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By JAMES M. LUDLOW

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With the first streak of the dawn C. B .Dayfoot & Kabilovitsch crept cautiously from the ledge and soon returned with the news that the Turks had vanished-swept away by the tide of Christian soldiers which was still pouring over and down the mountain in pursuit.

> Horrible was the scene which everywhere greeted them as they clambered back toward the road. The dead were piled upon the dying in every ravine. Red streaks seamed the white snowchannels in which the current of many a life had drained away. But the old man's familiarity with the ground found paths which the nimble feet of the maid could climb, so that the day was not far advanced when they stood on the site of their home. Scarcely a trace of the hamlet remained. Whatever could be burned had fed the campfires of the preceding night.

The old man sat down upon the doorstone of what had been his home. His head dropped upon his bosom. Morsinia stood by his side, her arm about his neck and her cheek pressed close to of the birth of our Lord as an omen of his, so that her bright golden hair mingled with his gray beard. They scarcenoticed that a group of horsemen, more gayly uniformed than the ordinary soldiers, had halted and were looking at them.

"By the eleven thousand virgins of Coln! I never saw a more unique picture than that," said one who wore a



Morsinia stood by his side.

skullcap of scarlet, while an attendant carried his heavy helmet. "If Masaccio were with us I would have him paint that scene for our new cathedral at Milano, as an allegory of the captivity in Babylon."

"Rather the captivity in Avignon. It would be a capital representation of the holy father and his daughter, the church," replied a companion, laughing. "Only I would have the painter insert the portrait of your eminence, Cardinal Julian, as delivering them both."

"That would not be altogether unhistoric, for the deliverance was not wholly wrought until our time," replied the cardinal, evidently gratified with the flattering addition which his comrade, King Vladislaus, had made to his pleasing conceit. "But if today's victory be as thorough as it now looks, and we drive the Turks out of Europe, it would serve as a picture of the captivity in which the haughty, half infidel emperor of the Greeks and his daughter, Byzan-

tium, will soon be to Rome." "But, by my crown," said Vladislaus, "and with due reverence for the great cardinal under whose cap is all the brain that Rome can now boast of, I think the Greeks will find as much spiritual desolation in Mother Church as these worthy people have about them

"I can pardon that speech to the newly baptized king of half barbarian Hungary, when I would not shrive another for it," replied Julian petulantly. "Let us speak to this old fellow. Good

man, is this your house?" "It was my home, sire, yesterday, but now it is his that wants it," re-

plied Kabilovitsch. "And where do you go now?" asked

the cardinal. "Toward God's gate, sire, and I wish I might see it soon, but for this little

one," said the old man, rising. "Holy Peter let you in when you get there," rejoined his eminence, turning

his horse away. "Hold, cardinal!" replied the king. "I will help the man. The golden hair of the child against the old man's head were as good an aureole as ever a saint wore. Ho, Olgard! Take the lass on the will keep close with your daughter you however, could not sleep. On the one will find as good provision behind the gate of Philippopolis as that in heaven,

tudio at residence Colborne St. North

It was hard for the old man to keep at the end of his beat. from under the hoofs of the horses as the attendant knights crowded together down the narrow and tortuous descent. Suddenly the girl uttered a cry

and, clapping her hands, called: "Constantine, Constantine!" The missing lad, emerging from a copse, stood for an instant in amaze-

ment at the apparition of his little When buying mention The Free Press.

playmate, then dashed among the

crowd toward her. "Drat the witch!" said a knight between the legs of whose horse the boy had gone, aiming at him a blow with his iron mace. Constantine would have been trampled by the crowding cavalcade had not the strong hand of a trooper seized him by his ragged jacket and lifted him to the horse's crup-

"So may somebody save my own lad in the mountains of Carpathia!" said the rough but kindly soldier.

As night darkened down, the plain at the base of the mountain burst into weird magnificence with a thousand campfires. The Turks were in full retreat toward Adrianonle, and joy reigned among the Christians. It was the eve of Christmas.

Cardinal Julian, reining his horse at the entrance to the camp, listened to the sound of trumpets as he gazed:

"'And with the angel there was a multitude of the heavenly host praising God? Let us accept the joy of this eve the birth of Christian power to these lands, which have so long lain in the shadow of Moslem infidelity and Greek heresy. Our camps yonder flash as the sparks which flew from the apron of the infant Jesu and terrified the devil. Sultan Amurath has been scorched this day, though the infernal fiend lodge in his skin, as I verily believe he does."

"Amurath was not in personal com mand today. At least so I am told," replied Vladislaus. "He is occupied with a rebellion of the Caramanians in Asia. Carambey, the sultan's sister's husband, led the forces at the beginning of the fight. He was captured in the bog and is now in safe custody with the Servian despot, George Brankovitch. Hunyades and the despot have been bargaining for his possession. But the real commandant, as I have learned from prisoners-at least he was present at the beginning of the fight-was Scanderbeg." "Scanderbeg!" exclaimed Julian, with

great alarm. "What! The Albanian traitor, Castriot? Iscariot, rather, should be his name. This, then, your majesty, is no night for revelry, but for watching. The flight of the enemy, if Scanderbeg leads them, is only to draw us into a net. What if before morning, with the Balkans behind us, we should be assaulted with fresh corps of Turks on the front? There is no fathoming the devices of Scanderbeg's wily brain. And never yet has he been defeated, except to wrest the better victory out of seeming disaster. Does General Hunyades know the antagonist he is dealing with? That it is not some bey or pasha, nor even the sultan himself, but Scanderbeg? have heard Hunyades say that since the days of Saladin the Moslems have not had a leader so skillful as that Albanian renegade, that a glance of his eye has more sagacity in it than the deliberations of a divan and that not a score of knights could stand against his bare arm. We must see Hun-

"I confess," replied King Vladislaus, "that I liked not the easy victory we have had. I would have sworn to prevent a myriad foes climbing the ice road we traveled yesterday if I had but a company of pikemen. Yet 10,000 Turkish veterans kept us not back, and they were led by Scanderbeg! There

is mystery here. Hunyades was found with the advance corps of the Christians. But for his white armor he could scarcely be distinguished from some subaltern officer as he moved among his men inspecting the details of their encampment. The contrast of the commander in chief with the kingly and the ecclesiastical soldier was striking. He listened quietly to their surmises and fears and replied with as little of their excitement as if he spoke of a ne armor cleaner:

"Yes, we shall probably have a rai from Scanderbeg before morning. But we are ready for him."

CHAPTER III.

HE company which Kabilovitsch and the children had joined was halted at the edge of the great camp. Other peasants and noncombatants crowded in from their desolated homes. But neither Milosch's face nor Helena's nor yet little Michael's was among those they anxiously scanned. The command of King Vladislaus secured for the three favored refugees every comfort which the rude soldiers could furnish. The boy and girl were soon asleep by a fire, while the old man lay close beside them, that no one could approach without arousing him. He, side was the noisy revelry of the victors; on the other the darkness of the plain. Here and there were groups of Kabilovitsch trudged by the side of soldiers and beyond them an occasional Voice and Piano pupils accepted. Olgard, who held Morsinia before him. gleam of the spearhead of some sendio at residence Called a Company of the spearhead of some sendio at residence Called a Company of the spearhead of some sendio at residence Called a Company of the spearhead of some sendio at residence Called a Company of the spearhead of some sendio at residence Called a Company of the spearhead of some sendio at residence Called a Company of the spearhead of some sendio at residence Called a Company of the spearhead of some sendio at residence Called a Company of the spearhead of some sendio at residence Called a Company of the spearhead of some sendio at residence Called a Company of the spearhead of some sendio at residence Called a Company of the spearhead of some sendio at residence Called a Company of the spearhead of some sendio at residence Called a Company of the spearhead of some sendio at residence Called a Company of the spearhead of some sendio at residence Called a Company of the spearhead of some sendio at residence Called a Company of the spearhead of some sendio at the spearhead of some sending a company of the spearhead of some sending a company

The dusky form of a huge man a tracted Kabilovitsch's eye. As the stranger drew near, his long bearskin cape terminating above in a rough and ungraceful hood and his long pointed shoes with blocks of wood for their soles indicated that he was some peasant. He seemed to be wandering about

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with no other aim than to keep himself warm, let Kabilovitsch noted that he lingered as he passed by the various livery of Kabilovitsch's message. groups as if to scan the faces of his

fellow sufferers. "Heaven grant that all his kids be safe tonight:" muttered the old man. As the walking figure passed across the line of a fagot fire he revealed a splendid form, too straight for one accustomed to bend at his daily toil.

Kabilovitsch, "For the field tillers are all round of shoulder and bow backed. But, no! His tread is too firm and heavy for that sort of life. One's limbs are springy, agile, who climbs the crags. A hunter will use the toes more

Kabilovitsch's curiosity could not keep his eyes from growing heavy with the cold and the flicker of the firelight when they were forced wide open again by the approach of the stranger. The old man felt rather than saw that he was being closely studied from behind the folds of the hood which the wanderer drew close over his face to keep out the cutting wind which swept in gusts down from the mountains. He passed very near and was talking to himself, as is apt to be the custom of men who lead lonely lives.

"It is bitter cold," he said, with chattering teeth-"bitter cold, by the beard of Moses!"

The last words startled Kabilovitar so that he gave a sudden motion. The stranger noticed it and paused. Gazing intently upon the old man, who had now assumed a sitting posture, he addressed him:

"By the beard of Moses, it's an awful night, neighbor!"

"Aye, by the beard of Moses, it is, and one could wear the beard of Aaron, too, with comfort. Aaron's beard was longer than Moses' beard. Is not that what the priest says?"

"What know you of the beard of Moses?" said the stranger. "Was it gray or black?" "Black," said Kabilovitsch, studying | self."

the other's face with suspicion and surprise. "Black as an Albanian thunderloud, and his eye was as undimmed by age as that of the eagle that flies over the lake of Ochrida." "You speak well," replied the stranger, pushing back his hood.

His face was massive and strong. No peasant was he, but one born to command and accustomed to it.

"You an -Drakul?" asked the man. "Harion?"

"Kabilovitsch?" "Aye, and you?"

"Castriot." Kabilovitsch sprang to his feet. "Lie down! Lie down! Let me share your blanket," said the visitor. We

can muffle our speech beneath the blanket. I feared that I should find no one who recognized our password. must see General Hunyades tonight, yet must not approach his quarters. Can you get to his tent?" "Readily," said Kabilovitsch. "Dur-

ing the day my little lass yonder won the attention of King Vladislaus, and he gave me the password of the camp tonight for her safety. 'Christus natus

"You must go to him at once and say I would see him here. You will trust me to keep guard over these two kids while you are away? I will not wolf

"Heaven grant that you may shepherd all Albania!" and the old man

"I knew that the prodigal Prince George would come back some day," said he to himself. "Many a year have I kept my watch in the pass and among the mountains of Albania. And many a service have I rendered as a simple goatherd which I could not have done had I worn my country's colors any-

where except in my heart." Kabilovitsch was challenged at every turn as he wound between the hundreds of campfires and tents, but the magic words, "Christus natus est,"

opened the way. A circle of splendid tents told him he drew near to headquarters. In the midst of them blazed an immense fire. Camp tables, gleaming with tankards and goblets of silver, were ranged beneath gorgeous canopies of flaxen canvas, which were lined with blue and purple tapestries. A multitude of gayly dressed servitors thronged into and out of them. Here was the royal splendor of Hungary and Poland, there the pavilion of the despot of Servia, there the glittering cross of Rome, and at the extreme end of this extemporized array of palatial and courtly pride the more modest but still rich banner of the White Knight.

Kabilovitsch approached the latter. "Your errand, man?" said the guard, holding his spear across the flapping

doorway of the tent. "Christus natus est!" was the re-

"That will do elsewhere, but not here," rejoined the guard. "My business is solely with General Hunyades," said Kabilovitsch.

"It cannot be," said the spearman. "He has no business with any one but himself." "No ear on earth shall hear mine but

the general's," cried the old man, raising his voice. "No, by the beard of Moses, it shall not!" "Let him pass!" said a voice from

deep within the tent. "Let him pass!" said another nearer. "Let him pass!" repeated one just inside the outer curtain.

The goatherd passed between a line of sentinels, closely watched by each. The tent was a double one, composing a room or pavilion, inclosed by the great tent, so that there was a large space around the private apartment of the general, allowing the sentinels to patrol entirely about it without passing into the outer air.

At the entrance of the inner tent Hunyades appeared. "You have news same the Albanians, by the beard of The Free Press Do Job Printing.

oses?" said Hunyades inquiringly. A moment or two sufficed for the de-

"Ho, guard! When this old man goes, let no one evter until he comes back, then admit him without the pass instantly," said Hunyades, springing from the couch. "Now, old man, give me your bearskin; now your shoes, your cap. Here, wrap yourself in mine. You need not shrink from occupying "A mountaineer? A hunter?" thought | Hunyades' skin for awhile, since you have had tonight a more princely soldier under your blanket. Did you say to the north? On the edge of the camp? A boy and a girl by the fire,

and he?" The disguised general passed out.

CHAPTER IV.

Y the beard of Moses, I'll break your head with my stick if you come stumbling over me in that way!" growled Scanderbeg from beneath his blanket as a peasant clad man tripped against his buge form, extended by the campfire. The man stooped down and eagerly removed the blanket from the partial-

"Constantine!" he exclaimed, "God be praised. And Kabilovitsch's girl, or the starlight mocks me!" "Father!" cried the boy, waking and

ly covered faces of the children.

throwing his arms about the neck of the man who stooped to embrace him. "And Michael, is he here, too?" asked Milosch.

"No. father," said the child. "We were parted at the cave, and I have not seen him except in my dream."

"In your dream, my child? In your dream? Jesu grant he be not killed, that his angel spirit came to you in your dream! Did he seem bright and beautiful-more beautiful than you ever saw him before—as if he had come to you from paradise? No? Then he is living yet on the earth, and I shall find him, though I tear him from the dead arms of the traitor Castriot him-

"And our mother dear?" asked Constantine. "She is safe?"

"Aye, aye, safe in heaven, I fear. But we will not give up hope until we have searched our camps tomorrow, nor then antil we have burned every seraglio of the Turks from the mountains to the sea. But who brought you and the lass here?" asked Milosch, eying the form of the surly man beside him.

"Why, good Uncle Kabilovitsch did," said the boy, staring in amazement at the spot now usurped by the strange figure of Scanderbeg.

"Kabilovitsch went to fetch some fire peat from the gully I told him of,"

muttered Scanderbeg. "Yes, he is coming yonder," said Muosch as Kabilovitsch's well known



"I can endure the service of the sultan

no longer." hood and cape were outlined against the white background of a snow covered fir tree a short distance off. "But he has found no fuel. Wrap close, my hearties. You will have no more blaze tonight. Ha, Kabilovitsch!" said he, raising his voice as the familiar form seemed about to pass by. "Has the fire in your eye been put out by the cold, that you cannot find your own place, neighbor? I would have sworn that, if Kabilovitsch were blind, he could find a lost kid in the mountains, and now he hardly knows his own nest."

The assumed Kabilovitsch came near and gave an awkward salute, which, while intended to be familiar, was not sufficiently unlimbered of the habit of authority to avoid giving the impression that its familiarity was only as-

"By the beard of Moses! I had almost mistaken my own camp, now the fires are smoldering," said he, approaching.

"He is not Kabilovitsch," said Milosch, half to himself and half aloud. "No," replied Scanderbeg. "But I'll go and find Kabilovitsch. Perhaps he has more peat than he can carry. And, stranger, I'll help you find what you are seeking, for you seem daft with the cold, if you will help me find him I am to look for. By the beard of Moses! That's a fair agreement, is it not?"

"A strange swear, that," said Milosch, looking after the two forms vanishing among the fir trees. "It is some watchword, and I like it not among these camp prowlers. I fear for Kabilovitsch."

Had one been lurking in the copse of evergreens to which the men withdrew he would have overheard conversation of which these sentences are

"Yes, General Hunyades, the time has come. I can endure the service of the sultan no longer. But for what I am about to do I alone am responsible and must decline to share that responsibility with any other, either Moslem or Christian. I believe, sire, that I am in this directed by some higher nower than my own caprice. I am

(To be continued.)

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