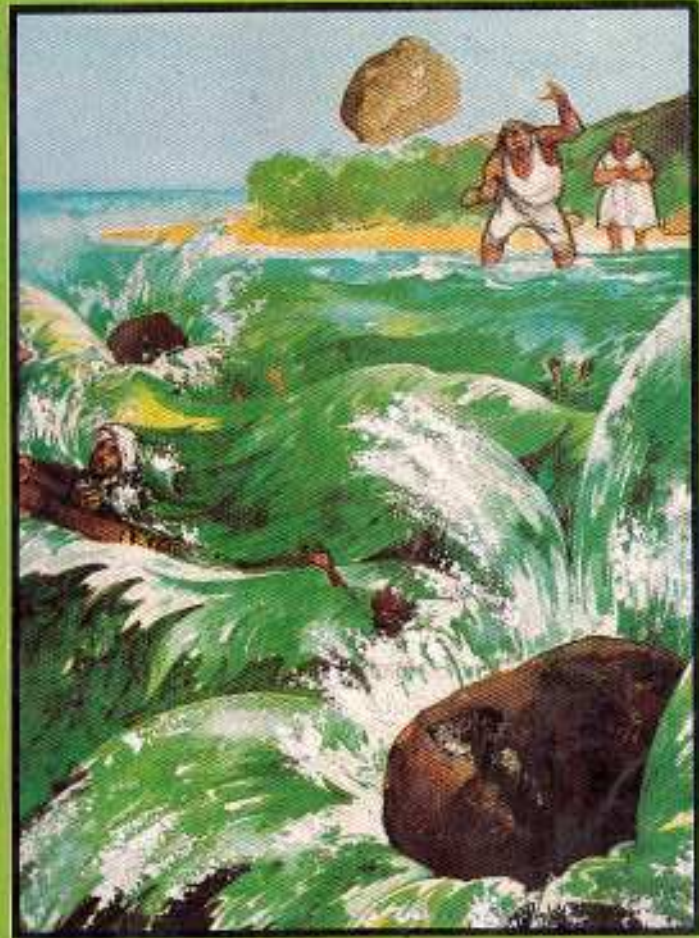
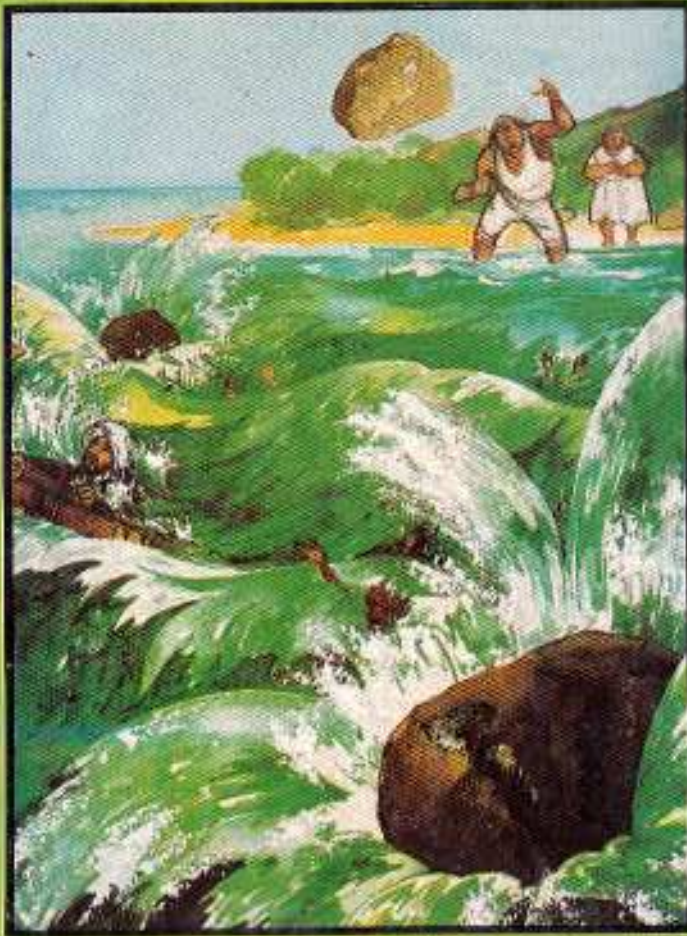


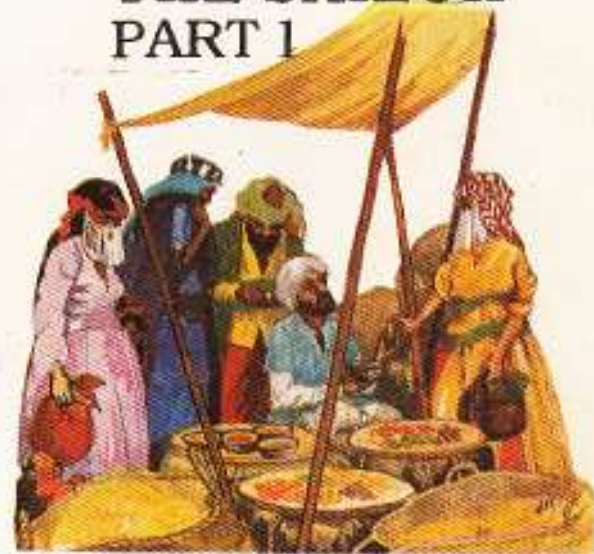
:- ARABIAN TALES :-

THE VOYAGE OF SINBAD THE SAILOR

THE VOYAGE OF SINBAD THE SAILOR - 1



THE VOYAGE OF SINBAD THE SAILOR PART 1



Published by
M.B.D. Publishers Distributors
Bhola Nath Nagar, Shahdara
Delhi-110032.

Sole Distributors

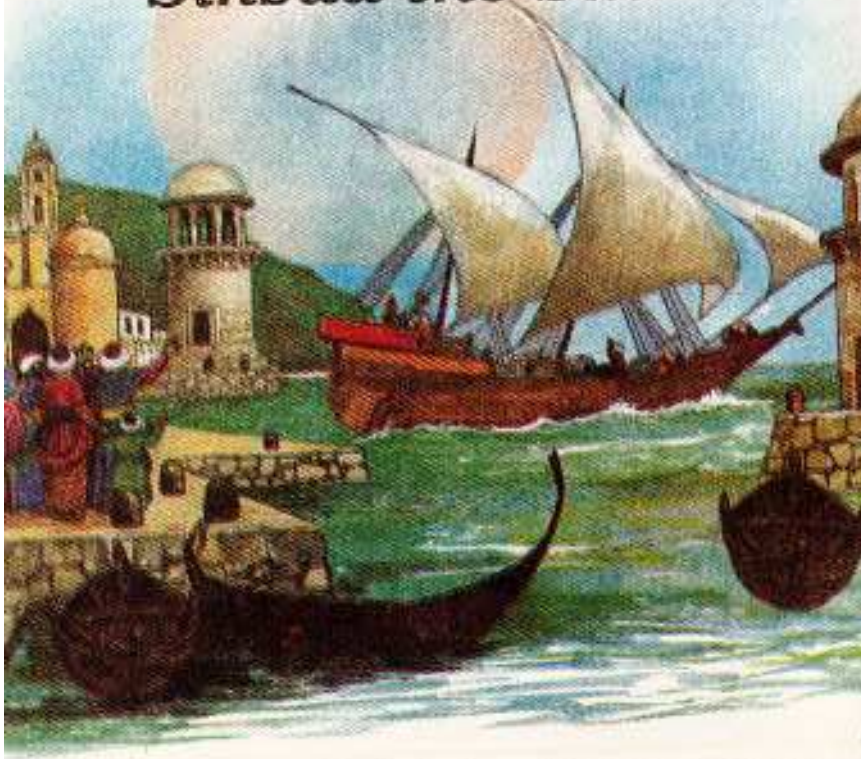
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22-A/1, Bhola Nath Nagar, Shahdara
Delhi-110032.

Price Rs. 12.00

The First Voyage of Sinbad the Sailor



My name is Sinbad. I am the son of a rich Baghdad merchant. He left me a fortune when he died. I soon learned to live like a King. I wore the finest clothes, gave great feasts in my many houses and bought my friends precious presents. Never did I worry about how much I was spending. I lived a grand life for many years. But one day I went

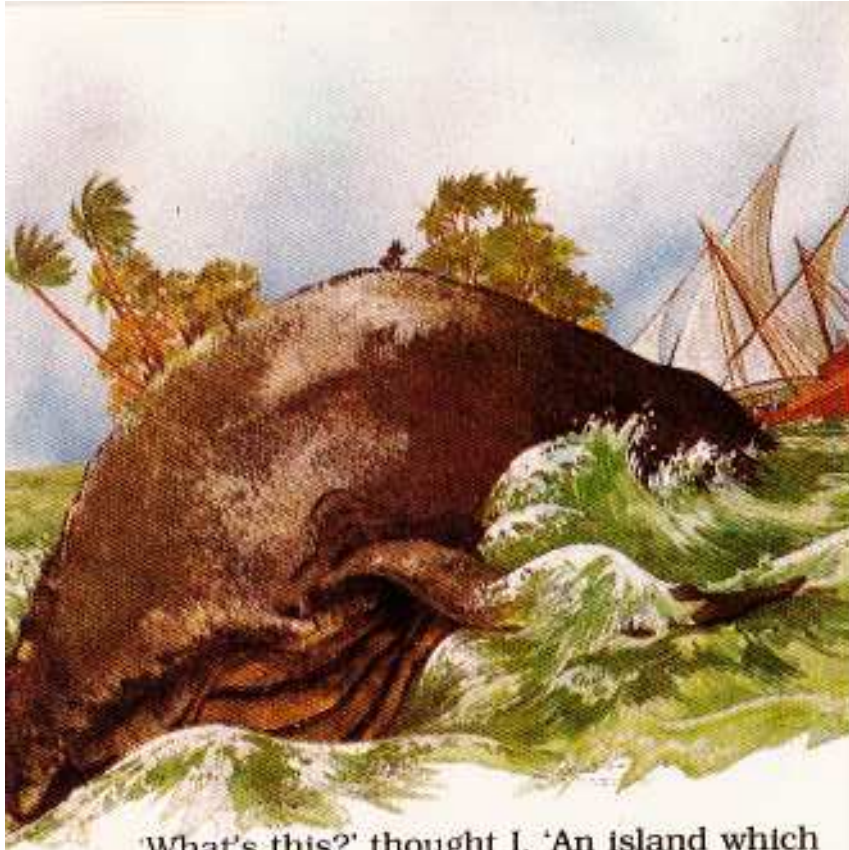
to my treasure chest and found it was empty. Allah, forgive me, I had wasted all my father's wealth.

What could I do? I decided to become a travelling merchant myself and sail the seas in search of trade. I spent my last few coins on buying sacks of nutmeg, ginger, cloves and other rare spices. I packed them securely in bales and found a ship to take me on my travels.

We set sail from Baghdad early one morning. All my family and friends came to see me off and wish me good fortune. I wondered when I would see them again.

We sailed for many days and nights, stopping at small islands to buy and sell cargo. But as we journeyed further we saw no land at all. Then one day when we were far out to sea, we spotted a strange island. Only a few trees grew on it and it had no beach. Nevertheless, our ship dropped anchor and we went ashore.

What an odd island it was. The land glistened like black ebony. I went off to explore while the others lit a fire to cook a meal. No sooner had the flames begun to flicker than something very strange happened. You might not believe this, but the island shuddered and shook.



'What's this?' thought I. 'An island which moves.'

At that moment someone still aboard the ship shouted out in alarm.

"Run for your lives! It's not an island. It's a huge fish!"

Upon my life, it was indeed a fish. It had been lying in the shallow water so long that trees had grown on its back. The fire had awoken the great creature and now it was



swimming off to deeper waters.

We all ran back towards the ship as fast as we could. Most of the crew reached safety but my exploration had taken me further afield. The fish sank too quickly for me. "Help!" I cried, the water rising over my scampering feet. Slowly I began to sink as the island monster vanished.

"Allah, save me." I cried. Struggling to keep my head above water, I waved frantically towards the ship. But no one saw me. The Captain, fearing I had drowned, had already raised his sails and was putting out to sea. My spirits fell as I watched the ship disappear over the horizon.

"I have been left to drown," I grieved. "This is the end for Sinbad the Sailor." I would have drowned but just then I saw a plank of wood

floating past. I swam over to it and clambered aboard. I found I could sit astride the plank, riding it like a horse.

I paddled with my hands for a while but soon darkness fell. I was alone on the black ocean. What a night I pent. My strength was almost gone. I could hardly hold onto the plank. And worse was to come! All night fish nibbled at my toes. I was sure that any moment a big fish would pass by and swallow me in one bite.

But at last dawn signalled a new day and with it came a wonderful sight. There in the distance was an island. Green grass and leafy trees ran down to the water's edge.

'This is no fish pretending to be an island,' I thought, my spirits lifting. The winds blew me towards it and I fell ashore exhausted. I was asleep before I could count how many toes had been nibbled by the fish.

When I awoke I went in search of food. I found some fruit bushes and ate my fill. My strength slowly returned. But what should I do next?

'Where am I?' I wondered. 'Does trapped here forever?' My questions were answered by the sound of horses' hooves. Racing down the beach galloped the finest white mares I had ever seen. All were without riders, except

one.

"Help!" I cried. The rider was very surprised to see me. I was so bedraggled that I hardly looked like a man at all.

"Are you a man, a beast or a fish?" he asked. "Who or what are you?"

It did not take me long to convince him that I was a man and in need of help. "I was lost from my ship," I said. "It was only Allah's kindness which saw me safely here. Where am I?"

"You are in the kingdom of Mihrjan," the man replied. "These are the King's horse, which I exercise every day. Come, I will take you to the city."

The man helped me onto one of the horses and we galloped off. When we reached the





city I was taken to see the King. He gave me a hearty welcome and I told him my story.

"By Allah, it is a miracle you were saved from the sea," he exclaimed. "The Gods have protected you well."

The King and I became friends and he made me Master of his harbour. There I noted down the names of all the ships which arrived and listed the cargo they brought. As each ship dropped anchor, my hopes rose. I yearned to bear news of my family in Baghdad. But all the ships came from strange and faraway lands.

"O Sinbad," I said to myself. "this will teach



you to go to sea."

The weeks passed and I gave up all hope of ever seeing my home again. Then one morning I saw the greatest sight I had ever seen. Into the harbour sailed the very ship from which I had been lost. I leapt aboard and found the Captain.

"It is I, Sinbad," I cried.

But the Captain did not believe me. "You look like Sinbad," he agreed, "but Sinbad is dead. He drowned at sea. I have brought my ship here to sell his bales of goods. Whatever I get for them I will give to his family."

"They are my bales," I said. "You cannot sell them. They belong to Sinbad. And I am Sinbad!" I told the Captain all that had happened to me since the ship had left me behind.

I even showed him where the fish had bitten my toes. At last he believed me.

"Sinbad, it is you," he said. "You are the luckiest sailor on the seas." The Captain immediately ordered my bales to be returned to me.

I opened one and, choosing the rarest spices from my cargo, took a small quantity to the King as a present for his kindness.

"This is indeed a rare gift," said the King. "It would fetch a great price in the bazaar because it does not grow on our island."

The next day I took all my bales to the bazaar and sold everything I had. My purse was filled with a hundred gold pieces. I was rich again.

I decided it was time to return home. The



King was sad to see me go but he gave me new treasures to take with me: boxes of silks and fine wines. The voyage back to Baghdad passed safely and my family and friends were



delighted to see me again.

"We thought you had been drowned at sea," they said.

I sold all the silks and wines. My treasure chest was full again. I bought a huge house. I filled it with treasures and settled down once more to a life of plenty. I feasted every night, gave my friends more presents and soon forgot about all the hardships and dangers of my first voyage. Even my toes healed.

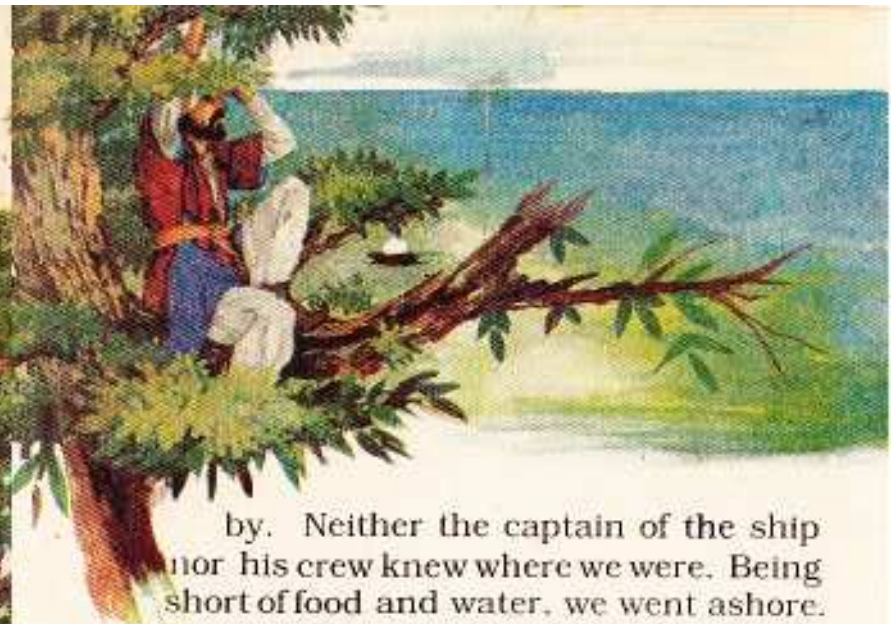
Yes, as the weeks passed, I grew tired of such a luxurious and comfortable life. 'I need adventure,' I thought. 'And, besides, soon my treasure chest will be empty again. I will board another ship and travel to distant lands to find my fortune.' And that is how I came to make my second voyage ...

The Second Voyage of Sinbad the Sailor

"O Sinbad, not do risk another voyage," warned my family. "Remember the dangers which befell you last time. Think time. What monsters are lying in wait for you now."

But I, Sinbad the famous sailor, would let nothing change my mind. I went to the bazaar and bought a fresh cargo of spices, herbs and other precious goods. Finding a ship bound for the distant Indies, I said farewell to my family and sailed away again.

We did not see land for many weeks. Then one morning we awoke to find an island close



by. Neither the captain of the ship nor his crew knew where we were. Being short of food and water, we went ashore. What a paradise!! Leafy trees grew everywhere and the grass was as deep and soft as a feather bed. The flowers smelled sweetly and huge oranges and lemons grew on the bushes. The rivers ran deep with cool refreshing water. I went off to explore.

It was not long before I felt tired and lay down on a bed of grass to rest. "This must be heaven," said I.

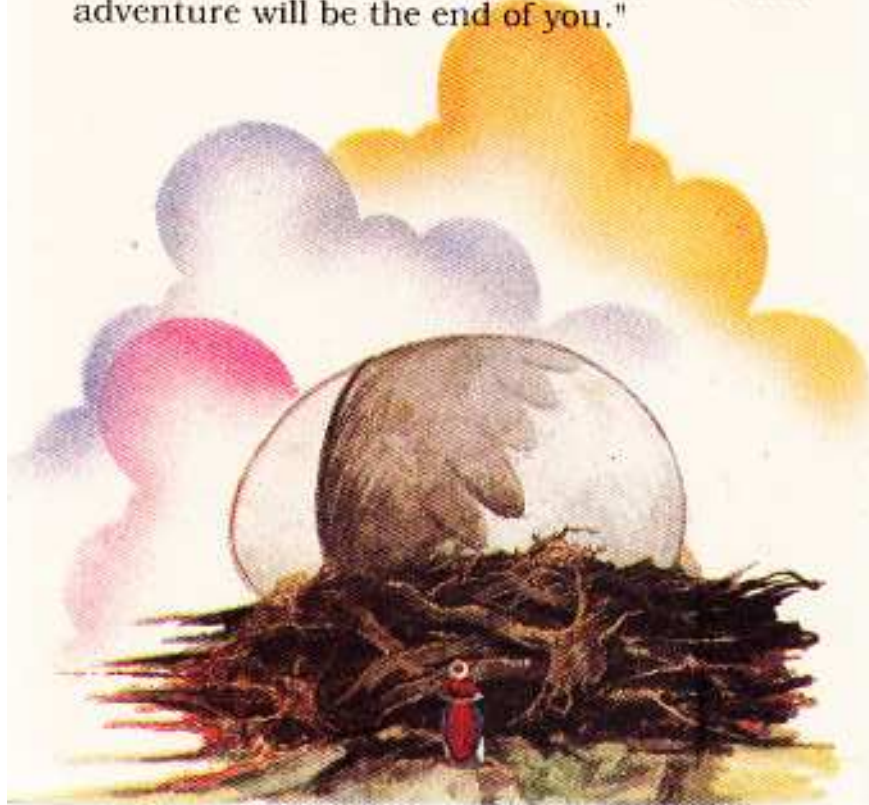
"Perhaps I will sleep awhile." I felt very drowsy with all the sweet smells in the air. Soon I was fast asleep, dreaming of my family back in Baghdad.

When I awoke I wondered where I was for a moment. It was evening and the island was

silent. Not a bird stirred, not a leaf on the trees moved. I climbed to my feet and looked around. I glanced towards the shore.

"My ship! My ship!" I cried in panic. I ran to the water's edge. The ship had sailed away. Even then I could see its distant sails clearly against the sinking sun. "They've left me behind," I sobbed. "I've been forgotten."

I watched as the ship finally vanished from view. "Alone again!" I cursed. "O Sinbad, why did you not stay at home with your friends. Allah saved you once, but this adventure will be the end of you."



I searched the island. Not one human being did I find. The place was deserted. Soon night fell and new terrors filled my head. What dreadful monsters would eat me as I slept. I dozed with one eye open all night and felt very relieved when dawn broke the next day.

I climbed the tallest tree I could find to get a better view of the island. My eye saw something gleaming at the heart of the lonely isle.

"A house!" I cried. "It must be a house."

I jumped from the tree and scampered off in the direction of what I had seen. I was sure I would soon find help. But when I reached the spot, I was puzzled. What a peculiar house it was. A circle of wooden branches surrounded a huge, white dome. It rose high in the air.

I walked around it, counting my steps. "A hundred paces," I marvelled. "A big house indeed, yet it has neither door nor windows."

I was still trying to find a way in when the sky darkened and a mysterious black shadow spread over me. I thought a thunder cloud had covered the sun. I looked up and saw that I was in mortal danger.

"Allah, be merciful!" I cried. There above my head was an enormous bird, its huge



wings hiding the whole sky. It was coming in to land, and if I was not mistaken, it had chosen my head as the very spot on which to settle.

I trembled as the flying monster descended. "It's a Roc!" I realised in terror. "A bird so large it feeds its young on elephants."

It was then that I understood what the circle of wood was, and the large dome. This was a nest and the dome was the Roc's egg. "Merciful Allah! I am about to be hatched," I cried. But the Roc took no notice of me and landed on the nest, settling on the egg. I was

pinned beneath one of the bird's legs. I dared not move. Each time the bird changed position to make itself more comfortable, its feathers tickled me. I pinched my nose to stop myself from sneezing. If it discovered me, I knew I was done for.

Then I realised the bird had fallen asleep and I began to think of escape. I had an idea. Trapped beneath the monster, I began to unwrap it to the Roc's leg and the other I wrapped around my waist. This is my only chance,' I thought. 'When the Roc takes off in the morning, perhaps it will carry me to another island.'

I stayed awake all night. In the morning the great bird awoke and stretched its wings. My heart was racing. Flap! Flap! Flap! The beating wings at last lifted the bird aloft. Hanging from the bird's foot, I rose into the air too. The Roc, so strong and powerful, did not notice its terrified passenger.

Together we soared high into the sky. The island below soon disappeared as we flew far out to sea. What a view I had! The whole world was laid out beneath me.

Presently the Roc began to descend. I saw another island. The bird flew towards it and landed. Bump! I saw stars as I hit the ground. Then I decided Sinbad the Sailor had been a bird long enough. I untied myself and



scrambled free. Just then I saw the bird's gaping beak dart at something in the undergrowth. I did not wait to see what it was. I ran for my life. I had not gone far when another dark cloud passed over my head.

It was the Roc again. It had taken off with its first meal of the day. A gigantic, writhing serpent hung from the bird's fierce talons. I was relieved to see both Roc and snake dis-



appear out to sea.

I looked around me. "What place is this?" I wondered. "What dreadful fate awaits me now?"

The gods did not disappoint me. I was in a deep valley which clearly had no way in and no way out. High mountains surrounded me. I sat down and sobbed again. "I'm trapped. Allah had forsaken me."

Then I noticed how my tears seemed to sparkle. I looked at the ground below me and was astonished to see that it was covered with diamonds. The precious gems lay scattered everywhere.

I realised then where I was. This was the legendary Valley of Diamonds. I had heard great explorers tell of it before. No man had set foot in the valley and come out alive. The story they told was that every diamond was guarded by a giant serpent.

I shivered with fear. But seeing no serpents, I forgot about my troubles for a moment and collected as many diamonds as I could carry. By evening my trousers and shirt bulged with the valuable stones.

I found a cave to hide for the night. There was a huge rock at its entrance. Once I was inside, I managed to roll it across. No serpent could sneak up on me now. I was safe. I settled down to sleep. My eyes were almost closed when I heard a movement at the bottom of the cave. I sat bolt upright and stared into the darkness, dreading what I might see. First two ghostly green lights appeared, quickly followed by several pairs of smaller ones.

"Merciful gods," I shrieked. "They are eyes! It's a serpent and her young." I scrambled to



the cave entrance and heaved at the rock. It rolled aside just as the serpent's hissing tongue was whipping at my ankles.

I fled for my life once more. Leaping, falling, rolling, I escaped down the hill to the valley floor. I was still running as fast as my quivering legs would carry me, when I felt something sharp catch my shirt.

"O Sinbad, this is the end," I howled. I was still running, but my feet were not touching the ground any more. I was flying in the air. I turned my head and saw the worst.

It was not a Roc this time but a great eagle. The creature had me firmly gripped in its talons. "O Allah, take my life now," I cried. "A giant Roc tries to crush me, huge serpents chase me and now an eagle will no doubt feed me to its young."

The eagle flew swiftly over the mountains and out to sea. I struggled to free myself from the bird's claws. I would rather have fallen to my death in the ocean than be torn to pieces in a nest of young eagles. But I was held firm.

I saw land approaching once more and prepared to meet my death. The bird swooped lower and lower. I saw its nest. Four hungry beaks pointed to the sky.

Just then I heard a shout. The ground was very close and I felt the eagle's wings jerk.



There was another shout and the bird's claws loosened their grip. One more shout and they released me. I tumbled through the air.

'What now?' I thought as I fell to earth. 'Perhaps an elephant will roll on me.' But there was a surprise in store for me. I fell straight into a thick, leafy bush. Standing beside it was a man, looking at me with very surprised eyes.

"Mysterious traveller, who are you?" he asked, as I climbed out of the bush realising that it was the man's shouts which had frightened the bird into dropping me.

"I am Sinbad the Sailor," I replied proudly. "And this, I hope, is the happy end of my adventures." I told the man my story and he was truly amazed.

"You are indeed a lucky man," he said. "No one has ever escaped from the Valley of Diamonds."



Diamonds! I had forgotten all about them. I emptied my trousers and shirt. My huge collection of diamonds was safe. The man stared at the glittering pile.

"What jewels," he cried. "A king could not be richer."

At that moment I was more interested in finding my way home. "You shall have half of the diamonds if you can find a ship to carry me home," I said.

"It is easily done," he replied. "I am the captain of a ship visiting this island. We sail tomorrow. You will journey with us."

So I set sail for home again. On the way I traded my diamonds at many different islands. I was a rich man again. My family and friends welcomed me home and when they heard of my adventures, they made me promise never to set to sea again. I happily agreed and for many months I lived a splendid life in Baghdad. I became famous for my adventures and many important people came to feast with me and hear my stories. I grew lazy and fat.

Yet slowly, day by day, I grew uneasy and yearned to travel again. My family tried to persuade me against such folly, but I had already forgotten about the terrors of the Roc, the serpents and the eagle.