

To see his charger and his scimitar.
 Gushtásp, when he had looked upon the presents,
 Chose for himself the steed and sword, and gave
 Híshwí the rest which pleased his soaring soul.
 Gushtásp arrayed himself as quick as dust,
 And mounted on the charger with his bow
 Upon his arm, his lasso at the saddle—
 A noble cavalier and stately steed.
 Híshwí went with him and Mírín withal,
 The aspiring one, who had invoked his aid.
 Their hearts were full, they hurried on and soon
 Were hard upon the forest of Fáskún.

V. 1465

§ 10

How Gushtásp slew the Wolf

When forest and wolf's haunt were near, Mírín,
 Who feared that fierce beast, showed Gushtásp its lair,
 Then turned back with Híshwí, grieved, with full heart,
 And weeping tears of blood. Thus said Híshwí:—

“We shall not see that noble man return.
 Woe for that breast and arm and neck of his!
 Woe for his courage, puissance, and mace!”

Now when Gushtásp was drawing near the wood
 His warlike heart was full of anxious thought;
 He lighted from his noble charger, prayed
 Before the Master of the world, and said:—

“O holy Fosterer of all, who sheddest
 Thy lustre o'er the processes of time!
 Do thou assist me to o'ercome this beast.
 Have mercy on the soul of old Luhrásp,
 For if this monster, which the ignorant
 Have termed a wolf, shall triumph over me,
 My sire will wail when he hath heard the tidings,
 Will never rest again but be distraught,

V. 1466 Like those that are insane, and everywhere
 Be questing and lamenting; while if I,
 In sheer dismay, shall shun this evil beast
 I may not face the folk for very shame."

He mounted, raised the battle-cry, and grasped
 The scimitar of Salm; with bow hung ready
 Upon his arm he made his way with caution
 And throbbing heart till he was near the spot,
 And then he thundered like a cloud in spring.
 Now when the wolf beheld him from the wood
 It sent a roar up to the darksome clouds,
 And like a lion or a savage leopard
 Tore with its claws the ground. Gushtásp, on seeing
 The monster, took in hand and drew his bow,
 And showering arrows from it swift as wind
 He made it as it were a cloud in spring.
 When wounded by the arrows of Gushtásp
 The beast became yet fiercer for the pain.
 It fell, but leaping to its feet came on—
 A lusty monster—butting with its horns,
 Stag-like, with smarting body and in wrath,
 Closed with the charger, gored its sable loins,
 And ripped it up from testicles to navel.
 The atheling drew from his waist the sword,
 Dismounted, smote the beast full on the head,
 And clave asunder back and breast and shoulder;
 Then in the presence of the Lord of beasts,
 Lord of omniscience and of good and ill,
 Made his thanksgiving to the Omnipotent,
 And thus he said: "O Thou who madest fortune!
 Thou pointest out the way to them that err,
 And art the just, supreme, and only God.
 We prosper and we triumph in Thy name;
 All Grace and knowledge are at Thy disposal."

V. 1467 He left the place of prayer, wrenched out the tusks,
 The two long tusks, and going from the forest

Alone fared onward till he reached the sea
 Whereby Híshwí was sitting and Mírín
 In anguish, deep in converse of the past ;
 Their talk was of Gushtásp and of the wolf :—
 “ Woe for that brave and gallant cavalier
 Now in his arduous fight and stained with blood
 In that wolf's clutch ! ”

Whenas Gushtásp appeared
 Afoot, all bloody, and with cheeks like flower
 Of fenugreek, they rose with sad exclaims,
 Embraced him mournfully, their cheeks all wan,
 The lashes of their eyes like clouds in spring,
 And cried : “ How went thy battle with the wolf ?
 Our hearts were bleeding at thine enterprise. ”

Gushtásp made answer saying : “ My good friends !
 Is there no fear of God in Rúm, that thus
 A savage monster is allowed to live
 Within the kingdom for a length of years,
 Destroying all the people in its path,
 And holding Cæsar as a pinch of dust ?
 But I have cleft it with Salm's scimitar,
 So now all fear and dread for you are over.
 Go and behold this wonder while yet warm,
 See how the hide is rent upon the monster !
 Thou'lt say : ‘ There is a mighty elephant
 Inside, as long and broad as is the forest ! ’ ”

Then both ran thither brightened by his words,
 And saw the wolf as 'twere an elephant
 With lion's claws and indigo in hue,
 But cleft from head to midriff by the blow ;
 That one skin would have held two mighty lions.
 Thereafter they invoked full many a blessing
 Upon that glorious Sun of earth, and went
 Glad-hearted from the wood, and came again
 Before that Lion of the fight to whom
 Mírín brought many presents, such as he