more ado took me on board with my goods. When I came to the ship, the captain was so well pleased to have saved me, and so much taken up with his own affairs, that he also took the story of my pretended shipwreck upon trust, and generously refused some jewels which I offered him.

We passed with a regular wind by several islands, among others the one called the Isle of Bells, about ten days' sail from Serendib, and six from that of Kela, where we landed. This island produces lead from its mines, Indian canes, and excellent camphor.

The king of the Isle of Kela is very rich and potent, and the Isle of Bells, which is about two days' journey in extent, is also subject to him. The inhabitants are so barbarous that they still eat human flesh. After we had finished our commerce in that island we put to sea again, and touched at several other ports. At last I arrived happily at Bagdad with infinite riches, of which it is needless to trouble you with the detail. Out of thankfulness to God for His mercies, I gave great alms for the support of several mosques, and for the subsistence of the poor, and employed myself wholly in enjoying the society of my kindred and friends, and in making merry with them.

THE FIFTH VOYAGE OF SINBAD THE SAILOR.

The pleasures I enjoyed again had charm enough to make me forget all the troubles and calamities I had undergone, without curing me of my inclination to make new voyages. Therefore I bought goods, ordered them to be packed up and loaded, and set out with them for the best seaport; and there, that I might not be obliged to depend upon a captain, but have a ship at my own command, I waited till one was built on purpose at my own expense. When the ship was ready, I went on board with my goods; but not having enough to load her, I took on board with me several merchants of different nations, with their merchandise.

We sailed with the first fair wind, and after a long voyage, the first place we touched at was a desert island, where we found an egg of a roc, equal in size to that I formerly mentioned. There was a young roc in it just ready to be hatched, and the bill of it began to appear.

The merchants whom I had taken on board my ship, and who landed with me, broke the egg with hatchets, and made a hole in it, from whence they pulled out the young roc piece by piece, and roasted it. I had earnestly persuaded them not to meddle with the egg, but they would not listen to me.

Scarcely had they made an end of their feast, when there appeared in the air, at a considerable distance from us, two great clouds. The captain whom I hired to manage my ship, knowing by experience what it meant, cried that it was the cock and hen roc that belonged to the young one, and pressed us to re-embark with all speed, to prevent the misfortune which he saw would otherwise befall us. We made haste to do so, and set sail with all possible diligence.

In the meantime the two rocs approached with a frightful noise, which they redoubled when they saw the egg broken, and their young one gone. But having a mind to avenge themselves, they flew back towards the place from whence they came, and disappeared for some time, while we made all the sail we could to prevent that which unhappily befell us.

They returned, and we observed that each of them carried between their talons stones, or rather rocks, of a monstrous size. When they came directly over my ship, they hovered, and one of them let fall a stone; but by the dexterity of the steersman, who turned the ship with the rudder, it missed us, and falling by the side of the ship into the sea, divided the water so that we could see almost to the bottom. The other roc, to our misfortune, threw the stone so exactly upon the middle of the ship that it split into a thousand pieces. The mariners and passengers were all killed by the stone, or sunk. I myself had the last fate; but as I came up again I fortunately caught hold of a piece of the wreck, and swimming sometimes with one hand and sometimes

with the other, but always holding fast to my board, the wind and the tide favouring me, I came to an island, where the beach was very steep. I overcame that difficulty however, and got ashore.

I sat down upon the grass, to recover myself a little from my fatigue, after which I got up, and went into the island to view it. It seemed to be a delicious garden. I found trees everywhere, some of them bearing green and others ripe fruits, and streams of fresh pure water, with pleasant windings and turnings. I ate of the fruits, which I found excellent, and drank of the water, which was very pleasant.

Night being come, I lay down upon the grass in a convenient place enough, but I could not sleep for an hour at a time, my mind was so disturbed with the fear of being alone in so desert a place. Thus I spent the best part of the night in fretting, and reproached myself for my imprudence in not staying at home, rather than undertaking this last voyage. These reflections carried me so far, that I began to form a design against my own life, but daylight dispersed these melancholy thoughts, and I got up, and walked among the trees, but not without apprehensions of danger.

When I was a little advanced into the island, I saw an old man who appeared very weak and feeble. He sat upon the bank of a stream, and at first I took him to be one who had been shipwrecked like myself. I went towards him and saluted him, but he only bowed his head a little. I asked him what he did there, but instead of answering he made a sign for me to take him upon my back and carry him over the brook, signifying that it was to gather fruit.

I believed him really to stand in need of my help, so took him upon my back, and having carried him over, bade him get down, and for that end stooped that he might get off with ease: but instead of that (which I laugh at every time I think of it), the old man, who to me had appeared very decrepit, clasped his legs nimbly about my neck, and then I perceived his skin to resemble that of a cow. He sat astride upon my shoulders, and held my throat so tight that I thought he would have strangled me, the fright of which made me faint away and fall down.

Notwithstanding my fainting, the ill-natured old fellow kept fast about my neck, but opened his legs a little to give me time to recover my breath. When I had done so, he thrust one of his feet against my stomach, and struck me so rudely on the side with the other, that he forced me to rise up against my will. Having got up, he made me walk under the trees, and forced me now and then to stop, to gather and eat fruit such as we found. He never left me all day, and when I lay down to rest by night, he laid himself down with me, always holding fast about my neck. Every morning he pushed me to make me wake, and afterwards obliged me to get up and walk, and pressed me with his feet. You may judge then what trouble I was in, to be loaded with such a burden as I could by no means rid myself of.

One day I found in my way several dry calabashes that had fallen from a tree; I took a large one, and, after cleaning it, pressed into it some juice of grapes, which abounded in the island. Having filled the calabash, I set it in a convenient place; and coming hither again some days after, I took up my calabash, and setting it to my mouth found the wine to be so good that it presently made me not only forget my sorrow, but grow vigorous, and so light-hearted that I began to sing and dance as I walked along.

The old man, perceiving the effect which this drink had upon me, and that I carried him with more ease than I did before, made a sign for me to give him some of it. I gave him the calabash, and the liquor pleasing his palate, he drank it all off. He became drunk immediately, and the fumes getting up into his head he began to sing after his manner, and to dance upon my shoulders. His jolting about made him sick, and he loosened his legs from about me by degrees; so finding that he did not press me as before, I threw him upon the ground, where he lay without motion, and then I took up a great stone, with which I crushed his head to pieces.

I was extremely rejoiced to be freed thus for ever from this cursed old fellow, and walked along the shore of the sea, where I met the crew of a ship that had cast anchor to take in water to refresh themselves. They were

extremely surprised to see me, and to hear the particulars of my adventures. 'You fell,' said they, 'into the hands of the old man of the sea, and are the first that has ever escaped strangling by him. He never left those he had once made himself master of till he destroyed them, and he has made this island famous for the number of men he has slain; so that the merchants and mariners who landed upon it dared not advance into the island but in numbers together.'

After having informed me of these things they carried me with them to the ship; the captain received me with great satisfaction when they told him what had befallen me. He put out again to sea, and after some days' sail we arrived at the harbour of a great city, where the houses were built of good stone.

One of the merchants of the ship, who had taken me into his friendship, asked me to go along with him, and took me to a place appointed as a retreat for foreign merchants. He gave me a great bag, and having recommended me to some people of the town, who were used to gather cocoa-nuts, he desired them to take me with them to do the like: 'Go,' said he, 'follow them, and do as you see them do, and do not separate from them, otherwise you endanger your life.' Having thus spoken, he gave me provisions for the journey, and I went with them.

We came to a great forest of trees, extremely straight and tall, their trunks so smooth that it was not possible for any man to climb up to the branches that bore the fruit. All the trees were cocoa-nut trees, and when we entered the forest we saw a great number of apes of all sizes, that fled as soon as they perceived us, and climbed up to the top of the trees with surprising swiftness.

The merchants with whom I was gathered stones, and threw them at the apes on the top of the trees. I did the same, and the apes, out of revenge, threw cocoa-nuts at us as fast and with such gestures as sufficiently testified their anger and resentment: we gathered up the cocoa-nuts, and from time to time threw stones to provoke the apes; so that by this stratagem we filled our bags with cocoa- nuts, which it had been impossible for us to do otherwise.

When we had gathered our number, we returned to the city, where the merchant who sent me to the forest gave me the value of the cocoa- nuts I had brought; 'Go on,' said he, 'and do the like every day, until you have money enough to carry you home.' I thanked him for his good advice, and gathered together as many cocoa-nuts as amounted to a considerable sum.

The vessel in which I came sailed with merchants who loaded her with cocoa-nuts. I expected the arrival of another, whose merchants landed speedily for the like loading. I embarked on board the same all the cocoa-nuts that belonged to me, and when she was ready to sail I went and took leave of the merchant who had been so kind to me; but he could not embark with me because he had not finished his business.

We set sail towards the islands where pepper grows in great plenty. From thence we went to the Isle of Comari, where the best sort of wood of aloes grows, and whose inhabitants have made it an inviolable law to drink no wine themselves, nor to suffer any kind of improper conduct. I exchanged my cocoa-nuts in those two islands for pepper and wood of aloes, and went with other merchants pearl- fishing. I hired divers, who fetched me up those that were very large and pure. Then I embarked joyfully in a vessel that happily arrived at Balsora; from thence I returned to Bagdad, where I made vast sums by my pepper, wood of aloes, and pearls. I gave the tenth of my gains in alms, as I had done upon my return from other voyages, and endeavoured to ease myself from my fatigue by diversions of all sorts.

THE SIXTH VOYAGE OF SINBAD THE SAILOR.

After being shipwrecked five times, and escaping so many dangers, could I resolve again to try my fortune, and expose myself to new hardships? I am astonished at it myself when I think of it, and must certainly have been induced to it by my stars. But be that as it will, after a year's rest I prepared for a sixth voyage,

notwithstanding the entreaties of my kindred and friends, who did all that was possible to prevent me. Instead of taking my way by the Persian Gulf, I travelled once more through several provinces of Persia and the Indies, and arrived at a sea-port, where I embarked on board a ship, the captain of which was resolved on a long voyage.

It was very long indeed, but at the same time so unfortunate that the captain and pilot lost their course, and knew not where they were. They found it at last, but we had no reason to rejoice at it. We were all seized with extraordinary fear when we saw the captain quit his post, and cry out. He threw off his turban, pulled his beard, and beat his head like a madman. We asked him the reason, and he answered that he was in the most dangerous place in all the sea. 'A rapid current carries the ship along with it,' he said, 'and we shall all of us perish in less than a quarter of an hour. Pray to God to deliver us from this danger; we cannot escape it if He does not take pity on us.' At these words he ordered the sails to be changed; but all the ropes broke and the ship, without its being possible to help it, was carried by the current to the foot of an inaccessible mountain, where she ran ashore, and was broken to pieces, yet so that we saved our lives, our provisions, and the best of our goods.

This being over, the captain said to us, 'God has done what pleased Him; we may every man dig our grave here, and bid the world adieu, for we are all in so fatal a place that none shipwrecked here have ever returned to their homes again.' His discourse afflicted us sorely, and we embraced each other with tears in our eyes, bewailing our deplorable lot.

The mountain at the foot of which we were cast was the coast of a very long and large island. This coast was covered all over with wrecks, and from the vast number of men's bones we saw everywhere, and which filled us with horror, we concluded that abundance of people had died there. It is also impossible to tell what a quantity of goods and riches we found cast ashore there. All these objects served only to augment our grief. Whereas in all other places rivers run from their channels into the sea, here a great river of fresh water runs out of the sea into a dark cave, whose entrance is very high and large. What is most remarkable in this place is that the stones of the mountain are of crystal, rubies, or other precious stones. Here is also a sort of fountain of pitch or bitumen, that runs into the sea, which the fishes swallow, and then vomit up again, turned into ambergris; and this the waves throw up on the beach in great quantities. Here also grow trees, most of which are wood of aloes, equal in goodness to those of Comari.

To finish the description of this place, which may well be called a gulf, since nothing ever returns from it--it is not possible for ships to get away again when once they come near it. If they are driven thither by a wind from the sea, the wind and the current ruin them; and if they come into it when a land-wind blows, which might seem to favour their getting out again, the height of the mountain stops the wind, and occasions a calm, so that the force of the current runs them ashore, where they are broken to pieces, as ours was; and that which completes the misfortune is that there is no possibility to get to the top of the mountain, or to get out any manner of way.

We continued upon the shore, like men out of their senses, and expected death every day. At first we divided our provisions as equally as we could, and thus everyone lived a longer or shorter time, according to their temperance, and the use they made of their provisions.

Those who died first were interred by the rest; and, for my part, I paid the last duty to all my companions. Nor are you to wonder at this; for besides that I husbanded the provision that fell to my share better than they, I had provision of my own, which I did not share with my comrades; yet when I buried the last, I had so little remaining that I thought I could not hold out long: so I dug a grave, resolving to lie down in it, because there was none left to inter me. I must confess to you at the same time that while I was thus employed I could not but reflect upon myself as the cause of my own ruin, and repented that I had ever undertaken this last voyage; nor did I stop at reflections only, but had well nigh hastened my own death, and began to tear my hands with my teeth.

But it pleased God once more to take compassion on me, and put it in my mind to go to the bank of the river which ran into the great cave; where, considering the river with great attention, I said to myself, 'This river, which runs thus under ground, must come out somewhere or other. If I make a raft, and leave myself to the current, it will bring me to some inhabited country, or drown me. If I be drowned I lose nothing, but only change one kind of death for another; and if I get out of this fatal place, I shall not only avoid the sad fate of my comrades, but perhaps find some new occasion of enriching myself. Who knows but fortune waits, upon my getting off this dangerous shelf, to compensate my shipwreck with interest?'

I immediately went to work on a raft. I made it of large pieces of timber and cables, for I had choice of them, and tied them together so strongly that I had made a very solid little raft. When I had finished it I loaded it with some bales of rubies, emeralds, ambergris, rock-crystal, and rich stuffs. Having balanced all my cargo exactly and fastened it well to the raft, I went on board it with two little oars that I had made, and, leaving it to the course of the river, I resigned myself to the will of God.

As soon as I came into the cave I lost all light, and the stream carried me I knew not whither. Thus I floated for some days in perfect darkness, and once found the arch so low that it well nigh broke my head, which made me very cautious afterwards to avoid the like danger. All this while I ate nothing but what was just necessary to support nature; yet, notwithstanding this frugality, all my provisions were spent. Then a pleasing sleep fell upon me. I cannot tell how long it continued; but when I awoke, I was surprised to find myself in the middle of a vast country, at the bank of a river, where my raft was tied, amidst a great number of negroes. I got up as soon as I saw them and saluted them. They spoke to me, but I did not understand their language. I was so transported with joy that I knew not whether I was asleep or awake; but being persuaded that I was not asleep, I recited the following words in Arabic aloud: 'Call upon the Almighty, he will help thee; thou needest not perplex thyself about anything else; shut thy eyes, and while thou art asleep, God will change thy bad fortune into good.'

One of the blacks, who understood Arabic, hearing me speak thus, came towards me and said, 'Brother, be not surprised to see us; we are inhabitants of this country, and came hither to-day to water our fields, by digging little canals from this river, which comes out of the neighbouring mountain. We saw something floating upon the water, went speedily to find out what it was, and perceiving your raft, one of us swam into the river, and brought it hither, where we fastened it, as you see, until you should awake. Pray tell us your history, for it must be extraordinary; how did you venture into this river, and whence did you come?'

I begged of them first to give me something to eat, and then I would satisfy their curiosity. They gave me several sorts of food; and when I had satisfied my hunger, I gave them a true account of all that had befallen me, which they listened to with wonder. As soon as I had finished my discourse, they told me, by the person who spoke Arabic and interpreted to them what I said, that it was one of the most surprising stories they ever heard, and that I must go along with them, and tell it to their king myself; the story was too extraordinary to be told by any other than the person to whom it happened. I told them I was ready to do whatever they pleased.

They immediately sent for a horse, which was brought in a little time; and having made me get upon him, some of them walked before me to show me the way, and the rest took my raft and cargo, and followed me.

We marched thus altogether, till we came to the city of Serendib, for it was in that island I landed. The blacks presented me to their king; I approached his throne, and saluted him as I used to do the kings of the Indies; that is to say, I prostrated myself at his feet, and kissed the earth. The prince ordered me to rise up, received me with an obliging air, and made me come up, and sit down near him. He first asked me my name, and I answered, 'They call me Sinbad the sailor, because of the many voyages I have undertaken, and I am a citizen of Baghdad.'

'But,' replied he, 'how came you into my dominions, and from whence came you last?'

I concealed nothing from the king; I told him all that I have now told you, and his majesty was so surprised and charmed with it, that he commanded my adventure to be written in letters of gold, and laid up in the archives of his kingdom. At last my raft was brought in, and the bales opened in his presence: he admired the quantity of wood of aloes and ambergris; but, above all, the rubies and emeralds, for he had none in his treasury that came near them.

Observing that he looked on my jewels with pleasure, and viewed the most remarkable among them one after another, I fell prostrate at his feet, and took the liberty to say to him, 'Sir, not only my person is at your majesty's service, but the cargo of the raft, and I would beg of you to dispose of it as your own.'

He answered me with a smile, 'Sinbad, I will take care not to covet anything of yours, nor to take anything from you that God has given you; far from lessening your wealth, I design to augment it, and will not let you go out of my dominions without marks of my liberality.'

All the answer I returned was prayers for the prosperity of this prince, and commendations of his generosity and bounty. He charged one of his officers to take care of me, and ordered people to serve me at his own charge. The officer was very faithful in the execution of his orders, and caused all the goods to be carried to the lodgings provided for me. I went every day at a set hour to pay court to the king, and spent the rest of my time in seeing the city, and what was most worthy of notice.

The Isle of Serendib is situated just under the equinoctial line, so that the days and nights there are always of twelve hours each, and the island is eighty parasangs in length, and as many in breadth.

The capital city stands at the end of a fine valley formed by a mountain in the middle of the island, which is the highest in the world. I made, by way of devotion, a pilgrimage to the place where Adam was confined after his banishment from Paradise, and had the curiosity to go to the top of it.

When I came back to the city, I prayed the king to allow me to return to my country, which he granted me in the most obliging and honourable manner. He would needs force a rich present upon me, and when I went to take my leave of him, he gave me one much more valuable, and at the same time charged me with a letter for the Commander of the Faithful, our sovereign, saying to me, 'I pray you give this present from me and this letter to Caliph Haroun Alraschid, and assure him of my friendship.' I took the present and letter in a very respectful manner, and promised his majesty punctually to execute the commission with which he was pleased to honour me. Before I embarked, this prince sent for the captain and the merchants who were to go with me, and ordered them to treat me with all possible respect.

The letter from the King of Serendib was written on the skin of a certain animal of great value, because of its being so scarce, and of a yellowish colour. The writing was azure, and the contents as follows:--

'The king of the Indies, before whom march a hundred elephants, who lives in a palace that shines with a hundred thousand rubies, and who has in his treasury twenty thousand crowns enriched with diamonds, to Caliph Haroun Alraschid:

'Though the present we send you be inconsiderable, receive it as a brother and a friend, in consideration of the hearty friendship which we bear to you, and of which we are willing to give you proof. We desire the same part in your friendship, considering that we believe it to be our merit, being of the same dignity with yourself. We conjure you this in the rank of a brother. Farewell.'

The present consisted first, of one single ruby made into a cup, about half a foot high, an inch thick, and filled with round pearls. Secondly, the skin of a serpent, whose scales were as large as an ordinary piece of gold, and had the virtue to preserve from sickness those who lay upon it. Thirdly, fifty thousand drachms of the best wood of aloes, with thirty grains of camphor as big as pistachios. And fourthly, a she-slave of ravishing

beauty, whose apparel was covered all over with jewels.

The ship set sail, and after a very long and successful voyage, we landed at Balsora; from thence I went to Bagdad, where the first thing I did was to acquit myself of my commission.

I took the King of Serendib's letter, and went to present myself at the gate of the Commander of the Faithful, followed by the beautiful slave and such of my own family as carried the presents. I gave an account of the reason of my coming, and was immediately conducted to the throne of the caliph. I made my reverence, and after a short speech gave him the letter and present. When he had read what the King of Serendib wrote to him, he asked me if that prince were really so rich and potent as he had said in this letter. I prostrated myself a second time, and rising again, 'Commander of the Faithful,' said I, 'I can assure your majesty he doth not exceed the truth on that head: I am witness of it. There is nothing more capable of raising a man's admiration than the magnificence of his palace. When the prince appears in public, he has a throne fixed on the back of an elephant, and marches betwixt two ranks of his ministers, favourites, and other people of his court; before him, upon the same elephant, an officer carries a golden lance in his hand, and behind the throne there is another, who stands upright with a column of gold, on the top of which there is an emerald half a foot long and an inch thick; before him march a guard of a thousand men, clad in cloth of gold and silk, and mounted on elephants richly caparisoned.

'While the king is on his march, the officer who is before him on the same elephant cries from time to time, with a loud voice, "Behold the great monarch, the potent and redoubtable Sultan of the Indies, whose palace is covered with a hundred thousand rubies, and who possesses twenty thousand crowns of diamonds." After he has pronounced these words, the officer behind the throne cries in his turn, "This monarch so great and so powerful, must die, must die, must die." And the officer in front replies, "Praise be to Him who lives for ever."

'Further, the King of Serendib is so just that there are no judges in his dominions. His people have no need of them. They understand and observe justice of themselves.'

The caliph was much pleased with my discourse. 'The wisdom of this king,' said he, 'appears in his letter, and after what you tell me I must confess that his wisdom is worthy of his people, and his people deserve so wise a prince.' Having spoken thus he dismissed me, and sent me home with a rich present.

THE SEVENTH AND LAST VOYAGE OF SINBAD THE SAILOR.

Being returned from my sixth voyage, I absolutely laid aside all thoughts of travelling any farther; for, besides that my years now required rest, I was resolved no more to expose myself to such risk as I had run; so that I thought of nothing but to pass the rest of my days in quiet. One day, as I was treating some of my friends, one of my servants came and told me that an officer of the caliph asked for me. I rose from the table, and went to him. 'The caliph,' said he, 'has sent me to tell you that he must speak with you.' I followed the officer to the palace, where, being presented to the caliph, I saluted him by prostrating myself at his feet. 'Sinbad,' said he to me, 'I stand in need of you; you must do me the service to carry my answer and present to the King of Serendib. It is but just I should return his civility.'

This command of the caliph to me was like a clap of thunder. 'Commander of the Faithful,' replied I, 'I am ready to do whatever your majesty shall think fit to command me; but I beseech you most humbly to consider what I have undergone. I have also made a vow never to go out of Bagdad.' Here I took occasion to give him a large and particular account of all my adventures, which he had the patience to hear out.

As soon as I had finished, 'I confess,' said he, 'that the things you tell me are very extraordinary, yet you must for my sake undertake this voyage which I propose to you. You have nothing to do but to go to the Isle of Serendib, and deliver the commission which I give you. After that you are at liberty to return. But you must

go; for you know it would be indecent, and not suitable to my dignity, to be indebted to the king of that island.' Perceiving that the caliph insisted upon it, I submitted, and told him that I was willing to obey. He was very well pleased at it, and ordered me a thousand sequins for the expense of my journey.

I prepared for my departure in a few days, and as soon as the caliph's letter and present were delivered to me, I went to Balsora, where I embarked, and had a very happy voyage. I arrived at the Isle of Serendib, where I acquainted the king's ministers with my commission, and prayed them to get me speedy audience. They did so, and I was conducted to the palace in an honourable manner, where I saluted the king by prostration, according to custom. That prince knew me immediately, and testified very great joy to see me. 'O Sinbad,' said he, 'you are welcome; I swear to you I have many times thought of you since you went hence; I bless the day upon which we see one another once more.' I made my compliment to him, and after having thanked him for his kindness to me, I delivered the caliph's letter and present, which he received with all imaginable satisfaction.

The caliph's present was a complete set of cloth of gold, valued at one thousand sequins; fifty robes of rich stuff, a hundred others of white cloth, the finest of Cairo, Suez, Cusa, and Alexandria; a royal crimson bed, and a second of another fashion; a vessel of agate broader than deep, an inch thick, and half a foot wide, the bottom of which represented in bas-relief a man with one knee on the ground, who held a bow and an arrow, ready to let fly at a lion. He sent him also a rich table, which, according to tradition, belonged to the great Solomon. The caliph's letter was as follows:

'Greeting in the name of the Sovereign Guide of the Right Way, to the potent and happy Sultan, from Abdallah Haroun Alraschid, whom God hath set in the place of honour, after his ancestors of happy memory:

'We received your letter with joy, and send you this from the council of our port, the garden of superior wits. We hope, when you look upon it, you will find our good intention, and be pleased with it. Farewell.'

The King of Serendib was highly pleased that the caliph returned his friendship. A little time after this audience, I solicited leave to depart, and had much difficulty to obtain it. I obtained it, however, at last, and the king, when he dismissed me, made me a very considerable present. I embarked immediately to return to Bagdad, but had not the good fortune to arrive there as I hoped. God ordered it otherwise.

Three or four days after my departure, we were attacked by pirates, who easily seized upon our ship. Some of the crew offered resistance, which cost them their lives. But as for me and the rest, who were not so imprudent, the pirates saved us on purpose to make slaves of us.

We were all stripped, and instead of our own clothes they gave us sorry rags, and carried us into a remote island, where they sold us.

I fell into the hands of a rich merchant, who, as soon as he bought me, carried me to his house, treated me well, and clad me handsomely for a slave. Some days after, not knowing who I was, he asked me if I understood any trade. I answered that I was no mechanic, but a merchant, and that the pirates who sold me had robbed me of all I had.

'But tell me,' replied he, 'can you shoot with a bow?'

I answered that the bow was one of my exercises in my youth, and I had not yet forgotten it. Then he gave me a bow and arrows, and, taking me behind him upon an elephant, carried me to a vast forest some leagues from the town. We went a great way into the forest, and where he thought fit to stop he bade me alight; then showing me a great tree, 'Climb up that tree,' said he, 'and shoot at the elephants as you see them pass by, for there is a prodigious number of them in this forest, and, if any of them fall, come and give me notice of it.' Having spoken thus, he left me victuals, and returned to the town, and I continued upon the tree all night.

I saw no elephant during that time, but next morning, as soon as the sun was up, I saw a great number: I shot several arrows among them, and at last one of the elephants fell; the rest retired immediately, and left me at liberty to go and acquaint my patron with my booty. When I had told him the news, he gave me a good meal, commended my dexterity, and caressed me highly. We afterwards went together to the forest, where we dug a hole for the elephant; my patron intending to return when it was rotten, and to take the teeth, etc., to trade with.

I continued this game for two months, and killed an elephant every day, getting sometimes upon one tree, and sometimes upon another. One morning, as I looked for the elephants, I perceived with an extreme amazement that, instead of passing by me across the forest as usual, they stopped, and came to me with a horrible noise, in such a number that the earth was covered with them, and shook under them. They encompassed the tree where I was with their trunks extended and their eyes all fixed upon me. At this frightful spectacle I remained immoveable, and was so much frightened that my bow and arrows fell out of my hand.

My fears were not in vain; for after the elephants had stared upon me for some time, one of the largest of them put his trunk round the root of the tree, and pulled so strong that he plucked it up and threw it on the ground; I fell with the tree, and the elephant taking me up with his trunk, laid me on his back, where I sat more like one dead than alive, with my quiver on my shoulder: then he put himself at the head of the rest, who followed him in troops, and carried me to a place where he laid me down on the ground, and retired with all his companions. Conceive, if you can, the condition I was in: I thought myself to be in a dream; at last, after having lain some time, and seeing the elephants gone, I got up, and found I was upon a long and broad hill, covered all over with the bones and teeth of elephants. I confess to you that this furnished me with abundance of reflections. I admired the instinct of those animals; I doubted not but that this was their burying place, and that they carried me thither on purpose to tell me that I should forbear to persecute them, since I did it only for their teeth. I did not stay on the hill, but turned towards the city, and, after having travelled a day and a night, I came to my patron; I met no elephant on my way, which made me think they had retired farther into the forest, to leave me at liberty to come back to the hill without any hindrance.

As soon as my patron saw me: 'Ah, poor Sinbad,' said he, I was in great trouble to know what had become of you. I have been at the forest, where I found a tree newly pulled up, and a bow and arrows on the ground, and after having sought for you in vain I despaired of ever seeing you more. Pray tell me what befell you, and by what good hap you are still alive.'

I satisfied his curiosity, and going both of us next morning to the hill, he found to his great joy that what I had told him was true. We loaded the elephant upon which we came with as many teeth as he could carry; and when we had returned, 'Brother,' said my patron-- 'for I will treat you no more as my slave--after having made such a discovery as will enrich me, God bless you with all happiness and prosperity. I declare before Him that I give you your liberty. I concealed from you what I am now going to tell you.

'The elephants of our forest have every year killed a great many slaves, whom we sent to seek ivory. Notwithstanding all the cautions we could give them, those crafty animals killed them one time or other. God has delivered you from their fury, and has bestowed that favour upon you only. It is a sign that He loves you, and has use for your service in the world. You have procured me incredible gain. We could not have ivory formerly but by exposing the lives of our slaves, and now our whole city is enriched by your means. Do not think I pretend to have rewarded you by giving you your liberty; I will also give you considerable riches. I could engage all our city to contribute towards making your fortune, but I will have the glory of doing it myself.'

To this obliging discourse I replied, 'Patron, God preserve you. Your giving me my liberty is enough to discharge what you owe me, and I desire no other reward for the service I had the good fortune to do to you and your city, than leave to return to my own country.'

'Very well,' said he, 'the monsoon will in a little time bring ships for ivory. I will send you home then, and give you wherewith to pay your expenses.' I thanked him again for my liberty, and his good intentions towards me. I stayed with him until the monsoon; and during that time we made so many journeys to the hill that we filled all our warehouses with ivory. The other merchants who traded in it did the same thing, for it could not be long concealed from them.

The ships arrived at last, and my patron himself having made choice of the ship wherein I was to embark, he loaded half of it with ivory on my account, laid in provisions in abundance for my passage, and obliged me besides to accept as a present, curiosities of the country of great value. After I had returned him a thousand thanks for all his favours, I went on board. We set sail, and as the adventure which procured me this liberty was very extraordinary, I had it continually in my thoughts.

We stopped at some islands to take in fresh provisions. Our vessel being come to a port on the main land in the Indies, we touched there, and not being willing to venture by sea to Balsora, I landed my proportion of the ivory, resolving to proceed on my journey by land. I made vast sums by my ivory, I bought several rarities, which I intended for presents, and when my equipage was ready, I set out in the company of a large caravan of merchants. I was a long time on the way, and suffered very much, but endured all with patience, when I considered that I had nothing to fear from the seas, from pirates, from serpents, nor from the other perils I had undergone.

All these fatigues ended at last, and I came safe to Bagdad. I went immediately to wait upon the caliph, and gave him an account of my embassy. That prince told me he had been uneasy, by reason that I was so long in returning, but that he always hoped God would preserve me. When I told him the adventure of the elephants, he seemed to be much surprised at it, and would never have given any credit to it had he not known my sincerity. He reckoned this story, and the other narratives I had given him, to be so curious that he ordered one of his secretaries to write them in characters of gold, and lay them up in his treasury. I retired very well satisfied with the honours I received and the presents which he gave me; and after that I gave myself up wholly to my, family, kindred and friends.

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