

§ 6

How Bahrám slew Lions and forbade Wine-drinking

He found employment for the hunting cheetah,
 Bestirred him and was minded for the chase.
 He mounted him upon a speedy steed,
 And pricked forth to the plain with hawk on hand.
 He found a wood that was a rich man's seat.
 It was as verdurous as Paradise,
 And there was neither man nor beast in sight.
 He said : " Here lions should be found. No man
 Of prudence would sleep here."

He entered in,
 And rode about surveying it. He saw
 A lion there and that he must employ
 The scimitar. He shouted at the beast
 And, when it bravely charged him, rode outside
 The forest, blazed forth like Ázargashasp,
 And, when the lion followed, strung his bow,
 A hero he, shot and transfixed the creature
 Through side and heart ; that of the lioness
 Grew all a-flame, and she too charged Bahrám,
 Roared out and clawed at him. The cavalier
 Smote with his sword her loins, and that brave beast
 Gave up the fight. Now in the wood there dwelt
 A country magnate, a God-fearing man,
 Whose name was Mihr Bídád. That sword-stroke
 charmed him.

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With sweet words on his tongue that old man left
 The wood, drew near the Sháh, blessed him, did
 reverence,
 And said : " O famous chief ! may fortune's star
 Be at thy beck. A rural chief am I,
 O holy one ! and owner of this march,