

## CHAPTER XXXVII

### Taji Still Hunted, And Beckoned

Previous to the kings' flight, we had plunged into the neighboring woods; and from thence emerging, entered brakes of cane, sprouting from morasses. Soon we heard a whirring, as if three startled partridges had taken wing; it proved three feathered arrows, from three unseen hands.

Gracing us, two buried in the ground, but from Taji's arm, the third drew blood.

On all sides round we turned; but none were seen. "Still the avengers follow," said Babbalanja.

"Lo! the damsels three!" cried Yoomy. "Look where they come!"

We joined them by the sumach-wood's red skirts; and there, they waved their cherry stalks, and heavy bloated cactus leaves, their crimson blossoms armed with nettles; and before us flung shining, yellow, tiger-flowers spotted red.

"Blood!" cried Yoomy, starting, "and leopards on your track!"

And now the syrens blew through long reeds, tasseled with their

panicles, and waving verdant scarfs of vines, came dancing toward us, proffering clustering grapes.

"For all now yours, Taji; and all that yet may come," cried Yoomy, "fly to me! I will dance away your gloom, and drown it in inebriation."

"Away! woe is its own wine. What may be mine, that will I endure, in its own essence to the quick. Let me feel the poniard if it stabs."

They vanished in the wood; and hurrying on, we soon gained sun-light, and the open glade.