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URAL-BATUR

In the days of old, they say so,
Was a land unseen, unheard-of;
On the four sides by the waters
Was that desert land surrounded.
There the foot of man stepped never
But for Yanbirthe, an old man,
And old Yanbikah, his woman –
In that land the only people.
And all roads were open to them;
They forgot the land they came from,
They forgot where lay their country,
Where they'd left behind their parents,
Strangely that escaped their memory.
And they turned out the first-comers,
The first settlers on that island,
With no living soul around there,
Two of them, until the woman
Bore two sons unto her husband;
Shulgan was the elder son's name
And the younger one was Ural.
They saw none of other people,
Living four of them together,
Unconcerned with home and household,
Unconcerned with pots and kettles,
They did not bake, hung no copper;
That was how they all existed.
And they knew no ailment, nor Death,
And they used to say: "We bear Death
Ourselves to every live thing."
Not on horseback rode they hunting,
Nor did they take bows and arrows,
For they kept some beasts for hunting,
Treating all of them as equals,
Beasts of prey: a lion for riding,
And a pike to take out fishing,
And a falcon trained for falconing,
And a black leech to suck game blood.
Either it comes down from old times
Or from Yanbirthe it comes down,
But the olden custom has it
In that land unseen, unheard-of:
If a beast of prey they captured,
And the beast was of the male sex,
Both the old man and his woman
Would cut off the head and eat it,

And the remnants they would give up
Both to Shulgan and to Ural,
To their hound and to their lion,
To the pike and to the falcon;
If the beast of prey was female,
Both the old man and his woman
Would cut out the heart and eat it;
If they caught a beast with antlers,
They would set the black leech on it,
That it might suck all the blood out,
And would make a beverage of it.
As their children were maturing,
As their children took to hunting,
The old people did not let them
Eat the game's head, eat the game's heart,
They did not allow their children
To taste wild game blood and drink it,
"This you must not do!" they ordered.
Growing daily, growing weekly,
Both the children grew judicious.
Only twelve years old was Shulgan,
And ten years of age was Ural.
"I will ride the lion", one said,
"I'll go falconing", said the other.
As no rest they gave their father,
Yanbirthe admonished saying,
"You, my sons, my dearest children,
You, black pupils of my own eyes,
Till your milk teeth all have dropped out,
Till you are strong enough in body,
You should handle not the sukmar²,
You should not go hunting, falconing,
You should never ride the lion,
For your time is due to come yet,
Meanwhile eat what I deliver,
Meanwhile do as you are ordered,
Master riding – saddle a roe-buck,
Master falconing – set the falcon
On a flock of nearby starlings.
If a-playing you feel thirsty,
Drink fresh water, do not taste blood,
Dare not drink it from the mussels."
Thus old Yanbirthe instructed
And forebade again his children
To quench thirst with blood of wild game.
Once the old man and his woman
Were away as usual hunting,
While at home stayed both their children.
And to while away the long time,
Since the parents went a-hunting,
The two boys were busy talking
And discussing various subjects,
And they talked of food and drink, too.
Shulgan knew, of course, their father
Had forbidden them to taste blood,

“Dare not drink!” the old man told them,
 Yet, on some consideration,
 He began inciting Ural,
 And he spoke to him in this wise:
 “Should it really be no pleasure
 To slay living things in hunting,
 Should blood really be not sweet drink,
 Then our father and our mother
 Would not sacrifice their night sleep,
 Sparing neither time nor effort,
 Tired and exhausted, would not
 Day by day go out a-hunting,
 Leaving us to ourselves here.
 If I am not mistaken, Ural,
 Let us take the blood-filled mussels
 And from each let’s take a little,
 Let us know the taste of blood now.”
 Ural said: “My father’s order
 I’ll fulfill and do my duty.
 And the taste of blood I’ll relish
 After learning the traditions,
 After rounding the entire world,
 After I have made quite certain
 That on Earth there is no dying,
 That the world knows not what Death is,
 And I will not slay a live thing
 With a sukmar in my right hand,
 When I’m thirsty I will not quench
 Thirst with blood sucked by the black leech
 And filled full into the mussels.”
 Shulgan said: “Death that is stronger
 Than mankind will not come hither
 And will never find our home place.
 By the phrase of our father,
 That he’s constantly repeating,
 ‘We bear Death to every live thing.’
 He has told us this beforehand,
 If it is so, why be fearful,
 Why so dread a gulp of blood-drink?”
 Ural said to him in this wise:
 “There are beasts both fast and frisky,
 Stately-shapen, strong in body,
 Cautious, quick-eared in the day-time,
 And at night they sleep a light sleep.
 Spotted leopards, lions, red deer,
 Bears, as well as other creatures
 Are not any worse than we are.
 A wild beast may have a bad hoof
 Or a bad paw cut with dry grass,
 Still they’re never lame in this leg,
 And in summer heat they never
 Have to take off their fur clothing,
 Icy winter-storms will hardly
 Make them put on any clothing,
 Never do they hold a sukmar,

Never set a falcon on game-bird,
 And they never need a hunter
 To be set on fur and feather,
 Need no pike to go a-fishing.
 Of the beasts of prey there’s no one
 They depend on for their living,
 Only fangs and claws as weapons,
 Thus themselves they have to count on,
 And they know not what fatigue means,
 What it means to dread and tremble.
 Thus it is their way of living,
 Both of lions and of leopards.
 But for all their upright courage,
 But for awe in which they keep flesh,
 Yet, their paws with rope entangled,
 With a knife pressed to their gorges,
 Won’t their eyes drop tears like humans,
 Won’t their hearts with terror flutter!
 But the Fierce Death that they’re scared of,
 One of which reminds our father,
 Never has been seen around here.
 It is humankind that is Death!
 Do not all wild creatures think so?
 Here the pike goes hunting roaches,
 And the marmot hunts the gopher,
 And the vixen hunts the field hare,
 And it’s true of every live thing,
 Once you start to think it over:
 Is not Fierce Death triumphant always
 Over those who are the weaker?
 We catch creatures scared of dying,
 Diving fish in deep blue waters,
 Wood-birds twittering on high rocks,
 Flying off when they are frightened,
 After catching eat their heads off,
 And their chests we tear asunder,
 So we may devour their hearts too,
 And we think we are superior!
 We enjoy to hunt the weaker,
 Having introduced the custom,
 Having sowed Death in this country
 In the same ferocious nature,
 All the live think that the humans
 Are the most atrocious creatures,
 The undoing of the living!
 Should their fangs turn into sukmars
 And their hearts into bold falcons,
 Should they gather all united,
 Fall upon us all together,
 Can it be that Death Ferocious
 Of which father has been saying
 Then will make here an appearance?”
 Although Shulgan answered nothing,
 Lost in thought he seemed, but truly
 He did not heed Ural’s warning,

But instead he took the mussels,
 Sipped some blood and made his brother
 Promise never to betray him.
 With a plenteous bag their parents
 Came back home from hunting, fishing,
 And, respecting the tradition,
 To the meal they sat together,
 Four of them, and started eating,
 After tearing up the wild game.
 And while eating Ural thought hard,
 Then he spoke and said in this wise:
 "Father, yonder lies the body
 Of the beast you chased and slaughtered,
 Of the beast that vainly scampered
 As you did attain your target,
 As you thrust your knife into him.
 Can a living thing come hither,
 Knife in hand, and slay us likewise?"
 And the old man said: "We bear Death
 Ourselves to all the living,
 Whose death hour's struck already.
 And whatever rooks and thickets
 Game may try to skulk and hide in,
 All the same we come and find them,
 Thrusting our knives into them.
 But to chase a human being,
 Knife him dead and eat his body
 There is someone to be born yet,
 And no Death can yet undo us.
 This land Death has never haunted,
 But the country whence we come from,
 But the land of our forefathers
 Death would constantly revisit,
 Till one day a dread-dev³ came there,
 Made away a lot of people,
 Eating them all young and living,
 And the land was flushed by waters,
 With no single spot of dry ground.
 Those whose lives were spared would hasten
 To forsake the land for ever,
 Leaving Death behind them raging,
 For there was no soul to ruin.
 Death thought no one could escape Him
 And did not behold your parents
 Flee away and hide in this land,
 In the land unseen, unheard-of,
 Where the foot of man stepped never,
 Where pursuit would be unlikely,
 Where was scarce both fur and feather
 At the time we settled down here,
 And the ground was damp and sodden
 From the pools and swamps all over."
 Ural said: "O father, tell me:
 Can a person seek and trace Death,
 Can one find and liquidate Him?"

Answered Yanbirthe: "This Evil
 Is invisible to man's eye,
 And unnoticed is His motion.
 There's but one thing that can ruin Him:
 In the country of the dev-shah⁴
 Babbling spurts a spring of magic.
 Any man that tastes its water,
 So they say, becomes immortal
 And to Death will not be subject."

That was what Yanbirthe said about Death.
 Upon finishing his meal he brought the mussels to
 have some blood. Old Yanbirthe saw that they we-
 re half-empty and tried to find out which of his
 sons had been drinking. Shulgan lied to him
 saying, "No one has been drinking!" Old
 Yanbirthe took his cudgel and began to beat his
 both sons taking turns. Despite this Ural, who was
 sorry for his brother, held on his tongue, but
 Shulgan gave way and admitted his guilt. When
 Old Yanbirthe took up beating Shulgan, Ural held
 his father by the arm and spoke in this wise:

"Pray, yourself remember, father,
 In your hand you have a cudgel,
 That once used to be a sapling,
 But you've stripped it of its young rind,
 And have blunted out the edges,
 Turning it into a dry stick.
 Ere you cut off this young sapling
 In a wood it had been growing,
 Quietly swaying in a light breeze,
 With its green leaves gently quivering
 And with buzzing bees upon them,
 Taking turns with chirping birdies,
 As the chirping birds would pick up
 Twigs to build nests for their chickens.
 Yes, a nice tree it was sometime!
 Through its roots, in all ways sprawling,
 It was able, like a baby,
 From the ground to suck out moisture
 Hitherto, and now it's cut off,
 Severed from its native kin-root,
 Clear of twigs and knots and young rind;
 It looks more like your stone-hammer,
 Like a falcon for bird-catching,
 Like a pike that goes a-fishing,
 Like a leech that sucks out game-blood,
 Like a hound well-trained for fowling,
 Turning thus into a cudgel!
 Wiping sweat off from your forehead,
 You have lived a long life, father,
 But of Death, the greatest evil,
 You know not the evil aspect,
 In your heart you cannot feel Him.
 If you smite this child again now,

Does it not mean that a parent
 Will be ready in his own home
 To abandon his own children,
 For to show how Death goes over,
 From the stronger to the weaker,
 From a father to a sapling?
 If today you slay my brother,
 If you slay myself tomorrow,
 In your old age you'll be lonely,
 You shall waste away, grow crooked,
 No more fit to ride your lion,
 Fit no more to go a-hunting,
 To go falconing no longer,
 Never any longer able
 To provide your beasts with foodstuff,
 So your lion, and your falcon,
 And your bloodhound, and your black leech,
 Being famished and exhausted,
 With their blood-shot eyes will watch you,
 So your hungry riding-lion
 Will run riot in a fury,
 Break his leash and fall upon you,
 Bend you down to tear to pieces,
 What is to become of you then?
 Will you not have, my dear father,
 To give welcome in your own home
 To the Evil named Death-Villain?"

On hearing this old Yanbirthe stopped beating Shulgan as he thought: "Death may come unseen. Probably, He is here tempting me. It cannot be that no one has ever encountered Death. It is necessary to assemble fur and feather and make inquiries." And he summoned them, and they assembled, and Ural addressed them in this wise, as the story goes:

"Let us recollect together
 All the aspects of Death-villain.
 Why not give up the tradition
 That the stronger eat the weaker?
 Of your kin and kindred someone
 Always will refrain from blood-drink,
 Tasting neither blood, nor live flesh,
 Making no one cry ere dying.
 Some eat roots and others green grass,
 This is just their way of living:
 Rearing, bringing up their young ones,
 That their young may be devoured
 By some beast of prey, flesh-eater,
 Thus with Death they are acquainted.
 And they don't befriend bloodsuckers,
 Do not mix with wild flesh-eaters.
 Let us put an end to Evil,
 Death that walks alone among us
 We shall find and do away with!"
 Shulgan and the beasts flesh-eaters

Were against this proposition,
 And they spoke their minds expanding,
 And the raven said as follows:
 "I am not afraid to trace Death,
 But to capture and deliver it
 I will never take upon me.
 Long on Earth as I have existed
 But I've no concerns in chasing.
 And to tell you in addition:
 If the stronger hunt no longer,
 If the weaker hide no longer,
 If no offspring of a mother
 Is to die, I find it no good.
 If on Earth both trees and bushes
 Change their nature altogether,
 Shedding all their green no longer,
 When they are frosted in the autumn,
 What's the good of it for living?
 Fancy beasts such as the grey hare,
 Propagating every half-year,
 Nibbling, eating all the verdure,
 Feeding in the night and day-time,
 Fancy other beasts all over,
 Roaming round in quest of green food,
 Fancy various fowls of feather,
 Here the swan and here the wild goose,
 In a river all at one time
 Bathing, diving, splashing water,
 Covering the water-surface.
 If no longer flow the waters,
 Washing river-banks no longer,
 And this usage stands for ever,
 Then this awkward situation
 May cause trouble and commotion,
 For the fowl, in water splashing.
 If the springs well up no longer,
 If the water becomes rotten,
 There is nothing left but perish,
 For there'll be no food for eating,
 And to drink there'll be no water.
 I have risked my head in battle,
 Often making wasteful efforts,
 I've seen hardship, thirst and famine,
 Yet, for all my need and hardships,
 In this world I cannot keep on,
 If I get no blood for drinking,
 If I get no flesh for eating,
 If I peck not once in three days
 In the eyelids of some carrion.
 So I cannot go to search Death,
 Cannot pledge my word to do it."
 Said the magpie: "Anybody
 Who is so afraid to meet Death
 Will be striving for salvation,
 Those who're after propagating

Will go looking for a fit place.”
 And this judgment was approved of
 By the tiger, and the panther,
 By the wolf, the ounce, the lion,
 By the pike-fish with his death-bite,
 But the animals grass-eaters,
 The grey duck, the crane, the wild goose,
 The black-cock, the quail, the partridge
 Set themselves upon their nestlings,
 Thinking they would settle in thickets,
 Peacefully to hatch their fledgelings,
 Till the latter became stronger,
 Till they learned to use their pinions,
 Till the summer was not over,
 They preferred at large to fatten.
 Like the wild goat, and the red deer.
 And the brown-faced hare kept silent,
 Not a word articulated,
 Taking great pride in his hind legs,
 And the starling, and the sky-lark,
 And the daw, the crow, the sparrow,
 Who ate aught and nothing special,
 Were, of course, ashamed to cut in.
 “I’ve no nest,” thus said the cuckoo,
 “I have no concern of nestlings
 And agree with those who cherish,
 All those pining for their dearest,
 Those whose children are their heart-blood,”
 Thus it was the cuckoo spoke out.
 Thus they spoke their hearts and argued,
 But they never reached agreement,
 Unanimity among them,
 Till it was the time to break up.
 And thenceforth became the old man
 Cautious, wary, on the look-out,
 By himself he never went out.
 Once they four of them together
 Went a-hunting, went a-fishing,
 Stepped their feet on trails and pathways,
 With a bagful, with a big catch
 Coming back home glad and gleeful.
 Of their prey there was a white swan,
 And the old man had it tied up,
 Set his knife sharp and was going
 To behead the white swan quickly,
 But the white swan started wailing,
 Wept and eased her heart as follows:
 “I have flown the world all over,
 As no common fowl of feather,
 But I’m not a homeless orphan,
 For far off I’ve got my homeland.
 When the whole Earth was a desert,
 Where the foot of man stepped never,
 Never could my father match-mate,
 For on Earth there was no mating

As he could not choose his equal
 Among alien stocks and families.
 So he flew into the heaven,
 Set on finding his beloved mate,
 And, while picking out his dearest,
 He admired the Sun at day-time,
 And he loved the Moon at night-time,
 Spelling both the luminaries,
 He, that bears the name of Samrau⁵,
 He, the head of all the bird stocks,
 And the padishah⁶ among them,
 And the father of two children,
 Knowing neither mischief, nor death.
 Let me go, pray, to my homeland,
 Back where lies my native country.
 If you tear my flesh to pieces,
 If you chew me up and swallow,
 I’ll be ill food for your stomach
 That will never be digested,
 For I am the Sun’s own daughter,
 One whose mother-sun gets water
 From the Spring of Life to wash me,
 Ere her sunrays fall to dry me.
 Let me go, because my father
 All the same will find a way here
 And will come to help me, Homai⁷,
 Shah Samrau’s begotten daughter.
 Letting down my hair of sunrays
 I can sweep away this country,
 With the sun-rays in the day-time
 And at night-time with the moonlight.
 Let me go back to my homeland;
 In reward for this I’ll show you
 To the Spring of Life the passage.”

On hearing this old Yanbirthe and his old woman Yanbikah turned to their sons for advice. Shulgan claimed that they must eat the bird and Ural thought they had better let her go, so they had a row. Ural snatched the swan out of Shulgan’s hands and laid her aside. “Cheer up, I shall have a snack now and take you to your parents!” he consoled her. As soon as they sat down to table the swan waved her right wing, dropping three pinions. She besmeared them with blood oozing from her broken wing and the three pinions were changed into three swans who took away Homai, the swan-maid.

Old Yanbirthe and his sons wished they had inquired of the way to the Spring of Life. Then the old man told Shulgan and Ural to follow the birds and search for the Spring of Life, and, if they encountered Death on their way, they were to

chop off His head and bring it home. He helped his sons to mount the lion and saw them off.

So together on their lion,
Counting days and years, the brothers
Over rock and over river,
Thorough brake and thorough forest,
As the story goes, rode forward.
And one day they saw a river,
With a grey-haired old man seated
In the shadow of a lone tree
Growing singly by the river;
In his hand he held a long staff.
First they all exchanged their greetings,
Then the grey-haired elder asked them
Where they headed for and wherefore.
As he learned of their assignment,
Long the old man meditated,
Long his snow-white beard caressing,
Closely stared at them and uttered,
Pointing out toward a crossroad:
“You can see two roads before you.
If you take the left-hand passage,
You shall have but gladsome tidings.
Day and night at peace together
Mirthful, gleeful are at meadow
Both the grey wolf and the grey sheep,
And the wood chicks live rejoicing
Side by side with thicket foxes,
Just like friends who never quarrel.
Swan-shah Samrau rules this country,
Rules the land that you are seeking,
No blood-drinkers, nor flesh-eaters,
Evil-Death completely shut out,
For they keep up the tradition:
It is good that pays for good deeds.
If you take the right-hand passage,
You shall find but wails and moaning.
This is the notorious country
Ruled by Katil⁸ the Ferocious.
From Shah Katil and his servants
All year round the people suffer,
And there seems no end to wailing,
For with bones the ground is covered,
For with blood the ground is soaked wet.”
Thus they learned of the hereafter,
Thought it over and decided:
They must cast the die to tell them
Of the roads they were to follow.
Shulgan’s was the right-hand passage,
Thus it was his lot had fallen,
But he nonetheless objected.
“I am older,” he explained so,
“So the left-hand road is for me,”
Thus it was he said departing.

Ural had to take the right-hand,
Striding over stream and mountain,
And the way lay long before him.
But at length he reached a mount-foot,
Where he saw an aged woman,
With her bare back all in blood-wales
Slashed, disfigured, mutilated,
And it looked as if a fierce wolf
Long had preyed upon the stranger,
As with chaps her legs were covered,
As her legs were like a hen’s legs,
And it looked that she had long delved
In the soil for roots to feed on,
And her hollow cheeks were sallow,
Like frost-bitten grass her lips were,
Withered muscles on her both calves
Looked like seams and sears on hewed
wood,
And her knobby knee-joints stood out.
Clinging to this wreck of woman,
Either terrified or bashful,
Stood a lovely sunburnt maiden.
As her hair fell o’er her shoulders,
To the waist her back it covered,
And her arms and legs were shapen
Beautifully, as if chiselled
Out of wood, and like a falcon
Who had had a feast on game-bird
She looked stately with her high breast,
And her eyes were like blue waters,
Shining brightly through the rushes,
And she had a slender figure,
With a small waist like a bee has.
On approaching Ural hailed her,
“Never fear me, you fair maiden.
I come from a far-away land
Where I set out on this journey
As a child and have been growing
On my way through many countries.
Never do I harm to people,
Never spill blood, nor do evil,
And the Evil of Death I’ll finish.
Come here, tell me where you come from.”
As he spoke they smiled at Ural,
Standing up, the elder woman
Smoothed her grey hair, long, dishevelled,
And behind her ears adjusted.
As she straightened herself a little,
Eyes wide open, the old woman
Spoke to him and said in this wise:
“So you are here from afar-off,
And you mean no harm to people.
Woe is us, oh, that you knew things,
Things the way they stand around here,
Oh, that you saw with your own eyes

Katil-padishah's misdoings!
 Every year he holds the choosing,
 Choosing out the best and gifted,
 Men and women, youths and maidens,
 And he chooses them regardless
 Of their age, it does not matter.
 Hand and foot he gets them tied up,
 And escorted to his palace,
 To have maids at his disposal,
 To give yegets⁹ to his daughter,
 While the padishah's retainers
 Are content with the remainder.
 But the rest of these, leftovers,
 They spare not for all their wailing,
 To the lake they draw fair maidens,
 Though they be both hale and hearty,
 As an offering of man's blood
 And as giving honour yearly
 To his birthday and his idols.
 Of the dozen of my children
 Four in such wise have been taken,
 With five more drowned in the water,
 And my husband has gone frantic,
 For it's more he could put up with,
 Losing nine of our young ones.
 Once beside himself with passion
 He stood up for our children
 And attacked a shah's retainer,
 But the same day he was dug in,
 Dug alive into the black ground.
 Though my last, my youngest daughter
 Came through, spared of the misfortune,
 Vengefully the shah's retainer
 Claims to have my daughter for him.
 There is no one like her for me,
 So we both fled to the forest,
 Joining all the other mothers,
 With their children and escaped men,
 Hiding out there in the thicket,
 Shedding floods of tears and wailing.
 With your kind heart free of hatred
 Go no farther, my good yeget,
 I entreat you, go no farther,
 For this is a bloody country."
 "Many pathways have I trodden,
 Stridden over stream and mountain,
 And wherever Death is hiding
 Years spent in my searching for Him,
 And until I've found and slain Him,
 And until I've chopped His head off
 And fulfilled my pledge of honour –
 Put an end to Death for ever,
 I will not bear the name Ural!"
 Thus it was he said departing,
 Having got upon his lion,

Making for Shah Katil's winning.
 Riding quickly in a few days
 He came on a crowd of people;
 Closely side by side in long lines
 They were standing stripped of clothing,
 And like twins alike the men were,
 And the women separated
 From the men were likewise lined too,
 Katil-shah's men being busy
 Dressing all the ranks by shoving
 And by lashing their bare bodies.
 Of the lashed no one protested,
 No one dared to, gripped by terror.
 Ural rode up there and took in
 At a glance the busy maithan¹⁰.
 Not far off, beyond those lined up
 Stood their parents holding babies,
 Overwhelmed, distraught with sorrow,
 Waving with their hands and wailing,
 Salt tears streaming down their faces.
 Ural asked them what had happened,
 Ere reporting of his mission,
 And they all attended to him,
 And a looker-on, an old man,
 Spoke to him and said in this wise:
 "Yeget, judging from the marvel,
 Hate wherewith you look around you,
 From this lion you are riding,
 I believe you are a stranger.
 Great-shah Katil rules this country
 With the help of his retainers,
 Who are all of various kindreds,
 And they practise celebrating
 Every year Shah Katil's birthday,
 When in honour of his parents,
 And the well wherein the babe-shah
 Had a bathe upon his first day,
 As a matter of convention
 There's an offering of blood made.
 Katil-great-shah's battle standard
 Bears the picture of a raven.
 Once a year they feed such ravens,
 Those black ravens watching closely,
 Have you seen before such ravens?
 As the ravens scent their feast-prey,
 They will perch upon a high rock
 For to watch the fairest maidens,
 Dragged and drowned into the shah's well,
 Drowned before and then dragged outward,
 With their bodies strewn all over
 For the birds to feast upon them,
 Tied up hand and foot, the yegets
 Of good stock and reputation.
 For herself one of these yegets
 Picks the daughter of the great-shah,

For himself picks Katil servants,
 Sacrificing the remainder
 To the dreadful monster Tangry¹¹.
 Hardly had the old man finished
 His so sorrowful narration,
 When the daughter of the great-shah
 Came in sight on her sedan-chair,
 Gilded chair borne by her carriers,
 Walking each of them on each side,
 Close behind a Turah¹² followed,
 In the rear he followed marching,
 And it was announced in public,
 As the train went past the people:
 "Everyone rejoice, make merry,
 Hither comes the great-shah's daughter!"
 Some unsparingly were beaten,
 As they failed to keep the order.
 And while Ural, silent, speechless,
 Stood in line with other yegets,
 At the maithan stepped the daughter
 Of the shah and started choosing,
 Walking slowly past the yegets
 Gathered for examination.
 There was no one to her liking,
 And she could not pick among them,
 Till she stopped short before Ural,
 Cast a knowing glance upon him,
 Meanwhile giving him an apple,
 Thus her picking discontinued.
 Then she motioned to her servant
 To take Ural to her chamber
 And, remounting her sedan-chair,
 Gilded chair with the four carriers,
 Ordered going to the palace.
 "Katil's daughter likes the yeget,
 Katil's son-in-law he'll make soon!"
 Thus the maithan raised an uproar
 And the great-shah's servants bustled,
 Trying to disperse the gathering
 And instructing Ural: "Yeget,
 The princess is waiting for you,
 So go straight into the palace."
 Trying hard to give directions,
 Someone offered walking Ural
 To the palace, thus remarking,
 "You are our son-in-law now,"
 Patting Ural on the shoulder
 With a flattering affection.
 Ural, though, would not accept it.
 "Unaware of local customs,
 I must see how matters stand first.
 If some day I feel like mating,
 To the palace I'll go forthwith,"
 Thus it was the yeget answered,

Thus refusing the suggestion.
 Of the yeget's downright answer
 Katil's servants turned resentful,
 Straightway sent word to the maiden.
 In the meantime to the maithan
 Came himself the great-shah Katil.
 Running high was his excitement,
 When, preceded by his heralds,
 By four baturs closely circled
 On his slave-borne high sedan-chair,
 Like a camel raving, raging,
 Like a he-bear, huge, blood-thirsty,
 With his bloodshot eyes all swollen,
 And ferocious in his anger,
 With a nape fit for a wild-boar,
 And his legs quite elephantine,
 With his paunch puffed out and ugly,
 Like a saba¹³ filled with kumiss¹⁴,
 All and sundry bowing to him,
 Katil-shah made his appearance,
 As it was his turn to choose now.
 And he sorted out them, saying,
 While he walked along, in this wise:
 "Here's a good hand for the palace,
 There's one good enough for burning."
 After he was through with men-slaves,
 He selected beauteous maidens,
 And, examining a beauty,
 Thus he said to a retainer:
 "See the teeth," and touched her bosom,
 Stroked her waist, until she buried
 In her hands her blushing visage.
 "She is fitting for the palace,
 See the rest and take the best ones,
 Take as many as may please you,"
 Ordered he to his retainer.
 "Now in honour of my mother
 In the well drown the remainder,
 Drown wherein I had my first bathe,
 My first bathe upon my birthday."
 In the meantime came his daughter
 And, approaching Ural, told him
 Words of ire that reproached him:
 "You're the one that I have chosen,
 And in token of my fair choice
 I have given you the apple,
 Making you my man and equal,
 But my love-couch thus disdainng,
 You've rejected my proposal,
 And before my father's servants
 You have shamed my face, besmirched it!"
 At her ireful reproving
 From his gilded chair rose Katil,
 "Of what kindred is the yeget
 That has so disgraced my daughter?"

He turned sputtering to Ural,
 Thus he spoke and said in this wise:
 "Hear, yeget, of my kindred
 And the name I bear – Shah Katil.
 Only too well wit all people,
 Those who are and aren't my subjects,
 Even beasts and birds of feather,
 Even dead men in their tomb-stones,
 Every living thing knows Katil.
 Like my own, my daughter's orders
 Are obeyed without delaying,
 Answer, how dare you disdain them,
 Disrespectful to my customs?"
 "I know not of any great-shah,
 Who calls slaying men a custom.
 Never have I seen this practice,
 Neither heard of it before now,
 In my ranging though the whole world,
 In my wandering around it.
 'Tis Death-Evil I am after,
 It is Death I strive to finish,
 And because I do not fear it,
 I do not fear monstrous customs.
 Death may come to any live thing,
 Lay His hand on any creature,
 Be it human being or fledgeling,
 But I will not stand by idly,
 Watching Life unjustly taken,
 Though before it at my leisure
 I can form my own opinion
 Through the lore of local customs."
 Ural's words brought home to Katil
 That the yeget was a stranger,
 While his men and his advisers
 Standing all around grew jealous
 Of their sovereign's daughter's option,
 Of the choice that was upon him.
 But the padishah grew furious
 And addressed his daughter saying,
 "Take not such a dolt as this one,
 Pine not for a good-for-nothing,
 Go back, daughter, to the palace,"
 As the story goes, he said thus.
 "Dare you not delay the offering,
 Throw these maids into the water,
 Make a bonfire of these yegets,
 Put this yeget into shackles
 And bring straightway to my chamber."
 Thus it was he told his batur,
 Occupying his sedan-chair,
 While his servants were preparing
 For to execute the doomed folks,
 Throwing some into the water,
 Burning others in the bonfire.
 As the people forced to face Death

Started wailing, started moaning,
 Forward Ural rushed and spoke thus:
 "I have pledged my word to end Death
 And to set free everybody
 Dying, suffering from the ruthless,
 The bloodthirsty dev-man-eater,
 With the water of the Life-Spring
 From the dead to raise all dead men!
 I was born a batur for this!
 Can a man born as a batur
 Stand by watching people suffer,
 Watching Death lay hands upon them,
 Take their lives before his own eyes?
 Can a miscreant scare a batur,
 Make him give way to the miscreant?"
 "Off, with ye, retainers," yelled he,
 "Get off the sedan, ye, Great-shah!
 I demand that all these maidens,
 All these slaves should be unfettered!"
 Hearing this Shah Katil puffed up,
 Flushed with rage, and cursed, and shouted,
 Then he spoke and said in this wise,
 "If he's after Death-Bloodthirsty,
 Let him see Death and remember,
 Let him bear in mind my country!"
 Menacingly Katil said thus,
 While his batur stepped out forward,
 All like he-bears, big and shaggy,
 And as huge as dev-man-eaters.
 "Will you fight or will you wrestle?
 Take your pick!" they said to Ural.
 Ural answered: "Better stay safe,
 Better think it over foremost!
 Find a mightier beast than you are!"
 At his words they roared with laughter:
 "What a fearless batur you are!"
 Thus they mocked, derided Ural,
 Both the shah and his retainers.
 Then the shah incensed immensely,
 And without a moment's thinking
 Ordered so: "If he's bloodthirsty,
 Bring the bull that props my palace,
 While you, batur, wait a little."
 Everyone was waiting, frightened,
 Having heard the shah pronounce it,
 Feeling sympathy for Ural,
 Thinking that he was a goner,
 And the great-shah's only daughter
 Came forth to beseech her father:
 "Stop it, father, pray, have mercy;
 'Pick your groom,' you said, did not you?
 As you gave me your permission,
 So I picked this yeget for me
 As my groom, my future husband,
 But you, father, never let me

Have a word with my own yeget.
 Stop it, father, pray, have mercy!”
 But for all her supplications
 He did not heed her entreaty,
 And, as heavy as a mountain,
 Sputtering in rage and pawing,
 Howling, down the bull came tearing.
 Stopping dead he looked at Ural,
 Turned his head a little sideways:
 “I will trample not upon you,
 Till you, rot, turn into ashes
 To be scattered by a windflow,
 High upon my horns I’ll lift you,
 High upon my horns I’ll dry you!”
 Thus it was the bull told Ural.
 “Listen, bull, I’m going to spare you,
 I will not be your undoing,
 Listen, bull, I’ll spare my efforts,
 I won’t waste my time upon you.
 That of all your fellow-mortals
 In the world man is the strongest
 And the master of your bull stock,
 I will make ye, bull, acknowledge.”
 Hearing this the bull grew furious,
 Rushed at Ural-batur, aiming
 High upon his horns to raise him.
 By his horns did Ural-batur
 Take the bull, who tried to pierce him,
 But for both his horns he could not
 Tear himself away from Ural,
 Sinking knee-deep in the black ground,
 And from great strain blood came spurting,
 From his mouth came dripping downward,
 And, his upper tooth out coming,
 He grew weaker, till he broke down.
 Side by side with his retainers
 Katil watched the bull defeated,
 With the utmost consternation,
 But the batur kept his promise,
 He was not the bull’s undoing,
 By the horns he tightly gripped him,
 Pulled his ground-stuck ankles outward,
 Set him steady on the firm ground,
 With his four hoofs cracked asunder,
 All cracked off and filled with red sand,
 Wet and soaked with blood his hoofs were.
 Ural said: “These horns I’ve bent now
 Shall be bent for ever henceforth.
 In your gap-toothed mouth another
 Upper tooth shall never spring up,
 And your fork-like hoofs shall never
 Close in and these sheer distinctions
 Your descendants shall inherit.
 Now that man’s power you have tested,
 Bear in mind – you are the weaker,

So don’t menace with horn-butting
 Man that’s fought and overcome you.”
 “Fall on him, you four together,”
 Katil signalled to his batur,
 Who addressed and questioned Ural:
 “Should you die the death of batur,
 Whither shall we pitch your body?
 Should you still survive and come through,
 Name the land where we could pitch you!”
 Thus one of the four said boasting.
 One against four mighty batur,
 Ural was not gripped by terror,
 But stepped forth and thus addressed them:
 “All the four of you, come over!
 Come and test me as a batur,
 Test the ranger, the Death-hunter!
 If you’re brave enough to kill me,
 Give my body to the lion,
 If you’re strong enough to pitch me,
 To the Spring of Life transport me!
 Let me question in my turn now:
 Where’s the place where I could dump you,
 Moth-like creatures in my power,
 Flapping, fluttering, apprehensive?
 After having smashed the dread-devs
 I will make a detour going
 To the Spring of Life for water
 And come back for your dead bodies
 Ground to dust, and for your moth souls,
 Clapsed in hand and panic-stricken!
 Whither shall I go to find you?”
 Whereupon they burst out laughing,
 “Come on us and throw in wrestling,
 To the shah’s and his suite’s pleasure
 Down toward their feet you throw us!”
 In derision so they held him,
 Ere they five of them together
 Came to grips and had a combat.
 Ural grabbed one fast and hurled him,
 At the great-shah’s feet he hurled him,
 At the feet of his retainers,
 Likewise hurled the other batur,
 While the earth began to tremble,
 And the shah with his retainers,
 With his batur altogether
 Turned to dust and turned to ashes.
 Mothers shedding tears in weeping,
 Fathers wailing, and their children,
 Bound up hand and foot and spellbound,
 Watched this wondrous transformation,
 But regained their senses quickly,
 Rushing forth, saluted Ural
 As a hero and their saviour.
 To the runaways in hiding
 He sent word that they were free now,

And he chose the king, the ruler,
 So that he might rule the country,
 And the people called a Yiyin¹⁵,
 People's rally ere his leaving
 In his honour, in his glory.
 While among the guests sat Ural,
 One, the older of the old men,
 Spoke his mind and said in this wise:
 "You have proved to be a yeget,
 You have proved a fearless batur.
 Only with your heart to lean on,
 With your heart full of compassion
 For the miserable and wretched
 You have hither come to help us,
 To have smashed your foes to pieces.
 She, who caused the shah's resentment,
 She, who caused the bloody conflict,
 Who has set us free and happy,
 Is the daughter of the great-shah,
 For she lost her heart to you, lad,
 And rebelled against her father,
 Loud she raised her voice against him.
 Marry, yeget, mate this woman,
 Who is sweet upon you, yeget,
 Mate and stay with her for ever!"
 As he learned their proposition,
 Learning what their cherished dream was,
 Ural set his mind on marriage,
 And he married Katil's daughter
 And prolonged his stay a little
 For the wedding celebration.
 Thus a few days passed by flying,
 And, the wedding being over,
 Ural went on with his journey.
 Many waterways he passed through.
 Once alighting from his lion
 Ural stopped for recreation
 At the foot of a rocky mountain
 In the bottom of a hollow,
 And he thought he heard a snake hiss.
 To his feet he jumped to look round,
 And beyond observed a serpent,
 At a shrub he lay in hiding,
 Thick he was as Ural's lion,
 O'er one hundred footsteps longwise.
 Ural saw him creeping outward
 From the bush to hunt a roe-buck.
 Then began a battle between them,
 But the buck could not withstand it,
 Shortly gave way, fell down gasping,
 And the serpent, mouth wide open,
 Snapped fast at the roe-buck's backbone.
 Straightway Ural came up running,
 But the serpent swished his long tail
 For to knock him off his balance,

Lashed his tail at Ural fiercely,
 But the yeget fell upon him,
 Squeezed his tail and gripped it tightly.
 "Let the buck go!" Ural ordered,
 But the serpent did not heed him
 And the roe-buck's backbone mutely
 He continued tearing, crushing,
 So to get at what he wanted,
 So to swallow up his victim.
 But his efforts were all wasted,
 For the antlers of the roe-buck
 Were too big for them to get through,
 Big as were the serpent's jaw-bones,
 So he could not crush the antlers,
 Though he lashed his tail to smash them,
 And against the earth he struck them,
 But the antlers would not give way,
 But the antlers would not pass through,
 And the serpent grew exhausted,
 For his prey he could not swallow,
 Neither could he belch it outward
 Through his weakness and exhaustion.
 Having had that misadventure,
 He looked up, imploring Ural:
 "Come and save my life, o yeget,
 May Death hie not come to take me!
 I'm the Son of Shah Kahkhahi¹⁶,
 And my name is Zarkum-yeget.
 For my rescue I'll reward you,
 So you'll benefit immensely.
 Should you look for a companion,
 At your beck and call I am now,
 Should you ask for pearls and corals
 As you like as much I'll give you
 After reaching home, my winning,
 Where you'll be my guest of honour."
 "You have put to death the roe-buck
 Who has lived so far unhurt yet,
 By a living soul unharmed yet,
 Who has known the blood-taste never,
 You have butchered him, betrayed him,
 Having put to Death, my worst foe.
 Meanwhile tell me your life-story,
 Share your mystery for nothing,
 For I need no earthly treasures,
 Nor the palace you reside in,
 For I left my home, my homeland,
 To set out upon this journey,
 That the innocent, the harmless,
 Like this buck, might never face Death,
 My worst foe," thus Ural answered.
 "O my yeget, you shall hear now
 My mysterious adventures.
 Not a long way from my homeland

There's a land of fowl of feather,
 Which is ruled by Great-shah Samrau.
 And this great-shah has a daughter,
 That the Sun has born unto him.
 For her hand to them I sued once,
 But she said I was a serpent
 And disdainfully rejected
 My proposal, so did Samrau.
 Eagerly I begged my father,
 'Marry me to Samrau's daughter,
 Should they not consent to marriage
 Sweep their country by a fire-storm.'
 And my father said, 'Go hunting,
 Clothe your body with your snake-skin,
 Hunt a deer-buck with large antlers,
 Antlers of a dozen branches,
 If you hunt him down and swallow,
 Nothing daunted, fearing nothing,
 You shall master any aspect,
 You shall modify your snake-self
 To the handsomest of mankind!
 To the land of fowl of feather
 Fare to pick out to your liking
 Anyone of Samrau's daughters?'.
 So I took my father's counsel,
 Drove and hunted down a roe-buck,
 All but swallowed him with antlers,
 But my strenuous effort failed me,
 As the antlers never fractured,
 In my gorge the antlers stuck fast.
 Thus my cherished dream has failed me.
 Take a mercy on me, yeget,
 Help me, yeget, do a favour!
 In my father's habitation
 You can take your heart's desire,
 Aught that to your eye is pleasing.
 Covet not, though, earthly treasures,
 May they not allure, engross you,
 Should the fairest maid be offered,
 Or a palaceful of treasures,
 Be not lured with this, o yeget,
 May it not distract, mislead you,
 As my father piles his treasures
 For your choice, do not be tempted!
 Wait until he says in this wise:
 'That a man may be disdainful
 Of my corals, pearls and diamonds,
 That a man may not be gainful,
 May not gain a fairest maiden,
 Never in my life I've heard it,
 Neither have I ever seen it,
 Ranging, roaming the world over!
 As I've no reward to fit you,
 Let me now myself inquire:
 Yeget, lay bare your desire

To repay you for your service.'
 Thus my father will be speaking.
 And you'll say what you are after,
 As by me it has been prompted.
 Tell him: 'Strip your skin of azhdah¹⁷,
 Put into my mouth your fowl tongue.'
 He may give a fright by spitting
 On a rock to make it sizzle,
 Make it bubble like boiling water.
 Should he spit upon a mountain,
 It will fuse straight into water,
 And this water from the highlands
 Will come running to the lowlands,
 Filling up a lake that glistens,
 That from end to end is boundless.
 Be not daunted, apprehensive,
 Ask again to put his tongue out,
 Kiss him right upon his tongue-tip,
 It will ease and mollify him.
 'What is the reward you ask for?'
 To my father's question answer:
 'Tis the custom in this country:
 Good's repaid by good, and, surely,
 You, Great-shah, must know about this!
 So your dearest you must give me!
 This is what you'll tell my father.
 If it is a cane he offers
 That is wrought in pearls immensely,
 Don't decline this cane of magic:
 It will keep you safe in water,
 Safe in fire it will keep you,
 And it can devisualize you,
 Make you vanish into thin air,
 When a foe is close behind you,
 Trailing, tracing you all over!'

During this harangue the serpent
 Crushed at last the roe-buck's antlers,
 Strained and swallowed up the roe-buck,
 Turning right into a yeget.
 In a twinkling, in an instant
 Ural heard a swish and questioned
 What it was but Zarkum-serpent
 As of fright grew pale and silent,
 Turning over in his snake mind
 What he kept from telling Ural:
 "So it's to my father's knowledge
 That I have betrayed his secret.
 If I let escape this batur,
 Let him go upon his journey,
 In a fit of wrath my father
 Can as well have me beheaded.
 Now I cannot swallow Ural,
 I can loop my tail no longer
 For the lack of strength within me.

If I kneel down to my father,
 If I give him up this yeget,
 He will punish me more gently
 And will spare my life more gladly.”
 Thus it was the snake was thinking,
 Keeping back his thoughts from Ural
 And beguiling him with cunning:
 “’Tis my father looking for me.
 Come on, yeget, we shall give you
 At our lodge a hearty welcome,
 There and then claim of my father
 The reward whereof I told you,”
 Zarkum talked thus Ural-batur
 Into going to his palace.
 “In the kingdom of the serpent
 I will come to know his mystery.
 Should the local custom have it
 That repaying good is evil,
 I’ll subject myself to test it.”
 Thus the yeget was determined
 To fulfil what he was up to.
 “I will not be fearful, daunted,
 What my heart is worth I’ll clear up,
 I will know if I can finish
 In a lethal final combat
 Death allegedly immortal.”
 Thus the yeget found it fitting
 To accept the invitation.
 “Should I come through this, I’ll find you,
 Once I’m back here in this quarter,
 Should I not be back, do not wait,
 Do not linger looking for me,
 Roaming all around this country,
 Go back home and give my love there,”
 To his lion Ural said so,
 Kissing him upon his forehead,
 And with Zarkum soon departed.
 Up hill, down dale they had travelled,
 Ere they came upon a strange thing.
 It was black, high like a mountain,
 And the mountain-top was heaving,
 Breathing, flashing blazes round it,
 Like a summer lightning flashing,
 High above a haze was circling.
 “What is it?” inquired Ural.
 Zarkum-yeget made this answer:
 “What you see is not a mountain,
 But a serpent as gigantic,
 Standing guard all o’er the palace.”
 When they came up to the gateway,
 Ural saw a serpent swirled up
 At the gateway iron railing,
 Of nine heads it was a serpent,
 Keeping watch upon the wonning.
 Zarkum was the first to hear him,

And to bring the key he ordered
 To the great nine-headed serpent,
 And the serpent gave a whistle,
 Gave a hiss that made the mountains
 Quake and tremble, and a noise came,
 As four serpents each of six heads
 Hauled the key forth rattling, rumbling.
 Zarkum then unlocked the palace
 With the key that had been brought him.
 “Come in, yeget, in the meantime
 I shall go to bring my father,”
 Zarkum said and then departed,
 Locking Ural on the outside.
 And at once all kinds of serpents,
 Big, and small, and many-headed,
 Came up to the wonning, crawling,
 And their minds they started speaking.
 An eleven-headed snake said,
 “It is now that I must eat him
 That my twelfth head may grow further,
 That I may be a retainer,
 And a vizier of the great-shah.”
 And a serpent of nine heads said:
 “As this man has learnt the secret,
 As he has the shah’s son’s promise,
 He shall therefore be devoured,
 Either by me or the great-shah,
 Because all the great-shah’s secrets
 In my head I keep securely,
 And Kahkhahi will not eat him,
 For this man his son has rescued.
 Should it happen that he eats him,
 All the same his head will not grow.
 Do not waste time flocking, crowding
 As there is no prey to count on.”
 Thus he said, and all the serpents,
 All except the latter cleared out,
 And the latter kept on crawling,
 Changed himself into a fair maid
 At the portal of the palace
 And approached the yeget trying
 At a glance to hold him spellbound.
 As with open arms she came near,
 Ural squeezed her hands, till blood came,
 Spurting from the maiden’s fingers.
 Such a grip the snake withstood not,
 Could not stand the batur’s handshake,
 And by fire tried to scorch him.
 Ural clutched his throat and uttered:
 “You know all the secrets, don’t you,
 Eating people, growing more heads,
 Standing guard over Kahkhahi,
 Keeping, safeguarding his secrets?”
 Ural’s words amazed the serpent,
 “So you are my god, are you not?

And I never knew it, trust me!
 For a human I mistook you,
 For a human being, a hostile,
 Who has come to know the secret,
 Thus it was I told the great-shah!"
 But the truth came guessed or scented,
 And the truth the serpent cried out,
 "Nay, I scent a human being,
 You're a man, my god you are not!
 You've been up to wheedling Zarkum,
 With your guiles and with your cunning,
 Out of our greatest secret!"
 Saying this the serpent uprose,
 Turned again into a self-snake,
 Gave a long hiss, thus preparing
 To scorch Ural with his blazes
 Coming forth from all his nostrils.
 Nothing daunted, fearing nothing,
 On one head the batur smote him,
 From the cracked head downward, clanging,
 Fell some keys, uniquely shapen,
 From the other heads eight batur
 Stepped out instantly and thus spoke:
 "We had all been human beings,
 Ere the serpent seized our homeland,
 That his heads might grow he ate us.
 Cleave the snake's heart, take the gold key
 You will find therein and unlock
 Full of mysteries this palace,
 That you may take what you please there."
 Thus the yeget did and unlocked
 Full of mysteries the palace,
 And inside, right at the doorway,
 He beheld a handsome maiden
 With a pretty faded visage,
 And the maid with pearls adorned was,
 Richly was in silks apparelled.
 From the doorway of the throne-room
 Of the shah beheld the yeget
 Wrought in pearls the cane of magic.
 "Take it," said a voice behind him,
 But immediately a white snake
 Blew the throne-room door wide open.
 "Who is he who dares to come here,
 Dares to take my cane of magic
 Inaccessible to all men?"
 Said the snake, whereon at Ural
 With all might he made an onslaught.
 But the batur gripped and squeezed him,
 Violently shook and threw down,
 And he spoke and said in this wise:
 "I'm the batur who is after
 Death that is all men's undoing.
 If there's anyone on Death's side,
 No rest shall I ever give him,

Since I bear the name of Ural,
 Of the human stock an offspring,
 Born into this world to struggle,
 Born into this world to help man,
 To undo the foe of humans,
 That my country may be happy!
 If you are the snake-shah, order
 All the serpents to assemble,
 Their men-eating heads to bend down,
 Those that swallow human creatures,
 I will cut these heads to pieces,
 Back to men I will transform them,
 Anyone who is on Death's side,
 Any miscreant-snake I'll slaughter!"
 And, confronted by his courage,
 Thus the snake-king had to give in.
 "I have let my cane of magic
 Slip out of my hands, so yours is
 All my magic power henceforth."
 Thus it was the great-shah uttered
 Summoning his subject-serpents.
 Those with numerous heads grown out
 Of devouring the people
 Ural there and then beheaded,
 Changing all those heads to humans,
 And arranged the cells and dungeons
 To be opened, that the prisoners
 By his order might be set free.
 "Find your son and bring him over!"
 To the snake-shah Ural ordered,
 Thus released were all the prisoners,
 And among them was that maiden,
 Who had languished in the snake's lodge,
 Full of mysteries the palace.
 And they all surrounded Ural,
 Spoke and said to him in this wise:
 "You have come to save us, yeget,
 To make good what God has failed to
 And the evil force of fire-winds
 You have come through, you have crushed down.
 How shall we reward your service?
 By what word shall we exalt you?"
 In this wise made answer Ural:
 "I need no reward, nor glory.
 Who with all his heart mankind loves,
 Makes a batur of his homeland.
 When you are gleeful, it is my glee,
 When I am gladful, you are glad too.
 Let us choose a ruler for you."
 And there was a man named Alghyr,
 Who against the snake had risen,
 Who for many years had fought him,
 It was him they chose the ruler.
 He had raised a dead friend's daughter,
 Gulistan the beauty's name was,

It was her, Kahkhahi's bondmaid,
 That the batur had seen locked up,
 It was her that they decided
 Finally to Ural marry.
 Ural wanted, though, this marriage
 To be put off till he finished
 Dread-Azraka, the dev-great-shah,
 But the eldest of the gathering,
 Who had seen much, much experienced,
 Took the floor and said in this wise:
 "Generations come and go by,
 And each bears one hero only,
 One unto their native country.
 Though your glory will outlive you,
 Nonetheless replaced you shall be
 By a coming generation,
 So one day you'll be less mighty.
 Heroes may depart, but nations
 From the world must disappear not,
 And a batur bears a batur
 To the nation that has born him,
 And the lead will take the young one,
 Making arrows like his father,
 Like his elders fighting, winning,
 He will grow among the people,
 Go through hail, and wind, and tempest,
 And a generation's life-time
 Passes by until his birthday.
 Now behold this fairest maiden:
 Through her father, a born batur,
 Through her mother, a born beauty
 She shall make a good match for you,
 For your son she'll make a mother."
 These wise words the batur heeded,
 And fair Gulistan he wedded,
 And the wedding-feast was festive,
 Both enjoyable and solemn.
 Shulgan took the right-hand pathway
 Where he also met an old man,
 And he said what he was after,
 Adding that he had encountered
 On his way the other old man.
 Then replied that old man downright,
 Straight and square replied in this wise:
 "The old man you have encountered
 Is my own, my younger brother.
 We were born and raised together.
 Now he is grey-haired and aged,
 Now he's old, and thin, and feeble,
 With a long white beard and wrinkles.
 Look at me! I'm like a yeget.
 When I said he was my brother,
 Did you think I was a liar?
 But to solve this riddle is easy:
 Bear it well in mind, my yeget,

Come to know the local custom
 That the old folk and the young folk
 Are akin as if they are brothers,
 And fraternal blood they spill not,
 So there's neither theft nor robbery,
 Neither digging out the treasures
 That are by their fellow-men gained,
 So the mighty of this country
 Cannot have all things their own way,
 So no orphan is offended,
 And no man can hurt a woman
 With a daughter, nor disgrace her,
 Nor throw both into the water.
 That this law be kept unbroken
 All of us an oath have taken,
 But my brother soon transgressed it,
 Took to hunting and to ruining,
 Took to slaying and flesh-eating
 Of all those who are the weaker,
 And with Death, the greatest evil,
 He made friends, he took up with Him,
 Thus contributing to blood-shed,
 Making it a common practice.
 All his countrymen as one man
 Drove my brother from their country,
 Lone and far away from people
 Now he drags out his existence,
 That of misery and sorrow,
 Aged, ramshackle, decrepit,
 Death foreshadowed on his visage."
 After Shulgan learned the story
 Of the old man, he inquired
 For the way that lay before him,
 And he was directed frankly
 To the land whereof he'd questioned.
 Over stream and over mountain
 For a whole year Shulgan travelled,
 Counting months, and where the night-tide
 Overtook him, he stayed o'ernight.
 Once upon a lake he happened,
 Thickly were the water's edges
 Overgrown with reeds and rushes,
 And with waterlilies spreading
 Out their teak-like leaves in blossom,
 But the bottom was not boggy,
 Pebbly, shingly was the bottom.
 On the surface sported wild geese,
 Ducks and swans there sported floating,
 And the water teemed with fishes:
 Roaches, gudgeons, pike and others;
 And while sporting, frisking, swarming,
 They did not assault each other.
 Shulgan saw this and decided
 For a while to stop for fishing.
 So a red hair he extracted

From his riding lion's thick mane,
 To the osier-bed went searching,
 Seeking for a twig of osier
 So to make a good loop from it.
 There a nightingale was singing
 In the thicket of the lake-shore,
 Perched upon on osier was he,
 Side by side with birds of all kinds,
 Such as falcons, hawks and sky-larks.
 Shulgan looked over the woodlands
 And beheld there sheep and grey-wolves,
 Foxes, hens and cocks together,
 And while watching he remembered
 What the old man had related.
 "To the shah I'll make my way first,
 That the secret of his palace
 I may learn, and leave my hunting,
 Leave my trapping till my way back,"
 Thus he thought upon his lion,
 Riding forward on his journey.
 As he fared on he encountered
 Zarkum who had fled his country,
 And, by Zarkum being inquired,
 Shulgan answered straight and forthright.
 Zarkum feigned the dread-dev's own son,
 Son of Dread-Azraka, dev-shah,
 And suggested Shulgan going
 To the palace of Azraka,
 Promised Shulgan many presents,
 Promised showing him the Life-Spring,
 Promised many wonders for him.
 Thus they set upon their journey,
 Stepped their feet on many a pathway.
 Once they sighted something blackish,
 Soaring high up like a mountain,
 High as heaven was that black thing,
 That might well be called a mountain,
 But it howled, and wailed, and hooted.
 Zarkum thus explained the vision:
 "What you see is but a huge dev,
 Standing guard over the palace.
 He has sight of us, in no time
 He will hither come to meet us.
 Move no farther, wait a little,
 While I go forth and inform him,
 That there is a guest to welcome,
 Whereupon the dev will come here
 And will show you to the palace."
 Thus it was he said, and straightway
 Zarkum headed for the guard-dev,
 Saying, "Show us to the shah's lodge,
 Usher me and my companion."
 Soon the shah received a message
 Of the visit and directly
 Zarkum's cunning fully made out,

His intentions comprehended,
 And he told his devs to bring him,
 Bring two tolpars¹⁸, steeds with pinions.
 Treating them with great distinction,
 With respect like guests of honour,
 Or as if there were great baturs,
 The dev-shah approached the tolpars.
 When the visitors were ushered,
 Zarkum was the first to come in,
 That he might make his appearance,
 Might appear ahead of Shulgan.
 As he shook hands with the dev-shah,
 Zarkum sighted his own father.
 Both Azraka¹⁹ and Kahkhahi
 Looked confused, bewildered, puzzled,
 As they talked of Ural-batur.
 Hynsy²⁰-devs made their appearance,
 And the elder one, more knowing,
 Said: "My Shah, do you remember
 That boy-baby, one, whose screaming
 At his birth-time rent the heaven,
 Shaking all the devs off downward?
 D'you remember your dispatching
 Genies, devs to slay or kidnap
 That pernicious new-born baby?
 Know: as they prepared to seize him,
 That boy-baby gazed upon them,
 So the hearts of all the devs broke
 From great anguish and confusion.
 As the boy grew up, he set out
 From his homeland to our country,
 And as soon as he was purposed
 To draw water, magic water
 From the Spring of Life, in panic
 It began to foam and gurgle,
 Till the water half subsided.
 Recollect, you have grieved for it.
 Now you must be up and doing,
 You must think and find a way out,
 For example, send somebody
 To the country of Swan-Samrau,
 To steal Akbuthat²¹, the white steed,
 Any dev is apt at stealing."
 Said Azraka: "To possess him
 Means to saddle and to mount him.
 Once to seven devs this mission
 I assigned and gave directions
 Where in heaven he seeks shelter.
 Round the skies they chased the white steed,
 By soft-handling they decoyed him,
 But it all came to no purpose.
 And my devs, humiliated,
 Put to shame, came down back never,
 But remained disgraced in heaven,

Yetegan²² they were called thenceforth,
 Yetegan, the Wain, the Dipper,
 The eternal luminaries.
 Then I wished I had a chestnut
 That the daughter of Swan-Samrau,
 By the Moon borne to her husband,
 Had acquired from her father.
 So his daughter I abducted,
 Put her under key and lock here,
 But this steed was never baited,
 Never after her came flying.
 Thus my dream has never come true.
 Let me tell you what I want now.
 Of the human kind a yeget
 Must charm Homai, the sun's daughter,
 To become the only yeget
 To be worshipped in the whole world.
 From her fondness for the yeget,
 She'll give Akbuthat, the white steed,
 And her sword of damask to him.
 If to saddle this steed of wonder
 Her beloved man is able
 We shall give him aught he covets,
 Be it treasures or a fair maid,
 If he wants to be a ruler,
 We shall make a ruler of him
 Over some outlying country.
 If we win the white steed over
 With the help of this brave yeget,
 We shall do away with Ural,
 Never shall we be molested
 By the human kind, and always
 We shall have in hand the mortals
 And be free in our doings."
 With a low bow, stepping forward,
 Zarkum spoke and said the following:
 "I have Ural's elder brother
 To Your Majesty brought over."
 Frankly of his ruse he told them,
 And they both were thrilled, delighted.
 Highly praised the dev-shah Zarkum,
 Whereupon he welcomed Shulgan,
 With a seat beside him honoured,
 Deferential and respectful
 Was his treatment of the yeget.
 Zarkum's father he pretended,
 As his own son he addressed him,
 Treated as a friend Kahkhahi,
 Winding Shulgan round his finger,
 He played up to him, obliged him,
 As a high guest he received him,
 Then displayed him all his treasures,
 And amongst these palace bond-maids,
 Bidding him to pick the fairest.

They were choice maids, and if someone
 Had a chance to see those beauties
 He could never take his eyes off.
 But amongst them Shulgan sighted
 Aihylyu²³, the fairest Beauty.
 Like a pearl she was among them,
 Like white pebbles were the others
 In comparison with Aihylyu,
 Like the moon among the sky-stars
 She was shining there more brightly,
 Like the only birth-mark was she
 On a beauty's cheek of damask,
 Like a flower in the meadow
 Decorating the green grasses.
 Shulgan kept his eyes fixed on her.
 And of her inquired Zarkum,
 As he couldn't help inquiring,
 And the snake called her his sister,
 Saying, "Match her, be my brother,
 To our brotherhood be loyal,
 And I'll get my father's backing."
 With desire burning, jumping,
 Shulgan's heart was all for marriage,
 Keen on marrying fair Aihylyu.
 In a while upon a mountain
 All his devs Azraka summoned,
 Summoned to his place fair Aihylyu,
 Took her to a nook and bade her
 Adamantly and severely
 Never to confess to Shulgan
 That she was a maid abducted,
 Bade her never leave the palace.
 "If you do not what you are bidden,
 Off I'll tear your head and eat it,
 Into fire throw your body,"
 Thus it was Azraka told her.
 Splendidly they made the wedding.
 Aihylyu, the beauty-virgin,
 Husbanded her yeget, Shulgan,
 And with all her heart she loved him,
 Who, desirous, fascinated,
 Quite oblivious of his mission,
 Lived away thus in the palace,
 Till Azraka-shah, the dev-shah,
 Called him to discuss the method,
 To discuss the way to come by
 Akbuthat, the steed of magic,
 And the damask sword through Homai,
 Daughter of the great-shah Samrau.
 "If a batur rides this white steed,
 In his hand the sword of damask,
 There'll be none in the entire world
 Greater, mightier than this batur,
 Everybody will bow to him."
 In this wise he tempted Shulgan,

Tempted him with Samrau's daughter,
 To the skies extolling Homai,
 Promising him that provided
 There was war he would assist him
 By supplying him with war-devs,
 Thus cajoling and convincing,
 So that he must capture Homai.
 On a straddled dev, with Zarkum,
 Shulgan set out on his journey,
 And in no time, in a twinkling,
 Reached a fit spot where they landed,
 While their riding-dev dismounting,
 To take counsel with each other,
 And, discussing their manoeuvres,
 Off-hand Zarkum mentioned Ural,
 And he spoke and said in this wise:
 "Nor far-off there is a country
 Of the azhdaha, the serpent,
 Of the serpent-shah Kahkhahi,
 Who has got a cane of magic,
 Has a wise cane that can help you,
 Help you fight your deadly enemy,
 Turning into fire against him,
 Turning into flooding waters,
 That your foe may not pass over,
 And at will this magic brings forth
 Heavy winds, snow-storms and tempests.
 Once a batur turning up there,
 Unexpected and mysterious,
 Either stole this cane or somehow
 In some other wise procured it,
 Overthrew the shah and captured
 The entire world, they say so,
 And himself became the great-shah
 Of the name of Ural-batur."
 Thus it was he spoke to Shulgan
 Of his brother's strange adventures.
 Shulgan first rejoiced on learning
 Of his brother hale and hearty,
 Later, though, he envied Ural,
 Saying to himself in this wise:
 "Ural will be my superior
 And will boast of his migrations,
 Of his rounding the entire world,
 Of his being a famous batur,
 Talking openly and freely,
 So the people may believe him."
 They continued their discussion
 Till they came to the conclusion:
 "We shall always be superior,
 Upon Akbuthat, the white steed,
 With the damask sword upon him."
 Though the yegets played the same hand,
 Though they acted both in concert,
 Zarkum nonetheless was envious,

Envyng his partner, Shulgan.
 "He will soon attain his Homai,
 Soon attain the sword of damask,
 Upon Akbuthat he'll ride soon,
 Thus becoming my superior.
 Presently we are on one side,
 But I'll test his strength and slay him,
 Murder him and murder Ural,
 Taking thus my vengeance on him,
 And retrieve the cane of magic,
 Thus fulfilling my intention."
 Thus it was he thought commending,
 Praising to the skies the wise cane.
 In the meantime, thus conversing
 They approached Swan Homai's palace
 And ahead saw numerous white birds.
 One of them beheld the travellers,
 Flushed, thus showing, giving signal
 To the others for to take wing,
 And away flew all the white birds.
 In an instant, in a twinkling,
 While the bird that first had sighted
 The approaching riders lingered,
 Closely watching them approach her,
 And, inquired after Homai,
 Said that she could not direct them,
 But no sooner had she said that,
 Than the white birds, all and sundry,
 Threw off their attire of feather,
 Turning into lovely maidens.
 Shulgan, lost in contemplation
 Of the beauties, was enchanted
 By one maid, one of the virgins,
 For beyond words was her beauty,
 Like the moon her face was fulgent,
 Her high bosom was upheaving,
 Adding to her beauteous aspect,
 That seemed to illumine all round her,
 Both her mates and the entire world,
 As if breathing life on all things,
 As if making the entire world
 Bow to her in admiration.
 Both the wanderers were certain
 That she was the virgin Homai.
 All the maids betrayed in no wise
 Their anxiety, their worry,
 So the wanderers never felt it.
 Then this fairest maid stepped forward,
 In a swarm of bees ⁷⁷⁷the queen-bee,
 As the hospitable hostess,
 Giving them a hearty welcome:
 "Ye, renowned itinerators,
 Having heard of Homai's glory,
 Having set out here to see her,
 You are welcome to this palace,

Enter, wait for Homai's coming."
 Not inquired for her own name,
 She kept back, did not betray it,
 Did not say that she was Homai,
 Only held the door wide open,
 Only motioned them to follow,
 Seated them and held in reverence,
 Treating them as guests of honour,
 Of an honourable birth-stock.
 Some time slipped before the palace
 Suddenly in fog was shrouded,
 From a sudden rumble rocking,
 Yawned the earth there, and the wanderers
 Swooned and downward tumbled flying,
 Down into a pitch-dark cavern.
 As they came to their good senses,
 Found each other, groping, fumbling,
 Their hearts frozen, horror-smitten,
 And recovered hardly, slowly,
 Somewhat from their fear recovered,
 Back and forth they started bustling,
 Looking for a way out, groping,
 But they could not get their bearings.
 Then, without a moment's lingering,
 Shulgan being dazed spellbound,
 Zarkum turned into a serpent,
 That somebody might transmute him.
 Homai, though, his wiles averted,
 Called a servant-maid and ordered
 That the cave be inundated,
 So he might be terror-stricken,
 So he might be flushed by torrents,
 Made to swim in seething water.
 Zarkum made a water-rat then
 Of himself, for his survival,
 Splashing, spluttering long but vainly,
 All his efforts being wasted.
 Homai spoke to him in this wise:
 "Overthrown into the darkness,
 Horror-smitten, seized with horror,
 Can you now recall the moment
 When you set your knife to slay me?
 I've revenged myself upon you
 For my past unearthly horror!
 Burst your heart, blood-thirsty creature,
 Hungering for blood, blood-spilling,
 You, the human-faced undoing
 Of a world of human beings,
 Yet, insatiable of more blood!
 May your heart-fat melt out, drip out,
 May your soul revive for loving,
 May it be recalled for living,
 That your resurrected clear heart
 May control and guard your reason!
 Thitherto alive, but captive

In this grave-pit you'll be staying,
 Wasting, languishing and changing
 Till you've changed into a person
 Striking up a worthy friendship.
 Stay away from worthless creatures,
 From the serpents, guard against them."
 Thus it was she said departing.
 Suddenly a maid came running
 With a message of a new-come,
 And that new-come turned out Ural,
 Straight identified by Homai,
 But she kept her recognition
 Back from him, and he recalled not
 Homai, daughter of the swan-shah.
 Ural cast a look at Homai,
 Her long hair as thick as rye-ears
 And adorned with plaited gold coins,
 Covering her back and lower,
 Waving, coiling, falling knee-down.
 Through long lashes stared at Ural
 Two black fulgent eyes surmounted,
 Crowned by arched and mobile eyebrows.
 As she spoke upthove her bosom,
 And her bee-like small waist quivered.
 In a voice as clear as silver,
 Playful, in a skittish manner,
 She accosted Ural-batur.
 Speechless, motionless stood Ural,
 For it never flashed upon him
 That they might have been acquainted,
 Speechless for a while she lingered,
 Ere she motioned toward the palace.
 Seated there conversed the batur,
 Foremost for her health inquiring,
 Then relating in succession
 Of the places and the people
 He had seen upon his journey.
 Then the maiden spoke to Ural
 And she said to him in this wise:
 "Judging from your aspect, yeget,
 You come from a far-away land.
 For what purpose you have come here
 I can only guess, so frankly
 Speak your mind, that I may trust you,
 Say your word, that I may help you."
 Thus she said, and Ural answered,
 "Young as I am, foreign countries
 I have come to know while roving,
 And whatever land I visit,
 Always do I find one person,
 One who calls himself the ruler,
 One subordinating others,
 While these others bow unto him,
 Find the strong who eat the weaker,
 Bloodshed mixed and merged with tear-shed,

Find one world-pervading evil,
 Quite invisible to mortals,
 Quite invincible and tireless,
 Never tiring of bloodshed,
 And this Evil ne'er goes hunting,
 Needs no lion for a-riding,
 Never looks for a companion,
 And my only cherished dream is
 To hunt down, to find this Evil,
 That's named Death, and finish off Him,
 That accounts at last be settled,
 That the world of Him be ridden.
 From a fowl brought home in childhood,
 Brought as game from hunt, I found out
 That there is the only medium
 That can save from Death, from dying."

Homai answered him in this wise:
 "Life on Earth will be eternal,
 Life will not pass into black ground,
 If the Spring of Life belonging
 To the dev-shah is of access,
 And this Spring no man has seen yet,
 For it lies not in my country.
 If you count on my assistance
 In attaining your life-object,
 In procuring magic water,
 This is the condition I lay down:
 Think and take your own way, yeget,
 For you've seen the serpent's country,
 For you have yourself acquainted
 With the right-hand and the left-hand,
 So you are free to take your own path.
 Seek the bird unseen, unheard-of,
 That the beauty of the world's birds
 In her own self has embodies.
 In a land unknown this bird dwells.
 Should you seek and bring her hither,
 I would grant you my assistance,
 That you reach this spring of magic,
 So that you fulfil your day-dream."

Ural said, "I am a batur
 From a land unseen, unheard-of,
 Journeying, roaming the entire world
 For to see both Good and Evil,
 To trace Evil-Death and slay Him,
 That the world may be spared of Him,
 That it may have ease and comfort,
 So I'll find this bird of wonder,
 And thereby enjoy your favour.
 In response to the condition
 You have laid I'll say in this wise:
 I've no cart to carry gold on,
 I have no sweetheart to give her
 Anything of earthly treasures,
 But for Good I will spare nothing,

For there's only Death and naught else
 That I wait to square accounts with.
 Help me to fulfil man's day-dream,
 That this land be free and peaceful,
 And against Death, fearing nothing,
 Help me rise up, help me o'ercome!
 Offer me a gift of magic,
 That it may be my companion,
 Be my faithful mate in battle,
 When I start my war against Death,
 That I wipe man's tears for ever!
 Thus it is the gift I ask for,
 Say, then, what gift do you offer?"

Homai said: "In blaze he burns not
 And in water he drowns never,
 He leaves all the winds behind him,
 Running valorously onward,
 Flying over rock and mountain,
 But a temerarious yeget
 He will recognize as equal.
 When he kicks, his hoof will smash up
 Rock and mountain as he gallops,
 As he races o'er the billow.
 In adversity and trouble
 He shall be your fellow-fighter,
 Being born and reared in heaven,
 Having on the Earth no scion.
 It is Akbuthat, the white steed,
 Persecuted, but uncaptured
 By the devs of Shah Azraka,
 The white tolpar of my mother,
 That I give you, my beloved man,
 And besides this sword of damask
 That with rust will not be eaten,
 That by force will not be broken,
 That's true fire against fire,
 And true water against water.
 Genies, devs and Death it frightens
 And away them drives like scared sheep."

Thus it was she said, and Ural
 Stayed a few days with the virgin,
 Resting, and resumed his travel
 To comply with her desire.
 Homai, though, betrayed herself not,
 She did not give out her true name,
 Said no word about his brother
 Under key and lock, in dungeon,
 So that he could not suspect it.
 Once the batur woke at day-break,
 Washed his face and then of Homai
 Took his leave right after breakfast.
 As a steed his wise-cane made him,
 And he rode forth for a long time
 Till he came into a valley
 Cutting through a range of mountains.

Only magpies and black ravens
 Haunted that deserted country,
 Neither men, nor devs, nor genies
 Had set foot upon those headlands.
 Like a camel's humps the crags were
 Shooting up as high as sky-clouds,
 And there was a beauteous crag there,
 The most beauteous in the whole ridge.
 And its summit Ural-batur
 Quickly reached and for a long time
 Stood there looking round the country
 Till afar a light he sighted,
 Wended down there and directly
 A miraculous lake discovered,
 Shining with its banks and bottom
 Not of shingles, but of silver,
 And the flowers that the banks bore
 In a gentle breeze did not sway,
 And the glistening, dazzling water
 Was not rippled by the still air
 And was shot with pearl in sunshine.
 And among the fowls white-feathered,
 Flocking, swarming there all over,
 Ural saw a bird of wonder,
 Bird of multicoloured plumage,
 Indescribable in beauty,
 Having neared her with his wise-cane
 Cast a spell upon the white bird.
 "This must be the bird of wonder
 Homai said about," he pondered,
 Edging forth and forward, gazing
 At the fowl so unaffrighted
 That she trustfully stepped onward,
 Undisturbed, until she neared him.
 Like a hunter hardly knowing
 Ways and habits of the creature
 He was after, Ural rushed forth,
 Headlong jumped into the water,
 Caught the bird and held her tightly,
 While in fright she flushed and fluttered.
 As he walked out of the water
 With the bird of dream pressed closely
 To his bosom, she addressed him:
 "O my yeget, tell me frankly,
 Are you of the human kindred
 Or a dev, an Evil spirit?"
 Much amazed was Ural-batur
 As he heard the fowl speak clearly,
 Speak thus in the human language.
 Near a brook upon a grass-plot
 Ural sat and made inquiries
 For her family, kith and kindred,
 And a little pause the fowl made,
 Murmured something, staring at him,
 "Shut your eyes, do not behold me,

Keep your both hands off my pinions,
 Let me go," she said to Ural.
 And it was his turn to linger,
 "If she flies away, pursue her
 As a falcon, if she dives in,
 Turn into a pike and follow,"
 He instructed thus his wise-cane
 And complied with her petition.
 "O my yeget, as you watch me,
 Speak your mind, what's your intention?"
 Thus she said as he was watching,
 Gaping at a dark-skinned beauty,
 With arched brows and cheeks with dimples,
 With a black mole on her left cheek,
 And her long hair all in ringlets
 Streaming downward by her cheek-bones,
 Swaying in a breeze like flowers,
 And her dark eyes through long lashes
 Smiled a smile that touched her dimples,
 And her visage beamed from smiling.
 With her bosom heaving highly
 From emotion, she approached him
 And pronounced, "My yeget, tell me,
 What misfortune brings you over?
 I am smiling welcome to you,
 And I only am desirous
 To unravel you my secret.
 I have never seen a yeget
 Brave as you, 'cause even genies
 Cannot ever make their way here.
 I did not anticipate you
 And, endowed with magic power,
 Turning into any object:
 In the sky – a shining starlet,
 Or a fish – in dazzling waters,
 I have all ways clear before me.
 But beholding you, my yeget,
 All my thoughts dispel like sky-clouds,
 Vanish all my ways of magic,
 Like a pathway interrupted.
 Back at home I knew no trouble,
 Nothing save for bliss, till one day
 By a dev I was abducted
 And enforced to mate a yeget,
 A brave yeget for my husband,
 But a short while was I happy,
 Till his sudden disappearance.
 Sick at heart I left that country
 But I did not set out homeward,
 For I feared that devs might follow,
 Bringing me another sorrow,
 So I turned into a white fowl,
 An unseen, unheard-of creature,
 Settled at this lake of water,
 As I thought there would be no one

For to seek out its location,
 Where the foot of man stepped never.”
 Thus it was he learnt her story
 And confided to the maiden
 His desire, though concealing
 That a maiden had requested
 That he find that fowl of magic.
 “How ill-starred I am, thought Ural,
 For I have not found the creature
 I am after, not at this lake.”
 He said he must do a service
 To some Homai, and her mission
 Thus he would complete, he told her.
 “Listen, yeget, to my story,
 I’ll be frank as is my smiling.
 I am Aihylyu, the daughter
 Of the ruler of a country,
 And my mother is the sky-moon.
 I have Sarusau, my fair steed,
 As a present I will give him
 To my sweetheart, my beloved man,
 For he’s good at any service
 And a mate-in-arms in battle.
 Heed my word: you shall not find here
 The miraculous fowl you are after.
 Let us fare now to my country
 And inquire of my father
 Who has flown all over heaven,
 Who has wandered all the places,
 So the fowl you’ve set your mind on
 Shall be certainly detected.
 If you guard me from the dread-dev
 That has kidnapped me, my father
 Will reward you to your liking,
 And in case you like my country,
 If you take me for your equal,
 We shall settle in my homeland,
 And as wife and husband live there,”
 Thus it was the beauty told him.
 “O my beauty, my sweet lady,
 Though I cannot take your present,
 Cannot fare now to your country,
 I shall take you to the palace,
 If you really are a sky-fowl,
 If you aren’t, indeed, a maiden.
 Make your mind up unmolested,
 So that you can opt for heaven
 Or for humankind, for maidhood,
 While I guard and stand up for you,
 If you are disdained and humbled,
 While I take you to your homeland,”
 Thus it was the batur answered.
 His assistance she accepted,
 Gathering from what he told her
 That he was a kindly person

And her bird’s attire recovered
 To set forward with the batur,
 Riding on his cane of magic.
 Over mountain in a twinkling
 They attained their destination,
 And the maidens from the palace
 Walked out forth to give them welcome
 And embraced and patted Aihylyu.
 Much amazed was Ural-batur
 As he watched that, until Aihylyu
 Thus explained it to the yeget:
 “You and I have both been striving
 For the place I long have dreamt of,
 For this palace, o my batur.”
 His amazement grew as Homai
 Spoke to him and said in this wise:
 “O my yeget, you have truly
 Proved a batur, shown your merit
 In the saving from the dev-shah
 Of my cherished fowl, my sister.”
 Ural said that he had struck her
 At the lake at peace and freedom,
 With no devs around, no genies,
 And he wondered, kept on wondering
 Why he was to have found Aihylyu
 As a sky-bird, in bird’s raiment.
 Ural thus inquired of Homai,
 In her turn she asked her sister,
 Far from covering amazement,
 How she had escaped the monsters
 And avoided being captured.
 Aihylyu was aware that Homai
 Did not know of her escapement
 And related then in detail
 Of her flight from Shah Azraka,
 Of the lake where she’d been hiding.
 When she heard it Homai would not
 Keep her name back from the batur,
 Could not keep it any longer,
 But admitted that she knew him
 In the presence of her father,
 Who embraced his daughter Aihylyu,
 Shedding tears of joy, and later,
 Mollified at last, he asked her
 To relate her strange adventures.
 So she did, and hearkening to her
 Samrau gave her some instruction:
 “Aihylyu’s flight you must keep secret,
 Nobody must know about it,
 Lest the dev should learn and come here,
 Come to launch a war against us,
 Come to conquer our country.
 Aihylyu, tired of her wanderings,
 Tired of distress and sorrow,
 Pining after her sky-mother,

Should go up to see the sky-moon,
 And to find a recreation
 In the heavenly retirement,
 Till we let her know if need be.”
 Thus he said, and his decision
 By his daughter was adopted,
 And she rested in the palace
 Till in several days her father
 Ordered that her given chestnut,
 That fantastic steed, be brought him,
 And away the steed took Aihlyu
 Upward to the moon at night-time.
 Ural as a guest of honour
 In the palace stayed for some time
 Till one day he woke up early,
 Called in Homai and thus told her:
 “Long ago my father winged you
 During hunting, as he took you
 For a common fowl with feathers,
 And you waited in his game-bag,
 In the jaws of Death, for splitting
 Of yourself to soul and body,
 In your horror, in your fury
 You regained the power of speaking,
 Spoke up in the human language,
 Over Death, over the Life-Spring,
 One whose waters overcome Death.
 With my brother I determined
 For to set out on a journey,
 For to seek and to extinguish
 Death that is the major Evil,
 And, provided with the water
 From the Spring of Life, to make life
 In the whole world last for ever.
 In our wanderings we happened
 On a strange mysterious crossroads,
 Where we learnt what fate awaited
 Who went rightwards, who went leftwards,
 And, my brother going leftways,
 I turned to the right and wandered
 For long years without forgetting
 What I had discovered from you,
 So without delay and wavering,
 As I found out of your homeland,
 I set out and fastened my lion
 At the gateway of your palace
 Where I candidly confided
 My desire to you forthwith,
 And on learning my intention
 You entrusted me with finding
 The most precious soul, your sister,
 And you promised to reward me
 By instructing how to slay Death
 That I’ve long been going after.
 Now you have what you required.

Say your word that may contribute
 To the object of my life-time,
 That I may renew my journey
 When I hear out what you tell me.”
 Homai harked to him and frankly
 What she knew retold her father.
 Samrau answered: “If you love him,
 You must match him and your white steed,
 Akbuthat, too, you must give him.
 In this world, child, you shall relish
 Joy, and happiness, and pleasure,
 You, my child, shall make a mother
 To a batur, Ural’s equal,
 And in honour of the worthy
 Call together friends and banquet,
 In the cause of Ural-batur
 Set his brother free, release him.”
 Homai harked, agreed with Samrau
 And assembled all the people,
 Made a feast, releasing Shulgan.
 Ural-batur met his brother,
 Though, against all expectations,
 Unreseedly relating
 Of his joy and his adventures;
 Shulgan listened to him thinking,
 “If he makes a glorious batur
 And returns with glory homeward,
 If his name is glorified there,
 Then he will be my superior,
 No one then will care about me.”
 He felt envious, he felt jealous
 And refrained from telling Ural
 Of his visit to Azraka,
 Of the reason wherefore Homai
 In her dungeon had immured him.
 He was up to slaying Ural,
 To depriving him of glory,
 Coveted for fame and Homai,
 For the fairest maiden Homai,
 Longed for Akbuthat, the white steed,
 And the famous sword of damask.
 Ural took no heed of Shulgan
 Being dismal, looking sullen,
 That he plotted, schemed against him
 He had not the slightest inkling.
 “As he has been in the dungeon
 He’s depressed and out of humour,”
 That was the conclusion he came to.
 Once he saw him frowning, scowling.
 “Both a batur’s luck and ill-luck
 Ride together on one stallion.
 Watchful, wary of each other,
 Like two shadows close together,
 Taking turns, they meet the batur.
 But there’s no force to defeat him,

For a person called a batur
 Never turns or yields to Evil,
 But will turn into a fire-storm
 Against water, into a mountain
 Aptly turns against an enemy.
 In distress, in tribulation
 His concern will turn to others,
 In behalf of other people,
 Who respond by being grateful,
 Being faithful to the batur,
 And the batur, smart, resourceful,
 Imprecate his fate will never,
 Won't grudge anyone a good deed.
 Tireless in battle, the batur
 Climbs the skies without a staircase,
 With no keys unlocks the Earth's door,
 And he needs no stairs to go down
 To the underground dominion.
 For a drink it is a good hand
 That gives naught, except pure water
 And an evil hand gives poison."

Thus it was exhorted Ural,
 While his brother feigned to hearken.
 In suspense and premonition
 Doubting, whirling Homai questioned,
 Sizing worth of both the brothers,
 Longing for a heart-to-heart talk
 With each brother to elicit
 Their intentions and their doings.
 But she lost her heart to Ural
 Knowing that he was a batur,
 Knowing that he was a good man,
 Thus preferring him to Shulgan,
 Whose behaviour made her anxious,
 Made her heart misgive and worry,
 As she watched his sulky manner
 And his way of treating Ural,
 Thus it set her heart uneasy.
 Ural had a gift of sleeping,
 For five days, as fits a hero,
 And to guard him from his brother
 Homai got her maids to watch him
 As he plunged into his slumbers,
 Which prevented Shulgan's malice,
 Which frustrated his designing
 And his long-hatched malefaction.
 Once he told his elder brother,
 "You've had marvellous adventures,
 Proved yourself a glorious batur.
 Do you have a further motive
 For the here and the hereafter?
 If your dream has not come true yet,
 Now that you have reached this country,
 Let us war against Shah Samrau,
 Let us take away his white steed!

One of us can hold the wise-cane,
 And white Akbuthat the other.
 Then we'll override this country,
 Mighty padishahs, high rulers!
 Give me now this cane of magic
 To lay waste Shah Samrau's country,
 To attain by force his daughter,
 To ride Akbuthat, the white steed,
 To be glorified and famous,
 Tantamount to you, my brother!"

Ural said whereat to Shulgan:
 "No one has been harmed in this land
 Which has seen no sorrow, bloodshed,
 Savage strife, discord it knows not.
 You and I must go together
 To the dev-shah's land and seize it
 To release those who are captive,
 Who are languishing in dungeons.
 If you're set upon this maiden
 You may take her if she loves you,
 Or, if you prefer the white steed,
 You may take him as her present,
 For it ill beseems us batur
 To make war over a maiden
 And to pave the way for Evil,
 To be miscreants and to shed blood,
 To return with ill-fame homeward.
 Let us overcome Azraka
 And the Spring of Life discover,
 Let us give life back to dead men
 And make everyone immortal!"

Shulgan growing gloomy, thoughtful,
 All the while continued scheming
 One design after another,
 Till one day he caught a moment,
 By himself to talk with Homai,
 Put his hand upon her shoulder,
 And thus made a declaration
 Of his love of the fair Homai:
 "Everybody is requited,
 For a good deed good is rendered,
 As you put it, as your phrase goes.
 In my heart I have no mischief,
 In my mind no ill intention
 Of blood-spilling, bloody wedding,
 And I give my heart to you now,
 Saying that it has been tempered
 In the battle and in waiting
 For your love and for your friendship,
 That my heart is faithful to you,
 That I, too, am a great batur,
 And you'll hear first-hand my story,
 Should you bend your ear toward me.
 Keep me not long in suspense, though,
 For I long to hear your answer,

For your square reply I'm anxious,
 And in case I fail to hear it,
 My design will I accomplish,
 To the end pursue my purpose.
 At first glance when I beheld you,
 I was spellbound and enchanted,
 Though you kept your eyes averted
 And pretended not to know me,
 Through the harm afflicted on you,
 Through the past offence, resolving
 First to test my perseverance,
 To precipitate me for this
 For a while into your dungeon.
 But why suddenly release me?
 Is it that my word has kindled,
 Has inspired some passion for me,
 Or has Ural's coming prompted
 Homai from the darksome dungeon
 Forth to draw and bid me welcome,
 Hearty welcome in your palace?
 Now that I behold your visage,
 My offences are forgotten,
 For there's no one in the whole world
 Like yourself, the fairest maiden.
 Can my love, thus, be requited,
 Can I have your heart and hand then?
 Here I stand before you, thrilling,
 With my longing, with my passion,
 As your husband, if you're willing,
 Or your foe, if you're against me,
 Resolute upon my purpose."
 Homai said: "Now that I've heard you,
 I, the great-shah's elder daughter,
 Have perceived now your intention.
 Your day-dream may come true, yeget,
 For I'll call the folk together,
 Call a maithan, the folk's meeting,
 That your baturhood be tested,
 That according to your merits
 I may treat you well thereafter.
 From afar will come my white steed
 That my mother has bequeathed me.
 If you prove to be a batur,
 Akbuthat will recognize you,
 Will regard you as his equal.
 You must prove to be a batur,
 Prove by catching, riding, drawing
 From his saddle the sword of damask.
 Manage it and I will give you
 Akbuthat, my wedding present,
 As your sweetheart, as your lover,
 And my father then will match us."
 Thus it was she spoke to Shulgan,
 Biding reason her suggestion,
 Called a maithan, the folk's meeting,

Called her Akbuthat, the white steed,
 And that caused a thunder rolling,
 Caused a tempest whirling, raging,
 As, excited from his spirit,
 Crushing rock and sweeping mountain,
 Terrifying all the living,
 Down came flying the white tolpar,
 Like a white star, and to Homai
 Galloped gracefully with bent head.
 Much amazed were all the maithan
 At his aspect and his outfit:
 To the pommel of his saddle
 Was a sword strapped, sharp as diamond,
 With the pommel and the bridle
 Richly gilded, both his prick-ears
 Were as fine-edged as an awl-point,
 Like a maid's hair was his mane combed,
 And like bashkunaks²⁴ his nostrils,
 And his teeth like cloves of garlic,
 Thin his flanks were, light his slim legs,
 And his broad chest like a falcon's,
 As a falcon's keen his eyes were,
 Shot with copper like a hare's eyes,
 And his neck one kolas²⁵ long was,
 Like a coiling, wriggling serpent.
 Squinting sideways like a vulture,
 With a whirl of dust behind him,
 With his both eyes flashing blazes,
 Chewing the bridle-bit in fury,
 In a lather, he came prancing,
 And his gallop was a bird's flight.
 Everyone was stunned and spellbound,
 Watching Akbuthat the wondrous,
 The white steed unseen, unheard of.
 Homai patted her white tolpar,
 Spoke to him and said in this wise:
 "Ye, a shining star in heaven,
 Long have waited for your master,
 Throwing off blameworthy riders,
 Those with no fire in their blood veins,
 Those you don't regard as equals,
 All those I have chosen for you.
 Up to now you've picked no batur,
 For myself you have not picked him.
 All these baturs have assembled
 For your choice that you may pick one,
 Pick your master, pick my sweetheart,
 One according to his merits,
 Be it baturhood or good looks."
 "One with good looks does not fit me,
 For he won't keep in the saddle.
 When a heavy shower breaks out,
 Birds can fly, and in a hollow
 Can a tumble-weed find shelter

From a heavy wind, from downpour.
 But my run will cause a whirlwind
 That a stone unturned will leave not,
 That will leave fish water-frightened
 In the seething foaming waters.
 As I strike my hoof even mount Kaf²⁶
 Instantly will break to pieces,
 And will perish all the living.
 To the pommel of my saddle
 Is a sword strapped, sword of damask,
 Sharp as diamond that for long years
 Has been tempered in the sunblaze,
 So that fire that can melt all,
 All the world, might never melt it,
 Naught on Earth can dull this sword's edge.
 He who cannot into heavens
 Throw a weight of seventy botmons²¹ ,
 Nor can keep this weight from falling,
 Holding it with but three fingers,
 Has no right to straddle me, ride me,
 Has no right to swing this damask,
 Never will be in the saddle,
 Never will become my comrade.
 Let a man who lays claim to me,
 Claims himself to be a batur,
 Show his strength before attempting
 For to ride the snow-white tolpar.”
 All the maithan, heeding, hearing,
 Comprehended what the steed said.
 To a mountain-foot they wended,
 A gigantic stone they found there
 Of the weight of seventy botmons,
 Trying each to push that huge stone,
 Toiling, panting for a long time,
 Till they saw that it was no use,
 That it took a greater effort.
 Then to Shulgan Homai ordered:
 “Come and throw it into heaven!”
 Shulgan walked up to that big stone,
 Touched and tapped the stone all over,
 Gripped it, strained himself and upward
 Tried with might and main to lift it,
 In the black ground sinking knee-deep
 From great strain, from great exertion,
 For a month and for a whole year
 Thus he bothered with that huge stone,
 Puffing, panting, unsuccessful.
 So he stepped aside exhausted,
 So he stepped aside defeated.
 Homai glanced at Ural-batur
 Ordering to lift the huge stone.
 Furious at his brother's failure,
 His disgrace, to meet the challenge,
 Ural smote the stone with one fist,

At one thwack he sent it rolling,
 Sent it flying into heaven,
 Flowing swiftly like an arrow,
 Far above to be lost sight of.
 All the people looked expecting,
 Looked up waiting for its back-fall,
 Thus from morn till evening waiting
 Till afar they heard a roaring,
 Heard a long reverberation
 From the huge stone falling downward,
 Ominously crashing downward.
 Everybody burst out crying
 And entreated Ural-batur
 To avert the fatal danger,
 To prevent the stone from crashing.
 With his right hand stretched he caught it,
 In its transitory back-fall
 And inquired of the people
 In which quarter lived Azraka,
 So that he might aim and hurl it
 Onward to Azraka's country,
 And, exchanging glances, smiling,
 They expressed their judgements freely
 As to where it would be landing.
 The proud Akbuthat, the white steed,
 Up to Ural pranced with bent head
 And bespoke him thus: “Henceforward,
 I am yours, you are my master.”
 Then, with open arms, Shah Samrau
 Stepped forth offering him his daughter.
 “Be my son-in-law,” he told him,
 And the nation reassembled
 To be guests at Ural's wedding,
 To confer a title on him,
 Thus ‘The Batur of the Nation’
 Ural might be called henceforward.
 While they glorified the batur
 Shulgan envied, grudged his glory,
 In his heart resolving mischief.
 Ural took compassion on him,
 And conferring with his Homai,
 He resolved to wed his brother,
 Wed him to the fair Aihylyu.
 To this plan the shah consented,
 Condescended to this marriage,
 Ordered that his junior daughter,
 Should appear before the nation,
 Thus concluding his decision:
 “We shall celebrate this wedding
 For the good of everybody.”
 Homai's wedding was in full swing,
 When the earth began to tremble,
 Causing puzzlement and wonder
 And in wonder everybody,
 Looking up beheld the heaven

Glistening with incessant lightening,
 And this world of Light suggested
 That it was a dev a-flighting.
 Thus their wonderment continued,
 Till they saw a thing descending,
 Coming like a fiery whirlwind.
 Ural caught that fiery tangle
 That surprised him to be Aihylyu:
 She it was returning homeward
 From the sky, in flames enveloped,
 Glistening with incessant lightening!
 "When this batur threw a huge stone
 Into heaven, when he caught it
 In its transitory back-fall,
 When he threw it over billow,
 Far away until it crashed down
 In the country of Azraka,
 Hard it hit the Earth and, bursting,
 Upward shot flames into heaven.
 And in flames enveloped, shrouded,
 Fainting now and now recovering,
 Hying home I've reached my homeland,"
 Thus the fair moon-maid related
 Her most wonderful adventure
 To the pleasure of Shah Samrau.
 "Much ado Azraka has there!"
 Thus it was he said contented.
 Meanwhile Shulgan recognized her,
 Who Azraka would call Aihylyu,
 And addressed her as his daughter
 To ensure their marriage promptly.
 Shulgan, cheated, learnt the lesson,
 Made no bones about deception,
 Feigning he had fled the dungeon
 And the country of Azraka,
 Thus he cheated everybody,
 Even Aihylyu he cheated.
 But her sister well remembered
 Zarkum, Shulgan's mate, the serpent,
 Who had stubbornly persisted
 In his aim to marry Homai.
 As she called it to her memory,
 Homai grew uneasy, doubtful;
 Samrau, though, undoubtful, gladdened:
 "Both my sons-in-law are baturs,
 Of my state they are the bulwark!"
 Shulgan watched the fairest Homai
 Once descending to the dungeon
 And grew fearful and suspicious,
 Lest the serpent should betray him,
 Should impute his fault unto him.
 He resolved to get the wise-cane,
 To procure the cane by all means,
 And to devastate the country
 Both by fire and by water,

Mounting Akbuthat, with Homai
 To the country of Azraka
 To escape, to set out straightway.
 In this wise he told his brother:
 "I am eager to seek glory,
 To the country of Azraka
 To this end I'll go to win fame."
 And he asked him for the wise-cane.
 "We had better go together
 To the devs' land," Ural offered.
 Shulgan, though, declined the offer
 And received the cane of magic.
 Before Homai from the dungeon
 Came back having talked with Zarkum,
 Without saying a word to Aihylyu
 Or to Samrau, he departed.
 Out of reach, he struck the wise-cane,
 Struck it hard against the hard ground,
 Making waters flush the country,
 Making terror sweep the humans.
 Zarkum turned into a big fish,
 Swallowed Homai and in no time
 Was the sun eclipsed in heaven,
 Seeing no more of her daughter.
 Akbuthat rushed into torrent,
 Making water seethe around him,
 Jammed its passage with his body,
 Barred the passage of the big fish,
 Making him release the maiden,
 Although he could not catch Zarkum,
 So he got off with a whole skin.
 Homai told of this betrayal,
 Of this mystery to Ural.
 And he thought in great affliction
 That his brother was his enemy.
 Soon the raging torrent dried up,
 For the tolpar turned out mightier,
 Proved much mightier than magic,
 But the evil dried up never,
 And, as Shulgan and his buddy
 Zarkum broke it to Azraka,
 Straight his devs the dev-shah summoned,
 Set a guard upon his winning,
 And assigned to head his war-devs,
 To command his Evil-army
 Shulgan, Zarkum and Kahkaha .
 Then Azraka told his subjects
 That the ground be inundated
 And the skies be scorched with red flames,
 So that men might perish down there,
 So that birds might perish up there.
 Therefore waters flushed the whole earth,
 Therefore heavens blazed with fire,
 So the sky-birds ceased their flying
 And amongst with other creatures

On the Earth-face looked for shelter,
 Struggling vainly for survival,
 Till the beasts of fur and feather
 Living in the serpent's country
 Gathered and entreated Ural
 To deliver them from ruin.
 Nothing daunted, fearing nothing,
 Neither sky-flames, nor Earth-torrents,
 Ural did not waste an instant,
 Mounted Akbuthat, the white steed,
 Drew his sword, the sword of damask,
 And against the dev Azraka
 Launched relentless bloody warfare,
 For a month and for a whole year
 Struggling thus against the fire-storm,
 Guarding off the Earth against it,
 While the folks coped with the water,
 Making boats to keep a-floating.
 Tough, relentless was the warfare;
 Ural slew the devs by thousands,
 And he slew so many of them
 That in the expanse of billow
 Rose a mountain of dead bodies.
 Thwart the billow lay a broad way,
 Broke by Akbuthat, the white steed,
 And along that way the people
 Followed Ural in his battle.
 Day and night fought Ural-batur
 And amid the bloody fighting
 Face to face met with Azraka.
 They stood up against each other,
 Crossed their swords and battled toughly.
 When Azraka raised his long sword,
 When he shot at Ural fire-whirls,
 There was heard a thunder rolling,
 Till the earth shook, frothed the waters
 From the battle, but, undaunted,
 Ural raised his sword of damask,
 Thrust and off knocked out the dev's brand,
 Slashed Azraka into pieces,
 Feeling underneath a tremor,
 As the dev-shah crashed down breathless,
 As his huge and ugly body
 Halved the sea, and in the middle
 Uprose Yaman-tau²⁹, a mountain,
 So that people in the future
 Might go up and rest at heart's ease.
 As the batur rode on forward,
 Wide his war-horse cleft the billow,
 High emerged a rocky broad way,
 Inaccessible to sea-waves,
 That the people from the water
 Might come out upon the dry land.
 In the years that Ural struggled
 Quite a lot of devs he slaughtered,

Mountains rising of their bodies.
 Children born when Ural-batur
 Launched his war grew into strong men,
 Strong enough to straddle horses.
 In pursuit of Ural-batur,
 Forth along his mountain broad way,
 Armed like batur's fit to battle,
 Once four yegets rode their tolpars,
 Four more riders close behind them.
 Meeting and accosting Ural,
 Said the first one: "I'm your own son
 Born to you by Katil's daughter.
 Long ago I straddled my first horse,
 And in rounding the entire world
 I came on a blood-soaked ground-patch,
 And the blood the ground would not drink,
 And the raven would not drink it,
 Beasts of prey would come and smell it,
 But they never dared to touch it.
 Back at home I asked my mother
 If that place was wrapped in mystery,
 Thinking that she could unwrap it,
 But, surprisingly, my mother
 Started crying, started weeping.
 In my wanders through the country,
 Through the people I encountered,
 I sought vainly to establish,
 To unravel the blood-mystery,
 But received no explanation,
 Though one person said in this wise:
 'Tantamount to God, God's equal,
 Child, your father has released us,
 Won our love, so in his honour
 Guard your mother's reputation,
 For to him you owe your whole life,
 For by her you have been brought up,
 You, the dearest to your parents,
 You, the dear child of the nation,
 And it is your mother's free will
 That will help disclose this secret
 To her own child out of worship,
 Out of deference to your father.
 Go back home, child, ask your mother,
 If she will confide it to you,
 You shall ascertain this mystery.'
 Then I wended my way homeward,
 To inquire of my mother,
 But she would not tell her secret.
 While I cried from disappointment
 She would not speak, keeping silent,
 Sitting at my bedside lulling,
 Singing me to sleep, and shortly
 I pretended to be sleeping,
 As I hoped that she might speak up.
 Maybe she believed my feigned sleep

Or was lost in thought completely,
 Her thought wandering God knows where,
 So, unconscious of my presence,
 She broke down and burst out crying,
 Drooped her head and with a blank look
 Said in this wise: 'Gone is Ural,
 Far away from home he is wandering,
 Nothing knowing of his grown son,
 Who has taken after father,
 Like his father, double-hearted,
 Strong enough to straddle a war-horse.
 My own father's vicious black blood
 Hitherto the Earth won't drink in.
 Now the child has come to see it,
 Pestering me with the question
 That I cannot keep from answering.
 If I now betray my secret
 He will go after his father,
 And forlorn shall I remain here,
 By my only child forsaken,'
 Thus my mother was bewailing.
 Rising up at early sunset,
 To that blood-filled pool I wended
 And around it wandered whispering,
 'Here's the blood spilt by my father
 As was war declared upon him,
 And there's no subsiding, cooling
 For the blood shed by a batur
 That the raven shrinks from drinking,
 That the soft soil will not drink in,
 Therefore it will never dry up
 And will always be tormented.'
 At that time the blood-pool boiled up,
 Splashing blood-sprays in abundance
 On a white stone that lay near it
 And betrayed its secret to me:
 'Long ago there were four batur.
 We, four batur, being captive
 By your grandfather Shah Katil,
 Came to blows with one another
 Following Shah Katil's order,
 Turned by magic into ill-blood,
 That the Earth will never drink in,
 That the Sun will never dry up.
 We beseech the raven to drink it,
 But he will not, he disdains it,
 And we no longer can stand this!
 To your father Ural fare straight,
 Tell him of our grief, keen sorrow,
 Tell him to revive and change us
 Into men that fight a battle,
 Friends-in-arms and his companions!
 Thus the mystery of that blood-pool
 In the long run I unravelled:
 When my mother learnt about it,

She thought over it a little,
 Called together all the ravens,
 Near a mount upon a mission
 Sent a raven, anticipating
 His come-back day in and day out.
 To the place of the appointment
 In some days the raven flew back,
 Bringing water, the whole beakful,
 At the order of my mother
 Outward spurting all the water,
 Spurting right into the blood-pool.
 From the dead uprose four batur,
 Whereupon my mother told them:
 'Long my father had abased you,
 Made you suffer, made you perish.
 If you take my husband Ural
 For a friend, then go and wipe out
 All my wicked father's buddies,
 With my son go after Ural,
 Give my love to my beloved man!
 Five times round my waist I belted
 And, alongside with these batur,
 Straight set out upon my journey.
 Ural's son am I, named Yayik,
 Keen on making your companion,
 Keen on following your footsteps.'
 Spoke the second batur saying:
 "Gulistan is named my mother.
 I was six years, when to ravage
 And to devastate my homeland
 Came a serpent with a person,
 One who bore the name of Shulgan.
 All the people fled the country,
 Being scared and apprehensive.
 All my mother's beauty withered,
 For she grieved over her husband,
 And because her legs had failed her,
 She was on her back, bed-ridden.
 When the serpent had assaulted,
 And the land was flushed by water,
 For the old folk and the young folk
 I made boats to keep a-floating,
 All the folk to keep from drowning,
 And stood up against the enemy,
 To defend, to save my homeland.
 As I looked a helpless baby,
 Zarkum rushed at me like lightening,
 Sword in hand, but I was not lost,
 To his strength I never yielded,
 Never let him slash and slay me,
 But unlike a child I struggled,
 Sword in hand, as if a batur,
 Fighting Zarkum and his war-devs,
 Rushing furiously upon me,
 But I stood firm and to pieces

Slashed the war-devs and their leader!
 Then my wasted mother stood up,
 Laid her hand upon my shoulder,
 Tears still in her eyes, and told me:
 'Ural-batur is your father,
 Unto him you, Nogosh, were born,
 Having grown into a batur.
 Mount your tolpar, child, find Ural,
 That you may be his companion,
 That you help him in his struggle!'

Thus it was she told me softly,
 Patting me upon my shoulder.
 Then she noosed my tolpar for me,
 Gave her blessing to the battle,
 Showed the way and bade her farewell."

The third batur said as follows:
 "To the sky my mother Homai
 Flies in breathless expectation:
 'How are you, my precious Ural?
 Do you know that I am grieving?
 How are you to thwart the billow
 That has flushed the Earth all over
 Owing to the devs and genies?
 Can you stand against the enemy
 Spilling human blood all over,
 Can you overcome these monsters?'

Thus one day bewailed my mother
 In her solitude, then, sighing,
 Stared at me and said in this wise:
 'Oh, that I had born you earlier,
 That you might now straddle a tolpar
 And support your father-batur,
 Dead-tired, weary of his battles!'

Thus she said while wailing, sobbing,
 Lulling me to sleep and rocking,
 For I was not of an age yet,
 In her confidence was not yet.
 Once at night, when we were sleeping,
 At the door there came a loud knock,
 Then the door was smashed to pieces,
 Inwards ran a dev like lightening,
 Stretched his hand out to my mother:
 'Tell me if you are the Homai,
 Whose sweetheart has ruined, ravaged,
 Devastated all my homeland,
 Thrown a stone into my country,
 Singed and scorched the devs all over?
 Tell me square: are you the Homai
 Whose gift-stallion has engendered
 All these mountains, all the highlands?
 Tell me if you are the Homai
 That the wondrous sword has wielded,
 That has put us to this damask?
 If you are, I'll cut your head off,
 Send it flying into blazes,

Drink your blood and throw your body,
 Down at Ural's feet I'll throw it,
 Dealing thus a blow unto him,
 Making him thus twice as feeble!
 Thus he said and at my mother
 Struck but stopped dead as he saw me.
 'Is this Ural's child a batur?'

Asked the dev in rage, but speechless,
 Horror-smitten, stood my mother,
 Anxious for me and lamenting.
 But I counted out my green age,
 Thought myself no more a baby,
 So without a moment's thinking
 On the dev I pounced and straddled him,
 While he spurted flames upon me,
 From one head and from the other
 Showering me with liquid poison.
 None of us could worst the other.
 As I was unarmed I struggled
 With bare hands, but did not give in,
 To the dev I gave no quarter,
 Squeezed his throat and kept on squeezing,
 Till blood spurted from his muzzle,
 Till the dev relaxed and weakened,
 Then with all my might I smote him,
 Dealt another blow upon him,
 So he could not keep his balance
 Crashed down, heavy like a mountain,
 Breathed his last, whereon the palace
 With his blood was inundated,
 And my mother, waist-deep in it,
 Trudged to fetch some water for me
 For to quench my thirst directly.
 Smiling through her tears she told me:
 'As a batur-child you were born
 To a batur as his full match,
 Childlike, young as is your body,
 Young as is your heart, however,
 You have come to man's estate now.
 Now your father has a rough time,
 All alone in his great battle.
 Find him, guard him from his enemies,
 Guard, avert him from disaster,
 Make a good companion for him.'

Thus persuaded me my mother,
 While arranging for the journey.
 Father, meet your son, named Ithel."

The fourth batur spoke in this wise:
 "Aihylyu my mother's name is,
 And my father is your brother
 Who has to the devs deserted,
 Who has generated slaughter,
 Who tells good from ill by no means.
 Mother Aihylyu having matched him,
 Ignominy heaped upon her,

And her face has withered, sallowed
 From her grief, her desperation.
 Once she spoke and said in this wise:
 'I'm the daughter of the sky-moon
 That illumines the night with moon-light,
 That would pet me and indulge me
 Ere I thoughtlessly matched Shulgan,
 Then she overcast her visage,
 Overcast with grief, and later
 Came upon her visage birth-marks,
 And her face kept daily changing,
 Changing daily, growing dimmer,
 From the shame I've brought upon her,
 From my shameful misdemeanour.
 Though the sun and she are rivals,
 She is now radiating sunshine
 As her subject, and disgraced, too,
 Is my father, tricked and cheated,
 Who has married me to Shulgan,
 Who has left home in affliction,
 And retired from the humans.
 You must take my chestnut tolpar
 Earmarked for my bridegroom,
 Straddle it, my child, and fare straight,
 Go your way along with Ithel,
 After Ural, meet your father,
 Find your father, Hakmar, join him,
 Join the battle he is fighting,
 Make a batur brave to match him.'"
 Ural, hearing these four baturs,
 With his own eyes saw his own sons,
 Saw them all matured and grown up,
 And to man's estate developed.
 And, rejoicing, Ural-batur
 Mounted Akbuthat, the white steed,
 And his four sons, his four heroes
 Straddled their tolpars in the same wise,
 And they five of them went fighting,
 Having worsted many devils,
 Having fought that bloody battle
 For a month and for a whole year.
 Down they struck the Snake, Kahkhahi,
 Down he tumbled into billow,
 And amid his floundering, plashing,
 There was heard a thunder rolling,
 Through his screaming, yelling, howling,
 And another mountain uprose,
 Separating the whole billow,
 Where the war developed raging.
 Shulgan happened to be severed
 From the most of his companions
 By that mountain, dead Kahkhahi.
 First confused, he braced up straightway,
 The remaining devs united,
 And a heated fight developed.

Waters overflow in fury,
 High above the heavens flared out,
 When in seething foaming water
 Shulgan stood against his brother,
 With the magic of his wise-cane,
 And with all his might attacked him.
 Hard he tried to scorch his brother,
 Hard he tried to strike his head off,
 But, undaunted, fearing nothing,
 Ural drew his sword of damask,
 In his rage he smote the wise-cane,
 Smashing it to tiny pieces,
 And the broad expanse of billow
 Instantly dried up and vanished,
 Leaving but a lake of water,
 And the devs without deep water
 Lost their magic strength and wasted.
 Ural's sons and his white stallion
 Did away with the leftovers,
 While himself he seized his brother,
 Who could not withstand and yielded,
 And collapsed upon the wet ground.
 Hakmar made a rush at Shulgan,
 Brandishing his sword, but Ural
 Caught him by the arm and stopped him,
 Summoning his sons, his comrades,
 And before them placed the recreant.
 "Since your childhood, brother Shulgan
 You have been insidious, crafty;
 Once by stealth you tasted wild blood,
 Heeding not our father's warning,
 And since then you have developed
 Inclination for wrong-doing,
 Into blood you've sunk with Evil,
 Flushing Mother-Earth by water
 And subjecting Her to scorching,
 Turning to the devs for friendship,
 And to Evil for your tolpar.
 With a heart of stone you have now,
 With our mother's milk developed
 Into lethal poison in you,
 You've estranged from our parents.
 As your partner, fellow-traveller,
 I thought I might count upon you,
 So I gratified your wishes
 And indulged you in your doings.
 When you set your mind on Homai,
 I objected not against it,
 When you strove to get my tolpar,
 I set not my face against it,
 When you sought renown and glory,
 I gave you the cane of magic.
 With your both eyes closed to goodness,
 With your heart that craves for slaughter,
 You have swept this land by firestorms,

And its men by inundation.
 You believed the dev's lies, brother,
 And he wound you round his finger,
 Which caused massacre and slaughter.
 Of the two belles who are dearest
 To their parents as their own eyes,
 As the pupil of one's eye's dear,
 I did not scruple to match you,
 To the one who's fresh as milk is,
 Hoping you, too, had a clean heart.
 I extolled you, praised you to her,
 That she might respect and love you,
 That you might be loyal to her,
 Turn to goodness, not to perjury,
 Heedful of your parents' warning.
 You have flushed the land by water,
 Spread the human blood all over,
 Upon Earth you've let loose devils,
 And Her even face disfigured
 With a lot of pits and hillocks,
 As the sign of Ill triumphant,
 As the sign of Good defeated.
 Aren't you now aware of all this?
 But mankind is strong and stronger,
 And the strongest of all living!
 All Kahkhahi's devs' dead bodies,
 With their legs off and unharmed,
 Shall be henceforth and for ever
 Mountains haunted by wild creatures.
 Kiss the Earth and firmly swear now,
 Swear upon your honour, brother,
 Bend your guilty neck to people,
 Take their tears upon your conscience!
 If you do not what I tell you,
 If you do not beg your father
 For your wrongdoing to forgive you,
 I'll cut off your head and roll it,
 Set it rolling like a grindstone,
 To the ashes I will grind you!
 Like a moth of light wings fluttering
 Is your apprehensive black soul.
 I will turn it into night mist,
 I will slay you to be buried
 On the peak of mountain Yaman
 Yaman-tau, that from the body
 Of Azraka-dev has sprung up.
 No one shall ascend this mountain
 By your grave-side to pay homage,
 No one shall think highly of you,
 Not a blade of grass shall grow there
 Where your cracked and sun-scorched body
 Will have stiffened into black rock,
 That for creeping, coiling serpents
 And for eagles intent on slaying,
 And for vultures, carrion-eaters,

Preying high into the blue sky,
 Will become a haunt of miscreants,
 Scheming and designing mischief."

Shulgan heard his brother, fearful,
 Fearing lest his brother Ural
 Should not spare his life but slay him,
 Therefore Shulgan said in this wise:
 "Let me go down to the water,
 The remainder of the billow,
 The creation of my ill will,
 Let me wash my wicked face there,
 Let me live by our customs,
 For henceforth I mean no evil,
 For henceforth at peace for ever
 I will be with every person
 And stand up for peace and guard it,
 As a batur of my homeland,
 Ural-batur's loyal brother,
 As a true son of my parents,
 Thus I swear to settle for ever
 On this land and do no evil,
 And I kiss your footsteps on it."

"Can you wash your bloody face clean
 With the help of this sweet water?
 Can your heart bloodthirsty, hungry
 Ever find a way to goodness?
 Those drowned in the blood of humans,
 Scorched by fire, will not befriend you,
 Because poisonous, full of hatred,
 Like a stone your heart has hardened,
 'Cause it knows not what is goodness,
 What's humanness it does not know!
 If you want to love the humans,
 If you want to make a batur
 For the welfare of your nation,
 War and fight against sworn enemies
 Of the human, with their black blood
 Fill the lake, as if with water,
 Wash your face to purify it
 Of the war against the people,
 Of their blood and of the mixture
 You have made of Evil and Glory,
 Of your arrogant conviction
 That to do good is disgraceful!
 Let this blood, therefore, remind you
 Of your past and make you wizened,
 Make your heart bleed, writhe and suffer
 With disgrace you've brought upon you,
 Let it purify in suffering,
 Let this black blood dry in your heart
 And be changed into a scarlet,
 That you may remain in this land,
 That you may become a batur!"

And as soon as Ural finished,
 Shulgan once again cried quarter,

Spoke again and said in this wise:
 “When the lion I used to ride on
 Stumbled twice, I lashed him fiercely,
 So that blood showed on his body,
 So that he saw stars and tumbled,
 Stumbling further for the third time,
 He swore ne’er again to stumble,
 And thenceforth I never lashed him,
 Never more I had to swear him.
 Now your brother Shulgan likewise
 Has been twice at fault, misled twice,
 Has imbued your heart with worry.
 There shall never be a third time,
 I will wash my face of black shame,
 Of my ignominy wash it,
 I will rout the Evil forces
 To stand purified before you,
 And I’ll kiss the ground upon it,
 As a friend to human beings,
 As their neighbour, peaceful settler.”
 Though he trusted his repentance
 Ural meant to test his brother
 For the last time, and he told him:
 “If a man waives off his honour,
 He will lose all hope, grow desperate,
 If he counts the bones of live men³⁰,
 Bears a grudge against all humans,
 Darkness he will see, not daylight.
 For a fiendish, heartless person
 It is dark night that his day is,
 For he hunts fowl in the night-time,
 Fowl that cannot see in darkness.
 Likewise, underhand you’ve spilt blood,
 Seeking glory, seeking friendship
 Of the devs, the bitter enemies
 Of mankind, of human beings,
 Knowing not that when the night’s dark,
 For mankind the moon will rise up,
 When the moon has set, then day breaks,
 You have not known this before now
 And can see now with your own eyes
 That for all men it is broad day,
 And for you alone it’s dark night.
 And the billow where your devs bode
 Is a land now, dry and fertile,
 And your great-shah named Azraka
 Has been changed into a mountain.
 A pure maid has born a batur
 To a desperate villain you are,
 And this batur’s name is Hakmar.
 All the men and women swallowed
 By your serpents, all the maidens
 Locked up in the dreary dungeons
 Are rejoicing as if new born,

As if brought anew to this world.
 You shall never have a fair day
 In your helpless strife against Man.
 But if you abandon fully
 Both your perfidy and cunning,
 If you stand up for humaneness,
 If you follow the example
 Of your lion that twice stumbled,
 Then I’ll grant you your petition
 And await but goodness from you,
 For old sake’s, for our father,
 For the sake of our good mother.”
 After bidding Shulgan farewell
 Ural called his men together,
 Spoke to them and said in this wise:
 “Death that’s visible we’ve ousted,
 Driving it away for ever,
 The mischievous devs we’ve worsted,
 Swept away, made mountains of them.
 So the Life-Spring we shall reach now
 To exhaust it, to distribute
 All the water to the mortals,
 That we may save man from mischief,
 From infirmity and ailment,
 From the fierce Death that they can’t see,
 The invisible, we’ll save them,
 Life eternal we shall give them,
 Bringing joy to all and sundry!”
 As the batur was thus speaking,
 Slowly edged toward him an old man,
 Calling down Death on his own head,
 Like a bag of bones the man looked,
 Withered, wizened and oblivious
 Of his father and his mother.
 Then he spoke and said in this wise:
 “I have outlived generations,
 Seen the world to know the countries
 And the times when human beings
 Did not have any emotions,
 And had no idea what fear was;
 Fathers did not know their children,
 Children did not know their fathers;
 I have known the times when people
 Flocked and came to live in couples,
 When the stronger nations raided,
 Ruined, ravaged weaker nations,
 When the snakes, the devs, their great-shahs
 Prosecuted human beings,
 Chased them one by one and ate them,
 That they might have more than one head,
 That they might enslave the nations.
 Thus they squared their shoulders freely,
 Swayed the destinies of people,
 Causing groaning, causing wailing.
 Long ago I was a yeget,

Unaware of Death I was then.
 When our land was captivated
 By the devs and when the Serpent
 Had already swallowed some men,
 Then I saw Death with my mind's eye,
 Thinking that I'd have my day yet,
 Thinking, if I failed to vanquish
 All the serpents, devs and genies,
 Then a batur in that country
 Would be born to end this mission,
 So that folks might have a glad feast,
 Quite a sumptuous feast on this day,
 So that all those blind from weeping,
 Those whose hearts had long been bleeding,
 Might sigh with relief and smile then,
 So that happiness might reign then,
 Thus I thought day-dreaming, musing.
 Of the Spring of Life I tasted
 To preserve, to spare my body,
 That I might attend that glad feast,
 Though I oft saw Death, oft watched Him
 Spill the human blood all over,
 Grip my own throat, knife against it,
 Break my bones, and smash, and bleed me,
 Yet I never yielded to Him,
 Never gave my soul unto Him,
 Fighting hard to overcome Him.
 Now I visualize this glad feast,
 The glad faces of the people
 And I've hither come to hail you,
 Baturhood of men to find here,
 And without regret I am dying.
 The great land where you have stepped foot
 Will make refuge for the people,
 While the mountains made of dead devs
 Will make refuge for the wild beasts.
 Everyone at these expanses
 With one's mate can freely couple,
 Multiplying with the coming
 And the going generations
 The posterity of mankind,
 Gleeful and rejoicing, humans
 Will live happily in this land,
 Singing praises to their batur.
 I am certain that this nation
 On the Earth will live forever,
 For you've proved to be a batur,
 As the pupil of a man's eye
 You have proved to be as precious,
 Really worthy of the praises
 That the coming generations
 Are to sing of you, my yeget,
 For you've made your country happy!
 Hardened against foes your heart is,
 To your friends you are kind-hearted.

Being for your life indebted
 To your father and your mother,
 Her, who nursed you with her breast-milk,
 Him, who raised you as a batur,
 Them, who gave their blessing to you,
 Seating you upon the lion,
 Showing you the way of goodness.
 Later on you found a beauty
 With her face as light as sunshine,
 With her waist that has no parallel.
 Then against the devs you stood up,
 Straddled Akbuthat, the white steed,
 That is fire against fire-whirls,
 Water against water-torrents
 And a mountain against whirlwinds,
 One who is an army's equal,
 Standing up against an army.
 You, who is the only batur,
 Who has dried up all the waters,
 And this land has liberated,
 Who has made it free and happy,
 Hear, my yeget, what I tell you:
 Like a moth my soul's within me,
 Quivering, fluttering its light wings
 In a bag of bones, my body,
 In this frame so thin and feeble,
 That my whole blood might be gulped up,
 So I cannot go on living
 As a wreck of my forgone self,
 As a wreck of my right senses.
 I have longed for Death's arrival
 To give up myself unto Him,
 But He says He does not want me
 From this world to move out, adding:
 'You have tasted of the Life-Spring
 With its power to withstand me,
 So I'll never take you, aged,
 Pining, wasting, yet undying,
 I will leave your body aching
 From white worms who make their
 windings,
 Suffering, dying for departure,
 But in vain you shall await me,
 In despair and in affliction.'
 Thus I've brought this word, my yeget,
 That you may hear out and heed it,
 Heed without disdain my warning.
 My experience proves and teaches
 How wrong values may mislead one,
 How misspent a man's life may be.
 Pray, do not taste of the Life-Spring,
 If you want to be immortal,
 Like this endless world around you,
 If you choose not to be subject
 To fierce Death, the human's worst foe,

Do not drink the Life-Spring's water,
 Or you will be doomed to suffering.
 All the world is but an orchard,
 Where the varied green develop.
 Justifiably some plants grow,
 Others are a shame to gardening,
 But all plants adorn the garden,
 All plants make it multicolour.
 Death that seemingly is evil
 Proves to be eternal order.
 Obsolete and feeble saplings
 Are uprooted, doomed to perish,
 That the garden might be better.
 Taste not of the Life-Spring, seeking
 Immortality for body.
 In this world there's only one thing,
 One thing constitutes its beauty,
 And one thing adorns our garden.
 It is Good that right to heaven
 Can ascend without much effort,
 Good that cannot sink in water,
 That will burn in fire never,
 That is the superior object
 For yourself and all your people,
 Good is what is good for eating,
 Of eternity a live source."
 Ural-batur comprehended
 What the Spring of Life was good for
 And with all his men directly
 For its whereabouts departed.
 With a mouthful of its water
 He rode forth towards a mountain,
 To the mountain from the bodies
 Of the slaughtered devs transmuted,
 All around he sprayed the water.
 "Let the woods on mountains grow green,
 Green is the eternal colour,
 Let the wood-birds, men, and women
 Sing and glorify these mountains,
 And may Evil that has vanished
 From the land begrudge its beauty,
 For this country is worth loving,
 Let our garden be as worthwhile,
 Worthy of our native country,
 That might shine amid all others,
 Shine out rousing envy in them!"
 Thus it was the batur spoke out.
 Where and when he sprayed the water
 Pines and fir-trees started growing,
 Their green colour never fading,
 Never withering in sun-heat,
 Never giving way to insects.
 Since these trees broke into needles
 Their green colour's stayed for ever.
 Shulgan heard of Ural's garden.

"So my only friend and partner
 That can help me finish humans,
 Help me slaughter all the mortals,
 That's at liberty for action
 Is but Death and none except Him,"
 In this wise thought gloating Shulgan.
 Devs and snakes he called together,
 Broke the news and interdicted
 To submit, to let his brother
 Take fresh water for his purpose.
 Days and months passed and the people
 Settled down upon the new land,
 Both the old men and the young men,
 Breathing now the air of freedom,
 Paying and receiving visits,
 Matching their relations, marrying
 And enjoying all their life-time,
 Resting from the bloody battles,
 In tranquillity thus resting.
 But again old bloodshed broke out,
 And again devs lay in ambush,
 Lay in wait for men on travel
 And for maidens carrying water.
 Devs would fall on them and knock down,
 Drink their blood and tear their hearts out,
 And on rocks would snakes lurk quietly,
 Biting one by one all travellers.
 Soon the people started wailing,
 Started moaning, turned to Ural.
 Ural gathered them together
 And thus guarded them from devils.
 Ithel, Yayik, Nogosh, Hakmar
 As great baturs led his army,
 While he took his sword of damask,
 Straddled Akbuthat, the white steed,
 Rattled forward in a frenzy,
 Down to Shulgan's lake he rattled,
 Leaving whirlwinds raised behind him.
 "To the last drop I will drink it,
 I will drain it to the last dregs,
 From the devs that lurk beneath there
 And from the insidious Shulgan
 Who will give no rest to people,
 I will save them, I will guard them!"
 Thus he said and started drinking
 From the lake until its water
 Foamed and seethed, and, terror-stricken,
 All the devs began their wailing,
 And while Ural drank the water,
 One by one they ran into him,
 Filling up all his interior,
 Gnawing at his heart and liver.
 As he spurted them all outward,
 While his baturs captivated
 Those who ran out with the water,

Ural's heart, afflicted, wasted,
 And he fell upon the damp ground,
 With the people all around him,
 Flooding bitter tears and wailing,
 And addressing him as earnest
 Of the nation's happy living.
 Ural spoke and said in this wise:
 "With your own eyes you have seen now
 Countless numbers of the monsters,
 Of the devs amongst the water
 Run into my mouth, my inside
 To bereave my arms of firmness
 And to perforate my heart through.
 I appeal to you, my nation,
 O my children, hearken to me!
 You will meet in lakes, pools, caverns
 Devs, designing and insidious,
 Who will try to run inside you.
 Ware their artfulness and cunning,
 Fall not for their bait and perish,
 Do not run the risk of drinking
 From the lake, be careful of it!
 Long ago I launched my warfare,
 War against the Evil forces,
 For to clear of them the billow,
 For to save you from all miscreants,
 That you might build habitation
 In the liberated country.
 With my white steed good to straddle,
 With my damask brand to fight with,
 With the vast land to assemble
 All my troops, consulting neither
 Of my heroes and my chief-aids,
 Though I have courageous batur's,
 Vainly did I strive for victory,
 All alone, proud of my prowess.
 I appeal to you, my nation,
 Hear, my sons, your father's warning!
 Strong you may be like a lion,
 With a strong arm like a batur's,
 But until you have experience,
 Till you've seen the world and sorrow,
 Till you each have grown a stout heart
 Don't make evil your companions,
 Don't disdain to ask for counsel,
 Lead the battle, if there's fighting,
 Gain prosperity for people,
 Make great batur's of the nation;
 Paying honour to your elders,
 Do not scorn their help and counsel;
 Showing honour to the younger
 Don't disdain to give your counsel!
 Should you see a mote in one's eye,
 See the mote that threatens blindness,
 Make eyelashes to this man's eye,

That the mote may not get inside,
 That it may cause blindness never.
 Akbuthat, my steed, my damask,
 Stays on for a man of valour,
 A companion and a war-horse
 For a batur who can ride him,
 Who can draw the sword in battle,
 Who has got a heart within him
 And can call this steed his own one.
 Go, sons, tell this to your mothers,
 Let them not lament my failure,
 Let them say: 'Farewell, my husband!'
 In addition I will tell you:
 Let Good be your true name henceforth,
 Let Man be your destination,
 'Cause a man yields not to Evil,
 Shuns not Good, but gives it welcome!'
 At these words died Ural-batur,
 And the folk bemoaned, lamented
 For his death, with drooped heads standing,
 When from heaven down a star flew,
 In her bird's attire Homai
 Promptly on the Earth descended,
 As she got the grievous message.
 On the lips she kissed her husband,
 Dead upon the ground, prostrated.
 "I have found you dead, my Ural,
 So I did not hear your last words
 And could not relieve your sorrow.
 Young was I when I first saw you,
 Fell in love with you, with joyance
 Stripping off my bird's attire.
 When you warred against the wicked
 For the welfare of the people
 And for good to reign in all lands,
 When you took the sword of damask,
 Straddled Akbuthat, the white steed,
 I was then the happiest woman.
 When I saw you off, I hoped so,
 Hoped that I should find you living.
 What am I to do now, tell me!
 If I turn into a human,
 Can I hope to find your equal?
 Though they take me for a maiden
 And address me as a lady,
 I'll keep to my bird's attire,
 For a frock I won't exchange it,
 So that I may not lure mankind,
 'Cause your peer I shall find never,
 Never bear a batur to you,
 Vainly waiting for one worthy
 Of my Akbuthat, my damask.
 As I sky-bird now and henceforth,
 I shall lay an egg and hatch it,
 And my child shall be a bird too,

Like your good intents, your pure mind,
 Pure white shall it be in colour.
 What am I to do now, tell me!
 Far upon your range of mountains,
 Near the mountain-road, your broad way,
 I will dig a grave for burying,
 Praying for you at your grave-side,
 And this way will not be flooded,
 Never will be flushed by water,
 And the mountain that will take you
 From this world will stand for ever.
 Since you drained the sea you have been
 And shall be a hero-batur,
 Precious to the wondrous country
 To the land you have established,
 And as dear as human heart-blood,
 Dear as gold that will decay not,
 Glorified among all people,
 As a matchless, peerless batur
 You shall rest in our memory!"

Thus it was she said and buried
 Ural-batur on the mountain
 On the day of her departure,
 And since then the batur's broad way,
 Ural's grave, the glorious mountain
 Has been called so: Ural-mountain.
 Many long years after Ural,
 Longing for him, Homai hovered,
 Soared high, wheeled over his broad way,
 Till she settled on a rock there,
 Moaning and lamenting Ural.
 She hatched swan-chicks and in this wise
 Multiplied the whole swan kindred.
 And the people learnt about it,
 The posterity of Homai
 They admitted as their kinsmen
 And arrived at an agreement
 Not to hunt swans, not to eat them,
 And since then to eat the swan flesh
 Men have thought to be forbidden.
 Homai flew to Ural-mountain
 And amongst her brought her nestlings,
 Other kinds of birds she brought, too,
 For that was a peaceful country.
 Back and forth she flew there leading
 Flocks of birds of various kindreds,
 And since then both fur and feather
 Have inhabited the Urals.
 Katil's big bull also found out
 Of the Ural's blissful nature,
 And as chief of all the bull-kind
 He with all his kindred made there,
 For the shelter of the mountains,
 Thus resolved and thus consenting
 With the human kind for ever

Side by side to live together.
 Akbuthat, the chief of horses,
 Led his kindred to the Urals,
 Where the men were pleased to break them,
 And to raise, to ride upon them,
 Thus his kindred multiplying,
 Multiplying other kindreds,
 And the calendar developed,
 Marking off the years according
 To a certain beast's arrival.
 After Ural-batur passed in,
 Turned to ashes luminescent,
 His remains emitting radiance,
 There the folk would get together,
 For to glorify their batur,
 Everybody with a handful
 Of the batur's radiant ashes,
 They would gather at his grave-side
 That had formed a vein of pure gold.
 When the beasts of fur and feather
 Multiplied in countless numbers,
 Water in the springs grew scanty,
 While from fear the people dared not
 From the lake to take fresh water,
 So they turned to their four batur,
 Turned to Ithel and to Yayik,
 Turned to Nogosh and to Hakmar,
 And they questioned in confusion:
 "What are we to do now, batur?"
 Ithel pondered for a short while,
 Took his brand, the sword of damask
 That his father had bequeathed him,
 Straddled Akbuthat, the white steed,
 And thus told the folk before him:
 "Till the Evil in the water
 That we drink departs for ever,
 Ne'er a man's soul will be born here,
 Never peaceful time enjoyed here.
 So we'll wage a war on Shulgan,
 Smash his force to gain fresh water,
 And to win us peace for ever."
 But no sooner had he said that,
 Than his mother Homai flew down,
 And she spoke and said in this wise:
 "Ill beseems confusion a yeget
 Who was born unto a batur,
 None of those born by a woman,
 None can have conceived a batur
 Turning dead-devs into mountains,
 Draining seas and causing kingdoms
 To be founded on his broad way,
 None could have conceived of doing it!
 Though your father has departed,
 He has left his sword of damask,
 Left behind him many a mountain,

Mountains of the dread dev's bodies,
 Left his Akbuthat behind him,
 That has broken all the road-ways,
 Cleansed the waters and has strengthened
 And united the whole country.
 And your father told you dying
 Not to drink the lake's ill waters,
 Not to bring yourselves to ruin.
 Win the day and vanquish Shulgan,
 But you cannot take advantage
 Of this lake, of its stale water
 That will not taste mother's sweet milk,
 Will not quench the thirst of people."
 O'er this word long pondered Ithel
 And, dismounting from his stallion,
 Took his father's sword of damask,
 Climbed the summit of a high mount
 And thus called out from the summit:
 "If this sword with which my father
 Has beheaded foes is worthy,
 As his son begotten of him,
 Worthy of the name of batur,
 While the people, parched and languid
 Die without consuming water,
 Mustn't I be up and doing?"
 And he cut the mount asunder
 To release a silver streamlet,
 Bubbling, purling down the mount-slope
 Up to Yaman-tau, the mountain,
 Formed of dead Azraka's body,
 That blocked up the streamlet's passage.
 Straightway ran there Ithel-batur,
 Straight cut Yaman-tau asunder,
 And the stream ran forth and farther.
 That first mountain cut by Ithel,
 Which that rapid stream sprang out from,
 Since then has been called Iramal³¹ ,
 And the canyon cut by Ithel
 To make passage for the river
 Kyrkty³² has been called since that time,
 While the stream itself from thenceforth
 Was called Ak-Ithel³³ , White River.
 Joyously came all the people
 To its banks to taste its water,
 To admire its even flowage,
 Saying thus in admiration:
 "This white river, sweet Ak-Ithel,
 Cut loose by our Ithel-batur,
 Will run forth up hill and down dale,
 With its waters washing sorrow,
 Washing grief, delighting people
 After long distress and weeping,
 With its waters glorifying
 Ural's son, begotten of him!"

Thus they eulogized the river,
 No more weeping, no more grieving,
 In the dales of white Ak-Ithel,
 Where they came to settle at freedom
 To live happily for ever,
 On the banks of sweet Ak-Ithel.
 But they found themselves too crowded,
 Having multiplied immensely.
 So again the batur's gathered
 And determined that new waters
 For the nation be discovered,
 Consequently Ithel's brothers,
 Yayik, Nogosh and young Hakmar,
 One by one drew out their battle-swords
 For to cut the mounts asunder,
 And three streams came running, bubbling,
 And the elders, the four batur's,
 At these streams their folk divided,
 At each stream a tribe to settle,
 Thus the names of the four batur's
 Having passed onto their streams' names,
 Shall not sink into oblivion,
 And the coming generations
 Will for ever keep their memory.

¹Batur – a hero in Turkic epic legends; a brave, temerarious man; this word is traced back to the mongol word *bahatur* (*batur*), probably with the stress on the last syllabe, yet in the English translation due to the phonetic structure of English words the word should be bronounced [бЪЕтЪ].

²Sukmar – a mace.

³Dev – a popular creature of the epic legends and fairy tales of the Middle and Central East – an ugly, huge, hairy, fabulously strong monster that can fly in the air and is capable of magic.

⁴Shah – (the title of) a ruler in the East, especially in Iran.

⁵Samrau — king of birds in Bashkir folk songs and legends.

⁶Padishah — a grand-shah (great-shah), see *shah*.

⁷Homai – a legendary bird of fortune in sagas and fairy tales of some peoples of the East that is said to bring fortune to anyone who manages to see it.

⁸Katil – literally “a hangman, a butcher”; the name of a shah notorious for his misdeeds.

⁹Yeget – a young man; a brave; a brave, temerarious man, see also Batur.

¹⁰Maithan – a place where people rally for public celebrations; a rally, a public celebration.

¹¹Tangry – heaven; superior deity.

¹²Turah – among the Bashkirs and other Turkic nations a person who enjoys a high-ranking position.

¹³Saba – a leather skin for kumiss.

¹⁴Kumiss – a beverage made of mare’s milk.

¹⁵Yiyin – a people’s rally, festival; see maithan.

¹⁶Kahkaha – in Bashkir legends and fairy tales head of evil forces, king of monstrous serpents.

¹⁷Azhdah(a) – a fabulous creature of the epic legends and fairy tales of the Middle and Central East – a giant-sized snake, living beyond Kaf-tau, a mythical mountain; according to the Bashkir popular belief an ordinary snake that has lived from 100 to 500 years is liable to turn into an Azhdaha.

¹⁸Tolpar – in epic legends and fairy tales of the Turkic peoples a winged horse.

¹⁹Azraka – in Bashkir legends and fairy tales head of evil forces, great-shah of devs, flying monsters.

²⁰Hynsy — a soothsayer, a prophet, a fortune-teller, often taking the position of a high-ranking counsellor at court in the Medieval East to tell fortunes by heavenly bodies and to select the best horses in the sovereign’s herd.

²¹Akbuthat/Akbuth – literally “white-grey”; the name of the famous winged horse of Bashkir legends; see also Tolpar.

²²Yetegan — the Great Bear, Ursa Major.

²³Aihylyu – literally “moon-beauty”; the name of an epic maiden, the moon’s daughter.

²⁴Bashkunak — a bucket for carrying water, made of horse head skin.

²⁵Kolas — a unit for measuring length — the compass of both arms.

²⁶Kaf (Kaf-tau) – a legendary mountain haunted by fantastic characters in fairy tales and epics of the inhabitants of the Middle and Central East.

²⁷Botmon – a unit of weight in the Ancient East, in different regions from 2 to 11 poods (one pood is equal to 16.38 kilos).

²⁹Yamantau – literally “bad mount”; a massif in the South Urals.

³⁰the phrase “to count the bones of somebody” means “to bear malice against someone”

³¹Iramal – a range of mountains in the South Urals in the North-East of Bashkortostan.

³²Kyrkty – literally “he cut it”; the name of a gorge in this legend; in reality Kyrkty-tau is a mountain in the South-East of Bashkortostan.

³³Ak-Ithel – literally “white-river”; the major river in Bashkortostan; see also Ithel.

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