THE UNSPEAKABLE TURK.

BY GEORGE HORTON.

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SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

John Curtis, a young American, who chances to be in Athens at the outbreak of the Greco-Turkish War, joins a filibustering expedition to Crete. The little vessel is wrecked, but Curtis, accompanied by Lieut. Lindbohm, a soldier of fortune, and a native Cretan, Michali, reach the island safely. They arrive at a village and are cared for by the inhabitants. Curtis has injured his foot on a sea urchin. He is nursed by Panayota, the priest's daughter. In a few days word comes of the advance of the Turks under Kostakes toward the town. The Cretans gather in the pass, the men fighting and the women and girls keeping up the fires. Thirty Turks are killed, but Michali is badly wounded and Panayota is captured by Kostakes. The Cretans retreat to the sea. Kostakes plunders the town, taking the old priest and Panayota along as prisoners. Curtis, representing himself as a newspaper correspondent, also accompanies the party. Kostakes has the old priest murdered. Curtis slips past the guards, wounds a other and escapes with Panayota. They meet Lindbohm and friends and attack the Bashi Bazouks, who recapture Panayota. Curtis and Lindbohm each discover that each is in love with the Cretan captive. Kostakes now imprisons her in his harem in Canea and tries to persuade her to marry him. Curtis learns from Hassan, a Turk of the wholesale sort of Panayota, Kostakes, after threatening Panayota with violence, collides with English troops marching through the streets to the Custom House, from the ship Hazard, which has come to anchor in the harbor. There is an affray in which the English are driven back to the boats. The captain of the Hazard determines to drop a few shells into the town. The Turks burn the houses of the Cretans and torture the people. Panayota escapes and takes refuge in a leper colony over night. The next day she starts for the home of her uncle. Lindbohm and Curtis start for Canea.

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CHAPTER XXXIX.

"Pity, Pity," whined the lepers, exposing their hideousness with all the skill of subtle and experienced merchants. They were all there by the roadside leading into Canea, and had commenced business for the day. Curtis stared at them, unable to remove his eyes from the dreadful spectacle.

Lindbohm fumbled nervously in his pockets with averted face, and producing two or three coppers tossed them to the afflicted group.

"Come away," he said, pulling Curtis along; "I cannot bear to look at them."

The Turk had been telling them of the leper colony, and they were not totally unprepared for this sight; yet the reality far exceeded the description.

"But you should see those who are not able to come down here and beg," exclaimed the Major; "these are comparatively well yet, you know."

"I hope I may never see them," said Lindbohm. "I hope I may never see these again."

The Swede bore the Turk no ill-will for the enforced detainment. It had not lasted for long, and the Major had shown his guests every attention, and had explained again and again that he had carried Lindbohm off to save his life.

"But those who are no longer able to beg," asked the Lieutenant, "do they starve?"

"Oh, no, indeed. They are living monuments to the tender-heartedness of my august master, the Sultan. Each of the lepers is furnished one loaf of bread a day."

"Oh, I see," said Lindbohm.

Curtis took no part in the conversation. He did not even hear what the others were saying, but walked on beside them with his eyes fixed upon the ground, like a man in a trance. Every now and then he ejaculated, "Good God!" with the accent on the "good."

At last he stopped so abruptly that the Turk, who was directly behind, nearly knocked him over.

"I say!" said Curtis, whirling around and choking a stream of fluent apologies with a vehement question.

"Do people who are not lepers ever go into that village? To see their friends, you know, or to stop over night, or anything of that sort?"

"But monsieur is talking English, which, unfortunately, I do not understand."

"Oh, damn!" and he repeated the question in Harvard French.

The Turk smiled.

"Impossible. You have seen the disease. Do you think any one would run the risk of catching it?"

Curtis strode on and became again immersed in thought, vaguely hearing the Major's explanation of the fact that nearly all the lepers of Crete were Greeks.

At last, at the gate of the Canea stood an English marine, in red jacket and cork helmet. A business-like "halt!" woke Curtis from his abstraction.

"I am Peter Lindbohm, Lieutenant of cavalry in the Swedish Army," said Lindbohm in English, and he drew an immense portfolio from the breast pocket of the Prince Albert. "Here is my card."

One of the marines took the proffered pasteboard, glanced at it solemnly and saluted.

"And here's mine," said Curtis. "I'm an American. And this gentleman is a Turkish officer. We were coming across the country on foot, and he said we were in danger of being massacred, so he took us to his house and kept us there till the English landed, and here—here's my passport, too, if you can manage to read it. It's been in the water."

"What do you want to do now, sir?"

"We have friends inside" replied Lindbohm, "and we wish to find out whether they are safe or not. We wish to go in."

"Very sorry, gentlemen, but we have strict orders to admit no one for the present."

"But, my dear sir, we are not Turks—nor Cretans. I am a Swede and my friend here is an American."

"Very sorry, gentlemen—"

"But this may be a matter of life and death! A Christian lady—the betrothed of this young gentleman is in the hands of the Turks—"

"Very sorry, gentlemen. Move away from the gate, please."

Lindbohm was too good a soldier not to know what that meant. So they went to a house nearby belonging to a friend of the Major, and waited two whole days, during the most of which time the Swede and the American had the place to themselves, for the Major and his friend were arrested and carried off before the end of the first day. They went repeatedly to the gate demanding admittance, and were refused as often. They continued until the third morning when they were greeted with a smile and a "Hits hall right, now, gentlemen, you may henter—'im givin' hup 'is sword which will be restored to 'im at 'eadquarters." Lindbohm raised his hand in military salute to the red bandana and passed under the ancient archway. Curtis handed over the cimeter and followed.

"D'yever see two such guys?" asked one red jacket of the other. "Never'n me loife. But 'e's one's a soldier, all right. D'ye see 'im sloud?"

Now, had two men attired as were Curtis and Lindbohm at that moment entered any other town in the world, their grotesque appearance would have excited attention, not to say jeers, and a crowd of small boys would have been following at their heels. The gray Prince Albert was wrinkled and faded, and so badly shrunken that it caused Lindbohm's arms to fall a trifle akimbo. Altogether, it was a garment very inharmonious with the tall yellow boots into which his trousers were tucked, and the gaudy handkerchief, which twisted about his brow, did service for a hat. He had picked up a slender stick, which took the place of his bamboo cane, and with which he occasionally warded off an imaginary thrust, as he strode up the street, looking eagerly about. Curtis's once natty business suit had been torn in several places. He also wore Cretan boots, and his costume was completed by a British fez provided by the hospitable Major. He had managed in addition, to afford his two guests a bath, an opportunity to shave and neglige shirts.

Lindbohm was quite voluble.

"Bear up, my friend," he said, "we shall surely find her. Remember that she was in a Turkish house, the very safest place she could be in."

Curtis continued to be silent and preoccupied, a condition which the Swede attributed to the fear that something had happened to Panayota, and that their long search would be rendered vain at the very end. Yet he could not understand the American's seemingly careless manner, mingled with absorption and perplexity.

"He acts like a man who has been hit on the head with a musket butt," thought the Swede, glancing shrewdly at his companion. "Good heavens, can it be that he has a presentiment of evil?"

"We must go straight to the military authorities," said the English. "We will tell them all about Panayota, and if Kostakes has her there we must make him give her right up, my friend."

"Yes, O yes; certainly," replied Curtis. "Yes, O yes; certainly."

The people whom they met looked sullen at the English troops were everywhere, marching in bodies through the streets. If any Mohammedan stopped to talk to them, the English redcoat was sure to step between and say, "Move on!" or a burly Montenegrin would come up with words to the same effect. Much damage had been done to the part of the town through which they were now passing, and a sprightly gossiping of birds was heard in the trees, and replying from distant parts of the forest came the echo of axes. Horses galloped across an intersection, and all the noise and bustle was of a continual tune, not sung loudly, like the motif of an opera.

Groups of Cretans they met, whether jubilant or despondent, stopped to look after the retreating Englishmen, some cursing them, others recongefully.

"I hear that," cried Lindbohm, "Panayota will be singing the hymn of liberty herself to-day. We must make her sing it all through for us. I wish I could understand the words."

And he beat time with his cane as a tall Cretan strode by, humming very distinctly:

We can tell you by the lightening
Of your terrible swift brand,
And we know you by the brightening
When your proud eyes sweep the land!

"Panayota will be singing that at this very moment, eh?" cried Lindbohm, laying his hand upon Curtis's shoulder; but the latter made no reply.

Occasionally two-wheeled mule carts, laden with supplies, stormed by over the cobblestones. From the narrow street they passed into a place of smouldering ruins, and roofless, ragged walls. Here a party of marines were at work, assisted by townspeople, throwing water on fires that were still burning or in digging bodies out of the débris. A cart stood near, and an awestruck, silent throng lingered by, ready to identify the remains of possible relatives or friends. The air was full of powdered lime and smoke, and had a queer, pungent smell.

"Come on," said Lindbohm, "before they find a body. I don't like to see such things, and don't let this affect you, my friend. Panayota, you know, is in the Turkish quarter."

Lindbohm urged this cheering assurance with the insistent frequency of a man who is trying to water his own hopes.

They came into the public square, where the shells from the Hazard had fallen thickest, for here the Bashi Bazouks had fired on the British soldiers, and yonder, rising precipitously to a height of thirty feet, was the fortified stronghold from which the Turkish guard had poured a rain of bullets upon the town. English sentries were now pacing to and fro up there. But the chief attraction was a sort of booth in the centre of the square, for all the world like a Punch and Judy booth, and in it were hanging by the neck seven figures with black caps over their heads, with their hands bound behind them and their feet tied together.

"By George, they've been hanging the ringleaders, hanging them higher than Haman!" cried Lindbohm.

Curtis could not realize that those were the bodies of human beings, there was something so theatrical about their appearance, they hung so neatly in a row, and the heads all lolled one way, like heads of Brownies in an advertisement.

"Maybe they have hanged them in effigy," he suggested.

Lindbohm laughed.

"Might as well be now," he replied. "But let us ask the guard where we will find the commandant. Then we shall learn something about Kostakes and Panayota."

"You go," said Curtis. "I'll wait for you here." He shrank from the ingenuous explanation that Panayota was his betrothed. The very thought made him shudder.

"I can't tell him," he muttered, as he watched Lindbohm forcing his way through the throng. "I must get away from him some way. By Jove, I'll run off and leave him, if I can't do any better. Good God, what an escape I've had!"

"Hi!" shouted Lindbohm, so that every soul in the square turned and looked at him. He was standing on tip-toe and Curtis could see the ruddy face with his red bandanna halo floating on a sea of heads. "Hi!" called the Swede again, waving his stick in air. "Come here quick! I've found Kostakes."

"Now, what the devil do I want of Kostakes?" muttered Curtis, plunging reluctantly into the press. When he had reached Lindbohm's side, the Swede gripped him by the arm and pointed a long finger at one of the pantomimists in Punch and Judy booth.

A board hung suspended from the neck of each, with a name and crime inscribed thereon in Turkish and English. Curtis read:

KOSTAKES EFFENDI,
Captain of Bashi Bazouks.
Murder and Arson.

"It is hard for a soldier to die thus," said the Swede sadly. "But a soldier who disgraces his calling deserves such a death. Well, my friend," turning to Curtis, "half our work has been done for us, eh? Now the rest will be easy. Is it not so?"

Curtis could not take his eyes from the hooded form before him, nor move from the spot where he stood. As long as he stared at the head covered with its black cloth, he was impressed with a sense of unreality, so might a row of wax inquisitors be shown in the Eden Musee at New York. And that pitiful, limp tilting of the head was not at all suggestive of Kostakes, who was ever wont to hold his neck stiff and stand upright with a certain launty insolence. But when Curtis's eyes travelled downward, the unreality vanished. The long row of buttons, the dark blue trousers tucked into the tops of the highly polished boots, the spurs, the backward bulging of the thick calf of the leg—all these things brought back to him a flood of reminiscences. He remembered the fight at Ambelaki, and the long ride across country. He could see those very legs—hanging the side of a horse, and he wondered once more how their owner managed to keep the boots so spotless. Then he saw Panayota again, the most splendid creature he had ever seen, denouncing the Turk for the murder of her father, and he felt once more the old thrill of admiration and chivalrous purpose. Ah! She had touched the Turk, she had made him wince, brave girl, despite those insolent eyes, and that square, protruding under jaw. Any one could see that by the way in which he stopped twirling the end of the little black mustache and was nervously nibbling it. The long chase after Kostakes, with those turbulent Cretans, the night in the square when Curtis had fired point blank at him and missed him—all these things passed through his mind like scenes on a moving panorama as he gaped at those dark blue breeches and the well-polished boots with their long spurs; but when he raised his eyes again to the black-hooded head, tipped to one side like a man with a stiff neck, the whole incident seemed ended, this life in Crete became a fantastic dream and took on the unreality of those faceless puppets, hanging all in a row, gently oscillating in the breeze like pendulums.

"Move on!" said a stern voice sharply.

"They mean us," said Lindbohm, pulling Curtis away. "It seems they allow no loitering here. Well, the next thing is to see the commandant and make some inquiries about Panayota, he?"

"Lindbohm," cried Curtis, pettishly, "I don't want to go to the commandant. See here, old man, there's something I want to tell you. Something I must tell you. I can't stand this any longer."

They had passed the crowd and were alone now. The Swede stopped and looked steadily at his companion. Curtis glanced up furtively. There was nothing but inquiry in those brave, honest, blue eyes.

"I say, old man," he stammered, "don't you think we ought to go and get some hats and things before we go to the commandant? I don't want to offend you, but you—but we look like the very devil!"

CHAPTER XL.

The Lieutenant found no difficulty in buying another straw hat, as the booths of the town were all open again; and another shoestring was easily obtainable, by which he tethered it to his buttonhole.

An enterprising Jew produced a stock of ready-made clothing from Vienna, and Curtis endeavored to persuade Lindbohm to join him in the purchase of a complete new outfit.

"The first thing is to find Panayota," said the Swede. "We must not waste a moment. Ah, my friend, you mistake that girl. She will be so glad to see you that she will not look at your clothes."

Clapping another straw hat upon the head of Curtis, he dragged him away. They found the commandant's quarters with little difficulty, as every man, woman and child in Canea was able to direct them. It was an Oriental house with a garden. Two sentinels stood at the gate. Lindbohm sent in his card, and a youthful officer in fatigue uniform came out, who started with evident surprise, and then gazed curiously at the two callers.

Lindbohm brought the heels of the yellow boots together with a click and saluted.

"Pardon our appearance," he explained, "but the fact of the matter is we have been fighting with the insurgents for the last three months and we have not yet had an opportunity to purchase clothing."

The Englishman laughed and held out his hand cordially.

"Come in, Lieutenant," he said, "and your friend here." When they entered the court, "Take a seat here in the shade. Shall I order you some coffee, Turkish style—or perhaps you'd prefer some whiskey and soda."

"I'd like a Christian drink," cried Curtis with great animation. "Something to take the taste out of my mouth."

"You shall bring me some whiskey, thank you," said the Swede, sitting on the edge of a chair, impatient to go on with the business that had brought him there.

"My name is Jones," said the Englishman. "Lieut. Alfred Jones, at your service." "Let me present my friend, Mr. Curtis, Mr. John Curtis. And now, Lieutenant, we wish to inquire about a Cretan lady, Panayota Nicolaides, whom Kostakes Effendi captured and carried off from her friends. She—"

"She was the daughter of some friends of ours," broke in Curtis, volubly, as Lindbohm waved his hand toward him. "Her father, a priest, befriended us. We were shipwrecked and I stepped on some sort of a cameo thing, a kind of sea pincushion stuck full of pins, and it poisoned me. And the priest took me in and took care of me, and the Turks swooped down on the village and murdered half the inhabitants and carried the girl and her father off. Then they killed the old man. This Kostakes—"

"That must have been one of the chaps that we hanged last night," interrupted Lieut. Jones.

"Just so," said Lindbohm, "and now we want to know what has become of Panayota. My friend here—"

"The fact is we feel very grateful and we want to know what has become of the girl," interrupted Curtis, determined at all hazards to head off Lindbohm's explanation to this civilized Englishman who might be inclined to smile at a tale of romance.

"The commandant is out, but I think I am the very man you want to see," said the Englishman. "This gentleman, Kostakes, it seems, had three wives, two Turkish ladies besides the Greek."

"The Greek was not his wife!" interrupted Lindbohm, with dignity.

"Well, however that may be, they all came back to the house of his house—it seems his house got in the way of one of our shells and there wasn't much left of it. Well, there they all stood, the two houris, wringing their hands and howling and the Greek quiet enough, but looking sort of dazed. I was out with a squad and came across them myself. Well, to make a long story short, we're assisting all the Turks to emigrate from here that feel so disposed, and we sent off the three women this morning."

"My God—where to?" asked Lindbohm.

"Why, the Greek, it seems, had some friends in Athens. She has had enough of Mohammedanism and wanted to be put off there. So we gave her a pass to Athens. The other two go on to Constantinople."

"When does the next boat go to Athens?" asked Curtis, looking up suddenly.

"There's an Austrian Lloyd to-morrow morning at 10 which stops at Athens."

"For——?"

"Trieste."

The Englishman accompanied his two callers to the gate.

"I'd like to hear the story of your adventures with the insurgents," he said. "You must have had some lively experiences. Good day, gentlemen."

"By the way," cried Lindbohm, turning back, "lest there be any mistake, was this Greek girl very beautiful?"

"Ye-es, yes, I should call her a very fine woman."

"What was the color of her hair? Brown?"

"I don't remember exactly. I believe it was."

"Tall, slender, oval face, big, fine eyes?"

"Well, you see, I only saw her for a moment. She certainly was tall and slender, and—and—a fine, handsome woman. Held her head back and threw her chest out, and had a sort of independent air about her."

Lindbohm had no further doubts.

Preparations for departure on the morrow were begun at once. Curtis had no difficulty in raising some money at Cook's on his letter of credit. His passport and two or three letters from home were sufficient identification.

"How are you off for money, old man?" he asked Lindbohm. The Lieutenant drew from the recesses of the ancient, water-warped pocketbook a £5 note, badly faded and stained. It came in two at one of the creases as he held it up.

"I will paste this together," he said, "and it will be just as good as ever. I have plenty more in Athens."

"All right then," replied Curtis, "I'll get the tickets—"

"But I have plenty."

"We must buy some clothes. I'll get the tickets."

Lindbohm assented so far as the tickets were concerned, but he positively refused to buy clothing till he got to Athens. He took a stroll about the town to see what military preparations were going on, while Curtis arrayed himself in a cheap and ill-fitting suit, a new pair of tie shoes, for all of which he paid a high price. He also bought a leather travelling bag, into which he put a supply of underwear and other necessities. The Cretan boots and the cimeter he tied to the handle of the bag as souvenirs.

So the next morning Curtis and Lindbohm walked briskly through the kaleidoscopic square to the wharf and embarked in a rowboat for the steamer waiting out in the bay.

"There will be no difficulty in finding her in Athens," said Lindbohm as the two stood at last on the deck of the steamer.

"Tickets, gentlemen."

The waiting employee glanced at the two tickets and then handed them back, one to Curtis and one to Lindbohm.

"Here," said the latter, "he made a mistake. I've got your ticket, John Curtis, Tri—. What does this mean? Why are you going to Trieste?"

"Lindbohm," said Curtis, laying his hand on the Swede's arm, "Panayota isn't in Athens."

"Is she in Trieste? Why are you fooling me?"

"I'm not fooling you. I couldn't tell you because I thought you'd want me to go and see her and bid her good-by. And I couldn't do it. I just couldn't. It would be too painful, and it would do any good."

"Why shouldn't you go and see her? And why should you bid her good-by? I don't understand."

"You will understand when I tell you. She's a leper. I saw her myself, with my own eyes, as we passed through their village. She isn't like those other horrible creatures yet, of course, but she will be in time. My God! Lindbohm, think of what an escape I've had. I was so wrapped up in the girl that I actually thought of marrying her after a while. Suppose I had done so, and it had broken out on her afterward. Why, I might have even caught the disease myself."

The Lieutenant was very pale. When he spoke his voice was low and unnaturally distinct, and he divided his sentence into groups of two and three words, like a man who is making a superhuman effort to control himself.

"And what about this young woman—who went to Athens?"

"She's nobody else. I couldn't be mistaken in Panayota. I tell you I saw her, man. Why, I was as close to her as from here to that mast yonder."

"But perhaps there's some mistake in the reason for her being there. Perhaps—"

"Why didn't she come out, then, when she saw me?" She clapped her hands in front of her face and shrunk away. My first impulse was to go in, and then it flashed over me in a minute. Besides, you heard what Hassan Bey said, that the lepers are nearly all Cretans."

"Then you don't think you'll ever see her again?"

"The three princes begged of him not to do this, for the three giants would come to life, and then he, having no help, would be killed.

"The Amadan was angry with them and ordered them off instantly. Then he sat down by the giant's corpse to watch and to mourn for his life again. But he was so tired from his great day's fighting that by and by he fell asleep.

"About 12 o'clock at night, when the Amadan was sleeping soundly, up comes a Cailliach [old hag] and four Badachs [unwieldy big fellows], and they soon come to life again. The feather and a bottle of Iocshlainte [ointment of health], with which she began to rub the giants' wounds.

"Two of the giants were already alive when the Amadan awoke and the third was just opening his eyes. Up sprang the Amadan, and at him leaped them all—Slat Mor, Slat Marr, Slat Beag, the Cailliach and the four Bedachs.

"If the Amadan had a hard fight during the day this one was surely ten times harder. And a brave and a bold fellow he was, and not to be daunted by numbers nor showers of blows. They fought for long and long. They made the hard ground into soft, and the soft into spring wells; they made the rocks into pebbles and the pebbles into gravel, and the gravel fell over the country like hailstones. All the birds of the air from the lower end of the world to the upper end of the world, and all of the wild beasts and tame from the four corners of the earth came flocking to see the fight, and at length after a long time the Amadan run his sword right through the Bull's heart and the Bull fell down dead. But before he died he put the Amadan under geasa to meet and to fight the White Wether of the Hill of the Waterfalls.

"Then the Amadan rubbed his own wounds with the iocshlainte and he was as fresh and hale as when he went into the fight.

"Then he set out and travelled back to the little hut again that had no shelter within or within, only one feather over it, and the rough red woman was standing in the door, and she welcomed the Amadan and asked him the news.

"He told her all about the fight and that the Black Bull of the Wood had put him under geasa to meet and to fight the White Wether of the Hill of the Waterfalls.

"'I'm sorry for you, my poor Amadan,' says she, 'for no one ever before met that White Wether and came back alive. But come in and eat and rest anyhow, for you must be both hungry and sleepy.'

"So she spread him a hearty meal and made him a soft bed, and the Amadan ate and slept heartily, and in the morning she directed him to where he would meet the White Wether of the Hill of the Waterfalls. And she told him that no steel was tougher than the hide of the White Wether, that a sword was never yet made that could go through it, and that there was only one place—a little white spot just over the Wether's heart—where he could be killed or sword could cut through. And she told the Amadan that his only chance was to hit this spot.

"The Amadan thanked her and set out. He travelled away and away before him until he came to the Hill of the Waterfalls, and as soon as he reached it he saw the White Wether coming tearing toward him in a furious rage, and the earth he was throwing up with his horns was shutting out the sun.

"And when Wether came up and asked the Amadan what great feats he had done that made him impudent enough to dare to come here the Amadan said: 'With this sword I have killed Slat Mor, Slat Marr, Slat Beag, the Cailliach of the Rocks, and her four Badachs, the Black Bull of the Brown Wood, and the White Wether of the Hill of the Waterfalls, and before night I'll have killed the Black Bull of the Brown Wood.'

"Then," said the White Wether, "you'll never kill any other." And at the Amadan he sprang.

"The Amadan struck at him with his sword, and the sword glanced off as if it might off steel. Both of them fell to the fight with all their hearts, and such a fight never was before or since. They made the hard ground into soft, and the soft into spring wells; they made the rocks into pebbles, and the pebbles into gravel, and the gravel fell over the country like hailstones. All the birds of the air from the lower end of the world to the upper end of the world, and all the wild beasts and the tame came from the four ends of the earth, came flocking to see the fight. But at length and at last, after a long and terrible fight, the Amadan, seeing the little white spot in the Wether's heart that the red woman had told him of, struck for it and hit it, and drove his sword through the White Wether's heart, and the Wether fell down. And when he was dying he called the Amadan and put him under a geasa to meet and fight the Beggarman of the King of Sweden.

"The Amadan took out his bottle of Iocshlainte and rubbed himself with it, and he was as fresh and as hale as when he had begun the fight.

"Then he set out again, and when night was falling he reached the hut that had no shelter, within or without, only one feather over it, and the rough, red woman was standing in the door.

"Right glad she was to see the Amadan coming back alive, and she welcomed him heartily and asked him the news.

"He told her of the wonderful fight he had had, and that he was now under geasa to meet and fight the Beggarman of the King of Sweden.

"She made him come in and eat and sleep, for he was tired and hungry. And heartily the Amadan ate and heartily he slept, and in the morning she called him early, and directed him on his way to meet the Beggarman of the King of Sweden.

"She told him that when he would reach a certain hill, the Beggarman would come down from the sky in a cloud that he would see the whole world between the Beggarman's legs and nothing above his head. 'If ever he finds himself beaten,' she said, 'he goes up into the sky in a mist and stays there to refresh himself. You may let him go up once, but if you let him go up the second time he will surely kill you when he comes down. Remember that. If you are alive when the fight is over come to see me. If you are dead I will go to see you.'

"The Amadan thanked her and parted with her, and travelled away and away before him until he reached the hill which she had told him of. And when he came there he saw a great cloud that shot out of the sky, descending on the hill, and when it came down on the hill and melted away, there it left the Beggarman of the King of Sweden standing, and the world and his legs the Amadan saw the whole world and nothing over his head.

"And with a roar and a run the Beggarman made for the Amadan, and the roar of him rattled the stars in the sky.

"He asked the Amadan who he was and what he had done to have the impudence to come there and meet him.

"He said: 'They call me the Amadan of the Dough, and I have killed Slat Mor, Slat Marr, Slat Beag, the Cailliach of the Rocks, and her four Badachs, the Black Bull of the Brown Wood, and the White Wether of the Hill of the Waterfalls, and before night I'll have killed the Beggarman of the King of Sweden.'

"'That you never will, you miserable object,' says the Beggarman. 'You're going to die now, and I'll give you your choice to die either by a hard squeeze of wrestling or a stroke of the sword.'

"'Well,' says the Amadan, 'if I have to die, I'd sooner die by a stroke of the sword.'

"'All right,' says the Beggarman, and drew his sword.

"But the Amadan drew his sword at the same time, and both went to it. And if his fights before had been hard, this one was harder and greater and more terrible than the others put together. They made the hard ground into soft, and the soft into spring wells; they made the rocks into pebbles, and the pebbles into gravel, and the gravel fell over the country like hailstones. All the birds of the air from the lower end of the world to the upper end of the world, and all the wild beasts and tame from the four ends of the earth came flocking to see the fight, and if the fights that the Amadan had had on the other days were great and terrible, this one was far greater and far more terrible than all the others put together, and the poor Amadan sorely feared that before night fell he would be a dead man.

"The red woman was watching at the well in her garden, and she was sorely distressed, for though at one time the honey was uppermost, at another time it was all blood, and again, the blood and the honey would be mixed, so she felt bad for the poor Amadan.

"At length the blood and the honey got mixed again, and it remained that way until night, so she cried for she believed the Amadan himself was dead as well as the Silver Cat.

"And so he was. For when the fight had gone on for long and long, the Cat, with a great long nail which she had on the end of her tail, tore open from his mouth to his toes, and as she tore the Amadan open and he was about to fall, she opened her mouth so wide that the Amadan saw down to the very bottom of her stomach, and there he saw the black speck that the red woman had put him under geasa to meet and fight the Silver Cat of the Seven Glens.

"'Well,' she said, 'I'm sorry for you, for no one ever before went to meet the Silver Cat and came back alive. But' she says, 'you're both tired and hungry; come in and rest and sleep.'

"So in the Amadan went and had a hearty supper and a soft bed, and in the morning she called him up early, and she gave him directions where to meet the Cat, and how to find her, and she told him there was only one vital spot on that Cat, and it was a black speck on the bottom of the Cat's stomach, and unless he could happen to run his sword right through that, the Cat would surely kill him. She said, 'My poor Amadan, I'm very much afraid you'll not come back alive. I cannot go to help you myself or I would, but there is a well in my garden, and I'll know how well you will know how the fight goes with you. While there is honey on top of the well I will know you are getting the better of the Cat, but if the blood comes on top, then the Cat is getting the better of you, and if the blood stays there, I will know, my poor Amadan, that you are dead.'

"The Amadan bade her good-by, and set out to travel to where the Seven Glens met at the sea. Here there was a precipice, and under the precipice a cave. In this cave the Silver Cat lived, and once a day she came out to sun herself on the rocks.

"The Amadan let himself down over the precipice by a rope, and he waited until the Cat came out to sun herself.

"When the Cat came out at 12 o'clock and saw the Amadan she let a roar out of her that drove back the waters of the sea and piled them up a quarter of a mile high, and she asked him who he was and how he had the impudence to come there to meet her.

"The Amadan said: 'They call me the Amadan of the Dough, and I have killed Slat Mor, Slat Marr, Slat Beag, the Cailliach of the Rocks, and her four Badachs, the Black Bull of the Brown Wood, the White Wether of the Hill of the Waterfalls, the Beggarman of the King of Sweden, and before night I will have killed the Silver Cat of the Seven Glens.'

"'That you never will,' says she, 'for a dead man you will be yourself.' And at him she sprang.

"But the Amadan raised his sword and struck at her, and both of them fell to the fight, and a great, great fight they had. They made the hard ground into soft, and the soft into spring wells; they made the rocks into pebbles, and the pebbles into gravel, and the gravel fell over the country like hailstones. All the birds of the air from the lower end of the world to the upper end of the world, and all the wild beasts and the tame came from the four ends of the earth, came flocking to see the fight, and at length the fight was putting so hard upon the Beggarman, and he was getting so weak, that he whistled, and the mist came around him and he went up into the sky before the Amadan knew. He remained there until he refreshed himself and then came down again, and at it again he went for the Amadan, and fought harder and harder than before, and again it was putting too hard on him, and he whistled as before for the mist to come down and take him up.

"But the Amadan remembered what the red woman had told him, he gave one leap into the air, and coming down, drove his sword through the Beggarman's heart, and the Beggarman fell dead.

"But before he died, he put geasa on the Amadan to meet and fight the Silver Cat of the Seven Glens.

"The Amadan rubbed his wounds with the iocshlainte, and he was as fresh and hale as when he had begun the fight, and then he set out, and when night was falling he reached the hut that had no shelter within or without only one feather over it, and the rough red woman was standing in the door.

"Right glad she was to see the Amadan coming back alive, and she welcomed him right heartily and asked him the news.

"He told her that he had killed the Beggarman, and said he was now