

"THE THIEF OF BAGDAD"

BY AHMED ABULLAH

Based on Douglas Fairbanks' Fantasy of the Arabian Nights, by Elton Thomas

On the stairway they met the vanguard of the invaders; were pulled down; heard the Mongol Prince's ironic command to his warriors as he stepped from his room:

"Do not harm them. For as to the Caliph, I shudder at the sacrilegious thought of killing my future-father-in-law. And as to the descendant of Hindustan's impotent gods and the descendant of Persia's great gods—why?" he laughed—"before I kill them I shall have them harnessed like horses to my chariot of victory, tomorrow, when I shall drive in triumph through the streets of Bagdad!"

To the Persian's greater glory be it said that, in spite of his fear, he broke into a flood of abuse, calling the other every bad name he could think of: "Traitor! Fig! Dog-faced Mongol barbarian! Seller of hog's tripe! Descendant of monkeys."

More of the sort. Nor did the Mongol interrupt him. He waited until lack of breath caused the Persian to stop. Then he smiled.

"You are braver than I imagined, O great sausage!" he replied. "Very well! Your tortures tomorrow shall be lengthy, novel, and exquisite—to let me see how brave you really are!"

Then, at his order, they dragged the captives away, while he returned to his room, closing the door.

From the outside, strident cries and yells drifted in as the Mongol swords leaped to their grim work.

He smiled. Then he frowned. He wished to be alone, quite alone with his pride and his coiling thoughts. So he closed the windows and the heavy iron shutters. The noises from the outside ceased. Only a dim memory of sounds was left in gliding, vibrant tone waves—very soft, very far away, not at all like the echo of battle and death.

There was now in the room a cloak or enormous, breath-clogging stillness. Crushing, unhuman stillness.

For a few seconds he stood quite motionless, thoughts flashing and zig-zagging through his brain, deeply frowning his yellow, stark devil's-mask of a face.

Then he walked to a taboret on which was a narrow, square package wrapped in silk of imperial yellow, embroidered with the five-clawed dragon. He took off the wrappings; took out a dozen tiny, very thin tablets of emerald-green, transparent jade inlaid in gold with a succession of Mandarin meroglyphics. These tablets were the ancestral tablets of his clan, reaching back into the dim mists of antiquity when his forefathers were still wild hephard chiefs near the shores of Lake Baikal, in Central Asia. Generation for generation, century for century, victory for victory, also occasional defeat when the Mongols were driven back into the steppes, thence to issue again, a generation later, with renewed vigor and savagery—generation for generation, the history of his clan was gold-engraved there on the smooth jade tablets.

He bowed before the tablets with slow, proper ceremony. He filled a bronze bowl with black incense powder, lit it, and watched the scented smoke curl up in opalescent spirals. From the ceiling lamp a yellow ray of light stabbed down, cutting across his face as clean as with a knife, emphasizing the prominent cheek bones, the oblique, heavy-lidded eyes, the thin lips, heightening the expression of stony reluctance on his features, yet, too, strangely, inconspicuously, lending to them something akin to spiritual ecstasy. He stared at the coiling incense clouds. Through the whirling, perfumed smoke he saw the green glitter of his ancestral tablets; saw there his own aim and the aim of his race—like a blood-red, challenging scrawl across the history of all the world.

Again he bowed, with hands clasped across his chest. Then he spoke. It was a prayer to his race, his tribe, his clan, his dynasty, himself.

A prayer. Too, a grim prophecy: "As long as water runs and the wind blows, as long as fire burns and the sea tosses, so long shall the Mongol race endure. It runs its way like a shuttle through all the broad lands of the earth, waving an eternal, unbreakable fabric. Time and again, in the past, the Mongol power has gone down before the gathered strength of other races, snatching at and taking

the luring jewel of dominion. Time and again we returned to the attack; we shivered the fetters; we enslaved the enslavers. Time and again, in the future, the Mongol power shall go down before the gathered strength of other races, snatching at and taking the luring jewel of power. Time and again we shall return to the attack; we shall shiver the fetters; we shall enslave the enslavers." His voice rose shrilly triumphantly. "Yellow, toothy wolves, we, of our mothers' bearing! Never shall we eat dirt to stay our craving! Ours is the greatest ambition, the greatest call, the greatest mission on earth. We cleanse with the swish of the sword when it is red. And the end is not yet; will not be for many centuries; never will be. For ours is the only pure race on earth. Our race is undying, eternal. The Emperors of Germany and of Russia, the Kings of Poland and Hungary, the Dukes of Lithuania and the Volga Tribes, the Chiefs and Khans and Princes of half the world gone down before the shining Mongol sword. Thus, in the future, Kings and Nations and Republics shall kowtow before our curved scimitars and kiss the shadows of our horses' feet. Time and again! Time and again! For ours is the vigor and the energy and the subtle brain and the harsh, ruthless will. Ours is forever the mighty, ever resurgent resurrection of race. All that is welded together by the rest of mankind we shall again and again tear asunder. All that has been built by the rest of mankind we shall again and again overthrow. All the weak deities invented and worshipped by the rest of mankind we shall again and again send down to oblivion and ridicule. For we are the Scourge of God!"

He bowed once more before the jade tablets; then turned as the door opened to admit Wong K'ai. "Tomorrow morning," he said, "I shall elevate the Princess Zobeid to the dragon throne. She is of foreign race. I know. But the Mongol race is stronger. My great-grandfather married a German Princess captured in war, but the son of this union, my grandfather, was pure Mongol. My grandfather married an Indian Princess stolen by Tartar raiders, but my father was pure Mongol. My father married a Persian Princess, sent to him as a tribute by the Shah-in-Shah, but I am pure Mongol. I shall marry an Arab Princess. But my sons shall be pure Mongol."

He paused; went on: "Tell Zobeid to prepare for the wedding. Let it be a wedding after the Mongol manner. Bestow on every one of my soldiers a horse, a slave, and three gold pieces. Bestow on every one of my war captains nine time nine white stallions, nine times nine precious pearls, nine time nine crimson robes of honor, nine times nine pieces of gold, nine time nine rolls of silk, and nine times nine female slaves. Have all the astrologers, sorcerers, soothsayers, and witch-doctors fed at my expense. Let there be a tinkling of bells and burning of incense and chanting of songs throughout Bagdad. See that all the Moslem priests be crucified at the altars of their impotent Allah. Have all the Christian and Jewish merchants' teeth pulled one by one, so that their cries may make sweet music. Give to the Princess Zobeid, as my wedding present the Kingdom of Tartary, the Chieftainship of Outer Mongolia, the Viceroyalty of Manchuria, the Island of Wak, and the revenues from nineteen thousand villages and cities in Russia and Siberia. Tell her that I shall confer upon her the charming and elegant title of the Model of Ten Thousand Female Generations to Come!"

"Listen in obey, O Great Dragon!" murmured Wong K'ai and withdrew, while the Prince of the Mongols walked over to the window and opened it. He looked out. Gradually the loom of the night lifted; the fires set here and there by the looting Mongol warriors had died out; and the smoke veil which had covered the town twisted up in baroque spirals and tore into gauzelike arabesques. He gave a sensuous, throaty exclamation of triumph. (To Be Continued.)

Monoxide gas killed three men in a garage at Holly, Mich.

WHY THE WEATHER?

DR. CHARLES F. BROOKE
Secretary, American Meteorological Society, Tells How.

Almanac Forecasting.
The versatile old-fashioned almanac was expected, among other things, to furnish general weather forecasts throughout the year. As not even the U.S. Weather Bureau is yet ready to enter the field of long range forecasting, it is evident that these almanac forecasts were pure guess work, often obviously absurd when they attempted to be definite. But they were often so vague, both as to time and place, that it was easy to claim verification for the predictions.

In a modern almanac, Prof. C. F. Talman says "The absurdity of such prognostications must have always been recognized by intelligent people; and, in fact, as far back as 1664 we find both of the above-mentioned traits of the almanacs burlesqued in Poor Robin, the first of the comic almanacs, in such predictions as the following:—
January—There will be much frost and cold weather in Greenland.
February—We may expect some showers of rain this month or next, or the month after that, or else we shall have a very dry spring.

BROCADE, FOX FUR



This very attractive evening ensemble costume is a combination of gold brocade and fox fur. The gown and wrap are of the same material and the coat is lined with emerald green velvet, which harmonizes most beautifully with the dull rose, blue and green shades that appear in the brocade.

DEATH OF F. ISARD.

He Suffered A Stroke—Lived At Bloomfield.

Bloomfield, Dec. 29.—December has been an extremely cold month with gales and snow. Enough snow has fallen to make sleighing. Death came suddenly to Fred Isard, on Friday morning. He was stricken with paralysis and died in a short time. Mr. Isard was forty-nine years of age and came to this country from England, with his family a number of years ago. Mrs. Isard was away at the time of his death visiting friends at Scrathroy. Besides his wife he is survived by two sons, Frederick and Alexander. At the Christmas tree entertainment, held in the Methodist church \$85 was realized. Ralph Clinton and wife, Hamilton, are spending Christmas holidays with friends here. Mr. and Mrs. John Branscombe, Lyle Branscombe and Mrs. Jones spent Christmas at Trenton the guests of Mr. and Mrs. David Jones. Miss Marjorie Partella, and Miss Helen Talcott, Queen's University, are spending holidays at their homes.

The cheese factory closes this week for the season. Leavens & Lovelace's evaporator finished drying apples last week. Frank Stanton and wife and family, Detroit, are visiting at Harry Slaven's. Clayton Burr and wife and family, Mrs. Marshal Burr and Mrs. Turlie Gibson, spent Christmas at Adam Burr's Concession.

News of Selby.
Selby, Dec. 29.—A large crowd attended nominations here to-day. A number from here spent Christmas away from home. Miss Fanny McCauley is spending some time with friends in Toronto. H. Rickley, formerly of this place, was married in Detroit recently. Mrs. A. Garrett, Toronto, is visiting friends here.

Mrs. McMillan, who has been on the sick list, we are glad to say is better. Miss Ida Dudgeon is visiting her sister in Montreal. W. Frisken is in Toronto attending the Boys' Parliament. Mr. and Mrs. Foots and Mr. and Mrs. Cassidy at J. Gollinger's; Mrs. M. Anderson at Rev. Mr. Anderson's; Mr. and Mrs. J. Frisken and family and Mr. and Mrs. Booth and son at J. E. Hodgins'; J. Gou at home; Miss Tunno at C. C. Tunno's; Mr. and Mrs. G. Paul and sons at R. Paul's; Miss E. Gou and Lorne Gou at F. L. Amey's.



Our New Year's Resolution

☉☉☉

To-night, the New Year is born — to-morrow, young and unafraid, he starts on his twelve months' journey. We will go with him, month by month, gladly and buoyantly; for we have resolved this New Year's day to carry on with renewed vigor all the ideals this store has upheld in the past. We have resolved to bring about within these next twelve months every improvement possible, which will increase our service to our customers, so that as the year progresses they will feel more and more that this store is here to serve them.

☉☉☉

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SOVIET MINISTER QUITS PARIS



M. Krassin, newly appointed Soviet ambassador to France, has unexpectedly left Paris for Moscow. He and his wife are seen here in their latest picture.

WHAT IS A HANDICAP?



Nothing, answers blind Julius Jonas, star insurance agent of New York, a member of the \$200,000 club of life insurance salesmen. Four years ago, Jonas, a prosperous business man, lost his eyesight. With it went his prosperity. He became penniless. Undaunted, he undertook to sell life insurance. To-day he is one of the highest-salaried men in a line of high-salaried men. He has taught himself the Braille system and out of his own funds, is educating forty blind men in its benefits, so that they, too, can have a chance at the success that has been his.

RESPONSIBILITY

Much—very much indeed—depends on the responsibility of the ones in whom you repose confidence to examine your eyes—make, design and fit your "Quality Beyond Question" Eye Glasses. You can depend on our advice. Consult:

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THE WHIG'S ZOO

In wilds of southern Africa,
A scampering on the ground,
The Otocyon, that's well known
As long-eared dog is found.
His legs and tail are very black,
Although his body is gray,
He's very wild and ferocious,
Wouldn't rather play than pray!

Wishing All Our Friends
A HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS
NEW YEAR

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