ANGUS DAVITT AND THE CONVERGENCE

35. The Lover who feigned himself a Thief to save his Mistress's Honour cxccxvii. As they abode thus on the fourth day, behold, a company of folk giving their beasts the rein and crying aloud and saying, "Quick! Quick! Haste to our rescue, O King!" Therewithal the king's chamberlains and officers accosted them and said to them, "What is behind you and what hath befallen you?" Quoth they, "Bring us before the king." [So they carried them to Ins ben Cais:] and when they saw him, they said to him, "O king, except thou succour us, we are dead men; for that we are a folk of the Benou Sheiban, (67) who have taken up our abode in the parts of Bassora, and Hudheifeh the Arab (68) hath come down on us with his horses and his men and hath slain our horsemen and carried off our women and children; nor was one saved of the tribe but he who fled; wherefore we crave help [first] by God the Most High, then by thy life." . . . . . . a. Nimeh ben er Rebya and Num his Slave-girl cxccxvii. . . . . . Deem not, O youth, that I to thee incline; indeed, no part Have I in those who walk the ways, the children of the tent. (87).If, in his own land, midst his folk, abjection and despite, ii. 196..62. Abdallah ben Maamer with the Man of Bassora and his Slave-girl cccclxxiii.6. Story of the Hunchback xxv. Accordingly El Merouzi repaired to the market and fetching that which he sought, returned to Er Razi's house, where he found the latter cast down in the vestibule, with his beard tied and his eyes shut; and indeed, his colour was paled and his belly blown out and his limbs relaxed. So he deemed him in truth dead and shook him; but he spoke not; and he took a knife and pricked him in the legs, but he stirred not. Then said Er Razi, 'What is this, O fool?' And El Merouzi answered, 'Methought thou wast dead in very sooth.' Quoth Er Razi, 'Get thee to seriousness and leave jesting.' So he took him up and went and with him to the market and collected [alms] for him that day till eventide, when he carried him back to his lodging and waited till the morrow... . . . . . a. The Christian Broker's Story cix. So saying, he fell upon her and beat her with a staff of almond-wood, till she cried out, "[Help], O Musлимs!" And he redoubled the beating upon her, till the folk heard her cries and coming to her, [found] Aboulhusn beating her and saying to her, "O old woman of ill-omen, am I not the Commander of the Faithful? Thou hast enchanted me!" When the folk heard his words, they said, "This man raveth," and doubted not of his madness. So they came in upon him and seizing him, pinioned him and carried him to the hospital. Quoth the superintendent, 'What aileth this youth?' And they said, 'This is a madman.' "By Allah," cried Aboulhusn, "they lie against me! I am no madman, but the Commander of the Faithful." And the superintendent answered him, saying, "None lieth but thou, O unluckiest of madmen!" . . . . . The Three Unfortunate Lovers cccclxxvi.76. The Khalif El Hakim and the Merchant cccclxxvii. . . . . . a. The King and his Vizier's Wife dcccclxxx. On this wise she abode a great while and indeed yearning for him came nigh to slay her; so she stood and watched for him one day at the door of her chamber and straining him to her bosom, kissed him on the cheek and breast. At this moment, out came the master of the king's household and seeing her embracing the youth, abode amazed. Then he asked to whom that chamber belonged and was answered, 'To Shah Khatoun, wife of the king,' whereupon he turned back, trembling as [one smitten by] a thunderbolt. The king saw him quaking and said to him, 'Out on thee! what is the matter?' 'O king,' answered he, 'what matter is graver than that which I see?' 'What seest thou?' asked the king and the officer said, 'I see that yonder youth, who came with the eunuch, he brought not with him but on account of Shah Khatoun; for that I passed but now by her chamber door, and she was standing, watching; [and when the youth came up,] she rose to him and clipped him and kissed him on his cheek. . . . . . How long shall I, in weariness, for this estrangement pine, What while the spies of severance (106) do watch me all the night?. . . . . . a. The Christian Broker's Story cix. So saying, he fell upon her and beat her with a staff of almond-wood, till she cried out, "[Help], O Musлимs!" And he redoubled the beating upon her, till the folk heard her cries and coming to her, [found] Aboulhusn beating her and saying to her, "O old woman of ill-omen, am I not the Commander of the Faithful? Thou hast enchanted me!" When the folk heard his words, they said, "This man raveth," and doubted not of his madness. 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So Melik Shah betook himself thither with his army and when it was one of the days, behold, the enemy fell in upon them in the night; whereupon some of his men fled and the rest the enemy took; and they took Melik Shah also and cast him into an underground dungeon, with a company of his men. There he abode a whole year in evil plight, whilst his fellows mourned over his beauty and grace. When the company heard this story, they marvelled thereat with the utmost wonderment. Then the fifth officer, who was the lieutenant of the bench, (113) came forward and said, [This is] no wonder and there befell me that which is rarer and more extraordinary than this... 71. Yehya ben Khalid and the Poor Man dclvi. At eventide the king sat in his privy sitting-chamber and sending for the superintendant, said to him, "Tell me the story of the fuller and his wife." "With all my heart," answered the vizier. So he came forward and said, "Know, O king of the age, that... ? ? ? ? ? When from the land the breeze I scent that cometh, as I were A reveller bemused with wine, to lose my wits I'm fain... ? ? ? ? ? Yea, "Welcome! Fair welcome to those who draw near!" I called out aloud, as to meet you I flew... "When I [returned from my sixth voyage, I] foresware travel and renounced commerce, saying in myself, 'What hath befallen me sufficeth me.' So I abode at home and passed my time in pleasance and delight, till, one day, as I sat at mine ease, plying the wine-cup [with my friends], there came a knocking at the door. The doorkeeper opened and found without one of the Khalif's pages, who came in to me and said, 'The Commander of the Faithful biddeth thee to him.' So I accompanied him to the presence of the Khalif and kissing the earth before him, saluted him. He bade me welcome and entertained me with honour and said to me, 'O Sindbad, I have an occasion with thee, which I would have thee accomplish for me.' So I kissed his hand and said, 'O my lord, what is the lord's occasion with the slave?' Quoth he, 'I would have thee go to the King of Serendib and carry him our letter and our present, even as he sent us a present and a letter.' When she had made an end of her verses, she considered her affair and said in herself, 'By Allah, all these
things have betided by the ordinance of God the Most High and His providence and this was written and charactered upon the forehead.' Then she landed and fared on till she came to a spacious place, where she enquered of the folk and hired a house. Thither she straightway transported all that was in the ship of goods and sending for brokers, sold all that was with her. Then she took part of the price and fell to enquiring of the folk, so haply she might scent out tidings [of her lost husband]. Moreover, she addressed herself to lavishing alms and tending the sick, clothing the naked and pouring water upon the dry ground of the forlorn. On this wise she abode a whole year, and every little while she sold of her goods and gave alms to the sick and the needy; wherefore her report was bruited abroad in the city and the folk were lavish in her praise. When Ibrahim heard this, he let fetch the thieves and said to them, 'Tell me truly, which of you shot the arrow that wounded me.' Quoth they, 'It was this youth that is with us.' Whereupon the king fell to looking upon him and said to him, 'O youth, acquaint me with thy case and tell me who was thy father and thou shalt have assurance from God.' 'O my lord,' answered the youth, 'I know no father; as for me, my father lodged me in a pit [when I was little], with a nurse to rear me, and one day, there fell in upon a lion, which tore my shoulder, then left me and occupied himself with the nurse and rent her in pieces; and God vouchsafed me one who brought me forth of the pit.' Then he related to him all that had befallen him, first and last; which when Ibrahim heard, he cried out and said, 'By Allah, this is my very son!' And he said to him, 'Uncover thy shoulder.' So he uncovered it and beheld, it was scarred. Thereupon the king went in to his mother and questioned her of his father, and she told him that he king her husband was weak; (211) 'wherefore,' quoth she, 'I feared for the kingdom, lest it pass away, after his death; so I took to my bed a young man, a baker, and conceived by him [and bore a son]; and the kingship came into the hand of my son, to wit, thyself.' So the king returned to the old man and said to him, 'I am indeed the son of a baker; so do thou expound to me the means whereby thou knewest me for this.' Quoth the other, 'I knew that, hadst thou been a king's son, thou wouldst have given largesse of things of price, such as rubies [and the like]; and wert thou the son of a Cadi, thou hadst given largesse of a dirhem or two dirhems, and wert thou the son of a merchant, thou hadst given wealth galore. But I saw that thou guerdonest me not but with cakes of bread [and other victual], wherefore I knew that thou wast the son of a baker.' Quoth the king, 'Thou hast hit the mark.' And he gave him wealth galore and advanced him to high estate. 'It is told of a certain doughty thief, that he used to rob and stop the way by himself upon caravans, and whenever the prefect of police and the magistrates sought him, he would flee from them and fortify himself in the mountains. Now it befell that a certain man journeyed along the road wherein was the robber in question, and this man was alone and knew not the peril that beset his way. So the highwayman came out upon him and said to him, 'Bring out that which is with thee, for I mean to slay thee without fail.' Quoth the traveller, 'Slay me not, but take these saddle-bags and divide [that which is in] them and take the fourth part [thereof].' And the thief answered, 'I will not take aught but the whole.' 'Take half,' rejoined the traveller, 'and let me go.' But the robber replied, 'I will take nought but the whole, and I will slay thee [to boot].' And the traveller said, 'Take it.' Fourteenth Officer's Story, The, ii. 183. Still by your ruined camp a dweller I abide, ii. 209. Now he had a nurse, a foster-mother, on whose knees he had been reared, and she was a woman of understanding and misdoubted of him, but dared not accost him [with questions]. So she went in to Shah Khatoun and finding her in yet sorrier plight than he, asked her what was to do; but she refused to answer. However, the nurse gave not over coaxing and questioning her, till she exacted of her an oath of secrecy. So the old woman swore to her that she would keep secret all that she should say to her, whereupon the queen related to her her history from first to last and told her that the youth was her son. With this the old woman prostrated herself before her and said to her, 'This is an easy matter.' But the queen answered, saying, 'By Allah, O my mother, I choose my destruction and that of my son rather than defend myself by avouching a thing whereof they will not credit me; for they will say, 'She avoucheth this, but that she may fend off reproach from herself' And nought will avail me but patience.' The old woman was moved by her speech and her intelligence and said to her, 'Indeed, O my daughter, it is as thou sayst, and I hope in God that He will show forth the truth. Have patience and I will presently go in to the king and hear what he saith and contrive somewhat in this matter, if it be the will of God the Most High.'? ? ? ? ? b. The Cook's Story (238) cxxi.? ? ? ? ? p. The Sixteenth Officer's Story dcccxli.? ? ? ? ? "How many a cup with bitterness o'erflowing have I quaffed! I make my moan of woes, whereat it boots not to repine."
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