The Scourge of Damascus

A Story of the East...

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CHAPTER IX.—(CONTINUED.)

"I remember," pursued Ulin. "It all comes to me now. I bathed his bruised head, and bound up his wounds, while you brought the cordial which my mother provided."

"So it was, my lady. I have seen the slave since, have seen him several times—he has brought messages to your father, and I know that his gratitude is strong. If Osmir has any power to open the prison door, and I can find him, there may be some hope."

"But can you find him?" asked the princess. She spoke eagerly, and no longer sought to conceal the real cause of her anxiety.

"I can try," returned the attendant, "and even here we have a fortunate help in Shubal who has been to bring your servant in a near friend to Osmir. I will take Shubal with me and we may find the man we seek. Shall I not leave at once?"

"Yes, Alba. Go at once. Be careful for all may depend on the success of your errand. I have entered upon this matter, and I will now give all my energies to the consummation. Go, and bring me word as quickly as you can."

The bondman made the signal, and while Ulin was speaking to Alba she stood in her place, and in all that she said to her father and mother she was calm. Too calm was she, for her cheek and her sparkling eye betrayed the inward struggle that was going on within her soul. She was a beautiful creature.

Indeed, there was not a more perfect and beautiful form in all Damascus, and I think that she had been the theme of admiration.

My good reader, you will recollect that I have said so well. I found him without difficulty, and he at once went alone in search of Osmir. He found him at the royal palace, and had brought him hither.

"Brought Osmir!"

"Yes."

"And what did he say?"

"I have not spoken to him of it yet. I thought you had better hear it first. You may have more influence."

"Very well. Bring him up at once. I will shrink from nothing now. Go, Alba, while the tall dark form that glided within the chamber of the princess. He bowed low as he entered, and when he saw the lady Ulin he sank down upon his knee.

"Noble lady," he said. Alba informed me that I can be of service to you. Command me, for I owe my life has been yours ever since. Command me."

At first Ulin had been startled by the appearance of the powerful black within her chamber, but when she remembered that the slave was her friend, and when she saw how gratitude for him shone in his face, she regained her confidence.

"I will not command you, Osmir; I can only ask you to assist me. You may be able to serve me, and you may not be able. But I will not detain you with useless words. You do not yet know what I seek."

"I do not, lady."

"You helped to bring the robber chieftain to Damascus."

"Ha, who told you that?" He was not startled with fear, but he rather seemed to wonder how the princess had gained the information.

"Do you know a man named Hobaddan?"

"Yes, lady. He is second in command of the robber band."

"He has been here, Osmir, and he has induced me to use my influence towards gaining freedom for his chieftain. I may not explain to you, but nevertheless I am willing to confess that I do much desire to free the Julian from the power of the kin. Can you help me?"

He bowed his head, and presently arose to his feet.

"Lady," he said, "I did help in the capture of the young man, for then when I came to know him I would rather have served him had it been in my power. I found him a generous, honorable man, and I learned to love him, but I was bound by an oath to the will of Judah, and I could not disobey. I wish I could save him now."

"Can you do it, Osmir? I do not wish that the king should kill him. We thought you might have access to his dungeon that you might at times be set to guard him."

"So it is, lady, but I am not to be on the guard again until daylight."

"And to-morrow may be the last," uttered the princess, painfully. "If you cannot help us our hope has an end."

Osmir moved back and leaned against the wall, with his head upon his hand.

"Lady," he said, after much thought, "I have one source of hope. My companion, Selim, he who was with me in the work of capture, stands watch over the chieftain at the gate at midnight. Selim may help me. If he will, Julian may be saved. I will hasten away at once and exert this only influence I possess."

"And when can I know the result?" asked Ulin.

"Within two hours past midnight," said Osmir. "That is," he added, "if I have any result to bring. If I do not succeed, I may not return at all."

"At two hours past midnight," pursued Ulin, "I shall be in the garden. You can meet him there."

"Yes," he cried, after a moment's reflection, "if I succeed, I shall not fear to meet the lion's maid. If I am not in the garden at the time appointed, or very near that time, you may know that I have done all that lay in my power. Have you more to say?"

"No, good Osmir. Go to the work and do the best you can."

He spoke a simple word of promise, and then turned from the apartment. Alba conducting him down, and guiding him out by a small door in the garden wall.

"Alba," he said, as he stood beneath the low arch and his tone showed that he did not speak lightly, "your mistress does not dream of the danger I must undergo in this work; but I will be true to my promise. I will do all I can. If Selim will not join me, there is the end; but if he falls in with me, then we both put our lives at stake, and the prize may be won. I hope we shall succeed."

The bondmaiden watched the retreating form until it was lost in the darkness, and then she closed the gate, and turned her steps back towards the house.

CHAPTER X.

In the Dungeon.

The robber chieftain had been placed in one of the most gloomy dungeons beneath the royal palace. His legs and arms were fettered, and he was also shackled to a bolt in the floor. How long he had been there he could not tell. Night and day were the same in the living tomb. Food and drink had been brought to him thrice, and a masked mute had been in to remove the latter. He had not seen the face of the man, and he had made no effort to do that. It would be useless, and he knew that he might as well keep his eyes closed as open. He could see nothing.

He had not been left entirely alone, for he knew that there was a guard at the door, though he could not see him. He could hear him walk, and he might be living in the same way a man being of such like, but he did not know of such. He heard the guard follows, but they could walk without him. They would feel much and could look for themselves. What could he do for them? Those were questions which he asked himself over and over again.

Suddenly there was a sound of footsteps upon the plain, and a few dependent rose near the river, but He Saddin would care for them. What was he to him?

The sound of the footsteps came to his ears more plainly, and he knew that they were coming to him. He had not heard the sound of human voice since he had been in the dungeon, and he longed for it. He had not seen a human face since he had been there, and he longed for that. He had not tasted human food since he had been there, and he longed for that. He had not felt the touch of human hand since he had been there, and he longed for that. He had not heard the sound of human voice since he had been there, and he longed for that. He had not seen the face of human being since he had been there, and he longed for that. He had not felt the touch of human hand since he had been there, and he longed for that. He had not heard the sound of human voice since he had been there, and he longed for that. He had not seen the face of human being since he had been there, and he longed for that.

"Certainly," he said, "if you lead me in safety from the bonds that now encompass me, I will give you such return as you may desire. You may remain with me, if you like, or I will give you safe conduct into the land of the Syrians."

"Your word is enough, my master and henceforth Selim and I are your servants. We change our allegiance and the proof of our fidelity shall be manifest in this first act of our service. We have dangers to meet, sir."

"I ask not of dangers," cried the chieftain. "Throw off these chains, give me a sword, and lead me to the upper world, and I ask no more. Once again I trust you, and if you prove true, my gratitude shall be your wife's love."

Without further words Osmir proceeded to the work he had come to perform. Selim held the lantern while he loosed the irons from Julian's limbs, and very soon the chieftain stepped forth with his limbs free.

"There is no time to waste," said Osmir, as he cast the chains upon the floor. "We have used words at last, and for the rest we must trust to our wit and strength. There is danger enough between this dungeon and the open air, but I am ready to meet it."

"By the gods!" cried Julian, as he grasped the sword which Osmir had placed in his hand. "I can laugh at danger now. Lead on, and let this present hour be the last of Herain's power."

(To be continued.)

HARPOONING BLUE WHALES.

The Harpoon Gun Is a Cruel Instrument of Destruction.

The pursuit of the blue whale, which is now beginning to attract considerable attention in Puget Sound, is a comparatively modern one. For a long time the whale was known only by reports of a few stranded specimens, but from these knowledge was gained of the habits of the species, which is further shed with a formidable weapon known as the harpoon gun. The harpoon gun is a powerful piece of apparatus fixed on a raised platform on the bows of the whaler, and consists of a short, stout shaft, which is mounted on a broad pedestal on which it has a vertical movement, and can be turned quickly in whatever direction the prow of the ship dominates. On the fore part of the shaft, and projecting just as in a rifle. Behind is the stock, which is grasped in the hand when firing the gun, and behind it the trigger. The bomb is a conical shell, and is fired by the explosion of a charge of powder. The gun is loaded in the muzzle, and the harpoon is fitted to the shaft, which is grooved for the purpose. A rope is attached to the harpoon from the muzzle, and the harpoon is fired in the manner of a rifle. The moment the harpoon strikes the whale the shell explodes, and the barbs are driven out. The harpoon is almost a foot in length, and very massive. It is made of bars of iron, the

THE MARKETS

AMUSEMENTS IN DETROIT

BASE BALL

THE STEEL WORKERS.

Phases and Reports of the Strike.

The resignation of Charles M. Schwab as president of the United States Steel Corporation is confidently expected.

It is stated that Mr. Schwab will devote his energies to the management of the Bethlehem Steel & Iron Co.

Mr. Schwab, when seen at the hotel Plaza, in Chicago, refused to talk with regard to the correctness of the report, declined positively to discuss it.

The line-up of the Continental and Pennsylvania tube plants of the National Tube Co. was assembled during Monday night. The Continental men also went out. The shutting down of the two plants adds about 1,500 men to the force of the strikers.

It is said that the four leaders of the Amalgamated association in Joliet, which voted last week to strike, seem now to be wavering on the verge of a return to work. Their action, as they freely avow, is not to let their policy hang on the decision of the South Chicago steel workers.

Gen. Nelson A. Miles has called a meeting of the national commandery of the Society of the Porto Rican expedition, to be held in Chicago, December 27. Gen. Miles is commander of the organization. The conventions is said to be large.

The Sound of silver-mined Paterson, N. J., has been heard in Chicago, and has allowing the purchase of mills to Labor unions. Two mills were purchased and two deaths by the recorded.

The Association has been organized to [illegible] the [illegible] of [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]