

May wisdom rest upon thee! I have heard  
 But seldom such fair words. Thy brain will grow  
 Since thou art thus amenable. Dismiss  
 All ill surmises from thy heart, away  
 With trouble, and enjoy thyself. Look in  
 Upon the children just for once: perchance  
 It will divert them somewhat."

"I will go,"

Said Siyáwush, "to-morrow and perform  
 The Sháh's command. Behold I stand before thee  
 Devoted, heart and soul, to do thy bidding.  
 As thou requirest so will I behave,  
 Thou art the world-lord; I am but a slave."

## § 7

### *How Siyáwush visited Súdába*

One named Hírbad, purged heart and brain and soul  
 From evil, never left the Idol-house,  
 And kept the key. The Sháh commanded him:—  
 "What time the sun shall draw the sword of day  
 Seek Siyáwush and further his commands.  
 Instruct Súdába to present to him  
 A gift of gems and musk, and let withal  
 His sisters and the slaves pour emeralds  
 And saffron over him."

When Sol o'ertopped  
 The mountains Siyáwush approached the Sháh  
 And did obeisance. When they had conversed  
 Awhile in private Kai Káuś instructed  
 Hírbad, then said to Siyáwush: "Go with him  
 And be prepared to look on something new."

The twain went off together merrily  
 Without a thought of care; but when Hírbad

Held up the veil that hung before the door  
The mind of Siyáwush foreboded ill.  
The women came before him one and all  
In festival attire to gaze at him ;  
The house was full of musk, dínárs, and saffron,  
And at his feet they strewed drachms, gold, and gems ;  
The floor was covered with brocade of Chín  
Enriched with lustrous pearls. Wine, scent, and voice  
Of minstrelsy were there, all heads were crowned  
With jewels ; 'twas like Paradise, replete  
With lovely forms and sumptuous furniture.  
Now Siyáwush on entering the bower  
Beheld a brightly shining, golden throne,  
With patterns wrought in turquoise, royally  
Draped with brocade. There sat moon-faced Súdába,  
Like Paradise itself in hue and perfume,  
Sat like the bright Canopus of Yaman,  
Her head adorned with ringlets, curl on curl.  
Surmounted by a lofty crown her hair  
Descended to her feet in musky lassos.  
A slave stood humbly by with golden slippers.  
When Siyáwush appeared within the veil  
Súdába hastened to descend the throne,  
Advanced with graceful gait, saluted him,  
Embraced him long, long kissed his eyes and face,  
And wearied not to look at him. She said :—  
“ I offer praise to God a hundred ways  
All day and three whole watches of the night,  
For no one hath a son resembling thee :  
The Sháh himself hath not another such.”

Now Siyáwush knew well what that love meant,  
And that such fondness was not in the way  
Of God, and, since it was unseemly there,  
Went quickly to his sisters, who enthroned him  
With many a blessing on a golden seat.  
He stayed awhile, then went back to the Sháh.

The bower was full of talk : the women said :—  
 “ Behold the head and crown of courtesy !  
 ‘ He is not,’ thou hadst said, ‘ like other men :  
 His soul diffuseth wisdom.’ ”

Siyáwush

Came to his father’s presence and spake thus :—  
 “ I have beheld the veil and what it hid.  
 All good things in the world are thine, no need  
 For thee to vindicate the ways of God  
 Who dost in treasure, scimitars, and troops  
 Surpass Húshang, Jamshíd, and Farídún.”

The Sháh joyed at the words. He decked his palace  
 Like jocund spring, had wine and harp and things  
 Prepared, and banned the future from the heart.

That night he went among his dames and talked  
 Thus with Súdába : “ Hide not what thou thinkest  
 About the judgment and the courtesy  
 Of Siyáwush, his stature, looks, and speech.  
 Dost thou approve of him and is he wise ?  
 Deserveth he what others say of him ? ”

Súdába answered : “ Sháh and people never  
 Saw thy like on the throne, and who is there  
 To match thy son ? Why speak with bated breath ? ”

The Sháh said : “ If he is to live till manhood  
 We must protect him from the evil eye.”<sup>1</sup>

She said : “ If my words please, and if thy son  
 And I are minded that I should bestow  
 A wife upon him out of his own kindred,  
 Not from the great ones that are round about—  
 A consort who shall bear to him a son  
 Such as he is himself among the mighty—  
 Then I myself have daughters like to thee,  
 Begotten of thy seed, of thy pure stock ;  
 Or should he take a child of Kai Árash,  
 Or Kai Pashín, she would give thanks with joy.”

<sup>1</sup> Open praise, especially of the young, was regarded as unlucky.

He said to her: "It is my wish. My name  
And greatness are dependent on the issue."

Next morning Siyáwush approached the Sháh,  
And called down blessings on the crown and throne.  
The monarch caused all strangers to depart  
And, speaking with his son in privacy,  
Said thus: "I have in me a secret longing,  
Inspired by God, the Maker of the world,  
That thou shouldst leave a memory of thy name,  
And that a king should issue from thy loins,  
That as my face refreshed at seeing thee,  
Thy heart should be enlarged at sight of him.  
I had thy horoscope to this effect  
From archimages that can read the stars,  
That from thy loins a king shall come and be  
Thy monument. Now choose thyself a wife  
Among the great from those within the veil  
Of Kai Pashín or bower of Kai Árash;  
Make all things ready and bestow thy hand."

He said: "I am the Sháh's slave and I bow  
My head before his counsel and behest.  
His choice for me is good, whoe'er she be;  
The world-lord is a monarch o'er his slaves.  
Would that Súdába heard it not! her words  
Are otherwise, she hath no mind thereto;  
I cannot talk to her of this affair,  
And have no business in that bower of hers."

The Sháh smiled at the words of Siyáwush,  
Not witting of the quag beneath the straw,  
And said to him: "Thy wife must be thy choice.  
Súdába least of all need be considered,  
Her words are full of loving-kindliness;  
She tendereth thy welfare."

Siyáwush

Was gladdened by the words, and reassured  
Began to speak the world-king's praise and pay

Him reverence, falling down before the throne,  
 Yet privily Súdába with her schemes  
 Still vexed and troubled him, for well he knew,  
 And his skin burst: "This is her notion too!"

## § 8

*How Siyáwush visited the Bower the second Time*

V. 538 Another night thus passed and starry heaven  
 Turned o'er dark earth. Súdába radiant  
 Sat on her throne and donned a diadem  
 Of rubies. Then she summoned all her daughters,  
 Arrayed, and seated them on golden thrones.  
 Before her stood young Idols: thou hadst said:—  
 "It is a paradise." The moon-faced lady  
 Said to Hírbad: "Go say to Siyáwush:—  
 'Afflict thy feet and show thyself to me.'"

Hírbad made speed to give that lover's message  
 To Siyáwush who, hearing, stood distraught,  
 And oft invoked the Maker of the world.  
 He sought in various ways but found no help;  
 He trembled, and his legs shook under him;  
 Then went to visit her and saw her state,  
 Her face, and diadem. She with her head  
 And tresses decked with gems rose at his coming,  
 Gave up the throne of gold to him and, standing  
 Slavelike, displayed her Idols—gems uncut.  
 "Behold this throne-room," thus she said, "and all  
 These handmaids with their golden coronets!  
 They all are youthful Idols of Taráz,  
 Whom God hath formed of modesty and charms.  
 If any one of them delighteth thee,  
 Survey her looks and form from head to foot."

While Siyáwush was glancing lightly round  
 There was not one who dared to catch his eye,

And as they talked they said: "The moon itself  
Would not presume to gaze upon this prince."

When each, in speculation on her chance,  
Had gone back to her seat, Súdába said:—  
"Why dost thou keep thy purpose to thyself?  
Wilt thou not tell me what is thy desire,  
O thou whose looks are fairy-like with Grace!  
For all are struck who catch a glimpse of thee,  
Preferring thee to any? Ponder well  
Which of these beauties is the worthiest."

V. 539

But Siyáwush was moved and answered not,  
For thoughts like these arose in his pure heart:—  
"Far better hold my pure heart's funeral rites  
Than take a consort from among my foes.  
I have been told by famous warriors  
Of all the doings of Hámávarán,<sup>1</sup>  
How he entreated the Íránian king,  
And how he raised dust from the Íránian chiefs.  
This treacherous Súdába is his daughter,  
And will not leave our kindred skin or marrow."

He opened not his lips to make reply.  
The fairy-faced one raised her veil and said:—  
"If one should see the new moon and the sun  
Here upon this new throne, it would not be  
A marvel if the moon should be despised,  
And thou shouldst press the sun in thine embrace.  
No wonder if the man that seeth me  
Upon the ivory throne, with rubies crowned  
And turquoise, should not look upon the moon,  
But think all other Beauties beautiless.  
If thou wilt make a compact with me now,  
Turn not away but set my heart at rest,  
One of my youthful daughters present here  
Will I make stand before thee like a slave.

<sup>1</sup> i.e. the king of Hámávarán—so *King John*, Act I. Sc. i.: "Now say, Chatillon, what would France with us?"

So make a compact with me now by oath,  
 And disregard no jot of what I say,  
 That, when the Sháh departeth from the world,  
 Thou wilt be his memorial with me,  
 Wilt never suffer me to come to harm,  
 But hold me dear as life. And now behold !  
 I stand before thee and I give to thee  
 Myself and my sweet life. I will fulfil  
 Whate'er thou asketh me—thy whole desire—  
 And let my head be taken in thy toils."

V. 540

She hung upon his neck, gave him a kiss,  
 And of a truth forgot her modesty.  
 He blushed ; the very lashes of his eyes  
 Were red with shame. He thought : " From this div's  
 work

Now may the Lord of Saturn keep me far !  
 I will not treat my sire disloyally,  
 Nor will I make a league with Ahriman.  
 If I speak coldly to this wanton dame  
 Her heart will seethe ; she will grow hot with rage,  
 Make practice of some secret sorcery,  
 And cause the world-lord to believe in her.  
 'Tis best to speak her fair and keep her full  
 Of tenderness and longing."

Then he said :—

" Thou hast not any equal in the world,  
 And art the rival of the moon itself  
 In beauty : thou art for the Sháh alone.  
 As for myself thy daughter will suffice ;  
 None other must be mine. Consent to this,  
 Propose it to the monarch of Írán,  
 And mark the answer that thou wilt receive.  
 I will demand her and will covenant,  
 And give a pledge before thee with my tongue,  
 That till her stature equalleth mine own  
 I will not think of any one besides.

For what thou askest further—since my face  
 Inspireth in thy soul a love for me—  
 God's Grace hath made me thus, O thou most fair!  
 Conceal thy secret; speak of it to none:  
 For me too silence is the only course.  
 Thou art the chief of ladies and a queen,  
 And I will think of thee as mother only."

He spake these words and rose to go, but love  
 Still filled her wicked soul. When next Káús,  
 The monarch, visited the women's bower,  
 Súdába looked and saw him. She appeared  
 Before the Sháh with news of what had passed,  
 And spake thus of the case of Siyáwush:—  
 "He came and looked all round the hall. I made  
 A bevy of the black-eyed Idols there.  
 The hall was such with all the fair-faced girls  
 That thou hadst said: 'Love raineth from the  
 moon!'

V. 541

But, save my daughter, he approved of none:  
 No other fair was precious in his eyes."

The Sháh was so rejoiced that thou hadst said:—  
 "The moon itself hath come to his embrace!"  
 He oped his treasury's door: a wealth of gems,  
 Brocade of cloth of gold, and golden girdles,  
 As well as bracelets, crowns, and signet-rings,  
 With thrones and torques such as the noble wear,  
 And divers kinds of treasures were displayed,  
 So that the world was filled with things of price.  
 The Sháh then bade Súdába: "Keep all these  
 For Siyáwush. When he hath need of them,  
 Give them to him and say: 'This gift is small;  
 Thou shouldest have two hundred times as much.'"

Súdába looked in wonder. Full of guile  
 She thought: "If Siyáwush complieth not,  
 Then he may take my life and welcome too.  
 Each practice good and evil, which they use



By stealth or openly throughout the world,  
Will I employ; and, should he slight me, bring  
A charge accusing him before the king."

## § 9

*How Siyáwush visited the Bower the third Time*

Súdába sat enthroned, adorned with earrings  
And chaplet of wrought gold upon her head.  
She called the prince and said, as they conversed:—  
"The Sháh hath set these treasures forth, and none  
Hath seen such crowns and thrones. The sum of  
gifts

V. 542

Is past all reckoning: to carry them  
Thou wouldst require two hundred elephants,  
And I will give to thee my daughter too.  
Now look upon my face and head and crown:  
What pretext hast thou to reject my love,  
And slight my face and person? I am dead  
Not seeing thee; I cry out, toss, and suffer:  
The light of day is hidden by mine anguish,  
My sun is turned to lapis-lazuli.  
And now for seven years this love of mine  
Hath made my face to run with tears of blood.  
Make me a happy woman—none shall know—  
Vouchsafe to me a day of youth again.  
More than the great king hath bestowed on thee  
Will I prepare thee—thrones, crowns, diadems;  
But if thou turn aside from my behest,  
And if thy heart come not to my relief,  
I will destroy thy hope of ever reigning  
And make both sun and moon turn black before  
thee."

"Now God forbid," he said, "that I should give  
Religion to the winds for passion's sake,

That I should treat my sire disloyally,  
 And be a coward and a fool at once!  
 Thou art his wife—the sunlight of his throne—  
 And shouldst not perpetrate a crime like this.”

She rose in wrath and hate, clutched him and  
 cried:—

“I told thee my heart’s secret, but thine own  
 Was hidden! In thy folly thou dost aim  
 To ruin me and show the wise my shame.”

## § 10

*How Súdába beguiled Káús*

She rent her robes and tore her cheeks, A cry  
 Rose from her bower, her clamour reached the street.  
 The palace was all hubbub; thou hadst said:—  
 “’Tis Resurrection-night!” News reached the Sháh,  
 Who hurried from the imperial golden throne  
 Toward the bower in his solicitude,  
 And when he found Súdába with rent cheeks,  
 And all the palace full of babblement,  
 He questioned every one in deep concern,  
 Not knowing what that Heart of stone had done.  
 Súdába wailed and wept before him, tore  
 Her hair, and told him: “Siyáwush approached  
 My throne. He caught me in his arms and cried:—  
 ‘My soul and body brim with love for thee.  
 Oh! why art thou so cold to me, my fair!  
 For thou art all I long for, thou alone?’  
 This is the truth—I am constrained to tell thee:—  
 ’Twas he that threw the crown from my black locks,  
 And rent the robe upon my bosom thus!”

The Sháh was troubled, asked her many questions,  
 And thought: “If she saith sooth, and if she hath