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CONTENTS

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THE CONNECTICUT COLLEGE QUARTERLY

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WELL, THAT'S LIFE FOR YOU!

THERE was once an old woman who was very old. She lived down on the sunset end of Mulberry Street because all her hopes were buried there, and she liked to have her dead hopes where she could run out and look them over, every once in a while. Foolishly enough she had had a very beautiful son, and she spent every year after that, regretting it. Perhaps she didn't regret it after all, because it *was* more or less of a compliment to her. Even compliments cause a great deal of trouble, occasionally. You may have heard that before. Well, it wasn't when he was fifteen, but when he was seventeen, that all the girls in town began to want him because of his curly hair and his eyes that had the lights you see in sapphires. But Lars knew about that. You can see how things must have been in an awful state from then on. I admit business was good for his mother then. She used to sell coffee, done up in square brown paper with blue string, and bright round tomatoes. They couldn't grow tomatoes fast enough those days. And the coffee that woman sold! Lucky she saved some of the proceeds! Lucky for her now! Every night when the dinner dishes drowsed away in their cupboard after the tub they had, the old woman would talk to Lars about being a grocer, and they even discussed delicatessens, on Friday nights. Saturday night Lars always went out. He didn't go far—only to the front gate and stand there looking and looking at the moon, until his eyes seemed to be melted onyx instead of sapphire fires. Girls walked past him, sometimes two at a time, sometimes alone. Mulberry Street had more moonlight than any other street, I guess. They all walked there and they laughed a lot. One night an old man came along and saw him standing there so beautiful, looking at the moon.

"Stop that", said the old man. "You'll ruin your eyesight."

Lars drifted back to earth and bent his deep gaze upon the old man.

"Who are you?" he asked.

"Can't you tell, by noticing my temperament?" replied the old man. "I'm a violinist, and if you want to learn how to play a violin, I'll teach you. It will cost you all the money that you've saved up. But I'll teach you first and then you'll want to give me all your money."

"What's a violin?"

"Don't tell me you don't know! Listen to this." Then he pulled a violin out of the case he was carrying and began to play. It must have been very good, because Lars went straight into the house when he finished and brought out all the money from the coffee and tomatoes that his mother hadn't put away. He brought a package of clothes, too, done up in a red table cloth.

"I'm going with you,—always", he remarked, as though that were the most ordinary thing in the world. "I'm never coming back here. I left mother a note and told her so. I told her I was going to be a great violinist." They walked down Mulberry Street in the patches of moonlight and on into the world.

The old woman waited a long long time for Lars. She wasn't an old woman when she began to wait, but business fell off entirely and rather suddenly and she had to count her money to make it last. Every time there was music in Mulberry Street; an organ grinder, a band of gypsies, a pretty girl singing, the old woman would run fast to the door and look out. It never was Lars. No, no one knows what became of him, but the old woman still lives at the sunset end of Mulberry Street, and sometimes, when there is a moon on Saturday nights, she goes and stands by the front gate and looks at it.

CANDLES

Bayberries, bayberries, are my song—
I pluck bayberries all day long;
When the dew is on the faces
Of curling leaves and traces
Tear-drop patterns,
I put on my petticoats
In the light of lanterns.

Long before the night has gone
Dancing toward the gypsy dawn,
I am tripping o'er the hills
Singing with the whippoorwills;

Bound with myrtle
Garlands, bayberry branches lie
In my lifted kirtle.

Bayberries, bayberries, are my song—
I pluck bayberries all day long;
Like the candles which I make
From the fragrant waxen cake,
Must the taper
Of my life burn slowly down
Leaving merely vapor?

TO A CERTAIN GREY EGOIST

YOU have always looked at me this way; you have tried to make it a look of scorn but you have not succeeded. I see it as it is; a puzzled, baffled look, not unmixed with admiration. I laugh, for I know that you will never see things through my eyes.

You cannot stifle the outbursts of my joy or anger. Do you not know that in these I find true life? No, you do not know, you are grey. You have never known a moment of passion; you have never been blinded by rage, or by a sudden realization of beauty. You have never dropped from a dazzling height of happiness to a great chasm of despair. I hate you for the comfort you have found in life; I hate you because you think life has made me suffer. The intensity of my suffering is balanced by the intensity of my joy. I would not change my ways for yours if all the world were mine for doing so.

You have looked at me this way before: we were children finding our first lady slipper together. The grove was dank and sweet and we walked hand in hand. I saw the flower first, and you will never know, how, when I stood silent looking at it, I felt a thousand things. You saw me gazing at it, and running quickly, you pulled it from the earth and brought it back, triumphant that you could give me what my gaze told you I loved. I cried out in rage at what you had done, and you stood looking at me as you are doing now.

Another day, years later, we climbed with a group of comrades to the desolate peak of a shaggy mountain. The day was bright, but not too clear. The lack of clearness lent a loveliness to all the scenes below, and I reveled in it. I went and sat on a jutting point of the cliff. The rest of you were noisy and busy counting mountain peaks and eating bananas. The slight mist annoyed you, because it kept some of the peaks from your sight. You wanted to go down to the village again and boast of how many peaks you had been able to see. You talked and fretted and threw your banana skins around. You were disgusted. You came over to me as I was perched on

my wind swept jut of rock. Was I not disgusted too? you asked. "Yes", I answered. And at my tone you looked at me as you are looking now.

We are older; you take me to concerts. From your box in the Opera House we have applauded Heifetz and Galli-Curci. After their trills and cadenzas you have glanced and smiled at me. I have smiled back, but I have wanted to laugh, for when I told you that I stood in the third balcony to hear Kreisler you looked at me as you are looking now.

At my sudden snatches of song, at my whims of joy in life, when a passing shadow darkens me for a moment, you stand incomprehendingly — I could strike you, and you would not be angry.

You have just told me you love me, and I have laughed at you, laughed because I am angry, so angry that I could almost kill you. I laugh too because it is all so funny.

Your look of would-be scorn is more baffled than ever.

PITY ME NOT

Pity me not, for I have lost no faith,
But woken from the depths of idle dreams—
What if the dawn be chill with searching doubts
And far too great the weight of wonder seems!

'Twas but a small belief, unworthy man,
Who by the gift of reason surely stands
Where he may look by right upon the real,
Yet weakling—proffers only pleading hands!

'Tis true I am not humble as they are
Who think it greatest praise to bend their eyes
Ever to earth, belittling their gift
To see the blinding majesty of skies.

I hold 'tis more of praise to bruise myself
Against the vastness of reality,
Claiming my own whate'er can touch my thought
And all the overwhelming mystery.

Pity me not, I know that flood may be
Too great which comes with lifting of those bars,
Pity me not, for I rejoice in pain
That brings me nearer, closer to the stars.

LIVES THAT BECKON

THE Saturday night crowd was waiting in line to spend part of its pay-day check. "Leona La Mar", announced the billboard, "The Girl With a Thousand Eyes. Knows All, Sees All, and Tells All. This Week Delighting the Audiences at the Capitol Theatre. Come and See into the Future." And the populace was swarming about the entrance, clamoring at the box office. Evidently Leona was doing her bit towards making the Capitol "New London's most popular theatre." Inside the swinging door, past the wheezing, portly doorman with his fist full of stubs, pushed the crowd. "Two seats on the front row", the usher said. The whole crowd surged forward, but we were far and away, flinging down the aisle, outstripping our nearest competitor by five rows.

Pushing creatures, you will say. Oh no, the front row seats are coveted ones, you see; from there the performance takes on such a personal flavor. If you are farther back, the actors are only puppets in a show—song and dance men, magicians, chorus girls, gymnasts, performing their tricks with bewildering yet distant precision. But from the front row! Ah—there you see them, living breathing persons like yourself, real people beneath their greasy make-up. With them you laugh at each little out-of-the-ordinary joke, and with them, take the rebuff of each wise crack fallen flat. Somehow you feel so much more sympathetic—there on your front row seat. Were you to sit only five rows farther back, you would see, up there on the stage, only a poor, scrawny woman, pretending to be young in her low cut, spangled finery and singing sickly sentimental songs in a voice which cracks. But to those on the front row, there is tragedy in her mascara-fringed eyes, and her lips, twisted into that bright smile, are bitter. Dreamily you imagine for yourself her battered life, and thereafter the songs seem less sickly and the cracking voice less pitiful.

Now the scene has changed and two acrobats are swinging above you while the orchestra in the pit beats out softly "Let Us Waltz Tonight." The light of discovery is in your eye. "They are married", you say to yourself after a glimpse of a glittering diamond on her outstretched hand. She is hanging by her feet miles above you—how awful should she fall! The traps flare out loudly—she has swung straight out towards you, but those feet of hers have saved her again from a dreadful death. An awkward bow or two, and she is gone.

Darkness again before you, while the posters at the side of the stage, changed by a shadowy stage man, announce the arrival of *Sand* and *Doone*. In the interim you cast a fraternal smile at the elderly trombone player who sits only an arm's length away. The thin little violinist starts his players off, and the trombonist looks quickly away. Evidently trombone playing and being friendly are not compatible. Lights again. Sand and Doone are the

kind of vaudeville actors you hate instantly. One is tall and one is short and both wear enormous diamond rings. They come in shouting at each other, endlessly carrying on their verbal rough and tumble, while their gold teeth flash intermittently like subway signals. They knock each other about, crash into the footlights, beg the orchestra leader's pardon and snarl at each other, "Say is this in the act?" You know all the time that it really is, but a weariness keeps you silent. No pathetic life histories could make you any more tolerant of Mr. Sand or Mr. Doone. You have a feeling they could fend for themselves anywhere. Five minutes of their hoarse laughter and they are gone.

The audience rustles in that special way audiences have of rustling. Leona La Mar, at last. The Venetian curtain scene rolls up before you—and there she is, the girl with a thousand eyes. Frankly, you are at first a little nonplussed. Fortune-tellers, since time immemorial have always worn great hoop ear rings, voluminous cerise skirts, and have had stringy black hair. But Leona is dressed as a fair young damsel of forty-five summers. Beautiful flaxen curls, caught up by butterfly bows, hang about her shoulders. Her dress is short and starched, revealing white socks and patent leather slippers. She sits stiffly in her chair in the very center of the stage. Furthermore, she is blindfolded. "Leona", says the sailor behind you, "is no spring chicken." Well, one needs long years of practice at fortune-telling in order to arrive at the state of perfection which Leona has achieved.

Scarcely have we taken Leona in, in every detail, when a middle aged, crooked nosed man, evidently her partner, bounds onto the stage. "Ladies and Gentlemen", he bellows in a fascinating nasal voice, "we are about to present Miss Leona La Mar." After much rubbing of hands and waving of arms in the direction of the unconscious Leona, Mr. La Mar gets down to business. He lightly leaps into the orchestra section and begins to bustle up the aisle. "Who wishes to know their past, present, or future—Ah—here we are. Miss Leona, tell this gentleman what he wishes to know." Leona twists miserably in her chair. As if to aid herself, she flings out her arms wildly, catching ideas, we are to presume, and forcing them into her cranium. The audience sits spellbound. "The gentleman wishes to know whether he will soon make a long journey." Leona's voice could hardly be called resonant, but it certainly delivers the goods, as the blank expression on the man's face testifies. Leona then proceeds to enlighten the audience as to where, when, how, etc., the adventuresome voyage is to take place.

Naturally she does not conclude with that, but rambles on at great length. Utter nonsense—or so it seems to you, but probably perfectly comprehensible to anyone of a psychic turn of mind. Every so often Mr. La Mar breaks in upon her reverie. "Leona, Leona", he says sharply, "come now, what does this lady want to know?" And Leona starts off on a long story about the awful tragedy of the husband's murder. You yourself ask a question

and are rewarded by a correct reply. The mystery deepens for you. How—how can she know your name and where you live? The whole audience is caught up in a perfect fever of questioning. Leona catches more and more ideas in her outstretched hands. The whole atmosphere is tense.

"Our time is up, Ladies and Gentlemen. We are very sorry but Miss Leona must rest now after her exhausting labor." Leona does look rather weary—all slumped in a heap, and you hope she goes home and gets a good night's rest. Yet as she takes her curtain calls, you know that however psychic her other nine hundred ninety-eight eyes might be, those two, which you now see unblindfolded, are certainly worldly enough.

The darkened stage and the organ pealing out prepares you for the moving pictures to follow. The scrawny woman, the acrobats, the awful men, Leona—all are gone, where, you can not tell. Where will they be tomorrow—what will their lives be then?

THE PATTERN OF THINGS

I COULD follow her about the house, for her trail was as definite and clear as the footprints of a fox in the snow. From a cluttered pile of papers to a scattered heap of books—from a mangled pillow to a curtain askew—from shreds of a letter scattered upon the floor to the falling flowers upon the desk—all around the house I could trace her.

We have been called Mary and Martha—so strange we are—so different—for she is a creature without order or perspective. She loses the sight of the pattern of things, the perfect pattern a chair makes with the window-sill, the pattern of tiny details perfectly arranged—the pattern of life where letters are tidily tucked away—not tossed in tiny fragments at a wastebasket to fall upon the floor, the chair, anywhere. The pattern of life, the precision of detail is lost to her.

She is just so in everything she does. Her toothpaste lacks a top—her brush and comb are never allies. Poor Mary that she is, when she touches my dresser top—"there, I have left it just as you had it",—but my constant compass of mirror to comb, comb to brush, the exact angle each picture holds, all are lost and the handles of my toilet articles point in all directions at once—like a compass gone mad.

Her themes, her daily work follow consistently that plan, a disregard of little things. She tries too much. She cannot punctuate or spell but rushes through some strange tale with great enthusiasm, hurtling cliffs with the aid of dashes and capital letters. "But, Martha, it's not the paragraphs or commas that count—it's what I say!"—Poor futile Mary!

She cannot even argue with us. She sits astounded at a marshaled array

of facts and is soon perplexed. "But, Martha, it's the principle behind all this—the principle!" It is not a wonder that we hold her a bit in contempt for she has no idea of the pattern of things!

One day, one wildly reckless day when she seemed to rush through the hours like a hurricane—a telegram came to tell her of the death of her mother. Long and rambling and verbose as it was, I felt as she read it to me between sobs, "Here is the progenitor of such enthusiasm, such heedlessness, such futility." For what sensible man would send a telegram repeating—"She's dead, Mary—she's dead", at five cents a word?

It was strange the effect that telegram made upon her. Quietly she began to tumble clothes into her suitcases, and, as I offered to help, she looked up and said—"Oh no—I'm just going home to take care of Dad. He needs me. You'll be looking for a new roommate now." Shiftless and impetuous as ever,—though she had been charming, too,—with her accustomed impetuosity she would leave her college year unfinished—all her opportunities thrown aside to take care of some poor old man hidden away in a small town in Tennessee. But when I remonstrated she looked surprised—then sorrowful.

"Martha, you never understood that life has a plan—a pattern that is made of love and sympathy and unselfishness. You've never understood the pattern of things!"

A SUNKEN GARDEN AT NIGHT

Dappled danced the moonbeams on the garden wall,
Shrouding it, and throwing shadows dark and tall.
All the paths were mellowed, gleaming ghostly white
And between the cobbles, spots of pastel light
    Brightened up the grotto, faintly scenting it,
    Making mystic dwellings, whence frail moths might flit.
Far off in a corner, arched in tangled vine
Stood a tiny statue, shrine to God of Wine;
Bacchus seemed to fit there, and a tinkling stream
Formed for him an island, where he ruled supreme.

A REVIEW OF 'THE ROMANTIC COMEDIANS'.

HUGH WALPOLE says he likes "Elizabeth" for her Victorian way of refusing to analyze her intestines, as it were. I am glad he has not yet read Ellen Glasgow's "Romantic Comedians." In fact, I hope he does

not—it is not meant for tolerant age, but for analytical youth; youth that makes mountains of mole hills, that is so very earnest, that looks upon the world in such a ludicrously serious light. "Elizabeth's" delightful humor, her "old-fashioned simplicity" of thirty long years' standing, the things which attract Walpole, are the very things which turn youth from her to Ellen Glasgow who, although she has written for many years, has kept abreast of the times. Remember "The Voice of the People" and you are struck by the long way she has come in the writing of "The Romantic Comedians."

We who are young take the "Romantic Comedians" very gravely indeed, blind to the fact that Miss Glasgow has her tongue in her cheek, a queer little smile on her lips, throughout the book. Never quite sure of ourselves, we mistake satire for sympathy, and feel we have received an illustrated lesson in life. Youth is fond of these "home-training courses" and goes forth from them strengthened and more sophisticated. Well, why not? Miss Glasgow's characters are very real. Take Judge Honeywell, for example. In his youth, Judge Honeywell had been betrothed to Amanda Lightfoot, his Ideal. But, unfortunately for Amanda, she left for Europe in a pique after a slight lovers' disagreement. She expected her Gamaliel to pursue her. He did so. The only difficulty was that Cordelia sailed on the boat he had chosen, and Cordelia being there, and Amanda somewhere on the continent, the Ideal became the ideal, and Cordelia the devoted wife. Amanda made still another mistake; she refused, virtuously, to elope with the untamed bridegroom when they were both back in Queensborough. The Judge, perforce, settled down to thirty-six years of "the double-edged bliss of a perfect marriage",—and Amanda Lightfoot to waiting. When these years were passed, and Cordelia, sensible, undemonstrative Cordelia, was dead of unselfish service, people as a matter of course supposed Judge Honeywell would marry the expectantly well-preserved Amanda. Perhaps Edmonia Bredaltane was most to blame that he did not. Edmonia was the Judge's unashamedly profligate twin sister who talked Amanda until the Judge could scarcely bear the sight of poor Miss Lightfoot. The Judge, naturally, disapproved of his sister highly, but Edmonia was neither sensitive or reticent, and by the time she was through with her twin, Amanda's fate was determined. For another thing, Judge Honeywell, although really sixty-five, felt not a day over thirty-five; gray hair, however faithful, or however much his Ideal, was not for him. So the Judge, feeling not a bit over thirty when the day was exceptionally fine, married, after an expensive courtship, a twenty-three year old cousin of Cordelia's. Annabel Upchurch, beautiful, disillusioned, temperamental, parasitic Annabel married the Judge in a frantic effort to escape poverty. At the end of a year the lawyer had aged ten, and Annabel had eloped with the impassioned Dabney Birdsong. Why the long-suffering Judge promised to support her as long as it was necessary, I do not know; since most men want a great deal in return for their shekels, I can only decide the Judge was pos-

sessed of a very desirable trait, now for a long time extinct. At any rate, he promised, and the next morning he awoke, thinking dreamily, "Spring is here, and I am feeling almost as young as I felt last year." (The Judge was firmly convinced that men keep their youth much longer than women, and that that was why Nature had bountifully provided fresh young wives for them.)

Judge Gamaliel Bland Honeywell is unquestionably real. We may regard him as the scornful Mrs. Upchurch, Annabel's sychophantic mother, regarded him—with compassion rather than ridicule. We may pity him as a dyspeptic old man, vainly craving youthful companionship, weirdly convinced of his own spryness. We may overlook the weak side of him in view of his achievements as an exceptionally keen and successful judge. Or we may only echo Mrs. Upchurch in saying, "Men are unaccountable creatures," but we will never deny his existence. And as Miss Glasgow has pointed out, his illusions are no stranger than young Annabel's, who,—like Romeo three centuries before her,—was in love with love, felt she could not live without beauty of surroundings, and went to bed in tears and a flame-coloured negligee.

After all, I think these older writers are more successful in the portrayal of the younger generation and their problems, than the younger. Undoubtedly their viewpoint is less prejudiced, more coldly analytical than that of younger writers. At any rate, Miss Glasgow has done the thing exceptionally well in her "Romantic Comedians."

SHADOWS

THE shadow of a man's figure fell on the floor. Big, ill-proportioned, it made a grotesque image of the human form. The great head bobbed ludicrously from side to side in rhythm to melodious singing, "Little Dav—id, *play* on yo' harp——Little Dav—id . . . " The voice was soft and sweet, gentle like the dew which, falling, veils magnolia blossoms. In it lay the burnished romance of hot sands, the subtle crimsoning of ancient suns. A voice weirdly pathetic, magnificently defiant. "Little David" . . . The voice faltered, broke. The shadow heaved its great shoulders, sagged. The rug was splashed with slow tears.

From another room a woman's voice called, "Lawrence, when you finish washing those windows, you can take the carpets out of the hall."

A reply came back in no longer time than it takes to dash away a tear.

"Yes'm. All right, Mis' Colby."

As Lawrence stooped for his bucket, the shadow huddled itself; it became

as hideous as some carved gargoyle. Its motions were jerky, ponderous. No beauty there.

Shadows belong to us; we do not belong to them. Lawrence stood poised above his shadow like Narcissus above a pool muddied with rain. But one similarity, stark and terrible, appeared between the man and the form stretching at his feet. Blacker than clouds before a storm, blacker than loam from some primeval forest, was Lawrence. Only ancestors darkened by hot African winds, winds which had blown since time immemorial, could have made him so black, so tragically black.

"All God's chillun, ain't a-goin there . . .," sang Lawrence in the husky, musical voice, deep as the Nile in flood. The tears had gone from his eyes, but not from his voice.

"Lawrence, aren't you through in the dining-room yet?"

His great ebony figure loomed in the doorway. He was heroic in his majesty. Here was beauty. Beauty in the tracery of his brow, in the fine rise of his tapered nostrils, in the grief of his eyes, eyes wearied with their search for beauty.

"I'll take de rugs right outa' here—no time a-tall. I'se sorry to keep yo' all a-waiting, Mis' Colby."

"That's all right, Lawrence. You're a good worker. But for a young man, you've been a little slow today."

"I ain't feelin' 'xactly right, Mis' Colby. I guess it's 'cause I been workin' too hard lately."

"Have you done any more painting recently, Lawrence? I'd like to see one or two of your canvases and if I could help you, I'd like to do so some time."

"O' course I'se only been in de city a sho't time, Mis' Colby. I ain't had time t' paint much. An' course I ain't had de money to buy any oil paints. I bought a tube a' red yesterday so's I could paint a picture wid poppies in it. D'you like poppies, Mis' Colby? At home, down in de country, dey grows all through de fields. An' when it comes late summer, all de blooms, bright an' pretty lak' de harvest moon, tangle in de wheat. Den dey look lak' flowers bound in silky gold hair. Mis' Colby . . . . but I got to go out back now and scrub de kitchen flo'."

"Little Dav—id, *play* on yo' harp, *play* on yo' . . ." The bold, sweet voice, cheery enough at first, faltered. The husky cadence rose again, this time as soft as breezes playing over the Mediterranean, gentle as the fall of white, happily white, magnolia blossoms. All of the throb and hush of burnished sands were mingled in the low modulatings of the falling notes. "Little Dav—id, *play* on yo' harp, *play*" . . . On the floor lay a great hunched shadow, hideous as pain itself. The shadow heaved with sobs. From the quiet stillness of the room, came a low cry.

"God, look at de beauty aroun' me—light streamin' through de curtains.

falling on de rug like happy tears—look at de sun on de golden daffodils. Ain't dis joy? But I, I got t' waste my years a-scrubbin' flo's—scrubbin flo's—waste ma time a-scrubbin' " . . .

The bulky shadow shifted. A bucket clanked on the floor, at the same time sloshing soap suds over the tin-bright edge. Pools of water settled on the boardings and chased into the far corners of the kitchen. More water. Scrubbings. The great shadow swayed in motion with a low, rhythmic crooning which, rising in crescendo, filled the room, "Little Dav—id, *play* on yo' harp, *play* on yo' harp, *play* on yo' harp, Little Dav—id . . . " Sweetly bitter as an uncrimsoned pomegranate, here was all of life's poignancy—and beauty.

A STORY FROM THE SEA

"LET'S have a sea story, Jack," said Ernie lounging into a deep chair before the fire, and proceeding to fill his Dunhill. "Make it a gruesome one—something that will scare this immovable Frannie here", he said, casting a gleeful wink in my direction.

"Don't worry, you can't frighten me," I replied, "but I'd love to hear one. Tell us a story about the Navy, Jack—you must have heard wonderful ones there." Jack had been an Ensign in the Navy for several years, and we all envied him his wide experience.

"Well", began Jack, always ready with a story for any occasion, "I once heard of a crew of men who were cruising among the British Isles. In fact, the man who told me this story was a second-mate on this ship. And it happened that among the crew were two men who hated each other. They even loathed the ground that one another walked upon. It was a great mystery—the cause of this hate. Craugh as they called him—the larger of the two—was a quiet, hard-set, rough appearing man. He had little to say—but what he did say, was brief and to the point. He shouldered his work willingly, giving no offense to anyone, yet bearing a stagnant hate in his heart for Brundy. Brundy was a smaller man—but his broad shoulders made him appear larger than he was. He was a more sociable chap—laughing and joking with his friends—always amusing the boys, unless Craugh was in sight. Then he would close up like a clam, and go around with his head down, watching suspiciously the movements of Craugh. Craugh never attacked him and time went on—their hate growing and enlarging each day. The fire and grumblings of an active volcano could not be more tremendous than the fire of hate which burned in the hearts of these two men.

* * * * * *

And then a strange thing happened. Late one night in fall, this ship unexpectedly ran onto a rock. The engine room caught fire, and all the crew had

to make for their lives. Life boats were lowered, rafts were set afloat, men were piled off in the greatest haste from the burning ship. Unconscious of their actions, the men frantically sought the life-boats and rafts. And as it happened, Brundy, when he became conscious that he was on a raft floating away from the ship, looked up into the face of Craugh, who drew back with a muttered ejaculation. They both were so stunned that for a moment they forgot the ship, their crew mates, their danger, everything save the fact of one another's presence. A whole night they drifted, being tossed hither and thither by the great waves dashing about them. At dawn they reached one of England's deserted islands. Their bodies were frozen with the icy, salty water, and their throats were parched and burning. With frantic hope they dashed onto the island,—for England was accustomed to supply these islands with water, and often food. Craugh, dragging his great sinewy body, strode off in one direction, Brundy in another. Like mad-men they searched, each minute their burning throats growing more painful. Each step was untold effort to their exhausted bodies. Hopefully, then despairingly, they searched, —and then suddenly Craugh threw his great body to the ground and began drinking with the haste of a dying man at a spring. Brundy, his throat now fevering his whole body, his strength failing, shrieked, "My God! Craugh—let me drink!" "Drink from your own spring", retorted Craugh, "you'll not touch a drop of this water."

"But—but—God! You devil—I tell you I'll die—God—Craugh—you—you——" And making one wild effort he fell headlong down to the well, his burning tongue hanging loose—now motionless. He was dead.

* * * * * *

A few days later a rescue party found Craugh—half dead—beside a spring of *salt* water. When he finally was restored to normal, they asked why he had stopped by the salt water spring.

"Wal", snapped Craugh, "couldn't find no fresh wata', and hatin' that guy as I did, I drank the salt, just to tantalize him! Near ta killed me, but I did it—yes by God!—I did it."

SUNDAY MORNING

SHALL we go for a walk?", you asked.

Of course we went. And then I was glad to go because I was so very tired of being shut up with my own reflection within four walls. That reflection that sneered at me whichever way I turned. What an imp, introspection can be! We went, of course.

It wasn't hard to decide where we would go. We simply began and kept on going. We left the row of neat ugly houses staring at us curiously and

wound down the road leading to the river. That river is so full of memories, piled and stored away for four years, that every step brought me a new picture, gay, painful, quiet, and mostly delightful. There on the left is a great pile of rocks, immensely important, keeping a ferocious snarl, and a wild, unexplored appearance in spite of the fact that they are right on the edge of the road where people see them every day. Then you looked at them casually.

"Do you remember how we thought 'mascot' was hidden there two years ago?" you said.

"Yes", I replied.

We passed the little path, creeping away through bushes of pussy willow and little slender willow trees. What a mysterious path—what windings over rocks! At any moment you could expect to find violets hidden.

"I think I could follow that short cut with my eyes shut. We always went this way when we lived down by the river. And when it rained it was the messiest thing! I believe I still have the mud from freshman year on my shoes." And you laughed.

I made no answer.

Almost at the ship yards, there is a strange house. It is very, very old, and in the back a chimney, made of seventy kinds of brick staggers to the roof. The doors are kindly, like old eyes, wrinkled at the edges, and the stone steps before them have been worn hollow for almost two centuries. The yard is a tangle of untamed and lanky grass just beginning now to show signs of a defiant green. The whole place makes you realize how very young you are, how very little you know. It seemed to smile a gentle smile at me. You had almost passed it, and I had hoped without comment, when, "Look, did you see that dilapidated old shack? Wonder who lives there?"

"Not knowing", I replied dryly, "I am in no position to say."

We reached the railroad tracks and began to hop along like two drunken birds, having a hard time to keep our balance. You shrieked with laughter, and I must confess that I shrieked too, having nothing better to do at the time. When you exhausted the pleasures of walking the rails and leaping the ties you walked along the edge with me. You suggested the graveyard. I had never been there. We climbed under a fence and I turned to see the river.

It was a grey river that day, grey and quiet; robbed of all desire and liveliness. The long hill on the other side was a neutral brown. There were no signs of life even along the road. Near the ship-yard reposed the remains of what might have been, at one time, anything from a coal-barge to a galleon. Now there was just enough of it to be seen above the water, just enough to keep it afloat. It lay dreaming, perhaps of pirate treasure, perhaps of pig-iron. "I'm a battered old sea-dog, ain't I?" it said to me. "You are very beautiful", I said to it.

"Hey",—from behind the mound of hill,—"Come and see the gravestone of a Brown. Might be a relation of mine, but it isn't spelled with an 'e'."

I came and looked at the tombstone. It said, "Josiah Brown—lost at sea—1776." They didn't spell things with an "e" in those days.

A brook wound through the graveyard, a brook almost filled with round, smooth rocks. It made loud, happy bursts of laughter. It was a secret brook, laughing under its mask of rocks. When it reached the great oak trees whose arms spread over it in benediction, it seemed to feel a sudden desire for rest. The stones left it; it widened into a pool, still, and slowly swirling.

"This reminds me of mascot, too." You exclaimed, "I made all the kids in this territory take up every single stone in this brook. We had the most awful time. Where I ever got the idea that mascot was hidden here, I don't know, but I did."

"Let's go home, shall we, Janet?" I said, "I'm getting tired."

We began the long climb across the fields. There had been a late snow the night before and wisps, like a torn veil, were caught in all the grasses. Our feet soon were wet. You remarked about that very frequently. The river dropped lower and grew narrow as we climbed. The oak tree became a network of branches, and there was no brook to be seen. The ships nodded at anchor beside the wharves. There was a still and eerie quietness. Suddenly a little breeze came leaping around the wall of bushes. It was so unexpected and so dear. It made me think of a frisky puppy, wanting to play. You began to run toward the road. The wind blew harder. We reached the top, and prepared to separate toward our respective dormitories.

"Well,—good-bye", you said.

"Thank you for the walk." (As though she had given it to me.)

"Thank you."

I walked home,—furiously. There was nothing more to be seen.

LIFE

Life is a broken chord of music
That in its birth of beauty dies,
As the sunset's flame of glory
In the depth of sapphire skies.

Life is the ceaseless, ceaseless breaking
Of the waves upon the shore,
Of waves crisped and curled, then sunken
Into formlessness once more.

Life is a never ending dreaming
Of great beauties unfulfilled,
And an agony of longing
In the artisan unskilled.

ALLAH KERIM

(Will of Allah)

An Arabian Fairytale

Characters

Khasib—the King
El Hadir—Counsellor of the King
Jullanar—Daughter of the King
Three Magi
Kasim—A Peasant
Marjaneh—Wife of Kasim
Achmad—As a Child
Achmad—As a Youth
Aladdin
Leader of Animals
Captain of Forty Thieves
The Princess in Distress
The Beggar
The Genie
Slave Girls
Dancing Girls—Head Dancer, Morgiana
Mighty Army
Children
Animals
Forty Thieves

Scene

The scene is in a garden. King Khasib reclines, fanned by the slave girls. Suddenly starts and wakes from sleep.

Khasib:

O damsels, cease to wave thy fans and caress thy lutes! For even as I slept sweetly, lulled by thy music, a strange dream came to me. Before I slept I was free from care, but now my heart is dull and heavy in my breast. I pray thee, call unto me El Hadir, noblest of men, that he may heed the tale of my dream and console me in my sorrow. Haste thou then to find him and bid him come in all swiftness!

(One maiden makes an obeisance and goes out with a gliding motion.

Khasib sinks sorrowfully down upon seat. Dancing girls dance until El Hadir enters, when they retire to background and sink down in graceful positions.)

El Hadir: (with deep obeisance)

Lo, my King, I was walking in my garden with thoughts of the things about me, how the roses climb against the sky in one deep corner, how the ring-dove coos so softly, when one of thy maidens ran unto me. I bade her approach me, whereupon she threw herself at my feet as I stood amazed, and called unto Allah. She brought me tidings of thy sadness, and I hastened quick to find thee. O sire, tell me what evil spirit disturbed thee in thy slumber. I would fain know all.

Khasib: (pacing up and down nervously. Gestures)

O noble kinsman, what have I done that Allah should thus weary me with anxiety? I have lived in happiness! I have not scorned the stranger who approached the palace, nor have I refused alms to the beggar at the gate. Naught that my daughter Jullanar hath sought have I refused her, and now this dream descends upon me like black wings folded around my head. I must not tell it to thee until I have learned the meaning. Wilt thou seek out the Magi, priests and prophets from their temple? Call them from their fire-worship with the message that Khasib has need of them. Wilt thou carry them my orders?

El Hadir:

O King, thou knowest that I live only to do thy bidding. No bird of heaven could fly on swifter wing than I will haste for thee! Pray thou to Allah, when I leave thee, that soon thy dream may be unravelled. Let not thine heart be troubled. Peace upon thee!

(Exit El Hadir. Morgiana dances, but king shows little interest. El Hadir returns with the Three Magi.)

El Hadir:

O King of the Age, I bring the Magi, come in answer to thy message.

First Magi:

O King, we leave our alabaster temple with hearts gladdened by thy trust. If there is aught that humble priests can do to serve thee, may Allah aid us to guide thee!

Khasib:

Being informed of thy strange power, I determined to call upon thee, O Magi, to tell me the meaning of my dream. Canst thy mystic power fulfill my wish? Speak!

Second Magi:

Verily, O Sire, we hope to end thy misery and to set thine heart at rest. But relate to us thy dream!

Khasib:

'Tis a strange tale, O Magi, such a vision as my poor eyes have never before seen. But heed my story.

(Action hazily accompanies story of dream. Host passes quite near them.)

Lo, I was standing silent beside a cypress tree. About me was the sound of rushing winds and many waters which I heeded not, for I was the king and naught might harm me. My daughter Jullanar stood beside me with a strange smile upon her mouth. But as we were silent there, I heard a blast of wild music and a strange host didst pass me by, as though risen from the ground beneath my feet. And lo, in its midst, walked a figure clad in black, and girt about with a gleaming sword that flashed gold. On its head was a crown crusted with rubies, and on its hand it bore a shining ring. I felt *my* head, and lo, *my* crown was gone! I regarded my hand and my ring was there no longer. I reached for my sword and behold, it was plunged deep in my side! I tried in vain to speak or to move. I tried to cry out and I awoke! I summoned thee at once. O calm my spirit and tell me that danger is afar off from me. Speak!

Third Magi:

Verily, Greatest of Kings, thou relatest a strange tale. Wouldst thou know its meaning? Thy knowledge will cost thee many a night unvisited by sleep.

Khasib:

I pray thee, tell me all!

Third Magi: (slowly and solemnly)

Know then, that, according as thy dream says, thy crown and ring shalt be borne by another. He shalt be the son of thy daughter Jullanar, and none other than he shalt plunge thine own dagger into thy side. Thus sayest thy dream!

(Khasib sits amazed in silence.)

El Hadir:

O Magi, ye have troubled the king even more sorely. How couldst thou warn him thus of a black future?

Second Magi:

We spake but the truth, O illustrious noble.

(Magi stand aside, a little aloof and majestic.)

Khasib: (to slave girl)

Call unto me the princess Jullanar. (To El Hadir) O friend, I cannot speak for wonder! I must know the truth of this dire matter.

El Hadir:

O my lord, I feel fear for the princess. Let not thine anger sway thee, but rather her beauty and her youth. Remember thou, I pray, what the wise man says, that the first part of anger is madness, and the

second is regret. (He stands back.)
(Enter Jullanar with her slave girls.)

Jullanar: (running to her father)
O King my Father, didst thou wish to speak with me? I hastened with the utmost swiftness to do thy bidding!

Khasib: (reproachfully)
O Jullanar, what meaneth this? In what evil deeds art thou confounded? Why hast Thou deceived thy father in his feeble old age? The prophets have related to me the meaning of a dream, and they tell me that thou hast borne a son who wilt one day slay thy father. Speak the Magi the truth?

Jullanar: (trembling and kneeling on the ground)
O my Father, they have spoken truly, but forgive me, I pray thee! I have meant no harm. How couldst I know the future of my son? How couldst I, in my weakness, foresee my father's ruin? True, I joined myself in wedlock for love and not for wealth or name. My husband is a private man, O Father, but good and noble. I conjure thee, O my lord, pardon my deceit and embrace thy daughter!

Khasib: (towering above her in anger)
O Jullanar, thou hast brought disgrace upon thy father's house! Thou hast brought ruin upon thy father. Pleading grief at the death of thy mother, thou hast concealed thyself from me, and kept secret thy marriage and the birth of thy son. And by mine own hands shalt thy babe perish. So go!
(Jullanar moves away weeping.)

Khasib: (to slave girl)
Bring to me thy mistress' son!
(To El Hadir, who comes forward beseechingly.) O my friend and wise counsellor, the words of the Magi were true! Jullanar hath wed a man of low rank and hath borne him a son. Thou art to take away the child, of whom we have heard the direful prophecy, into the farthest hills, into the dark, rugged hills of Kurdistan. Go thou not until the thin moon hangs above the highest peak, and go thou in all secrecy. There, where no man may look upon thee, slay the babe, wrap him about in ragged clothing, and leave him under the sky. Then return to me in haste.

El Hadir: (horrorstruck)
O Prince of the Faithful, thou canst not truly speak thy wish! Thine anger hast unbalanced thy reason. I am no slayer of helpless babes. I conjure thee, assure thy servant that thou but spake in jest, for I *can* not obey thee!

Khasib: (full of wrath)
El Hadir, I have treasured long thy friendship. I have treated thee

with trust and kindness. I have not imposed upon thee tasks below thy high station. I have called thee friend and kinsman. But if thou showest not obedience in what I command thee, thou art dead before the morning, slain by mine own hand if none other will raise his sword against thee.

(Slave girl enters with babe in arms.)

There thou seest the babe before thee. I canst not touch him, born of a thief and a scoundrel. Take him now, (El Hadir reluctantly complies) and bear him under thy cloak into the hills. Go thou with all speed!

(El Hadir starts slowly away. Jullanar throws herself full length upon the ground. Slave girls huddle weeping about her. Dancers strike tearful attitudes. The First Magi speaks thunderingly.)

First Magi: (with hand raised in warning)

O Greatest of Kings, the wisest of men doth not always follow the true path of wisdom. Before thou speakest surely, cease thine upbraidings and ponder upon the justice of thine awful act. Lo, if thou causest this helpless babe to perish, thou are branded a murderer in the eyes of the all-seeing Allah, and evil dodge thy footsteps forever. In spite of thy rash deed will the prophecy be fulfilled! *But if thou stayest thy wrath, if thou lookest once again upon thy daughter with favor, the evil words may perchance be softened. Allah may change his will. Stay thou thy hand and think!*

(Khasib stands in deep meditation, with Jullanar imploring him from the ground, her arms outstretched. El Hadir stands motionless with the child.)

Khasib: (after a long moment)

Alas, my mind is sore distressed, and I know not what to do! *Oh, would that I could surely read the misty future and know the wisdom—or the error of mine act!*

Second Magi: (very solemnly and majestically)

O Divinest of all Divine Rulers, thy word is law unto thy subjects. With our own magic powers shall we draw aside the veil of the future! We will show thee truly what will come to pass if thou committest this act. If thou imprisonest thy daughter, if thou sendest thy counsellor into the hills with the babe, all this have the fates decreed. *Behold!*

(Magi all wave hands majestically. King sits under canopy, leaning forward, watching intently. Jullanar crouches near him. Slave girls and dancers in graceful poses. Three Magii aloof, majestic. They all watch fixedly other end of amphitheatre.)

Scene

Wilder country, corner of plowed field. El Hadir plods slowly, sadly into

view, with child in his arms, wrapped in ragged clothing. Takes dagger from side and looks at it. Shakes head sorrowfully, looks at child, puts dagger back in sash. Peasant woman, Marjenah, comes into sight. She is weeping. El Hadir starts back when he sees her, then hides child under cloak and approaches her. She looks at him but continues to weep and wail.

El Hadir:

O woman, I beseech thee, tell me whom thou art and whyfore thou weepest, overburdened by sorrow.

Marjenah:

O my lord, for indeed my eyes can see that thou are of noble birth I am but a poor country woman. Kasim, my husband, tilleth the soil in yonder field and we subsist on the food, humble though it is, that Allah in his goodness does bestow upon us. And lo, Allah didst bless us but a brief while since with a little son. Wherefor, we didst rejoice greatly. But no sooner had the child grown to that age when he could know us and speak to us as a child speaketh, than Allah did send a dire sickness upon him, and he did waste away before mine eyes and die. So, oh my great lord, do I weep thus!

El Hadir:

O good woman, truly have the gods treated thee harshly. But I may have a solace for thy sorrow. Wouldst thou fain have another son to fill the place of him thou hast lost? Speak!

Marjenah:

O lord, I know not what thy words mean, but if I could have all that mine heart desired, a little son is all that I would ask. But why dost thou ask me this?

El Hadir:

O best of women, I have glad tidings for thee! Here I bear a wee child, torn from his mother's arms because of evil jealousy. I was commanded to bear him into these hills and to slay him here, but alas! My heart is too kind! My will is too weak! Wilt thou take him from me and bring him safely into manhood as thine own son? (He reveals the child.)

Marjenah:

O sire, I am truly overwhelmed with wonder and joy. (Kasim, a humble farmer approaches.) But lo, here cometh my husband. I will tell him all. (Turns to Kasim.) O my husband and master, this noble lord doth bear a child whom he was ordered to slay in these hills. But having learned of our deep sorrow, he hath said that we may have the babe for our own son. What sayest thou?

Kasim:

O my wife, verily, I say that we should take the babe. Thou sorrowest too much for thy lost child, and mine own heart is sorely rent. But we

must know of his birth and his story before we open our humble doors to him. O lord, canst thou disclose thy secret?

El Hadir:

My life and happiness would be in peril if I revealed all! Wilt it suffice thee that the babe is of royal birth and that the father of his mother cast him out because of a dark prophecy?

Kasim:

Yea, great lord, thy words suffice. Gladly do we take thy charge, and we shall call him Achmed for our first-born child. May peace ever attend thee.

(Kasim and Marjenah throw themselves at his feet. Marjenah takes the child.)

El Hadir:

O good people, may Allah bless thee while thou livest. May gladness and many riches await thee! Farewell!

(El Hadir departs. Kasim and Marjenah, still kneeling, pray to Allah. Kasim with arms upraised, Marjenah holding child in arms.)

Scene

At other end of amphitheatre.

First Magi: (to king, slowly and solemnly)

O King, thou dost see what Allah wouldst decree! Lo, the babe would not perish if thou shouldst send him away. But, greatest of kings, the years pass with the utmost swiftness, and the child groweth and waxeth strong and princely. Behold!

Scene

Country region again. Boy Achmed enters, leading band of little boys carrying wooden daggers. He stands apart from them and addresses them.

Achmed:

O my soldiers, come forward and array thyselves in line that I may observe thee! Stand thou straight and tall as soldiers should! But lo, Hamir, thy sword is dull and thy garments are soiled and tattered. What meaneth this? Did I not bid thee polish thine arms and wear a blouse befitting thy position? And am I not thy leader?

Boy: (ashamed)

Yea, indeed thou art my leader.

Achmed: (sternly)

Then whyfore carry thou a dull sword, and whyfore wear thou torn garments. Lo, thou must straightway be locked in the dark prison. Oh Ibrahim and Jafar, take him away!

(He is borne away by two boys. Enter little girls.)

First little girl: (running up to Achmed and followed by others)

O Achmed, we would play with thee and thy band! Pray leave thy

swords and fighting, and join us! Come and dance, Achmed!

Achmed:

Knowest thou not that I am a soldier and cannot play with thee? My men may dance if they will, but a leader must ever be mindful of his duty. But play! I shall watch thee.

(Achmed stands aside, while girls and boys dance folk dance. Exit.)

Scene

Other end of amphitheatre.

Second Magi: (to king)

Lo King, dost thou see how Achmed groweth strong and manly, and how he beareth himself like a young king? But, greatest of rulers, again do the years roll by, and the boy is a youth, Behold! !

Scene

Country region. Marjenah stands beside corner of field where Kasim and Achmed are working. El Hadir, grown older, approaches. They peer at him but do not recognize him.

Kasim:

Lo stranger, we welcome thee to these hills. But what mission brings thee, weary and footsore as thou art?

El Hadir:

O good people, dost thou not know me? When first mine eyes did rest upon thee, I knew thee at once, though twenty winters have passed me by since I last did see thee! I found thee, then, O woman, sorrowing because thy child was dead, and I did stay thy sorrow. Dost thou not remember?

Marjenah: (throwing herself at his feet)

O my lord, how could I forget thy face? Thou didst bring me the joy which hath made bright these twenty years. May Allah ever bless thee!

Kasim:

O great lord, seest thou where thy charge standeth? For these many years have we cared for him, and now that he is strong and able, he doth aid us in the fields. O long ago, when he was old enough to understand the meaning of our words, we did tell him of his royal birth, but although he doth know of his high station, he doth ever look upon us as his parents, and doth ever treat us with love and devotion. May Allah be praised.

El Hadir: (to Achmed)

O royal youth, my heart is gladdened by thy strength and manner, for thou seem truly the grandson of a king. But lo, I have journeyed far into these hills to warn thee of a danger that is thine. The king hath learned that thou art still alive, and ever thinking of the prophecy of

the Magi, he hath sent out soldiers to kill thee. But he knew not where thou livest, and all the soldiers have returned without success. So, swearing to slay thee, Khasib hath disguised himself, and hath set out alone, hoping to encounter thee in his journeyings and kill thee. I fear now that perchance he may have learned of thy dwelling place, and that he may come hither. So, Achmed, oh bravest of youths, I command thee to flee far away. Make haste and set out this very day, for thy danger ever increaseth.

Marjenah: (weeping)

O lord, dost thou speak the truth? Must we indeed lose our son, for Achmed hath ever been a true son to us! Oh, my heart is mournful!

El Hadir: (firmly but sorrowfully)

Yea, my good woman, he must depart from thee now while there is time. I shall go with him to the foot of the hill. Then he must travel on alone. I, too, am sorrowful at the message that I bring, but it is the will of Allah.

Achmed:

O my father, for thou hast ever regarded me as a true son, O my mother, for thou hast nursed me and cared for me as thine own firstborn, would that I could ever stay beside thee! If now thou but sayest that I should rest here with thee, naught can move me from this hillside. O my father, what wilt thou do, when the harvest is ripe and my young arms cannot help thee bear in the sheaves? (They look sorrowfully away and say nothing. Achmed makes his decision.) Lo, I see that I must go even as I am ordered. But fear not that I shall not return, for when it is decreed, I will haste hither with all the speed that devotion can lend to my swift feet. So, my mother, weep not. O my father, look not upon me with sadness! Farewell!

(Achmed goes away with El Hadir. Kasim and Marjenah gaze after them.)

Scene

Other end of amphitheatre.

Third Magi: (to king)

O, Greatest of all Rulers, didst thou surely see what has been portrayed before thee? Didst thou see the youth Achmed go forth from his humble home? O King, days pass and he doth meet a stranger. Behold!

(Achmed walks into view humming a song. He meets a young man, Aladdin, richly dressed, carrying a lamp conspicuously and wearing a great ring.)

Achmed:

O traveller, I greet thee with joy for my way is lonely, and for a day

I have seen no one with whom I could speak. I pray thee, tell me who thou art.

Aladdin:

O youth, thou hast surely heard my name before this, for my good fortune is of great fame in this country. Indeed, I am called Aladdin, and my story is wonderful to hear, for I am the son of a poor tailor who fell sick and died, after which my unfortunate mother subsisted by her spinning. But through a wicked Moor who wished to harm me, but who instead did harm himself, I came into possession of this signet ring and this magic lamp. And forsooth, if I but rub this ring and speak my smallest wish, the Slave of the Ring doth grant me that which I have asked. And if I rub this lamp, the Genie of the Lamp doth do my bidding. So now I am rich, with much gold and many jewels and whatsoever I desire. Dost thou not marvel at my story?

Achmed:

Indeed, O great Aladdin, thou art possessor of great fortune, for which thou shouldst truly thank Allah. Oh would that I could but wish and my wish would be granted!

Aladdin:

O noble youth, mine eyes gaze upon thee with favor, for I can see that thou art good and brave. If thou wilt, thou mayest wish upon my Lamp. Rub it but once, speak thy wish, and it will come to pass!

(Achmed shows great joy, takes lamp and rubs it.)

Achmed:

O Genie of the Lamp, I would fain have the opportunity to meet great adventures and to show my courage. I have lived ever in the peaceful country with naught of danger or of interest to encounter. I pray thee, put thou in my pathway some strange sight that I may behold it, some peril that I may try my bravery.

(He returns lamp to Aladdin.)

Aladdin:

Truly, O youth, thou art young and foolish to make such a wish! I look with admiration upon thy boldness, and I wish for thee all that Allah may ordain. May peace be with thee!

Achmed:

O great Aladdin, may Allah favor thine every deed. Farewell!

Scene

Other end of amphitheatre.

First Magi: (to king)

O King of the Faithful, thou hast seen the youth and heard his wish. Now mayest thou gaze upon the sights he doth see and the perils he doth encounter. Behold!

(Achmed sees band of animals approaching—very grotesque appear-

ing. He surveys them in wonder. Draws sword doubtfully.)

Leader: (sadly)

O youth, take not thy sword from its sheath, for we will not harm thee! Once indeed, we were all humans like thyself.

Achmed:

Then how came thou in this guise?

Leader:

O youth, evil spirits have changed us for varied reasons, and so we walk the earth in the garb of creatures of the wilderness. We wish thee no evil. Lo, to show thee our good intent, we shall dance for thee. Come thou, comrades!

(All murmur assent. Dance grotesque.)

Achmed: (When dance is over)

I thank thee humbly. Would that I could alter thy fate, but I have not the power. I can but bid thee farewell!

All:

Farewell, gracious youth.

(Achmed approaches cave and pauses nearby. Stands regarding it when forty thieves approach. Leader bears beautiful maiden before him on horse. Achmed starts back in alarm, then grips sword and stands ground. Thieves do not see him. All, or at least some, leave horses and do a fierce dance to wild music. Then thief sees him.)

Leader:

Stand thou where thou art, O wretched youth, that I may ask of thee where thou goest and what is thy business here. Speak! !

Achmed:

O stranger, I like not thy manner toward me. Indeed, I am not thy slave and I will not submit to thy contempt and scorn. Tell me first whom thou art and why thou dost bear this fair damsel before thee on thy saddle, and I will tell thee my name and mission!

Leader:

O bold youth, thou knowest not the danger thou dost encounter! But we fear not thy knowledge! Lo, we are thieves, forty in number. In our bags we carry gold and silver, and this cave is filled with that which we have stolen: silk, embroideries, and jewels that flash fire. And the password to the cave is "Open Sesame!" And this damsel, if thou must know, O foolish youth, we did encounter wandering in the forest, and we did capture her to sell in the city for much gold. Now— (drawing nearer) repent thee of thy boldness if thou wilt, but it is too late!

Achmed:

O Genie of the Lamp, truly thou hast fulfilled my wish. And now, O my sure sword!

(Battle between Captain of Thieves and Achmed. Achmed wounds leader. Others flee, leaving maiden. Achmed stands with sword upraised. Then he turns to maiden who comes to meet him with hands outstretched.)

Maiden:

O noble youth, thou art surely good and brave for thou hast put to flight the forty thieves and rescued me from their cruelty.

Achmed:

O most lovely of maidens, my heart rejoiceth to have saved thee from danger, for thy beauty doth blind me and thy voice doth make the sweetest of music! But why dost thou wander in this wilderness? Where dost thou live?

Maiden:

O brave youth, I live in the city behind yonder forest, with my father who is a wise king. And it happened that I was idling with my handmaidens in the wood near my father's palace when these forty thieves did fall upon me, and seize me straightway and bear me off with them, the while my maidens wailed and cried unto Allah. But thou didst save me!

Achmed:

I pray thee, say no more. I did but act as should any youth of royal birth. But hold! Horsemen are approaching!

Maiden: (looking where he points)

O I am truly safe now! They are my father's trusted servants sent out to find me! (She starts to go toward them. They halt at a little distance and await her.)

Achmed:

O most lovely princess, stay but another moment, for there are words that I must speak.

Maiden:

In truth, I am listening, O gracious youth.

Achmed:

I pray thee, do not scorn me when I tell thee that I am overwhelmed by thy beauty, and that my heart is filled with love for thee! I cannot yet tell thee my name or my parentage, for I am pursued by a great danger, but soon canst thou know all. Wilt thou, O princess, await me in thy father's palace? Wilt thou heed my love?

Maiden:

O noble youth, my heart is gladdened by thy love, for in truth thou hast won mine in turn! I shall repair forthwith to the home of my father, and there shall I await thee. But, I pray thee, be thou swift to come! Guard thyself in thy danger, and again look thou well to thy sure sword! I must hasten away now. My father's heart must be filled

with anxiety for me.

Achmed:

Farewell, O most gracious princess! (He kisses her hand, kneeling. She joins the horsemen and rides off with them. Achmed watches her go.)

Scene

Other end of amphitheatre.

Second Magi: (to King)

O good King, thou hast seen the bravery of Achmed. Thou hast seen flee the forty thieves. Thou hast seen the youth's love for a beautiful princess. But now, prepare thyself to witness a strange and awful deed. Summon all thy courage to thine aid, and regard all that which doth happen, for the time when the prophecy shalt be fulfilled is near! Behold! !

(King leans forward intently. Jullanar gazes ahead even more steadily. Slave girls and dancers move forward a little and closer together.)

Achmed meets an old beggar, dressed in dirty rags, bent with gnarled stick.

Achmed: (pityingly)

O good man, thou art weary with walking and covered with the dust of the roads. I pray thee, sit down by my side and tell me thy story.

Beggar: (in rather a trembling voice)

O kindest of youths, I would fain kneel before thee. Thine heart is a heart of purest gold and thine appearance that of a prince. Indeed I am weary and footsore, for I have walked far and for many days. But whyfore wanderest thou upon this deserted road, young and handsome as thou art?

Achmed:

O old man, my tale is a sad one. Fate hath torn me from the side of those who did cherish me in their old age. I am fleeing, against my will, from a jealous king!

Beggar: (straightening up and pulling forth a dagger from his rags)

Then mayest thou die, son of a scoundrel! (Tries to stab Achmed.) Achmed snatches sword from him and stabs him in self-defense. Beggar falls to ground dead. Achmed stands still in shocked amazement and horror. Sword falls from his hand and hits stone. Genie appears, seemingly risen from stone.

Genie: (dramatically)

O Achmed, thou who wast concealed in the hills because of evil jealousy, thou who art the rightful heir to the throne of Khasib, thou who hast grown in stature, in wisdom, and in bravery, as befitteth a prince, —know thou that this man is not a beggar. Know thou that he is thy grandsire Khasib in disguise, and that thou hast slain him. Thus O

Achmed, has the prophecy of the Magi been fulfilled. Thus hast thou overcome Khasib!

(Genie disappears. Achmed stands silently, awed, looking into the distance. Walks away.)

Scene

Other end of amphitheatre.

Third Magi: (solemnly)

Oh Khasib, greatest of kings, thou hast truly seen a direful picture. Thou knowest now that which will surely happen if thou dost send the babe into the mountains to be slain. But, Khasib, heed carefully my words. If thou treatest thy daughter with kindness, if thou sendest not the child away to perish, Allah may change his decree. Thou mayest live happily with the son of thy daughter, O King, think long and well, for many lives await thy word. If these shades of the future could but speak, they would counsel thee even as we have already spoken.

(Shades of the future march in the distance silently, to strains of eerie music: Kasim, Marjaneh, El Hadir grown old, Aladdin, Animals, Thieves, Princess, Beggar, Achmed as boy, Achmed as Youth. Silence for a moment. Khasib, pondering, Jullanar kneeling, imploring, at his feet. Then Khasib speaks

Khasib: (very slowly)

I have thought long and well, O Magi. I have seen with wonder the future and that which the future may bring forth if I act rashly. My heart hath been moved and my judgment changed. O my daughter, (embracing Jullanar) I forgive thee all. Live thou in happiness with thy husband and thy child. But call thou the babe Achmed, that he may wax strong and brave! Peace unto thee! May Allah be praised!!

(Three Magi stand in silent approval. Khasib is motionless, with Jullanar kneeling in joyful thanks. Slave girls touch the strings of their instruments. Dancers dance for joy. Music should be joyful and triumphant. Recessional.)

END