### Hoshruba:

### The Land & The Tilism

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# BOOK ONE OF TILISM-E HOSHRUBA A Legend from the *Dastan of Amir Hamza*

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#### MUHAMMAD HUSAIN JAH

# Tilism-e Hoshruba (An Extract from Book One)

#### Preface

**A** HUNDRED THOUSAND praises and a million laudations befit the Cupbearer of Eternity<sup>1</sup> whose euphoric call of "Be!' and it is" caparisoned the desolate expanse of the world. Everyone who sips from perception's glass must likewise eulogize and glorify the one<sup>3</sup> who, deep in his cup of Original Covenant, cured all those quaffing the dregs of impiety and perdition with the restorative goblet of his Advent (may God bless him, his illustrious family and worthy companions).

After that homage, I, Saiyid Muḥammad Ḥusain Jāh, ask your indulgence to look upon myself as a gleaner of the gardens of men of learning and wisdom, and those erudite in the subtle and the sublime; and as one who is as the dust under their shoes. I petition the attentive ear of those who are tolerant of a mortal's errors, and are steeped and versed in letters, that the Dāstān-e Amīr Ḥamza is a tale both excellent and enchanting, a favorite of the seeker and the sought, a veritable pearl from the sea of eloquence, and a dazzling sun of the noon of rhetoric; such as humbles the tongue singing its praise, and overawes the discourse describing its glory. This dāstān contains a most astonishing tale popularly known as the Ṭilism-e Hōshrubā which is the choicest of its choice books. Thus I set my heart on transcribing this wonder—which is the soul of adornment

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Allusion to God.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>Qu<sup>3</sup>rān 36:82.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>Allusion to Prophet Muḥammad.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup>Refers to *Rōz-e Alast*, the event in pre-eternity when God gathered mankind and asked them "*Alastu bi rabbikum?*" ("Am I not your Lord?") and they answered, "Yeah, verily" (*Qālū*, "*Balā*") (see Qu²rān 7:168). This is designated as "The Day of the Covenant" in Muslim sacred history and is a concept especially dear to the Muslim mystics (Sufis).

and the epitome of grace—in the realm of the written word, employing the proper idioms and chaste expressions of the Urdu language, to convert devotees of beloved lore to its marvelous charms, with the grace and boon of my Lord, and His guidance and succor.

#### Broadcast by the Transcriber for the Worthy Readers of this History

Let it be known that the Dastan of Amir Hamza comprises seven books and it is a difficult proposition to understand the history of personages such as Amīr Ḥamza, 'Amar 'Aiyār, Zamarrud Shāh, Bakhtiārak, Afrāsiyāb Jādū, et al. without perusing the said books. Keeping that in mind, I introduce Amīr Ḥamza who is the son of Saiyid Khvāja 'Abdu 'l-Muttalib, the chieftain of Ka'ba; 'Amar who is Ḥamza's trickster; and Sa'd son of Qubād, Ḥamza's grandson, appointed by him as the king of his camp. Amīr Ḥamza is the commander-in-chief of the armies. All of Ḥamza's sons pay allegiance to Sa'd son of Qubād who is also their king. Besides these, many other potentates from the face of the earth are attached to his camp with their armies and will be duly mentioned in the pages of this history. Amīr Ḥamza is warring with King Zamarrud Shāh Bakhtarī or Lagā, an illustrious king who has proclaimed himself God, to make him renounce his false claim. Several times Lagā has escaped Amīr Ḥamza's hands into lands whose sovereigns and laity pay allegiance to him as their God, and do battle with Ḥamza at his behest. Accompanying Laqā is Farāmurz son of Emperor Naushīrvān of Persia, who has thrown in his lot with Laqā and battled Amīr Ḥamza in the past. Bakhtiārak son of Bākhtak, the vizier of Farāmurz, is the Devil-designate of the court of His Holiness Laqā—for the seat of Deity needs a Fiend to make it complete. Previously Laqā had sought refuge in the Tilism of Hazār Shakl, and upon its destruction at Amīr Ḥamza's hands, he headed for the lands of Kōhistān. The book of the Tilism of Hazār Shakl precedes the history of the Ţilism of Hōshrubā. But your humble narrator abandoned it in favor of the latter to avoid gratuitously prolonging the narrative.

#### Of the Beginning of the Amazing History of the Tilism of Hoshruba and the Arrival of Laqa's Camp in the Precincts of Kohistan

Sing O minstrel for my cup of life brimmeth over Under the nine vaults of heaven From the revolutions of the cosmos I intone like the pipe At the fate of Jamshēd<sup>5</sup> and the fortunes of Kaikhusrau<sup>6</sup>

The master of discourse intricate and obscure Has masterly adorned the lovely bride of the narrative

The cupbearers of nocturnal revelries and bibbers from the cup of inspiration thus pour the vermillion wine of red inscription into paper's goblet that when Zamarrud Shāh Bākhtarī left the Tilism of Hazār Shakl, his vizier of ill council advised him to move to the lands of Kōh-e 'Aqīq Gulzār-e Sulaimānī, whose celebrated sovereign was master of innumerable armies and mighty warriors. His land was linked to the Tilism of Hōshrubā—a country whose potentate, Afrāsiyāb Jādū, was emperor of sorcerers and a mighty monarch whose sword's repute caused mutinous hordes to tremble and shudder with trepidation, and his past-mastery in sorcery caused Sāmerīs<sup>7</sup> of the time and Jamshēds<sup>8</sup> of the world to make obeisance to him.

He is the lord of throne, insignia and crown Lord of the fish in sea and moon in heavens His grandeur is complete without the aid of coronet At his name the heavens tremble and offer tribute

In complete accordance with the advice of his iniquitous vizier, Zamarrud Shāh headed for Kōh-e 'Aqīq, and after trekking his way and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>Jamshēd: name of an ancient King of Persia. Also see footnote 8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup>Kaikhusrau: King Cyrus.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup>Samerī: name of a magician said to have been contemporary with Moses, and to have made a speaking calf. See F. Steingass, *A Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary* (Beirut: Librairie du Liban, 1970).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup>Jamshēd, at King Jamshēd's directions a goblet was fashioned by the Greek philosophers which revealed the future as per astrological calculations. It is probably by reason of this occult connection that Jamshēd is one of the patron saints of sorcerers in *Tilism-e Hōshrubā*.

fording the distance, he arrived near its borders, and messengers brought news of his arrival to King Sulaimān 'Ambarīn-Mū Kōhī of Kōh-e 'Aqīq, who readied platters of gold and jewels as offerings, had the city decorated with mirror-works, and marched forth with his retinue outside the city walls to greet Laqā. He accompanied him into the city and conducted him into the royal palace with great fanfare. Nobles, viziers, ministers of state and privy councilors gathered there to pay their respects and make obeisance to him. Laqā was taken to the nave of the palace, to the royal throne encrusted with rare and precious jewels. There he did give audience amidst a cluster of dancers, silver-thighed cupbearers, and minstrels both honey-tongued and jovial, whose sweet strains caused every eye and ear to become transfixed with wonder. Before long the rounds of the cups of roseate wine made all minds oblivious to the fickle ways of Time.

The armies of the King of this dominion had two commanders, Manzūr Zāġ Čashm-e Kōhī and Nazīr Zāġ Čashm-e Kōhī, who were both the King's nephews from his sister. The commander-in-chief of his armies was one Lālān Lāl-Qabā who had no equal in the art of war. All of them arrived and prostrated themselves before Laqā and submitted to him that they were ready to wager their heads and scatter their lives in his service; and that he might settle down there without the least anxiety. Laqā felt reassured by their pledges and made that place his domicile. King Sulaimān 'Ambarīn-Mū then arranged a feast and bowed the head of submission in the service of Laqā.

It is recounted that when Laqa had fled from the Tilism of Hazar Shakl, Amīr Ḥamza, the Tremor of Qāf, the Latter-Day Solomon and the Majestic Lord of the Auspicious Planetary Conjunction, had dispatched after Laqa the Damned four messengers from his victorious army whose names were Nāmiān Khaibarī, Tūmiān Khaibarī, Sarhañg Makkī and Abū Tāhir Khuñrēz, and they were fleet of foot and swift as the zephyr. They were given instructions to discover where Laqa, the Bird of Ill-Fortune, had found a roost, and gather particulars of the kingdom and its armies whose sovereign had offered him refuge, and report to the worthy servants and attendants of their lofty king and all powerful sovereign. These spies had accompanied Lagā and were present in the court of 'Ambarīn-Mū in different disguises. They listened to the presentations of the commanders of Sulaimān 'Ambarīn-Mū, and after collecting all the particulars of the kingdom and its armies, readied themselves to report before Amīr Hamza, the Conqueror of the World. Before long they came out of the fortress and were on their way, quick as lightning and swift as wind.

After conquering the Tilism of Hazār Shakl, Amīr Ḥamza was seated

on his lofty throne, and King Sa'd son of Qubād was giving audience in the Pavilion of Solomon, whose folds had been lifted to allow him to admire the stretch and scenery of the plains, when the messengers suddenly arrived in his most excellent service and presented themselves with chapped lips and pulsating temples, caused by the haste with which they had brought themselves there. They made an obeisance at the designated station and kissed the ground at his feet with the lips of servitude, and raising their hands in visiting benedictions and offering prayers on his kingship, submitted: "O Distinguished King and Emblem of Justice,

May Your Excellence last as long as the sun in heavens May the goblet keep you company as long as there's another morn

For as long as the crown of life remains on Khizr's head May your fortunes remain as lofty as those of Alexander<sup>10</sup>

The foe-of-accursed-fortune and depraved bear, having turned tail before the victory-incarnate armies, has escaped the wine of ruin and the bait of death and arrived in Kōh-e 'Aqīq Gulzār-e Sulaimānī to make his abode there. The king of that land has promised him the support of his arms and offered him succor and solace."

All that the messengers had witnessed, they narrated with accuracy and detail in the presence of Sa'd son of Qubād, the Magnificent King. The King turned his gaze towards Amīr Ḥamza, the Lord of the Auspicious Planetary Conjunction and the Commander-in-Chief of the Armies of the True Faith. Thereupon Amīr Ḥamza ordered 'Amar the trickster to send for the mighty warrior 'Ādī Ma'dī Karab and dispatch with him the advance camp of the armies towards Kōh-e 'Aqīq. As per the excellent orders of the venerable commander, the signal of departure was sounded in the triumph-bearing army, and every warrior prepared for departure.

 $<sup>^9</sup>$ Khiẓr: a holy personage according to Islamic legend who had drunk from the Waters of Life. He is often mentioned in the  $d\bar{a}st\bar{a}n$  as a prophet and as brother to Prophet Elias.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup>Alexander: two princes of this name are much celebrated in the East, both distinguished by the title of  $z\bar{u}'l$ -qarnain, bi-cornis, or Having Two Horns (of the world), implying that they conquered the globe from east to west; the first is supposed to be one of the most ancient kings and the other is identified as Alexander of Macedon (See Steingass, *ibid.*).

The cities of Greece and Syria shook to their foundations With such preparations the advance camp was provisioned

Platoons, troopers mounted on Arabian horses, and countless footsoldiers began marching onward with majestic mien. The bazaars of the army also started moving, and the tents, pavilions and other furnishings of the court were loaded up for transportation on camels and mules. The braves decked themselves with their arms and armor and prepared to march. The King with his illustrious commanders and the Ṣāḥibqirān with his peerless tricksters headed out to lead the armies.

In the manner of the spring gale as it moves about To the desert the majestic entourage departs

In short, after marching and bivouacking, and after one night and a day, Amīr Ḥamza's illustrious army arrived with splendor and landed in the vicinity of Kōh-e 'Aqīq. The celebrated pavilion of the King was raised and the bazaars of the camp were opened. The platoons began arriving in contingents and began occupying the spotless plains and strategic locations in spectacular formation. At the sound of the tymbals and the kettle-drums of the army, the wits of the foe took flight like birds. Upon hearing of the arrival of the Amīr's army, Sulaimān gave orders for his armies to assemble, closed the gates of the city, and deployed canons cast of brass and steel; he fortified all the crenellations, ramparts, battlements and bulwarks. While these preparations were being made, and Ṣāḥibqirān was camped opposite the city waiting for an encounter with the foe, the feel and sight of the pleasant air and green plains enticed Amīr Ḥamza's son,

Badī'u 'z-Zamāñ, the Brave, the Router of Armies The Moon of the Constellation of Excellence

with thoughts of chase and he asked Amīr Ḥamza's permission. When he made no reply, Badīʿu 'z-Zamāñ went to his mother, Princess Gardiya Bānō of the city of Ardabīl¹¹ and requested her to obtain from his respected father permission for him to go hunting. The Princess accepted his request and when Amīr Ḥamza came to her chamber, she interceded for the Prince. Then Amīr Ḥamza was forced to grant his permission, but he said this much: "These plains are the abode of all the sorcerers of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup>Ardabīl: name of a city in Media.

world. That was the reason why I had not granted my permission earlier, lest the Prince should get snared in some calamity. At your interceding I am granting permission to him on condition that he returns after a day and does not stay any longer. Badīʿu 'z-Zamāñ accepted Ṣāḥibqirān's condition, and the whole night was spent in making the preparations for the hunt.

When from its eastern house the hunter of the heavens<sup>12</sup> carrying the net of rays on his shoulders started hunting the planetary fixtures on the plains of the sky, that World-Illuminating Sun of the High Noon of the Auspicious Planetary Conjunction, the Star that Lights Up the Six-Dimensions of the Skies of Triumph, to wit, Badī'u 'z-Zamāñ the Magnificent, headed for the plains to hunt as the crack of daylight was appearing. The draught of the morning breeze was stirring, the tapers flickered, the buds flowered, the love-struck nightingales made their outcries, the peacocks danced in the forests, the birds fluttered away from their nests in search of food and water, every living being occupied itself in the thoughts of the Creator of the World, every heart was filled with the name of the Progenitor, and like a veritable preacher, the ring-dove sang from the pulpit of the cypress a sermon in the name of the True God.

Every blade of grass which sprouted from the ground Calls out "There is but one God and none is His partner!"

To sum up, the eminent Prince was hunting in the plains with his equipage and retinue, and occupying his gaze with the pleasant air of the land and the mountains, when a fawn came out from the riverbank, cavorting and gamboling like a frolicsome beloved well-versed in coquetry.

Sporting a brocade sheet on his back
How beautiful and fairy-faced the fawn
His feistiness even a mistress could not attain
A veritable hunter of the meadow where hearts abound

When he beheld that beautiful and comely fawn, Badī'u 'z-Zamāñ became enamored and infatuated by him, and he gave orders to his commanders: "Take him alive! Beware, do not let him get away!" As per their orders, the companions of the Prince immediately encircled the ani-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup>Allusion to the sun.

mal and surrounded him on all sides. The fawn pricked up his ears and bolting, broke off the cordon by leaping over the Prince's head. Badī'u 'z-Zamāñ chased him on his horse at a gallop and followed him for many miles until he lost all his companions and was left by himself. Near to losing the fawn, and unable to take him alive, he took an arrow from his quiver and putting the notch of the arrow in the bowstring with the thumb stall, and drawing it to his ears, let fly.

Pre-ordained fate said, Give! Providence answered, Take! The Heavens said Bravo! The Seraph said Well Done!

The arrow pierced the fawn and he fell. The Prince jumped down from his horse and slaughtered him. The moment the fawn died a most dreadful voice was heard that shook the heart of the constellation of Taurus in the skies and sent tremors into the seven heavens and the seven seas. It said: "O son of Ḥamza! You committed a terrible deed by killing the sorcerer Ghazal Jādū. This is the frontier of the Land of Hōshrubā, and it is well-nigh impossible to escape from its bounds. Anything that may happen now will be too little!"

The Prince saw that the entire expanse had become dark with the billowing of sand and dust, and a tempest of gales was raging mightily there. After a moment the Prince lost consciousness and when he opened his eyes he found himself in heavy chains, and resting his head on his knees, was lost in reflection.

When Umaiya son of 'Amar, a trickster in the service of the Prince of happy fortune, arrived there he found the plains pitch dark and all the signs of Doomsday's horrors manifest.

[Be it also known that the sons of 'Amar 'Aiyār are designated tricksters of the courts of Amīr Ḥamza's sons. When a son was born to Ḥamza from a princess, a son was also born to 'Amar from the minister's daughter who attended on that princess. Thus 'Amar's son was deputed as the trickster of Hamza's son.]

In short, Umaiya saw Badī'u 'z-Zamāñ's corpse lying on the ground and the beauty that was the envy of the moon lying before him all gored.

When the Prince entered the frontiers of Hōshrubā, the Lord of the Tilism of Hōshrubā, Afrāsiyāb, learned of it and ordered the Defender of the Tilism, Queen Sharāra Jādū, to capture the Prince and leave an effigy

of him made by magic there so that it might serve as an example to other transgressors and deter them from entering the Tilism.

The trickster of the illustrious Prince held up the corpse in his arms and broke into tears of grief. He rent the collar of his tunic in anguish, and throwing dirt on his head, carried the Prince's corpse on his horse to his camp. On the way he met the Prince's entourage and when they saw that woeful sight, it smote their hearts. Weeping and wailing and throwing dirt over their heads, all of them presented themselves before Amīr Ḥamza. When the people of the camp and the renowned Ḥamza regarded that tragic misfortune, they gave themselves up to crying and lamenting. The entire camp and the women's quarters rang alike with sounds of weeping and wailing. Princess Gardiya Bānō, the mother of the Prince was inconsolable with grief, and cried out,

O solace of my heart and soul You departed leaving me alone

You left without giving me news that you leave Caring not a whit for my loneliness

While these lamentations were being made, Amīr Ḥamza said to 'Amar 'Aiyār, "Go and harness my steed Ashqar and bring him to me so that I may depart in search of the murderer, kill him and bring away his head." 'Amar submitted: "O Prince and Pride of the Heavens, I have heard it said that nobody was seen killing the Prince but that the expanse had suddenly become dark, and when the darkness parted that headless body was found there." Amīr Ḥamza said: "By God there is some mystery in this matter which the Heavens alone know. Send for the sons of Khvāja Buzurjmehr!"

[Buzurjmehr, the vizier of the Emperor of Persia, had manifested a great affection for Amīr Ḥamza and attached his sons to his camp to wait upon him with devotion. The story of Khvāja Buzurjmehr and Amīr Ḥamza is recounted in the first book of the Dāstān of Amīr Ḥamza, and this much will suffice at present to acquaint the readers with their particulars.]

As per the orders of Amīr Ḥamza, the sons of Khvāja Buzurjmehr were sent for and they were seated with great honor on prestigious stations and the Amīr asked them to find out what had passed with the

Prince. Khvāja Buzurg Ummīd, Khvāja Siyavush and Khvāja Daryādil, drew the lots of perception from the board of introspection, and drawing the horoscope studied the manifestations of the year, the signs of the zodiac, and the lines of geomancy, and after their deep study, and much contemplation and reflection, they raised their heads and said: "O Illustrious King, the Prince is alive and safe but lies powerless and helpless in the severe internment of sorcerers. The corpse that has been brought before you is an effigy made of lentil<sup>13</sup> flour. Pray recite the Most Great Name over water and sprinkle it on the corpse, then see the manifestations of the Creator's power."

When the Amīr recited the Most Great Name and sprinkled the water on the corpse, it returned to an effigy made of flour. The Amīr bowed his head in gratitude before God and gave thanks to Him who had sent the news of his son's life. He bestowed robes of honor on the sons of Buzurjmehr and had the effigy thrown away. All the lamentation and weeping in the camp ceased and everyone celebrated the news of the Prince's survival. Amīr Ḥamza sent for 'Amar and, after conferring on him much gold and jewels, deputed him to find the whereabouts of the illustrious Prince.

'Amar decorated himself with the contraptions of trickery taking along the *zambīl*, <sup>14</sup> the net of Elias and the mantle of trickery, the lasso of Āṣif, the *dēv-jāma* and staff and shoes and all the holy gifts and mementos which he had received on his visit to the mountain in Ceylon as well.

[The transcriber states that when the armies of Amīr Ḥamza had arrived to conquer India, 'Amar had made a pilgrimage to the shrines of the prophets (peace be upon them) and there 'Amar was overtaken by sleep. In the realm of dreams he had a beatific and marvelous audience with some prophets and they told him that in the chamber of their shrines there lay

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup>Māsh: a variety of pulse, *Phaseolus Radiatus* or *Phaseolus Mungo*; it is used as a vehicle for producing spells and enchantments; hence the phrase "*māsh mārnā*" (to charm or make blind by spell).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup>Zambīl (wallet): 'Amar's *zambīl* is perhaps based on *Zambīl-e Sulaimān*, a wallet or leathern bag in Solomon's possession which produced anything he wished for. Also called *Ambān-e Sulaimāni* (See Steingass, *ibid.*). In the Turkish version of the *Dāstān of Amīr Ḥamza* of Behçet Mahir we find that 'Amar's pouch was made from the skin of the sheep that Prophet Abraham had sacrificed to Allāh instead of his son and that sheepskin had been waiting there for 'Amar since the time of the Prophet Abraham.

for 'Amar certain devices of trickery. Among them was the zambīl, which was a bag within which existed a world comparable to the world on Earth. It produced on command anything that 'Amar wished at any time and accommodated anything that 'Amar kept in it. The mantle of trickery had such properties that when 'Amar wore it he could see everyone, but none could see him. And the net of Elias had the miraculous property of carrying an object, even if it weighed millions of tons, and made it feel as lightsome as a few pounds. And wherever 'Amar raised the Pavilion of Daniel and took shelter underneath, none was able to capture him and anyone who entered it was caught and hung upside down. When he threw the lasso of Asif, it extended as little or as much as he commanded and nothing cut it or broke it. When he wore the dev-jama it changed seven colors from green to red to yellow, etcetera. Likewise, all the things he found there carried miraculous properties. 'Amar took possession of those items upon receiving the tidings. All this has been mentioned in "Naushērvān Nāma," the first book of the Dāstān-e Amīr Ḥamza cycle. Whenever the reader may hear about these objects, he may associate them with their legend. It was these same objects which 'Amar readied as he set out to search for Badī'u 'z-Zamāñ.]

Then 'Amar set out to search for Badī'u 'z-Zamāñ and left with great dispatch for the desert,

Setting out in the expanse with such dispatch that birds of prey Did not even catch the dust he roused in his wake

At the end of his journey, when that Pinnacle of Trickery and the Star of the Skies of the Dagger Arts arrived at the place where Badīʿu 'z-Zamāñ had been captured by sorcery, he saw a meadow which was even more delightful than the Garden of Eden.

On the green expanse the flowers shone like jewels The lustrous dew was as pearls bonded with the emerald of grass

Everywhere there was a profusion of many-colored flowers For parsangs on end the fragrance of the flowers reached

Admiring the air, 'Amar was continuing forward on his mission when

suddenly a group of girls appeared on the horizon and 'Amar hid himself in a bush. He saw coming his way several coquettish girls who were as beautiful and lovely as the moon and as stately as the sun in the heavens.

They were of ages between fifteen and sixteen years Familiar with pangs of adolescence, and nights of desire

Among them was a princess whose beauty was the envy of the moon. She was the gazelle of the desert of beauty and a prancing peacock of the forest of splendor. Outfitted in a fine costume and wearing jewellery enchased with stones, she walked with her hand resting on the shoulders of her attendants, stepping with a graceful and haughty air, regarding the sights of the forest.

Like the rose in a cluster of nightingales, the supreme lord Like the moon among stars, the lantern of heavens

'Amar was regarding the whole scene from his hiding place when one of the girls suddenly felt the call of nature. She sat down to make water at a distance from her companions, who carried on with the princess. 'Amar reckoned that if he went along with those girls he might find some clue to help him in his mission. With that thought he came out of the bush and threw his lasso at the girl answering the call of nature. When she raised the alarm, 'Amar stuffed a ball of trickery in her mouth and rubbed a drug on her face which made her unconscious. 'Amar tied her to a tree and putting the mirror before his face, began putting on colored powder and lotions of trickery and changing his face to her likeness. He took off her clothes and put them on himself, then leaving her tied there, rushed forward to join the group. Thinking that it was their companion, the girls said to him: "O Shagūfa! You took very long. What was it you were doing there?" 'Amar realized then that Shagūfa was the name of the girl whose disguise he had taken. He answered: "Come now, I did not take all that long!"

Talking together they all approached a garden. 'Amar saw that its gates were open like the yearning eyes of a lover, and the cold wind which wafted there was such that it would revive the breath of the Messiah itself. Those beauties entered the garden whose splendor had no equal, and 'Amar beheld those wondrous grounds that were the envy of the Garden of Paradise.  $\square$