

quiet. Then he imitated the barking cry of the jackal; and the well known sound was responded to by several of the village pack. He repeated it, and two or three fierce hounds rushed towards him. He threw them a bone: growling and fighting ensued, which soon attracted the whole pack of ill-fed dogs. Delicious morsels—sufficient to bribe and to satisfy the hungry maws of all comers—were thrown to them: and henceforward the enemy required no watchword with which to enter the unguarded camp. So taking a bridle he had stowed away in his basket for that purpose, and grasping his dagger, he walked boldly to the sheikh's abode of felicity.

"There stood the prize—black as the night—but her eye gleamed like a star! There she stood inviting her ravisher. Her figure was like—(and the narrator paused, as if at a loss for a comparison)—picture to yourself, O Nazarene, an animal yet more beautiful, more lively, than my steed, and you have it. She snorted and reared, but Alee was quicker than the heels of a thorough-bred, for planting his vice-like hand on her nostrils, he donned the bridle, cut the pickets, and now vaulted on her back.

"Most generous sheikh," cried the Six-fingered. Nobody answered. 'O possessor of fine horses! O Sheikh Ifamon!"

"What's the matter, and who is there?" said a gruff voice from within the tent.

"God give you a prosperous morning, Sheikh Ifamon," said Alee; "I have kept my word and come for the mare; may the All-bountiful send you a better." No sooner said he these words, than he darted off full gallop into darkness.

"Sheikh Ifamon with cocked gun rushed to the rescue, and caught a glimpse of a black figure making off at full speed. 'Devils and demons!' cried he in despair, 'she shall die rather than be another man's.' He fired and down fell his object. A wild laugh echoed at a distance. The sheikh rushed towards the fallen object; all the villagers were up in arms—Sieve him, Mahomed—Bind him, Saleh—Bring him dead or alive, Mustafa," cried the frantic sheikh; 'if I have killed my — (and he could not for grief utter the name of his mare) my loss is irretrievable; but I have done a service to the Sultan and the world.'

"The forms of half-naked Arabs with torches, guns, and daggers gleamed all around, and now they rushed towards the fallen mass, and a shout of surprise and yet of gladness was given as they discovered that the angry passion of their chief had been vented on one of his finest black bulls, the plague of the village, for many persons had been gored of late; and as they were ignorant of Alee's apparition, they all supposed it had met with its well deserved fate for having attacked

their chief when returning from his matins. They dragged the carcass before the sheikh's tent; who on beholding his victim, plucked his beard in fury, then hung his head, and with solemn voice exclaimed—'War not against the devil, God's will be done,' and returned into his tent.

"The loss of the mare, and the extraordinary conduct of the sheikh, were not known in the village until next day. Alee rode that mare till the day of his death.

CHAPTER IV.

"THOUGH he possess the charm of Abd-el-Er-rachman, the Soosy—though he be in league with the dark One himself—this day shall he render account to Him who is the Almighty Judge of crime?" Thus spoke a doughty kaid, who armed to the teeth, and mounted on a prancing horse, was accompanied by some fifty followers, all in warlike train.

"Look," said the kaid to his kleeza (lieutenant) as they reached a dark and lonely ravine in the wood of Boumar, 'look at these gouts of blood which—still as crimson as on the day poor sheikh Selim, the bearded, was here villainously murdered—call for the vengeance of all who would fight in the path of righteousness. Here let us then arrange our plans, and swear not to abandon our task till we have fulfilled the mandates of our lord the Sultan: and let every man take the precaution of adding a piece of silver to the ball, for thus alone can be broken the charm of the malicious one.'

"The Fatha"—let the Fatha be said,' they all with one voice exclaimed; and Taleb Abd-el-Kader, a military priest, with hands uplifted, gabbled over the sacred words:

"Praise be to God, the Lord of all creatures, the most merciful, the King of the day of judgment. Thee do we worship, and of thee do we implore assistance. Direct us in the right way; in the way of those to whom thou hast been gracious, who walk uprightly; not of those to whom thou art incensed, nor of those who go astray."

"The stronghold of the besieged freebooter was a wood about two miles long, by half a mile in breadth, impenetrable in many parts from the thick briars and close-set bushes. To attempt to board the robber in his den was considered too hazardous a deed: it was therefore determined to set fire to the wood in the quarter whence the wind was blowing, and to lay wait for the fugitive on the opposite side. Thus they felt assured that between fire and sword, they were certain to destroy him. Kaid Mokhtar now proceeded to station his men in companies of six, at all the outlets of the wood;

* First chapter of the Koran used as a prayer.