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Hand clasped in hand, to her pavilion
 Gold-arabesqued—a meeting-place for kings,
 A Paradise adorned—a blaze of light.
 Slave-girls attended on the Houri there,
 While Zāl in rapt astonishment beheld
 Her face, her hair, her loveliness and grace,
 Her bracelets, torque, and earrings: her brocade
 And jewels were like gardens in the spring;
 Her cheeks were like twin tulips in a garth;
 Her crispy love-locks twisted curl on curl.
 Zāl sat in royal grace by that fair Moon,
 His dagger in his belt and on his head
 A ruby coronet. Rūdāba looked
 And looked with stolen glances at him still;
 Looked at that form, that neck, that grace, that
 height,

Which used to make rocks brambles 'neath his mace,
 And at those cheeks whose lustre fired her soul.

The more she gazed the more her heart inflamed:

They kissed and clung intoxicate with love.

What lion hunteth not the onager?

Thus spake the chieftain to the moon-faced maid:—

“O silver-bosomed Cypress, musk-perfumed!

The Shāh will ne'er consent, and Sām will wring

His hands and storm, but still by God I swear

That I will never break my troth to thee.

Nay I will first hold soul and body cheap

And wear a shroud. I will seek God and pray Him,

With all the instancy of devotees,

To wash all opposition, wrath, and vengeance

From both their hearts, and if He hearkeneth

Thou shalt become my wife before the world.”

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Rūdāba answered: “I too swear by Him—

The God of Faith and right—that none but Zāl

Shall be my lord; the Maker is my witness.”

Their love waxed ever as the moments sped,
 For wisdom was afar and passion near.
 So fared they till the day began to break
 And drum-call sounded. Zál farewelled his Moon,
 Embracing her as warp and woof embrace.
 Both wept and both adjured the rising sun:—
 "O glory of the world! one moment more!
 Thou needst not rise so soon."

Then from aloft
 Zál dropped his lasso and descending straight
 Went from the palace of his lovely mate.

§ 12

*How Zál consulted the Archimages in the Matter
 of Rúlába*

The warriors, when bright Sol rose o'er the hills,
 Went to the levee of the paladin,
 And then dispersed while Zál bade call the sages.
 They came—the ministers, archmages, heroes
 And glorious chieftains, men both wise and ardent—
 Well pleased at being summoned. Zál, all smiles
 And yearning, offered first his praise to God,
 Then roused the archimages to attention
 By thus addressing them: "Let all our hearts
 Regard with fear and hope the righteous Judge,
 Who is the Lord of circling sun and moon,
 And showeth souls the way of righteousness.
 To give Him all the praise that we can give
 We must bow down before Him night and day.
 By Him the jocund world abideth fast,
 By Him is justice done in heaven and earth.
 He bringeth summer, spring, and autumn-tide
 With fruit to fill the branches of the vines;

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