The Scourge of Damascus

A Story of the East...

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CHAPTER XII.—(Continued.)

Trembling at every joint, the king proceeded to the work. He pulled off the robe of purple silk and cast it down; then he took off the crown, and then the golden chain. Julian picked them up and turning once more to the king said:

"I will grant you one favor before I go. You owe a father to me. If you have any question to ask I will answer it."

The king started up. Clearly he had received a promise of great blessing.

"Now I ask you, most patient father, to tell me where I may find my mother."

"Mistress she cried as she said to herself, in lending my aid to this robber I shall never see him again. I do not wish to see him any more. And I do not suppose he would care to see me. I hope he will escape. I hope he will prosper in the years to come."

She ceased speaking aloud, and pressed her hand upon her heart as though the effort must not escape.

At this moment Shubal came back. He had mounted a fine horse and was armed with sword and dagger. He was a handsome fellow.

"Now, my mistress," he cried, as he leaped to the ground, "I am ready to do your bidding."

"I will not trouble you," she said, coldly.

"Ha! Who is this?" demanded Shubal, moving back a pace.

"I am a man, and have sought the spring for fresh water," was the answer. "And now, who are you?"

Shubal recognized the voice of an Arab, and as he gazed more sharply on the fellow, he was able to see that the garb was wild and filthy.

"I have sought this spring as you have, Sir Arab."

"Ah, you recognize my tongue and nation, do you?"

"Yes, and it would seem that you are even with me."

"I know you are a slave, but that has not to do with slaves coming to a fountain."

"And you, perhaps, they have not to do with Arabs. Perhaps they are wealthy and can hire their water. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Peace, sir!" sternly spoke Shubal. "Mount your horse and ride on your way. I have no time to waste with you."

"Ha, ha, ha! Mount my horse, indeed! I like your impudence, sir. Mount your own