

CRYSTAL WHITE: A NICK LAFFERTY THRILLER

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light of his fire, some standing around it and some sitting." So the master of the police refrained from slaying him and said to the third, "Who art thou?" Quoth he, "I am the son of him who plungeth through the ranks (77) with his might and correcteth (78) them with the sword, (79) so that they stand straight; (80) his feet are not loosed from the stirrup, (81) whenas the horsemen on the day of battle are weary." So the master of police held his hand from him also, saying, "Belike, he is the son of a champion of the Arabs." Meanwhile, the news spread abroad that Bihzad, son of the king, was lost, whereupon his father sent letters in quest of him [to all the kings and amongst others to him with whom he was imprisoned]. When the letter reached the latter, he praised God the Most High for that he had not anydele hastened in Bihzad's affair and letting bring him before himself, said to him, 'Art thou minded to destroy thyself?' Quoth Bihzad, '[I did this] for fear of reproach;' and the king said, 'An thou fear reproach, thou shouldst not practise haste [in that thou dost]; knowest thou not that the fruit of haste is repentance? If we had hastened, we also, like unto thee, we had repented.' It befell, one day of the days, that King Bihkerd embarked in a ship and put out to sea, so he might fish; but the wind blew on them and the ship foundered. The king won ashore on a plank, unknown of any, and came forth, naked, on one of the coasts; and it chanced that he landed in the country whereof the father of the youth aforesaid, [his sometime servant], was king. So he came in the night to the gate of the latter's city and [finding it shut], took up his lodging [for the night] in a burying-place there..They have shut out thy person from my sight, iii. 43..?STORY OF THE HAWK AND THE LOCUST..When the evening evened, the king sat in his privy sitting-chamber and his mind was occupied with the story of the singer and the druggist. So he called the vizier and bade him tell the story. "It is well," answered he, "They tell, O my lord, that. . . . What strength have I solicitude and long desire to bear? Why art thou purposed to depart and leave me to despair? There came one day an old woman [to the stuff-market], with a casket of precious workmanship, containing trinkets, and she was accompanied by a damsel great with child. The old woman sat down at the shop of a draper and giving him to know that the damsel was with child by the prefect of police of the city, took of him, on credit, stuffs to the value of a thousand dinars and deposited with him the casket as security. [She opened the casket and] showed him that which was therein; and he found it full of trinkets [apparently] of price; [so he trusted her with the goods] and she took leave of him and carrying the stuffs to the damsel, who was with her, [went her way]. Then the old woman was absent from him a great while, and when her absence was prolonged, the draper despaired of her; so he went up to the prefect's house and enquired of the woman of his household, [who had taken his stuffs on credit;] but could get no tidings of her nor lit on aught of her trace..Then the girl went away, running, after her mistress, whereupon I left the shop and set out after them, so I might see her abiding-place. I followed after them all the way, till she disappeared from mine eyes, when I returned to my place, with a heart on fire. Some days after, she came to me again and bought stuffs of me. I refused to take the price and she said, "We have no need of thy goods." Quoth I, "O my lady, accept them from me as a gift;" but she said, "[Wait] till I try thee and make proof of thee." Then she brought out of her pocket a purse and gave me therefrom a thousand dinars, saying, "Trade with this till I return to thee." So I took the purse and she went away [and returned not to me] till six months had passed by. Meanwhile, I traded with the money and sold and bought and made other thousand dinars profit [on it].23. Hatim et Tal; his Generosity after Death cclxx.iii Effects of Precipitation, Of the, i. 98..Firouz and his Wife, i. 209..One day, a day of excessive heat, as I stood at the door of my house, I saw a fair woman approaching, and with her a slave-girl carrying a parcel. They gave not over going till they came up to me, when the woman stopped and said to me, 'Hast thou a draught of water?' 'Yes,' answered I. 'Enter the vestibule, O my lady, so thou mayst drink.' Accordingly, she entered and I went up into the house and fetched two mugs of earthenware, perfumed with musk (175) and full of cold water. She took one of them and discovered her face, [that she might drink]; whereupon I saw that she was as the shining sun or the rising moon and said to her, 'O my lady, wilt thou not come up into the house, so thou mayst rest thyself till the air grow cool and after go away to thine own place?' Quoth she, 'Is there none with thee?' 'Indeed,' answered I, 'I am a [stranger] and a bachelor and have none belonging to me, nor is there a living soul in the house.' And she said, 'An thou be a stranger, thou art he in quest of whom I was going about.'? ? ? ? ? Our Lord, after sev'rance, with them hath conjoined us, for he who doth good Shall ne'er disappointed abide and kindnesses kindness entail.. "O sister mine," answered Dinarzad, "bring forth that which is with thee and that which is present to thy mind of the story concerning the craft of women and their wiles, and have no fear lest this endamage thee with the king; for that women are like unto jewels, which are of all kinds and colours. When a [true] jewel falleth into the hand of him who is knowing therein, he keepeth it for himself and leaveth that which is other than it. Moreover, he preferreth some of them over others, and in this he is like unto the potter, who filleth his oven with all the vessels [he hath moulded] and kindleth fire thereunder. When the baking is at an end and he goeth about to take forth that which is in the oven, he findeth no help for it but that he must break some thereof, whilst other some are what the folk need and whereof they make use, and yet other some there be that return to their whilom case. Wherefore fear thou not to adduce that which thou knowest of the craft of women, for that in this is profit for all folk."97. The Woman who had a Boy and the other who had a Man to Lover dclxxviii.Quoth the cook, 'Nothing will serve but I must slay thee, O fellow; for, if I spare thee, I shall myself be slain.' But Selim said, 'O my brother, I will counsel thee somewhat (74) other than this.' 'What is it?' asked the cook. 'Say and be brief, ere I cut thy throat' And Selim said, '[Do thou suffer me to live and] keep me, that I may be a servant unto thee, and I will work at a craft, of the crafts of the skilled workmen, wherefrom there shall return to thee every day two dinars.' Quoth the cook, 'What is the craft?' and Selim said, 'The cutting [and polishing] of jewels.'Then he folded the letter and sealing it, delivered it to the damsel, who took it and carried it to her mistress. When the princess read the letter and apprehended its contents, she said, "Meseemeth he recalleth to me that which I did aforetime." Then she called for inkhorn and paper and wrote the following verses: ? ? ? ? e. The Barber's Story xxxi.105. El Feth ben Khacan and El Mutawekkil cccxcix.? ? ? ? ? Thine honour, therefore, guard and eke thy secret keep, Nor save to one free-born and true thy case confess..? ? ? ? ? Yea, nevermore I ceased from that wherewith I stricken was; My night with wakefulness was filled, my heart with dreariment..? ? ? ? ? Still do I yearn, whilst passion's fire flames in my liver aye; For parting's shafts have smitten me and done my strength away..So he left him for dead and entering his brother's chamber, saw him asleep, with the damsel by his side, and thought to slay her, but said in himself, 'I will leave the damsel for myself.' Then he went up to his brother and cutting his throat, severed his head from his body, after which he left him and went away. Therewithal the world was straitened upon him and his life was a light matter to him and he sought his father Suleiman Shah's lodging, that he might slay him, but could not win to him. So he went forth from the palace and hid himself in the city till the morrow, when he repaired to one of his father's strengths and fortified himself therein..O amir of justice, be kind to thy subjects, iii. 24..When the evening evened, the king sent after the vizier and when he presented himself before him, he required of him the hearing of the

[promised] story. So he said, "Hearkening and obedience. Know, O illustrious lord, that So Abdulmelik went away to his house, whither he found that the money had foregone him, and on the morrow Jaafer presented himself before the Khalif and acquainted him with what had passed and that he had appointed Abdulmelik's son governor of Egypt and had promised him his daughter in marriage. Er Reshid approved of this and confirmed the appointment and the marriage. [Then he sent for the young man] and he went not forth of the palace of the Khalif till he wrote him the patent [of investiture with the government] of Egypt; and he let bring the Cadis and the witnesses and drew up the contract of marriage..When it was the ninth day, the viziers [foregathered and] said, one to another, "Verily, this youth baffleth us, for as often as the king is minded to put him to death, he beguileth him and ensorcelleth him with a story; so what deem ye we should do, that we may slay him and be at rest from him?" Then they took counsel together and were of accord that they should go to the king's wife [and prompt her to urge the king to slaughter the youth. So they betook themselves to her] and said to her, "Thou art heedless of this affair wherein thou art and this heedlessness will not profit thee; whilst the king is occupied with eating and drinking and diversion and forgetteth that the folk beat upon tabrets and sing of thee and say, 'The king's wife loveth the youth;' and what while he abideth on life, the talk will increase and not diminish." Quoth she, "By Allah, it was ye set me on against him, and what shall I do [now]?" And they answered, "Do thou go in to the king and weep and say to him, 'Verily, the women come to me and tell me that I am become a byword in the city, and what is thine advantage in the sparing of this youth? If thou wilt not slay him, slay me, so this talk may be estopped from us.'" .? ? ? ? z. The King who lost Kingdom and Wife and Wealth and God restored them to him dccccix. The Khalif marvelled at my speech and said, 'How great is this king! Indeed, his letter testifieth of him; and as for the magnificence of his dominion, thou hast acquainted us with that which thou hast seen; so, by Allah, he hath been given both wisdom and dominion.' Then he bestowed on me largesse and dismissed me, so I returned to my house and paid the poor-rate (216) and gave alms and abode in my former easy and pleasant case, forgetting the grievous stresses I had suffered. Yea, I cast out from my heart the cares of travel and traffic and put away travail from my thought and gave myself up to eating and drinking and pleasure and delight." So saying, he took leave of the woman and her husband and set out, intending for Akil, his father's brother's son. Now there was between Baghdad and Akil's abiding-place forty days' journey; so El Abbas settled himself on the back of his courser and his servant Aamir mounted also and they fared forth on their way. Presently, El Abbas turned right and left and recited the following verses: .? ? ? ? a. Story of the Eunuch Bekhit xxxix. ? ? ? ? c. The King who knew the Quintessence of Things dcccci. The prefect bade carry him to his lodging; but one of those in attendance upon him, by name El Muradi, said to him, "What wilt thou do? This man is clad in rich clothes and on his finger is a ring of gold, the bezel whereof is a ruby of great price; so we will carry him away and slay him and take that which is upon him of raiment [and what not else] and bring it to thee; for that thou wilt not [often] see profit the like thereof, more by token that this fellow is a stranger and there is none to enquire concerning him." Quoth the prefect, "This fellow is a thief and that which he saith is leasing." And Nouredin said, "God forbid that I should be a thief!" But the prefect answered, "Thou liest." So they stripped him of his clothes and taking the ring from his finger, beat him grievously, what while he cried out for succour, but none succoured him, and besought protection, but none protected him. Then said he to them, "O folk, ye are quit of (12) that which ye have taken from me; but now restore me to my lodging." But they answered, saying, "Leave this knavery, O cheat! Thine intent is to sue us for thy clothes on the morrow." "By Allah, the One, the Eternal," exclaimed he, "I will not sue any for them!" But they said, "We can nowise do this." And the prefect bade them carry him to the Tigris and there slay him and cast him into the river..Three men once went out in quest of riches and came upon a block of gold, weighing a hundred pounds. When they saw it, they took it up on their shoulders and fared on with it, till they drew near a certain city, when one of them said, 'Let us sit in the mosque, whilst one of us goes and buys us what we may eat.' So they sat down in the mosque and one of them arose and entered the city. When he came therein, his soul prompted him to play his fellows false and get the gold for himself alone. So he bought food and poisoned it; but, when he returned to his comrades, they fell upon him and slew him, so they might enjoy the gold without him. Then they ate of the [poisoned] food and died, and the gold abode cast down over against them..When the Khalif heard this, her speech pleased him and he strained her to his bosom. Then he went forth from her and locked the door upon her, as before; whereupon she took the book and sat looking in it awhile. Presently, she laid it down and taking the lute, tightened its strings. Then she smote thereon, after a wondrous fashion, such as would have moved inanimate things [to delight], and fell to singing marvellous melodies and chanting the following verses: .? ? ? ? A talking-stock among the folk for ever I abide; Life and the days pass by, yet ne'er my wishes I attain), Man whose Caution was the Cause of his Death, The, i. 291..So Belehwan the froward abode king in his father's room and his affairs prospered, what while the young Melik Shah lay in the underground dungeon four full-told years, till his charms faded and his favour changed. When God (extolled be His perfection and exalted be He!) willed to relieve him and bring him forth of the prison, Belehwan sat one day with his chief officers and the grandees of his state and discoursed with them of the story of King Suleiman Shah and what was in his heart. Now there were present certain viziers, men of worth, and they said to him, 'O king, verily God hath been bountiful unto thee and hath brought thee to thy wish, so that thou art become king in thy father's stead and hast gotten thee that which thou soughtest. But, as for this boy, there is no guilt in him, for that, from the day of his coming into the world, he hath seen neither ease nor joyance, and indeed his favour is faded and his charms changed [with long prison]. What is his offence that he should merit this punishment? Indeed, it is others than he who were to blame, and God hath given thee the victory over them, and there is no fault in this poor wight.' Quoth Belehwan, 'Indeed, it is as ye say; but I am fearful of his craft and am not assured from his mischief; belike the most part of the folk will incline unto him.' 'O king,' answered they, 'what is this boy and what power hath he? If thou fear him, send him to one of the frontiers.' And Belehwan said, 'Ye say sooth: we will send him to be captain over such an one of the marches.' .? ? ? ? Then was my heart by that which caused my agitation seared, And from mine eyelids still the tears poured down without relent..51. The Woman whose Hands were cut off for Almsgiving cccxlviii. When it was the Nine hundred and thirtieth Night, Shehrzad said, "O king, there is present in my thought a story which treateth of women's craft and wherein is a warning to whoso will be warned and an admonishment to whoso will be admonished and whoso hath discernment; but I fear lest the hearing of this lessen me with the king and lower my rank in his esteem; yet I hope that this will not be, for that it is a rare story. Women are indeed corruptresses; their craft and their cunning may not be set out nor their wiles known. Men enjoy their company and are not careful to uphold them [in the right way], neither do they watch over them with all vigilance, but enjoy their company and take that which is agreeable and pay no heed to that which is other than this. Indeed, they are like unto the crooked rib, which if thou go about to straighten, thou distortest it, and

which if thou persist in seeking to redress, thou breakest it; wherefore it behoveth the man of understanding to be silent concerning them." . . . wa. The Hawk and the Locust dccccxvi. So they wrapped him in the shroud and set him on the bier. Then they took up his bier and bearing him to the burial-place, laid him in the grave (41) and threw the earth over him; after which the folk dispersed, but El Merouzi and the widow abode by the tomb, weeping, and gave not over sitting till sundown, when the woman said to him, 'Come, let us go to the house, for this weeping will not profit us, nor will it restore the dead.' 'By Allah,' answered the sharper, 'I will not budge hence till I have slept and waked by this tomb ten days, with their nights!' When she heard this his speech, she feared lest he should keep his word and his oath, and so her husband perish; but she said in herself, 'This fellow dissembleth: if I go away and return to my house, he will abide by him a little while and go away.' And El Merouzi said to her, 'Arise, thou, and go away.' .29. Maan ben Zaideh and the three Girls dxxxii. Then will he say to thee, 'Then thou art an ape-leader of the tribe of the mountebanks?' And do thou reply, 'I may in nowise deny my origin, for the sake of thy daughter and in her honour.' The Cadi will say, 'It may not be that thou shalt be given the daughter of a sheikh who sitteth upon the carpet of the Law and whose descent is traceable by genealogy to the loins of the Apostle of God, (267) nor is it seemly that his daughter be in the power of a man who is an ape-dancer, a minstrel.' And do thou rejoice, 'Nay, O Effendi, she is my lawful wife and every hair of her is worth a thousand lives, and I will not let her go, though I be given the kingship of the world.' Then be thou persuaded to speak the word of divorce and so shall the marriage be dissolved and ye be delivered from each other." .146. The Lovers of Bassora dcxciii. So the highwayman took the saddle-bags and offered to kill the traveller, who said, "What is this? Thou hast no blood-feud against me, that should make my slaughter incumbent [on thee]. Quoth the other, "Needs must I slay thee;" whereupon the traveller dismounted from his horse and grovelled on the earth, beseeching the robber and speaking him fair. The latter hearkened not to his prayers, but cast him to the ground; whereupon the traveller [raised his eyes and seeing a francolin flying over him,] said, in his agony, "O francolin, bear witness that this man slayeth me unjustly and wickedly; for indeed I have given him all that was with me and besought him to let me go, for my children's sake; yet would he not consent unto this. But be thou witness against him, for God is not unmindful of that which is done of the oppressors." The highwayman paid no heed to this speech, but smote him and cut off his head. . . . If I must die, then welcome death to heal My woes; 'twere lighter than the pangs I feel. So he said to her, 'Do thou excuse me, for my servant hath locked the door, and who shall open to us?' Quoth she, 'O my lord, the padlock is worth [but] half a score dirhems.' So saying, she tucked up [her sleeves] from fore-arms as they were crystal and taking a stone, smote upon the padlock and broke it. Then she opened the door and said to him, 'Enter, O my lord.' So he entered, committing his affair to God, (to whom belong might and majesty,) and she entered after him and locked the door from within. They found themselves in a pleasant house, comprising all (262) weal and gladness; and the young man went on, till he came to the sitting-chamber, and behold, it was furnished with the finest of furniture [and arrayed on the goodliest wise for the reception of guests,] as hath before been set out, [for that it was the house of the man aforesaid]. Then I arose and fared on a day and a night, till I came to the house of my master, who saw me pale and disfeatured for fear and hunger. He rejoiced in my return and said to me, 'By Allah, thou hast made my heart ache on thine account; for I went and finding the tree torn up by the roots, doubted not but the elephants had destroyed thee. Tell me then how it was with thee.' So I told him what had befallen me and he marvelled exceedingly and rejoiced, saying, 'Knowst thou where this hill is?' 'Yes, O my lord,' answered I. So he took me up with him on an elephant and we rode till we came to the elephants' burial-place. When she came to Alaeddin's shop, she sat down thereat and said to him, "May the day be blessed to thee, O my lord Alaeddin! God prosper thee and be good to thee and accomplish thy gladness and make it a wedding of weal and content!" He knitted his brows and frowned in answer to her; then said he to her, "Tell me, how have I failed of thy due, or what have I done to injure thee, that thou shouldst play me this trick?" Quoth she, "Thou hast no wise offended against me; but this inscription that is written on the door of thy shop irketh me and vexeth my heart. If thou wilt change it and write up the contrary thereof, I will deliver thee from thy predicament." And he answered, "This that thou seekest is easy. On my head and eyes be it." So saying, he brought out a ducat (264) and calling one of his mamelukes, said to him, "Get thee to such an one the scribe and bid him write us an inscription, adorned with gold and ultramarine, in these words, to wit, 'THERE IS NO CRAFT BUT WOMEN'S CRAFT, FOR THAT INDEED THEIR CRAFT IS A MIGHTY CRAFT AND OVERCOMETH AND HUMBLETH THE FABLES (265) OF MEN.'" And she said to the servant, "Go forthright." Whenas mine eyes behold thee not, that day, iii. 47. . . . Assemble, ye people of passion, I pray; For the hour of our torment hath sounded to-day. Now I was drunken and my clothes were drenched with the blood; and as I passed along the road, I met a thief. When he saw me, he knew me and said to me, "Harkye, such an one!" "Well?" answered I, and he said, "What is that thou hast with thee?" So I acquainted him with the case and he took the head from me. Then we went on till we came to the river, where he washed the head and considering it straitly, said, "By Allah, this is my brother, my father's son. and he used to sponge upon the folk." Then he threw the head into the river. As for me, I was like a dead man [for fear]; but he said to me, "Fear not neither grieve, for thou art quit of my brother's blood." As for Zubeideh, she went in to the Khalif and talked with him awhile; then she fell to kissing him between the eyes and on his hand and asked him that which she had promised Sitt el Milah, saying, "O Commander of the Faithful, I doubt me her lord is not found in this world; but, if she go about in quest of him and find him not, her hopes will be cut off and her mind will be set at rest and she will sport and laugh; for that, what while she abideth in hope, she will never cease from her frowardness." And she gave not over cajoling him till he gave Sitt el Milah leave to go forth and make search for her lord a month's space and ordered her an eunuch to attend her and bade the paymaster [of the household] give her all she needed, were it a thousand dirhems a day or more. So the Lady Zubeideh arose and returning to her palace, sent for Sitt el Milah and acquainted her with that which had passed [between herself and the Khalif]; whereupon she kissed her hand and thanked her and called down blessings on her. . . . O'erbold art thou in that to me, a stranger, thou hast sent These verses; 'twill but add to thee unease and discontent. Sixteen Officers of Police, El Melik ez Zahir Rukneddin Bibers el Bunducdari and the, ii. 117. Then they spread him a prayer-carpet and he prayed. Now he knew not how to pray and gave not over bowing and prostrating himself, [till he had prayed the prayers] of twenty inclinations, (21) pondering in himself the while and saying, "By Allah, I am none other than the Commander of the Faithful in very sooth! This is assuredly no dream, for all these things happen not in a dream." And he was convinced and determined in himself that he was Commander of the Faithful; so he pronounced the Salutation (22) and made an end (23) of his prayers; whereupon the slaves and slave-girls came round about him with parcels of silk and stuffs (24) and clad him in the habit of the Khalifate and gave him the royal dagger in his hand. Then the chief eunuch went out before him and the little white slaves behind him, and they ceased not

[going] till they raised the curtain and brought him into the hall of judgment and the throne-room of the Khalifate. There he saw the curtains and the forty doors and El Ijji and Er Recashi (25) and Ibdan and Jedim and Abou Ishac (26) the boon-companions and beheld swords drawn and lions (27) encompassing [the throne] and gilded glaives and death-dealing bows and Persians and Arabs and Turks and Medes and folk and peoples and Amirs and viziers and captains and grandees and officers of state and men of war, and indeed there appeared the puissance of the house of Abbas (28) and the majesty of the family of the Prophet. . . . But if my wealth abound, of all I'm held in amity. . . . Meanwhile, when Aboulhusn went out from the presence of the Khalif and went to lay out Nuzhet el Fuad, the prince mourned for her and dismissing the divan, arose and betook himself, leaning upon Mesrou, the swordsman of his vengeance, [to the pavilion of the harem, where he went in] to the Lady Zubeideh, that he might condole with her for her slave-girl. He found the princess sitting weeping and awaiting his coming, so she might condole with him for [his boon-companion] Aboulhusn el Khelia. So he said to her, "May thy head outlive thy slave-girl Nuzhet el Fuad!" And she answered, saying, "O my lord, God preserve my slave-girl! Mayst thou live and long survive thy boon-companion Aboulhusn el Khelia! For he is dead." Quoth Ishac, 'Indeed, this was of thy fair fortune. By Allah, I know not that which thou knowest in this craft!' Then he arose and going to a chest, brought out therefrom striped clothes of great price, netted with jewels and great pearls, and said to her, 'In the name of God, don these, O my lady Tuhfeh.' So she arose and donned those clothes and veiled herself and went up [with Ishac] to the palace of the Khalifate, where he made her stand without, whilst he himself went in to the Commander of the Faithful (with whom was Jaafer the Barmecide) and kissing the earth before him, said to him, 'O Commander of the Faithful, I have brought thee a damsel, never saw eyes her like for excellence in singing and touching the lute; and her name is Tuhfeh.' (186) 'And where,' asked Er Reshed, 'is this Tuhfeh, who hath not her like in the world?' Quoth Ishac, 'Yonder she stands, O Commander of the Faithful;' and he acquainted the Khalif with her case from first to last. Then said Er Reshid, 'It is a marvel to hear thee praise a slave-girl after this fashion. Admit her, so we may see her, for that the morning may not be hidden.' Then she wept till her voice rose high and her lamentation was discovered [to those without]; after which she again began to drink and plying the old man with wine, sang the following verses:..Seventh Voyage of Sindbad the Sailor, The, iii. 224..The Second Night of the Month. 'Thou liest, O accursed one,' cried the king and bade lay hands on him and clap him in irons. Then he turned to the two youths, his sons, and strained them to his breast, weeping sore and saying, 'O all ye who are present of cadis and assessors and officers of state, know that these twain are my sons and that this is my wife and the daughter of my father's brother; for that I was king aforetime in such a region.' And he recounted to them his history from beginning to end, nor is there aught of profit in repetition; whereupon the folk cried out with weeping and lamentation for the stress of that which they heard of marvellous chances and that rare story. As for the king's wife, he caused carry her into his palace and lavished upon her and upon her sons all that behoved and beseemed them of bounties, whilst the folk flocked to offer up prayers for him and give him joy of [his reunion with] his wife and children..The prince thanked them and said to them, 'God requite you with all good, for indeed ye give me loyal counsel; but whither would ye have me go?' Quoth they, 'Get thee to the land of the Greeks, the abiding-place of thy mother.' And he said, 'My grandfather Suleiman Shah, when the King of the Greeks wrote to him, demanding my mother in marriage, concealed my affair and hid my secret; [and she hath done the like,] and I cannot make her a liar.' 'Thou sayst sooth,' rejoined they; 'but we desire thine advantage, and even if thou tookest service with the folk, it were a means of thy continuance [on life].' Then each of them brought out to him money and gave to him and clad him and fed him and fared on with him a parasang's distance till they brought him far from the city, and giving him to know that he was safe, departed from him, whilst he fared on till he came forth of the dominions of his uncle and entered those [of the king] of the Greeks. Then he entered a village and taking up his abode therein, betook himself to serving one there in ploughing and sowing and the like..?STORY OF THE THREE MEN AND OUR LORD JESUS..? ? ? ? ? "The glory's not in those whom raiment rich makes fair, But those who still adorn the raiment that they wear." Jesus, The Three Men and our Lord, i. 282..A certain assessor was one day taken with a woman and much people assembled before his house and the lieutenant of police and his men came to him and knocked at the door. The assessor looked out of window and seeing the folk, said, "What aileth you?" Quoth they, "[Come,] speak with the lieutenant of police such an one." So he came down and they said to him, "Bring forth the woman that is with thee." Quoth he, "Are ye not ashamed? How shall I bring forth my wife?" And they said, "Is she thy wife by contract (118) or without contract?" ["By contract,"] answered he, "according to the Book of God and the Institutes of His Apostle." "Where is the contract?" asked they; and he replied, "Her contract is in her mother's house." Quoth they, "Arise and come down and show us the contract." And he said to them, "Go from her way, so she may come forth." Now, as soon as he got wind of the matter, he had written the contract and fashioned it after her fashion, to suit with the case, and written therein the names of certain of his friends as witnesses and forged the signatures of the drawer and the wife's next friend and made it a contract of marriage with his wife and appointed it for an excuse. (119) So, when the woman was about to go out from him, he gave her the contract that he had forged, and the Amir sent with her a servant of his, to bring her to her father. So the servant went with her and when she came to her door, she said to him, "I will not return to the citation of the Amir; but let the witnesses (120) present themselves and take my contract."..?THE THIRTEENTH OFFICER'S STORY..? ? ? ? ? Lo, in my heart the heat of every heart burns high And in mine eyes unite the tears of every eye..Then he bade fetch the youth; so they brought him before him and the viziers said, "O base of origin, out on thee! Thy term is at hand and the earth hungereth for thy body, so it may devour it." But he answered them, saying, "Death is not in your word nor in your envy; nay, it is an ordinance written upon the forehead; wherefore, if aught be written upon my forehead, needs must it come to pass, and neither endeavour nor thought-taking nor precaution will deliver me therefrom; [but it will surely happen] even as happened to King Ibrahim and his son." Quoth the king, "Who was King Ibrahim and who was his son?" And the youth said, "O king..The Khalif smiled and said to his eunuch, "O Mesrou, verily women are little of wit. I conjure thee, by Allah, say, was not Aboulhusn with me but now?" ["Yes, O Commander of the Faithful," answered Mesrou] Quoth the Lady Zubeideh, laughing from a heart full of wrath, "Wilt thou not leave thy jesting? Is it not enough that Aboulhusn is dead, but thou must kill my slave-girl also and bereave us of the two and style me little of wit?" "Indeed," answered the Khalif, "it is Nuzhet el Fuad who is dead." And Zubeideh said, "Indeed he hath not been with thee, nor hast thou seen him, and none was with me but now but Nuzhet el Fuad, and she sorrowful, weeping, with her clothes torn. I exhorted her to patience and gave her a hundred dinars and a piece of silk; and indeed I was awaiting thy coming, so I might condole with thee for thy boon-companion Aboulhusn el Khelia, and was about to send for thee." The Khalif laughed and said, "None is dead but Nuzhet el Fuad;" and she, "No, no, my lord; none is dead but Aboulhusn."..When King Shah Bekht heard his vizier's speech, he

was confounded before him and abashed and marvelled at the gravity of his understanding and his patience. So he sprang up to him and embraced him and the vizier kissed his feet. Then the king called for a sumptuous dress of honour and cast it over Er Rehwan and entreated him with the utmost honour and showed him special favour and restored him to his rank and vizierate. Moreover he imprisoned those who had sought his destruction with leasing and committed unto himself to pass judgment upon the interpreter who had expounded to him the dream. So the vizier abode in the governance of the realm till there came to them the Destroyer of Delights; and this (added Shehrzad) is all, O king of the age, that hath come down to us of King Shah Bekht and his vizier..? ? ? ? p. The Foxes and the Wolf dccccxi.? ? ? ? An you'd of evil be quit, look that no evil yon do; Nay, but do good, for the like God will still render to you..All those who were present marvelled at this story with the utmost marvel, and the twelfth officer came forward and said, 'I will tell you a pleasant trait that I had from a certain man, concerning an adventure that befell him with one of the thieves. (Quoth he).When she awoke, she said to the old man, "O elder, hast thou aught of food?" And he answered, "O my lady, I have bread and olives." Quoth she, "That is food fit but for the like of thee. As for me, I will have nought but roast lamb and broths and fat rissoled fowls and stuffed ducks and all manner meats dressed with [pounded nuts and almond-]kernels and sugar." "O my lady," replied the Muezzin, "I never heard of this chapter in the Koran, nor was it revealed unto our lord Mohammed, whom God bless and keep!" (31) She laughed and said, "O elder, the matter is even as thou sayest; but bring me inkhorn and paper." So he brought her what she sought and she wrote a letter and gave it to him, together with a seal-ring from her finger, saying, "Go into the city and enquire for such an one the money-changer and give him this my letter." ? ? ? ? So hath the Merciful towards Hudheifeh driven you, A champion ruling over all, a lion of great might..51. The Thief and the Money-changer dcv

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