

Conclusion of the Adventures of Utzim-Ochanti, Prince of China

By Thomas Simon Gueulette

I followed the enchanter, continued the prince, into a cabinet, where I soon recruited the strength and spirits I had lost, with a magnificent collation; afterwards we returned into the hall, and as soon as I had seized on the golden chain, there fell from the ceiling two fiery globes; each of these opening in the middle, discovered a monster in human form from the waist upwards. These two monsters ranging themselves on each side of the tomb of white marble, endeavoured to hinder my approach; when, behold! there arose out of the middle of the tomb a pillar, on which was engraved in letters of gold, **“Strike, Defeat, Descend.”** This incident greatly encouraged me, though I had resolved to engage with the two monsters; and, being aided by the enchanter, whose blows were all well timed, we vanquished every obstacle; for the fiery globes and the two monsters were swallowed up; and on my approaching the pillar, both that and the tomb, from the bare touch of my sabre, were reduced to a powder.

We went down a kind of trap-door, and descending a staircase hewn out of the rock, were conducted to the banks of a river, whose waters were very black. Here we found a little boat, furnished for a long voyage with all sorts of provisions. The enchanter and myself entering the boat, put off, and falling down the stream, arrived about a month after at the mouth of a cave into which these waters were discharged. Though the current which brought us thither was very rapid, we were five days in crossing it by the light of my carbuncle; and we did not recover the light till about that time. We then moved but slowly, and coasting along the banks, beheld at a distance two women bathed in tears running towards us; we beckoned to them, and making directly for the shore leaped out upon dry land and joined them immediately. Ah! my lord, cried one of them, if you have any pity for the beautiful Sahik make haste and rescue her from the perfidious Kazak. He has persecuted her a whole year, and she is resolved to suffer immediately the most cruel death rather than espouse the barbarian.—As the charming Sahik has defended herself so well, it is time, my lord, cried I, addressing myself to Bizag al-Asnah, to revenge the treason of your perfidious brother; let us fly to the rescue of your beautiful spouse, and not spare a monster.—I am infinitely obliged to you, interrupted the enchanter; but there is another method, more sure and less dangerous, for my revenge. Kazak is so blinded with his brutal passion that he thinks no more of me. I intend he shall proceed so far as even to marry my dear princess; then, as soon as he has divested himself of his power, I shall punish him for his wickedness to me. This resolution the enchanter committed to writing, and instructed Sahik at the same time so to behave that Kazak might be effectually ensnared; and gave what he had written into the slave’s hands who had come to implore his succour. Carry this, said he, to your beautiful mistress, and tell her here is a remedy enclosed for all her misfortunes. The slave was out of sight in an instant, and acquitted herself forthwith of her commission; and upon Sahik’s opening the letter she was ready to die with joy to find her dear spouse had recovered his primitive shape. Kazak entering her apartments, she dissembled her sentiments admirably. Well, my lord,

said she, with an air that appeared serene, since I must resolve, I consent to marry you this day, provided you abstain for three days from consummating the marriage rites; my hand is yours on that condition only.—Ah! madam, replied Kazak, transported with joy, I swear by all the tenderness I feel for you, your will shall be obeyed, and may I be for ever deprived of my power if I once violate my oath ! Upon this assurance Sahik espoused him, and he adorned his nuptials with every pleasure his art could furnish or his fancy devise.

During this interval Kazak omitted nothing which might divert the princess, who grew very uneasy till the return of her real spouse. At last, to the dreadful astonishment of Kazak, we entered her apartment. He would fain have fled, but his brother prevented that, and touching him with his wand: Stay, traitor, cried he, and make a suitable acknowledgment of thy crime. As soon as Kazak found his feet fixed to the floor so that he could neither advance nor retreat, he grew so outrageous that without discovering the least remorse, he uttered against his brother everything rage and despair could possibly suggest. Transported beyond all bounds, I cried: This is too much, my lord, to be any longer endured, this wretch has lived too long; and so, without regarding the interposition of his brother, I struck off his head. The enchanter had no sooner expired than all the people of his retinue, who groaned under his tyranny, threw themselves at his brother's feet to implore his clemency. He received them very graciously, and having transported us in an instant to his palace, he banished by his presence sorrow, which had long reigned there. After he had indulged in a few moments' tenderness with his spouse, he conducted me in an instant to Tiflis, where having assembled the states of your kingdom, I declared to them the death of the usurper, and at the same time renewed in your behalf those oaths of allegiance they owed to you. He then informed me of the cruel trial that the infidelity of Kamsim had put you to for having slighted her love. He instructed me in the victory you obtained over the centaur, who, it seems, is an enchanter, and was condemned for some fault to waste nine years under that form, unless he should happen to be overcome by the address of a virgin, by whose means he might obtain his liberty. After this, Bizag al-Asnah bore me with inconceivable swiftness through the air, and landed me at the gates of Nankin just in the instant when the flames were putting a period to the life of the perfidious Kamsim.

This narration wonderfully delighted the king and the young princess. My dear son, said the good father, I can defer your happiness no longer; I am too much obliged to this amiable princess not to admit her with joy for my daughter. But this is not all; I will forthwith surrender into your hands the kingdom of China, and I will No, no, my lord, replied the prince, embracing his knees, you shall by no means quit your throne. If ambition had been my ruling passion I need not have wanted for a kingdom, where, I can truly say, I might have enjoyed the affections of the people; but I parted from thence without regret, purely for the sake of re-visiting you. The kingdom of Tiflis is sufficient to bound my utmost views; but if my advice has sufficient weight with the princess, I had much rather, my lord, be the first subject in your court than reign in Georgia. Gulguli-Chamami was so charmed with this truly noble behaviour, that her will seemed to be entirely resolved into that of the prince; and Fanfur was forced to give way to their united instances, but on this condition, however, that the prince should share the diadem with his father; and as this latter would be obeyed, Utzim-Ochanti was proclaimed king. He then

espoused the princess of Tiflis, and enjoyed complete felicity with that charming lady, uninterrupted by those accidents to which the lives of princes are so subject.

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Here the new wazir stopped, and Shams al-Din declared himself highly satisfied with his discourse. Thy conversation enchants me, said the monarch, embracing him; but, my dear Ibn Aridun, how is it possible that all these adventures occur to your memory? I am surprised to hear with what ease you have related the history of the prince of China, together with all those which are comprised in this narration.—Ah! my lord, replied the son of Abu Bakr very modestly, I rather apprehend from your Majesty's observation, that I ought to have been less prolix in my narrations, and that I should have passed on to the histories of the prince of Akim and of the young princess of Borneo; this I perceive myself. But to this is owing the suspension of those adventures which could not be so well related till those of Utzim-Ochanti were all unravelled.—Never mind that, replied the king of Astrakhan, I shall not lose the thread of your narrations. I well remember how ingeniously you brought Gulpanhi back to the hall just as the princess of Tiflis was going to rehearse the history of Faruk the corsair, and I observed at the same time you did not explain by what means this princess lost the protection of that brave man, so as to become Gulpanhi's slave.—This, my lord, replied Ibn Aridun, was a circumstance I purposely omitted, in order to shorten the history of that corsair. But as your Majesty desires to be instructed, I will tell you how the beautiful Georgian became the slave of Gulpanhi.

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The calm which had lasted so long ceased at length, and one night when the ship was under full sail the princess was attacked with a great sickness at her stomach; she walked out upon the deck to take the air, and bending over to discharge what offended her stomach, a sudden squall of wind throwing the ship on that side, she fell into the sea. It was very dark and they did not perceive the loss of the princess, but hearing something fall into the water the pilot imagined it was one of the seamen; several planks were directly thrown overboard, one of which the princess happily gained, and she floated about between life and death till break of day, when a little vessel, hastening to her succour, took her up. The master of this vessel was a dealer in slaves, and though the lady was half dead he perceived, as she was very beautiful, she would bear a considerable price; with this view he took great care of her, and the capital of the kingdom of Kusah being the first port he landed at, he sold her to the princess Gulpanhi for eight hundred dinars of gold.

Thus, my lord, you have heard all the adventures of this beautiful princess, continued the son of Abu Bakr; and as for those of Faruk, if you please, they shall be postponed a few days longer. Meanwhile, I shall begin such an entertaining story as I dare say will highly amuse and divert your Majesty.—Proceed, then, my dear Thu Aridun, replied the king, and you will oblige me infinitely. The new wazir being permitted, resumed his discourse in the following terms: