

The Caliph addressed me: "Stranger! It seems clear that you know where Selim, the son of the venerable Hussein, is concealed. Release him and all will be well with thee."

I knew not what to reply, and for a long time I kept silence, until finally Hussein cried out, "Powerful Eucharter, give back my son to my old age."

I could not resist these words of my father and his sorrowful countenance, but cried aloud, "Hussein! I am thy son, Selim!"

Hussein ran to me, and looking me steadily in the face, exclaimed, "Allah is great! It is even so. This is Selim, my son."

Now there was great joy and wonder, and I was called on by the Caliph to narrate how it had been with me. Mindful of my promise to Daniel, I tried to evade his curiosity, and told him, after much pressing, that I had slept through the intervals.

The Caliph now spoke to Hussein: "It is plain, that thy son is the victim of Daniel Ben Eli, a great wizard, and once my treasurer, who disappeared on the same day that he did. It is requisite to secure thy son, until to-morrow, to dissolve this enchantment." These words filled me with sorrow, but I had no resource, for I was bound and guarded by the Caliph, Hussein, Othman, and a number of wise dervises, who formed a magic circle round me to ward off hostile enchantments. A violent storm fell upon the city, amid which were heard the howls of genii, trying to reach me. Although anxious to be released and return to Hannah, I was able to do nothing, so powerful were the counter-spells of the dervises. The storm lasted till midnight, when it suddenly ceased, and I heard through the subsiding blasts, a melancholy strain of music, and Hannah's voice bidding me farewell. All this time I implored for leave to go, but when I heard her voice, I fainted. I awoke not until noon next day. When I came to my senses, my father told me that at daylight, the gardens of Daniel, which had been invisible for twenty-one years, were discovered as they had existed before that time. The guards of the Caliph, on entering, found the house consumed by fire, and Daniel dead on the threshold. In the summer-house, beside the fountain, lay the corpse of a beautiful lady, on whose bosom played an innocent babe. I took my child, and yielding to the wishes of my father, returned with him and Othman to Bagdad. Here after some years I buried my father. Othman lived with us, but I took little part or pleasure in anything, except in the care and education of my daughter. Seventeen years have passed thus, which seem like so many centuries to me. To-day the Angel of Death called Othman, and I, possessing the Elixir of Life, carefully guard, lest one drop of it, mingling with my food, should prolong a life, which, since the loss of Hannah, is weariness itself. Heaven seems to have sent you to me. By the gift of Azrael, you do not need the Elixir, which shall perish with me; for to my daughter Zuleima, I desire no moment of life beyond the time allotted to her above. The Benevolence which presides over life and death ordains more wisely than the lust of the flesh of man. Thou, Mahmoud! shall, if thy heart assents, have Zuleima for thy wife, and I will depart to the fountain where Azrael met thee, for perchance he will kindly visit me there also."

Mahmoud could only throw himself at his benefactor's feet, and thank him for his confidence and wonderful goodness. Selim then clasped his hands, and ordered a slave to bring to him Zuleima. When Mahmoud beheld her, so great was her beauty, that his love knew no bounds, but when he heard her voice, which she inherited from her mother, he was transfixed and mute. Zuleima was delighted with her father's choice, and being mutually acceptable, the wedding was fixed for the next day, when it was celebrated with great magnificence. On their return from the Gadi's, Selim kindly took Mahmoud by the hand, and placing on his finger the amulet, which informed him whether the truth was spoken, said, "My children, I depart on a long journey; all that I have of wealth, I leave to you. I burden you not with the painful knowledge, which I might in time transmit to you, but which is a

load to the happy and a weariness to the flesh of him who sorrows. Be virtuous. Be patient. Be resigned." He took an affectionate farewell of them and departed.

And now for a while we will leave Mahmoud, who in so short a time as twenty-four hours, from a homeless and hungry beggar, became one of the richest men in Bagdad, the possessor of a magic ring, and the husband of one of the loveliest women in the world.

#### ALI'S STORY.

When Ali parted from his brother at the caravanserai, he took a path by the river side. With no defined purpose he strolled along, drinking in the songs of birds, and forming vague dreams of a possible greatness. At length, when the sun had passed the zenith, his youthful appetite reminded him that he had eaten no dinner. He lay down under the dense shade of a sycamore to reflect on the best means of obtaining a dinner, when, overcome by heat and fatigue, he fell asleep. When he awoke, the moon was up. He had hardly opened his eyes, when he heard a step coming towards him, and looking in that direction saw a gigantic black slave approaching and bearing in his arms a female form. Before he could utter a word, the slave halted on the river's brink and cast his burden into the stream. Filled with horror, Ali could only spring to his feet and rush violently upon the gigantic black, whom, striking unawares, he pushed into the river; the slave seemed unable to swim, for he went down and did not rise again to the surface. Ali plunged in and with great difficulty rescued the lady, whom, however, the cold water had restored to consciousness. She immediately begged of him to fly with her, and leading him to a spot near by, pointed out a hidden boat, in which they embarked. After rowing some time in silence, the lady spoke, "Generous deliverer! to whom I owe my life, tell me how it happened that you were so wonderfully at hand?" "A merciful Providence led me to the spot," replied Ali, who then narrated to her how it had occurred.

"I owe it to my preserver, to tell him all," said the lady, "I am Selina, the favourite of the Caliph. A Greek by birth, my father, who was a merchant, travelled into these parts, and when I was but a girl, three years since, came with me to Bagdad. A young Greek, named Dionysius, applied for my hand, and my father resolved that I should be his, but without any reason that I could give, I conceived a violent dislike to him. My father, although usually indulgent, determined that I should marry Dionysius, and after in vain using all the arts of persuasion, finally fixed the next day as that of my wedding. I, equally obstinate, looked around for some mode of escape. That afternoon, my father made sale of some valuables to a merchant of Bassora, whom he then invited to dinner. The repast had almost ended, when a message came to my father, to attend instantly at the Gadi's, in regard to some of the formalities of the marriage. My father, excusing himself to his guest, promised to return in an hour and left him. Looking through the lattice and seeing the merchant, who was a man of noble aspect, alone, an impulse seized me to ask his advice and assistance. Entering the room, I respectfully approached him, and saluting him gracefully, made known my purpose. He bade me be seated and said, "Lady! obedience is a filial virtue."

"You speak wisely, noble sir! but so great is my aversion to this Dionysius, that I should die if I married him."

"Is he hideous," asked the merchant.

"On the contrary, he is called handsome," said I. "This is a strange case," replied the merchant, who all this time had been examining my countenance with looks of approval and delight. "Answer me fairly, lady! Should your father consent would you wed me?"

"I will be candid to your heart's desire," said I. "I would gladly marry one of so noble a man as yourself, but my father's word being out he will not break it."

"We will easily settle that," said he, "know, lady, that I am sometimes a merchant of Bassora, and sometimes Haroun Al Raschid, Caliph of Bagdad," and putting to his lips, a silver

whistle, he speedily summoned a train of followers, and before I knew it almost, I was conveyed to the palace. It is needless to say that my father was dismissed to his own country, satisfied with the magnificent presents of the Caliph.

Since then I have led a very happy life, in spite of the jealousy of Zobeide, chief wife of the Caliph, until about six months ago, I discovered that Dionysius, for whom I had entertained so strange and seemingly groundless an aversion, had been installed in the outer apartments of the palace as Deputy master of Accounts, under a false name. Since then every sort of ill-luck has seemed to hunt me down. The jealous rage of Zobeide has increased, and many enemies, unknown before, have sprung up. Still, as I had, without good ground, originally ill-treated Dionysius, I never mentioned his name, and pretended not to be aware of his existence. Yesterday, I was, by means of a drugged potion, thrown into a deep sleep, and the black, whom you put to death, and who was the slave of Dionysius, was employed to murder me. Your courage and goodness have saved me from death; but now whither am I to fly from the wrath of Zobeide, and the suspicious jealousy of the Caliph?"

"Alas, noble and beautiful lady!" said Ali, on whom her loveliness and distress had made a great impression, "how can I advise you. I have neither home, nor means to buy bread, and even now am faint from hunger." Hardly had he spoken these words when, exhausted, the oars fell from his hands, and he sunk senseless in the boat. Selina, overcome by grief, placed his head in her lap and called upon him to return to life. So absorbed was she in this new distress, that she did not observe a gay boating party which had overtaken her, and was now watching her frantic attempts to recall animation in Ali. Presently, they cautiously pulled alongside and before she was aware, she was grasped in a pair of strong arms and transferred to the other boat. A moment of mute surprise was followed by another of tempest, for it was the Caliph's pleasure-boat, which had joined her. The first words that Haroun uttered were addressed to Mesroul, chief of the slaves. He said slowly, and in a tone of sombre and burning indignation, "Mesroul! methinks you are slow to do your duty. An unfaithful favorite of the Caliph, by the law, should be drowned in the Tigris, and this one seems to have sought her doom."

As Mesroul was about to proceed to his painful office, Selina, awakened to her danger, calmly remarked, "Commander of the faithful! it has been the boast of thy people, that thou did'st not condemn unheard. Hasty judgment, in the mouth of a prince, is a two-edged sword."

"Speak," said Haroun coldly, and with effort. Immediately Selina began, and with a rapid and flowing eloquence recounted to the Caliph the whole of her adventure. When she concluded he directed them to proceed to the spot where the black was drowned. Arrived there, he bade his attendants drag the river for the body, which was speedily found, but Mesroul said, "Dread master, this is indeed the body of Kobo, but his master's name is not Dionysius, but Kaliphernes."

"Nevertheless," said Selina, "I maintain that these two are one, and my story true."

"Let us proceed to the Judgment Hall," said the Caliph.

Scarcely was the Caliph seated, before the mother of the Harem sent word that Selina, the favorite, had fled with one Dionysius, a Greek, who had murdered Kobo, the slave of Kaliphernes, Master of Accounts, who could testify to the facts.

Kaliphernes, being summoned before the Caliph, after due obeisance, began to speak. "Commander of the Faithful," said he, "it is my misfortune to be a Greek, though of the true faith. Appointed to the post of Master of Accounts in your household, by reason of my great skill, I have been happy until I met one Dionysius, a companion of my youth. To-day he came to me under the pretext of borrowing money. I gave him what he wished. Kaliphernes," said he, "a noble lady wishes to row with me on the river this evening. Give me thy slave, Kobo, at dusk.