

The Prophecy

Contributed by The Marquis d'Ascoyne
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When recuperating, one should get plenty of bedrest

The Marquis cheerfully ignores this sage advice

He recovered from the 'mummy wrapping' feeling like his younger self and elected to go into the city of Maharek to sample the local foods, merchandise dancing girls, craftsmen, dancing girls and taverns.

Later that day, whilst many prepared for the next orders for dispersal, the Marquis, Sir Richelieu, Sir Parcifal and Lady Gandolfyn ventured into the Marketplace and here he purchased bolts of fine cotton, some lovely jewelry and a few oil lamps which he wrote to his wife would produce no jinn. just light. He became focused on a large sign over a small doorway and it read Oracle and Soothsayer, Know Thy Future. He began to drift to the doorway, hoping the others would not notice.

But they did. As one they pressed him back into the flow of traffic and he protested. "M'Lord, ye were better mannered when you were eight years old in the Toyshop at Courrone." Lady Gandolyn was not amused, the others were. After an hour of shopping the Marquis suggested eating and they found themselves in a good inn, eating the noon meal in a private room, As they completed the meal, the Marquis excused himself to relieve his bladder and the others relived the battle that ended in a draw The minutes passed in the waiting and the Marquis did not return The men all spoke as one.

"Fortune Teller" and they returned to the small door under the large sign to find an empty place, void of furnishings, dust and human presence. "This does not bode well." Said Sir Parcifal Lady Gandolfyn walked slowly through the open room, back past the curtains into the chamber there and returned.. "No harm hath befallen the Marquis, but there is strong traces of magic unknown to me."

They searched a bit more and returned to camp to find the Marquis napping in his Great Chair outside his tent. It was soon learned that he had felt sleepy and came to the tent and with some good natured jesting from his captains he was left alone.

Almost alone. Lady Gandolfyn fluttered at his shoulder like a butterfly. "Pull the other one, Hercule", she said bluntly. Then ushered him into his tent. She hailed three Sister of the Golden Lady and said "No One disturbs us."

When she went inside she found the Marquis in his travelling bed, laying on his side, she pulled a horsehide stool to the bed and sat down. "Tell me what happened."

The Marquis pummeled the pillows and set up the bed for conversation. "Yes, I did return to the shop." He squirmed a bit and got comfortable.. It was filled floor to ceiling with pottery, dishes, jars, carpets, tapestries and mystical signs.. In truth there was hardly enough room to move.. The smells were most intoxicating, I must say."

"Get to the point, Hercule." Hercule began to tell the story slowly. "Although no bell at the shop door, I heard a singular bell tinkling and then this wizened old woman emerged from the back of the store and called me by name" He leaned forward in confidence "Not as the Marquis d'Ascoyne, she called me by my full name Ascoyne Hercule Achille du Bois Guilbert." He leaned back and shook his head. She asked me why was I in Araby and I answered in response to the people's cry" She dismissed my words with a flourish of her hands. "Phaugh", she cried out, "Now why are you in Araby?"

"He reached for a goatskin and sipped some water. "Then a curious thing happened, my throat closed up and I began to choke. It was unpleasant." Another sip of water. She asked me a third time and I answered why don't you tell me why I am in Araby".

"This delighted the old woman greatly as she laughed. I saw her clearly in the sunlight from the roof. She looked as ancient as dirt, yet she moved with the grace of a young woman and for all the years etched in her face, her arms, her hands, there was something young about her."

Lady Gandolfyn was intrigued. "What did she tell you?". The Marquis shook his head, "She said it was Fate which brought me to Araby; that my destiny would made known to me before I left. Oh," he said with another thought, " she said that I would see signs from my kinsman and to heed them, to take what was offered, but refuse that which is given."

Lady Gandolfyn thought a bit. "Be cautious what you ask for Hercule, take no gifts. Accept Prize monies and only your share of ransom. Be very careful and as always I am but a heartbeat away from you should ye need help." He noted Lady Gandolfyn was upset. "I know very little of the Magics present in Araby". She said conversationally. "They prefer riddles or enigmae."

He was sleepy and had difficulty staying awake. Sensing his fatigue, Lady Gandolfyn leaned over and studied him, putting one hand at the top of his head and the other over his heart. She relaxed her grip "Simple healing spell, no threat." The Marquis looked at her through bleary eyes. "Hercule, when the woman said kinsman, take her at her word-specifically." She gathered a light bed sheet and covered him up,

She whispered into his ear "Kinsman doth NOT mean a Bretonnian, kinsman means an Ancestor. Remember"