

foe.

Great was the rejoicing in the camp when it was known that the boy chief of the desert and famous horse were captives. Fiercely gloated the turbaned leader of the caliph's soldiers over the helpless Abon.

"Right glad will be the commander of the Faithful to behold thee, robber," he cried.

"Better that thou hadst taken his proffer of gold and jewels and Indian shawls, for now the matchless steed of the desert is his without payment, and thou in the caliph's dungeon shall waste thy life away."

The young Arab's right arm had been severed by a Damascus blade; his wounds were grievous and many, and he was bound like a malefactor, but he answered never a word to his enemy's taunt, only in his dark eyes there gleamed a proud defiance.

The victors pitched their tents that night upon the battlefield and the tired warriors sought repose. Bound hand and foot and guarded by a sentinel, dark Abon lay. Tethered to a stake near by was peerless Lalla, the pride of the desert.

In the dark watches of the night the sentinel fell asleep, and Abon, wrestling with pain and unrest, heard the low neigh of the disconsolate steed without. The sound touched the heart of the chief, and, bound and almost helpless as he was he rolled over and over on the ground and through the opening in the tent, to where White Lalla was tethered. The steed greeted his master with a neigh of joy, and bending his proud neck he lay his muzzle against young Abon's cheek.

"O my brave my beautiful," whispered Abon to his steed. "It is not ordained that thou shalt feed in the stables of the Commander of the Faithful. Thou wouldst pine within the city's dark walls for the desert has always been thy home. Now, hark thee, peerless Lalla, I will cut with my teeth the rope that holds thee, then with the speed of lightning thou must away to where the white tents of my people cluster beneath the desert palms. Do this and the heart of Abon El Mahr will fear neither captivity nor death."

And the Arab steed whinnied and pawed the ground with his shining hoof, as if to say that he understood his master's speech.

Then did Abon set to work to gnaw with his teeth the stout rope that held his faithful steed. Patiently he labored for an hour, at the end of which time Lalla stood free. But the horse did not spring away; instead he smelled the bonds that held his master and seemed to realize the wrong.

Then there happened a wonderful thing that for ages afterward was the theme at many a Bedouin camp, and is still told to Arab children as a bedtime story. With his strong white teeth Lalla grasped slim and sinewy Abon by the girdle, and proud as a mother might be with her child, he dashed like a streak of lightning through the sleeping camp.

In vain was all pursuit. White Lalla left far behind all other steeds, and as the morning sunbeams silvered the palm-tops, safe in his own tent he laid his master. And to-day when they wish to praise a steed the Bedouin says he is as

fleet of foot and as faithful as White Lalla, the Arab steed of El Mahr.

Three Friends.

By the blazing fire, in a big arm chair,
We're as happy as happy can be;
The three best friends in the whole wide world,
My Dolly and Pussy and me.

My Dolly looks 'ceedingly good and wise,
But not a word speaks she;
And Pussy can only mew or purr—
So the talking's done by me.

I read to them from my story books,
And the pictures they like to see;
I can't help thinking they understand—
The way they look at me.

My Dolly is only two years old,
I'm seven, and Puss is three;
But still we're the very best of friends—
My Dolly and Pussy and me.

—Carolyn Wells.

A Riddle.

There is—

Something that flies
Yet has no wings;
It brings sure death
To all living things.
It is always going
But never gone,
For every second
It's newly born.
It never sleeps
Nor does it eat;
It travels fast,
Though it has no feet.
It brings us evil,
It brings us good:
Its ways are strange
And ne'er understood.
It comes and goes
As the lightnings fly:
'Tis here when we're born,
And stays after we die.

Answer: Time.

Hardships of a Boy.

I like roast beef and lemonade,
And ham and gingerbread,
And apple pie and pickles, just
Before I go to bed.

But ma she says it wouldn't do
To eat a single bite;
She says that little boys who eat
Such things will die at night.

I'd hate like anything to die,
Yet eating is such joy;
Between the two it's pretty hard
To be a little boy.

Conundrums.

When are windows like flags?
When hoisted.
Why are actors like little children?
They are always fond of playing.
Why is a sick Hebrew very valuable?
He is a Jewel. (Jew ill.)

What is it?

In marble halls as white as milk,
Lined with skin as soft as silk;
Within a fountain, crystal clear,
A golden apple doth appear.
No doors are there in this stronghold,
Yet thieves break in and steal the gold.
Answer:—An egg.



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