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APPENDIX I

LEGEND OF SPAIN

PREFACE

It may seem to some that this short story has no place in a work of non-fiction. However, good historical fiction can often bring an era to life better than straight history and the following short story is based on an authentic Hispano-Muslim legend and contains much historical information.

In the south of Spain is a town called "Arcos de la Frontera, which many consider to be the most beautiful small town in Spain.

Dominated by a castle, Arcos sits high on a limestone bluff above the Rio Guadalete. From many places in the town one may look out over the bluff and see soaring below the small hobby falcons, called *halcon sacre* in Spanish, *falcon sacre* in Andalusí Romance, which language the Arabs called *Lisan al-Ajjam* or "the non-Arabic language" and *saqar* in Arabic, perfect miniature versions of the great and noble Pellegrine falcon renowned in the literature of Chivalry. One sees green meadows and groves of olive trees and cork oaks stretching to the horizon, with the silver ribbon of the Guadalete winding its way at the base of the cliff.

Above the whole scene is the sapphire-blue sky of Andalusia, as the southern part of Spain is called. Arcos is a town of narrow, cobbled streets and tiny white houses with wrought iron balconies and bright flowers in the windows, a town of good food and wine, very friendly people and pretty girls.

According to tradition, Arcos was founded by Breoghan or Brigo, a king of a people called **Celts**. **Breoghan** or **Brigo** is also

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known in Ireland and in other parts of Spain, notably Galicia in the northwest, as well as Arcos. On the outskirts of La Coruna in Galicia is a lighthouse which is mainly of Roman construction. According to the local legend, in pre-Roman times another tower stood on the same site. Breoghan or Brigo climbed to the top of this tower, looked to the North and saw Ireland. Thus, in La Coruna the lighthouse is called "the tower of Breogan", and in song Galicia is called *fogar de Breogan* (home of Breogan). Some Galician or Gallego sources refer to him as "Breogan", others as "Brigo", though all give the same data.

Those who have read the novel Bard by Morgan LLeuwelyn and who have visited Galicia will recognize "the stronghold by the headland" of said novel as La Coruna. According to Irish tradition, a descendant of Breoghan or Brigo led a migration of Spanish Celts to Ireland. As a bard of the great Irish family O'Hara said:

There never was anyone to equal Eber the fair
Neither in Spain nor in Ireland
Of the royal blood of his tribe
Of the lineage of Breoghan

The old name of Arcos, "**Arcobrigan**", seems to mean "the fortress of Breoghan" or "the high place of Breoghan". Breoghan or Brigo probably lived around 500 BC.

It was more than 1500 years after the time of Brigo or Breoghan. Many conquerors had come and gone. A castle built by the Byzantines and much enlarged by a Germanic people called the

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Visigoths now stood on the site of Breoghan's stronghold. Square or rectangular whitewashed houses with red tile roofs had replaced the round, thatch-roofed huts of the Celts. Though a learned man could find many reminders of the Celts among the people of Arcos and their way of life, the people no longer worshipped at sacred fires in sacred groves, but now some were Christians, some were Muslims, and a few were Jews. The people no longer spoke Celtic, but spoke Arabic or Romance, this last very like Spanish, Gallego or Catalan.

Times were bad in Arcos, the city of king Brigo. People spoke longingly of the days when the good Caliphs of the Umayya family had ruled all **Andalus**, which is what they called their country, the name perhaps being yet another reminder of King Brigo and his people. So seemed to say a wise man of Persian blood named **al-Razi**.

Now Arcos was ruled by uncouth Berbers from North Africa. The people of Arcos hated these barbarous foreigners.

*"Aye de mi Andalus, land of poets, knights and holy men,
now ruled by these ignorant, barbarous and impious
foreigners",*

they groaned. Yet not all Andalus was ruled by Berbers. The people of Arcos heard that in the great city of Seville ruled al-Mutadid, a cultured man and **Andalusi**, and dreamed of the day when he would come to free them.

Among the people of Arcos was a girl born of a Christian family and named **Bonifacia**, though many called **Nanafasy**, which in

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Andalusi-Arabic or Hispano-Arabic means "violet". Of her family

she remembered nothing. As a small child she had been raised by a Christian priest called Father Isidoro, a very good and kindly man. When she was yet a young girl, Father Isidoro, well advanced in years, died and was sorely mourned by all, Christians, Muslims and Jews. A new priest, a young man, was sent to take Father Isidoro's place. It was considered unseemly that a young girl should live with the young priest, so Bonifacia or Nanafasy went to live with Ali ibn Isa, a Muslim and a very wise and holy man whom the people called a **Sufi**.

"Could I do less for my old and very dear friend
Father Isidoro?",

asked Ali ibn Isa. Besides the rudiments of the Christian faith and lessons from the Gospels and Lives of the Saints, Bonifacia had been taught to read Romance and a bit of Latin by Father Isidoro. Though an old man, Father Isidoro had told Bonifacia how Arcos had belonged to Romans, Byzantines and Visigoths before the coming of the Muslims. He showed her Byzantine crosses cut into the stones of some buildings, and explained that some of the words of the Mass which were not Latin, such as **Hagios, Hagios, Hagios, Kyrios o Theos (1)** and **Kyrie Eleison** were Greek and were a heritage of the time when much of Andalus was ruled by the Christian Greeks of Byzantium.

Ali ibn Isa was very learned, a real authority on Arcos and its history. He explained that he was of one of the oldest

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families of Arcos, that his grandparents had been born Christians but had converted to Islam thanks to a sufi.

"See the castle", he asked.

"Long ago King Brigo had his stronghold on the same spot. Much later than the time of King Brigo, men of Arcos descended from Brigo's people helped defeat the Roman general Servilianus in a battle near Ronda."

Ali ibn Isa believed that the people of king Brigo were the **al-Andalush**, the mysterious people of whom the learned man of Persian blood named al-Razi had spoken and from whom had come the name of the country, or at least the people of King Brigo were part of the "al-Andalush".

"Al-Razi said that the al-Andalush or al-Andalus as they are called in most places, were **Majus**, that is, fire-worshippers like the Persians before the time of the Prophet Muhammad, On Whom Be Peace. Al-Razi was of Persian blood, he must have heard something of the al-Andalus which made him think that they were Persians, or at least related to the Persians. I have heard that in places in in Andalus and in Jellikan, the land of Christians to the North, some people still keep sacred fires, and in many places, including here in Arcos, on midsummer's eve, which we Muslims call by the Persian name **Mihrajan** and the Christians call "**the Night of St. John**", people light great fires and leap over them.

Much later, after Rome had fallen the Greeks of Byzantium built a fortress on the site of Brigo's stronghold, and the Visigoths made it larger, extending the walls along the cliff face."

"Then who were our ancestors?", Bonifacia, now called Nanafasy, asked Ali ibn Isa.

"Well", began Ali ibn Isa, "I know a few people here who descend from the Greeks of Byzantium, many more whose fathers were Visigoths, a few who descend from Arabs, Syrian Arabs to be exact, and a very few whose fathers were Persians. Of course, those Berber sons of swine now live where Brigo once had his stronghold. But, Nanafasy, observe the those small

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falcons called **falcon sacre** in Romance and **saqar** in Arabic that nest in the crevices of the cliff on which Arcos is built and for all the world look like small versions of the pellegrine falcon, noblest of the birds of falconry.

Was not the great Abd ar-Rahman I, the first of the Umayya family to rule in Andalus, called "the falcon of beni Umayya?" These small hobby falcons have the noble bearing and marvelous flight of the great and noble pellegrine falcon. Their ancestors, soaring above the river and the plain have seen Romans, Greeks, Visigoths and Arabs come and go. They watched as the armies of don Rodrigo, the last Visigothic king, were destroyed by the forces of Tarik the Moor not far downstream on the Guadalete which flows by the city of Arcos. Now the falcones sacres watch the Berber sons of swine on the battlements of the castle, and will be here when the Berbers are gone. We, descendants of the people of King Brigo, of the true Andalusis, are like the falcones sacres. We have seen many conquerors come and go, but we remain. Except for a few who in part descend from Greeks or Visigoths or Syrian Arabs or Persians, we of Arcos descend from the people of King Brigo. This land is called "Andalus", not Romania nor Greece nor Gothia nor Syria nor Arabia nor Persia, though the wise al-Razi seemed to say that we are kin to the Persians."

How wise and learned was Ali ibn Isa!

"What language did the people of King Brigo speak?",
asked Bonifacia,

"Romance, our everyday language, which the Arabs call "Lisan al-Ajjam?"

"No", answered Ali ibn Isa, "The Romance that we speak may have some words that come from the speech of King Brigo's people, but, as the name shows, Romance comes from Latin, the language of the Romans."

"But I could not understand the Latin of the Mass",
said Bonifacia.

Ali ibn Isa laughed.

"A butterfly comes from a caterpillar, but it is not the same as a caterpillar. Father Isidoro studied much

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about Latin and the Romans. He thought that perhaps much of our music, verse forms, designs that we use in decoration and many of our festive days and celebrations come from the people of King Brigo, since they certainly do not come from the Romans."

"He never told me about this", replied Bonifacia.

"Perhaps he thought you were too young", said Ali ibn Isa.

"Were the people of King Brigo Christians?", asked
Bonifacia.

"No, King Brigo lived and died long before the time of the Prophet Isa, On Whom Be Peace. The people of King Brigo were what Christians call Pagans and what we Muslims call **Kafiri**. Of course, this is not very clear, because Pagan and Kafiri include a great many religions."

Al-Razi believed that the religion of the people of King Brigo was very like that of the fire-worshippers of Persia, the followers of Zoroaster, but little know I of that faith. I have heard that far in the North in the land of Jellikan they also speak of King Brigo. I have thought that I should like to go there and perhaps learn more of King Brigo. Who knows? It is said that the old priests of Zoroaster were wise men, were great thinkers. Then perhaps at least the priests among Brigo's people were wise men and great thinkers. Not like these ignorant Berbers who now rule over us, ignorant and impious louts and bandits. Even if he try, no ignorant man can be truly pious. As Imam Ali, On Whom Be Peace, said: **"The ignorant worshipper is like an ass turning a mill; he goes round and round, but goes nowhere"**, and **"Knowledge is the foundation of right actions"**, and **"Ignorance is a mine of evil."** Anyone who doubts the truth of that last hadith of Imam Ali, On Whom Be Peace, has only to see those Berbers who now rule over us. But do not speak of the Imam Ali, On Whom Be Peace. If by chance you do, the imam of one of the mosques of Ronda is named Ali. But I really speak of Ali ibn Abu Talib, On Whom Be Peace, cousin of the Prophet Muhammad, On Whom Be Peace. Much more you must learn of **Kalam**, of **Tauhid**, of **Tafsir**, **Batin** and **Tawa'il**, of **Tasawwuf**, **Ishraq**, **Hikmah** and **Irfan**. But that must come later. Perhaps someday you may study under the great woman sufi Fatima bint Waliyya of Seville. In spite of the Berber swine, Andalus is filled with sufis, and it is sufis who have won most of the people to Islam. No

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Maliki alfaqui with his nit-picking and hair-splitting legalisms could ever have won my grandfathers to Islam. You know, though they had nothing of the Visigoth about them, they were christened Gandulfo and Teodomiro, though they later became Zayn al-Abidin and Ali Reza. Thus, my family name is "ibn Tadmira" the "son of Theodimir", though I am no kin to the *cadi*, Hussein ibn

Tadmir, who is a true Visigoth. But all these are very weighty matters, and much you must learn before you are prepared for them. There is much to learn which is more appropriate for your tender years."

Ali ibn Isa was silent for a few minutes, dipping a piece of bread in olive oil and cutting off bites of cheese and melon, one of those extravagantly delicious melons of Andalus with the hard, dark green, wrinkled skin and luscious green-gold flesh brought from Persia in the time of the Emir Abd ar-Rahman II. After dipping the bread in olive oil, some Syrian Arabs then dipped it in powdered thyme, but this custom had never become popular in Andalus, where most people only added a bit of salt or garlic to the olive oil before dipping bread in it. Bonifacia liked to dip the bread in pure olive oil and then eat it with cheese and quince jelly.

Ali ibn Isa used to joke about this, saying:

"One would think that your father was Persian and your mother Andalusi, for you dip your bread in olive oil like an Andalusi and then eat it with cheese and quince jelly like a Persian."

In spite of Ali ibn Isa's jokes, the Persian custom of eating bread, cheese and quince jelly for breakfast or dessert or for an afternoon snack had become very popular in Andalus, though when eating this Persian snack many Andalusis dipped the bread in olive oil. Ali ibn Isa continued:

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"Al-Razi said that the al-Andalus were *Majus*, which means that he thought them akin to the Persians and their religion very like that of the followers of Zoroaster, whose priests were said to be very wise men and great thinkers. Persia is a land of Tasawwuf or Sufism, as is Andalus. Could it be that in some manner we Andalusis incline towards Sufism because we are descendants of the al-Andalus, of the people of King

Brigo? Does Sufism answer some call in our blood? Mysterious seem the ways of God to we poor, severely limited creatures. Yet we know that He is wise. Though they were Kafiri, perhaps the wise men of the people of King Brigo somehow prepared the way for Sufism, and thus for the conversion of most of the people of Andalus to Islam. But this is all very complex. ..."

Though she had much work helping Ali ibn Isa's wife Zahara around the house, helping to carry water from the fountain and taking lessons from Ali ibn Isa, yet Bonifacia or Nanafasy found time to play. Was there ever such a lovely place as Arcos in late spring or in that delicious time in early autumn which was called **"summer of the quinces"**? In late spring after a long period of wind and cold rains, the sun would warm the earth, buds on the trees would burst into leaves and flowers, and the meadows would be covered with a rainbow-hued Persian carpet of wild flowers. Even within the town, the flowers in the window boxes gave bright colors to the tiny, whitewashed houses, in the courtyards flowered roses and orange trees, and even at night the air was perfumed by jasmine, honeysuckle, wisteria and Persian lilac. How marvelous was this perfume on a night when the full moon shown on the whitewashed houses and turned the leaves of orange and olive trees to silver and from a quince tree a nightingale sang his love song to the rose!

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Bonifacia or Nanafasy liked to go to the meadows on the other bank of the Guadalete from the high cliff of Arcos and lie amidst the sweet grass and wild flowers, looking up at the sapphire-blue sky with the wisps of white clouds and the small falcons soaring overhead, the silence broken only by the rustle of the wind in the

tall grass and the occasional "plop" of a fish or frog jumping in the river. How wonderful to see the light shining through the petals of the wild flowers! How strangely sweet the aroma of wild rosemary and dill! How exciting was the irridescent blue-green flash of a diving kingfisher! How curious the long-legged herons who would stand for hours on one leg! How fascinating the wild ducks with their bright plumage swimming and dabbling for plants and small animals, followed by a host of downy young! By an ancient law, nesting wild ducks were not to be hunted nor molested, though they could be hunted at other times of year. On occasion a shepherd would bring his woolly flock through the meadow. Though most sheep rather dull creatures, one ram was friendly as a dog and became a special friend of Bonifacia. When this ram saw her he would rear up on his hind legs and run towards her, begging to be stroked.

Also at times there would be horses pasturing in the meadow, those wonderful horses of Andalus, calm and gentle, with an intelligence that seemed almost human, perfectly proportioned and with dark bluish spots on a pale grey background. Father Isidoro and Ali ibn Isa said that they were a cross between the big Visigothic horses and the smaller Arabians. Bonifacia had no fear

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of these horses, for as a small child she had learned that they were gentle and only wanted their noses rubbed.

Returning home from the meadow, she would pass by a wild rose bush. Though this simple flower had only four large, pink-tinged white petals, to Bonifacia it seemed sweeter and more

evocative than the cultivated roses with their bright colors and large, double blooms. Often someone was baking bread, and they would give Bonifacia a piece of fresh bread from a large, round loaf. Bonifacia would usually save a small piece to give to a horse, who loved the fresh bread and would put his nose on her shoulder so that she could rub his head. Friendly Arcos, where no one was a stranger for more than half an hour! Even the hot summer, when the wild flowers disappeared and the river became low and lazy, had its charm. What a wonderful feeling, warm dust between one's toes! How refreshing were the rare, brief, violent summer storms! More than once Bonifacia had stood in the rain with her arms spread and her face turned up towards the rain clouds, and then Zahara became angry because she had gotten her clothing wet.

Wonderful also was the summer of the quinces, with autumn wild flowers, the leaves of many trees turned to a riot of color, the deliciously cool nights after the heat of the day, the birds flying south, particularly the geese, cranes and storks, who now left their large nests on the chimneys. Only the end of the summer of the quinces was melancholy, when for days the rain clouds gathered in the West, and lightning flashed and thunder

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rumbled in the distance. When the heavy autumn rains finally began, some said that the water was bitter and salty, and called the raindrops the "**tears of God**". Ali ibn Isa said that there was a special symbolism when the time of the autumn rains occurred during the Muslim Lunar Month of Muharram, and most particularly

(and this seemed to happen far more often than one might expect) if the rains began on 10th Muharram, which Ali ben Isa called **Ashura**. Then, he said, these heavy rains of autumn were truly "tears of God".

Besides the rudiments of the Christian faith, Father Isidoro had taught Bonifacia to read Romance and a bit of Latin. Now Ali ibn Isa taught her to read Arabic. He also taught her of poetry.

She did not much like Classical Arabic Poetry, obscure and written in a language she really did not know well, but loved the verse in Romance and everyday Arabic, whose metres and most of the verse forms derived from the Celtic bards of the people of King Brigo. He also taught her to play the 'oud (lute), the *rabab* (a sort of violin) and the flute. Bonifacia knew that Ali ibn Isa and Zahara had grown children, but noted that they almost never spoke of them, and when they did they would glance around furtively to be sure that no one was listening.

In Arcos there was little peace. The Berbers had never been popular, and their oppression only seemed to get worse. Finally an incident occurred which almost caused the smouldering anger and hatred to explode.

The Berbers had taken to insulting and abusing the Christians

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of Arcos. One day two Berber soldiers were insulting Edelmiro, one of the Christians of Arcos. Edelmiro growled something and one of the Berbers struck him with the flat of his sword, knocking out several teeth. By chance, Hussein ibn Tadmira, Cadi of Arcos, happened to be present.

"You have broken the laws of Islam. Your tongues must be cut out and the one who struck Edelmiro must pay him compensation", yelled Hussein.

But Hussein soon found himself under arrest and being taken to the castle. His fury knew no bounds at being arrested when he had only done his duty. Driven by righteous anger, he knew no fear. When brought before the king, he spoke as though he were the judge and the king the accused.

"You Berbers are worse than infidels, worse than Kafiri", said Hussein. "You claim to be Muslims, yet you know less of Islam than you know of algebra, and you ignore its commandments. For you Islam is no more than an excuse to plunder Christians and Jews. I know how you rob the people with unjust taxes and forced labor, how you abuse the wives and daughters, and, though I find it revolting even to mention something so unnatural and disgusting, the sons of the people. Yet when you insult and abuse peaceful Christians it is worse. When you rob the people and abuse their sons and daughters, it is only to satisfy your avarice and your unspeakable and inconfessable appetites. Your honor is not affected, because you have none and never had any. But when you insult and abuse peaceful Christians you say that you do it because you are Muslims. This is an offense against the Honor of Islam. Now you are strong and I am weak. But someday we will all stand before the Judge from whom those who seek redress are never disappointed, and from Whose justice no wrongdoer escapes."

The king's first impulse was to kill the cadi, but he feared that this might cause Muslims all over Andalus to declare a Jihad

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or holy war against him. Finally he said:

"Cadi Hussein ben Tadmir, I declare that you are banished from my dominions, and if you return you will be put to death."

As the cadi and his family were being led out of Arcos, he suddenly turned and shouted:

"I see no living Berbers, I see only corpses whose

souls will soon roast in Hell. You are criminals and enemies of Islam, and whoever kills you commits no crime. People of Arcos, have no dealings with these tyrants, for anything to do with them is more unclean than swine's flesh."

At last the king could take no more. He seized a javelin and hurled it at the cadí. As he was dying the cadí said:

"A dying man's curse be upon you. It will not be long before you will all follow me to face the Supreme Judge. My blood will drown you."

Now the anger of the people of Arcos was near the boiling point. In Arcos relations between Muslims and Christians were very easy and cordial. Nearly all the Muslims of Arcos were descendants of Christians who converted to Islam, so many had cousins, grandparents, even parents who were Christians. The death of the cadí was an unbearable outrage. To Muslims it was a veritable sacrilege to kill a cadí, while Christians knew that he had died because he protested the oppression done to Christians, and all saw him as an Andalusí martyrred by Berbers.

Ali ibn Isa noted that the cadí was slain on 10th Muharram and said:

"The martyr of Karbala was named Hussein,
On Whom Be Peace."

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The king decreed that only the immediate family might attend the funeral of the cadí, and that any show of mourning would be punished. However, Casimiro, a Christian and brother of Edelmiro, had an idea.

The day of the cadí's funeral the streets of Arcos were absolutely empty and silent, doors and balconies shut, all

businesses closed. People crouched in their houses, armed with axes, hammers, scythes and kitchen knives. They might be no match for the well-armed Berbers in the open, but should the Berbers try to force entrance into the houses they would get a surprise.

The Berbers did nothing. There was nothing to be done, it not being practical to arrest the whole town, and no one revealed the name of Casimiro, the ringleader.

Not very far away, in Seville these tidings were heard by a handsome, brown-bearded man of middle years, al-Mutadid ibn Abbad, king of Seville. His kingdom and court were famous for poets, musicians, philosophers, sufis, scientists and artists.

Yet other activities were taking place in Seville, cultural capital of Andalus. Blacksmiths worked night and day making arms and armor, and many men trained long hours in horsemanship and use of weapons. Some day not far in the future the poet al-Nahli would write:

(al-Mutadid) ibn Abbad annihilated the Berbers
Ibn Ma'an (king of Almeria) killed the village hens

Al-Mutadid ibn Abbad, father of a great king and great poet
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and ancestor of a great sufi, was a man of the sword as well as a man of culture.

Al-Mutadid heard the news from Arcos with a mixture of rage and satisfaction: rage because he considered all Andalusis to be his people and hearing of them being oppressed by Berbers made him angry, satisfaction because now there was no doubt that the discontent of those Andalusis ruled by petty Berber kings was at

the boiling point. Several men came to him, begging him to lead an army to liberate Arcos and punish the murderers. Said one man:

"If we allow this outrage to go unpunished and our fellow Andalusis to be oppressed, then we are not men, we have no honor."

Replied al-Mutadid:

"Do not worry, the day of reckoning is not far off."

Those who saw the cold anger in his eyes had no doubt that he spoke the truth.

In Arcos if anything the oppression became harder. The king heard something that led him to believe that Ali ben Isa was a cousin of the martyred cadí and ringleader of a conspiracy.

One day Ali ibn Isa was going about his business when he was arrested by a patrol of Berber soldiers. Bonifacia and Zahara feared the worst. The next day two Berber soldiers came with him and threw him in the front door. Ali ibn Isa would not say what they had done to him, but he was obviously in great pain. He developed a fever and soon it was plain that he was dying.

"Nanafasy", he said, "Go to Seville, study under
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Fatima bint al-Muthanna, learn wisdom, be a sufi."

Soon afterwards he died. Both Muslims and Christians made pilgrimages to the grave of this good, wise and holy man. Zahra did not long survive him. Now Bonifacia was once again alone in the world. Once her life had seemed carefree, she had wandered among the olive groves, lain amidst the wild flowers looking up at the white clouds and the hobby falcons, played with lambs and baby goats. Now sadness had covered her world like a dark cloud,

and her tears fell like the rains of autumn.

Bonifacia had grown to be a beautiful girl. She was tall and slender as a cypress tree, as the Persians say. Her hair was dark brown with a touch of red, her eyes were large and were what is known as *el color del vino de Jerez salpicados de oro* or "Sherry colored with golden flecks".(2) Those who describe all Andalusian women as having hair "like the raven" and eyes "like two windows opening onto the night" are thinking of Gypsy dancers. Young men composed songs and verses in Romance and Arabic to "Nanafasy, Violet, loveliest flower of Arcos." Ali ibn Isa had taught Bonifacia to play the lute, violin and flute in both the Persian style once popular in the courts of the Caliphs and still popular in the court of al-Mutadid in Seville, and also in styles native to Andalus, mostly derived from the Celtic music of the people of King Brigo, mixed with a few Byzantine elements. She often combined the styles in her playing, since the difference between them was not great, indeed very slight. She also sang the **zajal** songs of Andalus, whose metres and verse forms were derived

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from the Celtic bards of the people of King Brigo, as was their music, though mixed with Byzantine and Persian elements. Some young men wished to marry her, but their parents said:

"She is beautiful and talented, but we know almost nothing of her family, she cannot provide a dowry, and, besides, she is a singing girl."

The truth was that Ali ibn Isa had much learning but little money.

It happened that the old king died. Knowing that the people

had not loved the Berber king, the Berbers decreed:

"All people of Arcos will mourn the king or we will see that they mourn for other reasons."

So the unloved king was buried amidst loud but very false lamentations. Once again the Berbers chose one of themselves as king, this time a young man named ben Hazrun.

One day Bonifacia was surprised by four Berber soldiers. "You come with us", said the leader. Bonifacia was petrified with fear, knowing how the Berbers abused girls and boys.

"But why, what have I done wrong?", cried Bonifacia.

"We not know", answered the leader in bad Arabic. "We only been told bring you king ben Hazrun, not know more."

Trembling with fear Bonifacia went with the soldiers to the old Visigothic castle, where the king waited in the great hall. Though young, he was ugly. Bonifacia noted that he spoke Arabic with the harsh, rasping, slurry accent of a Berber.

"You Nanafasy, most pretty girl in Arcos. You Andalusi, not Berber. People in Arcos no like Berbers. So I marry pretty Andalusi, have son half Andalusi,
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maybe they like me a little." said ben Hazrun.

So the cadi, Abu Bakr ibn al-Gutia who had replaced the martyred Hassan ibn Tadmira, was brought to the castle, though with as much disgust as though he had been forced to eat pork. Bonifacia did not wish to be the wife of this boor who belonged to a people that she utterly hated and despised, but saw that she had no choice. The cadi, who recognized her as the adopted daughter of Ali ibn Isa, saw that she did not wish to marry the Berber, but

saw that she had no alternative. With utmost repugnance and saying to himself:

"God, forgive me, but you know that the guilt is neither hers nor mine, but is of these impious Berbers".

Of course, the forced marriage of Bonifacia did not endear ben Hazrun to the people of Arcos. On the contrary, they quite rightly saw this forced marriage as a kidnapping and as one more Berber crime.

Bonifacia soon found that ben Hazrun was indeed ignorant and impious, that he knew nothing of poetry and had no taste for it. He also had no taste for the sweet, melodious music of Andalus, of Celtic base, but with Byzantine and Persian elements. He had his Berber musicians whose music was, to Bonifacia, a horrible noise and cacophony which hurt her ears and gave her a headache. She was almost never allowed to leave the castle unless accompanied by the king and an escort or by several older women servants.

In his crude way ben Hazrun loved Bonifacia and tried to make

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her happy. She constantly received gifts of clothing, perfumes, musical instruments and other luxuries. She had the choicest of food and a host of servants to do her bidding. Yet her life was boring and lonely, and she could not love a man like ben Hazrun, who was a crude, cruel, ignorant Berber. Had he any poetic talent, ben Hazrun would have compared Bonifacia to the orange of that part of Andalus: sweet scented and lovely to look at, but inside bitter.

One day when ben Hazrun was away on an inspection tour,

Bonifacia was told by a woman servant that she was to come to the main gate of the castle. Wearing a veil and accompanied by women servants and Berber guards, Bonifacia went to see what was wanted.

At the gate was a pleasant-looking youngish man with a brown beard whose black skullcap and long locks tumbling from his temples proclaimed him to be a Jew. With him were two armed men who had not dismounted and several heavily laden donkeys. He spoke in Romance.

"I am Hezekiah ben Solomon ha-Levi, son of Solomon ben Aharon ha-Levi, younger brother of Abdias ben Solomon ha-Levi, whom I believe you have met.", said the visitor.

"Yes", said Bonifacia, "a few times they visited Ali ibn Isa, my adoptive father."

"Ah then, there is no doubt that you are Nanafasy, wife of ben Hazrun. Isaak, bring the packages", said Hezekiah.

One of the men dismounted and brought two rather large packages wrapped in coarse cloth.

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"Now, my lady, please examine the seals on the packages", said Hezekiah. The packages had been carefully sealed with sealing wax. The cloth did not seem to be torn, nor the seams cut.

"The packages seem to be intact, sir", said Bonifacia.

"Very well, would you be so kind as to sign this paper affirming that they are intact?", said Hezekiah.

Bonifacia signed the paper and offered Hezekiah a few coins.

"No, my lady, I have already been paid for delivering these packages, and to take more would not be honorable", said Hezekiah.

"Bring water and fresh fruit for Hezekiah ben

Solomon and his men, and give the animals water and barley", said Bonifacia.

This was not payment, but was hospitality. It was best to offer a Jew only water and fresh fruit, so that the dietary laws of his faith would not be broken.

Ben Hazrun often ordered things for her. Nevertheless, Bonifacia was excited. "Bring the packages to my room", she ordered the servants.

Carefully she opened each package. In both were embroidered silks from the East, perfumes and unguents. In one was a musical instrument which she recognized as a harp. "Must not be very different from playing a lute", she thought. On the wood of the harp were beautiful and colorful designs which, though she had never seen them before, were somehow familiar, and words in a language she could not decipher.

In the other package was something which seemed to be a

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goatskin bag covered with bright cloth with two short wooden tubes and one long wooden tube protruding from it. "What is it", she thought. Then she saw that one of the tubes was very like a simple flute or oboe.

"Why yes", she thought, "one short tube carries the melody, the long tube is the tonic, and one blows air into the bag through the other short tube."

She had heard of these before. They came from a place in the North called **Jellikan**, where the countryside was green and lovely, where long arms of the sea, called **rias** in the language of Jellikan, extended far into the land, where tall and short

varieties of heather, called **brezo** in the language of Jellikan, grew in abundance, and in many places almost touched the waters of the sea. "Land where the heather meets the sea", some called it. But the weather in Jellikan was rainy and foggy. The people of Jellikan, save a few Jews, were all Christians, also spoke of King Brigo, their tongue very like Romance, and they were very fond of this musical instrument, which they called **gaita**. The great general al-Mansur had taken a Christian holy place in Jellikan where St. James the Greater, also known as St. James the Righteous, whom the people of Jellikan called **Santiago**, one of the disciples of Jesus Christ, whom the Muslims called **The Prophet Isa** (On Whom Be Peace) was buried. Al-Mansur had taken the bells from the Christian Holy Place to Cordoba, where they could still be seen, but had given orders:

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"Not to harm the tomb of the holy man, the disciple of the Prophet Isa, On Whom Be Peace".(3)

Though his position in Jellikan was perilous, al-Mansur had remained in there for a time, raiding to the outskirts of the city called **La Coruna**. In both Jellikan and parts of Andalus, some said that he was seeking the treasure of King Brigo, while others said that he had fallen in love with a beautiful lady of Jellikan, but al-Mansur himself was silent as to his motives.

Bonifacia blew into the mouthpiece of the "gaita". The bag filled with air, the long tonic pipe sounded, but when she tried to play an air on it, the melodic pipe or chanter, which she had

heard was called **punteiro** in the language of Jellikan, was mute.

Something was in it. She put two fingers into the mouth of the punteiro and pulled out a paper. She saw that there was something written on it in Romance.

"Dear sister Bonifacia", the letter began, "I trust that those vile Berbers will not find this letter, and if they do they will not be able to read it. You may not remember me, I am your elder brother Rodrigo. After the Berbers caused the death of our father I had to flee to Seville. I heard that you were raised by the dear, kindly Father Isidoro and later by that wise and holy man Ali ibn Isa, but also that the Berber swine ben Hazrun has forced you to marry him.

Here in Seville is a king named al-Mutadid who is a cultured man and an Andalusi. His dream is to drive all the Berbers from Andalus. I now belong to the army of al-Mutadid, as does our cousin Recaredo and the three sons of Ali ibn Isa. Some day I will come with the Army of Seville, free Arcos from the Berbers and avenge the deaths of our parents, of Ali ibn Isa and so many others, and the dishonor to you, my sister. With my sword I shall write the epitaphs of our parents, of Ali ibn Isa, of the cadí Hassan ibn Tadmír and so many others in the blood of Berbers. The arrows of the Army
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of Seville will mend an Andalus rent asunder by the savage Berbers. Do not lose heart, God is Just."

Your Brother,

Rodrigo

Bonifacia read the letter with mixed emotions.

"A brother, a cousin and three sons of Ali ben Isa in the Army of Seville, I could have gone to Seville, been well received, not have had to marry this Berber lout, and studied under the woman sufi Fatima bint Waliyya, as Ali ibn Isa wished. Why did not Zahra tell me of her sons in the Army of Seville? Perhaps she did not know or was afraid to breathe a word of it. Ah well, my liberation has been delayed, but will come, I will be free, I will be able to fulfil Ali ibn Isa's dream, I will see the brilliant court of al-Mutadid."

Though overjoyed, she dared not say a word to anyone. That

evening she took a walk around the castle. It was a late spring evening. The moon was full and the sky filled with uncountable stars. The leaves of the olive trees shown silver in the moonlight, and the Guadalete seemed to be a ribbon of silver. Looking towards the town, the whitewashed houses looked silvery-blue, and the shadows took on fantastic shapes. From the garden came the perfume of orange blossoms, jasmine, honeysuckle, wisteria and roses. A nightingale warbled. The rose and the nightingale, as in those poems written in a language called **Persian** or **Farsi** of which Ali ibn Isa had been so fond, and which he had explained to Bonifacia.

"What a lovely place old King Brigo chose for his stronghold", mused Bonifacia. "Andalus, sweet, noble and lovely land. Was it not the poet and thinker ibn Hazm of Cordoba who said: "You can keep your pearl of China, I prefer my ruby of Andalus"?"

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Bonifacia took her rabab and began to play, then she sang softly. Though she did not know it, the scale of the air she played and the metre and the form of the stanzas of her song all proceeded from the people of King Brigo.

Next morning she read her brother's letter again. She looked out the window and saw how the rays of the rising sun caught the minaret of the main mosque, and, in spite of the shadow, finally surrounded it. She was reminded of the words of another Persian poem which Ali ibn Isa had explained to her:

"And lo, the hunter of the East has caught the Sultan's turret in a noose of light."

How she loved to hear the call of the muezzin from the minaret of the main mosque! Father Isidoro and Ali ibn Isa had said that in Byzantine and Visigothic times a church had been where the main mosque now stood. Ali ibn Isa had shown her fragments of this church which were still visible in the mosque, and had wondered aloud if King Brigo and his people had not had a place of worship there long before.

"Did the Muslims simply take the church from the Christians, then demolish most of it and put the mosque in its place?", asked Bonifacia.

"No", answered Ali ibn Isa. "For some time after the Muslim Conquest there were only a few Muslims in Arcos. They rented part of the church for use as a mosque. Finally when the number of Muslims became too large for this, they bought the whole church from the Christians. Seeing that the church was not well oriented for use as a mosque, they demolished it and built a mosque on the same site, though reusing many materials from the church. Thus fragments of the church are still visible in the mosque."

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By and by Bonifacia had a child, a bouncing boy whom, for reasons she would not say, she insisted on naming "Hussein". Ben Hazrun was overjoyed and decreed a day of celebration. Yet once again he was mistaken. The people did not love him because he had a son who was half Andalusí. The good Emirs and Caliphs of the family Umayya who had ruled Andalus had originally been Arabs. Andalusis in general admired Arabs and Persians and were proud to claim Arab or Persian blood even when they had none. The great ibn Hazm was a pure Andalusí, whose grandparents had been born Christians in Huelva, only later converting to Islam.

Yet ibn Hazm liked to claim a Persian ancestor. The Emirs and Caliphs of Cordoba for generation after generation had married

Andalusi women until their proportion of Arab blood became almost nothing and all had blue eyes and blond or red hair. But Berbers were different. They knew that they were hated and despised in Andalus. Few believed that the Berbers of Arcos would choose a half-Andalusi as king.

"Now even if ben Hazrun takes another wife you will still be *Umm Walid*, the chief wife, because you are mother of his eldest son", said the servant women.

Though he spent much time with nurses, Bonifacia loved little Hussein.

"An Andalusi you are, real descendant of King Brigo, with your wine-colored hair and grey-blue eyes", said Bonifacia. "With God's help you will free Andalus of Berbers."

The child somewhat relieved Bonifacia of the feeling that she was prisoner in a luxurious prison. Though the care of Hussein

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was largely in the hands of nurses, Bonifacia sang to him and played with him.

One day rather unexpectedly ben Hazrun came into the nursery and said:

"I go away for few days. You and Hussein will be safe."

Bonifacia, Hussein, a nurse and another woman servant found themselves shut up in a tower of the castle. The furnishings were luxurious. If indeed ben Hazrun intended to be away only a few days, the provisions were more than ample. A cistern provided a supply of cool water. There were musical instruments and books of poetry. Bonifacia could only guess as to ben Hazrun's motives for doing this. She had learned long ago that it

is difficult to understand the mentality of a Berber.

"Now I am really in a luxurious prison", thought Bonifacia. The windows were barred, but the views were marvelous. Bonifacia spent long hours gazing out the windows and dreaming of freedom. She watched the hobby falcons soaring past the window.

"How fortunate you are, little falcons, free to soar where you will, while I am caged like a parrot.", said Bonifacia, thinking out loud.

The "few days" slowly became many. The servants were worried and constantly whined.

"Oh, my lady, something has happened to ben Hazrun, and we will be left to starve", moaned one.

"Silence", snapped Bonifacia, "The next one who talks like that will have her tongue cut out."

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But Bonifacia herself was worried. She thought of trying to communicate with the guards and offering them money to break down the door at the entrance to the tower. However, she knew that if the guards did break down the door and ben Hazrun returned, then they would all be in serious trouble. This could only be done in the last extremity, which had not yet been reached.

One day Bonifacia heard trumpets sounding. At first she thought that they were announcing the return of ben Hazrun. Then she realized that they were sounding the call of alarm.

"What is happening out there", she thought.

Not far outside Arcos was a large force of mounted men in chain mail and helmets with nose guards whose banners proclaimed them to be of the Army of Seville. At the head was a

strikingly handsome boy of 13 or 14, al-Mutamid, son of al-Mutadid, king of Seville.

With al-Mutamid were five natives of Arcos: Bonifacia's brother Rodrigo, their cousin Recaredo, Hassan ibn Ali, Hussein ibn Ali and Jaafar ibn Ali, sons of Ali ibn Isa, as well as Hezekiah ben Solomon ha-Levi, who knew Arcos well.

"It has been well planned", said al-Mutamid. "The people of Arcos are with us, so the Berbers are trapped. We have ambushes posted on every escape route."

The five men of Arcos drew their swords and swore:

"We will not put down our swords until they have drunk the blood of Berbers."

Trumpets and kettledrums sounded the advance.

"You must stay here, my lord", said Rodrigo.
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"But I do not fear the accursed Berbers", replied al-Mutamid.

"No one said that you did, but your father ordered you to remain here, and a good soldier obeys orders", said Rodrigo.

The Berbers of Arcos found themselves facing the Army of Seville from without and the people of Arcos from within. Those who tried to flee were ambushed and killed. Soon Berber heads topped the long lances of the soldiers of Seville.

"Death to the Berbers", chanted the people of Arcos.

A man whose head was bleeding seized the bridle of Rodrigo's horse.

"Sire", he cried, "Come quickly, the Berbers are massacring the people. Come with me, please."

"Follow me", yelled Rodrigo to his troop.

The wounded man led them to a small plaza covered with men, women and children who had been hideously slaughtered. Surprised, the Berbers turned to face the avengers. It was over in a few minutes. Impelled by a terrible fury, Rodrigo and his men made short work of the terrified Berbers. One Berber tried to find shelter in a house, but a man who had been hiding there killed him with an axe.

Now only one Berber was left, a big man who was obviously a veteran.

"Single combat, single combat", cried Rodrigo.
"Why I accept", said the Berber. "If I win your people kill me."

"No", answered Rodrigo. "My men are not Berbers
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but Andalusis, they keep their word. Men, swear that if I am defeated you will see that the Berber goes free."

"Yes, we swear", his men replied.

The Berber was a skillful fighter, and the combat continued for what seemed an eternity. Finally Rodrigo made a feint as though he were going to strike at the Berber's legs. The Berber then lowered his sword, and Rodrigo struck him a blow on the right shoulder. Though it did not cut through the chain mail, the blow momentarily paralyzed the Berber's right arm, and by reflex he moved his shield to the right. Rodrigo struck the Berber two hard blows on the left shoulder, the first paralyzing the left arm, the second cutting through the chain mail and amputating the arm at the shoulder. Rodrigo now drove his sword deep into the Berber's armpit, where there was no armor.

"My sword is sated with Berber blood", shouted Rodrigo.

At that moment he happened to glance toward the castle and remembered:

"Bonifacia, oh my God. To the castle, men. Recaredo, take that Berber's head and put it on a lance. If there are any Berbers left in the castle it will be a warning to them that one of their best fighters is dead."

Fleeing Berbers were drawn toward the castle, pursued by the people and by the soldiers of al-Mutadid. Seeing the banner of Seville, the gate of the castle was shut. Some Berbers were caught outside the gate and killed. Several wounded Berbers were hurled off the precipice into the waters of the Guadalete far

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below. At first the attackers were unable to storm the castle, some people of Arcos being killed by arrows and spears, since they had neither shields nor armor. Then some servants opened a door used as a service entrance. Some townsmen overpowered the Berbers by the main gate and survived long enough to open it. Now the remaining Berbers were hunted down and killed. One huge soldier of Seville picked up a Berber like a rag doll and hurled him off a tower. The Berber landed on the stones below and burst like a watermelon.

Bonifacia heard the people shout "Death to the Berbers", and heard the trumpets of the Army of Seville and saw the fighting. She ran to a window of the tower and shouted over and over in Romance and Arabic:

"Help, I am a prisoner here, open the door of the tower."

Finally she was heard and the door was broken down with axes. With Hussein in her arms, Bonifacia came out of the tower. She was unveiled, her dark auburn hair waving in the breeze and her green eyes flashing. All were struck by her beauty.

"Thank you, thank you", she cried. "My beloved Arcos free of Berbers."

After her imprisonment, the warm sun felt good, but the courtyard of the castle was strewn with corpses, some hacked to pieces, some broken after being hurled off walls and towers.

"I only want to find a place with green grass and flowers", she thought.

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She left the castle, but the plaza in front of it was also littered with dead bodies of men and horses. Among so much death the sight of such a beautiful woman with a small child was strangely moving. At her approach all became quiet.

Suddenly a townsman whose head was bloodied and whose eyes were red from weeping shouted:

"Kill the Berber brat."

"No", cried Bonifacia, "I married a Berber, but my son has done no wrong."

"Not true", shouted the man. "You are an Andalusian who was kidnapped and forced to marry that Berber swine, but that brat carries the blood of the accursed Berbers."

At this moment Rodrigo and his men arrived at the opposite end of the plaza. He knew that the beautiful woman must be Bonifacia, and attempted to make his way to her through the crowd.

"Help me open a path", he shouted to his men.

"Make way for Rodrigo", shouted some soldiers of Seville

among the crowd.

The man who had screamed at Bonifacia now suddenly seized Hussein from her arms and threw him off the cliff into the abyss. Now a blood-curdling scream spilt the air, as Bonifacia leaped off the cliff.

"No, no, no", shouted Rodrigo.

The pleats of Bonifacia's sleeves unfolded like the wings of a huge bird which seemed to grow smaller and smaller as it fell into the abyss, appearing first as a hobby falcon, then as a

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swallow, then as a black butterfly which fell into the silvery waters of the Guadalete. The waters had not yet calmed when a black bird rose from the river, soared to the heights of the castle and briefly circled. Then, swift as an arrow the black bird made for the murderer of Hussein, pecking out his eyes.

"The Ghost Bird", shouted the mob.

Rodrigo, blind with fury, was running to the murderer to complete the vengeance of Bonifacia when trumpets sounded. Al-Mutamid had arrived. Rodrigo stayed his hand, but growled to the murderer:

"Take one step and I will strike your ugly head from your shoulders."

When al-Mutamid heard what had happened, he turned to the now-blind murderer and said:

"You have turned a day of victory into a day of sorrow. You have shed innocent blood and indirectly caused the death of Bonifacia or Nanafasy, who was sister of one of my best soldiers, cousin of another,

adoptive sister of three more and adoptive daughter of the sufi holy man Ali ibn Isa. By the laws of Islam I could have you slain. Nanafasy spared your life and so will I. However, the hands which shed innocent blood will be cut off, and the tongue which shouted for innocent blood will be cut out. You will be a beggar, and all who give you alms will spit on you. Thus it will be known what happens to those who shed innocent blood in the kingdom of the **banu Abbad**. Rodrigo, do you agree?"

"Yes, my lord, you have wisdom and justice which would do credit to a man far older than your tender years", answered Rodrigo.

"And you, *cadi*, Abu Bakr ibn al-Gutiyya is your name, I believe?", said al-Mutamid, turning to the *cadi* of Arcos.

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"Yes, young sire, I agree with Rodrigo. You will be a great king someday", answered Abu Bakr ibn al-Gutiyya, the *cadi* of Arcos.

The memory of the beautiful and tragic Bonifacia or Nanafasy lived on in Arcos. To this day at twilight on Friday evening the Ghost Bird rises from the river and soars to the high chimneys of Arcos. Many people of Arcos have seen the Ghost Bird soaring about the tower where Bonifacia or Nanafasy was imprisoned, as though looking over her beautiful and beloved Arcos and seeking the peace and happiness which was never hers in life.

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NOTES

LEGEND OF SPAIN

Arcos is a real place and is as described. King Brigo or Breoghan, the Emirs and Caliphs of the Umayya family, Fatima bint Waliyya, ben Hazrun, al-Mutadid, al-Razi, ibn Hazm of Cordoba, al-Mansur (called **Almanzor** in Spanish), al-Nahli, ibn Ma'an and al-Mutamid are all real historical figures. When she was a very old woman and he an adolescent, Fatima bint al-Muthanna was **sheikh** or Sufi Master of Ibn Arabi, and thus the first who set his feet on the mystic or esoteric path. Thus, the world owes a great deal to the wise sufi Andalusian woman Fatima al-Muthanna of Seville.

Bonifacia or Nanfasy is the main character in the legend of Arcos, so it may be supposed that she really lived. The other characters are my own inventions.

- ❖ 1.) I am well aware that the Greek phrase **Hagios, Hagios, Hagios, Kyrios o Theos** does not appear in the liturgy of the Gregorian or Tridentine Rite. However, the Rite used in Arcos in the 11th Century would have been the **Mozarabic** or **Visigothic Rite**, which is still used in some parishes in and around Toledo, Spain and in special chapels of several cathedrals throughout Spain. Said Greek phrase does indeed appear prominently in the Mozarabic or Visigothic Rite.

- ❖ 2.) "**Sherry colored eyes**" are something which I have seen only among Andalusian women and white-skinned or "wheat colored" high caste Hindu women in north India. To give the reader an idea of what I am talking about, pour some Williams Humbert Dry Sack Sherry, either *Medio Seco* (Medium Dry) or *Oloroso* (Medium Sweet and possessing a delicious *bouquet* (or, as some wine experts call it, "nose"); a lighter colored sherry will not serve, while sweet sherries are heavy bodied and therefore opaque. Pour said sherry into a sherry

glass hold it up to the light, and imagine that there are flecks of gold in it. One of the two great loves of my life, whom I knew during my years at the University of Granada in Spain, had Sherry colored eyes with golden flecks. At a conference in New Delhi, India I met a high caste Hindu girl (her *tilak* or caste mark indicated that she was a Brahmin) at a conference on Buddhism. She was a native of Delhi, and a student at the University of Delhi. Her hair was sable brown with a red tinge which was only visible in certain lights, while her eyes were Sherry colored with golden flecks. I do not recall her name if I ever knew it, but I cannot forget her, as she was one of the most beautiful creatures I ever saw in my life; certainly I cannot forget her large, Sherry colored eyes with golden flecks.

- ❖ 3.) **Jellikan** refers to Galicia in the Northwest corner of Spain.

The harp is an Irish harp. The Celtic designs on it would look somehow familiar to Bonifacia. The language of the writing would be Gaelic. The ***gaita*** is the Galician or Gallego bagpipe, which, unlike those of Ireland and Scotland, generally has only one drone pipe. King Brigo or Breoghan is an undoubtedly real if shadowy personage who once ruled all of what is now Portugal and the Western half of Spain. In Southwestern Spain he is known as "Brigo", in Northwestern Spain as "Brigo" or "Breogan", and a song calls Galicia "fogar de Breogan", i.e., "home of Breoghan". Both Irish and Spanish sources affirm that a descendant of breoghan led a migration of Spanish Celts to Ireland, and many old Irish families proudly claim to be "of the lineage of Breoghan". In La Coruna in Galicia is a lighthouse which is mainly of Roman construction. The local legend says that there existed a tower on the same site in pre-Roman times and that Breoghan climbed to the

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top of it and from there saw Ireland. Those who have read the novel Bard by Morgan LLeuwelyn will recognize the "stronghold by the headland" as La Coruna. The "Christian Holy Place" in Galicia captured by al-Mansur is Santiago de Compostela, where St. James the Greater, also known as St. James the Righteous, disciple of Jesus Christ, is buried.

Michael McClain