

## THE NEW ARABIAN NIGHTS

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[continues]

“The Fisherman and the Jinni”

It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that there was a fisherman well stricken in years who had a wife and three children, and withal was of poor condition. Now it was his custom to cast his net every day four times, and no more. On a day he went forth about noontide to the seashore, where he laid down his basket and, tucking up his shirt and plunging into the water, made a cast with his net and waited till it settled to the bottom. Then he gathered the cords together and haled away at it, but found it weighty. And however much he drew it landward, he could not pull it up, so he carried the ends ashore and drove a stake into the ground and made the net fast to it. Then he stripped and dived into the water all about the net, and left not off working hard until he had brought it up. He rejoiced thereat and, donning his clothes, went to the net, when he found in it a dead jackass which had torn the meshes. Now when he saw it, he exclaimed in his grief, “There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in the Lord the Glorious, the Great!” Then quoth he, “This is a strange manner of daily bread,” and he began reciting in extempore verse: “O toiler through the glooms of night in peril and in pain, Thy toiling stint for daily bread comes not by might and main! Seest thou not the fisher seek afloat upon the

sea His bread, while glimmer stars of night as set in tangled skein? Anon he plungeth in despite the buffet of the waves, The while to sight the bellying net his eager glances strain, Till joying at the night's success, a fish he bringeth home Whose gullet by the hook of Fate was caught and cut in twain. When buys that fish of him a man who spent the hours of night Reckless of cold and wet and gloom in ease and comfort fain, Laud to the Lord who gives to this, to that denies, his wishes And dooms one toil and catch the prey and other eat the fishes." Then quoth he, "Up and to it. I am sure of His beneficence, The Lord-willing!" So he continued: "When thou art seized of Evil Fate, assume The noble soul's long-suffering. 'Tis thy best. Complain not to the creature, this be 'plaint From one most Ruthful to the ruthlessest." The fisherman, when he had looked at the dead donkey, got it free of the toils and wrung out and spread his net. Then he plunged into the sea, saying, "In the Lord's name!" and made a cast and pulled at it, but it grew heavy and settled down more firmly than the first time. Now he thought that there were fish in it, and he made it fast and, doffing his clothes, went into the water, and dived and haled until he drew it up upon dry land. Then found he in it a large earthen pitcher which was full of sand and mud, and seeing this, he was greatly troubled. So he prayed pardon of the Lord and, throwing away the jar, wrung his net and cleansed it and returned to the sea the third time to cast his net, and waited till it had sunk. Then he pulled at it and found therein potsherds and broken glass. Then, raising his eyes heavenward, he said: "O my God! Verily Thou wettest that I cast not my net each day save four times. The third is done and as yet Thou hast vouchsafed me nothing. So this time, O my God, deign give me my daily bread." Then, having called on the Lord's name, he again threw his net and waited its sinking and settling, whereupon he haled at it but could not draw it in for that it was entangled at the bottom. He cried out in his

vexation, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in the Lord!" and he began reciting: "Fie on this wretched world, an so it be I must be whelmed by grief and misery. Tho' gladsome be man's lot when dawns the morn, He drains the cup of woe ere eve he see. Yet was I one of whom the world when asked 'Whose lot is happiest?' would say, "'Tis he!'" Thereupon he stripped and, diving down to the net, busied himself with it till it came to land. Then he opened the meshes and found therein a cucumber-shaped jar of yellow copper, evidently full of something, whose mouth was made fast with a leaden cap stamped with the seal ring of our Lord Solomon, son of David (the Lord accept the twain!). Seeing this, the fisherman rejoiced and said, "If I sell it in the brass bazaar, 'tis worth ten golden dinars." He shook it, and finding it heavy, continued: "Would to Heaven I knew what is herein. But I must and will open it and look to its contents and store it in my bag and sell it in the brass market." And taking out a knife, he worked at the lead till he had loosened it from the jar. Then he laid the cup on the ground and shook the vase to pour out whatever might be inside. He found nothing in it, whereat he marveled with an exceeding marvel. But presently there came forth from the jar a smoke which spired heavenward into ether (whereat he again marveled with mighty marvel), and which trailed along earth's surface till presently, having reached its full height, the thick vapor condensed, and became an Giant-Demon huge of bulk, whose crest touched the clouds while his feet were on the ground. His head was as a dome, his hands like pitchforks, his legs long as masts, and his mough big as a cave. His teeth were like large stones, his nostrils ewers, his eyes two lamps, and his look was fierce and lowering. Now when the fisherman saw the Giant-Demon, his side muscles quivered, his teeth chattered, his spittle dried up, and he became blind about what to do. Upon this the Giant-Demon looked at him and cried, "there is no god but the

God, and Solomon is the prophet of God,” presently adding: “O Apostle of the Lord, slay me not. Never again will I gainsay thee in word nor sin against thee in deed.” Quoth the fisherman, “O Marid, diddest thou say Solomon the Apostle of the Lord? And Solomon is dead some thousand and eight hundred years ago, and we are now in the last days of the world! What is thy story, and what is thy account of thyself, and what is the cause of thy entering into this cucurbit?” Now when the Evil Spirit heard the words of the fisherman, quoth he: “There is no god but the God. Be of good cheer, O Fisherman!” Quoth the fisherman, “Why biddest thou me to be of good cheer?” And he replied, “Because of thy having to die an ill death in this very hour.” Said the fisherman, “Thou deservest for thy good tidings the withdrawal of Heaven’s protection, O thou distant one! Wherefore shouldest thou kill me, and what thing have I done to deserve death, I who freed thee from the jar, and saved thee from the depths of the sea, and brought thee up on the dry land?” Replied the Giant-Demon, “Ask of me only what mode of death thou wilt die, and by what manner of slaughter shall I slay thee.” Rejoined the fisherman, “What is my crime, and wherefore such retribution?” Quoth the Giant-Demon, “Hear my story, O Fisherman!” And he answered, “Say on, and be brief in thy sayinig, for of very sooth my life breath is in my nostrils.” Thereupon quoth the Jinni: “Know that I am one among the heretical Jinn, and I sinned against Solomon, David-son (on the twain be peace!), I together with the famous Sakhr al-Jinni, whereupon the Prophet sent his Minister, Asaf son of Barkhiya, to seize me. And this Vizier brought me against my will and led me in bonds to him (I being downcast despite my nose), and he placed me standing before him like a suppliant. When Solomon saw me, he took refuge with the Lord and bade me embrace the True Faith and obey his behests. But I refused, so, sending for this cucurbit, he shut me up therein and stopped it over

with lead, whereon he impressed the Most High Name, and gave his orders to the Jinn, who carried me off and cast me into the midmost of the ocean. There I abode a hundred years, during which I said in my heart, 'Whoso shall release me, him will I enrich forever and ever.'" But the full century went by and, when no one set me free, I entered upon the second fivescore saying, 'Whoso shall release me, for him I will open the hoards of the earth.' Still no one set me free, and thus four hundred years passed away. Then quoth I, 'Whoso shall release me, for him will I fulfill three wishes.' Yet no one set me free. Thereupon I waxed wroth with exceeding wrath and said to myself, 'Whoso shall release me from this time forth, him will I slay, and I will give him choice of what death he will die.' And now, as thou hast released me, I give thee full choice of deaths." The fisherman, hearing the words of the Giant-Demon, said, "O the Lord! The wonder of it that I have not come to free thee save in these days!" adding, "Spare my life, so the Lord spare thine, and slay me not, lest the Lord set one to slay thee." Replied the Contumacious One, "There is no help for it. Die thou must, so ask by way of boon what manner of death thou wilt die." Albeit thus certified, the fisherman again addressed the Giant-Demon, saying, "Forgive me this my death as a generous reward for having freed thee," and the Giant-Demon, "Surely I would not slay thee save on account of that same release." "O Chief of the Giant-Demons," said the fisherman, "I do thee good and thou requitest me with evil! In very sooth the old saw lieth not when it saith: "We wrought them weal, they met our weal with ill, Such, by my life! is every bad man's labor. To him who benefits unworthy wights Shall hap what hapt to Umami-Amir's neighbor." Now when the Giant-Demon heard these words he answered: "No more of this talk. Needs must I kill thee." Upon this the fisherman said to himself: "This is a Jinni, and I am a man to whom the Lord hath given a passably cunning wit, so I will now cast about to

compass his destruction by my contrivance and by mine intelligence, even as he took counsel only of his malice and his frowardness." He began by asking the Giant-Demon, "Hast thou indeed resolved to kill me?" And, receiving for all answer "Even so," he cried, "Now in the Most Great Name, graven on the seal ring of Solomon the son of David (peace be with the holy twain!), an I question thee on a certain matter, wilt thou give me a true answer?" The Giant-Demon replied "Yea," but, hearing mention of the Most Great Name, his wits were troubled and he said with trembling, "Ask and be brief." Quoth the fisherman: "How didst thou fit into this bottle which would not hold thy hand — no, nor even thy foot— and how came it to be large enough to contain the whole of thee?" Replied the Giant-Demon, "What! Dost not believe that I was all there?" And the fisherman rejoined, "Nay! I will never believe it until I see thee inside with my own eyes." The Evil Spirit on the instant shook and became a vapor, which condensed and entered the jar little and little, till all was well inside, when lo! the fisherman in hot haste took the leaden cap with the seal and stoppered therewith the mouth of the jar and called out to the Giant-Demon, saying: "Ask me by way of boon what death thou wilt die! By the Lord, I will throw thee into the sea before us and here will I build me a lodge, and whoso cometh hither I will warn him against fishing and will say: 'In these waters abideth an Giant-Demon who giveth as a last favor a choice of deaths and fashion of slaughter to the man who saveth him!'" Now when the Giant-Demon heard this from the fisherman and saw himself in limbo, he was minded to escape, but this was prevented by Solomon's seal. So he knew that the fisherman had cozened and outwitted him, and he waxed lowly and submissive and began humbly to say, "I did but jest with thee." But the other answered, "Thou liest, O vilest of the Giant-Demons, and meanest and filthiest!" And he set off with the bottle for the seaside, the Giant-Demon

calling out, "Nay! Nay!" and he calling out, "Aye! Aye!" Thereupon the Evil Spirit softened his voice and smoothed his speech and abased himself, saying, "What wouldst thou do with me. O Fisherman?" "I will throw thee back into the sea," he answered, "Where thou hast been housed and homed for a thousand and eight hundred years. And now I will leave thee therein till Judgment Day. Did I not say to thee, 'Spare me and the Lord shall spare thee, and slay me not lest the Lord slay thee'? yet thou spurnedst my supplication and hadst no intention save to deal ungraciously by me, and the Lord hath now thrown thee into my hands, and I am cunninger than thou." Quoth the Giant-Demon, "Open for me that I may bring thee weal." Quoth the fisherman: "Thou liest, thou accursed! Nothing would satisfy thee save my death, so now I will do thee die by hurling thee into this sea." Then the Marid roared aloud and cried: "the Lord upon thee, O Fisherman, don't! Spare me, and pardon my past doings, and as I have been tyrannous, so be thou generous, for it is said among sayings that go current: 'O thou who doest good to him who hath done thee evil, suffice for the ill-doer his ill deeds, and do not deal with me as did Umamah to 'Atikah.'" Asked the fisherman, "And what was their case?" And the Giant-Demon answered, "This is not the time for storytelling and I in this prison, but set me free and I will tell thee the tale." Quoth the fisherman: "Leave this language. There is no help but that thou be thrown back into the sea, nor is there any way for thy getting out of it forever and ever. Vainly I placed myself under thy protection, and I humbled myself to thee with weeping, while thou soughtest only to slay me, who had done thee no injury deserving this at thy hands. Nay, so far from injuring thee by any evil act, I worked thee naught but weal in releasing thee from that jail of thine. Now I knew thee to be an evil-doer when thou diddest to me what thou didst, and know that when I have cast thee back into this sea, I will warn whosoever may fish thee up

of what hath befallen me with thee, and I will advise him to toss thee back again. So shalt thou abide here under these waters till The End of Time shall make an end of thee.” But the Giant-Demon cried aloud: “Set me free. This is a noble occasion for generosity, and I make covenant with thee and vow never to do thee hurt and harm— nay, I will help thee to what shall put thee out of want.” The fisherman accepted his promises on both conditions, not to trouble him as before, but on the contrary to do him service, and after making firm the plight and swearing him a solemn oath by the Lord Most Highest, he opened the cucurbit. Thereupon the pillar of smoke rose up till all of it was fully out, then it thickened and once more became an Giant-Demon of hideous presence, who forthright administered a kick to the bottle and sent it flying into the sea. The fisherman, seeing how the cucurbit was treated and making sure of his own death, piddled in his clothes and said to himself, “This promiseth badly,” but he fortified his heart, and cried: “O Giant-Demon, the Lord hath said: ‘Perform your covenant, for the performance of your covenant shall be inquired into hereafter.’ Thou hast made a vow to me and hast sworn an oath not to play me false lest the Lord play thee false, for verily He is a jealous God who respiteth the sinner but letteth him not escape. I say to thee as said the Sage Duban to King Yunan, ‘Spare me so the Lord may spare thee!’” The Giant-Demon burst into laughter and stalked away, saying to the fisherman, “Follow me.” And the man paced after him at a safe distance (for he was not assured of escape) till they had passed round the suburbs of the city. Thence they struck into the uncultivated grounds and, crossing them, descended into a broad wilderness, and lo! in the midst of it stood a mountain tarn. The Giant-Demon waded in to the middle and again cried, “Follow me,” and when this was done he took his stand in the center and bade the man cast his net and catch his fish. The fisherman looked into the water and was much astonished to see



therein varicolored fishes, white and red, blue and yellow. However, he cast his net and, hauling it in, saw that he had netted four fishes, one of each color. Thereat he rejoiced greatly, and more when the Giant-Demon said to him: "Carry these to the Sultan and set them in his presence, then he will give thee what shall make thee a wealthy man. And now accept my excuse, for by the Lord, at this time I wot none other way of benefiting thee, inasmuch I have lain in this sea eighteen hundred years and have not seen the face of the world save within this hour. But I would not have thee fish here save once a day." The Giant-Demon then gave him Godspeed, saying, "the Lord grant we meet again," and struck the earth with one foot, whereupon the ground clove asunder and swallowed him up. The fisherman, much marveling at what had happened to him with the Giant-Demon, took the fish and made for the city, and as soon as he reached home he filled an earthen bowl with water and therein threw the fish, which began to struggle and wriggle about. Then he bore off the bowl upon his head and, repairing to the King's palace (even as the Giant-Demon had bidden him) laid the fish before the presence. And the King wondered with exceeding wonder at the sight, for never in his lifetime had he seen fishes like these in quality or in conformation. So he said, "Give those fish to the stranger slave girl who now cooketh for us," meaning the bondmaiden whom the King of Roum had sent to him only three days before, so that he had not yet made trial of her talents in the dressing of meat. Thereupon the Vizier carried the fish to the cook and bade her fry them, saying: O damsel, the King sendeth this say to thee: 'I have not treasured thee, O tear o' me! save for stress time of me.' Approve, then, to us this day thy delicate handiwork and thy savory cooking, for this dish of fish is a present sent to the Sultan and evidently a rarity." The Vizier, after he had carefully charged her, returned to the King, who commanded him to give the fisherman four hundred dinars.

He gave them accordingly, and the man took them to his bosom and ran off home stumbling and falling and rising again and deeming the whole thing to be a dream. However, he bought for his family all they wanted, and lastly he went to his wife in huge joy and gladness. So far concerning him. But as regards the cookmaid, she took the fish and cleansed them and set them in the frying pan, basting them with oil till one side was dressed. Then she turned them over and behold, the kitchen wall clave asunder, and therefrom came a young lady, fair of form, oval of face, perfect in grace, with eyelids which kohl lines enchase. Her dress was a silken headkerchief fringed and tasseled with blue. A large ring hung from either ear, a pair of bracelets adorned her wrists, rings with bezels of priceless gems were on her fingers, and she hent in hand a long rod of rattan cane which she thrust into the frying pan, saying, "O fish! O fish! Be ye constant to your covenant?" When the cookmaiden saw this apparition she swooned away. The young lady repeated her words a second time and a third time, and at last the fishes raised their heads from the pan, and saying in articulate speech, "Yes! Yes!" began with one voice to recite: "Come back and so will I! Keep faith and so will I! And if ye fain forsake, I'll requite till quits we cry!" After this the young lady upset the frying pan and went forth by the way she came in and the kitchen wall closed upon her. When the cookmaiden recovered from her fainting fit, she saw the four fishes charred black as charcoal, and crying out, "His staff brake in his first bout," she again fell swooning to the ground. Whilst she was in this case the Vizier came for the fish, and looking upon her as insensible she lay, not knowing Sunday from Thursday, shoved her with his foot and said, "Bring the fish for the Sultan!" Thereupon, recovering from her fainting fit, she wept and informed him of her case and all that had befallen her. The Vizier marveled greatly and exclaiming, "This is none other than a right strange

matter!" he sent after the fisher-man and said to him, "Thou, O Fisherman, must needs fetch us four fishes like those thou broughtest before." Thereupon the man repaired to the tarn and cast his net, and when he landed it, lo! four fishes were therein exactly like the first. These he at once carried to the Vizier, who went in with them to the cookmaiden and said, "Up with thee and fry these in my presence, that I may see this business." The damsel arose and cleansed the fish, and set them in the frying pan over the fire. However, they remained there but a little while ere the wall clave asunder and the young lady appeared, clad as before and holding in hand the wand which she again thrust into the frying pan, saying, "O fish! O fish! Be ye constant to your olden covenant?" And behold, the fish lifted their heads and repeated "Yes! Yes!" and recited this couplet: "Come back and so will I! Keep faith and so will I! But if ye fain forsake, I'll requite till quits we cry!" When the fishes spoke, and the young lady upset the frying pan with her rod and went forth by the way she came and the wall closed up, the Vizier cried out, "This is a thing not to be hidden from the King." So he went and told him what had happened, whereupon quoth the King, "There is no help for it but that I see this with mine own eyes Then he sent for the fisherman and commanded him to bring four other fish like the first and to take with him three men as witnesses. The fisherman at once brought the fish, and the King, after ordering them to give him four hundred gold pieces, turned to the Vizier and said, "Up, and fry me the fishes here before me!" The Minister, replying, "To hear is to obey," bade bring the frying pan, threw therein the cleansed fish, and set it over the fire, when lo! the wall clave asunder, and out burst a black slave like a huge rock or a remnant of the tribe Ad, bearing in hand a branch of a green tree. And he cried in loud and terrible tones, "O fish! O fish! Be ye an constant to your antique covenant?" Whereupon the fishes lifted their heads from the frying pan

and said, "Yes! Yes! We be true to our vow," and they again recited the couplet: "Come back and so will I! Keep faith and so will I! But if ye fain forsake, I'll requite till quits we cry!" Then the huge blackamoor approached the frying pan and upset it with the branch and went forth by the way he came in. When he vanished from their sight, the King inspected the fish, and finding them all charred black as charcoal, was utterly bewildered, and said to the Vizier: "Verily this is a matter whereanent silence cannot be kept. And as for the fishes, assuredly some marvelous adventure connects with them." So he bade bring the fisherman and asked him, saying: "Fie on thee, fellow! Whence come these fishes?" And he answered, "From a tarn between four heights lying behind this mountain which is in sight of thy city." Quoth the King, "How many days' march?" Quoth he, "O our Lord the Sultan, a walk of half-hour." The King wondered, and straightway ordering his men to march and horsemen to mount, led off the fisherman, who went before as guide, privily damning the Giant-Demon. They fared on till they had climbed the mountain and descended unto a great desert which they had never seen during all their lives. And the Sultan and his merry men marveled much at the wold set in the midst of four mountains, and the tarn and its fishes of four colors, red and white, yellow and blue. The King stood fixed to the spot in wonderment and asked his troops and an present, "Hath anyone among you ever seen this piece of water before now?" And all made answer, "O King of the Age, never did we set eyes upon it during an our days." They also questioned the oldest inhabitants they met, men well stricken in years, but they replied, each and every, "A lakelet like this we never saw in this place." Thereupon quoth the King, "By the Lord, I will neither return to my capital nor sit upon the throne of my forebears till I learn the truth about this tarn and the fish therein." He then ordered his men to dismount and bivouac all around the mountain, which they did, and summoning his

Vizier, a Minister of much experience, sagacious, of penetrating wit and well versed in affairs, said to him: "'Tis in my mind to do a certain thing, whereof I will inform thee. My heart telleth me to fare forth alone this night and root out the mystery of this tarn and its fishes. Do thou take thy scat at my tent door, and say to the emirs and Viziers, the nabobs and the chamberlains, in fine, to all who ask thee, 'The Sultan is ill at ease, and he hath ordered me to refuse all admittance.' And be careful thou let none know my design." And the Vizier could not oppose him. Then the King changed his dress and ornaments and, slinging his sword over his shoulder, took a path which led up one of the mountains and marched for the rest of the night till morning dawned, nor did he cease wayfaring till the heat was too much for him. After his long walk he rested for a while, and then resumed his march and fared on through the second night till dawn, when suddenly there appeared a black point in the far distance. Hereat he rejoiced and said to himself, "Haply someone here shall acquaint me with the mystery of the tarn and its fishes." Presently, drawing near the dark object, he found it a palace built of swart stone plated with iron, and while one leaf of the gate stood wide-open, the other was shut. The King's spirits rose high as he stood before the gate and rapped a light rap, but hearing no answer, he knocked a second knock and a third, yet there came no sign. Then he knocked his loudest, but still no answer, so he said, "Doubtless 'tis empty." There upon he mustered up resolution and boldly walked through the main gate into the great hall, and there cried out aloud: "Holloa, ye people of the palace! I am a stranger and a wayfarer. Have you aught here of victual?" He repeated his cry a second time and a third, but still there came no reply. So, strengthening his heart and making up his mind, he stalked through the vestibule into the very middle of the palace, and found no man in it. Yet it was furnished with silken stuffs gold-starred, and the hangings were let down

over the doorways. In the midst was a spacious court off which sat four open saloons, each with its raised dais, saloon facing saloon. A canopy shaded the court, and in the center was a jetting fount with four figures of lions made of red gold, spouting from their mouths water clear as pearls and diaphanous gems. Round about the palace birds were let loose, and over it stretched a net of golden wire, hindering them from flying off. In brief, there was everything but human beings. The King marveled mightily thereat, yet felt he sad at heart for that he saw no one to give him an account of the waste and its tarn, the fishes, the mountains, and the palace itself. Presently as he sat between the doors in deep thought behold, there came a voice of lament, as from a heart griefspent, and he heard the voice chanting these verses: "I hid what I endured of him and yet it came to light, And nightly sleep mine eyelids fled and changed to sleepless night. O world! O Fate! Withhold thy hand and cease thy hurt and harm Look and behold my hapless sprite in dolor and affright. Wilt ne'er show ruth to highborn youth who lost him on the way Of Love, and fell from wealth and fame to lowest basest wight? Jealous of Zephyr's breath was I as on your form he breathed, But whenas Destiny descends she blindeth human sight. What shall the hapless archer do who when he fronts his foe And bends his bow to shoot the shaft shall find his string undight? When cark and care so heavy bear on youth of generous soul, How shall he 'scape his lot and where from Fate his place of flight?" Now when the Sultan heard the mournful voice he sprang to his feet and following the sound, found a curtain let down over a chamber door. He raised it and saw behind it a young man sitting upon a couch about a cubit above the ground, and he fair to the sight, a well-shaped wight, with eloquence dight. His forehead was flower-white, his cheek rosy bright, and a mole on his cheek breadth like an ambergris mite, even as the poet doth indite: A youth slim-waisted from

whose locks and brow The world in blackness and in light is set. Throughout Creation's round no fairer show No rarer sight thine eye hath ever met. A nut-brown mole sits throned upon a cheek Of rosiest red beneath an eye of jet. The King rejoiced and saluted him, but he remained sitting in his caftan of silken stuff purpled with Egyptian gold and his crown studded with gems of sorts. But his face was sad with the traces of sorrow. He returned the royal salute in most courteous wise adding, "O my lord, thy dignity demandeth my rising to thee, and my sole excuse is to crave thy pardon." Quoth the King: "Thou art excused, O youth, so look upon me as thy guest come hither on an especial object. I would thou acquaint me with the secrets of this tarn and its fishes and of this palace and thy loneliness therein and the cause of thy groaning and wailing." When the young man heard these words he wept with sore weeping till his bosom was drenched with tears. The King marveled and asked him, "What maketh thee weep, O young man?" and he answered, "How should I not weep, when this is my case!" Thereupon he put out his hand and raised the skirt of his garment, when lo! the lower half of him appeared stone down to his feet while from his navel to the hair of his head he was man. The King, seeing this his plight, grieved with sore grief and of his compassion cried: "Alack and wellaway! In very sooth, O youth, thou heapest sorrow upon my sorrow. I was minded to ask thee the mystery of the fishes only, whereas now I am concerned to learn thy story as well as theirs. But there is no Majesty and there is no Might save in the Lord, the Glorious, the Great! Lose no time, O youth, but tell me forthright thy whole tale." Quoth he, "Lend me thine ears, thy sight, and thine insight." And quoth the King, "All are at thy service!" Thereupon the youth began, "Right wondrous and marvelous is my case and that of these fishes, and were it graven with gravers upon the eye corners it were a

warned to whoso would be warned.” “How is that?” asked the King, and the young man began to tell



