

And I shall have the praise of every one."

On hearing such words from the youth, Munzir
 The agéd, blessed him and then bade a man ¹
 To make all haste to the slave-dealer's shop
 Upon that quest, who brought out forty damsels
 Of Rúm, all fit to please and soothe the heart,
 As tall in stature as a cypress-tree,
 All objects of desire, of charm, and grace.
 Bahrám chose two, among those rosy-cheeked,
 With rosy skins and bones of ivory.
 One of these Stars could play upon the lute,
 The other with her cheeks all tulip-like
 Was as Canopus of Yaman, in height
 A cypress, and with tresses lasso-wise.
 Munzir paid for them when they were approved.
 With cheeks bright as the gem of Badakhshán ²
 Bahrám gave thanks with smiles upon his face,
 And spent his days at polo and the chase.

§ 3

*How Bahrám went to the Chase with a Damsel and how
 he displayed his Accomplishment*

C. 1467 It happened that one day without attendance
 Bahrám went with the lutist to the chase.
 Ázáda was the Rúman damsel's name;
 Her cheeks were coral-hued. Bahrám had mounted
 A dromedary with the noble ³ Cypress,
 Who had her lute in hand. She was his charmer,
 His love; her name was ever on his lips.
 For such occasions he required a camel,
 And set thereon a housing of brocade,
 While from it hung four stirrups. Thus he pricked

¹ Reading with P.

² The ruby.

³ Ázáda, to pun on the girl's name.

O'er hill and dale. Two stirrups were of silver,
 Two were of gold, and all were set with jewels,
 And furthermore he had beneath his quiver
 A stone-bow; that brave youth was all-accomplished.
 He came upon a pair of deer and laughing
 Said to Ázáda: "O my Moon! when I
 Have strung my bow and in my thumb-stall notched
 The string, which shall I shoot? The doe is young,
 Her mate is old."

She said: "O lion-man!
 Men do not fight with deer. Make with thine arrows
 The female male, the agéd buck a doe,
 Then urge the dromedary to its speed,
 And, as the deer are fleeing from thy shafts,
 Aim with thy cross-bow at one creature's ear
 That it may lay its ear upon its neck,
 And when the beast shall raise its foot to scratch
 The ear that hath been tickled though not hurt,
 Pin with one arrow head and ear and foot
 Together if thou wouldest have me call thee
 'The Lustre of the world.'"

Bahrám Gúr¹ set

The string upon his bow and caused commotion
 Upon that quiet plain. Within his quiver
 He had a double-headed shaft for use
 While hunting on the waste and, when the deer
 Sped off, he shot the buck's two horns away
 Much to the girl's amaze. Forthwith the sportsman
 Shot two shafts at the doe which struck her head
 Just where the horns should be and furnished her
 Therewith. Her breast grew red with blood. He rode
 Toward her mate again, set in his stone-bow
 A bolt, hit the buck's ear, and was well pleased,
 For he had aimed thereat. The creature scratched

C. 1468

¹ The first occurrence of his full title—"Onager Bahrám"—as we might say "Buffalo Bill."

Its ear. Forthwith within his bow of Chách
 He set an arrow and pinned head and ear
 And foot together; but Ázáda's heart
 Was vexed about the deer, and when the prince
 Said: "When I hunt I bring them down by thousands
 Thus," she replied: "Thou art an Áhriman,
 Else how canst thou shoot thus?"¹

Bahrám stretched out,
 Flung her from saddle headlong to the ground,
 And made his dromedary trample her,
 Besmearing hands and breast and lute with blood.
 He said to her: "O thou lute-playing fool!
 Why shouldst thou seek for my discomfiture?
 If I had drawn mine arms apart in vain
 My race had been dishonoured by the shot."

When he had trampled her beneath his camel
 He never more took damsels to the chase.²

Next se'nnight with a noble troop he went
 Forth to the hunting-ground with hawk and cheetah,
 And near a mountain saw a lion that tore
 An onager's flanks. Impetuously he strung
 His bow and notched therein a shaft three-feathered,
 Then pinned both preyer's back and heart of prey
 That underneath the blood-stained lion lay!

§ 4

*How Bahrám showed his Accomplishment in the Chase
 before Munzir*

Another week Nu'mán went with Munzir
 To be Bahrám's companion in the chase,

¹ Reading with T.

² Bahrám's feelings, though the outcome of them is more tragic, are somewhat like those of De Lorge in Browning's poem "The Glove," and Ázáda, when she sought to shame Bahrám by setting him what she intended to be an impossible task, had not the excuse that the English poet ingeniously puts into the mouth of the French lady.