

And now, my lords and ladies, — or should I name my ladies first, since you all be Christians more or less? — Now, such of my ladies and my lords as have had patience to be also my gentle readers to this length, I must thank you one and all for your kind attention and tell you that here ended the strange adventures Fatima had, who was the most beautiful and the very cleverest creature ever was, and knew it. For after this she had no more adventures in her life than you have or I have.

For she and Ali lived happily forever after and one day more than that. And they had simply scores and scores of children. Naturally half the children had the wit of their mother Fatima, which was superlative, and the other half had the wit of their father Ali, which was no wit at all, so that the average wit of the children was just plain average wit.

And with her first child, Fatima, who had been slim, grew plumpish, and with the second, stoutish, and with the third, fattish, and long before even the first score had finished being born, she, who had so hated fatness, was quite undeniably fat and short of breath, and alto-