

The Handsome Egyptian Girl

Mr. Bronson, The London Detective's Experiences In Egypt

An Englishman's Mysterious Disappearance In Egypt—A Sweet Heart's Case—A Trip On The Nile—Reis Tabut, The Handsome And Polite Captain—Adriani, The Cunning Dragoman—Mystery Of A Turquoise—A Female Male-Servant—Who Is The Criminal?—Santa And An Egyptian Festival—A Row In A Dancing House—How A Monogram Leads To The Discovery—A Woman In The Case—The Wife Of An Emir—Egyptian Jurisdiction And Its Horrors—A Revengeful Father-In-Law—The Secret House Of The Reis—Gazale, The Handsome Dancing-Girl, The Daughter Of A Wealthy Egyptian—El Volet Before Court—Overwhelming Proofs Of The Guilt Of The Reis—Where Is The Dragoman?—Mr. Landenau And Alice Find Each Other Again—A Benevolent Egyptian—Gazale, The Heroine—Tragical Death Of The Reis—How Did The Dragoman Get Drowned?—A Mystery Which Solves The Mystery—Mr. And Mrs. Landenau—A Visit In London.

In the spring of the year 1876, a young man, a member of one of the richest families of London, had undertaken a journey up the Nile, with the purpose of establishing along its shores, connections with a firm in London. He was, at the outstart, very successful; had written very satisfactory letters to the firm, and had sent to his betrothed, Miss Alice Worthley, many a glowing and enthusiastic account of the beauties of the Nile, and the peculiarities of the people he met.

In one of his last letters he had told her that he had hired a boat, called the "Timsah," and intended to start from Bulah farther toward the sources of the Nile, and that Reis Tabut, the happy possessor of the boat, which was a real beauty of its kind, was one of the most polite, gentlemanly men he had met with in Egypt. He added that the Reis, or captain, made it his business to carry passengers up the Nile, and that he even had mastered some European phrases, which was very rare, except for the dragomans or interpreters to do.

Miss Alice was highly interested in those letters, and always longed for the mail, which would bring her tidings from her lover. Suddenly the letters ceased to come, and several mails came in without bringing any tidings, and Mr. Worthley himself began to feel anxious as to the fate of the young man. He thought that it was possible that the beauties of the country occupied his mind to such an extent that he did not feel like writing to his betrothed; but most surely something serious must have happened, to induce Mr. Landenau—this was the name of the young man—to neglect his business. He was always so very punctual and active in business matters that Mr. Worthley very soon made up his mind that something ought to be done to find out the whereabouts of the young man.

Alice very strongly urged him to do so, and insisted upon it, that as her father had often promised her that she should see the Nile, to make the trip now, and take a detective with them, who might be of use in tracing the young man, and, if a crime had been committed, to bring the criminal to justice.

In August, Mr. Worthley, provided with strong letters of recommendation to the English embassy at Cairo, and an order to institute a strict investigation, and to give all the required aid to the detective, left London with his daughter and Mr. Bronson, the London detective.

They soon arrived at Cairo. The ambassador, seeing the letters of recommendation, wished Mr. Worthley all possible success in his investigations, and gave him one of the attachés, who was thoroughly acquainted with the country, to join his party, and, on the 1st of October, they embarked in the "Timsah," the same vessel in which Mr. Landenau had made his trip, at Bulah, pretending that they wanted to make a trip on the Nile.

Here the experience of Mr. Bronson, the London detective, commences, and we will relate his story in his own words:

"At Cairo, I had obtained all possible information as to the character of Reis Tabut, the man who had driven Mr. Landenau towards the sources of the Nile.

All that I could find out of the inhabitants of the country was that the Reis had the name of being very wealthy. How this wealth was obtained, nobody knew, as he had commenced his career in life as a poor sailor's boy, and all that he possessed had been made in a comparatively very short period. Rumor said that he had murdered his wife, but justice in this country being yet in a very primitive state, the charge could never be proven against him, and, to all appearance, he enjoyed the outward esteem of his fellow-men.

The fact that nobody knew how he had obtained his wealth was rather against him, in my mind, and I prevailed upon Mr. Worthley to undertake the trip in the boat of Reis Tabut, in that way giving me a chance to carefully watch the man.

My wish was fulfilled, and early in the morning, we lifted anchor at Bulah, and soon passed the castle of the viceroy, Kasr-el-Nil. I will not give a description of the magnificent country we passed through; and, acknowledging my inferior descriptive power, I will say that it would take the pen of a fully accomplished author, or the brush of an eminent painter, to do justice to a subject so sublime.

Miss Alice stood upon deck, leaning on the arm of her father. The captain was giving his commands in an imperative tone, to the black sailors, and she whispered in my ears:

'I confess, Mr. Bronson, I felt a horror when I stepped on board this ship. It is terrible that we are obliged to take just this one.'

'I conjure you, Miss,' I said, 'do not show any mistrust. Only by being very polite, and showing that we have not the least suspicion, we may discover something. Above all, do not tell your name or the object of our travel to anybody.'

I forgot to mention that we had engaged, at Cairo, a dragoman, who had been recommended to us, and had several times made the trip with foreigners, and also with Mr. Landenau.

We agreed that Miss Alice should remain on deck with the dragoman, who already had spread out a costly carpet for her, and that we should go down in the cabin, and, unobserved, would take a survey of the ship.

Mr. Worthley and I had a conversation in the cabin. The old gentleman objected to the plan of our taking a vessel, which, by its slow progress, would undoubtedly retard the discovery of the crime, if any had been committed; at all events, it would lengthen the time of anxiety for his daughter, who felt almost sure that some fatal accident had befallen her lover.

‘Well,’ I said, ‘I have already told you that the information which I gathered about the antecedents of the captain is such that, under any other jurisdiction than the primitive one in this country, the Reis would have been convicted. It is difficult to learn anything positive of the people of this country, for no nation in the world lies so skillfully, and yet keeps such silence on such points that it is almost impossible to believe anything. There are not two Arabians who would tell you the same thing, if they were perfectly similarly informed. Believe me, I am convinced that the Reis of this boat is a scoundrel, and I hope to prove to you that I am not mistaken.’

‘Well,’ answered Mr. Worthley, ‘if you are so positive about it, I will not contradict you, and will leave the management of the whole affair to you.’

‘You will do me a great service,’ I replied; ‘this will really be the only way to accomplish anything.’

I now began to search the ship, but did not find any clue, and, fearing that we might arouse the suspicions of the Reis, I went on deck and talked for a while with Miss Alice, and requested her to tell me the whole story of the disappearance of Mr. Landenau, as far as she knew it, ‘for,’ I added, smilingly, ‘your father seems to be more communicative with you than with me, and yet it is absolutely necessary that I should know every particular.’

‘You are in the right,’ she said, ‘and therefore I will tell you all I know, and what my father found out at Cairo.’

‘Mr. Landenau went to Egypt in the interest of my father’s firm. He had formerly had connections in the wool trade, and wished to re-establish them, and at the same time to get orders for steam engines for the Delta. Our unfortunate Wilibald conceived the foolish idea of going alone down the Rosette river in this vessel, while his companion was left to join him at Tanta or Dessak, as soon as he should send a dispatch. Probably he was induced to do so on account of the uncomfortable hotels along the shore. He made engagement with the Reis, and left Cairo on board of this ship. In vain his companion waited for his dispatch; in vain he looked for him in all the cities on this branch river of the Nile, inquired for him at all the railroad depots. Nobody had seen him.’

Here the poor girl ceased speaking, and, wiping away her tears, she continued:

‘When he looked for the Reis, he found him several weeks afterwards, sitting quietly on the deck of his ship, on the shore of Bulah. He was summoned to the consulate, and declared there, with the greatest calmness, that the *Inglisi* (Englishman), had gone ashore in the evening at Tanta, and that he had not returned; he had waited for him several days in vain, and then had returned with his boat to Cairo. When he was asked where the baggage of the Englishman was, he replied that it was in the cabin, waiting for his return, and the payment of the second half of the passage, as he had paid one half in advance.

‘The baggage had not been touched; it contained neither money nor valuables, and yet they knew that he had not an inconsiderable amount with him. They found also his diary, which had been kept up till the day of his disappearance. They could not find out anything of the Reis, or of his men. Now I have told you everything I know and I hope that you will be as explicit with me. Tell me all you know, and do not fear that, as I am a woman, I am not fit to be trusted with everything, and cannot assist you most materially. I wish to cooperate with you in your researches, and, should it be deemed advisable, I will even disguise myself as a man, and assist you in tracing the crime.’

She reached me her hand. I warmly pressed it, and said:

‘Well, Miss, I will tell you all I know, although it may not be very pleasant for you to hear it. The worst of the case is, that, as I understood, in Cairo, just at the time Mr. Landenau was there, they celebrated, in Tanta, the feast of the holy Sa’id-el-Bedui, a feast which, in its cynicism, its brutality, is a disgrace even for this low-cultured people, an orgie to which hundreds and thousands from Asia and Africa flock together.

‘It is probable that Mr. Landenau did not know anything about this festival; may be that he was led there by curiosity. So much is sure, that the Reis and two of his men rowed him, in a boat, up the canal to Tanta, and left the vessel in the Nile with the other men.

‘Now, it seems suspicious to me that the Reis accompanied Mr. Landenau himself. He says that he was obliged to watch the safety of his guest. The Reis said, at the consulate, that he had arrived, in the evening, at Tanta, and that the *Inglisi*, surprised and enticed by the festive appearance of the city, had at once disembarked, and, before the Reis could follow him, he had disappeared in the crowd. After he had offered his prayers, as a good mussulman, at the grave of the high saint, he had gone to the dances of the Gavazzi, hoping to find his passenger, but in vain; he did not see him.

‘On the next morning, Mr. Landenau had not returned. He waited for five days, until the festival had passed by, and the crowd dispersed. When his guest did not appear, he went back to his large vessel, without advising the *Mudirieh* (the government) of the disappearance. This fact, I confess, excites my greatest suspicion. He returned to Cairo, and even there he did not say anything about the disappearance of his passenger, and quietly awaited his pleasure to come after his baggage, and pay his passage. The two men who rowed Mr. Landenau and the Reis to Tanta are not to be found; nobody knows where they are.

‘Another circumstance came to my knowledge, which I had rather not tell you, but, being convinced that it is a lie, I will tell you all, if you allow me to.’

‘Oh, certainly, Mr. Bronson,’ the young lady replied; ‘you can safely tell me all. I am convinced that only the half, at the most, of what those Egyptians say is true, and their tales cannot shock me.’

‘Well, then,’ I replied, ‘the affair is this: The kaffir, or watchman of the boat, declares that he had been left behind by the Reis to guard the vessel; that he, in the evening, had gone ashore, and was lying, half asleep, near the vessel. Suddenly he observed an Egyptian woman, dressed with the greatest elegance, enter the boat, and, a little while afterwards, the “Inglisi.” They remained there together for about an hour, and then they left together, she being carefully veiled; and the only thing he could remember was that she wore a gold-embroidered mantle, with red silk schitingan (wide, female pants), and a faradyeh (head-apparel) around her hair.

‘It is my opinion that the woman is a myth; that the kaffir has been bribed by the Reis to tell this story, as he knew perfectly well that the Egyptian magistrates are very careful not to pry into the secrets of the seraglio of a Pasha, and they could easily see, from the description of the dress, that such a woman had been involved in the mystery.

‘However, let us carefully watch the captain, and, as our aim is Tanta, I have hope that we will either find Mr. Landenau, or, at least, traces of the crime.’

Miss Alice sighed, but did not reply, as the Reis and the dragoman approached. The Reis inquired whether there was anything wanting to our comfort, and politely expressed his desire that we would tell it frankly, if there was anything which did not please us.

At this moment, the Reis, who was really a handsome man, seeing that the eyes of Miss Alice were resting on him, felt flattered, and brought his hands to his black mustache and curled it. The young lady grew deathly pale, but did not utter a word. Happily the Reis did not observe it, as he was talking with me, with the aid of the dragoman, and when he had left, Miss Alice whispered in my ear, ‘I have found a trace; let us go down to the cabin.’

We arose, and exchanged a few jesting words with the dragoman, in passing him, and joined Mr. Worthley in the cabin.

The young lady next told us, while sobbing, that the Reis wore one of the stones on his finger which Mr. Landenau had worn in his sleeve-buttons; she was very sure of it. It was a round turquois, set in white, gold-seamed enamel.

I conjured her not to show suspicion, as this, undoubtedly, would put him on his guard, and promised her to find out, in the evening, how he came in the possession of the stone.

I hardly considered it as any clue to the crime. It was not probable that, if the Reis had committed a murder, he would wear the overwhelming proofs about him. However, such an oversight often leads us to the discovery of the miscreant.

I will be short in the narration of my further experiences on board the vessel, and briefly state the conversation which I had with the captain in the evening.

The dragoman and the captain were sitting on the deck. I approached them, and made a few remarks on the beauty of the Egyptian sunset.

Reis Tabut at once exclaimed, 'Za Volet!' and soon a boy appeared with a precious Turkish pipe, which he, gracefully bowing, put before me.

I complimented the captain on the beauty and elegance of his vessel, and smoked the delightful narcotic of the Egyptians. The Reis seemed to be highly pleased, smoothed his mustache, which he did at every occasion, and the stone glistened in my eyes!

'The Reis,' I said to the dragoman, 'is not only a very handsome man, but he seems to be very wealthy. I see a precious stone on his finger, which, in our country, only is worn by rich people.'

Reis Tabut took this compliment with a satisfied smile, and began to give the following narrative:

'I have a little bag, filled with such stones, received as a present from a friend of mine of the Libanon. They are not so large as this one, which I received from an 'Inglisi,' he was my guest. I brought him, some months ago, to Tanta, and he gave me this stone, as the other one, which he wore in his shirt-sleeve, had fallen overboard.'

'The poor Inglisi,' he continued, with a sigh, 'never returned. I lost him out of sight at the festival of Tanta. Allah alone knows where he is. We have sought for him in vain, but,' he added, mysteriously, 'there was a woman in the case. May Allah protect his soul. He was a handsome man!'

'Who was this woman? Have you any idea of a love affair? I would like to know something about your courtship in Egypt,' I replied, smilingly.

'Well, let me tell you. Many a distinguished and wealthy lady comes to the festival; even the wives of Mir's, the princesses of India, and you may rely upon it that everything done there is not exactly as it ought to be. The young Englishman was, as I told you, a very handsome man, and therefore something may have happened which he did not expect. But now excuse me; this evening we will draw the vessel ashore, and when the fanus (lantern) burns, I will tell you what I heard about him at Tanta. It is a very interesting story.'

He withdrew, and I was left alone, doubting whether I had to deal with an innocent man, or a rascal of the sharpest kind.

In the evening, we were all sitting on deck. I will not indulge in an account of the poetry of an evening in this delightful clime, or of the way in which the Egyptian spends it, but will only mention it, as this is important for the comprehension of what I have to relate afterwards.

The boy who had brought me the pipe in the morning, and whose graceful form I then noticed, was sitting on the deck, and amused us and the crew with songs, rendered in that melancholy, complaining strain so essential to Egyptian melodies. At the end of every strain, the crew broke out in a deep, 'Ah;' and even the Reis exclaimed, 'Tahib ja Volet!' (Good, my boy!) and the boy began anew with his very girlish voice.

At last the captain commenced his narrative, gave us a glowing account of the splendor of the festival of Tanta, to which millions of people flock from all parts of Asia and Africa, and at last came to the essence of the story, namely that he had seen the Inglisi amid the festive crowd.

'It is not good,' he said, lowering his voice, 'that a foreigner ventures himself in the crowd, for it is at the same time a festival for our women. It is not good, for many rich and distinguished women flock thither, as no husband is allowed to forbid their going on a pilgrimage to Tanta, whither the prophet sends his angel. However, many of these men are jealous, and secretly send tawaschi (spies) after them, and it is not easy for a fast woman to escape their piercing eyes; and so it has happened that strangers have paid with their life for a gallantry of an hour.'

'So, I am told, the Inglisi mingled with the believers, and misfortune would have it that a beautiful young woman was pleased with him, the wife of an Emir, who had just come from the moschee.

'She was elegantly dressed, but wore a very thin veil, and her dark, black eyes may have rested too long on the handsome Inglisi; at all events, she was seen following him, and I am inclined to believe—may Allah forgive me if I err, but the kaffir of my boat has declared so—that she entered the boat of my Inglisi while I and my man were at the feast.

'May be that the Emir has taken revenge on him for the faithlessness of his wife. At all events, the Inglisi, after that evening, disappeared, and, although the court seemed to hold me responsible for him, I could not say anything more than I knew, and, at last, I was declared innocent. My friends had seen me that evening in the dancing-houses, and I could give the clearest evidence that I could not have done anything towards the disappearance of the young man.'

This story was told with such apparent truthfulness that I again was rather inclined to think him innocent in the matter. However, I resolved that he would bear watching, and Miss Alice's presentiments told her that he, and nobody else, was the murderer.

The instinct of a woman in such cases very seldom misleads, and I did not see sufficient reason to relinquish all my doubts.

We soon were near the Seray canal, which leads to Tanta. Mr. Worthley requested the Reis to accompany us in his small vessel to that place. He seemed at first not very well pleased with the proposition, but, as we said that we would entrust our safety to nobody but him, he felt flattered, and exclaimed, 'Tahib! I go with you to Tanta, and I wager my head that no evil will befall the kawacha (foreigner) and his beautiful child.'

We arrived at Tanta. Again a festival was being celebrated there; but this time one of less importance than that above-mentioned. We passed over a market-place, and saw young women laughing at all morality, and so passionately gesticulating that Miss Alice turned her head in disgust. They were very indecorously dressed, but I must confess that they were wonderfully handsome.

In Tanta, my real detective labor commenced. All I had experienced, as yet, was only an introduction, although it had enlightened me on so many points that the case was as clear before my eyes as if I had made the journey with Mr. Landenau to Tanta; but now we were on the place of action of the crime, if any had been committed.

Mr. Worthley and his daughter took apartments in the same hotel where I and the attaché of the embassy had taken our quarters. This young man spoke the Egyptian language fluently, and was of great service to me. We concluded that we should go out together, and see all that was to be seen, partly for curiosity's sake, and principally as I desired to watch the Reis and see what society he frequented.

In the evening we went into one of the dancing-houses. Reis Tabut was there; he was swimming in a sea of voluptuousness. The women called him El-Zarif (the handsome), and the men gave him the name of Abu-Dahab (the father of gold). He was proud of these names, and was bound to show that he was rich.

The Reis had deemed it more to his taste not to sleep in the boat, and therefore took his quarters in a house, in which a company of gawanis (singers), and gawazzis (dancing-girls), were the guests; and as soon as evening came, the ground floor of the house was crowded with men and women, who passed the night in singing Egyptian songs and applauding the dances of the gawazzis.

Reis Tabut was the favorite of all these beauties; he richly rewarded them, threw the most beautiful roses at their feet, when they, in the '*bee-dance*,' looked very passionately for bees in their garments; and he staggered home when dawn came, and, tired of lust, stretched himself out to sleep.

His friend, the dragoman, was not allowed to be wanting; he had to share all his enjoyments. Adriani however, did so with marked prudence and self-command. He sneaked away before midnight, and the Reis reproached him that he had, somewhere in the city, his particular friends, whom he held concealed from him.

Days passed on in this way. We went one evening to this, another evening to that house, and during the day Miss Alice gave me a very minute description of all the valuables Mr. Landenau had taken with him; among others, she described a portfolio of Russia leather, on which she had embroidered his monogram in gold thread.

On the fourth evening we entered a dancing-house, where a very handsome young girl attracted my attention. Drawing nearer towards her, I saw that she had on the girdle of her waist the monogram, as described by Miss Alice.

I did not seem to see it, but resolved not to lose the girl from sight. For that reason I took my quarters in the same house, and dispatched my assistant, the employed of the embassy, to call for a man with whom I had made acquaintance the evening before.

His name was Abdul-Safet. He was one of those jolly Egyptians, who amused the crowd by their tricks and songs, and appeared, in all his actions, to be a straightforward and honest man. I was soon in conversation with him, and, taking him out to another house, asked him, who spoke a little English, whether he knew anything about Reis Tabut.

He said that he did know more about him than he would like to tell, as he, as yet, had not the proofs, but that he was zealously watching him, and as soon as he had procured evidence, he would deliver him to justice, as he suspected him of having assassinated his daughter, the first wife of Reis Tabut.

This was a splendid ally; a man who was an Egyptian, was thoroughly acquainted with the peculiarities of the people, and whose own interest it was to convict the Reis.

I told him my story, attested that I strongly suspected him and the dragoman of having been confederates in the crime, and enjoined upon him to tell me every new fact which came under his notice, but to be very careful not to reveal our secret by too great zeal.

He promised to do so, and when I saw him enter the dancing-house with the employee, before he was noticed by anybody, I took him outdoors and asked him whether he knew anything more. He said that he had discovered that the Reis was in possession of the second turquois, set in white enamel; or, at least, that he was acquainted with the woman to whom the Reis had given it.

Here was great evidence against the captain, and I requested the employee at once to go to the government house and insist upon it that the Reis should be arrested, as we had the greatest proofs of his guilt. Another difficulty was to be taken into account. The jailers in Egypt are very easily bribed, and are accustomed to sell their services to the highest bidder. For that reason I sent word to Mr. Worthley to have, at once, an interview with the jailer, and to offer him such a high bribe, if the Reis did not escape, that it was not probable that the latter would over-bid it.

This done, I told Abdul-Safet that I had seen the monogram on the waist of the girl; that she was inside, and that I wanted to know what I should do.

‘Well,’ he said, ‘don’t do anything as yet. The girl, I know, is a great favorite of the dragoman. If she is arrested now, he will certainly escape, as he must have given her the monogram, and, perhaps, more of the spoil. You keep watch over her; see that she does not escape, and I will take care that the dragoman is arrested at once.’

‘But,’ I replied, ‘we have not a single proof against him. We can not arrest him without being able to say what for.’

‘Oh, never mind that,’ he said; ‘we do not look so exactly in this country. Besides, your ‘milord’ has a great deal of money, and anything is here pardoned to a rich man. I will have him arrested, if he has not escaped yet. It may be that, by this time, he knows of the arrest of the Reis.’

‘Well, make haste; I will keep an eye on the girl.’

I was chatting and laughing with the girl, flattering her to the best of my ability, this being the best means of securing her attention, and soon two hours had passed with out our observing them. At last Abdul-Safet entered, with four kawassen (policemen), who at once laid hold on the girl. The poor thing was frightened to death, and so sadly lamented, and proclaimed her innocence in the committal of any crime, that I felt very sorry for her. However, the kawassen did their duty, notwithstanding the lamentations and supplications of the other Egyptians present in the house.

It was my luck that those people did not know why she was arrested, as I, in that case, would have been in imminent danger. At all events, I thought it safest to withdraw with the kawassen, who were followed by an immense wailing crowd.

Abdul-Safet quietly drew me out of the crowd, and whispered in my ear, ‘Let us go to the house of the girl.’

We followed, street after street, and Abdul told me, on the way, that the Reis had been imprisoned; that he had defended himself like a lion; that his garments were torn to rags by the kawassen; that they at last had succeeded in conquering him, and that they had tied his hands on his back with heavy ropes. When Abdul appeared at the jail, Mr. Worthley was already there, and had promised the jailer to pay him a high price if the Reis was delivered to justice, and he would keep watch over him. The employee of the embassy had, in the meanwhile, prevailed upon the Governor to place a strong guard before the prison, as Reis Tabut was a rich man, and therefore not to be entrusted to the care of a corruptible jailer.

The dragoman, however, had escaped. He probably had heard that the second turquoise was found, and, as he feared that this would lead to his arrest, he had absconded in the most vigilant manner. Now, in Egypt it is necessary to surprise a criminal. If that aim can not be accomplished, he has all possible chance to hide himself in the deserts, and with the inhabitants, who, strange to say, always side with the criminal, considering him a martyr to tyranny.

That was sad news. However, I hoped, even without the proof of his guilt, to be able to prove that of the Reis, and, therefore, prevailed upon Abdul to go, on the next day, with me and the employee to Cairo, and help us search the house of the Reis.

At last we arrived at a very small house, and, led by Abdul, we entered. An old woman received us with a volley of curses and lamentations.

I told Abdul to tell her that her daughter only had been arrested as evidence against the Reis Tabut, and that we had been obliged to make certain of her person, as we feared that the dragoman would either get her out of the way, preventing, in that way, her giving evidence, or

perhaps do worse; that we, however, were assured of her innocence, and that, in order to prove it, we had come, in the name of the police, to search her goods; and that as we were sure we would not find anything but evidences of her innocence, we would be able to soon have her released.

Abdul did so with the greatest possible prudence, and the old woman seemed to be appeased; the more so because we told her that, as the Inglisi was rich, she certainly would receive a handsome present, if her daughter, by her evidence, was instrumental in convicting the Reis.

This seemed to soothe her completely, for she asked whether she would be allowed to see her daughter, as she was eager to advise her to speak the whole truth, and not to excuse the dragoman or the Reis.

Abdul told her that she might go and see her, and that he would give the necessary orders to the jailer, if she would now show us where her daughter kept her apparel and trinkets.

She showed us a wooden box, in which we found, besides many trinkets, gauzes and female apparel, the head-dress, the mantle, and the wide pantaloons which the lady who, it was said, had visited the boat with Mr. Landenau, had worn on that memorable evening. They exactly answered to the description given.

We told the old woman that this apparel would completely prove the innocence of her daughter; that we would take it along, but, as a proof that we did not want to rob her, I handed her money enough to pay for the whole.

It was in my interest to keep the good side of the old woman, as I did not doubt that, if she prevailed upon her daughter to tell the truth, her evidence would convict the Reis. In showing that we were willing to pay, we procured the securest means of her assistance.

It proved that I had not been mistaken. The old woman went at once to the jail, and Abdul told me that she prevailed upon her daughter to speak the truth, and not to spare the dragoman, who had deserted her.

We deposited the apparel in the hands of the judge, and on the next morning the employee, Abdul, and I left for Cairo, after having procured the promise of the judge that he would delay the investigation until we had returned, as we expected to produce overwhelming evidence.

While we were on the road to Cairo, the judge had the Reis brought before him. He denied everything. He declared he knew of nothing. The buttons had been given to him by Mr. Landenau, both as well as one. He said further, that he only knew the dragoman from business transactions. It may be that he had seen him, on the night in question, before the tents, but it was very possible that he had been mistaken, as the dragoman declared that he had been in Cairo that night. It was very possible to make a mistake in such a crowd, and by the dazzling light of the illumination. He was very certain that he had not spoken with him. He could not believe that the dragoman had fled; it might be that he was not to be found just that moment, but he was sure he would present himself, as the Reis did not think there was any reason why he should be afraid. He further declared that he had not the least idea what had occurred on that night with the Inglisi.

The Reis was remanded to jail, and the mudirieh (judge) ordered that a guard should be placed before the hotel of Mr. Worthley, in order to protect him against the rage of the crowd, which considered the Reis as a martyr.

While on our way to Cairo, I discussed with Abdul the necessity of arresting the kaffir, and having him declare that the female apparel, of which we had taken possession, were the identical garments which had been worn by the lady who had enticed Mr. Landenau into the boat, as the story was. If we could succeed in having him declare that he recognized it, it would easily be proven that either the apparel had been worn by the dancing-girl, or that the woman to whom it belonged had been murdered.

Our investigation in Cairo took more time than we had expected, and I, being afraid that the judge would release his prisoners, went to the consulate. The consul at once sent a dragoman to Tanta, with the order of the foreign minister, to keep the prisoners in jail until further orders.

In so far secure, we searched the house of the Reis, but nothing was found which led us any nearer to our aim. I soon made acquaintance with the sharpest policeman in Cairo, who told me that the Reis had, besides this house, another little house in the street of the Rumilich.

I at once proceeded thither, and found, in the dark, small house, a sickly young woman, whom, it was easy to be seen, had been the subject of great abuse, and a dumb, cripple negro, who was there to prevent an escape of the sad creature. After we had searched for a long while in vain, we came to an iron door. The woman and the negro declared that they did not have the key; that nobody but their master ever entered it. We had it opened at once, and here I found the most astonishing things: elephant teeth, bags with gold dust, precious Indian shawls, small bags, filled with the most beautiful Indian stuff, and among them, scattered around, several European articles of luxury, of greater or less value, pins, rings, small toilet-boxes, smelling bottles, with gold knobs, etc.

The latter articles showed, without any doubt, that they had been stolen from European travelers, who had journeyed in his vessel, probably no one of the travelers, although missing the articles, suspecting the polite, gentlemanly Reis.

Provided with this evidence, I at once proceeded to the consulate, and as the 'Timsah' (the vessel of Reis Tabut), was expected on that day to arrive in Cairo, I requested an order for the arrest of the Volet and the crew of the ship.

My request was duly executed, and the men were sent up, that very evening, to Tanta, on the same train on which I and my companions started for that place.

When the whole company, prisoners and officials, arrived at Tanta, the crowd which surrounded us, with the cries, 'Aman! aman!' (mercy! mercy!) was innumerable. However, the Egyptian has too much fear of the police to venture any resistance, and we safely deposited our prisoners in the jail.

On the next day the trial began, and as it completely pictures the character of Egyptian jurisdiction, I will tell all I saw.

The hall was crowded with men and women of different classes. When we arrived, and took our seats next to the judge, the employee was requested to take notes, that he might report the whole affair to the consulate.

At once the Reis was led in. He looked proudly around, and his bearing was that of a man who is innocently accused. His eyes flashed with rage at this disgrace. His hands and feet were closely chained.

He listened to the accusation with great calmness. For a long while he was silent, as if he did not deem it worthy of any reply. Then he shortly called on the present witnesses, who could affirm that he had been quietly with them on that evening in the dancing-house. 'She,' he said, pointing at the dancing girl, who was sitting in the bench of the witnesses, 'can not say anything, as I never saw her, and she never has seen me.'

The witnesses all nodded in consent.

Now a witness was called who declared that he had seen the Reis and the dragoman together on that night.

The Reis laughed, and looked with utter contempt at the witness.

'I have seen many a hundred and thousand men that evening, and have talked with a great many of them,' he exclaimed; 'should I be responsible for all they did on that fearful night?'

'You are suspected, Reis Tabut,' said the judge, 'to have robbed, together with the dragoman, who has proven his guilt by his flight, the young Inglisi, who had entrusted himself to you, and it is very evident that you have divided the spoils with him.'

'That is a lie!' The Reis closed his fists and madly stamped on the floor.

'We will teach you respect for the court, Reis,' calmly replied the kadi, and looked sideways at the men, who stood there armed with bamboo canes.

'I am an honest man!' exclaimed the Reis, 'and pay, punctually, my taxes.'

'You are a thief and a robber!' replied the kadi. 'We have found all your stolen goods in your secret house in Cairo, and the woman and the slave have declared that you had stolen them.'

The Reis slightly trembled, and bit his lips.

'Whatever they may have found are goods which I honestly obtained in the Belid-es-Sudan, and presents which the foreigners made me!' he exclaimed, in a firm voice. 'Allah is my witness!'

‘You lie, scoundrel! How do you dare to call upon Allah! Others will tell you that you are a thief!’

The kadi gave a sign. The Reis proudly smiled; the chains shook on his wrists.

A policeman stepped in. Every one looked at the door. He was accompanied by a form which was entirely wrapped in a blue cloth.

Even the kadi looked astonished.

‘What do you bring?’ asked the judge.

‘El Volet,’ was the reply, and it could easily be seen that the man tried his utmost not to break out in a loud laughter.

Then he took the cloth from the prisoner, and the form of a girl was visible, nude to her hips, as tall as a roe. Her body had the color of cinnamon, her face that of coffee, her hair was cut short, and she stood there, bashfully, folding her arms over her nude, full bosom.

‘Is that the Volet of the Reis—a woman?’ exclaimed the kadi, looking, with great interest, at the beautiful form.

‘Yes, kadi, we found out in jail that she is a woman.’

‘What is your name?’ asked the kadi, looking at the girl.

‘Marian,’ she whispered, without lifting her eyes from the floor.

‘From where are you, and how did you come on board the ‘Mirah?’

‘He bought me from my father in Berbera, and brought me to his ship.’

‘Did you follow him willingly?’

‘Yes.’

‘What had you to do on his vessel?’

The girl did not reply; her lips trembled.

‘Tell me of the thefts which the Reis has perpetrated on the ship.’

The chains of the Reis rattled. He gave, with this, a sign of his presence to the girl. She looked, in great anxiety, to the spot from where the noise came, and did not dare to reply.

The kadi gave a sign. One of the men, armed with a bamboo, stepped towards the girl and laid his hands on her shoulder.

She uttered a piercing scream, fell down on her knees, and, stretching out her arms towards the judge, she exclaimed, 'Mercy!'

'Not one of your hairs will be molested, if you only speak the truth.'

'Is it not so, the Reis is a thief?' he asked, in a tender tone.

'No, not he, it is me!' she exclaimed, covering her eyes with her hands.

'You!' The kadi smiled. 'But he, the Reis, did command you to steal, did he not?'

'She is my property! she may not witness against me! All that she says is a lie!' thundered the voice of the Reis.

'Ah! he calls me a liar,' exclaimed the girl: 'now I will tell you all, kadi, and Allah is my witness that I will tell the truth. He says that I am a liar. I will speak now! I have not dreamed that of him. He dragged me as his property, from Berbera, with several other girls—we were children. He abused the others, and caused their death, and left them dying on the road. He brought me to his ship, where I had to be his servant and his wife. He was, for a long while very good to me, until he wished to force me to steal from the foreigners. I would not do so. He beat me, and then I obeyed him for love's sake. I went to the cabin of the ladies and gentlemen and concealed such things as he desired to possess. As soon as they had left, I had to show him the place of concealment. That is all, kadi. I would not have betrayed him, but he has called me a liar, and he could see me beaten, in order that he might go to his other wives.'

'Tell me further, my girl,' said the kadi, in a mild tone, 'where do the stuffs come from, which have been found in the house of the Reis?'

'I do not know; he had his friends higher up the river, and they brought them to him. He concealed them in his boat, and had the custom-house officers at Bulah for his friends, and they took them from his hands.'

'What did the Reis do when he returned to the 'Timsah' without the Inglisi?'

'He put the two buttons of the Inglisi on his shirt. I had been ordered to conceal them, as he was pleased with them. Then he locked himself up, and I saw him through the window, counting paper money, which the foreigners were accustomed to give to him, when they left the vessel.'

'What did he say to you about the Inglisi?'

'He said that we would find him in Cairo, whither he had gone with the sikked-el-haddid (cars).'

'You do not know anything further?'

‘Nothing.’

The kadi gave a sign, and the girl left the room. A curse of the Reis followed her.

‘Reis Tabut!’ he exclaimed. The Reis was led forward.

‘You hear the declaration of this woman, who has served you as valet on your ship?’

‘She has lied!’

‘Did you understand me, Reis?’

‘I have heard the lying declaration of this woman, who has even stolen from me.’

‘Then we will try how strong your stubbornness is. Have you anything to confess?’

‘No.’

The Kadi gave a sign; three men fell upon the Reis, who desperately defended himself. A struggle ensued, too fearful to mention, but the powerful men at last succeeded in dragging him to the half-dark background, and soon the lashes were heard falling on the back of the Reis. He uttered not a sound. After a little while, he was led again before the Kadi. His eyes were bloodshot, but he did not reply to the questions of the judge.

‘Lead him off,’ said the judge; ‘we will spare him for to-day. To-morrow, Reis, we will see whether you are more willing to speak.’

The Reis was led away, and the Kadi now commanded to have the woman brought before him.

The dancing-girl was led in; she did not dare to lift her eyes. With drooping face, trembling with anxiety, ashamed, but convinced that she was a martyr, she stood there, with her raven-black hair floating over her shoulders and bosom.

‘Gazale,’ said the Kadi, in a very mild voice, looking sadly at the young girl; ‘Gazale, you stand before me to whom you owe the truth; will you speak?’

The girl was silent.

‘I knew you long since, Gazale,’ the Kadi continued; ‘you are the child of a rich man. How did you come among the dancing-girls?’

‘You ask, Kadi,’ the girl replied, ‘what everybody here knows! My father was a rich, but righteous man. The one does not agree with the other, and his enviers tried to ruin him. He was accused of a conspiracy. They surprised him, took away all he possessed, and when they had made a beggar of him, they gave him back his liberty! My mother died in misery, my sister went as a servant to rich people, and I—but why do you ask? Kadi, you know everything!’

‘I ask, because I was the friend of your father, before his misfortune happened; because I wish to speak to your soul, as I believe that, even among the dancing-girls, you have remained pure and innocent, and because I hope that your hand has remained far from that for which you now stand before me. Answer me candidly; you know the dragoman, Adriani, from Cairo, who, with the Reis, is guilty of the murder of the Inglisi?’

‘Yes, I know him,’ she said, in a firm voice.

‘You were in connection with a murderer, who—’

‘You lie, Kadi!’ exclaimed Gazale, and her eyes flashed.

‘Then you speak the truth! It is against you, that are standing before me, accused of being accomplice in a crime. Prove your innocence! How did you know Adriani—how did he know you?’

‘Anastasio Adriani is the son of the sister of my mother, who is an Armenian woman, and the daughter of a rich manufacturer in Tuah.’

‘Good, Gazale; you saw him on the night that the crime was perpetrated.’

‘Yes, I saw him!’

‘Tell us all about it,’ was the mild reply of the judge. ‘Adriani has fled; he has confessed his guilt by doing so.’

‘I had not seen Adriani,’ replied the girl, ‘since the misfortune of my father. That evening, he met me, and showed his joy at seeing me; he treated me with sherbet, admired my beautiful dress and my form, and besought me to do him a service, for which he would give me ten piasters.

He told me that I should go to the boat, dressed as the wife of an Emir; that the Kaffir was there to guard me, so that nothing could happen to me, and that I should leave the boat, as soon as the Kaffir had gone, and come to the city by a roundabout way. I did so, as I saw nothing wrong in it. The Kaffir was sleeping on the shore. He did not seem to observe me, and I entered the boat. It was empty. I rested out for about half an hour, and as I saw that the Kaffir had gone, I returned to the city. Adriani had promised me that he would bring the ten piasters, that same evening, to my house.’

‘Good!’ said the judge; ‘what occurred that night?’

‘Adriani came, after midnight, to my house. He thanked me kindly, and paid me the ten piasters. I wanted the money, for I am poor.’

‘And how did you come in the possession of these things, which have been found on your person?’ asked the judge, and showed the monogram.

‘Anastasio gave to me a red portfolio, with the request to keep it concealed, that my friends might not see it. He would take it back, on the morning when he intended to leave for Cairo.’

‘Further?’ asked the Kadi.

‘As Anastasio did not return,’ she replied, ‘I thought he had forgotten the portfolio. I was eager to possess the beautiful gold embroidery, so I cut it out, and burned the remainder.’

‘How was Adriani when he came to see you, that evening?’

‘He seemed to be very excited, but that was nothing extraordinary during the festival. One of his hands, however, was covered with dried blood; so was his mouth. He said, laughingly, that he had had a quarrel with a Syrian man, and that they had fought with knives. Then he went away, as he said that he had to see a friend—believe he said a Reis—and I did not see him again.’

‘Good!’ said the judge; ‘you may now go and put on the garments which you wore on that evening;’ and, turning to one of the policemen, he said: ‘Lead the Kaffir Ali-el-Jabis before me.’

An old man, with gray hair, was led in; his hands were fastened on his back; he stood before the judge, with bended head, and exclaimed: ‘Aman! aman! Kadi!’ (‘ Mercy! mercy! judge! ’).

‘Ali-el-Jabis,’ said the judge, ‘till this day, you have been known as an upright man. May Allah forbid that, now in your old age, you are the accomplice of a criminal! Who paid you for watching, that night, over the boat?’

‘Reis Tabut, Kadi,’ replied the old man.

‘What did the Reis say to you?’

‘He said, before he went to town, that I should only look after the boat, for an hour, until a young woman went into it, then I might go. He gave me, for that service, three sabaïn, Kadi; not any more, as true as Allah lives; then he went to the city.’

‘And what did you do?’

‘As he had told me! When the woman had gone into the boat, I went away. I did not think that I was doing anything wrong.’

‘Did you know the woman?’

‘It was dark, Kadi! But she wore a gold-embroidered mantle, and was very young and handsome. May Allah protect me if I have drawn upon myself, by this confession, the wrath of a great man.’

‘Would you be able to recognize the mantle?’

‘I think so, although my eyes are old and weak.’

The Kadi gave a wink, and Gazale entered; never in my life did I see a more handsome picture; she was aware of the impression she made, and haughtily looked around.

‘Well, Kaffir,’ said the judge, ‘do you recognize the woman?’

‘Yes,’ said the old man; ‘she is it; may Allah help me.’

‘That is enough; you may go.’

‘And now, Gazale,’ he continued, ‘I thank you for your assistance; my dear girl, for the sake of your father’s memory, leave the life you are leading.’

‘Kadi,’ she said, ‘dismiss me now from the disgraceful position I am in.’

‘You are dismissed, and have plainly proven your innocence.’

The girl went away, and I, knowing, now, that the guilt of the Reis was fully proven, left the hall, and, accompanied by the employee, followed the girl. We soon overtook her, and I promised her a large amount of money, if she would tell us where she had met Adrian for the first time, and exactly under what circumstances. She very willingly pointed out the inn to us, and at once took me by the arm, and led me along, whither, I did not know; she walked fast, her eyes were flashing, and I could easily observe that a great struggle was going on within her. Before the hotel, she stopped, made a sign to me to follow her, and in she went to the room where Miss Alice was sitting; the latter was startled at seeing this handsome girl so unceremoniously enter into her apartment, the more so as she seemed to be greatly excited.

The Egyptian girl signified to Miss Alice to put on her hat and follow her. She did so, at my request, thinking that she was about to bring us on the real track of the crime. She walked fast, ahead of us, so that we could scarcely follow her.

We had been walking about two miles, through open fields, and through bushes, when we arrived at a garden so magnificent that I refrain from describing it. She walked through the garden as if she was perfectly at home; at last, she stopped before the house, and exchanged a few words with a girl, standing on the piazza.

This girl entered the house, and soon a gentleman came towards us, and requested us, in the purest English, to enter; he led us into a room which was but feebly lighted, and judge of my astonishment, and Alice’s joy, when we saw Mr. Landenau lying on a sick-bed, deathly pale, but perfectly conscious.

I left the loving couple alone, and went to see the Egyptian girl; she had disappeared. The gentleman of the house, who was an English resident in Egypt, told me that as he was driving in the neighborhood of Tanta, he had picked up Mr. Landenau, covered with blood, and that he had brought him to his house, to give him careful nursing and medical assistance.

Mr. Landenau told us that the dragoman had met him, in the city, and as he did not know the way, and was dazzled by the lights and the crowd, the dragoman had offered to show him the way. 'I,' thus spoke Mr. Landenau, 'willingly accepted his offer, under condition that he would allow me to pay him for it. The dragoman said to me that he would bring me to a place where I could rest, and be waited upon in European style; he led me always farther on, behind the market-place, and even so far that we came on a spot where the camels, the asses, and the wagons of the peddlers were standing.

'At last, the lights of a large tent attracted us; we stepped in, and scarcely had we been a few moments there, when I saw the Reis, sitting at a table, discussing with two men; soon they had a quarrel, and a fight ensued. The dragoman got entangled in it, and to my great astonishment, I saw that they also attacked me. I drew my pistol, and ten men at once were standing against me, one man pulling me by the arm, from behind; the shot went off, but I do not believe that it hit anybody. The lamps were extinguished—God knows how; at once, I felt somebody taking hold of my arm, and the dragoman said, in English: 'Come, or you are lost!' I do not know how he succeeded in drawing me through the crowd; I felt that I was led along, and soon I was in the open air.

'I knew that we were pursued; I heard wild, excited voices behind us. All was dark around me. At once, I felt a thrust in my side; at the same time, I was grasped by the shoulder, as if somebody tried to drag me down. Without knowing who was attacking me, I struck around me. I recognized the face of the dragoman, who had taken me by the breast. I struck him with my fist, in the face, but tumbled. A cold steel pierced my temples. I fell down and swooned. I do not know how long I had been lying there, and have not the slightest idea of what has happened with me, neither where I am, as the doctor, till now, strictly forbade me to utter a single word!'

This explains why the Englishman had not communicated with the friends of Mr. Landenau, in England, not knowing who he was, and the doctor considering it dangerous to have him tell his story, till now.

So the dragoman had committed the attempted murder, and the Reis had raised the row, to make the crime possible. Happily, they had not succeeded.

On the next morning, I witnessed the second session of the court.

The Reis was led in.

'Reis Tabut,' said the judge, 'I want to know the truth, to-day, from your own mouth, although your guilt has been proven already. You have robbed the Inglisi, and tried to murder him, together with Adrian!; do you confess now?'

No answer.

'I ask you whether you acknowledge your guilt?'

'No!' was the proud, but sad reply. 'Never! I am innocent!'

‘The Kaffir has declared that you have paid him for watching the boat, until a young woman should have gone into it,’ said the judge.

‘The Kaffir lies!’

The judge now repeated the evidence given by Gazale, and at last asked him, again, whether he confessed.

‘No! I am an honest man!’

‘Your own valet has plainly proven that you are a thief. You have made a thief of the girl, to enrich yourself—’

‘She lies—and you, it is a lie in your throat!’ thundered the Reis, rattling his chains in the maddest manner.

The Kadi quietly gave a sign to the men with the bamboo canes; they at once threw the Reis down, and dragged him to the background, and soon we heard a heavy body fall to the floor, and regular lashes administered. Not a cry of pain, not a groan was heard. All was quiet. My heart beat loudly, as I heard the sound of the lashes.

So a few terrible minutes passed. At last, all was silent. After a few moments, a rough, hoarse voice exclaimed:

‘Mejit!’ (dead.)

Reis Tabut had expired, without giving a sound. In order to prevent his uttering a groan, he had closed his teeth upon his tongue, and the blood gushed from his mouth. Even the executioner had not the slightest idea that he was lashing a corpse.

The body of the dragoman was found floating on the Nile. How he had come to his well-deserved end, nobody knew.

After Mr. Worthley had requested me to seek Gazale, and hand her, in his name, a handsome sum of money, I was dismissed, and left for England, where, many a time, I related my strange experience in Egypt.

It need hardly be said that Mr. Worthley, Miss Alice, and Mr. Landenau remained in Egypt, until the latter was entirely cured.

I had the satisfaction to be called to Mr. Worthley’s house, after their return, and both gentlemen, and Miss Alice, who is now Mrs. Landenau, thanked me most heartily for the good services I had done them, and Mr. Worthley laughingly added: ‘I wanted to be wiser than the detective. Thank God that he was so fearfully stubborn.’

McWatters, George. *Detectives of Europe and America*. Hartford: J. B. Burr, 1877.