



# The Strange Adventure of Beder Basim

King Beder Basim, son of a king of Persia and Gulsar, of the Sea, falls in love with Princess Giohara, also a sea princess, from her description only. When he and his uncle go to demand her in marriage her father refuses with scorn. There is a battle. Giohara's father is killed, Giohara escapes, and Beder Basim accidentally finds her on a desert island. He tells her how he loves her, but she turns him into a beautiful bird, and tells her slave to take him to the Island of Thirst. The girl relents and he is caught alive by a Fowler, who presents him to his king. The king's wife says he is a man.

(Continued from last Sunday.)

NOW at the great cry he heard the king was certain his wife was right and the bird a man enchanted. For the cry was that of a human voice, and it had come from the throat of the white bird. So he said to his wife, "I have never had much faith in your sorcery, but now show me what it is worth. Turn this bird into a man again."

The queen wrapped herself in her veil, prepared water, recited over it verses from the Koran and magical words for many minutes, and then, sprinkling some of the water over the bird, cried: "If thou be man, take again thy accustomed form." And immediately Beder Basim, the handsomest man of his time, stood there before them. He told them his whole story, and the king, wondering at its strangeness, was deeply interested and very sympathetic.

"Had I a grown daughter," he said, "I should demand, Beder Basim, that you stay and marry her. But as I have only sons I will instead send you back to your home, hoping that some day you may find and win a woman as beautiful as this princess of the sea, Giohara, and less cruel." So he bought a boat, fitted it out, and watched Beder Basim sail away on his homeward path.

But there were more strange adventures in store for the young king. A great storm arose, the vessel was wrecked, and every one was drowned but Beder Basim, who, by virtue of being his mother's son, could not be hurt by the water. But he was almost dead from hunger and thirst when at last he swam near an island on which stood a beautiful city, all built of pure white marble. The young king swam

FROM THE ARABIAN NIGHTS

by  
W. DONAHEY

toward the shore, but what was his astonishment to see dozens of horses, donkeys, and mules racing down the shore with the evident intention of keeping him from landing! In fact, they kicked and bit at him so viciously that Beder Basim, weary as he was, swam away, around to the back of the island, where he landed at last and fell exhausted upon the beach.

There he was found by a good natured grocer, who took him home, fed him, clothed him, and, when he was well again, explained to him the story of the animals who had fought him away from the shore.

"This island," said the grocer, "is ruled over, unfortunately, by a beautiful, clever, but wicked sorceress named Queen Labe, which named signifies 'sin.' And sinful she is indeed. She falls in love with every young man who comes here, tells him she will make him the king of the island, and then, tiring of him, changes him into a horse, a donkey, or a mule. That is why you were sent away from the shore. These poor unfortunates try to save from their fate every young stranger who approaches, and that was why they beat you off, thinking you would prefer death to a fate like theirs. But now you need not fear our wicked queen. I stand high in favor at her court, and when I say that you are related to me, as I shall, she will leave you alone."

Beder Basim thanked the kindly merchant and lived in his house happily for many weeks, trying to find a way to start once more upon his homeward way. In these endeavors he, of course, went out more or less and saw a great many people, and news of his arrival in the city spread. At last it must have reached the castle of Labe, the queen. For one morning

when the young king was sitting in front of the home of his friend the good grocer he heard music, and, looking up, beheld a band of handsome musicians, followed by a hundred beautiful slave girls, approaching.

"O, dear, O, dear, it is the queen," cried the grocer. "Get out of sight, Beder Basim, and let me alone meet her."

So Beder Basim went hurriedly inside and the grocer remained, bowing deeply as the glittering litter, draped with the heaviest of embroidered silk curtains, came to a rest before the shop.

The queen, beautiful as the dawn, parted the curtains and looked out. "My friend," she said, "I hear that you have as your guest a handsome young stranger."

"Yes," said the grocer, bowing low, "the son of my brother has come to pay me a visit, and, though I love him as my own child, he says he must soon go on, so I shall lose him again presently."

"We will try to fix things so you will not lose him," said the queen. "Send for him, that I may see what he looks like."

So the grocer, trembling now, sent for Beder Basim, who came out hanging his head, twisting up his face, and trying to look sour and unhappy and ugly. But it was no use. His beauty shone out unmistakably, and the queen smiled as she saw him.

"Come and visit me at the castle—I insist upon it," she said. And then and there made Beder Basim climb into the gorgeous litter beside her and ride with her back to the palace.

Once there she feasted him and dressed him in sumptuous clothes and smiled at him till poor, foolish Beder Basim thought that the grocer must have misunderstood her sadly, and made up his mind that she was not only the loveliest woman on earth, more beautiful even than his once longed for Giohara, but also the best and the sweetest. So he stayed with her in the castle many days, till one



"The queen, beautiful as the dawn, parted the curtains and looked out."

morning he saw her go into the garden and change herself into a white bird. Presently a big black bird flew up, the two seemed to talk together, and then flew away. The white bird was gone for hours, and the longer Beder Basim waited the more jealous of that black bird, whom he took to be a man, did he become.

At last the queen returned, became a woman again, and came into the room where Beder Basim was sitting. But he would not speak to her at all, and presently, seeing that she was becoming angry with him, he rose and went down into the city to visit the grocer.

To him he told the whole story, and the grocer, when he had finished, sat a while in deep thought. Then he rose and said: "My dear friend, the queen means to do evil to you, as she has to others. Watch her closely, but remember she cannot harm you. She and all

the other enchanters in this most wicked city are fire worshippers, but I am a true Mohammedan and I know as much magic as they, using my power only for good, as they use theirs for evil. Consequently they all are afraid of me, and there is not one of them whose plans I cannot frustrate if I but have a little time. Go back now to the palace. Have no fear, but watch closely."

So Beder Basim returned to the palace and found the queen awaiting him. And she seemed all sweetness and love, but he knew she had evil thoughts in her heart. After dinner soft music played and she sang to Beder Basim, telling him she would sing him to sleep. So he pretended to fall into a deep sleep, but really he was wide awake, and from between his eyelids he watched the strange, weird doings of the beautiful enchantress who was seeking to destroy him.

(To be continued next Sunday.)

## The TEENIE WEEENIES BUILD A CISTERN

by  
W. DONAHEY

CHUCK the Chinaman soon became a great favorite with all the Teenie Weenies. He told many funny stories, and sang Chinese songs in such a quaint way that the Teenie Weenies never grew tired of hearing him, and had him singing every evening.

"Gennie," said Chuck to the General, several days after he came to the Teenie Weenie house, "me got to get to work. Me come to open laundry, do Teenie Weenie wash, no be vaud'vil man, me gotta work now."

"All right, Chuck," laughed the General, "I'll get the boys to help you build a laundry right away."

"Velly much obliged," said Chuck. "Member, laundry mustbe near muchie water."

"Yes," said the General, "that's right. You will need lots of water, won't you?"

"Oh, yes—muchie, muchie," cried Chuck.

"We can get the water easily," said the Doctor, who was standing near. "We'll just get an old tin can and sink it in the ground right near the laundry for a cistern, run the water into it from the roofs of the Shoe House and the Lovers' Bungalow. As it is, that water's all wasted."

"Good idea," said the General. "We'll do just that. Come along. Let's get busy right away."

The next day the Teenie Weenies got the old tin can, and after a great deal of very hard work, rolled it up between the two houses. Next they brought out their tiny picks and shovels, and dug a very deep hole in the ground. The can was set down in this hole, and earth filled in around it, with only a few teenie weenie feet of the can left sticking out of the ground.

The water spouts from the two teenie weenie houses were then connected with the can. Next a platform was built over the top of the can and a little windlass, with a rope and bucket, was put in place to draw up the water, and a kettle, which, with many other fine and useful things, had been sent the Teenie Weenies by one of their friends, was used by Chuck to carry the water to and fro.

That very night a rain fell and the next morning, to the delight of Chuck, the cistern was full and he began work immediately.

(Copyright: 1915: By Wm. Donahey.)

