

barber! a barber! Is 't so? can it be? To me? A barber! O thou, thou reptile! filthy thing! A barber! O dog! A barber? What? when I bid fair for the highest honours known? O sacrilegious wretch! monster! How? are the Afrites jealous, that they send thee to jibe me?"

Thereupon he set up a cry for his wife, and that woman rushed to him from an inner room, and fell upon Shibli Bagarag, belabouring him.

So, when she was weary of this, she said, "O light of my eyes! O golden crop and adorable man! what hath he done to thee?"

Shagpat answered, "'T is a barber! and he hath sworn to shave me, and leave me not save shorn!"

Hardly had Shagpat spoken this, when she became limp with the hearing of it. Then Shibli Bagarag slunk from the shop; but without the crowd had increased, seeing an altercation, and as he took to his heels they followed him, and there was uproar in the streets of the city and in the air above them, as of raging Genii, — he like a started quarry doubling this way and that, and at the corners of streets and open places, speeding on till there was no breath in his body, the cry still after him that he had bearded Shagpat. At last they came up with him, and belaboured him each and all; it was a storm of thwacks that fell on the back of Shibli Bagarag. When they had wearied themselves in this fashion, they took him as had he been a stray bundle or a damaged bale, and hurled him from the gates of the city into the wilderness once more.

Now, when he was alone, he staggered awhile and then flung himself to the earth, looking neither to the right nor to the left, nor above. All he could think was, "O accursed old woman!" and this he kept repeating to himself for solace; as the poet says:

'T is sure the special privilege of hate,  
To curse the authors of our evil state.

As he was thus complaining, behold the very old woman before him! And she wheezed, and croaked, and coughed, and shook herself, and screwed her face into a pleasing pucker, and assumed womanish airs, and swayed herself, like as do the full moons of the harem when the eye of the

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