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THE
FORTY THIEVES ;

OR

ALI BABA AND MORGIANA.



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FRONTISPIECE.



“ The robber immediately marked the door with a piece of chalk ; and giving Mustapha his four pieces of gold, dismissed him.”

ALI BABA ;

OR

THE FORTY THIEVES.

IN a town of Persia lived two brothers, sons of a poor man ; one named Cassim, the other Ali Baba. Cassim, the elder, married a wife with a considerable fortune, and lived at his ease ; but the wife of Ali Baba was as poor as himself ; they dwelt in a mean cottage in the suburbs, and he maintained his family by cutting wood. Ali Baba was in the forest, preparing to load his asses with the faggots he had cut, when he saw a troop of horsemen approaching. As he had often heard of robbers who infested that forest, he hastily climbed a large thick tree, which stood near the foot of a rock, and hid himself among the branches. The horsemen soon galloped up to the rock, where they all dismounted. Ali Baba counted forty of them : each took a loaded portmanteau from his horse, and turning to the rock, said, *Open, Sesame* ; immediately a door opened, the robbers passed in, when the door shut of itself. In a short time the door opened again, and the robbers came out, followed by their captain, who said, *Shut, Sesame*. The door instantly closed ; the troop mount-

ed their horses, and were presently out of sight. Ali Baba, seeing the robbers did not return, ventured down; and approaching the rock, said, *Open, Sesame*. Immediately the door flew open, and Ali Baba beheld a spacious cavern, very light, filled with all sorts of provisions, merchandise, rich stuffs, and heaps of gold and silver coin. He brought his asses, took as many bags of gold coin as they could carry, covered them with loose faggots of wood; carried the bags home, and spread the gold coin on the floor.

His wife, delighted with possessing so much money, wanted to count it; but finding it would take up too much time, she resolved to measure it; and running to the house of Ali Baba's brother, she entreated them to lend her a small measure. Cassim's wife was very envious: "I wonder," she said to herself, "what sort of grain such poor people can have to measure; but I will find out what they are doing." So, before she gave the measure, she artfully rubbed the bottom with some suet. Away ran Ali Baba's wife, measured her money; and having helped her husband to bury it in the yard, carried back the measure, without perceiving that a piece of gold was sticking to the bottom. "Fine doings, indeed!" cried Cassim's wife to her husband, after examining the measure, "your brother,

who pretends to be so very poor, is richer than you are, for he does not count his money, but measures it."

Cassim hearing these words, and seeing the piece of gold, grew as envious as his wife, and hastening to his brother, threatened to inform the Cadi of his wealth, if he did not confess to him how he came by it. Ali Baba, without hesitation, told him the history of the robbers, and the secret of the cave, and offered him half his treasure; but the envious Cassim disdained so poor a sum, resolving to have fifty times more out of the robbers' cave. He rose early next morning, and set out with ten mules loaded with great chests. He found the rock, and having said, *Open, Sesame*, gained admission, where he found more treasure than he expected from his brother's account. He began to gather bags of gold, and pieces of rich brocades, which he piled close to the door; but when he had got together more than his ten mules could possibly carry, and wanted to get out to load them, the thoughts of his wonderful riches made him entirely forget the word which caused the door to open. In vain he tried *Bame, Fame, Lame, Tetame*, and a thousand others; the door remained as immoveable as the rock itself. Presently he heard the sound of horses' feet, which he rightly concluded to be the robbers, and he

trembled lest he should fall a victim to his thirst for riches.

He resolved, however, to make one effort to escape: when he saw the door open, he sprang out, but was instantly put to death by the robbers. The thieves now held a council, but not one of them could guess by what means Cassim had got in the cave. They saw the heaps of treasure he had piled ready to take away, but they did not miss what Ali Baba had secured before. They cut Cassim's body into quarters, and hung the pieces within the cave, that it might terrify any one from further attempts. Cassim's wife became terrified, when she saw night come on and her husband not returned; and went to tell Ali Baba of her fears. Ali Baba did not wait to be desired to go in search of him, but he drove his asses to the forest without delay. He was alarmed to see blood near the rock; on entering the cave, he found the body of his unfortunate brother. He took down the quarters, put them upon one of his asses, covering them with faggots; and weeping for the miserable end of his brother, he regained the city. The door of his brother's house was opened by Morgiana, an intelligent faithful female slave. He delivered the body to her, and went himself to impart the sad tidings to the wife of Cassim. The poor woman reproached herself

with her foolish envy, as the cause of her husband's death.

Morgiana having washed the body, hastened to an apothecary's and asked for medicine, saying it was for her master Cassim, who was dangerously ill. She took care to spread the report of Cassim's illness through the neighbourhood; and as they saw Ali Baba and his wife going daily to the house of their brother in great affliction, they were not surprised to hear that Cassim had died of his disorder. The next difficulty was to bury him without discovery; but Morgiana went to a distant part of the city very early in the morning, where she found a poor cobbler just opening his stall. She put a piece of gold in his hand, and told him he should have another, if he would suffer himself to be blindfolded and go with her, carrying his tools with him. Mustapha the cobbler hesitated at first; but the gold tempted him. Morgiana, taking him to the room where the body was lying, removed the bandage from his eyes, and bade him sew the mangled limbs together. Mustapha obeyed, having received two pieces of gold, and was led blindfolded the same way back.

Morgiana sent for the undertaker, and Cassim was buried with all due solemnity; and Cassim's widow received every kind attention both from Ali Baba and his wife.

The robbers were astonished to find the body taken away, and every thing else remaining in its usual order. "We are discovered," said the captain, "and shall certainly be undone, if we do not adopt speedy measures to prevent our ruin. Which of you my brave comrades, will undertake to search out the villain who is in possession of our secret?" One offered, and was accepted on the following conditions; namely, that if he succeeded, he was to be made second in command of the troop; but if he brought false intelligence, he was immediately to be put to death. He proceeded to the city about day-break, and found the cobbler Mustapha in his stall, which was always open before any shop in the town. "Good morrow, friend," said the robber, as he passed the stall, "you rise betimes; I should think, old as you are, you could scarcely see to work by this light." "Indeed, sir," replied the cobbler, "old as I am, I do not want for good eyesight; as you must needs believe, when I tell you I sewed a dead body together the other day, where I had not so good a light as I have now." "A dead body!" exclaimed the robber, "you mean, I suppose, that you sewed up the winding-sheet for a dead body." "I mean no such thing," replied Mustapha; "I tell you I sewed the four quarters of a man together."

This was enough to convince the robber he had luckily met with the very man who could give him the information he was in search of: he began to laugh. "Ha! ha!" said he, "I find, good Mr. Cobbler, that you perceive I am a stranger, and wish to make me believe that the people of your city do impossible things." "I tell you," said Mustapha, in a loud and angry tone, "I sewed a dead body together with my own hands." "Then I suppose you can tell me also where you performed this wonderful business?" Upon this, Mustapha related every particular of his being led blindfold to the house, &c.

"Well, my friend," said the robber, "'tis a fine story, I confess, but not very easy to believe; however, if you will convince me, by shewing me the house you talk of, I will give you four pieces of gold." "I think," said the cobbler, after considering awhile, "that if you were to blindfold me, I should remember every turning we made; but, with my eyes open, I am sure I should never find it." The robber covered Mustapha's eyes with his handkerchief, who, stopping by Cassim's door, said, "Here it is, I went no further than this house." The robber immediately marked the door with a piece of chalk. Shortly after they had quitted the door, Morgiana, coming home from market, perceived the little mark

of white chalk; suspecting something, he directly marked four doors on one side, and five on the other, in exactly the same manner.

The robber rejoined his troop, and boasted of his success: they proceeded to the town in different disguises, in the dusk of the evening. On arriving in the street, they began to examine the doors, and found, to their confusion, that ten doors were marked exactly alike; the robber, who was the guide, could not explain this mystery, and his enraged companions ordered him to be put to death.

Another offered himself upon the same conditions as the former; and having bribed Mustapha, and discovered the house, he made a mark with a dark red chalk upon the door, in a part that was not in the least conspicuous; and carefully examined the surrounding doors, to be certain that no such mark was upon any one of them. But nothing could escape the prying eyes of Morgiana: scarcely had the robber departed, when she discovered the red mark, and getting some red chalk, she marked seven doors on each side, precisely in the same manner.

The robber triumphantly conducted his captain to the spot: but great indeed was his dismay, when he found it impossible to say which among fifteen houses was the right one.

The second robber was therefore condemned to death. The captain having thus lost two of his troop, resolved to go himself. Accordingly, he repaired to the city, and addressed himself to the cobbler Mustapha, who, for six pieces of gold, readily performed the same services for him he had done for the others. The captain, much wiser than his men, did not amuse himself with setting a mark upon the door, but attentively considered the house, counted the number of its windows, and passed by it very often, to be certain that he should know it again. He returned, and ordered his troop to go into the town, and buy nineteen mules, and thirty-eight large jars, one full of oil, and the rest empty. The captain put a man into each jar, properly armed, the jars being rubbed on the outside with oil, and the covers having holes bored in them for the men to breathe through, loaded his mules, and in the habit of an oil-merchant, entered the town in the dusk of the evening. He proceeded to the street where Ali Baba dwelt, and found him sitting in the porch of his house. "Sir," said he, "I have brought this oil a great way to sell, and am too late for this day's market. As I am quite a stranger in this town, will you do me the favour to let me put my mules into your court-yard, and direct me where I may lodge to-night?"

Ali Baba, who was a good-natured man, comed the pretended oil-merchant very kindly, offered him a bed in his own house, and invited his guest in to supper.

It happened that Morgiana was obliged to sit up later that night than usual, to get ready her master's bathing linen for the following morning; and while she was busied about the fire, her lamp went out, and there was no more oil in the house. After considering what she could do for a light, she recollected the thirty-eight oil jars in the yard and determined to take a little out of one of them. She took her oil pot in her hand, and approaching the first jar, the robber within said, "Is it time, captain?" Morgiana instantly replied, "No, not yet; lie still till I call you." She passed on to every jar, receiving the same question, and making the same answer, till she came to the last, which was really filled with oil. Morgiana was now convinced that this was a plot of the robbers to murder her master, Ali Baba; so she ran back to the kitchen, and brought out a large kettle, which she filled with oil, and set it on a great fire; and as soon as it boiled, she went and poured into the jars sufficient of the boiling oil to kill every man within.

The captain of the robbers, hearing every thing quiet in the house, arose and went down into the yard to assemble his men. Coming to the first jar, he felt the streams of the boiled oil; he ran hastily to the rest, and found every one of his troop put to death in the same manner. Full of rage, he forced the lock of a door that led into the garden, and made his escape over the walls.

On the following morning, Morgiana related to her master, Ali Baba, his wonderful deliverance from the pretended oil-merchant and his gang of robbers. He could not sufficiently praise her courage: and without letting any one else into the secret, he and Morgiana the next night buried the thirty-seven thieves in a deep trench at the bottom of the garden.

While Ali Baba took these measures to prevent his and Cassim's adventures in the forest from being known, the captain returned to his cave, and for some time abandoned himself to grief and despair. At length, however, he determined to adopt a new scheme for the destruction of Ali Baba. He removed by degrees all the valuable merchandise from the cave to the city, and took a shop exactly opposite to Ali Baba's house. He furnished this shop with every thing that was rare and costly, and went by the name of the merchant Cogia Hassan. Many persons made acquaint-

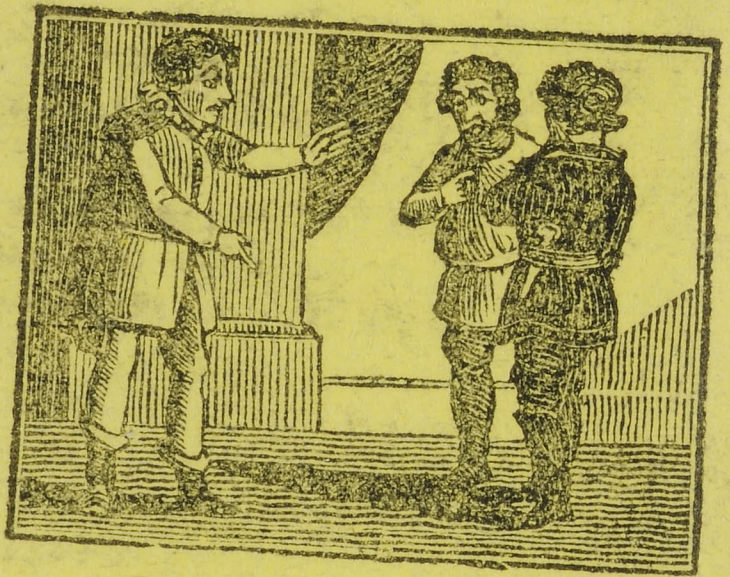
ance with the stranger; among others, Baba's son went every day to his shop. The pretended Cogia Hassan soon appeared to be very fond of Ali Baba's son, offered him many presents, and often detained him to dinner. Ali Baba's son thought it was necessary to make some return for these civilities, and expressed his father to invite Cogia Hassan to supper. Ali Baba made no objection, and the invitation was accordingly given; and after repeated solicitations, the merchant consented to sup at Ali Baba's house the next evening.

A most excellent supper was provided, which Morgiana cooked in the best manner, and, as was her usual custom, she carried in the first dish herself. The moment she looked at Cogia Hassan, she knew it was the pretended oil-merchant. The prudent Morgiana did not say a word to any one of this discovery, but sent the other slaves into the kitchen, and waited at table herself; and while Cogia Hassan was drinking, she perceived he had a dagger hid under his coat. When supper was ended, and the dessert and wine on the table, Morgiana went away, and dressed herself in the habit of a dancing girl. She next called Abdalla, a fellow-slave, to play on his tabor, while she danced. As soon as she appeared at the parlour door, her mas-

er, who was very fond of seeing her dance, ordered her to come in to entertain his guest with some of her best dancing.

Morgiana danced several dances with the utmost grace and agility; and then drawing a poniard from her girdle, she performed many surprising things with it, sometimes presenting the point to one, and sometimes to another, and then seemed to strike it into her own bosom. Suddenly she paused, and holding the poniard in the right hand, presented her left to her master, as if begging some money, upon which Ali Baba and his son each gave her a small piece of money: she then turned to the pretended Cogia Hassan, and while he was putting his hand into his purse, she plunged the poniard into his heart. "Wretch!" cried Ali Baba, "thou hast ruined me and my family." "No, sir," replied Morgiana, "I have preserved, and not ruined, you and your son; look well at this traitor, and you will find him to be the pretended oil-merchant who came once before to rob and murder you." Ali Baba pulled off the turban and the cloak which the false Cogia Hassan wore, discovered that he was the captain of the forty robbers who had slain his brother Cassim; nor could he doubt that his aim had been to destroy him.

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