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**The Works Of The Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq.**

In Four Volumes

**Addison, Joseph**

**London, 1721**

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S I R,

“ A F T E R having got out of you every thing you can conveniently spare, I scorn to trespass upon your generous nature, and therefore must ingenuously confess to you, that I know no more of the Philosopher’s stone than you do. I shall only tell you for your comfort, that I never yet could bubble a blockhead out of his mony. They must be men of wit and parts who are for my purpose. This made me apply my self to a person of your wealth and ingenuity. How I have succeeded, you your self can best tell.

*Your humble servant to command,*

Thomas White.

“ I have locked up the laboratory, and laid the key under the door. I was very much shocked at the unworthy treatment of this man, and not a little mortified at my disappointment, though not so much for what I my self, as what the publick, suffered by it. I think however I ought to let the world know what I designed for them, and hope that such of my readers who find they had a share in my good intentions, will accept of the will for the deed.

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N<sup>o</sup> 167. *Tuesday, September 22.*

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*Fata viam invenient*-----

Virg.

**T** H E following story is lately translated out of an *Arabian* manuscript, which I think has very much the turn of an oriental tale, and as it has never before been printed, I question not but it will be acceptable to my reader.

The name of *Helim* is still famous through all the eastern parts of the world. He is called among the *Persians*, even to this day, *Helim* the great physician. He was acquainted with all the powers of simples, understood all the influences of the stars, and knew the secrets that were engraved on the seal of *Solomon* the son of *David*. *Helim* was also gover-

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nor of the black palace, and chief of the physicians to *Alnarefchin* the great King of *Persia*.

*Alnarefchin* was the most dreadful tyrant that ever reigned in his country. He was of a fearful, suspicious and cruel nature, having put to death upon very slight jealousies and surmises five and thirty of his Queens, and above twenty sons whom he suspected to have conspired against his life. Being at length wearied with the exercise of so many cruelties in his own family, and fearing lest the whole race of *Caliphs* should be entirely lost, he one day sent for *Helim*, and spoke to him after this manner. *Helim*, said he, *I have long admired thy great wisdom, and retired way of living. I shall now show thee the entire confidence which I place in thee. I have only two sons remaining, who are yet but infants. It is my design that thou take them home with thee, and educate them as thy own. Train them up in the humble unambitious pursuits after knowledge. By this means shall the line of Caliphs be preserved, and my children succeed after me, without aspiring to my throne whilst I am yet alive.* The words of my Lord the King shall be obeyed, said *Helim*. After which he bowed, and went out of the King's presence. He then received the children into his own house, and from that time bred them up with him in the studies of knowledge and virtue. The young Princes loved and respected *Helim* as their father, and made such improvements under him, that by the age of one and twenty they were instructed in all the learning of the *East*. The name of the eldest was *Ibrahim*, and of the youngest *Abdallah*. They lived together in such a perfect a friendship, that to this day it is said of intimate friends, that they live together like *Ibrahim* and *Abdallah*. *Helim* had an only child who was a girl of a fine soul, and a most beautiful person. Her father omitted nothing in her education, that might make her the most accomplish'd woman of her age. As the young princes were in a manner excluded from the rest of the world, they frequently conversed with this lovely virgin, who had been brought up by her father in the same course of knowledge and of virtue. *Abdallah*, whose mind was of a softer turn than that of his brother, grew by degrees so enamoured of her conversation, that he did not think he lived when he was not in company with his beloved *Balsora*, for that was the name of the maid. The fame of her beauty was so great, that at length it came to the ears of the King, who pretending to visit the young princes his sons, demanded of *Helim* the sight of *Balsora* his fair daughter. The King was so enflamed with her beauty and behaviour, that he sent for *Helim* the next morning, and told him it was now his design to recompence him for all his faithful ser-

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vices; and that in order to it, he intended to make his daughter Queen of *Persia*. *Helim*, who knew very well the fate of all those unhappy women who had been thus advanced, and could not but be privy to the secret love which *Abdallah* bore his daughter, *Far be it*, said he, *from the King of Persia to contaminate the blood of the Caliphs, and join himself in marriage with the daughter of his Physician*. The King, however, was so impatient for such a bride, that without hearing any excuses, he immediately ordered *Balsora* to be sent for into his presence, keeping the father with him, in order to make her sensible of the honour which he designed her. *Balsora*, who was too modest and humble to think her beauty had made such an impression on the King, was a few moments after brought into his presence as he had commanded.

She appeared in the King's eye as one of the virgins of *Paradise*. But upon hearing the honour which he intended her, she fainted away, and fell down as dead at his feet. *Helim* wept, and after having recovered her out of the trance into which she was fallen, represented to the King, that so unexpected an honour was too great to have been communicated to her all at once; but that, if he pleased, he would himself prepare her for it. The King bid him take his own way, and dismissed him. *Balsora* was conveyed again to her father's house, where the thoughts of *Abdallah* renewed her affliction every moment; insomuch that at length she fell into a raging fever. The King was informed of her condition by those that saw her. *Helim* finding no other means of extricating her from the difficulties she was in, after having composed her mind, and made her acquainted with his intentions, gave her a potion, which he knew would lay her asleep for many hours; and afterwards, in all the seeming distress of a disconsolate father, informed the King she was dead. The King, who never let any sentiments of humanity come too near his heart, did not much trouble himself about the matter; however, for his own reputation, he told the father, that since it was known through the Empire that *Balsora* died at a time when he designed her for his bride, it was his intention that she should be honoured as such after her death, that her body should be laid in the Black Palace, among those of his deceased Queens.

In the mean time *Abdallah*, who had heard of the King's design, was not less afflicted than his beloved *Balsora*. As for the several circumstances of his distress, as also how the King was informed of an irrecoverable distemper into which he was fallen, they are to be found at length in the history of *Helim*. It shall suffice to acquaint my Reader, that *Helim*,

*lim*, some days after the supposed death of his daughter, gave the Prince a potion of the same nature with that which had laid asleep *Balsora*.

It is the custom among the *Persians*, to convey in a private manner the bodies of all the Royal Family, a little after their death, into the Black Palace; which is the repository of all who are descended from the *Caliphs*, or any way allied to them. The chief Physician is always Governor of the Black Palace, it being his office to embalm and preserve the holy family after they are dead, as well as to take care of them while they are yet living. The Black Palace is so called from the colour of the building, which is all of the finest polished black marble. There are always burning in it five thousand everlasting lamps. It has also a hundred folding doors of ebony, which are each of them watched day and night by a hundred Negroes, who are to take care that no body enters, besides the Governor.

*Helim*, after having conveyed the body of his daughter into this repository, and at the appointed time received her out of the sleep into which she was fallen, took care some time after to bring that of *Abdallah* into the same place. *Balsora* watched over him, till such time as the dose he had taken lost its effect. *Abdallah* was not acquainted with *Helim's* design when he gave him this sleepy potion. It is impossible to describe the surprize, the joy, the transport he was in at his first awaking. He fancied himself in the retirements of the blessed, and that the spirit of his dear *Balsora*, who he thought was just gone before him, was the first who came to congratulate his arrival. She soon informed him of the place he was in, which, notwithstanding all its horrors, appeared to him more sweet than the bower of *Mahomet*, in the company of his *Balsora*.

*Helim*, who was supposed to be taken up in the embalming of the bodies, visited the place very frequently. His greatest perplexity was how to get the lovers out of the gates, being watched in such a manner as I have before related. This consideration did not a little disturb the two interred lovers. At length *Helim* bethought himself, that the first day of the full Moon, of the month *Tizpa*, was near at hand. Now it is a received tradition among the *Persians*, that the souls of those of the Royal Family, who are in a state of bliss, do, on the first full Moon after their decease, pass through the eastern gate of the Black Palace, which is therefore called the gate of *Paradise*, in order to take their flight for that happy place. *Helim* therefore having made due preparations for this night, dressed each of the lovers in a robe of azure silk, wrought in the finest looms of *Persia*, with a long train of linnen whiter than snow, that floated

floated on the ground behind them. Upon *Abdallab's* head he fixed a wreath of the greenest mirtle, and on *Balsora's* a garland of the freshest roses. Their garments were scented with the richest perfumes of *Arabia*. Having thus prepared every thing, the full Moon was no sooner up, and shining in all its brightness, but he privately opened the gate of *Paradise*, and shut it after the same manner, as soon as they had passed through it. The band of Negroes, who were posted at a little distance from the gate, seeing two such beautiful apparitions, that showed themselves to advantage by the light of the full Moon, and being ravished with the odour that flowed from their garments, immediately concluded them to be the ghosts of the two persons lately deceased. They fell upon their faces as they passed through the midst of them, and continued prostrate on the earth till such time as they were out of sight. They reported the next day what they had seen; but this was looked upon, by the King himself, and most others, as the compliment that was usually paid to any of the deceased of his family. *Helim* had placed two of his own mules at about a mile's distance from the black temple, on the spot which they had agreed upon for their rendezvous. He here met them, and conducted them to one of his own houses, which was situated on mount *Khacan*. The air on this mountain was so very healthful, that *Helim* had formerly transported the King thither, in order to recover him out of a long fit of sickness; which succeeded so well that the King made him a present of the whole mountain, with a beautiful house and gardens that were on the top of it. In this retirement lived *Abdallab* and *Balsora*. They were both so fraught with all kinds of knowledge, and possessed with so constant and mutual a passion for each other, that their solitude never lay heavy on them. *Abdallab* applied himself to those arts which were agreeable to his manner of living, and the situation of the place, inasmuch that in a few years he converted the whole mountain into a kind of garden, and covered every part of it with plantations or spots of flowers. *Helim* was too good a father to let him want any thing that might conduce to make his retirement pleasant.

In about ten years after their abode in this place the old King died, and was succeeded by his son *Ibrahim*, who, upon the supposed death of his brother, had been called to court, and entertained there as heir to the *Persian* empire. Though he was for some years inconsolable for the death of his brother, *Helim* durst not trust him with the secret, which he knew would have fatal consequences, should it by any means come to the knowledge of the old King. *Ibrahim* was no sooner mounted

to the throne, but *Helim* sought after a proper opportunity of making a discovery to him, which he knew would be very agreeable to so good-natured and generous a Prince. It so happened, that before *Helim* found such an opportunity as he desired, the new King *Ibrahim*, having been separated from his company in a chase, and almost fainting with heat and thirst, saw himself at the foot of mount *Khacan*; he immediately ascended the hill, and coming to *Helim's* house demanded some refreshments. *Helim* was very luckily there at that time, and after having set before the King the choicest of wines and fruits, finding him wonderfully pleased with so seasonable a treat, told him that the best part of his entertainment was to come, upon which he opened to him the whole history of what had past. The King was at once astonished and transported at so strange a relation, and seeing his brother enter the room with *Balsora* in his hand, he leaped off from the *Sopha* on which he sat, and cried out *it is he! it is my Abdallah!* — having said this he fell upon his neck and wept. The whole company, for some time, remained silent, and shedding tears of joy. The King at length, after having kindly reproached *Helim* for depriving him so long of such a brother, embraced *Balsora* with the greatest tenderness, and told her, that she should now be a Queen indeed, for that he would immediately make his brother King of all the conquered nations on the other side the *Tygris*. He easily discovered in the eyes of our two lovers, that instead of being transported with the offer, they preferred their present retirement to empire. At their request therefore he changed his intentions, and made them a present of all the open country as far as they could see from the top of mount *Khacan*. *Abdalla* continuing to extend his former improvements, beautified this whole prospect with groves and fountains, gardens and seats of pleasure, till it became the most delicious spot of ground within the empire, and is therefore called the garden of *Persia*. This *Caliph*, *Ibrahim*, after a long and happy reign, died without children, and was succeeded by *Abdallah*, a son of *Abdallah* and *Balsora*. This was that King *Abdallah* who afterwards fixed the Imperial residence upon mount *Khacan*, which continues at this time to be the favourite palace of the *Persian* empire.

