RACHEL AND THE SEVEN WONDERS

THE STATUE IN THE HARBOUR

RACHEL AND THE SEVEN WONDERS

BY NETTA SYRETT

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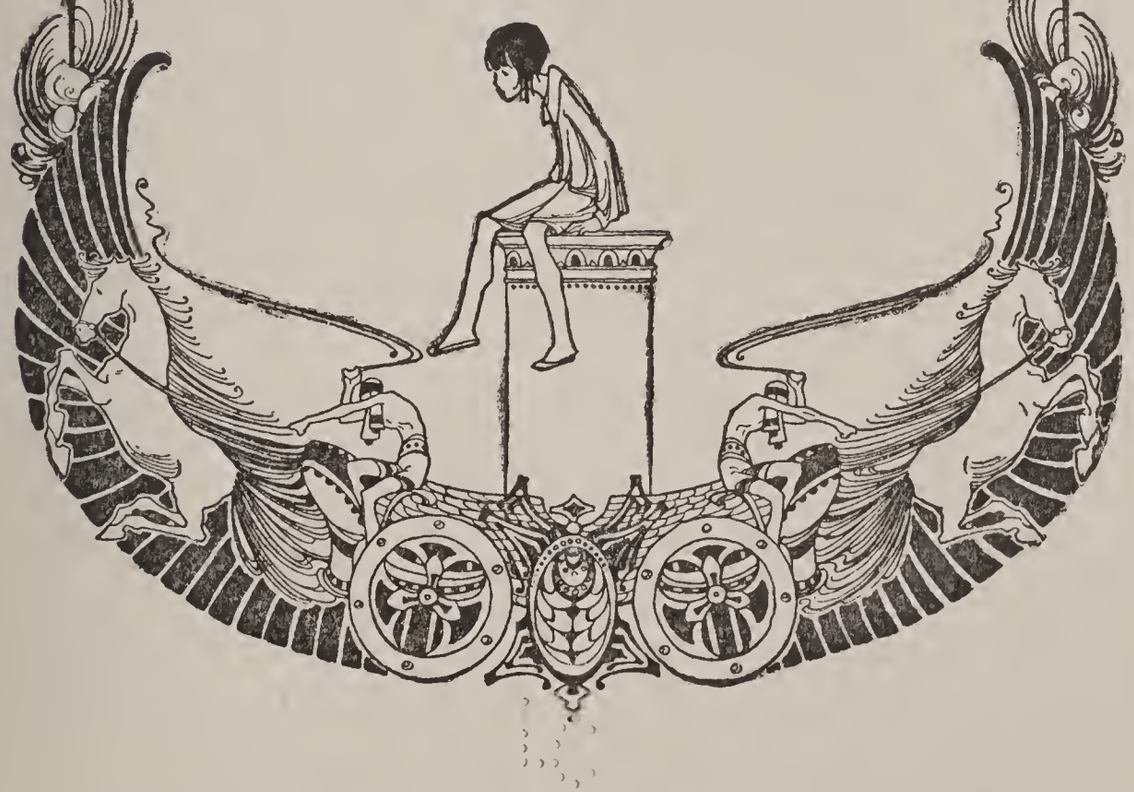

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TO ROBIN

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Rachel was a very unhappy little girl as she sat in an omnibus with Miss Moore, on her way to the British Museum. She didn't want to go to the British Museum. She didn't want to be in London at all. She longed desperately to be back in her country home with her father and mother—now, alas! far away in Egypt.

Everything as Rachel said had happened so suddenly. Certainly her mother had been ill some time, but it was all at once decided that the only possible place to send her little daughter in a hurry, was to Aunt Hester, in London.

Aunt Hester, who was her father's eldest sister, and in the eyes of Rachel, at least, awfully old, was quite kind, but also, as she admitted, quite unused to children. The first thing she did therefore, was to engage a governess to look after her niece for the seven weeks she would have to remain with her.

Miss Moore, a rather uninteresting, middle-aged lady, had duly arrived the previous evening, and at breakfast time Aunt Hester had suggested the British Museum as a suitable place to which Rachel might be conducted.

"She's never been to London before, and, though I don't want her to sit too long over lessons, I think she should improve her

mind while she is here. The British Museum is an education in itself," declared Aunt Hester, and Miss Moore had primly agreed.

So it happened that at eleven o'clock on a bright spring morning, a secretly unwilling little girl climbed the steps leading to the great entrance of the great museum. The pigeons on the steps reminded her of the dovecote at home, and the tears came suddenly to her eyes, as almost without thinking she counted the number of birds on the top step.

"Seven," she murmured half aloud.

"Seven what?" asked Miss Moore.

"Seven pigeons on this step. Aren't they pretty?" Rachel lingered to look at the burnished shining necks. She would much rather have stayed outside with the pigeons, but Miss Moore hurried on to the swing doors, and Rachel was obliged to follow her into the huge building.

"What do they keep here?" she asked listlessly, when Miss Moore had given up her umbrella to a man behind a counter, just inside.

"All sorts of things," returned her governess vaguely. "It's a *museum*, you know."

Rachel was not very much the wiser but, as she walked with Miss Moore from one great hall to another, she was confused and wearied by the number of things of which she had glimpses. There were rows of statues, cases full of strange objects, monuments in stone all covered with carvings; curious pictures on the walls. Indeed, there *were* "all sorts of things" in the British Museum! But, as she knew nothing about any of them, and Miss Moore volunteered very little information, she was yawning with boredom by the time her governess remarked:

"Now, *these* things come from Egypt."

For the first time Rachel pricked up her ears. Mother and Dad were now in Egypt, and as she glanced at the long stone things like tombs, at drawings and models and a thousand other incomprehensible objects all round her, she wished she knew something about them. Instead of saying so, however, and almost without thinking, she murmured, "This is the seventh

room we've come to. I've counted them."

"This is the famous *Rosetta* Stone," observed Miss Moore, reading an inscription at the foot of a dull-looking broken block of marble in front of them.

Rachel yawned for the seventh time with such vigour that her eyes closed, and when she opened them a queer-looking little old man was bending over the big block.

"What is the date of the month?" he asked so suddenly that she started violently.

"Let me see. The seventh, I think. Yes—the seventh," she stammered, raising her eyes to his face.

He was so muffled up, that nearly all Rachel could see of him was a pair of very large dark eyes, under a curious-looking hat. He wore a long cloak reaching to his heels, and one end of the cloak was flung over his left shoulder almost concealing his face.

Rachel scarcely knew why she thought him so old, except perhaps, that his figure seemed to be much bent.

"Quite right. It's the seventh," he returned. "And what's the name of your house?"

Rachel looked round for Miss Moore, who strangely enough was still reading the inscription on the stone, and seemed to be paying no attention to the old man's questions.

"It's called 'The Seven Gables,'" she answered.

"And where are you living now?"

"At number seven Cranborough Terrace."

"And your name is *Rachel*. Do you read your Bible? How many years did Jacob work for his wife?"

"He waited for her seven years. And her name was Rachel," she exclaimed, forgetting to wonder why Miss Moore didn't interfere, or join in a conversation which was becoming so interesting.

"The *seventh* of the month, and the Seven Gables, and *seven* years for Rachel—and, why, there were *seven* pigeons just outside as I came in, and this is the seventh room we've come to. Because I counted them. I don't know why—but I did. What a lot of sevens."

"Can you think of any other sevens in your life?" asked the little old man, quietly.

"Why, yes!" she answered, excitedly. "There are seven of us. All grown up except me. And I'm the seventh child, and the youngest!"

"Seven is a magic number, you know," said her companion, gravely.

"Is it? Really and truly?" asked Rachel. "Oh, I do love hearing about magic things! But I thought there weren't any now?"

"On the contrary, the world is full of them. Take this, for instance." He pointed to the broken marble block. "That's a magic stone."

Rachel gazed at it reverently. "What does it do?" she asked almost in a whisper.

"It's a gate into the Past," returned the old man in a dreamy voice. "But come now," he went on more briskly, "can we remember any more sevens? You begin."

"There are seven days in the week," said Rachel, trying to think, though she was longing to ask more about the magic stone.

"There's the seven-branched candlestick in the Bible," the old man went on, promptly.

"And the seven ears of corn and the seven thin cows that Pharaoh dreamt about," returned Rachel, entering into the spirit of the game.

"The story of the Seven Sleepers."

"The Seven Champions of Christendom," added Rachel, who had just read the book. "Oh, there are thousands of sevens. I can think of lots more in a minute."

"It's my turn now," was the old man's answer. "The Seven Wonders of the World."

"I never heard of them. What are they?" Rachel demanded.

Again the old man pointed to the stone. "That gateway would lead you to one of them," he said, quietly, "if, as I'm beginning to think, you're one of the lucky children."

"Do lucky children have a lot to do with *seven*? Because

THE ROSETTA STONE

if so, I ought to be one, oughtn't I? It's funny I never thought about it before, but there's a seven in everything that has to do with me! And—"

"We'll try," interrupted the little old man. "Shut your eyes and bow seven times in the direction of this stone. Never mind this lady"—for Rachel had quite suddenly remembered the curious silence of her governess. "She won't miss you. You may do as I tell you without fear."

Casting one hasty glance at Miss Moore, who had moved to a little distance and was just consulting her watch, Rachel, full of excited wonder, obeyed. Seven times she bent her head with fast-closed eyes, and opened them only when her companion called softly "*Now.*"

Even before she opened them, Rachel was conscious of a delicious warmth like that of a hot midsummer day. A moment ago she had felt very chilly standing before the marble block Miss Moore called the *Rosetta* Stone, in a big, gloomy hall of the British Museum. How could it so suddenly have become warm?

In a second the question was answered, for she stood under a sky blue as the deepest blue flower, and the glorious sun lighted a scene so wonderful that Rachel gave a scream of astonishment.

"Where are we?" she gasped.

"In the mighty and mysterious land of Eygpt," answered her companion, "as it appeared thousands of years before the birth of Christ."

His tone was so solemn that Rachel turned quickly to look at him, and, wonder of wonders, no old man was by her side! A dark-skinned youth stood there, dressed in a curious but beautiful robe with strange designs embroidered on its hem, and a no less strange head-dress, from which gold coins fell in a fringe upon his forehead.

"Oh!" cried Rachel, when she could speak for amazement. "You were old just now. I don't understand. Who are you?" she added, in confusion.

The young man smiled, showing a row of beautiful white teeth. "My name is Sheshà. I *am* old," he said. "Very, very old."

He pointed to a great object at which, so far, in her astonishment, Rachel had scarcely had time to glance. "I was born before *that* was quite finished—six thousand years ago."

Rachel gasped again.

"But you look younger than my brother, and *he's* only twenty," she exclaimed.

"In returning to the land of my birth I return also to the age I was when I lived in it. . . . But now, little maid of To-day, look around you, for there stands, as it stood six thousand years ago, one of the Seven Wonders of the World."

Rachel obeyed and gazed upon a huge building with a broad base, tapering almost to a point, whose walls were of smooth polished stones of enormous size. Only a moment previously she had glanced carelessly at pictures of buildings like this one, but now, as she saw it rising before her in all its grandeur out of the yellow sand, and under a canopy of blue sky, she almost held her breath.

"It is a pyramid, isn't it?" she whispered. "I've seen pictures of pyramids, but I don't know anything about them."

"It is the first great pyramid of Egypt," answered the young man. "And, little maid, you are highly favoured, for you see it as it looked nearly six thousand years ago. It was already old when Joseph was in Egypt, and Moses saw it when he lived in the palace of Pharaoh's daughter.

Rachel gasped. "But what is it? What is it built for?" she asked.

"For the tomb of a king. That pyramid—" he pointed towards it—"was built by the great King Cheops, and because you are one of the fortunate children of the magic number seven, you see one of the Seven Wonders of the World as it stood fresh from the workers' hands."

"Dad is in Egypt now. *He* doesn't see it like this then?"

Sheshà smiled. "Nay. He has already approached the Wonder in an electric car—like all the other travellers of to-day, and instead of these walls of granite which you behold, graven over with letters and strange figures, he has seen great rough steps."

"Steps?" echoed Rachel. "Why are there *steps* up the side now?"

"Because beneath these smooth walls the pyramid is built of gigantic blocks of stone, and now that their covering has been removed, the blocks look like steps which can be, and *are* climbed by people who live in the world to-day."

"But why was its beautiful shining case taken off?" Rachel asked, looking with curiosity at the carving upon it.

"Because in the course of long years the people of other nations who conquered Egypt and had no respect for my wondrous land, broke up the 'beautiful shining case,' to quote your own words, little maid, and used it for building temples in which they worshipped gods strange and new."

Rachel glanced again at her companion. She was still so bewildered that she scarcely knew which she should ask first of the hundred questions crowding to her mind. And then everything around her was so strange and beautiful! The yellow sand of the desert, the blue sky, the burning sun, the long strip of fertile land bordering a great river.

"That must be the Nile," she thought, remembering her geography. "The Nile is in Egypt."

Just as though he read her thoughts, Sheshà again broke silence.

"Do you wonder that we worshipped the river in those far-off days?" he asked, dreamily.

"Did you? Why?" Rachel gazed at him curiously.

"It was, and is, the life-giver," returned Sheshà. "But for that river, there would never have been any food in this land. And therefore no cities, no temples, no pyramids, no great schools of learning as there were here in ancient days when Moses was 'learnèd in all the wisdom of the Egyptians.'"

"Yes, but how could the river make the corn grow, and give you food?" asked Rachel. "I thought it was the *rain* that made things grow."

"In Egypt rain does not fall. But the river, this wondrous river of ours, does the work of rain. Once every year it overflows its banks, and the thirsty land is watered, and what would

otherwise be all desert, like the yellow sand you see that is not reached by the flood, becomes green with waving corn, and shady palm trees, and beautiful with fruit and flowers. Yes, no wonder we worshipped our river."

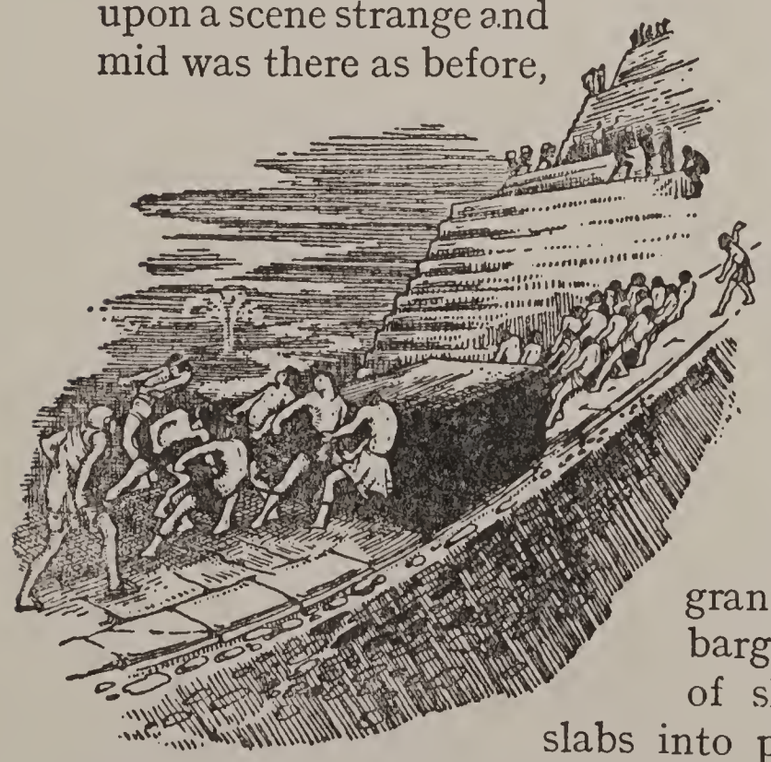
Rachel would like to have asked him how the river was worshipped, but Sheshà seemed rather to be talking to himself than to her, and there was such a curious far-away look on his face that she felt shy of questioning him. He stood gazing at the Pyramid as though he saw things even more amazing than its mighty form.

"It must have taken a long time to build," she ventured at last, rather timidly.

Sheshà started.

"I was dreaming," he said. "A long time to build? Verily. Would you care to see by whom, and at what cost it was raised? I can show you. We have but to travel a little further back into the Past for that. Shut fast your eyes and bow seven times as before."

Rachel needed no second bidding, and in a few seconds, having obeyed the instructions of her companion, she looked again upon a scene strange and marvellous. The great Pyramid was there as before, but as yet not quite finished. Its mighty walls were built, and were being covered by the smooth case of granite, and round the great pile, like ants swarming over an ant hill, were the builders—thousands upon thousands of dark-skinned, almost naked, men, toiling like the slaves they were. Here great blocks of marble and granite were being dragged from barges on the river. There, hundreds of slaves were hoisting the huge slabs into place on the as yet, unfinished walls, while multitudes of others swarmed over and round the



monument, cutting, hammering, polishing, chiselling. A hum as of innumerable bees filled the air, and indeed, Rachel was reminded of a hive, the inside of which her father had once shown her, all quivering with the movement of the worker bees as they toiled to make their cells.

She gave a little scream of astonishment at the sight of the thronging multitudes, and presently heard the grave voice of Sheshà speaking.

"Behold, little maiden, in what manner this Wonder of the World was fashioned. Out of the toil and labour of flesh and blood, in the days when the Pharaohs ruled in this land, and cared naught for the lives of their humbler subjects. Of these, as you see, they made slaves who did the work that in the world of to-day is performed by machines, by steam power, by electricity, by all the new inventions of modern times."

"Do the people who come to Egypt now know all this? I mean people who don't come in a *magic* way like me. Are there history books all about Egypt as it was long ago?"

Sheshà pointed to the Pyramids. "That and many other monuments are the history books—the great tombs, and all the palaces and temples and columns still standing after thousands of years. On them are written the story of the land. Behold, it is being written before your eyes, since by what you call *magic* you are watching the work of men who laboured four thousand years before Christ."

"But how can those funny pictures and signs they are cutting be *writing*?" asked Rachel, watching a man who was graving strange marks on the granite blocks.

"Such was the writing of the ancient Egyptians," replied Sheshà, "called in later days *hieroglyphics, or secret* writing, because, as ages passed, the meaning of the writing was forgotten, and men gazed at these strange signs and wondered what they meant, and what secrets were hidden from them by a language which no one could read."

"And did they *ever* find out the secret?" asked Rachel, eagerly. "Can anyone nowadays read what is written on stones like these?"

"Yes. The secret has at last been discovered. For thousands of years it was hidden, but at last, in modern days, almost within the life-time of some old men and women still on this earth, the mystery was revealed by means of a magic stone."

"I know!" cried Rachel excitedly. "That was the piece of marble I was looking at when I met you in the British Museum—was it a minute ago, or ages?" she went on, looking puzzled. "It all seems like a dream, somehow. But I remember Miss Moore, saying 'This is the Rosetta Stone'—and I didn't know what she meant.' And then *you* said, '*That stone is a gate into the Past,*' and I didn't know what you meant, either!"

Again Sheshà smiled gravely as he looked down at her.

"I will tell you. Ninety years ago, a Frenchman was living in this mysterious land of Egypt, knowing no more of the secret writing on palaces and tombs and temples than do you, little maiden. But while he was at *Rosetta*, which is a town on the sea coast not far from where we stand, he found a broken block of marble—a fragment from what was once, perhaps, a mighty temple. Upon it he saw the secret marks he could not understand, but *beneath* it were some lines in Greek, which he and other people *could* read. Now, thought the Frenchman, 'What if these Greek words should be the translation of those hieroglyphics above, which no one for thousands of years has been able to decipher?' So he brought the broken stone away with him. And the scholars examined it, and at last, after patient study, comparing the Greek words, which they *could* understand, with the mysterious signs and pictures above, they learnt to read *them* also. And so, from that piece of black marble which now rests in the great museum of your great city of London, learned men have made Egypt give up one of its many secrets. All that is written on columns, walls and tombs, can now be read by the scholars who have studied the hieroglyphic writing of this ancient land, and translated it into English and French, and all the languages of men who live to-day. Was I not right to call 'the *Rosetta* Stone' a stone of magic, a gateway into the Past?"

"Oh, yes!" exclaimed Rachel, drawing a long breath. "If

PHARAOH IN HIS CHARIOT

that Rosetta Stone had never been found, people would still be looking at the—what did you call the writing? Oh yes, the *hieroglyphics*, and wondering what they mean, wouldn't they? But you know, of course? You have always known."

"I wrote signs and figures like these, six thousand years ago," replied Sheshà, gazing upon the mighty unfinished Pyramid upon which, like clustering bees, the brown-skinned, half-naked men were slaving.

"Will you read me something that's written there? Please read what that man has just finished carving," begged Rachel, pointing to a youth who was working at the base of the Pyramid. "What do those signs mean?"

"They record," said Sheshà, glancing at them, "that a hundred thousand men were always kept working upon this tomb. These slaves that you behold are the last hundred thousand, for as you see the Pyramid is nearly built. But for twenty years previous to this moment of Past time, every day, a hundred thousand men have been working in the same way as these poor slaves before your eyes."

Rachel was just trying to put into words something of all the wonder and bewilderment she felt, when a strain of music that sounded rather faint and far away made her turn quickly. The sight she saw was so wonderful that I scarcely know how to describe it.

"Who is this?" she whispered. "Why are the people bowing down before him?"

"It is Pharaoh the king, come to look at his Pyramid—the tomb for himself which is rising under the hands of his slaves. Well may you gaze in wonder, O child, for never before this, has a little English maid been given sight of the far, far Past. You behold Pharaoh in all his pomp and glory as he lived six thousand years ago."

And indeed Rachel gazed in wonder.

Looking down from the raised platform of soil on which stood the nearly finished Pyramid, she saw a broad road, thronged with a glittering company. In their midst, standing upright in a chariot painted with brilliant colours and enriched with gold, was the

imposing figure of a man with an olive-tinted skin, dressed in a white robe, bordered with gold. A head-dress strangely shaped almost shrouded his face, and on his bare brown arms were bracelets, and hanging from his neck long chains of metal work.

Running beside and behind the chariot, were slaves carrying great fans, made, some of palm leaves, some of feathers. They were followed by a crowd of girls in gauzy robes, whose black hair fell in tight ringlets on their bare shoulders, holding in their hands musical instruments of curious

form. Behind them followed other chariots filled with men clad in the same sort of dress as that worn by Sheshà.

Rachel saw the wonderful procession clearly enough, yet it seemed as though she was looking at it through a slight mist which quivered like hot air, and made the figures behind it a little unreal, as if something in a dream. This gauze-like mist she had noticed before, in gazing at the workers on the Pyramid. It

stretched between her and the slaves like a barrier behind which, though she could watch them, they toiled out of touch, and somehow a long way from her.

"You are beholding scenes that took place thousands of years ago, remember," said the voice of Sheshà, and though Rachel had not spoken, she knew he read her thoughts, and was explaining. "Ages ago all these people were turned to dust. They have arisen before your eyes—but only like painted figures real though they seem. If you tried to touch them your hand would but meet the air."

"What is he going to do? Where is he going?" whispered Rachel, who was feeling awe-struck, and perhaps a little frightened.

"Pharaoh is going to look at the tomb which has been prepared for him," said Sheshà, gravely. "In a moment we will follow him into the heart of the Pyramid."

"*Pharaoh* comes into the Bible," began Rachel, looking puzzled. "But I thought you said it was another man, King Cheops, who had this Pyramid built."

"*Pharaoh* was the name given to *all* the kings of Egypt, but this is not the Pharaoh who dreamt of the fat and lean kine, nor the Pharaoh Moses knew, who was stricken with plagues. *This* Pharaoh, whose other name was King *Cheops*, lived long before the days of Joseph and Moses."

Rachel gave a funny little murmur of excitement.

"We *have* gone back far into the Past, haven't we? It's—it's rather frightening. I feel as though I should never get home again!" She looked really anxious, and Sheshà laid his brown hand gently upon her head.

"Have no fear. In less time than I take to say it, you will be seated in an omnibus, travelling back to your aunt's home," he declared with a curious smile.

"Oh, but I don't want to go yet!" Rachel hastily assured him. "I want to see everything. It's so *frightfully* interesting," she went on, incoherently.

"Again have no fear. You shall see and hear, for Time itself is a 'magic' thing, little maiden, and wonders can be worked

during the opening and shutting of the eyes. Let us now follow that procession to the royal tomb."

The painted chariot drawn by white horses with marvellous trappings, had now been reined up before the entrance to a passage on one side of the Pyramid. On either hand the workmen and the other people who had been passing to and fro now lay prostrate in the dust, while the great king was led from the chariot by the men Rachel had already seen dressed in robes like that worn by Sheshà.

"Those are the priests of the order to which I belong," he said. "They are the people nearest to Pharaoh, the learned men whom he honours—poets, historians, physicians, as well as priests. With them he talks and takes counsel. These others," he pointed to the poor men on the ground, "are his slaves who bow down before him, and are used as beasts of burden."

Rachel looked at them pityingly as with Sheshà she followed the wise men and the reigning Pharaoh, King Cheops, into the passage hewn within the Pyramid. No one noticed her presence, and somehow, though she was almost close enough to touch the robes in front of her, Rachel was not surprised. Plainly, as through the quivering haze surrounding them she could see the wonderful group of people, she knew they were not exactly *real.* She could not have touched them. She saw their lips move, but she heard no sound.

In a few minutes the passage, which sloped upwards, broadened out into a little hall lined with polished granite. Here the

priests who were following the mighty Pharaoh, very slowly and solemnly ranged themselves against the walls, leaving the middle of the floor clear. Rachel then saw the king standing alone, and looking down upon something that looked like a coffin made of red granite placed in the centre of the hall. The priests bowed their heads, and she saw their lips moving, while the king stood motionless as a statue, his white robes and his strange head-dress appearing as though they were carved upon a painted figure.

For a second Rachel saw this, and then almost before she could breathe, she was standing under the blue sky, looking at the scarcely finished outside of the Pyramid, from which all the builders had disappeared, as had also the crowds upon the road bordering the river Nile.

She rubbed her eyes. "It's so strange," she began, dreamily. "Was all that great Pyramid built only to hold a little grave? Because I suppose that was what the stone thing that the king looked down on, really was?"

"It was the outside *case* of a coffin—yes," said Sheshà. "Such a case is called a *sarcophagus*. The real coffin was made of wood, placed within the sarcophagus, upon which a granite lid was fixed and sealed down when a man was dead."

"Why did this Pharaoh want such a great place only for a tomb?" asked Rachel, still puzzled. "Fancy making thousands and thousands of people work, just to build a great heap over a grave! Why did he do it?"

"Partly because he wanted to be remembered for ever (and though he was forgotten for ages, we are now talking about him after six thousand years!) But also because of what was taught by the ancient religion of the Egyptians."

"What was that?" asked Rachel.

Sheshà smiled, his grave, strange smile. "It taught many things difficult to explain to a little maid of to-day. But one thing was this. When a man died, his soul left his body, and wandered about, entering into other bodies—possibly for hundreds of years. But it might happen that, after many ages, the soul should want to return to its old home—its old body. Therefore,

that body was carefully preserved, in case the soul should wish to re-enter it."

"But if it was very long before it wanted to come back it would find its home turned to dust, wouldn't it?"

"For that we provided," answered Sheshà, "by preserving the poor body in a way that is called *embalming*. We filled it with sweet spices, and wrapped it closely in linen bandages, and——"

"I know! The dead people like that are called *mummies*, aren't they? I was just going to ask Miss Moore to take me to see them when I met you!" Rachel interrupted.

"There are many such embalmed bodies in your great museum. When you see them, little maid, remember that you are looking upon the very features of men and women who lived under this blue sky, and enjoyed this sunshine, thousands of years before their bodies were taken to your grey city beside the Thames. They were people who worshipped indeed, but gods very different from the God worshipped in your churches and cathedrals of to-day."

"You worshipped the river, didn't you?" asked Rachel, presently, as Sheshà was silent.

"Osiris, God of the River and the Sun," murmured Sheshà, as though to himself. "Him we worshipped, and Isis, the fruitful Earth, and—" He paused suddenly, and looked down at Rachel. "Our worship is difficult for you to understand. Would it please you instead, to behold this place as it looks *now*—to the travellers of To-day. As your father, for instance, beheld it only this morning?"

"Oh *yes*," cried Rachel eagerly. "That's just what I *should* like."

"Prepare then to see *nine*, instead of one of these mighty works—eight of them built after this first Pyramid of King Cheops, but, even so, thousands of years old, and battered not so much by the hand of Time as by the hands of destructive men. Turn towards the river, child of To-day, and, with closed eyes, bow seven times."

Rachel again obeyed, and, when she turned and looked, instead of one, a group of Pyramids stood up grandly against such a sunset sky as she had never before imagined. The sand of the desert, the flowing river, the worn sides of the huge buildings, were washed by a rosy glow. And battered and worn, as they now looked, they were still the Pyramids as they had stood for thousands and thousands of years before she was born.

Changed though it was, Rachel recognised at once the great tomb of King Cheops, and as she looked she listened to Sheshà speaking, though somehow the voice sounded faint and far away.

"*All things dread Time, but Time itself dreads the Pyramids,*" she heard him say. And then, after a moment, "Gaze well, O child, upon one of the Seven Wonders of the World."

The last words came so faintly that Rachel turned to look at her friend—and instead found Miss Moore at her elbow.

She was still consulting her watch, and Rachel was still standing in front of the black Rosetta Stone.

"I think we ought to go," said Miss Moore. "It will take us some time to get back, and we mustn't be late for lunch."

Rachel drew a long breath, and followed her governess in silence.

When you have just stepped out of Egypt into the British Museum, you feel you don't want to talk—and Rachel scarcely spoke all the way home.

On the hall table, waiting for her, lay a letter from her father, and his little daughter eagerly pounced upon it, and ran with it to her bedroom. Mother was much better already, the letter said, and, after a great deal of other news, Rachel came upon a sentence which interested her more than her father could have imagined, when he wrote it.

"I have just seen the Pyramids! One of these days you and I will go to Egypt and look at them again together. But you must learn something about them first, or you won't be half so excited about them as I am."

Rachel laughed gleefully. "Dad hasn't seen King Cheops, anyhow," she thought. "And he'd be certain to think I dreamt it if I told him all about Sheshà and the slaves. No one would believe me—so I shan't say anything about this lovely adventure."

She ran down to lunch, happy and excited by her secret.

"Well, how did you enjoy the British Museum?" enquired Aunt Hester, when she had heard all the news contained in the letter from Egypt.

"Oh, I *loved* it!" exclaimed Rachel, and two little dimples appeared at the corners of her mouth as she tried to repress a smile. "When can I go again?"

Miss Moore looked a little surprised, for she remembered no particular enthusiasm on Rachel's part during the morning.

"A most instructive place," she observed, turning to Aunt Hester. "I'm sure Rachel will learn a great deal there."

And again Rachel tried to keep back a smile.

All the rest of that day Rachel went about feeling excited and happy. It was not till next morning when she woke that doubt crept into her mind. Could she *really* have been to Egypt and seen the great Pyramid of Cheops before it was quite finished? Surely, she couldn't *really* have talked to Sheshà, the priest of that ancient king! It must, of course, have been a dream. Yet how had she managed to go to sleep in the British Museum? And how was it, if she had dreamt the whole adventure, that she remembered everything distinctly, and not in the confused fashion of an ordinary dream? Rachel was puzzled, but she was obliged to come to the sad conclusion that somehow or other the glowing pictures in her mind, of slaves, of Pharaoh in his chariot, of the room within the Pyramid holding the sarcophagus, were, as her old nurse used to say, "all imagination."

It was a terribly disappointing thought, and for the whole of the following day she felt quite dull and miserable, especially as Aunt Hester wouldn't hear of another immediate visit to the British Museum.

"It's too far," she declared. "You may go next week. But I can't think why you're so anxious about it. Miss Moore says you didn't seem particularly interested while you were there."

Rachel couldn't of course tell Aunt Hester that in her longing for the British Museum, there was a faint hope that if by any chance the adventure had been "real"—there, if anywhere, "something might happen."

A few mornings afterwards, however, something *did* happen. At breakfast time Aunt Hester put down a letter she had been reading, and looked across at her niece.

"Old Mr. Sheston is coming to lunch," she remarked. "He says he thinks he must have seen you the other day. He knew you from your likeness to your father."

"Who is old Mr. Sheston?" asked Rachel, looking up from putting more sugar on her porridge.

Aunt Hester smiled. "He's a funny old man who has been a friend of our family for years, and knew your father as a boy. He is doing some important work at the British Museum, so you'll be able to talk to him about it."

Rachel pricked up her ears.

"Why is he funny?" she enquired.

Again Aunt Hester smiled. "He dresses in a strange way for one thing, and he has all sorts of curious ideas that you wouldn't understand. He's a dear old man—but eccentric. Certainly eccentric," she added as though to herself.

"*Eccentric* means not like other people, doesn't it?" murmured Rachel. "I've never heard Dad talk about him."

"I don't think he's seen him since he was a boy. . . . Certainly you *are* very like your father as he was at your age, child! I'm not surprised that the old man recognized you."

Rachel was running across the hall just before lunch, when in answer to a knock at the front door, the parlourmaid admitted a strange figure, wrapped in a long cloak, one end of which was thrown over the left shoulder. A battered hat almost hid the face of the little old gentleman who entered—but in a flash Rachel remembered him. He was looking at the Rosetta Stone the day she and Miss Moore went to the British Museum! And he had spoken to her—or had she dreamt this? It was curious, but she really couldn't remember. All she knew at the moment was,

that he and the Rosetta Stone were, as she put it, "mixed up together in her mind."

By this time the visitor had taken off his hat, and Rachel, so puzzled and curious that she had stopped short in the middle of the hall, saw a pair of dark eyes in a crinkled, wrinkled face under a fringe of white hair.

The old man smiled and held out both hands.

"You are Rachel," he said. "I knew when I saw you last week in the Eygptian gallery, that you must be your father's daughter."

Rachel felt suddenly shy, and was glad when Aunt Hester came down the stairs and, after a word or two of greeting, led the way straight into the dining-room.

At table, during the meal, Rachel sat opposite to the guest, who now and then looked across at her, and every time she met his dark eyes she was puzzled afresh.

"You'll be glad to hear that Rachel is *most* interested in the British Museum," said Aunt Hester, presently.

"I *am* glad to hear it," was all the old man said, but he smiled in such a way as to make Rachel more excited and puzzled than ever.

She listened eagerly to what he was saying to Aunt Hester. He was talking about what he called the "explorations" in Egypt, and she gathered from his conversation that men were often sent out by the people who took charge of the British Museum, to dig and explore among the ruins in Egypt and other ancient countries, and to bring back some of the things they found to London.

He made the story of these explorers and what they discovered, so exciting, that Aunt Hester, who did not at first seem very curious, began to ask questions. Rachel wanted to ask a great many more, for her head was still full of her strange dream—as she now called it—about Egypt, and it was interesting to know how all the tombs and monuments and statues she had seen last week had found their way to England.

"You can run away now, Rachel," said Aunt Hester, when lunch was over, and Grayson was bringing in coffee.

"Don't let her run very far," observed Mr. Sheston. "Because

I'm going to take her back with me to the Museum in ten minutes."

He said this without looking at her, and Rachel gasped for joy, and glanced imploringly at Aunt Hester, who laughed.

"You always *announce* what you are going to do, I remember," she declared, speaking to her guest. "You never *ask*."

"A habit of mine," returned the old gentleman quietly. "Acquired long ago."

"Go and get ready," said Aunt Hester, with a nod to her niece, and Rachel flew like the wind.

Ten minutes later she was seated in a taxi-cab with Mr. Sheston, who talked about her father, about her country home, her brothers and sisters, and everything in the world except just the things Rachel wanted him to talk about—Egypt and the Pyramids.

At last, however, he said quite suddenly, just as they were going up the steps of the Museum, "How long is it since you were here?"

"Five or six days, I think, or perhaps—"

"*Seven* days," corrected the old gentleman, quietly, and all at once Rachel began to get excited.

They entered the building, and she noticed that all the officials in uniform touched their hats to the little old man who was evidently very well known there. He turned at once to the Egyptian Gallery, and as they passed the Rosetta Stone, Rachel looked back.

"I know all about *that*," she said, glancing up at Mr. Sheston, who only smiled.

"We will go to the Babylonian Room in a minute," he said. "Do you know where to find Babylonia on the map?"

Only that morning, in looking as she always did now, for Egypt, Rachel had seen it marked in her atlas.

"It's up above Arabia, isn't it?" she began, uncertainly "Up above the Persian Gulf."

"And do you remember any of its cities that were famous once?"

"Babylon?" suggested Rachel.

Mr. Sheston nodded.

"Babylon," he repeated, and after a moment added, as though to himself, "*How far is it to Babylon?*"

"Why, that's in a book of poetry I've got," exclaimed Rachel. "It's called 'A Child's Garden of Verses.'"

"Yes, there are a great many things in Stevenson's Child's Garden," said the old man. "We'll find out how far it is to Babylon presently. But, before we do that, just come into this room for a moment."

He took her hand and led her into a narrow passage to the right of the big Egyptian hall through which they had come.

"Is there anything here that reminds you of—something else?" he asked.

Rachel glanced about, and suddenly her eyes rested on a monument against a wall, carved curiously in stone. Beneath it there was an inscription, and she went nearer and began to read the words aloud.

"*The tomb of Sheshà, High Priest of Cheops,*" she began, and suddenly stopped short.

"Why . . . !" she exclaimed, turning to Mr. Sheston, and then again stopped short, for in his place stood her friend Sheshà in his beautiful robe, his young face framed by the strange head-dress she so well remembered! And yet—somehow—it was Mr. Sheston too! Sheshà and the old man were in a curious way one and the same person!

"Why, you *are* Sheshà!" cried Rachel, incoherently. "But then—why?"—she glanced at the tomb—"That means you were *dead*—ages and ages ago?" she whispered. "How can you be here—?"

The young priest smiled. "Tombs are but folly," he answered. "Do you remember, little maid, what I said to you of the soul, and how it lives and returns after many thousand years to inhabit the same, or perhaps another body?"

Rachel nodded, too overwhelmed to speak.

"Well, then, are not tombs folly?" he repeated, still smiling. "But come, of Egypt you have had a glimpse already. Now shall you behold Babylon."

He turned and led the way towards another gallery running parallel with the Egyptian one, and, as Rachel followed him, she wondered for a moment why the people strolling about in the Museum did not stare in amazement at the wonderful figure of Sheshà in his priestly robe. No one took the slightest notice, however, and she remembered that Miss Moore had on a previous occasion seen and heard nothing.

"They're not mixed up with *seven*, I suppose," she reflected, before Sheshà began to speak again. He talked, she thought, rather as though he were translating from another language, trying to make what he said quite modern. "But sometimes," thought Rachel, "he forgets—and then he says '*behold*,' and '*verily*,' and old-fashioned words like that!"

"Let us first look at some of the wonders which, long buried, have come at last to this Museum," he suggested, pausing in front of a huge statue. It represented a creature with the body of a bull, and the face of a man with a long curled beard cut square—while from the shoulders of the beast sprang two great wings.

"Here is one out of many such marvels," he added.

Rachel looked at the monster, full of curiosity.

"Was *this* dug up by the people you were talking about to Aunt Hester to-day? I mean—at lunch time—when you were—Mr. Sheston?"

Sheshà smiled. "I was the same person then as now. It was only my body that was different. . . . Yes, little maid, this was found by the explorers not far from Babylon. Now glance with me at these pictures in stone." He turned into a narrow gallery close at hand, and pointed to the walls against which were fastened large slabs of stone sculptured most beautifully with scenes of hunting, with processions in which kings rode in chariots under graceful canopies like parasols hung with fringe, or stood looking down upon long lines of prisoners chained together.

"These came from the palace of one Tiglath Pileser, a king who lived more than seven hundred years before Christ was born. He was one of the conquerors of Babylon."

"But I do want to see Babylon itself!" exclaimed Rachel. "You did mean I should *really* see it, didn't you?"

"Patience!" murmured Sheshà. "Patience! You are just about to see Babylon first as it is now—and then as it was in the days of its splendour. Shut your eyes. Beat seven times with your foot on this stone floor—and have no fear of what befalls. You are safe with me."

Trembling with excitement, Rachel did as she was told, and at the last tap of her foot, was conscious of a most strange and wonderful sensation. She seemed to be out of doors, and not only out of doors, but rushing through the air, while a noise like that of a great engine almost deafened her.

"We are near Babylon!" said a voice close to her ear, and, as she opened her eyes, Rachel gasped, for she was seated in an aeroplane, and the pilot of the machine, in the dress of an airman, was —Sheshà! Rachel had so often longed to fly, that at first she could think of nothing but the wonder and excitement of her first rush through the air, and it was only by degrees that she began to notice the earth below. The machine was dropping nearer to it now, and she saw they were flying over a vast plain through which flowed a river. Three large mounds near this river broke the monotony of the desert place, overarched by the beautiful blue sky, and when the aeroplane skimmed yet lower, Rachel saw little figures moving near the mounds, like ants running over an ant heap.

At the same moment the noise of the aeroplane's engine ceased, and she was able to talk to the pilot.

"Why those are *men*, aren't they?" she said, pointing to the tiny figures. "And what are those heaps of rubbish there?"

"All that is left of Babylon—the beautiful and proud City of Babylon," answered the voice of the pilot, Sheshà.

Rachel looked at the desert plain with its three "rubbish heaps," as she called them, in silent astonishment.

"Is *that* where the bulls with wings and the other things in the British Museum come from?" she added at length.

"Some of them—yes."

"And are those little men down there digging up other things now?"

"Yes. They are working for the Museum. By-and-by, in a few weeks, perhaps, you may read a column in your newspaper at breakfast time giving an account of the latest things found in that heap," he pointed to the largest of them. "That mound below you is called *Babil*, and it covers the palace in which dwelt King Nebuchadnezzar, nearly three thousand years ago."

"The Nebuchadnezzar in the Bible that I was reading about with Miss Moore only this morning?"

"Yes—the Nebuchadnezzar who conquered the city of Jerusalem and brought the Children of Israel captives to Babylon—the Nebuchadnezzar who set up the golden image to which Daniel would not bow down."

"And the fiery furnace!" interrupted Rachel, eagerly, "that didn't burn the three Children of Israel when Nebuchadnezzar threw them into it . . . . I remember! . . . And there's a psalm about them when they were prisoners in Babylon."

"*By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept when we remembered Zion,*" quoted Sheshà, in a dreamy voice. "There is one of the rivers of Babylon." He pointed to the great stream —the Euphrates—on both sides of which the city was built.

"It doesn't look as though there could ever have been a city here," Rachel declared, gazing down upon the desert and the mounds of earth. "How could it have disappeared altogether like that?"

"Thousands of years have passed since it was standing. It has been burnt to the ground many times, and laid in ruins. The sand of the desert has swept over it, and new races of men have arisen, knowing nothing of its ancient grandeur. It is only sixty years ago that scholars from France and Germany and England began to explore those heaps of rubbish which cover its palaces and temple."

"Oh, I *do* want to see them!" exclaimed Rachel. "I mean as they used to look when Nebuchadnezzar was king. Not just the bits of them that people dig up now!"

"We will make a landing," said Sheshà in a matter-of-fact

voice, and in a few moments the aeroplane had touched the ground, and he was helping her to jump out of the marvellous machine, which, surrounded as she was by so many other marvels, Rachel took almost as though she had been used to an aeroplane all her life.

"You behold Babylon as it looks to-day," went on Sheshà, stretching out his hand towards the ruins. "In a second you shall behold it as it looked three thousand years ago when Nebuchadnezzar was king. And your guide shall be a little maid of your own years." Almost before he had finished speaking he laid his hand gently over Rachel's eyes. . . .

"Count the magic number aloud."

The voice that spoke certainly did not belong to Sheshà, and when full of eagerness her eyes flew open they rested first of all upon the loveliest and strangest little girl you can possibly imagine.

Her hair, black as ebony, was cut straight across her forehead, and fell in tight ringlets to her shoulders. She wore a thin gauze robe spangled with gold, and on her bare brown arms there were bracelets, and round her slim little ankles golden anklets, which tinkled as she moved.

As her great dark eyes met Rachel's blue ones she said gravely:

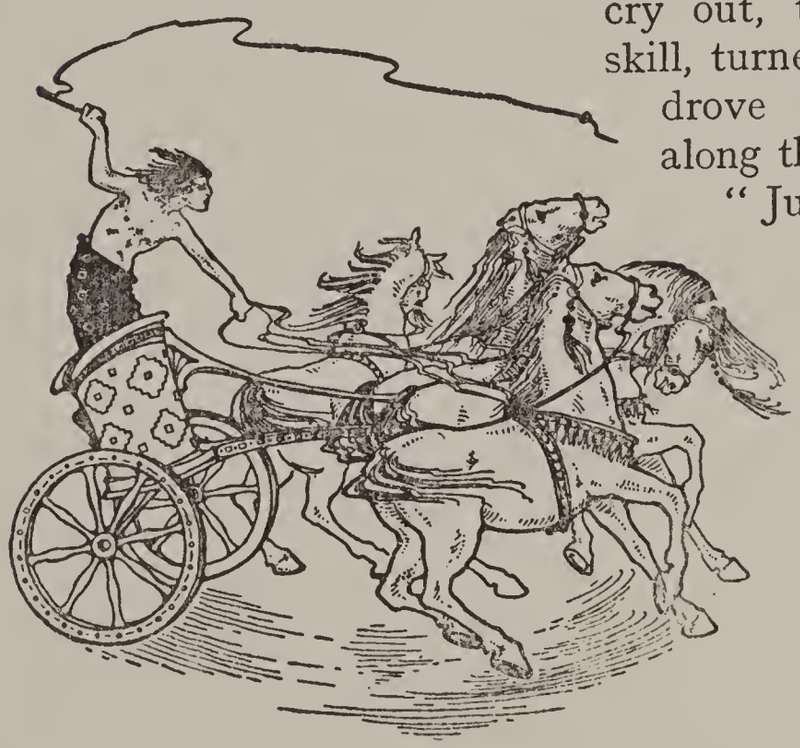
"I am Salome, handmaid to the Queen of this city of Babylon. Come with me and you shall see all its riches and its glory. Sheshà has commanded it."

Rachel was too bewildered to wonder how it happened that she understood the child, who was certainly not talking English. But, strange language though it was, she seemed to know it as well as her native tongue. There were besides, other and even stranger things to amaze her, for before her, under the burning blue sky, was spread a gorgeous city, or rather what looked like miles and miles of gardens and palaces and temples, enclosed within huge walls.

From the slightly raised ground on which Rachel with her new companion were standing, she could see these city walls —a double row of them—stretching away to form a gigantic square

enclosing the river, the woods and gardens, and all the strange buildings which made up the city.

"Oh look! look!" she cried suddenly, as all at once, actually on the *top* of one of the inner walls, she saw a brilliantly painted chariot drawn by four horses, coming at a furious pace towards her. It was driven by a long-haired man who stood upright within the car, urging on his steeds—till he came so near the end of the wall that Rachel held her breath, expecting to see chariot, horses and driver dashed to the ground. But, before she could cry out, the man, with marvellous skill, turned horses and chariot, and drove at full speed back again along the wide top of the wall.



"Just *think* of a wall broad enough for four horses to gallop along—and *turn!*" Rachel almost screamed the words in her excitement.

"That is Akurgal, the driver of the king's chariot," said the little Babylonian girl, unconcernedly. "He drives like the wind for fury when it pleases him."

Rachel scarcely knew in which direction to look first, so glorious was the view. She saw that each of the four sides of the wall was pierced by gigantic gates made of bronze—all the gates opening upon broad streets which crossed one another, so that the whole city was divided into squares, filled with gardens and houses. The broad river flowed through it from north to south, and over the river hung a mighty bridge, at each end of which was a palace.

It was difficult for Rachel to make up her mind in which direction to turn her eyes, but the sight of something that appeared like a forest-covered mountain rising near one of the

palaces, was so lovely that she pointed to it and turned to Salome.

"What a beautiful mountain!" she exclaimed. "How funny there should be only *one*—because the rest of the country is so flat. There isn't another hill as far as ever I can see," she added, glancing over the wide plain in which the city lay.

Salome smiled.

"That is no mountain," she said. "It was made by human hands. It is the great glory of our city, and, so my mistress says, in time to come, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon will be called one of the Wonders of the World."

Rachel started. "There are seven Wonders of the World," she began, eagerly. "I've seen one of them already—the Great Pyramid, you know. And now——"

"I have heard of the Pyramid in the land of Egypt," Salome interrupted. "But come now and see more closely *our* wonder—the Garden that is like no other in the world."

She took Rachel's hand, and in a few moments they had entered the city through a gate which Rachel noticed was covered with tiles of blue enamel as brilliant as the sky above them. And on either side of the gate, like sentinels, stood huge winged bulls carved in stone. But how different they looked here, she thought, in the golden sunshine, with the wonderful blue tiles behind them, and their great shadows, black as ink, stretching on either hand!

"This is one of the new gates built by our king," Salome told her. "He has caused inscriptions to be written about them so that all the world may know what adornments he has added to our fair city of Babylon. Our city that shall last for ever," she added proudly.

Rachel glanced at her, and thought of a great rubbish heap she had recently seen—"*the mound called Babil which covers the palace in which dwelt King Nebuchadnezzar nearly three thousand years ago*"—she remembered the very words of Sheshà. . . . How amazing it was to be walking with this little girl in the very city that now lay under a mound of earth! To be talking to a little girl who lived nearly three thousand years ago, and had no idea

that her home was even now being dug up in fragments by men living in the world to-day! . . . For a moment it all seemed too puzzling to be true. Rachel rubbed her eyes with her disengaged hand, and half expected the whole vision to disappear. Yet when she looked again, the lovely scene still lay before her, and she could feel the warmth of Salome's little brown hand within her own.

"I must be getting used to the Past," she reflected. "Because now I can *feel* as well as see the people. They didn't seem quite real when I was with Sheshà in Egypt. But now it's different. Is it because *these* people didn't live quite so far back into the Past as King Cheops and his slaves, I wonder?"

She glanced again at the grave, strangely clad little girl at her side, who talked as though she were quite grown up.

"I mustn't say anything about the rubbish mound, or tell her anything about the sort of world *I* belong to," she reflected hurriedly. "She wouldn't understand. I suppose she thinks I'm living in her times, but have just never happened to see

Babylon before. And that's quite true!" she added to herself, with a little inward chuckle.

While such thoughts as these were hurrying through her mind, she was looking right and left, full of eager curiosity, for the bridge she was crossing was thronged with amazing figures.

Men with black, curling beards, bare-legged, and bare-armed, wearing tunics of brilliant colours, passed her. Some of these were seated upon the backs of camels following one another in long lines. The soft-footed, grey beasts were loaded with merchandise, and the bales on either side of their humped backs swayed as they moved. They were decked fantastically with trappings of plaited scarlet wool, hung with tassels of brilliant colour. After such a procession of camels and their drivers, would come perhaps a chariot with four horses abreast, driven by a fierce-looking man in a gorgeous fringed robe, whose dark eyes flashed like jewels in his bronzed face. Following one such chariot, she saw a group of girls in gauzy tunics, bracelets on their arms, tinkling anklets above their feet, dancing as they came, and singing a wild song as they tossed their arms above their heads.

"They are going to the Temple of Belus," explained Salome, as Rachel stood still to look at them.

She turned round and pointed with her little brown forefinger to a great building at the other end of the bridge.

"Later, if there is still time, you shall see the temple of the great God. But let us hasten now towards the gardens, for there, in the cool of the day, the queen walks with her maidens, and I must be in attendance."

Rachel was torn between her longing to be actually within the wonderful Hanging Garden and her desire to linger on the bridge which afforded such a magnificent view. She gazed with delight upon the broad shining river which divided the city, and upon the ships with gracefully curved sails which, rowed by almost naked slaves, moved to and fro over its surface.

Some of these ships were drawn up against the quays which lined the river, as far as eye could reach, and Rachel saw a

swarming multitude of men staggering under corded chests of wood which the ships had brought to be unloaded.

Salome stopped to watch the slaves at their work.

"That is merchandise for the palace, I trust," she observed. "We have awaited it too long, and the queen grows angry."

"What sort of things are in those boxes?" Rachel asked.

"Ivory and ebony for the thrones, and for the couches and the chariots, emeralds and fine linen, and coral and agate. Spices from Arabia and precious stones and gold," answered Salome, in a sort of chanting voice.

Rachel gasped. It sounded like a fairy tale. Yet she remembered something like it—Where was it? In the Bible, surely!

Just as the thought of the Bible crossed her mind, a group of men passed close to her. They were dressed rather differently from the other people around her, their faces, too, looked different, and their eyes were very sad.

"Who are those men?" she enquired, looking back over her shoulder. "They look so unhappy—and *homesick*, somehow." Rachel knew what it was to be homesick!

Salome glanced at them carelessly. "They are Hebrews who call themselves the Children of Israel. Our king, the great Nebuchadnezzar—may he live for ever—conquered their country and took their treasures from Jerusalem, their chief city, and brought many of them here to Babylon to live. They hate us, and we despise them."

Rachel started as the words of the psalm darted into her mind. "*By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down. . . . We hanged our harps upon the willows.* . . . She had heard this sung in church,

and it had meant nothing to her but just "a psalm." Yet, here before her very eyes now, was one of "the rivers." There were "the willows" fringing streams which flowed through the innumerable gardens, and she had just met some of the captive Jews! Rachel gasped again as all these things became "real" to her—something that had actually happened—was, in fact, happening before her eyes.

"It's awful to be homesick," she murmured, rather to herself than to Salome, who, without replying, ran on in front of her to a flight of steps at the end of the bridge.

"This is one of the entrances to the Hanging Garden," she explained, looking back. "We must hasten, lest my mistress calls for me."

Rachel followed her from terrace to terrace, too overwhelmed with delight at the glimpses of beauty she caught right and left to say a word. She saw that the whole garden was supported, tier above tier, by gigantic arches, and Salome told her each terrace was made of plates of lead, holding earth so deep that great forest trees could grow in it. If she had not known this, the whole place would have seemed to Rachel as though blossoming by magic in the heart of a forest growing in mid-air. She could scarcely believe it was not the work of some magician.

By the time they reached the uppermost terrace, on a level with the city wall, she was not only breathless, but struck dumb by the beauty and wonder of everything round her.

Mighty cedar trees spread their layers of branches between her and the burning blue sky. The air was perfumed with the scent from groves of lemon trees. Fountains tossed their sparkling drops high into the sunshine. Red roses swept in cascades from her feet down the slope to the terraces below. Along paths paved with tiles of sapphire-blue enamel, peacocks walked delicately with outspread tails, and far below, within its four-square walls, the city of Babylon lay glittering in such brilliant sunshine as in her own country she had never dreamt of, nor faintly imagined.

And now, before she had time to recover from her amazement, a new sight was presented, for, coming slowly in her direction,

but as yet in the distance, a group of people approached. In the midst of them, as the little procession drew nearer, Rachel saw a lovely woman leaning back in a litter slung between ivory poles and borne by four slaves. The litter was covered with silk hangings of a rich purple, and a fringed canopy of the same material supported on poles also of ivory, was held above the swinging couch by four dark-skinned girls.

"The Queen Amytis," whispered Salome, and Rachel drew back in sudden fright. "She will wonder who I am—and I shan't know what to say," she began, hurriedly. "I don't know how to talk to queens."

"Have no fear, she will not see you. No one here sees you but me. That is the work of Sheshà, who is greatest of all magicians and has entrusted you to me, why I know not—nor do I know with any certainty who you are. But he has commanded me to be your guide here in Babylon. No one sees, no one hears you but I alone."

Wondering greatly, but feeling much relieved, Rachel watched the slaves as very carefully they set down the litter close to a throne-like seat, covered with silken pillows. The arms of the chair she noticed, were two-winged bulls in stone, and the back of it shone with enamelled tiles and plates of gold. The maidens now surrounded their mistress, helping her to rise from the litter, and, as she sank into the great chair, Rachel gazed at her wonderful robe, made of stuff like gossamer, clasped with a great jewel at the waist. Her slim, olive-coloured feet were bare, and, to Rachel's amazement, she saw the gleam of emeralds in rings upon her toes! On her bare arms and neck there were jewels, also, and there were emeralds in the fillet that bound her beautiful black hair.

Never had Rachel ever dreamt of such a vision! Never indeed could she have imagined such luxury and magnificence as she had seen since she entered Babylon.

"It's like—like the stories in the Arabian Nights," she thought, confusedly. Presently the queen spoke in that language which sounded strange to her ears, but which with her *mind* she somehow understood quite well.

"Listen! One can hear the singing from the Temple of Belus."

"To-day is a high festival. They offer sacrifices to the God," answered one of her maidens. "There has been great stir in the city since sunrise."

"But when the darkness falls there will be silence, and the wise men on the topmost tower will watch the stars."

Queen Amytis said this as though to herself. Her great dark eyes were fixed upon the shining city below, and Rachel thought she looked sad and anxious.

"The most high God will protect our lord the king on his perilous journey," one of her maidens declared consolingly. "And the wise men will surely learn good tidings from the stars," added another.

The queen did not reply, and Rachel looked enquiringly at Salome, who was lying full length on a great tiger-skin stretched in front of her mistress's chair.

"Sit near me," said the little maid, making room for her. "No one else sees or hears you. What is it you would ask?"

"Tell me about the temple," whispered Rachel. "That temple of Belus."

She could see it very distinctly from where she sat, a wonderful building with a number of storeys piled up one above the other, each storey covered with glazed tiles of a colour different from that above and below.

"It is the Tower of the Seven Planets—the Temple of Belus, who is the God of our city," Salome told her. "Our great king has lately built it where once stood, so they say, the Tower of Babel."

"The Tower of Babel? That's in the Bible!" But a glance at Salome's face showed her that she didn't know anything about the Bible—and she remembered that the gods Salome and all the people here worshipped were those the Bible called "false gods."

"Of the Tower of Babel I know nothing but its name," said Salome, shrugging her shoulders. "It stood doubtless long ago. But this is a new temple built, as they say, on its ruins. It is of

seven colours, because each of the seven planets has a different colour, so the wise men who study the stars declare. And within the temple there stands a golden image of the god Belus, and a golden altar upon which the priests burn frankincense and all sweet scents in honour of the god."

"But the queen said the wise men watch the stars there?"

"Even so. At night on the topmost storey of the tower, the priests study the sky. They are great astronomers, and have learnt wonderful things about the heavenly bodies, all of which are written down so that their knowledge may not be lost to people who live after them."

"Then I suppose that's how *we* began to know about the stars," thought Rachel. "Through these people who lived here in Babylon thousands of years ago." It was very strange to think of this, and strange also, and sad, to remember that what Salome called "the new temple" was now nothing but a heap of half-buried ruins! And, yet, there in some magic way lay Salome before her eyes, her anklets tinkling when she moved, and her little face full of life. And there sat the lovely queen, surrounded by her maidens in their transparent robes! And the cedar trees murmured overhead, and from the groves of lemon trees sweet scents were blown, and below lay the marvellous city.

Rachel grew so confused that it was with difficulty she could prevent herself from saying aloud all she was feeling. And this, as somehow she knew, would be the greatest possible mistake.

"The queen is sad because the king is away, isn't she?"

The question was put hurriedly, in case she should betray herself.

"Yes. Our great King Nebuchadnezzar is in Egypt, fighting against his enemies. May he be preserved! The queen longs for tidings of him."

Just at that moment the sound of quick footsteps on the blue tiled path, behind the queen's chair, made Rachel turn her head. A slave was running in haste along an upper terrace.

The queen also turned and half rose from her throne-like seat as the messenger, drawing near, threw himself face downward on

the ground before her, and then, rising and bowing low, put something into her hand.

"A letter, perchance, from the king," whispered Salome eagerly.

"A letter?" repeated Rachel, looking with curiosity at the strange object.

It certainly bore no resemblance to the letters she knew, for it looked something like a thin square brick, and though it had an envelope, that envelope was made of *clay* instead of paper, and had a seal upon it.

Feeling quite sure by now that she was invisible to all but the eyes of Salome, she ran to the back of the queen's chair and watched her break the seal, and take out what it contained.

This proved to be a small brick tablet. Upon it was carved some writing that was like, yet unlike, the hieroglyphics she had seen in Egypt, for the letters of which the writing was composed were wedge-shaped, with curious dots and arrow-heads every here and there between them.

And then, smiling happily, the queen began to read the brick aloud.

"*Unto Amysis, my queen whom I love, who loveth me,* say, *It is well with me.* With thee also may it be well. . . . Let the wife of the king, my lady, be of good cheer, for a messenger

of good luck from Belus walketh beside the king of the world . . . ."

Still smiling, she looked round her at her maidens, who all bowed low and murmured together.

"Our lord the king, may he live for ever."

"The great god Belus, as you hear, protects him!" exclaimed Salome, turning to Rachel.

Suddenly the queen clapped her hands, and at the signal, her maidens snatched up the musical instruments they had laid aside, and their brown fingers began to sweep the strings of curiously shaped harps and lyres as they sang a chant of rejoicing. . . .

The sun was setting, and as she lay stretched out upon the tiger skin, Rachel saw the city below her glowing like a heap of jewels within the casket of its walls. The broad river was washed with gold, and reflected in its depths she saw the purple and embroidered sails of the ships passing and repassing, as they brought gold and ivory, fine linen and precious stones, to enrich still further the magnificence of Babylon. The long line of quays formed a white, glittering fringe on either side of the river. In the gardens and open courtyards between the houses the palms and cedar trees and masses of flowers shone like coloured fire, and the great temple of Belus towering towards the sky, with its seven storeys of seven colours, might have been the enchanted palace of a magician. Rachel gazed and gazed as though she wanted to fix the vision of so much loveliness upon her mind for ever.

But her last look after all was for the beauty of the garden in which she sat—the Hanging Garden that might well, she thought, be called one of the World's Wonders! For the sun's last rays lent an even greater magic to the lemon groves, to the leaping cascades which flowed from the upper terrace and were lost among the forest trees beneath; to the pyramids of gorgeous flowers and to the group of singing girls surrounding their lovely queen. Their gauzy robes were dyed with crimson light, the jewels on the queen's head-dress and on the brown hands touching the harp-strings gleamed dazzlingly, and the voices of the singers mingled with the deep hum of voices floating upwards from the swarming multitudes below.

"Is not our Babylon well called "*the lady of kingdoms*"? whispered Salome. "It shall endure for ever, and in ages to come men will travel hither to see its glories, and to gaze upon this our Hanging Garden—one of the Wonders of the World."

Rachel turned to look at the grave little girl who spoke like a woman, yet was perhaps no older than herself.

For a moment she saw her great dark mournful eyes, and then, the whole scene, the garden, the great city below with its towers and palaces, disappeared. For yet another moment she saw the dreary desert, the three great mounds of earth under the blue sky, and almost at the same instant, she was walking in a gallery lined with cases, containing stones, bricks, and various other dull-coloured objects. . . . "These don't look much like the letters the postman brings every morning, do they?" Mr. Sheston was saying. "Yet they are the sort of letters the Babylonians wrote to one another. These marks on the bricks were made with a metal stick, when the clay was still moist and soft, and then the tablet was baked, so that the writing should last practically for ever."

"I know!" cried Rachel. "The queen had a letter from the king Nebuchadnezzar, and it was in a sort of clay envelope. And she read it out, and—"

But Mr. Sheston only smiled, and went on telling her about the "brick letters" hundreds of which had already been discovered in the ruins that cover Babylon!

It was a curious smile, and in some way it told Rachel that she must not talk much to Mr. Sheston about Sheshà—even though they were one and the same person. . . . "Why, even the beginnings of their names are alike!" she thought, suddenly.

"Yes, the Babylonians were wonderful people," the old man exclaimed. "They were astronomers as well as sculptors and metal workers, you know. They built high towers from which they studied the stars. You may imagine what a splendid view of the sky they would have from these towers rising out of a flat country into air so absolutely clear that the stars look enormously big and bright."

"And they told fortunes by the stars, didn't they?" Rachel asked, remembering the king's letter.

"Yes, they were *astrologers*, too—that is they believed that certain planets had an effect on people's lives. But, putting that on one side, we have to thank them for the beginning of all the marvellous discoveries that later astronomers have made. . . . Well, now, my dear," he went on, presently, just like any other kind old gentleman, "I'm sure you're ready for tea and buns."

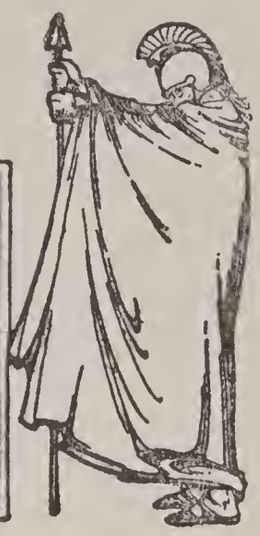
Rachel was quite ready, and she also quite understood that "Mr. Sheston" and "Sheshà" wished to have very little to do with one another.

So she only said, when, half an hour later, the old man left her at Aunt Hester's door:

"Thank you *ever* so much. I shall never forget Babylon, and—and—the Hanging Garden, you know. But there are five more Wonders of the World, aren't there? She could not help adding this, nor could she help a beseeching glance at Mr. Sheston.

He laughed. "We'll see about them, perhaps," he said. But Rachel ran into the house quite satisfied.

THE·COLOSSUS OF·RHODES



One morning, several days later, Rachel received a long letter from her father, in answer to one she had written to him before making the acquaintance of Mr. Sheston. (Though, indeed, as she remembered, she had even then met him without knowing it!)

"You talk about the British Museum," he wrote, "and that reminds me of a dear old friend of mine who works there. I don't think I've ever told you about Mr. Sheston, have I? And now I come to think of it I don't believe I've told *anyone* all he meant to me when I was a little boy, no older than you are now. I've never seen him since, but he was better to me then than a thousand beautiful mysterious books. He used to tell me the most wonderful stories, and I've never forgotten them. He must be a very old man now. (I thought him very old *then*, but, of course, he wasn't really.) I believe he sometimes goes to see your Aunt Hester, and I want you to meet him. Perhaps he will tell you some of the strange things he told me. Perhaps even you will have 'adventures' when you're with him! And perhaps not. Anyhow, if you *do* have 'adventures,' take my advice and don't talk about them. People as a rule don't understand Mr. Sheston, and some of them say all sorts of silly things about him, and even think he's mad. He isn't. He's the *oldest* and the wisest man in the world."

Rachel folded up the letter feeling very happy. She and "Daddy" were great friends, and she was as she said to herself "frightfully glad" that Dad had known Mr. Sheston when he was a little boy. That hint he gave about "adventures" pleased her very much, as also his remark about Mr. Sheston being the oldest man in the world! Oh, yes, certainly Dad had passed through the same sort of experiences as those she had enjoyed since her meeting with his old friend. That was a splendid thought. And all at once she remembered that Dad also was the seventh child in his family. "So *he's* mixed up with *sevens* too," was her next reflection. "He's one of the lucky people—like me. He'll be awfully interested when he gets my last letter to say I've met Mr. Sheston already!"

That very same morning, Aunt Hester had a note from the old man to ask if Miss Moore would be kind enough to bring Rachel to tea at his house the following day, at three o'clock. "I will bring her back again myself. Don't trouble to answer this, because I shall rely upon seeing Rachel at the appointed time."

Aunt Hester brought the note into the schoolroom, and, after reading it aloud, laughed a little and shrugged her shoulders.

"This is a *command*," she said, addressing Miss Moore. "He always gets his own way. Will you see that the child arrives punctually?"

Rachel wanted to jump for joy.

"It's exactly seven days since the last time I saw him," she exclaimed. "How exciting!"

Mr. Sheston's house was tucked away in a little quiet square, near the Museum. It had a narrow front-door with a brass knocker that shone with much polishing, and above it, in the shape of a crescent, panes of glass divided by a tracery in white plaster.

Within, the walls of hall and staircase were panelled with dark wood, and the room into which Rachel followed her host after Miss Moore had left her was, she thought, the nicest she had ever seen.

It had three windows, and was long and low, and like the hall,

panelled right up to the ceiling. There were cushioned window-seats, and books everywhere, and great bowls of spring flowers on the tables. And in an old-fashioned grate with hobs, a fire sparkled cheerfully, for it was a cold gloomy afternoon.

Tea was laid on a table in front of the fire, and in a few moments the dearest old woman in a frilled close-fitting cap and a spotless apron, entered, bringing a teapot and a kettle, which she placed on the hob.

She smiled at Rachel.

"The very image of her father, isn't she, sir?" she remarked.

"Oh! Did you know Dad?" enquired Rachel, joyfully.

"Martha has known all my young friends," said Mr. Sheston.

"Many's the time your father has sat where you're sitting now, my dear," the old woman continued. "He was no older than you then, and had just your look."

She went out of the room quietly, leaving Rachel much interested, and glad to be in a place that Dad had once known well.

She would like to have asked all sorts of questions about her father when he was a little boy, but, remembering his letter, she felt in some curious way that it would be better not to do so.

Tea was a most cosy and delicious meal, but it was only after old Martha had cleared the table and swept up the hearth that Rachel said rather disappointedly—"Then we're not going to the British Museum?" Mr. Sheston smiled. "Not to-day. I'm going to tell you a story instead. But first you'll have to listen

to a little lecture." He took an atlas from one of the book-shelves, and opened it on the table before her. "The story I am going to tell you has something to do with Greece, and in order that you may understand it better, I want you first to look at this. It is a map of Europe as it was three thousand years ago, showing the countries round the Mediterranean Sea. All the parts of the countries that belonged to Greece in those days are coloured pink."

Rachel looked, and saw many pink islands in the Mediterranean Sea, as well as pink strips along the coast of Asia Minor, and even a pink tip to the heel of Italy.

"The Greek people had a lot of land—only all scattered about," she remarked.

Mr. Sheston nodded.

"Like England, it was a little country owning a lot of land—'scattered about,' as you say. Well now, these islands were the Greek colonies, just as India and South Africa and Australia are our colonies. Again, like the English, the Greeks were great colonists. They sent out their people to live and build and work in places sometimes far distant from the mother country. But now I want you to find on the map one particular island-colony called *Rhodes*."

"Here it is!" cried Rachel, in a minute, putting her finger on a pink-coloured spot. "It's a good long way from Greece," she observed, "and quite close to Asia Minor."

"It belonged to Greece, however," said Mr. Sheston, folding up the map. "I only want you to remember its name, and where it is. Now come and look at this statue."

He got up, and Rachel followed him to a recess on which stood a beautiful little figure of a god.

"That is a god called Phœbus Apollo," said Mr. Sheston. "To the Greeks he meant all the best things in the world—the sun, poetry, music, wisdom and truth, and everything that is free and beautiful."

"The gods they worshipped in Egypt and Babylon weren't beautiful," said Rachel. "But this god *is*. He's much better than the others."

"Because the Greeks themselves were in some ways higher and better than the Egyptians or the Babylonians. They were thinkers and artists, and their minds were free. Therefore they were able to imagine beautiful gods, and they became the greatest race of people that ever lived. . . . Do you remember the name of their chief city?"

"Athens," answered Rachel, who was rather good at geography.

"Yes, Athens," repeated Mr. Sheston, softly. "Wonderful Athens!" "Well, now, my dear, I can begin my story, asking you to remember that Greece had many colonies, peopled by Greeks whose general life was very much like the life led by the citizens of Athens in the mother country. They worshipped the same gods—Phœbus Apollo amongst them—and they were, in fact, part of the Grecian Empire. . . ."

He was silent for a minute or two, and the room was so quiet and restful that Rachel had almost begun to feel pleasantly drowsy when she heard his voice again. "What I am going to tell you, I once told your father years ago in this very room, and he sat just where you are sitting now," he said. Before she had time to make a reply, he began the story, and though his first words ought, as Rachel afterwards reflected, to have been rather startling, they seemed perfectly natural, for she was getting used to the idea that, as Dad said, Mr. Sheston was "the *oldest* man in the world."

"When I was a little boy, nearer three than two thousand years ago, I lived in the island of Rhodes. You know where it is, because a minute or two ago, you found it on the map, and saw it marked in the Mediterranean Sea as an island some long way from Greece.

"In the map, it was nothing but a little blotch coloured pink, so it's not surprising if you have no idea what *I* see, when I remember Rhodes as I knew it nearly three thousand years ago. I'll describe the vision that rises before me now.

"First of all, my own home. It is a big white house with pillars at the entrance, and a flat roof, standing in a garden full of

roses that slopes down almost to the harbour of the town of Rhodes. The harbour is full of ships—our own, and those from Tyre and Athens and Smyrna, and all the great seaports on the Mediterranean—ships with curious curved sails, some of them purple and embroidered with strange devices."

("Like the ships from Tyre I saw at Babylon," thought Rachel, though she did not care to interrupt.)

"Beyond the great harbour with its crowded shipping and merchandise of green and purple figs, heaps of dates, bales of fine muslin and linen, chests—some full of spices, others of gold and ivory—lies the sea, blue as the bluest sapphire, over which, going and coming from every harbour of every country whose shores touched the Mediterranean, ships go sailing. That is the picture I have in my mind when I think of Rhodes as I knew it ages ago.

"My name in those days was Cleon, and I had a beautiful mother, and a little sister called Penelope.

"But before I go on, I must tell you that by the time I came into the world, Athens, our mother city, where my father had been born, was no longer so great and powerful as it had been in the days a hundred years before my time. All sorts of trouble had come to Greece. It had been conquered by a certain king called Alexander the Great, who died just before I was born, and all the time I was a child, the generals of his army were quarrelling among themselves—each one trying to get the largest share of all the great kingdoms their master King Alexander had won. You will ask what that had to do with Rhodes, and with my beautiful home, and with the happiness of everyone I loved. It had all too much to do with us, as I will explain.

"Our island had indeed been conquered by Alexander the Great, but fifty years before I was born we had regained our liberty, had become a republic and also the greatest sea nation in the world. But now, though the great conqueror himself was dead, one of his generals, jealous of our power, determined to subdue us and make us slaves again. This man's name was Demetrius, and, because he had become so famous in war, he was generally called Demetrius, the Besieger of Cities.

"I was twelve years old when the news came that this dreaded Demetrius had declared war on Rhodes, and was coming to besiege us, and never shall I forget the speech my father (who was Governor of Rhodes) made to the citizens that day!

"'We are Greeks,' he said, 'and worthy children of Athens, our mother city. Never will we yield to Demetrius! Let us prepare for the greatest siege that has ever been known.'

"A great shout answered him, and my father at once began to make preparations.

"'First of all,' he said, 'every useless person must be sent out of Rhodes.' That meant all the women and children, and all men who were not strong enough to fight. For, in the long siege that was expected, there would not be sufficient food for anyone but workmen and soldiers. Workmen must instantly begin to make every sort of warlike weapon, including machines as far as possible like those which Demetrius would certainly employ against the city. Other workmen must strengthen its walls, toiling day and night. Everyone in fact must labour as they had never done before. I followed him from the market-place that day full of dread. If all the children were to go, should I have to leave Rhodes just at this stirring time, when I so longed to be in the midst of things? Yet I dared not ask my father to let me stay, for I knew I must not trouble him with my affairs when he had the whole town's business on his mind. I was very miserable, for I knew he intended to send me, with my mother and little sister, to Athens. But you shall hear how it was that I after all remained in Rhodes through the whole dreadful siege.

"One of our greatest friends was a certain young sculptor called Chares. He was very fond of me, and deeply interested in a curious gift which, even as a child, I possessed. My greatest amusement and interest had always been to draw *plans* of houses and towns, and I drew them so correctly and well that everyone was amazed, for I had never been taught. To *me* there was nothing wonderful about this, for it seemed quite easy, and I could never understand why Chares looked upon my work with so much astonishment.

"As soon as I dared I began to beg and entreat not to be sent away, till my father, growing angry, silenced me, and I was just creeping off miserably when Chares, who was with us, spoke.

"He had picked up a plan of the town on which I had been working, and I saw him studying it attentively, all the time I was begging to stay.

"'Yield to the boy, Hippias,' he exclaimed, suddenly. 'Who knows that this gift of his,' he tapped the paper he held, 'may not be of value? I think he should remain with us.'

"My father looked from me to Chares, and, after a moment's silence, said quietly, and to my great joy, 'So be it. That is'—turning to me—he went on: 'if you can bear hunger and even wounds perhaps, like a man. We must have no whimpering children in Rhodes.'

"I felt I could bear anything if only I might remain, and I was unspeakably grateful to my dear Chares for his interference. I knew my father not only trusted him greatly, but also had an idea that he was favoured by the gods, and could look into the future. It was because *he* pleaded for me that my wish was granted.

"In a few days I was the youngest person left in Rhodes, which was now filled only with soldiers and workmen. Those were wonderful days when we waited for the coming of the fleet that was to destroy us! Almost every hour fresh troops were landed, for the countries that were friendly to us sent us soldiers in plenty. Many of them were our own countrymen—Greeks from other colonies, who rejoiced to fight with us, and arrived shouting, singing, and full of delight. All day long I ran here, there and everywhere in the town. Now I was down by the harbour to see a fresh ship full of warriors come sailing in; now I walked round the city walls to watch the workmen strengthening and repairing them. But most time of all I spent in the sheds where the great war engines were being built, for these fascinated me beyond measure, and I wondered whether even the celebrated Demetrius had better or larger ones than those we were making. I was soon to know.

"My father had brought me up to reverence the gods, and

the chief god of our worship was Phœbus Apollo—lord of the sun which poured its light so gloriously upon our island, and ripened our grapes and figs, and made the whole land lovely and pleasant to the sight.

"In our garden there was a little white marble temple, and in it, with an altar in front, stood a beautiful statue of the god, made by our friend, Chares, the sculptor. Here I often went to pray for victory. One morning I woke before sunrise, and the loveliness of the sky made me wish to worship the god of the approaching day.

"Like a vast mirror the scarcely heaving sea reflected the pink glow of the sky, where little golden clouds like feathers floated just above the horizon, and a broad band of amber was growing momentarily brighter.

"I rose quickly from my place on the roof, and, running past rooms filled with sleeping soldiers (for our house had been turned into a barracks), made my way into the garden all mysterious, dim and dewy in the dawn.

"I crossed wet lawns, stopped to pick a handful of the roses that poured in a crimson torrent from a stone urn, and then ran on to the grove of lemon trees in which stood the temple.

"To my surprise I found someone there before me. A dark figure stood within. Just at that moment, the first ray of the risen sun darted like a golden arrow between the pillars of the temple, and the marble statue of the god appeared bathed in dazzling light.

"The figure I had seen was now kneeling at the foot of the altar, and I recognised Chares.

"Very softly I crept into the temple, and, dropping my roses on the altar, knelt beside him.

"Then Chares rose to his feet, and stretching out his arms, prayed aloud. His words, spoken in the Greek tongue, sounded like beautiful poetry, but I can only give you in another and different language, a poor idea of the prayer he offered to Phœbus Apollo.

"'O mighty lord of the sun and of all the beauty in striving

for which men are raised above the beasts that perish, grant us victory in the coming strife. I, Chares, thy worshipper, who have many times fashioned in thine honour statues which but faintly show forth my dreams of thy perfection, do make a vow before thee here, at the rising of the sun, that, if to thy people of Rhodes comes the victory we crave, I will raise to thy glory such a statue as never man yet beheld—the Wonder of the World, an everlasting sign of thy mercy, the best and last work of my hands.'

"The little temple was flooded with sunlight, and the heap of roses on the altar was glowing like a crimson fire, when Chares turned, and, seeing me beside him, laid his hand on my shoulder. We moved out of the temple, and he was just going to speak when I pointed with a cry to the horizon. Crowding sails were in sight, and Chares started. 'They come!' he exclaimed. 'At what better moment than after my prayer and vow?"

"But, even before the last words were uttered, such a shout went up from the harbour and the town as to make my heart beat and set me trembling with excitement. From the house, across the lawns to the gates which led to the seashore, the soldiers came rushing, and, in a few moments, Rhodes was humming and buzzing like a hornet's nest.

"So the famous siege of Rhodes began. You will read all about it when you are older, for it was one of the most celebrated sieges in history. To me, as to hundreds of others, it was a time which, though full of excitement, was still more full of misery and sorrow. My dear father was killed fighting bravely, and many, many of our friends.

"Months passed, and sometimes we won a victory, breaking through the enemy forces, and sometimes Demetrius, with his terrible war machines, triumphed. He had succeeded in landing on our island and was encamped on a hill near our city, while *we* within *our* walls, resisted all his efforts to break them down.

"After nine or ten months of fighting, our sailors won a splendid victory against the fleet of Demetrius, and the temples of the gods were crowded with worshippers giving thanks for our success.

"Since my father's death, Chares had lived with me in our once

beautiful house (now a barracks for the soldiers), and he and I preferred to worship in our own little private temple of Phœbus Apollo. When we left it that day, the sun was setting, and the roses, which during the war had grown in wild profusion, almost smothered the shrine, and made it look as though set in the midst of scarlet flames.

"Chares glanced back at it, and put his hand on my shoulder.

"'Cleon,' he said, 'if the statue I have in mind ever rises to the honour of the god, it will be through *you*.'

"I was startled and impressed by his words which I did not understand. How could I, still a child, and not even allowed to fight, have anything to do with victory—if victory ever came? For we knew that Demetrius had but retired to bring fresh forces against us. I began to say something like this, but Chares paid no heed to my words.

"'Are you keeping your drawings and plans in safety?' he asked, as though to change the subject. For he knew that my days now were chiefly occupied in making plans of different parts of the city, and also careful drawings of our own, as well as of the enemy's war machines. This I did to amuse myself, and often, though Chares did not know this, ran into great danger in my eagerness to see something I thought useful or important, more closely.

"'How do you think this gift has come to you?' asked Chares presently, when I had assured him that I kept all my drawings.

"And when I said I had never thought about it, and did not consider it a 'gift,' because to me it was like a kind of game, he replied gravely,

"'Some day you will know.'

"We were not left long to enjoy our victory, for soon rumours began to fly about which filled us with anxiety.

"Demetrius, beaten for the time, had indeed retired, but it was known that he had invented, and was building, a new and a more terrible war engine than had ever before been designed. By this time, in Rhodes, we were nearly starving, for our food was almost all gone, and Phrynis, our general, was full of anxiety,

for though he did not doubt the courage of our troops, he knew they could not fight if they were weak for lack of nourishment. You may imagine his relief when, just at the blackest moment of despair, some ships sent by our friend, the King of Egypt, managed to get past the watching fleet of the enemy, laden with corn, and, a few days afterwards, other ships arrived with fresh troops to help our tired men.

"After they had rested and been well fed, Phrynis gave orders for soldiers and sailors to prepare for the great machine which would soon be at our gates, by building an *inner* wall behind that which encircled the city. To do this it was necessary to pull down a great many houses, and, among them, my own beautiful home, and even the little temple of Phœbus Apollo. Before this was done, we held a solemn service within the temple, and again Chares renewed his vow to make the statue, and begged forgiveness of the god for having to destroy one of his dwelling-places. I thought my heart would break when instead of the white house I knew and loved, with its marble columns, its flights of marble steps leading to a garden beautiful as a dream, I saw waste land, scattered over with stones and rubbish, all the roses trampled under foot, and desolation far and wide about the new wall that was rising. But we were fighting for our lives, and there was no time either for sorrow or regret.

"Meanwhile, the war machine which Demetrius was preparing for our destruction was nearly completed. It was being built upon that part of the island already in possession of the enemy, and marvellous tales about its size and deadliness were daily brought into the city by those of our soldiers who had seen it. The name they said that was given to the new engine was *helepolis*, which means *destroyer of cities*. As time went on, I could think of nothing but this awful monster, which I was quite sure *might* be overcome if only one could think of the means.

"By now, so many were the plans I had made of our city that there was scarcely a yard of it I did not know, and one day I said to Chares,

"'If only we could discover to which point of the walls this *helepolis* will be brought when it begins its attack upon us.'

"Chares glanced at me quickly.

"'Why?' he asked.

"'Because, if only I knew that, I should also know at once what to do.'

"I spoke with great confidence, for I was really quite sure of the plan I had in mind—though *why* I was so sure, I could not tell.

"Chares looked at me again, and then as though he had dismissed the subject, said, 'To-day I will take you where you may work at your maps and plans in greater quiet.'

"Since the destruction of our house, another in the heart of the town had become our General Headquarters, and here everything was crowded and rough and noisy with the incessant tramping of soldiers about its door, and there was no spot in it that I could call my own. So I was glad that Chares had found a place for me, and, when after several hours' absence, he returned, I willingly followed him to a house on the hill-side beyond the walls. We passed through a quiet garden and presently entered a room, where, to my surprise, I saw our general Phrynis, several other officers, and one or two men I knew to be engineers. These men smiled in an amused way when I came in, and I heard one whisper to another,

"'Have we been brought here to consult with a child?'

"But Chares drew a stool up to the table in the window space, and told me to open the ground plans of the city and the maps I had brought, and when the men crowded round to see, I noticed that their faces altered as they passed my drawings from one to the other in silence.

"At last Phrynis, who was very grave, spoke touching a point on one of my plans of the town.

"'Cleon,' he said, 'if the new war engine should be posted at *this* part of the wall, what would you do supposing you had everything you wanted at your command?'

"Then I began to explain very fast and confidently—(for it all seemed quite simple to me)—just the way in which I would

lay a mine under that part of the wall, and just the spot where the engine would sink, if certain directions were carried out.

"The men glanced at one another again in silence, and all at once Phrynis rose. 'The work begins to-night,' I heard him say. 'There is no time to lose. Back to the city.'

"The soldiers clattered out, leaving me alone with Chares, who took my hand and whispered hurriedly, 'It is right you should know—though you understand that no word must cross your lips. It is *there*, opposite the place on the plan pointed out to you by Phrynis, that the machine will be planted. This we have learnt through our spies. So important is the secret that Phrynis would hold no meeting in the city itself, and therefore have we come to this quiet place. You are to follow and direct the work as soon as it grows dark.'

"Can you at all imagine what a thrilling night that was for me when by the light of torches I saw hundreds of men working under my direction? At the time I was too preoccupied to wonder how it happened that I knew exactly what to say and do. It seemed to me every now and then that I had done and said the same things many times before and therefore need not hesitate, nor even think. It was as though something was happening in my sleep, quite easily and naturally.

"When the first streak of dawn was in the sky, the work was finished, and, all at once worn out, I was almost carried by Chares to our barracks, where I slept for hours. All the rest of that day we waited in suspense, for, though we knew the war machine was ready, we were not sure when the attack would be made.

"It came the next morning. Shouts and battle cries from the besiegers, and terrific blasts from their trumpets were followed by flights of arrows, as the huge monster moving towards us over the waste ground beyond the walls drew near.

"I watched it, with my heart thumping. The ground already in the possession of Demetrius had been levelled so that the 'destroyer of cities' might move more easily, and I knew just where the mine would strike it—if only we had not been deceived about the track over which it was to pass!

"But suppose Demetrius had changed his plans? Or that the spies were wrong? Suppose the machine should pass a shade too far on the right or the left of the mine. It would then arrive safely beneath the wall, and we should all, I thought, be destroyed. For never had I, or any of the Rhodians, imagined such a monster as this!

"It was like a square castle upon wheels. Thousands of soldiers pushed it forward, but their toil was made easier by the wheels or castors which turned every way under the great frame supporting it. Nine storeys I counted, with staircases leading up and down from one to the other. The whole monster, half animal, half tower (as it looked), was covered with iron plates like the scales on a serpent. In the front of each storey there were little windows with leather curtains which moved up and down, covering them—meant, no doubt, to break the force of the stones and darts we should hurl in our defence. On it came, towering above our walls, its windows like the awful eyes of some dragon, glaring at its victims. As yet it had not begun to spit forth stones and darts and flaming torches, but evidently it was only waiting for this till it should be closer at hand, and more deadly in effect.

"While I held my breath in terror lest anything in my plan should go wrong, I yet noticed with pride the spirit of our men

who shouted their battle-cries, and shot streams of arrows in return for those sent over by the enemy foot-soldiers. Nearer and nearer came the monster—my heart stood still—and then, just as I was feeling I must faint or scream, with such a crash as to make the whole city totter, it suddenly disappeared into the ground. *Almost* disappeared, for only the topmost and smallest storey was visible!

"At first it seemed as though the whole world had been suddenly struck dumb. Not a sound was heard from either side, besiegers or besieged. Then, after that moment of deathly silence a cry went up from the city that was like nothing I ever heard. The next moment I felt the arms of Chares catching me before I fell to the ground.

"The excitement and suspense had been too much for me, and when I opened my eyes I was lying in our barracks, and Phrynis, Chares, and crowds of other people, were waiting to embrace me, and call me the saviour of our city.

"For the war had ended while I was unconscious. Phrynis afterwards told me that messengers from many parts of Greece had for some days past arrived at the camp of Demetrius, urging him to make peace with us on our own terms. But he added: 'It was the failure of his last and greatest engine rather than the entreaties of his friends that decided him to struggle no more for victory. The victory is ours, and we owe it to you, Cleon, a child in years, but a man in genius.'

"Such praise as this might well have filled me with foolish pride and vanity if I had not been quite sure that somehow or other I had been *helped*. I had not thought out the plan at all. It had come ready-made into my mind. But when I tried to explain this to Phrynis, he merely laughed at what he called my modesty, and I could see he did not understand. It was only Chares who understood, and made *me* understand also. But that came much later on, as I presently will tell you.

"Meanwhile everyone was mad with joy that the siege which had lasted a whole year, and was the most wonderful and celebrated that had ever happened, was over. Trumpets blew, bells

rang, the city adorned with flowers and crowded with rejoicing people gave itself up to festivity.

"But in all this triumph I had no share, for I was too ill and unhappy to take any part in the victory rejoicings. Not only had excitement, lack of food, and the long strain of the war injured my health but sad news soon came to me from Athens, where my mother and sister were living.

"Chares had taken me to live with him at his house in Lindus, a town in the island not far from Rhodes, and there I heard that my mother was dead. She was ill when tidings of my father's death reached her, and from the shock and grief of this news she never recovered. So the war had robbed me of both my parents and separated me from my sister, to whom some friend in Athens had offered a home.

"You may imagine that I was a very unhappy little boy in those first days of victory, and it was not for a long time that I could bring myself to take joy in the great work that lay before my friend, Chares.

"Almost as soon as the fighting ceased, he began the statue promised to the god, Phœbus Apollo—that statue which became one of the Seven Wonders of the World.

"To explain how such a statue as this, requiring enormous sums of money and an enormous quantity of metal became possible to make, I must tell you what happened after we made peace.

"Demetrius was a generous enemy, and just before withdrawing all his troops from the island, he actually sent us all the very war machines he had built for our destruction, saying that he could not sufficiently admire our gallant defence! Now the materials of which these engines were made were immensely valuable, and the citizens agreed to sell them and to put the great sum of money they received for them at the disposal of Chares.

"So Chares began his work, and for twelve long years I saw the famous statue of the Sun-God growing under his hands in the open-air workshop he used for his task.

"By the end of those twelve years I was, of course, a grown man. Many things had happened. I had worked hard and was now

a very famous engineer, well known in all the islands of the Mediterranean. I had caused my old home to be rebuilt, as well as the little temple to Phœbus Apollo. I was married, and had little children of my own, who played in the garden I had known as a boy. It was lovely as ever now, for in that warm climate plants grow quickly, and once more it was full of roses and fragrant with the scent of lemon groves.

"All this you must understand before I tell you what happened on the evening of the day the great statue was finished.

"That evening Chares was my guest, and the next day was to be one of special rejoicing. For not only was there high festival in the city—because, at last, the statue was to be set up at the entrance to the harbour—but it was also the marriage day of Chares and my sister, Penelope, who had now come to live with us. By this time she was a beautiful maiden of eighteen, and I was only too happy to think she was to be the wife of my friend.

"Long after all the house was quiet that night, and everyone else slept, Chares and I sat on the terrace that overlooked the sea, and talked of the future and the past.

"'Cleon,' said Chares, after a silence, 'have you no wonder about the part you played in the siege, you being then but a child?'

"'I have wondered, indeed, and I still wonder,' I answered. Often I have seemed to be just about to understand the miracle of my knowledge when I planned the overthrow of the war engine And a moment later I am again confused.'

"'Come!' exclaimed Chares, after a silence. 'Let us go to the temple in the grove. It was there I made my vow to Phœbus Apollo, and it is just that there I should return thanks on this, the happiest evening of my life, when my work is at last finished.'

"We rose and walked across the moon-silvered lawn towards the little temple gleaming white amidst the lemon trees.

"I can never forget the beauty of the night. We could hear the gently murmuring sea where it lay under the moon, calm as a shining lake.

"The shadows of the trees lay motionless on the grass, and

made a lovely tracery upon the temple roof, and the air was full of sweet scents. Once again, as when I was a boy, I picked a handful of roses, and laid them on the altar at the feet of the statue, which, carefully preserved during the war, stood once more on its marble pedestal. We knelt before it, and Chares offered a strange prayer. From his words I knew that he was praying to a *Spirit,* and that the statue before which he prayed only represented one little idea (which was all we poor human beings might understand) of some God greater than we could know, or than any statue could suggest. His prayer ended, he turned to me, and I saw him take something from the folds of his tunic. The moonlight glittered on what I now saw to be a crystal ball which he put into my hands.

"'Look steadfastly within it,' he said gravely. 'Here, in this temple, it may be, you will understand.'

"Full of wonder, I began to gaze into the depths of the crystal, for the moonlight was so bright that everything reflected in the ball was plainly visible. At first I saw nothing but a little upside-down picture of the temple itself, and the overhanging trees, but after a moment this reflection melted away, and other scenes appeared, dissolving and reappearing so rapidly that I could catch but a glimpse of each. Then, all at once, a clear steady vision, upon which I looked intently, took the place of these shifting ones. There were pyramids in this scene, visible from the open door of a vast hall with sculptured figures at the entrance. And in that hall I saw *myself!* But I was not clothed in my ordinary linen

tunic. I wore a strange robe, and a still stranger head-dress, and I was bending over something that looked like a plan of a building. For a moment I was puzzled, and altogether confused—till in a flash I *remembered*, and as the truth came to me, I gave a startled cry.

" Chares was looking at me with a smile as I raised my head.

" ' I was Sheshà—chief engineer and architect among the priests of Egypt, long ages ago,' I exclaimed.

" ' Do you understand now why you were able to plan that mine, and save our city ? ' asked Chares quietly. ' It was knowledge you had already gained in another far-away life, though you were ignorant whence it came, and why the work was easy to you.

" I was struck dumb with wonder, for not only did I remember my life as Sheshà, but fragments of many other lives since then began to come back to me, some vividly, some only as a sort of confused dream.

" But Chares put his hand on my arm and led me out of the temple.

" ' Leave your memories now, and let us go in and sleep,' he said. ' See, a new day has begun—the greatest day for me in this my present life.' He pointed to the east, where the first grey streaks of dawn were visible, and I followed him into the house. So for the first time I *remembered*. There have been many, many lives since, and in some of them I again forgot all that had gone before. But, once more now, the old man you know as ' Mr Sheston,' remembers again, otherwise he would not be telling you this story—which is nearly at an end.

" When the sun rose we were awakened by the sound of trumpets, the clashing of bells and the shouting of the workmen who were dragging the huge brazen figure on its wheeled platform from the workshop. Later on in the morning, came the procession through the city, where Chares led my beautiful sister up to the great temple. Children strewed flowers before them as they passed through shouting multitudes, praising Chares and showering blessings upon him and his newly made bride.

" By sundown, hundreds of workmen working with a will had

'IT WILL LAST FOR EVER'

set up the statue, on a pedestal at the entrance to the harbour, and now crowds of the citizens took ship, to view it from the sea.

"In a gorgeously painted barge, all my household, with Chares and my sister in the places of honour, floated out of the harbour, and we turned to gaze at the wonderful figure. It flashed and glittered in the light of the setting sun, as though the god thus by a gracious sign accepted the gift. A mighty and beautiful figure it was, towering against the sky; a giant in bronze, proud, stately and awe-inspiring—a fit memorial of the famous siege of Rhodes. Well might it become, as it did, one of the Seven Wonders of the World.

"'It will last for ever—like the Pyramids!' I whispered to Chares as I took his hand.

"Little did any of us know that it would last little longer than one lifetime. In eighty years that marvellous statue was a heap of ruins. A great earthquake, which shook Rhodes to its foundations, shattered it also to fragments, and only a memory of one of the most famous statues in the world remained. And even that memory faded and grew false, for legends gathered about the celebrated 'Colossus of Rhodes,' and men actually believed that it had stood astride the harbour and that ships in full sail passed under its huge body as under an arch.

"This could only have been thought possible by men who had forgotten, or never knew, the beautiful Greek sculpture. Never could a Greek artist have made a figure ugly and grotesque as this would have been, if later descriptions had been true. And I who saw the statue daily, smile when, sometimes even in these days, I read such a description of it in books of history. Chares was a true artist, and his simple, noble statue was worthy of him, and worthy of its fame as one of the World's Seven Wonders."

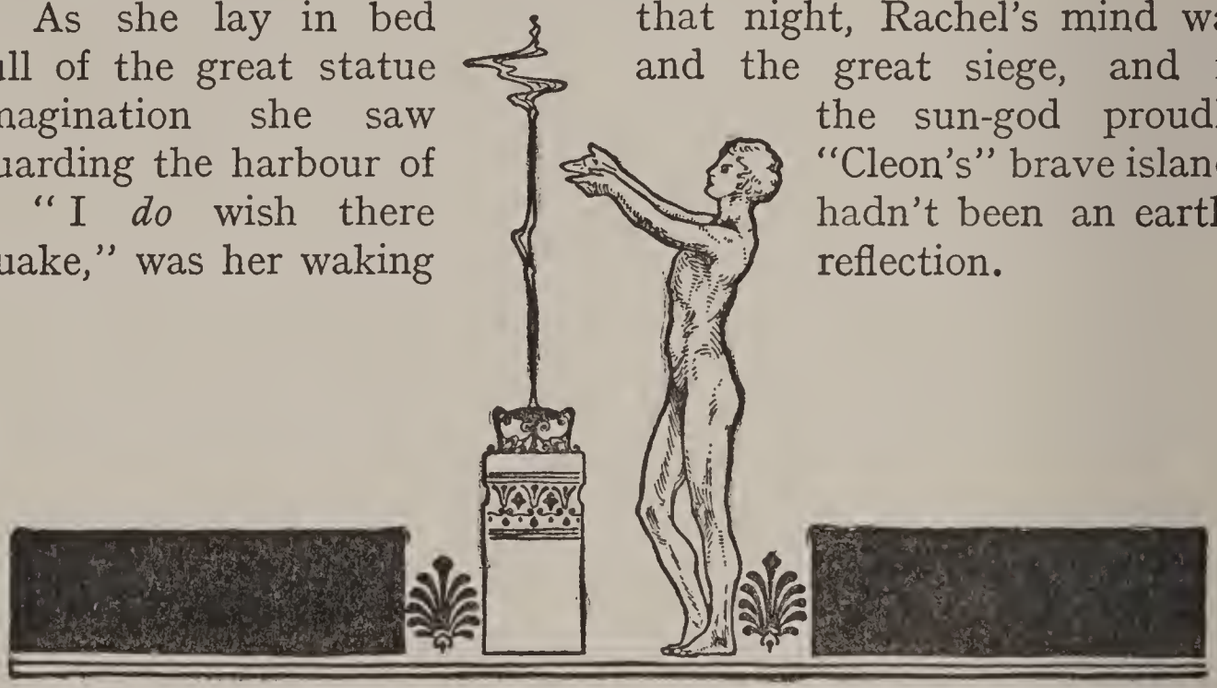
Mr. Sheston's voice died away, and at this moment Martha came in with a lamp; the room was all at once lighted up, and the old man glanced at the clock.

"I must take you back at once," he said. "Aunt Hester will be getting anxious."

He rose quickly, and Rachel knew without being told that she mustn't ask him any questions. He had become the kind, ordinary old gentleman he seemed to most people—not at all the same person who in the firelight had looked so mysterious and had told her the whole long story to which she had just listened, as though he were reading it from a book!

As she lay in bed that night, Rachel's mind was full of the great statue and the great siege, and in imagination she saw the sun-god proudly guarding the harbour of "Cleon's" brave island.

"I *do* wish there hadn't been an earthquake," was her waking reflection.



Lessons always began for Rachel with a chapter in the Bible which she read to Miss Moore. She was allowed to choose her own chapter, and one morning, as she opened her Bible at random, the word *Ephesus* struck her. She wondered why this name immediately reminded her of Mr. Sheston and the story of Rhodes, for at first they seemed to have nothing to do with one another. Then she remembered that on the map—(why it was actually *seven* days ago since he had shown her that map)—she had seen the town *Ephesus* marked on the coast of Asia Minor.

"Shall I read this? It's the nineteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles," she asked suddenly, addressing her governess.

"Very well," agreed Miss Moore.

So Rachel began to read how St. Paul, having come to Ephesus to preach Christianity, had roused the anger of a certain silversmith, Demetrius by name, who "made silver shrines for Diana." This man, as it appeared from the story, was greatly afraid of losing his trade, because so many people were becoming Christians that no one, he thought, would care any more for the silver shrines. He therefore tried to stir up the citizens against St. Paul and his teaching, by calling together a great crowd of people, to whom he declared that all the silversmiths and workmen would suffer through this new religion of Christianity. "*So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at naught,*" he said, "*but also that the*

temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth."

Rachel read this with interest, for she had actually *seen* some of the temples built thousands of years ago, in honour of certain gods, and she guessed that the temple for a goddess, "whom all Asia and the world worshippeth" must have been particularly magnificent. She went on to the next verse, which showed that Demetrius had succeeded in rousing the people to defend their old worship: "*And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, 'Great is Diana of the Ephesians.' And the whole city was filled with confusion . . . some therefore cried one thing and some another: for the assembly was confused, and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together.*"

Then the story went on to relate how a man called Alexander tried to speak to the clamouring people, and could not make himself heard for the noise, for "*all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out 'Great is Diana of the Ephesians.'*"

Thanks to Mr. Sheston's story of Rhodes, and thanks also to her own strange magical journeys, Rachel had some sort of picture in her mind of the scene described in the Bible.

Ephesus was not so very far from Rhodes, and it was on the coast. There must then, have been a deep blue sky above that temple round which the people shouted "*Great is Diana of the Ephesians,*" and dazzling sunshine, and a glimpse of wonderful blue sea!

Before Rachel had finished the chapter she had made up her mind to ask Mr. Sheston about Diana of the Ephesians. She liked the name very much, and it certainly sounded as though something interesting—perhaps *exciting* might be connected with it. Suppose it should even lead to an "adventure"? She scarcely dared to hope for this, but all the same there *was* a little hope at the back of her mind.

Anyhow, there was something, though of a different nature, to look forward to this very afternoon, for a little girl was coming to tea.

"She's the daughter of an artist I happened to meet the other day," Aunt Hester had explained at breakfast time. "He turned out to be a friend of your father's, and, when he heard you were here, he said he would like his little girl to meet you, so I invited her to come to-day."

"What is her name?" had been Rachel's first question.

"I don't know. I forgot to ask. But she's about your age. She's coming early, so you needn't do any lessons this afternoon."

This in itself was good news, and by three o'clock Rachel was looking out of the window for the expected visitor. But after all, when the bell rang she was too late to see who was admitted, because for the third or fourth time, she had moved across the room to the mantelpiece, to look at the watch which lay there.

Aunt Hester opened the door.

"Here is Diana," she said. "I shall leave you together to amuse yourselves till tea time."

"Oh, is your name really *Diana*?" exclaimed Rachel, forgetting to shake hands. "How funny!"

"Why is it funny?" enquired the little girl, not unnaturally, while Rachel swiftly looked her up and down.

She scarcely knew whether to think her very pretty, or only curious-looking. She had a mop of red hair, big eyes, more green than blue, and a little pointed face which reminded Rachel of the faces of certain elves in an illustrated fairy-tale book she possessed. Certainly she was rather like an elf altogether, light and slender, with quick darting movements.

"Why is it funny?" she repeated. And, when she laughed, Rachel was quite sure she was pretty, as well as curious.

"Only because I was reading about Diana in the Bible this morning—and I liked the name."

"It's the name of a goddess," her visitor announced rather importantly.

"I know. 'Diana of the Ephesians.'"

The little girl looked puzzled. "I don't know anything about the—what did you say? Ephe—something? I was called

Diana because my father was painting a picture of her when I was born."

"What was it like?"

"Oh, it's a lovely picture. She's a girl running through a wood, and she has a bow and arrows in her hand. And she's dressed in a short white thing—a tunic, you know, that comes to her knees. And her hair in father's picture is red, like mine, and there's a little moon, a tiny crescent moon, just over her forehead. And running behind her there are some other girls who are hunting with her. Father told me all about her the other day, because, you see, as I've got her name, I wanted to know."

"Tell me," Rachel urged.

"Well, the Greek people worshipped her, father said. She was the twin sister of Apollo——"

"I know about *him*," interrupted Rachel eagerly. "Phœbus Apollo. He was the Sun-God."

"Well, Diana was the *moon*-goddess. I suppose that's because she was his twin sister? Sun and moon, you know. But, anyhow, she was the goddess of hunting as well. And she loved to be free and live out of doors in the woods. So do I—that's why I'm glad my name's Diana, like hers. And her father, Jupiter, let her be free, and gave her some girls called nymphs, to be her companions, and hunt with her in the woods and on the mountains. . . . I think the Greek people had awfully nice gods and goddesses, don't you?"

"Awfully nice," agreed Rachel. She was thinking of the little white temple to Phœbus Apollo in "Cleon's" beautiful garden, and of the great statue at Rhodes. She glanced at Diana, who was perched like an elf on the corner of the table, swinging her feet. How splendid it would be if she could tell her—well, all sorts of things. But would she understand? Wouldn't she laugh and say, "You've just made them up!" Again Rachel glanced at her visitor. She looked as though she *might* understand. There was something about her— But she determined to be very cautious.

"When's your birthday?" she began suddenly.

"The seventh of May. When's yours?"

"The seventh of June." Rachel found herself growing excited. This was a promising beginning.

"How many brothers and sisters have you got?"

"Six."

"Then you're the seventh child?" Rachel held her breath now.

"Yes. And I'm the youngest."

"So am I. And is your father the seventh child in his family?" She scarcely dared to put the question.

Diana laughed, and began counting on her fingers. "Let me see—Uncle John, Aunt Margaret. . . . And there was Aunt May, but she died, and then Uncle Dick. . . . And then . . . . Yes, he *is*. I never thought about it before. What made *you* think of it?" Diana seemed much amused, but Rachel was desperately serious.

"Wait a minute," she urged, "and perhaps I'll tell you."

The next "minute" was occupied in putting breathless questions to Diana.

"Yes!" she exclaimed at last. "You're just as much mixed up with *sevens* as I am. Oh, isn't it perfectly *wonderful* that I've actually found someone as lucky as I am? I shall have to tell Mr. Sheston. . . . But perhaps he knows. I shouldn't be a bit surprised if he had something to do with getting us to meet each other. You see he——"

But Diana's mystified face checked Rachel in the midst of her excited chattering.

"Of course you don't understand anything about it yet," she exclaimed. "How stupid I am. I shall have to tell you everything from the beginning."

So she began the story of her first visit to the Museum, of the little old man who had spoken to her there, of the mysterious seven times bowing before the Rosetta Stone, and of all the marvels that had since happened.

And as she talked, explaining and describing, she saw Diana beginning to "understand." Her eyes grew bright with eager-

ness, and, when at last Rachel paused for breath, she slipped from the table and began to dance about the room in her delight and excitement.

"I knew something like that might happen if only I could find out the way to make it," she cried. "Because, do you know, Rachel, I often have dreams that are quite *real*—just as real as this room, and you, and the tables and chairs are now. In those sorts of dreams I go to places I've never seen in my life. Funny places where everything's quite different. People wear different clothes, and don't talk English—and yet I understand what they say. But I'm only there for a minute before I come back again to my own bed and my own bedroom. And then I'm most *awfully* disappointed because I'm always quite sure that there's a way of making the dream *last*, so that I can go on, and have adventures—instead of only seeing things in a sort of flash, you know."

"Mr. Sheston can make them last—if they *are* dreams!" Rachel declared. "I have to call him 'Mr. Sheston' here," she added. "But he's really Sheshà and Cleon, and I expect ever so many other people as well. And yet all the *same* person, you understand. In this life he just happens to be Mr. Sheston, that's all."

"Oh, I *do* wish I could see him," sighed Diana.

She had scarcely spoken before her wish was granted, for at the last word the door opened, and Mr. Sheston came in.

Rachel gave a shriek of delight, and seizing Diana's hand, dragged her to meet him.

"This is Diana. She's the seventh child of the seventh child, and she was born on the seventh of May, and everything that happens to her has *sevens* in it, and she has dreams, and—" Rachel tripped over her words in her excitement, and Mr. Sheston laughed.

"Your Aunt Hester told me to walk up," he said in an ordinary everyday voice. "So this is Diana? How do you do, Diana?" He shook hands with her, and turned to Rachel. "I came to see whether you felt inclined for the Museum this afternoon. But as you have a friend with you—perhaps another time?"

Diana gave a little gasp, and grew very pink, but seemed too shy to speak.

But Rachel, who had seen a twinkle in Mr. Sheston's eyes, laughed happily.

"It's just what Diana wants more than *anything*. Oh, do let's put on our things at once."

She was running to the door when the old gentleman stopped her.

"Plenty of time. Plenty of time," he said quietly. "Haven't you yet learnt that 'time' is as 'magic' as most other things? What have you two been talking about?"

The children glanced at one another.

"I was telling her all about it," said Rachel. "About the Pyramid, you know, and Babylon, and the statue at Rhodes. I wouldn't have told anyone else, but when I found that she was a 'seven' girl too——"

"But before that?" interrupted Mr. Sheston, settling himself comfortably into an arm-chair.

"We were talking about Diana," said the other Diana. "It's my name, and Rachel had been reading about her in the Bible. And my father painted a picture of her, so she was asking me about it."

"Well," returned Mr. Sheston, "let's go on talking about Diana, because there's a great deal to say. There was a famous temple built for her once upon a time, wasn't there? Where was it?"

"At Ephesus," said Rachel promptly.

"And where is Ephesus?"

"In Asia Minor," answered Rachel again. "By the sea. Not so very far from Rhodes," she added, with a meaning glance.

Mr. Sheston got up, and to the children's surprise, altered the position of his arm-chair till it faced the window. Then he fetched two other chairs, and placed one on either side of his own seat. This done, he took from his coat pocket a leather case, and out of the case drew a photograph. Then he pointed to the two small chairs on either side of the big one.

"Sit down, one on each side of me," he said.

When the children, too interested and puzzled to ask questions, had done as he directed, he held the picture in such a position that both of them could see what it represented.

"Is it the temple of Diana?" ventured Rachel as she glanced at the photograph of a huge building.

"Well, not the picture of the temple itself, because that has ceased to exist, and lies buried under ruins. But it's a picture of what scholars think the temple must have been like when it was standing. . . . And they're not very far out," he added. But this he murmured as though to himself, as he again rose and walked towards the window. Rachel and Diana watched him breathlessly while he propped the photograph against the rim of one of the glass panes. After this had been successfully accomplished, he returned to his seat, and looking from one little girl to the other, said, "Stand up. Close your eyes. Bow seven times in the direction of the picture."

The children exchanged glances before they obeyed.

"Open your eyes." These were the next words—and they were necessary, for till they were spoken, both of them felt all at once so drowsy that they had no wish to raise their eyelids.

At the command, however, four eyes flew open in eager expectation—of what, their owners scarcely knew. The scene they actually beheld was surprising enough to force a little scream of astonishment from both of them

—even though Rachel, who had been through "adventures" before, guessed at fresh wonders to follow.

The square-paned window, with its prospect of a road along which omnibuses, carts and cabs travelled, and people went to and fro, had vanished. They were looking into the open air.

A mist like a shimmering white veil obscured everything but the sky, which was intensely blue, and though the children strained their eyes, they could discern nothing beyond, except, perhaps, something that might, or might not, be trees. They were just vague shapes behind the soft wall of mist.

"You shall see more than this in a moment."

Mr. Sheston's voice was close to them, but as Rachel and Diana turned their heads to look at him they found that neither he nor anything within the room was visible. It was as though they sat in a darkened theatre looking out upon a stage. "And the curtain hasn't gone up properly yet," thought Rachel, full of tremulous anticipation.

"I'll tell you why the curtain hasn't gone up yet," Mr. Sheston's voice continued, and Rachel gave a little jump of surprise—for she had not spoken her thought aloud. Oh, certainly, as Salome in Babylon had said, Sheshà was "the greatest of all magicians!"

"You will understand presently how Diana's temple at Ephesus began," Mr. Sheston went on. "What I am going to tell you now is *legend*—that is to say, something that has been repeated from father to son for a great many years, always altered a little in the telling, so that though there may be, and probably is, some truth in the story, we can't say how much is true and how much false. Well, the *legend* part of the story, you see, is rather like the mist full of vague shapes which you're looking at now. I'm going to *tell* you the legend part—but, directly we come to what we really *know*, the curtain will go up.

"Once upon a time, then, in the country we now call Asia Minor, the women were taught (or perhaps taught themselves) to do all the hard and all the fierce work generally done by men.

The little girls learnt to hurl spears called javelins, and to shoot with bow and arrows, and when they grew up were brave fighters. They also tilled the ground, and gathered the harvest, and built houses, and in fact did everything of that sort as well as men. They were called Amazons, and even great men-warriors found them powerful enemies. According to the old story it was they—these Amazons—who founded the city of Ephesus. That is, they were the first people to cultivate the land and to build houses where the magnificent city of Ephesus afterwards stood. It was these strange and wonderful women who first worshipped Diana in the woods and groves near the dwelling-places they had built. And it was quite natural they should worship the sort of goddess they imagined, for all wild life was her kingdom. So the Amazons, being themselves huntresses and fighters, loved and reverenced her. Forest creatures like the deer and wild boars belonged to her as the goddess of hunting, and she was also the protectress of all young human creatures—girls as well as boys. Thus, even in times so far away that there is no real history about them, there were altars where Diana was worshipped, and, legend tells us, the first altars set up in her honour were in, or near, the city of Ephesus, founded by the Amazons. At first these were very simple altars, for neither men—nor even women—had yet learnt to build temples.

"In a moment the mist-curtain will go up, and you shall see the sort of altar that once stood, where, afterwards, temples were built, and at last that most splendid one of all, which was called a Wonder of the World." . . . Mr. Sheston paused.

"We have done with legend now," he went on after a moment, "and all you will see is what has actually happened in the past."

Neither of the children spoke, but they watched in breathless suspense to see the curtain of mist shake and begin slowly to dissolve. First, tall pointed trees began to prick through the fog, then a glimpse of blue sky became visible. Next there was a gleam of sunshine on low white roofs, and at last, clear and distinct, a lovely country lay spread out before their eyes. They seemed to be looking at it as one might sit on a terrace over-

A LITTLE BOY WALKED IN FRONT OF THE PROCESSION

hanging a wide view, yet close enough to the nearer trees as almost to be able to touch them. Warm air in gentle puffs flowed towards them, and the sun was hot upon their faces and hands.

They saw in the distance a cluster of simple houses between trees, which Rachel guessed rightly to be the earliest city of Ephesus. Beyond these houses, lay the deeply blue sea, stretching away, away towards the distant shores of Greece opposite, with here and there a rocky island set in the blue. The land between the sea and the point nearest to them, was all hill and dale—the hills covered with stiff cypress trees like dark torches against the sky, mingled with graceful smaller and lighter trees. But just in front, and quite close, there was an open glade, and in the midst of it an altar made of piled-up stones. The altar was overshadowed by a big tree, and hanging from the lowest branch the children could see a little figure carved very roughly in wood.

Just as they noticed this, the sound of faint music—so faint, so remote that they could only hear it because of the absolute stillness, made them look quickly to the left of the altar. There, at a little distance, between the trees they saw approaching a company of women and children. The smaller children were almost naked, and their tiny bodies showed white against the dark background of the wood. The women wore short tunics with strips of leather bound in a criss-cross fashion round their bare legs. A little boy, with nothing but the skin of some wild animal hanging from his shoulders, walked in front of the procession, proudly blowing into a small pipe made of a hollow reed. The other children also had reed-pipes in their hands, and most of them carried armfuls of poppies. They crossed the glade and gathered in front of the altar upon which the women as well as the children began to scatter the poppies.

For a long minute Rachel and Diana watched the little scene, scarcely daring to breathe, in case it should vanish before their eyes. Then it *did* vanish! Blue sea, blue sky, hills and valleys, the small town in the distance, the glade with its altar, the group of people about it with their flowers, were all swallowed up in the white mist.

The children, spellbound and silent, while the beautiful scene lasted, now found their tongues loosened.

"Oh, what a *darling* little boy—the one with the fur over his shoulders," exclaimed Diana. "Oh, how lovely the sea looked, and the blue sky, and the woods!" cried Rachel, excitedly. "And didn't the children look pretty bringing their flowers? But they were all *poppies*. Why did they all bring poppies?"

"Because the poppy was the flower sacred to Diana. Nearly all the gods and goddesses of Greece and the Greek colonies had flowers, as well as animals that were specially theirs. And poppies belonged to the goddess Diana. But now, if you want to see anything more, you mustn't speak again."

The children subsided at once into silence, and Mr. Sheston went on talking.

"You noticed the little naked boy who led the procession to the altar in the glade? Keep him in mind, for it was *he* who built the first real temple to Diana. Listen, and I will tell you all I know about him.

"He was called Dinocrates, and his home was in Ephesus (you saw the town in the distance, a mile or two from the glade). At the time when Dinocrates was young, the city was small, the wild country stretched up close to its walls, and the boy lived nearly all day long in the open air.

"His father taught him to hunt, and he learnt so quickly to hurl the javelin and to shoot with bow and arrows, that everyone said he was specially favoured by Diana. The belief that the goddess was watching over him made Dinocrates, even as a tiny boy, very happy, and filled him with courage so that he was always successful in the chase, and even grown-up men marvelled at his wonderful skill. It was so well-known that he was a child greatly loved by Diana that whenever there was a festival in her honour, Dinocrates was always chosen to lead the procession, and to be the first to place his offerings of poppies on her altar. And later, when he was a little older, he was allowed to sacrifice in her honour an animal he had killed in the chase. So the boy grew up with a great love and reverence for Diana, and a longing to

serve her in some special way that would shew his gratitude for her protection. He soon grew dissatisfied with the altar of stones, and the rough image on the trunk of her sacred tree, and in secret dreamt of some dwelling worthy of the goddess, which should *last,* and not be liable to destruction like the loosely built altar and the image exposed to the air.

"As time went on, he found that skill in hunting was not his only gift. He liked to plan houses, and he soon began to plan better ones than had ever been built before. By the time he was a man, he was the most famous architect in Ephesus, and many new buildings in the city began to rise, designed by him. But the dream of his life was to build a dwelling-place for his special goddess on the very spot where as a child, with other children, he had worshipped her out of doors under the sacred tree.

"It must be a real temple, and a temple different from, and better in every way than any of the attempts yet made by other men to fashion dwelling-places for the gods. So he worked and thought and imagined, and at last a little marble building, supported by pillars different from any other pillars yet designed, actually covered the spot of the original altar.

"The day his temple was finished was the happiest day of his life. There was a great festival, and from the city, crowds of people had come to worship Diana for the first time under a roof, and to gaze at the building itself. Small and simple, it was yet the most wonderful they had ever seen, with its columns of an entirely new shape, and its marble porch. And everyone was loud in the praise of its architect.

"That night, Dinocrates was too happy to sleep. He lay thinking of the temple which had been his life work, till suddenly a great desire to see it again swept over him. So he got up, dressed, and began to walk quickly in its direction. In half an hour he reached the glade in the heart of which stood the temple, and before long he saw it gleaming through the encircling trees. Dinocrates stopped short in delight at the beauty of the scene. There was a full moon, and its silver light poured down upon the

little white building and made it dazzling to behold. Graceful shadows from the trees trembled upon its roof, and lay in long bars across the grass, and in the deep silence he could hear his

heart beating. All at once, another sound made him start—the sound of a horn coming from far away, very faint and sweet! And then, scarcely trusting his eyes, he saw in the distance through

the misty avenues of trees, white forms moving. They came nearer, rushing over the grass as though blown softly by an invisible wind, and through the silvery haze he caught a glimpse of white arms, and beautiful faces, and of one face more lovely than the rest, with cloudy hair in which something in shape like a crescent moon, sparkled and shone.

"For a second he saw the forms of beautiful women sweeping up the steps towards the door of the temple, and then the vision disappeared. There was only the moonlight on the grass, and the shadows, and silence.

"'The goddess herself takes possession of her temple,' thought Dinocrates. 'And mortals cannot see the gods and live.'

"He felt so happy, and yet so tired, that he sank down before the temple to rest, and the glade was all full of sunshine before the people who had come to look for him found him lying there, and saw that he was dead. . . ."

"Oh," whispered Diana after a moment, "that's an awfully sad story."

"No," said Rachel's voice on the other side of Mr. Sheston's arm-chair. "Not really. Because he came back again. In another life, you know. You'll see in a minute. She *will* see him again, won't she?" In the darkness Rachel turned towards Mr. Sheston.

"The story isn't finished yet," he replied. "Let me go on with it.

"Dinocrates died in *that* life, as Rachel says, and hundreds of years passed. That first temple with the columns of a new shape was at last destroyed by fire, and a new temple took its place, much larger, much more splendid, as you will see in a moment. But the architect who planned the second building copied those pillars invented by Dinocrates, so though his temple had been destroyed, his work you understand, in a way, went on. Now you are going to see that *second* temple, still on the same place or *site*, as it is called, of the first altar in the glade. And you shall see Dinocrates also—again as a little boy. Before you see him, however, I may tell you that he doesn't remember anything about

himself or his life many years before. Remember that hundreds of years have passed between the life-time of those simple people you have just seen and the people you are going to see now. Even *they* lived six hundred years before the birth of Christ. But, as you will discover, they had already learnt to make wonderful buildings.

"Shut your eyes again. Bow seven times—and many years will have gone by."

The white mist was again dissolving when the children opened their eyes and looked eagerly to see what changes had taken place during the time that had magically flown.

Unaltered were the blue sky and the blue sea; unaltered the hills, unaltered many of the woods, though some of them had been cut down and houses and gardens had taken their place. The little white town in the distance, however, had grown into a large city, whose houses were now big and imposing. But the greatest change of all had taken place in what was once the glade and then (though they had not actually seen it) the first small temple.

A white marble building, covering a great stretch of ground, now rose in front of the children—a beautiful temple with arcades of lofty pillars wonderfully carved, and thronging upon the steps leading to the wide open doors was a multitude of people. They were gracefully clothed—the men in tunics, with long cloaks drooping from their shoulders, the women in robes falling in folds to their sandalled feet.

But the attention of Rachel and Diana was at once directed towards a group for whom everyone on the steps of the temple made way.

A little boy dressed in a short white tunic, his silky hair falling on either side of his face, walked at the head of a procession towards the temple gates. Behind him, richly dressed, followed his parents, and a train of attendants and slaves.

He was evidently the son of some great nobleman, and, as he passed, the crowd pressed forward, and men and women looked over one another's shoulders for a glimpse of the pretty child who walked so composedly alone. And then the temple, brilliant in

the sunshine, the crowd on its steps, the blue sky and the blue sea in the distance, disappeared in a flash. But even before the watching children could utter a cry of disappointment, they found themselves, to their amazement and delight, actually *inside* the building, and quite close to an altar before which stood the little boy and his parents. The sound of chanting voices echoed through the temple, on the marble floor of which the sunshine fell. Sweet scents floated in the air from burning incense, and presently a priest, dressed in a rich robe, came from the altar, followed by attendant priests.

One of these approached the boy, and with a pair of curiously shaped shears, cut off his beautiful silky hair, letting it fall on to a silver platter, held by a priestess. Lifting the platter aloft in both hands the priestess moved slowly to the altar, upon which she placed it, and then all the great company in the temple bowed themselves to the ground and worshipped. The little boy—now with close-cropped hair, and evidently proud and satisfied—was being led back towards the entrance door, when all at once he stopped and gazed about him as though he recognized something, and could scarcely believe his eyes.

Diana and Rachel, who followed him, saw him point eagerly

to a row of pillars, and then turn to his parents saying something at which they smiled.

One second they saw his dark puzzled eyes—the next they themselves were out of the temple and seated as before, one on either side of Mr. Sheston.

The white mist blotted out everything in front of the window.

"That was Dinocrates. He had come back after hundreds of years, hadn't he?" cried Rachel.

"Oh, do explain about him," begged Diana. "Why did he point to the columns like that? Why did he have his hair cut off? What is he going to do now?"

Mr. Sheston laughed softly. "I'll take one question at a time," he began.

But it was Rachel who answered the first question after all.

"I know, I know," she exclaimed. "When he looked at the pillars he was sort of *remembering*, wasn't he? Remembering that a long time ago he made something like them."

"Yes, that's a good guess. He was. He felt that somehow or other he was as you say, 'mixed up' with that temple."

"And about his hair?" enquired Diana.

"Well, that was just a ceremony, meaning that he was dedicated to, or put under the special protection of the goddess. Boys at a certain age had their hair cut off and offered to Diana in the temple to show that they were her worshippers. And in the case of Dinocrates this was especially true, for he became, perhaps, the most celebrated of the worshippers of Diana."

"Now let me go on with the story.

"Again, as in the life he had lived about three hundred years before, he became, when he grew up, a most famous architect, and again, strangely enough, he built another temple to Diana. The temple you have just seen, famous throughout the world for its beauty, after standing about three hundred years, was set on fire one night by a madman, and burnt to the ground; just as the still earlier temple had been burnt.

"Two memorable things indeed happened on that night, for while the fire was raging in the temple just outside Ephesus, a

baby was born, who lived to be the greatest conqueror in the world. His name was Alexander the Great—and Rachel has already heard something about him.

"But to return to the story. So great was the grief and horror of the people of Ephesus at the loss of their temple that they at once determined to set about another and still more magnificent one, greater and more splendid than any other in existence. And of this last temple—which became one of the Seven Wonders of the World—Dinocrates was appointed to be the architect.

"Now you might easily think that Dinocrates ought to have been the happiest man in the world to be allowed to build just the way he pleased, and with enormous riches at his disposal, a temple that should be worthy of the goddess he worshipped—the lovely Diana, the moonlight queen of the chase, the friend of children. And certainly, if *this* had been the Diana for whom he worked, he would have been happy indeed. But what kind of image do you think was to stand in the midst of the magnificent temple when at last it should be built? No statue of the graceful Diana *he* knew, with her short tunic blowing back in the breeze, and the crescent moon on her white forehead. The Diana now worshipped by the Ephesians was nothing but a monstrous black idol, scarcely like a woman at all! She was an enormous figure carved in ebony, with great towers upon her head, and a body hideously and grotesquely shaped!

"Hundreds and hundreds of years, you see, had passed since the true, lovely Diana had been worshipped under the trees or in early temples, and people had forgotten her—or rather they had perhaps confused the idea of her in their minds with other quite different goddesses belonging to Egypt. In any case, though they still kept her name, *this* was the Diana now adored by the Ephesians; this gigantic hideous idol which the people believed had fallen from heaven, sent down to them by Jupiter, the chief of all the gods! This ugly idol was the precious figure saved from the fire, for which Dinocrates was asked to build the most splendid temple in the world!

"Well, he built it. But all the time he was planning its long

aisles of columns, its splendid entrance gates, its pavements, and lovely walls, it was of the long-ago, lovely Diana he was thinking, not of the hideous idol which had taken her place. And in his heart he built that temple to the Diana he had once known and loved, and could not imagine how he came to remember. Never, of course, did he speak of this strange memory, nor of his hatred for the hideous idol. He would never have dared to do so, for fear of what might happen to him if anyone knew how he hated and despised the image held sacred by the Ephesians.

"So he worked and planned, not for the honour of 'Diana of the Ephesians' but for the sake of a lovely memory, or dream perhaps, of something worth all his toil. And at last this Wonder of the World was finished. Kings with gifts of gold had helped to build it. The greatest king of all, Alexander the Great, had offered to spend his wealth upon it if only his name might be written on the building to last for ever. The greatest sculptors in Greece, and the greatest painters, had made statues and painted pictures to adorn the temple which covered the very same spot where once had stood the rough altar under the tree. But now the great building and numberless smaller ones connected with it, stretched over acres and acres of land beyond the little glade, and thousands of people belonging to the temple lived close to its walls. Priests, priestesses, men who composed hymns and chants to be sung in honour of the great idol, people who made copies of her shrine in silver (like the Demetrius in the Bible) all dwelt in the shadow of the huge temple of which in a moment you shall have a glimpse.

"But I will first finish the story of Dinocrates.

"After the temple was finished, he went on to fresh work, and became more and more famous as an architect.

But better than all the other buildings he planned, he loved the temple which in his heart he had dedicated to a lovely rather than to an ugly, cruel goddess. More and more he grudged her image its proud place in the midst of so much beauty, and longed for the rightful goddess who should have been there.

"At last, when he was quite an old man, he returned to

Ephesus, which for many years he had not seen, and took a house in the city. There for some months he lived, often visiting the temple and thinking of days long past.

"One night Dinocrates could not sleep. His house was in the city itself, close to the sea, and from his bed he could look out upon the long pathway of moonlight that stretched across the quiet water far away to the horizon. As he lay thinking and dreaming, it seemed to him that a shining figure was floating close above the moon-path on the sea, and coming swiftly towards him. He just caught a glimpse of the waving robe, of white feet, of cloudy hair, when such a sudden drowsiness came over his senses, that he was compelled to close his eyes. When he opened them again—how long afterwards he could not tell—the moonlight was still flooding his room. He glanced eagerly at the path on the sea, but to his disappointment it was empty of everything but silvery sheen.

"What was it he had seen? Or was it nothing but an idle fancy before sleep? Dinocrates was coming to believe this true, when all at once his eyes lighted upon something on the coping of the terrace which lay before his window. In a moment he was out upon the terrace, bending over such a lovely little statue as he —who had seen the most famous sculpture in the world—had never before beheld

"And there—there at last was the goddess of his dreams—the true Diana with her wind-blown kirtle, her bow, and the crescent moon above her forehead!

"Dinocrates did not ask himself how the statue came there. His first and only thought was to take it straight to the temple where by every feeling in his heart it belonged.

"Wrapping his cloak round him, and hiding tenderly within its folds the statue, which was small enough to lift in his arms, he stole out of the house, and began to walk from the city towards the temple. Just so—(though he had no memory of it)—three hundred years and more ago, he had walked in the night to another temple, also his work, dedicated then to the *true* Diana. As though moving in a dream, he reached the outermost courtyard of the

new temple, and saw in the moonlight the gigantic building and the acres of colonnades and avenues of statues around it.

"Entering by a little door known only to himself, he stood at last in the still more wonderful interior of the temple, shining and glowing with marbles white and pink and green-veined, gorgeous with jewel-covered altars, above which sculptured columns soared towards ceilings painted in scarlet, gold and blue. A glorious place! A fit shrine indeed for the goddess whose image he hid so carefully—yet there in the midst, black and loathsome behind the pyramid of lamps, burning before her, towered the monstrous statue called Diana!

"All at once Dinocrates was filled with rage. Was it for this terrible creature he had built a temple that was one of the Wonders of the World? No, a thousand times no! The likeness of the goddess *he* worshipped was the lovely little statue hidden in the folds of his cloak.

"He longed to overthrow the hideous black figure which stood in her rightful place. Yet he knew that to be impossible. It would take the strength of many men to throw down an idol so huge and massive. Suddenly an idea came. He could not shatter, but he might *burn* the image! With this thought, he ran towards the mass of lights in front of it, scattering and upsetting them right and left at the feet of the wooden figure. Behind it, supported on golden pillars, there was a gallery, and, without a second's pause, Dinocrates rushed like a boy up the marble stairs that led to it, and, standing now high above the head of the figure, he snatched the little white statue from his cloak, and held it aloft.

"'*This* is Diana of the Ephesians!' he cried aloud, and his voice echoed and re-echoed through the aisles and colonnades of the temple. Before the last sound of it died away, a terrific clap of thunder shook the temple. Frightened voices were heard on every side, and suddenly, from every direction, priests in gorgeous robes came rushing towards the idol. Dinocrates caught one glimpse of them as they snatched the burning lamps from the feet of the figure, and then everything went dark.

"In another moment, how he could not tell, he found himself

'THIS IS DIANA OF THE EPHESIANS'

in the open air, listening to a murmur which sounded like the soft rustling of leaves overhead. Slowly he opened his eyes, and looked round him in amazement. The great temple had vanished. He was lying under trees in a little glade, and there before him stood a simple altar of stones piled together, and behind it, in the hollow of a tree, he saw a little figure roughly carved. And then, with a cry of wonder, he *remembered*.

"This was the first altar to Diana, and here, as a tiny boy, he had laid poppies upon it! Scarcely had he seized that memory, when the altar melted away before his eyes, and out of the mist round the place where it had stood emerged a small temple. He remembered that, too. In another life he had planned it, and seen it built. He remembered the columns he had invented—those pillars of a new shape called later the *Ionic* columns. For a moment the temple stood there in the glade, gleaming in moonlight, and then *it* too disappeared. . . . In its place, rising out of the earthlike smoke which gradually took shape, was formed at last another, this time a mighty temple, covering the whole of what had once been the glade. He had built this one, also—in yet another life—hundreds of years later! And, as he gazed at its rows of shining columns, he saw that they were like the columns of the first small temple. To the building now before him—again hundreds of years later—he had come back as a little boy on the day when his hair was cut off by the priest. How well he recalled it! How well he remembered looking at the pillars with some faint memory stirring in his mind, yet with no idea that long, long before he had built them. . . .

"He had come now to his present lifetime. This was the temple that was burnt down while he was quite a young man. In another moment what he expected happened. The building before him vanished, and magically, in its place, stood the new one, the last work of his hands. . . . Now at last he understood how, for hundreds of years, in many different lives and with long intervals between them, he had been making temples for Diana—for the true, beautiful Diana. And her worship and honour had been stolen from her by the hideous black monster now enthroned

in this last and most magnificent temple! . . . Dinocrates was full of misery at the thought, and full also of confusion about what had recently happened. Had he really tried to set fire to the false goddess? Had he really held up the statue of the true one? What was real in all that was happening to him, and what was not? He felt wretched and afraid. Was he mad, or dreaming?

"Such a heavy drowsiness came over him that he was obliged to close his eyes, and sink down upon one of the marble benches in the outer courtyard of the temple where now he found himself standing.

"And then, though he could not lift his tired eyelids, he knew that some wonderful presence was near him. Sweet scents were in the air; faintly from far away he heard the music of a horn, and then a beautiful voice spoke close to his ear:

"'Fear not, Dinocrates,' he heard, 'for thou hast ever been a worshipper of all the truth and beauty thou hast known. Thou hast striven to place me in a seat of honour, and thy work has not been in vain. The day will come when another god shall reign in that last temple, the work of thy hands—a merciful god who shall triumph over the false Diana worshipped by the Ephesians. And I, too, the Diana thou hast adored, shall be no more a goddess worshipped by men. But the thoughts I have given to men shall remain, and the beauty thou hast seen in me shall remain also. And because thou hast been my faithful worshipper I will give thee, as I have given thee once before, a happy passing from this to another life.'

"The voice ceased, and, smiling with perfect happiness, Dinocrates gave a long sigh, and then lay still.

"His friends, finding him next morning in his bed by the open window, thought he was asleep, and it was a long time before they knew he would not wake again.

"'His last dreams were happy ones,' they said as they gathered round him, 'for, see, he smiles as though in great content.'"

Rachel and Diana both together gave a little sigh.

"Then he didn't *really* try to burn the black image?" asked Rachel. "He was really in his own room all the time?"

"I don't know," said Mr. Sheston, slowly. "It was such a magic night that I scarcely know what was '*real*,' as you say, and what was dream."

"Oh, can't we see the temple just once more," begged Diana. "It will be even more lovely to see it, now we know all about Dinocrates!"

"You shall see it again. And, when you see it, remember what the voice said to Dinocrates about the new merciful God. Your Bible tells you the story of St. Paul, who, three hundred years after the death of Dinocrates, went to Ephesus, and, by preaching the new religion of Christianity, caused that great tumult when all the people shouted: '*Great is Diana of the Ephesians.*' Well, not long afterwards, in the temple which St. Paul had first seen as a heathen place of worship—but you shall see."

The children eagerly turned to the place where the window had once been. There, in the glaring eastern sunshine, stood the temple once more, and through its wide open doors they caught a glimpse of the high altar. But now a great crucifix stood above it, and low at its feet, overturned, lay the ebony image of Diana of the Ephesians!

In a flash the vision was gone, blotted out by the white mist, and Mr. Sheston spoke again:

"Three hundred years after Dinocrates passed away, Ephesus had become a Christian city, you see. . . . Again many years pass. Ephesus now belongs to Rome, the mistress of the world. And the temple still stands. Then Rome grows weak, and a barbarous nation, the Goths, attack her possessions. You shall see how they treated one of the Seven Wonders of the World nearly three hundred years after St. Paul was in Ephesus. Look once more."

Under the blue sky, in ruins, scattered far and wide, with here and there a column or a fragment of wall standing, lay the mighty temple. All about and around it swarmed wild-looking men, clothed in uncouth garments, with long hair and many of them with red beards. They were seeking for gold and silver among the ruins, fighting among themselves like wild beasts for the treasures of the once beautiful temple they had destroyed. Just for a second the children saw them. Then they, too, were gone.

"One more glimpse, and the story is told," said Mr. Sheston's quiet voice.

The mist that had gathered dissolved once again. There was the blue sky, there the sea—though it looked further away than in the days when Ephesus was great. But where was Ephesus now? Not a trace of the city remained. Where once it had stood, the children saw in the distance the few low scattered houses of a small village. Not a trace, not even the *ruins* of the great temple of Diana could they see. Instead, mounds of earth, great pits and long cuttings in the soil, where workmen were digging, was all that stretched in front of them.

"This is Ephesus as it looks to-day," Mr. Sheston was saying.

He pointed to the group of small flat-roofed houses in the distance.

"That Turkish village covers the proud city where St. Paul walked, and where, in the open-air theatre, the people shouted *Great is Diana of the Ephesians!* The mouth of the river now choked with mud has pushed back the sea. Here in front of you, where the temple stood, men of to-day are digging to find fragments of its pillars and pavements to send to the British Museum."

As he spoke the last word, the scene wavered before the eyes

of the children, and through it came the glimmering shape of the schoolroom window. In another second they sat closed in by four walls, and the clock on the mantelpiece pointed to half-past three.

"Why—why—it was half-past three when you came in," stammered Rachel. "The clock must have stoppped."

"I think not," said Mr. Sheston, smiling quietly. "We shall have plenty of time for the Museum—if you still want to go."

Rachel and Diana exchanged glances which contained all the wonder they felt it was better not to express.

In five minutes, having spoken to Aunt Hester on the way, they were driving through the streets in Mr. Sheston's car, and a very little while afterwards, they entered a hall in the Museum, over the door of which was written *Ephesus Room.*

"Here," said Mr. Sheston in a voice which gave no hint of all the marvellous scenes they had just beheld, "are fragments from two temples built in honour of Diana of the Ephesians. These broken pillars and pieces of carving on the right are from the temple that was burnt down on the night Alexander the Great was born. On the left, are fragments of the latest temple which was still standing when St. Paul was at Ephesus."

Having said this—and, if they hadn't known what they *did* know, it would not have interested the children in the least—he walked on to look at something on one of the walls, leaving Rachel and Diana standing in front of a piece of broken pillar.

"St. Paul may have *touched* this, and seen that boy with wings," whispered Diana, gazing up at the beautiful carving upon it. "Oh, Rachel, hasn't it been perfectly splendid?"

"Do you know," returned Rachel, in an answering whisper, "I'm sure he was once Dinocrates—Mr. Sheston, I mean. He couldn't know so much about him if he *hadn't* been—could he? And he's lived ever and ever so many times. He said so. And he's been heaps of different people. Only, when he's *Mr. Sheston,* you know, we mustn't talk much about him."

Diana nodded gravely. "I thought not. That's why I didn't say anything. . . . We must only talk about just what's here," she added quickly, as she saw their guide coming back to them.

The rest of the time at the Museum passed delightfully. And then, to Rachel's joy, Mr. Sheston took them back to tea at his quaint old house, and afterwards sent them home together in his car.

"It's jolly to be alone. Now we can talk about it," exclaimed Diana, jumping up and down upon the comfortable springy cushions. "Wasn't it exciting and *lovely*? And, somehow, it was all the more exciting in the Museum when he told us all sorts of things that we shouldn't have understood if we hadn't *seen* it all, out of your schoolroom window. It made me quite sure I *had* seen everything from the beginning. Not just dreamt it, you know. But, anyhow, we couldn't have had the *same* dream, could we?"

"It's heavenly that you're a *seven* child too," declared Rachel. "I was getting so tired of having to keep all my adventures a secret because no one would believe me if I told them. And now there's you—and you understand. Oh, Diana, just think how we should have hated going to the British Museum on a holiday if we didn't have these adventures! Aren't you glad we belong to the 'seven' children?"

It was fortunate that Diana lived so near. Her father's house was in fact scarcely five minutes' walk from Aunt Hester, and the two little girls whose acquaintance had begun so wonderfully began to see a great deal of one another.

They had, as you may imagine, much to talk about, and, when they met, the conversation always turned upon the amazing adventure they had lately shared.

"Oh, Rachel, did you notice the tiny little girl with the red hair who walked next to Dinocrates in the glade—when they put the poppies on the altar?" or, "Do you remember the lovely dress the priestess had? The one who carried the silver dish in the temple?"

Questions and exclamations such as these flew between Rachel and Diana, each one reminding the other of something she had noticed particularly, in the magic scenes beheld from the schoolroom window.

They were, of course, very careful to keep their talks strictly private ones, and Aunt Hester sometimes wondered why such quiet reigned when they were alone together. She was however, very glad that Rachel had found a companion, for she had been rather anxious about having her little niece to stay with her for so long a time as seven weeks. "You see, I haven't had anything to do with children for years, and I was afraid she would be very dull here," she told her friends, "but old Mr. Sheston, who

seems to have taken a great fancy to the child, has been a god-send, and now that there's this little Diana as well, I feel I need not trouble about Rachel any longer. I can't imagine how the old man manages to interest children so much in the British Museum," she often added. "When I was her age, though, of course, I don't tell Rachel so, there was nothing I hated more than to be taken to a dull place like a museum. But these two, Rachel and Diana, are always clamouring to go. It's very strange."

It *was*. And even stranger than Aunt Hester thought, as Rachel and Diana could have told her. But of all that made the Museum literally a place of enchantment to the children, she naturally had no idea, nor did she know that *without* "Sheshà" and his magic, they would probably have been as little pleased with museums as she herself at their age.

It was a wet afternoon, and Diana, who had come round to tea with Rachel, sat perched on the corner of the table, her usual seat, while every now and then she cast a quick glance at the door.

"Do you think he'll come?" she asked for the twentieth time. "It's raining so horribly that perhaps he won't." (*He* always meant Mr. Sheston nowadays).

"Oh, I expect he'll drive up in his car soon," said Rachel. "It's seven days since last time, and I've never yet missed seeing him on the seventh day. Somehow or other I'm *sure* we shall have an adventure. Only you never know beforehand how it's going to happen. And it generally happens quite suddenly, and just when you don't expect it."

The afternoon wore on, tea-time came. Still no Mr. Sheston, and at last, when it was almost dark, Diana was obliged to go.

She was almost tearful as she said good-bye.

"It's so awfully disappointing," she wailed. "Perhaps it's all over—all the magic, you know, and we shall never see any lovely things again."

Rachel was just as puzzled, but not quite so hopeless as Diana.

"Anyhow, even if the *magic* part is over, he can go on telling us stories," she observed. "And his stories are splendid. That

one about the Siege of Rhodes, you know. I tried to tell you, but I can't do it properly. Perhaps he'll tell you himself some time or other. I *did* think we should have had at least a *story* to-day," she added, mournfully.

Rachel repeated this remark to herself as she lay in bed several hours later. The rain had ceased, and a full moon shone in a clear sky. She had pulled up her window blind, and the beautiful silvery light came pouring into the room and made her long more than ever for the magic which Diana feared was "all over."

For a long time she lay with wide-open eyes staring out of the window at the radiant sky. And then, all at once—how was it? How could it be?—she found herself looking at something quite different.

What was that strange shape high up above her head? . . . Where was she? What had become of the bed in which a second ago she had been lying? How did it happen that she was standing upright, gazing about her, in what seemed a vast hall filled with moonlight and shadows and dim forms?

She heard a voice—Diana's voice, surely!

"Where are we? I can't understand *anything*. Can you?"

Rubbing her eyes, Rachel looked again. Yes! Diana was beside her. She too was in her nightgown, and they were both standing on the pavement of some huge room which stretched away right and left into darkness. It certainly ought to have been frightening to find oneself all at once in an unknown place surrounded by mysterious shapes, in the middle of the night. But curiously enough, Rachel was not in the least frightened, nor, judging from her voice, was Diana. Both children were deliciously excited, indeed. But of fear there was not in either of them a trace.

"Do you know I believe it's the *Museum*," Rachel whispered. "Only it's a part of it I've never been to before."

"What's that big thing up there?" returned Diana in an answering whisper. "Let's come back a little—we shall see better."

They were standing just under something that looked in the half light like a great block of stone on the top of which there was an object which neither of them could see distinctly.

Taking hands they moved backwards a few steps, and again looked up.

The silver-green moonlight, streaming in from some window high above their heads, fell full upon the face, and part of the body of a marble horse.

The statue aloft upon its pedestal looked very grand and majestic. But, as even in the dim light, the children could see, it was only after all a *fragment* of a statue.

"What a lovely horse. But he's broken," exclaimed Diana, still in a low voice. "Isn't it a pity? There's only his face and a piece of his body left. I wonder how he got broken?"

Before she had finished speaking, Rachel suddenly squeezed her friend's hand with a tight clasp.

"Look! Look!" she whispered, scarcely able to speak for excitement. For the strangest thing was happening. A kind of pearly mist was gathering to form the missing body of the horse, and presently out of the mist, his face, no longer a marble one, but quivering with life, looked out. He shook his head and the metal curb in his mouth rattled as he fixed his great dark liquid eyes upon the children.

"He's coming down," cried Diana, half excited, half afraid.

Quickly she leapt back to make room for him, dragging Rachel with her.

In less than a second, with a bound so rapid that they could scarcely see how he left the pedestal, a graceful, beautiful white horse stood on the pavement before them, gently pawing the ground, and moving his head slowly from side to side.

And then, marvel of marvels, he *spoke*.

"Have no fear, O little ones," they heard, in a tone soft, yet distinct. "I am here at the bidding of your friend, Sheshà—greatest of magicians."

Rachel glanced triumphantly at Diana, as if to say, "I told you so." And the beautiful steed went on:

"For this one night I am your slave. Command me. What is it you wish to know, or to see?"

Diana pinched Rachel's wrist as a sign for her to speak, and after a moment she said timidly:

"We would like to know about *you* first. Why were you on that pedestal? And all broken? Where do you come from?"

"Something of my history, little maidens, you shall hear later. For the present, be content to know that you behold in me a horse as famous as he is beautiful."

This was said very simply, and the children could well believe its truth, for never had they seen such a lovely creature as that now standing before them.

His coat, smooth and soft as ivory satin, gleamed in the moonlight. His limbs were strong, yet formed with perfect grace, and his dark, lovely eyes shone in a face that was at the same time gentle and full of intelligence.

"I don't wonder that someone made a statue of you," exclaimed Diana. "But what a pity it's so broken. How did it get broken?"

"Many things get broken in the course of two thousand years and more, little one. Since I was first carved in marble, much that was beautiful has been destroyed, either by man, by earthquake, by fire, or other calamities."

He sighed and turned his head restlessly as he glanced right and left about the great hall. Rachel and Diana, who till now had been too engrossed by his marvellous and sudden appearance to pay attention to anything else, now followed his gaze, and saw that the hall in which they stood was filled with fragments of buildings, with broken statues, broken columns, stone or marble lions and other wild animals, all more or less damaged.

"Behold!" exclaimed their strange companion, after a moment. With a movement of his head, he indicated something which stood on a massive block near him, and the moonlight was so bright that the children saw the object plainly.

"It's a big wheel!" cried Diana. "What is it?"

"One wheel of the chariot to which my statue was harnessed ages and ages ago!"

"But where? Why? *Do* explain all about it," cried Rachel, eagerly.

"Would you see the monument itself of which these columns, these statues, these poor broken things are but the fragments?"

"Oh, *yes!*" returned the children, both together. They glanced at one another rapturously, for evidently this adventure was to be continued.

"Your wish shall be granted," said the lovely creature. "But first, that you may gaze upon one of the Wonders of the World with greater interest, look round you and behold, here, where you stand, the poor scattered remains of its beauty. . . . Take note of those statues facing you, for defaced, disfigured as they are, they represent a famous king and queen."

The children looked up obediently at two gigantic statues of a man and a woman, both clad in robes beautifully draped, who stood side by side on a great block of stone. Scarcely anything was left of the woman's face, though the head of the man was almost perfect.

"You behold Queen Artemisia and King Mausolus," said their new friend. "Now turn and regard that pillar behind you."

The children looked in the required direction and saw, flooded in moonlight, a tall, beautifully fluted column, to which was attached a piece of broken ceiling.

"That was once part of the monument you shall presently see as it looked in its first beauty," he continued. "Come, mount upon my back. We tarry too long in this narrow place where there is scarce room to move, encumbered as it is by these fragments of the past. Let us away to sunshine and blue sky!"

Very gently and carefully, so that he did not touch any of the objects close to him, the snow-white horse knelt down, and, with a shake of his bridle, invited the little girls to climb on his back.

THEY HAD A GLIMPSE OF THE CITY

They glanced at one another, rather afraid, but Rachel, after a moment's hesitation, went boldly up to him and, holding tight to his mane, scrambled on to his back.

"Come along!" she called to Diana. "It's always all right when Sheshà manages anything, and he's managing this."

Taking courage, Diana followed, and, in a moment, both children were seated.

"Well done!" exclaimed their steed. "Have no fear, little maidens. You are safe. No harm shall befall you."

With the last words he began to rise from the pavement, floating slowly upwards.

"Oh! we shall bump against the ceiling!" began Diana, in alarm.

"No. Look! look!! There isn't any ceiling!" cried Rachel. "It's all melted away, and there are the stars. . . ."

In another second they were out in the open air, seated as comfortably on the back of the white horse as though they were on the schoolroom sofa, and feeling quite as safe. Below them lay the roof of the British Museum, and beyond it, stretching for miles and miles, all the crowded roofs, the spires, the domes and the lights of London. For a moment they had a glimpse of the wonderful city lying silent under the moonlit sky, and then they soared upwards so high that all sight of it was lost.

"We're going awfully fast," whispered Rachel. "Isn't it perfectly lovely?"

And Diana sighed in perfect content. For, indeed, it was beyond all words wonderful to be rushing through soft, warm air under the moon, and to feel the gentle rocking motion of the horse's body under them. Faster and faster they flew through the ocean of air, and the children screamed with delight when now and again their giant shadows were thrown for a second upon a white cloud as they shot past in their flight.

On and on fled their magic steed, moving his limbs in the sea of air as a swimmer moves in water, his beautiful mane streaming like a white mist behind him. . . . Gradually the moonlight faded, and, for a time, only the stars shone in the dark blue sky.

"We're flying over the sea now. I can hear it!" whispered Rachel presently, for they had dropped lower by this time, and a deep murmur and even every now and then the gentle splash of waves could be distinctly heard.

"It's getting light," answered Diana, in a sleepy voice.

There was silence for some time, and perhaps both children fell asleep, for, almost at once as it seemed, instead of a grey gleam of dawn, they saw that the sky was all flushed with rosy light, and everything was now clearly visible.

"Look! Look!! We're quite close to the land!" cried Rachel, pointing to where rocky mountains stood up against the sky. "Oh, Diana, isn't it beautiful?"

By this time they were hovering above a white-roofed city, curving round a beautiful blue bay.

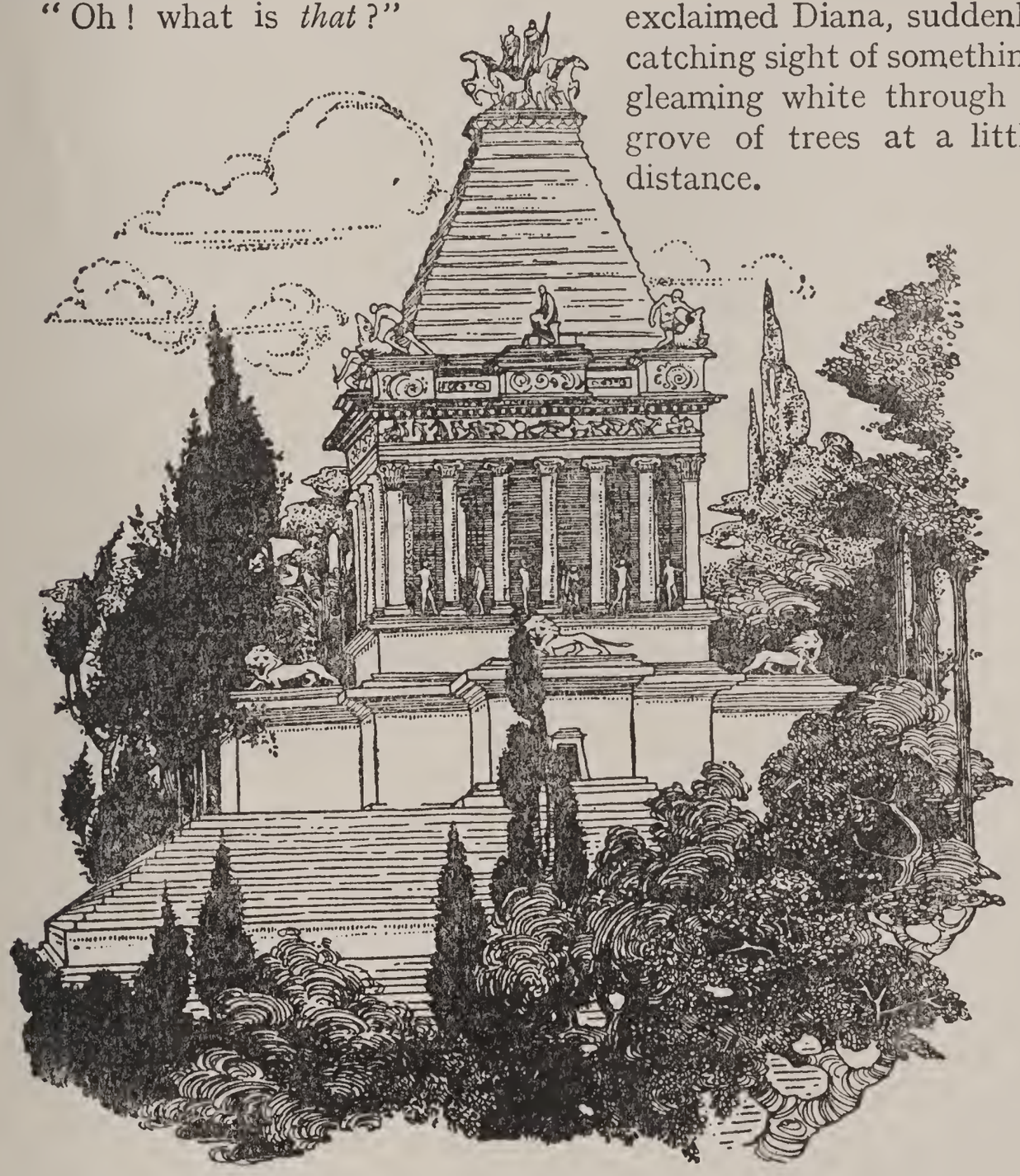
"Where are we?" begged Rachel, leaning forward to speak to their flying steed, who was now moving slowly.

"This land, O child, is Asia Minor, and the part of it you now see was called long ago, when I was young, Caria. The city just below us is Halicarnassus."

"Then the sea is the Mediterranean, I suppose?" said Rachel. "And we are not so far from Rhodes?"

"Yonder is the island of Rhodes," he answered, turning his head in its direction. "You can see it, a dim shape on the horizon — not so very far, as you say, from the city of Halicarnassus."

"Oh! what is *that*?" exclaimed Diana, suddenly catching sight of something gleaming white through a grove of trees at a little distance.



"The very monument I have brought you to behold. A Wonder of the World. The place where, carved in marble, my image

once stood beside the statues of a king and queen. Come, let us approach it."

Turning a little aside from the city itself, the horse dropped gradually lower, and, after just skimming the ground for a moment, allowed his hoofs to touch it, and finally stood motionless in front of a lovely building.

A stately flight of steps, whose balustrade was guarded by marble lions, led up to a square tower, and higher still to a cluster of beautiful columns. Above this was a sort of pyramid, with steps mounting yet again to a chariot of marble in which stood two figures, a man and a woman. The chariot was drawn by magnificent horses, and as the children looked at these, they cried out together, pointing to them, eagerly :

"Why, they're all of them—*you!*" exclaimed Diana. In her excitement she let herself slip easily to the ground. Rachel followed her example, and both stared up at the group of horses on the summit of the building.

"What we saw in the Museum before you turned into a real horse is just one head of you!" cried Rachel. "Then those people in the chariot must be the broken statues that are also in the Museum—I mean before they were broken?" she went on.

The steed bowed his head. "You are now beholding the statues of Queen Artemisia and King Mausolus as they appeared soon after the sculptors had finished their work. There also you see *my* image as it, too, appeared nearly three thousand years ago. Or, rather, my image four times repeated in each of the four horses."

The children were at first silent, for amazement and admiration held them spellbound. The sun was rising, and bathed in its light, the building was more lovely than tongue can tell.

"It's like a tower in a fairy tale. The kind of tower a magician builds, you know!" declared Rachel, at last.

"But what is it for?" added Diana, after a moment.

"It is a tomb, little maid."

"A tomb?" echoed Diana. "All that great big beautiful place only for a tomb?"

"The great Pyramid was a tomb," Rachel told her in an aside, "and that's bigger, you know. Whose tomb is it?" she went on.

"Would you hear the whole story? I am here to tell it, if that should be your wish. Let us then rest in the shade of these cypress trees while you listen."

Their guide lay down and stretched his beautiful body at full length on the soft turf, while the children, with their hands clasped round their knees, sat facing him, eagerly waiting for him to speak.

"I cannot, O little maidens," he began, "relate to you the history of this magnificent tomb without telling you something of my own story, which is in a way bound up with it. Already it must be clear to you that I am no ordinary horse. The time has now arrived when I may reveal my name. Know, then, that I am no other than *Bucephalus,* the famous steed of the greatest conqueror in the world, Alexander the Great.

"I was born in Greece, but when I was still very young, I was sent as a gift to the King of Macedonia, a country bordering upon my native land. As yet, no man had ridden me, and being young and untried, I was so impatient of control that when the king would have mounted upon my back, I reared and plunged, lashing out with my hind legs in a fashion so dangerous and unseemly that no one might approach me.

"Full of anger at my fierce behaviour, the king was ordering me to be sent back whence I came, when his son, the young Prince Alexander, cried out, 'This is a noble horse! Will you lose him for lack of a little skill and courage? Give me leave, my father, to make trial of him.'

"At first the king, afraid for his son's life, refused, but, the entreaties of Alexander at last prevailing, he gave consent for the prince to approach me.

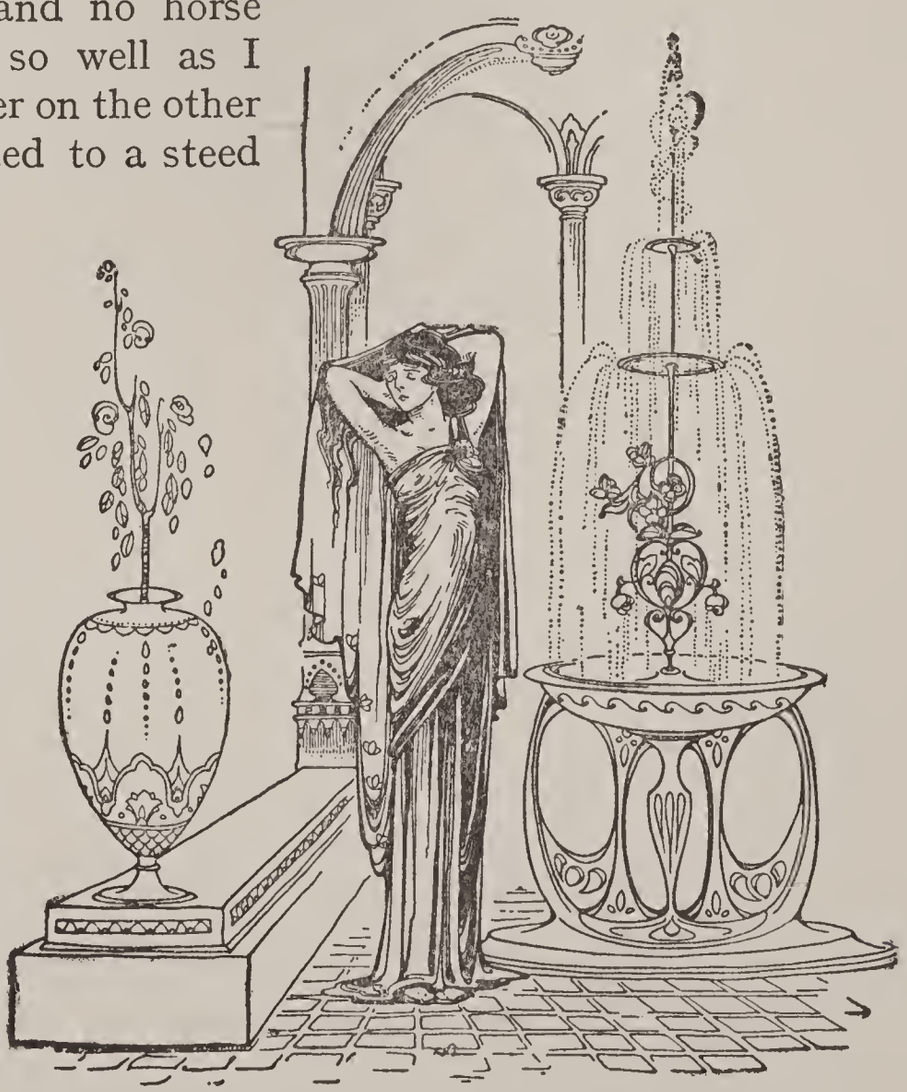
"At once the noble boy drew near, and boldly seizing me by the bridle, turned me about so that my face was to the sun. For he had the wisdom to perceive that what had terrified my foolish young heart was nothing but my own shadow. This, now that the sun was not at my back, I could no longer see, and gradually, as I felt the prince's kind hand patting my neck and stroking my glossy hide, I ceased to tremble. But, even so, such was my folly and youthful pride I would not have allowed him to mount if he had not with great skill taken me by surprise. As it was, before I had time to consider, I felt him already on my back, and, bounding forward in anger, I began to run like the wind. Far from making any endeavour to check my speed, the prince, without touching me with whip or spur, urged me on with ringing shouts of encouragement, and not till I was worn out did he draw rein. By that time I was his slave. His voice, his gentle touch had tamed me, and with delight I accepted him as my master. Never shall I forget how the king and his courtiers who had been struck dumb with fear while I raced like a mad thing, Alexander upon my back, now gathered round, praising us both.

"The king, embracing the prince, exclaimed, as I remember:

'My son, seek a kingdom more worthy of thee, for Macedonia is not sufficient for thy merits!'

"This advice as perhaps I need not remind you, Alexander was not slow to take, for a few years later, when his father died and he became King of Macedonia, he began those conquests which have made him for ever famous. Soon nearly all the world that was then known owned his sway. In all his victories I, Bucephalus, had my share, for I carried him into every battle. No one but my dear master would I allow to mount me, and, in order that he might do this the more easily, it was my custom to kneel down upon my forefeet as soon as he was ready to bestride me—just as some little while ago I knelt down for *you*, little maidens.

"Ah! those were happy days when we went out to conquer, and great was my joy in battle. I felt no fatigue when I carried Alexander into the fight, and no horse ever loved a master so well as I loved mine. No master on the other hand was more devoted to a steed than Alexander to his. What other horse, I pray you, has given his name to a city? Yet of me this may be said, for where at last, worn out in his service, I died, Alexander built a city where he buried me, and called it *Bucephalia*."



The beautiful creature sighed, but a moment later recovered himself.

"You will wonder," he went on,

" when I am coming to the story of the noble tomb before you, and what it has to do either with me or with Alexander. This I will now relate. About the time when Alexander became King of Macedonia, there was a Persian king reigning here in this city of Halicarnassus. His name was Mausolus, and he had a beautiful wife called Artemisia, who loved him devotedly.

" You, O little ones, who live in modern days in a grey city, where people go clothed in sad colours and walk in dingy streets, have no idea (except from your fairy tales) of the manner in which a Persian king and queen kept their court nearly three thousand years ago.

" Ah, the beauty and luxury I have seen in those Persian palaces ! " exclaimed Bucephalus, as though to himself. " The marble courtyards with their springing fountains, the jewelled thrones, the silken robes, men and women alike blazing with precious stones —and over all the glorious blue sky and the splendid sun ! " He sighed again, and for a while seemed lost in thought.

" Those days are gone for ever," he went on at last. " But it was amidst such scenes, in such pomp and luxury as this, that Mausolus and his queen Artemisia dwelt in the city of Halicarnassus. Some years they lived together in great happiness, and then, to the terrible grief of his queen, King Mausolus died. In her despair and misery, Artemisia could think of no other means of distraction than that of building to the memory of her husband so beautiful a tomb that it should be famous throughout the world, and for ever preserve the name of Mausolus.

" She had vast riches, and because she was a learned and enlightened queen, she knew that it was to Greece she must turn to spend her wealth. For in Greece dwelt all the great artists, whether sculptors, architects or poets.

" This tomb raised to the memory of her husband, Mausolus, was to be the Wonder of the World. Not content with one Greek architect, therefore, she employed no less than four to design and beautify the building you see before you, which faces north, south, east and west. Scopas it was who built the eastern side, Leochares the west, Bruxis the north, and Timotheus the south. These

were famous men in my day, and even when they had finished their labour, and even when the tomb of Mausolus was surrounded by colonnades, supported by beautiful pillars, and lined with magnificent statues, the queen was not satisfied. The tomb must be still more wonderful, still more stately. So she sent for Pythios, a great sculptor, and ordered him to erect above the temple-like tomb, a pyramid. On the top of the pyramid he was to place a group in marble which should represent herself and Mausolus, standing side by side, in a chariot drawn by four horses.

"Now Pythios was anxious to find as a model for these horses the most beautiful steed in the world. And where, said everyone, could he find a creature more beautiful than the famous Bucephalus of Alexander?

"So Pythios came to our court and sought of my master permission to make drawings of me in varying attitudes as I reared or ran. This being granted, I became the model for all four of the marble steeds who drew the chariot of King Mausolus and his queen Artemisia. Behold them! For in magic fashion you see them as they appeared long, long ago, when this tomb was first completed. Greatly favoured are you, little children, for other mortals now living must be content to gaze only upon those broken fragments of the tomb, which, in recent days, have been drawn from the earth. Long, long ago, was this magnificent monument destroyed, and were it not for my company and the magic of Sheshà, who has called me to this earth once more, you would be looking upon nothing but ruin and destruction here in this place. See how splendidly white and dazzling appears that noble group against the deep blue of the sky! And then contrast it with the battered figures, the one chariot wheel, the broken horse's head, which is all that now remains. Still more wonderful that such fragments should at last have found their way to your grey city of London—thousands of miles away."

Bucephalus paused once more, wrapped in earnest thought, which the children scarcely dared to disturb, though they were longing to ask questions.

"You will ask," he continued presently, "how I, who at the

time when this tomb was built dwelt far from Halicarnassus, know all that I have related. Let me explain.

"Though Pythios had taken me as a model for those famous horses of his, I never thought to behold them, and when I have completed the story of Queen Artemisia, I will relate how it chanced that I *did* at last look upon them with my own eyes.

"The great tomb, so marvellous, so beautiful that it became one of the Seven Wonders of the World, was at length finished—as you see it. A miracle in marble, with the queen herself and her dearly loved husband standing together to endure as she thought for ever. Her task completed, and with nothing else to live for, the queen pined away, and a year later died. The monument she raised, as you know, is shattered to fragments, but, after all, Artemisia's wish was fulfilled, for the name of her husband, at least in a fashion, yet lives. Ever since her day, every splendid tomb, such as that in which kings or great heroes are buried, has been called a *Mausoleum*. And when people of the present age speak that word, though they may not be aware of it, they are uttering the name of Mausolus, so dear to Artemisia.

"And now to return to my own history.

"Fourteen years after the death of this unhappy queen, I bore my master, Alexander, into yonder city of Halicarnassus, as a conqueror. He had fought and defeated the sovereign then reigning in Caria, and all the inhabitants of this country did him homage. How well I remember the morning he rode out to see with his own eyes this very tomb of which he had heard so much.

"It was a morning such as this. The sun, just as you see it now, had newly risen, and then, as now, the marble pillars, the chariot group, the statues stood out white as sea-foam against a sky, every whit as deep and blue as you behold.

"Alexander stood transfixed with admiration, and I could not refrain from a glance of pride at my own image, four times repeated on the summit of the building.

"'Ah!' thought I, 'when she ordered those marble horses to be carved by the greatest sculptor of her time, little did Queen Artemisia guess that the model from which they were designed

would one day gallop proudly into her city, bearing upon his back the conqueror of her kingdom.' It was a sad and overwhelming reflection, and, as I gazed upwards at the statue of Artemisia herself, I half expected her to descend in wrath from her chariot to punish my insolence. But, after all, it was Alexander, not I, who had taken Halicarnassus, as I made haste to assure myself, and I turned my head to look in the face of my beloved master. He was gazing sadly at the tomb, and I fancied that, conqueror though he was, he thought with sorrow and pity of the unhappy queen. For as generous as brave was my dear master, Alexander the Great."

Quite a long silence followed the last words, and it was a silence which somehow the children had no wish to break, for they both felt a little dreamy and disinclined to speak.

"Presently," thought Rachel, "we'll ask him to let us go up that splendid staircase and get inside the temple where Mausolus is buried. There must be all sorts of lovely things there." But at the moment she felt it was enough just to sit still and gaze at the outside of the tomb, at the burning blue of the sky behind it, at the sparkling bay beyond, about which the flat-roofed white houses of the city clustered.

"It will be awfully interesting to walk about in Halicarnassus," she reflected. "I wonder whether we shall see Queen Artemisia? We *might*. Anything of course could happen. And it's all just as real as—as though it *was* real," she added, at a loss how to put it to herself. It was just when she had made this half-dreamy reflection that she saw the tomb of Mausolus beginning to totter. It swayed for a moment right and left before her eyes—and then was gone. So also was the city. She had a flashing glimpse of mounds of earth, and of a plain scattered over with stones, before Grayson stood putting a can of hot water upon the wash-stand.

"Time to get up, Miss Rachel," she observed, cheerfully.

Never had Rachel so longed to see Diana as now. If Diana

knew nothing about this adventure—then it was only a dream, and that would be too dreadful.

She could scarcely wait till the afternoon, when her friend was to come round to go for a walk with her. One glance, however, at Diana's face when at last she came, reassured her. Their eyes met, and Diana's were sparkling and full of mystery. You may imagine what they talked about in Kensington Gardens that afternoon when they ran on together in front of Miss Moore.

The day after their walk in Kensington Gardens, Diana, full of distress, ran in to see Rachel early in the afternoon.

"What do you think? I have to go to the seaside to-morrow!" she exclaimed, breathlessly. "Mother and Father are going, and they say I'm to go with them, and—"

"But how lovely!" interrupted Rachel. "For *you,* I mean. It will be horrid for *me,*" she added, dejectedly. "Why don't you want to go?"

Diana stared at her. "Don't you understand? I shall be away more than a week, and "—she lowered her voice mysteriously—" the *seventh* day, you know, will come round, and I shan't be here, and I shall miss the chance of an adventure. Oh, I do envy you, Rachel! I'd rather never go to the seaside again than miss all the exciting things that might happen. And you see I can't explain why I don't want to go—so it's all perfectly horrible."

"But you know I don't believe it makes a scrap of difference *where* we are," declared Rachel. "If 'he' wanted us to go to the Museum, or to Eygpt, or to Rhodes, or anywhere, we could go just

the same, whether we were in London or by the sea, or at the North Pole. You remember what everybody says about him." She glanced over her shoulder to make quite certain that they were alone, and went on to quote in a whisper, '*Sheshà, greatest of Magicians.*' Salome said that, when I was in Babylon, and the other night, you remember, Bucephalus said it when he changed into a real horse. And, of course, he *is* the greatest of magicians. He can do anything he likes. I shouldn't worry a bit about going away if I were you. I only wish I had the chance."

Diana's face became radiant.

"I never thought of that!" she exclaimed. "How clever you are, Rachel. Oh, if only you were coming, too, it would be perfectly splendid."

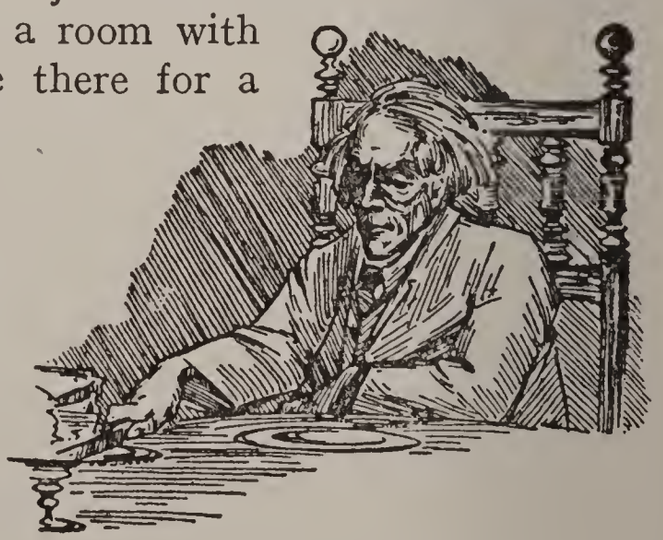
Rachel sighed. "It will be awfully dull without you. But all the same I expect I shall meet you *somewhere or other* in a few days. Seven days, or perhaps nights, from the evening before last, you know!" she went on with a little chuckle of anticipation.

She felt nevertheless so depressed at the thought of losing Diana, even for a short time, that what happened next seemed altogether too good to be true.

"Would you like to go to the seaside with Diana?" enquired Aunt Hester at tea-time.

Rachel's face of joy was such an answer that Aunt Hester laughed.

"Well, I think you may. I've just had a note from the child's mother to say you could share a room with Diana at the hotel. They'll be there for a week. . . . It will do her good to get out of London for a few days," she went on, turning to Miss Moore. "She's a country child, you see, and she's beginning to look a little pale. A breath of sea air won't hurt her."



Rachel could have screamed for delight, and as though things

could not happen too fortunately, just at that moment, Mr. Sheston was announced.

She hadn't seen him for nearly a fortnight, so she would anyhow have been very glad of his arrival, but to-day, his coming seemed specially fortunate as a kind of sign that she had been right in offering consolation to Diana. A few minutes later, indeed, she was even more certain of it.

"It's no use suggesting a visit to your favourite place of amusement," said Aunt Hester, in a quizzical tone when she had welcomed the old gentleman and given him some tea. "Rachel is going to St. Mary's Bay for a week with her little friend, so she'll be far away from such entertainments as museums."

"So shall I," returned Mr. Sheston, helping himself to cake. "Curiously enough *I'm* going to St. Mary's Bay in a day or two for a little change of air."

Rachel really *did* scream for joy at this news, and when, after some eager questioning she discovered that Mr. Sheston was actually going to the very hotel in which Diana's father and mother had taken rooms, she was almost sure that whatever else happened, she and Diana would not miss an "adventure."

It was altogether delightful at St. Mary's Bay. The weather was perfect. Diana's father and mother were, next to her own, Rachel thought, the nicest father and mother in the world, and it was gratifying to find that they very much liked their little daughter's new friend, Mr. Sheston. All day long, she and Rachel were out of doors, scrambling about bare-footed on the rocks, and enjoying themselves tremendously.

At intervals, of course, they discussed their chances of an adventure, and, as the magic seventh day approached, their excitement increased.

"It makes it such fun that he never says anything about the magic between whiles, doesn't it?" Rachel observed on the morning of the day when something might be expected to happen. "He's just like a nice old gentleman, except at 'seven' times. Can't you imagine how people would stare at him if they knew he was Sheshà, and Dinocrates, and Cleon, and ever so many more?"

"And that he can make Alexander's beautiful horse come back again to the world, and fly with us to Halicarnassus!" put in Diana with a laugh of triumph. "They only think he's a dear, clever old gentleman who knows all about things in the British Museum. It's jolly to be us and to know ever so much more about him than just *that!*"

"Don't forget he's promised to take us up the lighthouse this afternoon," remarked Rachel, as they went into the hotel for lunch.

They reminded him of this promise almost before he had taken his place opposite to them at the table, and an arrangement was made to meet on the terrace outside, at three o'clock. "After I've had my nap," said Mr. Sheston, in his character as an old gentleman who took care of himself and could not do without his midday sleep.

Punctually at three o'clock, however, he made his appearance on the terrace, and they all set out to walk to the lighthouse.

It was built at the end of a long spur of rock which jutted out from the bay for quite half a mile, and when at last they reached the strong stone tower, both children thought how lonely was the spot on which it stood.

It was great fun to climb the twisting stone staircase within the lighthouse and to come at last into the

"lantern"—a round room at the top, from which there was a wonderful view of the great expanse of sea now calm and blue as any mountain lake.

"Oh, I should like to live up here!" exclaimed Diana, enthusiastically, when the lighthouse-keeper had explained all about the working of the great shining lamp.

"Ah, it's all very well now, missie," returned the old sailorman, shaking his head. "But you wouldn't like it so much on some of the nights we gets up here in the winter. To look at that there sea now, you'd never think, p'raps, what it's like in the winter when there's a great storm, and the waves come on mountains high, a-dashing all around, with the wind howlin' and shrieking like a lot 'er wild animals, and the spray tossin' right up to them there winders, and beatin' against 'em like mad. And the birds—them sea-gulls flying round the light as they do—gettin' all 'mazed-like and confused, dashin' theirselves against the glass, poor things, an' cryin' most uncanny. . . . It's wild enough up 'ere then, I can tell you. Not altogether comfortable-like either," he added, with a broad smile.

"And it's even worse for the poor sailors in the ships, isn't it?" said Rachel, nodding seawards. "How glad they must be to see your light that keeps them from getting on to the rocks. I should think they feel awfully glad then that lighthouses are invented. How *were* they invented?" she asked, suddenly turning to Mr. Sheston. "I mean who first thought of making a lighthouse?"

Scarcely had she asked the question, when the glass-encircled room, with its huge lantern, was blotted out in darkness. Another second and Rachel felt a fresh wind blowing in her face, and, before she had time to cry out to Diana, Diana herself gave a scream of amazement and delight.

"Rachel! Look—look! What is it? Where are we?" she cried.

For a moment Rachel paid no heed to the second question. She had no idea where she stood. She only knew that she was gazing upon something very strange and wonderful. It was night and quite dark, and she heard the sound of water lapping

close to her feet. But her eyes were fixed upon something that looked like a gigantic lily rising out of the sea, and made visible by *flames*, which at its summit leapt and danced and streamed upwards towards the night sky.

"We're on a *ship*," whispered Diana, excitedly.

And then, for the first time, Rachel realised that she was standing on the deck of a vessel, and that all around her, sailors were moving, busy with ropes and sails as they shouted to one another in a language she did not understand.

The flames darting from the top of the wonderful column lighted up a great track of water between the ship and the coast, which was plainly visible in the red glare of the fire. So also was the ship that sailed over the illuminated sea, and the figures of the sailors on board. They were like no sailors she had ever seen, for they were clothed in a strange fashion, and wore curiously shaped caps.

"There is the first lighthouse," said a well-known voice, and turning together, the children saw standing behind them—Mr. Sheston. Rachel, at any rate, knew it was Mr. Sheston, even though he looked quite different, and wore a tunic with a cloak thrown over his shoulders, for she was accustomed by this time to seeing him in various guises.

"Oh, *do* tell us where we are," she begged. "We're on the sea, of course—but what sea is it? And how far are we back into the Past? And what is your name *this* time?"

The tall dark man laughed.

"Let me take the questions singly. This is the Mediterranean Sea. We are about two thousand five hundred years back into the Past. The land there is the coast of Egypt. And my name you already know, for I am Dinocrates."

"Oh, then it was you who built the Temple of Diana?" asked Rachel.

"And you were the little boy with the leopard skin? And afterwards—hundreds of years afterwards—you built the *first* temple—and the second and third ones too," cried Diana. "Mr. Sheston told us all about you, and——"

But here Diana paused, for she suddenly realised that Dinocrates and Mr. Sheston were one and the same.

Rachel had evidently come to a like conclusion, for all at once she said in a whisper, "I thought so."

There was silence for a moment while both children, rather confused, were considering the strangeness of this. Then Rachel, who was never very long quiet, began again:

"There's a great town behind the tower, isn't there? When the flames blow backwards I can see the houses."

"You behold the city of Alexandria."

"Alexandria?" repeated Diana quickly. "That reminds me of—*last* time. Bucephalus, you know, and Alexander the Great. . . . Has the town anything to do with him?"

"Everything," answered Dinocrates. "He founded it, and gave to it his own name, the name by which men who live in your world of to-day, still call it. But it was I who built it," he added. "That is, you understand, it was I who made the plans for the building of the city."

"And did you build the lighthouse too?" asked Diana.

Dinocrates shook his head.

"Nay, not to me, but to another, do the sailors owe that tower of warning—the tower that has saved many lives."

"Do tell us about it," urged Rachel. "Who first thought of it? I suppose the sort of lights we have now with reflectors and all that, weren't invented when *this* lighthouse was made? But what a good idea to make flames come out at the top instead."

"You shall hear the story of the lighthouse," said Dinocrates, but let us sit at our ease while I relate it."

He pointed to a coil of ropes, and the children, settling themselves close together upon it, found that it made a most comfortable seat.

Dinocrates meanwhile wrapping his cloak about him lay full length upon the deck near them, and turned his face in the direction of the lily-white tower with its crown of leaping flames. For a moment he did not speak, and the children were so impressed by the wild beauty of the scene that they too were silent.

The vessel, as strange to their eyes as were the sailors who

formed its crew, glided slowly and softly over the dark water on which lay a pathway of crimson light. To and fro moved the sailors, sometimes singing, sometimes laughing, sometimes shouting to one another as they went about their work, but paying no heed to their visitors.

The flames from the lighthouse rising and falling revealed a coastline with a fringe of white houses, and on the sea other ships moving in various directions, their sails sometimes lighted up brightly in the red glow of the fire.

Rachel, who had sunk into a sort of happy dream, started when at last their companion spoke.

"Do you remember," he began, "what Bucephalus, that famous horse, has already told you concerning his master, Alexander the Great? How that he set out to conquer the world? Bucephalus has, I know, related to you how his master took the city of Halicarnassus in Asia Minor and visited the tomb of Mausolus, built by the sorrowing Queen Artemisia. That, however, was only the beginning of his victories.

"A little later, when all Asia Minor owned his sway, he turned his thoughts to Egypt and conquered *that* country also. Sailing in his barge up the great river Nile which waters the land, he came at last to where it flows out into the sea—this very sea upon which you are now sailing. But he found no city there, such as by the light of that beacon fire you now behold. Only a few poor huts stood then at the mouth of the great river. 'Here,' thought Alexander, 'is the place for a mighty port, and here a mighty town shall arise. But whom shall I employ to build such a city for me? Who is the greatest architect now living?' Instantly my name was upon his lips. For, only a year before, he had seen the great new temple I had completed at Ephesus, in honour of Diana.

"At once he sent for me, and straight from the building of that temple in Ephesus I came hither. Let me now show you, little maids, what I found where now that lighthouse and that city stand. Rise, and bow with closed eyes seven times in the direction of the shore."

THE PHAROS LIGHTHOUSE

Rachel and Diana needed no second invitation. They leapt to their feet and obeyed.

"Open now your eyes and behold," said Dinocrates.

Again the children did as they were told, and found, scarcely to their surprise now, so accustomed to marvels had they grown, that the night had vanished. It was broad daylight, and the sun streamed down upon a bare rocky island separated by a narrow belt of sea from the mainland. There was no city, no lighthouse, only a few rough huts upon the rocky island round which the sea-gulls circled, uttering sad cries. A mighty river, flowing through miles of flat land, poured its waters into the sea close to the island.

"This," said Dinocrates, when the children had gazed a moment at the scene, "was what I found, when, at the command of Alexander, I came hither to build the city. That bare island in front of the mainland was then, and is still called, the Isle of Pharos."

He waited a moment.

"Close once again your eyes, and wait till I pronounce the magic number," he presently directed.

At the word *seven,* the children looked again, and together uttered a long *Oh!* of astonishment at the change which had taken place. There was the island indeed, but no longer bare and uninhabited. A gleaming bridge joined it on the land side to a city whose temples, open-air theatres, statues and monuments shone white and splendid in the sunshine. The whole, including three sides of the island, was enclosed by a mighty wall with turrets at intervals upon it, and the water space between the island and the city was now a harbour in which ships rode at anchor.

"There stands Alexandria as I built it over two thousand years ago," said Dinocrates, quietly. "And there, bearing the same name, the name of Alexander the Great, it stands to-day. English sailors anchor their ships in its port, many English people live there, and it has heard the guns of the Great War that is just over."

"Not like Babylon, or Ephesus—all in ruins," murmured Rachel. Alexandria has *lasted.*"

"It has lasted—but it no longer looks as you see it here. Time

and change! Time and change!" murmured Dinocrates, softly. "It is a modern city now, and most of what *I* built is ruins beneath its present squares and houses."

"But there's no lighthouse—even as we see the place now," exclaimed Diana.

"There was no lighthouse even in my time, little child. It was not till I had been dead twenty years and more that the beacon tower was built."

Rachel glanced at him. "After you had—gone on? Gone into another life, you mean?" she said.

Dinocrates smiled kindly at her.

"That is a better way of saying the same thing, little maid," he agreed.

"But you promised you would tell us about the lighthouse," began Diana, after a moment. "*Do* tell us, please," she urged.

Again Dinocrates smiled.

"I am coming to it, impatient one," he began, when Rachel interrupted.

"I want to know all sorts of other things first," she declared. "Did Alexander live here after the town was built?"

"Nay, and he never saw more of the city than its beginning. He was marching always from country to country, conquering the world, and had no time to return to the place which bears his name. Though, after all, I am wrong. He *did* come back. But when he came, Death, not he, was the conqueror. He died in Babylon, but they brought him hither, to the city built at his command, and here he was buried."

"Was his lovely horse dead by that time?" asked Diana. "I hope so. Because he would have missed his master."

"Why, yes," put in Rachel. "Don't you remember that Alexander buried him and named a town after him?"

"Of course! How silly of me . . ." Diana turned expectantly to Dinocrates.

"And about the lighthouse?" she persisted.

"Our ship is about to enter the harbour," said their companion. "We will land, and go to the spot where the lighthouse finally arose. There I may best tell you its story."

In a few moments the little vessel on the deck of which they stood, had been safely steered into the harbour between the island of Pharos and the city. At a quay running alongside of the island, they stepped off the ship, and "Dinocrates" led the way to a rock jutting out into the sea. It was a position from which there was a view of the busy harbour, and of the long bridge joining the island to the city, over which passed continually a gaily coloured crowd. Mules with gaudy trappings were driven by shouting boys. Ladies in silken litters were borne along by dark-skinned slaves. Men dressed in tunics like the one worn by "Dinocrates" sauntered by, and from the city itself came a confused hum of voices.

By turning their backs to the bridge the children found the blue sea almost at their feet, stretching away to the distant horizon.

Dinocrates began to speak again, and the water lapping against the rocks close at hand murmured between the pauses of his story.

"There lies the city I began to build while Alexander was yet alive," he said, pointing backwards over his shoulder. "I was a famous architect in those days, and rich men sent me their sons to learn from me. But among all my pupils the best, the most brilliant, was Sostratus. He came to me when he was but a lad, and I early foretold for him a great career. I loved him dearly, and he was to me like a son. His native land was Greece, and, though he spent some years with me during the building of Alexandria, he returned more than once to his home, and on one of these visits fell deeply in love with a beautiful Grecian maiden.

"Never shall I forget the happiness of Sostratus, when he told me that the maiden, with her parents, was coming to Alexandria, where the marriage was to be celebrated. All was prepared for the bride, and on the appointed day, she set sail to cross the stretch of sea between Greece and Alexandria. But, alas, the weather, till then calm and peaceful, suddenly changed. A great storm arose, and the ship, when it came into sight, though it held bravely on, was tossed like a cockle-shell upon the waters.

"Now this bay of Alexandria is difficult of navigation, and in the darkness, full of danger. Night came on; there was no friendly beacon fire to show the way, and presently we, who were gathered here on this very spot, heard the shouts and cries of drowning men. Powerless to help, we waited in despair for daybreak, only to see the waters strewn with wreckage. Close to land, the good ship, with all on board, had gone down for lack of a light to show the captain where lay the treacherous rocks.

"Sostratus was wild with grief, from which, as time went on, I strove in vain to rouse him. Nothing I could say or do would comfort him, till at last, when I was ill and near to death, I called him to my bedside and urged him not to waste his life in useless idle despair.

"'Build something,' said I, 'which shall be at once a monument to the memory of your bride, and of use to the living. So shall you not have passed through this your present life in vain.'

"'What if I should build a light-tower?' he asked presently.

'Something that shall serve as a beacon and a warning to sailors? Already has the thought of such a tower begun to take shape in my mind, and now, O master, I swear to thee that I will not rest till such a building arises, for by such means, grief such as I have endured may be spared to others.'

"With that he began to discuss with me how such a tower, the first of its kind, could be constructed so that a light should stream constantly from its summit during the darkness of the night. And I, seeing him roused from his grief and ready for a new interest, passed some days later, happily from that life. All that follows, I learnt long afterwards when once more I returned to this earth.

"Even before my own death, Alexander the Great had passed away, and the world he had conquered was being divided amongst the generals who had fought under his command. This land of

Egypt, with Alexandria as its port, fell to one of them—a man whose name was Ptolemy. (He it was who helped the Rhodians against Demetrius in the famous siege)," he added, turning with a smile to Rachel.

"And you were *Cleon* then—not Dinocrates," she exclaimed quickly. "You remember I told you about that siege, Diana?"

Diana nodded. "But do go on about Sostratus," she begged, turning to Dinocrates. "Ptolemy let him build the lighthouse, I suppose?"

"After my death," continued their friend, "my pupil went to King Ptolemy with his plans, and he was ordered not only to set about the building of the tower, but to spare no expense and to make it the most beautiful monument he could possibly accomplish. So Sostratus worked and thought and invented, and in time, on the very spot where now we are seated, there rose the tower you beheld a short while ago. Four hundred feet high it towered above this rock, built of white marble, slender as a lily, yet strong as steel. And in the cup-like hollow at the top, was sunk a brazier, that is, a huge basket of iron in which a fire was kept always burning. The men who from the gallery around this hollow tended the fire and fed the flames, were the first lighthouse-keepers, and the tower itself, being the first lighthouse, was the model for others all over the world. The lighthouse on the spur of land at St. Mary's Bay, little maids, owes its existence to the marble tower of Sostratus, as in like fashion do all the other famous lighthouses of modern days, such as Eddystone, the North Foreland, and the rest. No longer, it is true, do naked flames stream upwards into the darkness from these modern towers—for, in two thousand years other light has been invented, as well as shielding panes of glass. Nowadays, strong electric globes shoot forth their gleams over the sea at night. But the tower of Sostratus was not only the first of these friendly beacons but also the most beautiful as a monument. So beautiful, indeed, and in those early days so strange to the sight, that it was named amongst the Seven Wonders of the World."

"Was it called the Tower of Sostratus?" asked Rachel.

Dinocrates smiled and shook his head.

"Nay," he returned, "though that was the wish of Sostratus himself. It was called the *Pharos* Tower—after the name of this island upon which it stood."

"Why," exclaimed Diana suddenly, "*phare* is the French word for lighthouse. Is that because of the Pharos tower?"

Diana had a French governess, and to Rachel's wonder and admiration, spoke French, if not as well, at least as quickly as she talked in English.

"Yes," answered Dinocrates. "Every time French sailors use that word, even though they have no knowledge of its meaning, the work of Sostratus is mentioned by men who live to-day. His work is remembered, his *name* forgotten, even though he strove hard that this should not be the case.

"Listen, and I will tell you what chanced. When the tower was at length finished and stood gleaming white on this headland, the time had come for an inscription to be placed upon it, and Ptolemy, King of Egypt, ordered Sostratus to engrave these words upon the marble: *King Ptolemy to the gods, the saviours, for the benefit of sailors.*"

"Now Sostratus, to whom the lighthouse represented all that he now cared for in life, was determined that his own name should be read, if not at the moment, at least in time to come. Yet he dared not disobey the King's command. This, then, was the device by which he tried to ensure remembrance.

"Deep in the marble he first engraved:

"'*Sostratus, son of Dexiphanes,* to the gods, the saviours, for the benefit of sailors.'

"Having thus placed his own, instead of the King's name upon the tower, he then covered up the whole inscription with mortar, and on the top of it engraved the inscription commanded by Ptolemy. Well he knew, that in the course of years, the mortar would decay and his own name become visible. . . . Rise, make seven obeisances towards the sea, and you shall behold, if it please you, the lighthouse as it appeared a hundred years after Sostratus and King Ptolemy alike had left this world."

The children lost no time in obeying, and when they opened their eyes they found themselves, to their delight, standing at the foot of the beautiful white tower. Dinocrates, smiling, stood beside them, and pointed to some lettering upon the tower at a little height above his own head. The inscription was cracked and defaced, and as the words were in Greek, they could not read them, but in a hollow, where the mortar had broken away at the beginning of the sentence, they saw a name which Dinocrates pronounced aloud—the name of Sostratus, now at last plainly to be seen.

The children gazed with interest upon the splendid graceful tower springing high above their heads, and then looked from it across the bridge to the city.

"Why, the town is ever so much bigger. Twice, three times as big," cried Rachel, as she saw the clustering houses and let her eyes wander over the new domes and colonnades, courtyards and gardens visible on the other side of the harbour.

"A hundred years have passed between the opening and shutting of your eyes," said the voice of Dinocrates. "The city founded by Alexander and built by me has had time to grow and to become one of the most famous homes of learning in the world. There great men have lived and died, and been forgotten, even as Sostratus, despite this inscription made in vanity, is forgotten. But Alexandria still lives, though the Pharos Tower, the Wonder of the World, is no more. And there, to-day, men who have fought in this last great war are planning to dig for buried treasures under modern houses and squares. Time goes on and men are forgotten, but the work of their brains lasts longer, and sometimes bears fruit centuries after they themselves have departed. . . . Here, for instance, we stand in this modern lighthouse. . . ."

It was Mr. Sheston (no longer in the guise of Dinocrates) who uttered the last words. Dinocrates, the Pharos Tower, the City of Alexandria had vanished, and a moment later Rachel and Diana were listening to the sailor-man.

"I don't know who invented them," he was saying, as though

in answer to a question, "but, whoever it was, he did a good piece of work. There's too many wrecks as it is, but there'd be a considerable number more if it wasn't for these 'ere light-'ouses."

"*We* know who invented them," whispered Diana to Rachel, as they clattered down the winding stairs of the tower.

"Didn't I tell you that being away from London wouldn't make any difference?" demanded Rachel, triumphantly. "Sheshà can do *anything*!"

"Hush! Here comes Mr. Sheston," Diana warned her in a low voice. "And I suppose we mustn't say anything. But *he* knows that *we* know he's Sheshà and Dinocrates—"

"And Cleon—and all the rest," put in Rachel. "Isn't it wonderful and—and *fun*, you know?"

Mr. Sheston, who had lingered in talk with the old sailor upstairs, now joined them, and all the way home the children chattered demurely about the St. Mary's Bay lighthouse. There was no mention of the Pharos at Alexandria.

THE STATUE OF JUPITER OLYMPIUS

Both the children were back again in London a few days later, sadly missing the sea and the freedom of St. Mary's Bay, of course, but consoled by the knowledge that Mr. Sheston had also come back to town.

One afternoon, soon after their return, Rachel met Diana with a radiant face.

"Dad and Mother are coming back," she exclaimed joyfully. "They're on their way now. And Mother is ever so much better, Dad says. And this day week I shall see them, and go home with them. Isn't it perfectly lovely?" But there were sudden tears in Diana's eyes, and, in the midst of her excited talk, Rachel paused. "You're to come and stay with me, of course," she declared hastily. "Do you think I should be so glad if I had to say good-bye to you? Mother says she's writing to *your* mother to ask her to let you stay for a month. And she will, won't she?"

This announcement had the effect of making Diana's face almost as joyful as Rachel's, and during their walk that afternoon their chattering tongues never ceased. There was so much to talk about.

When Rachel had described all the delights of her country home, the farm, the garden, the river with its punt, the woods in which they could build huts of branches—the conversation turned, as usual, upon the "adventures" in which Mr. Sheston was concerned.

"There's still another one to come, you know," Rachel presently declared. "At least I expect so. I've been here six weeks now, and every seventh day it's—*happened*. And there'll be another seventh day on Wednesday."

"I do wonder what it will be this time, don't you?" said Diana. "It's so exciting not knowing where it will begin. Perhaps in the British Museum again. I rather hope it will be there. It's so jolly to go with 'him' just as other children go with grown-up people to the Museum, and yet to know all the time that something frightfully interesting is coming."

"Yes, that's just what *I* feel is so jolly about it," Rachel agreed. "You go through all those rooms and you see statues and tombs and stones and things, and they all look *dead*, and you can't believe the people who saw them thousands of years ago were just as much alive as we are now. Every time I go to the Museum I feel like that at first. Don't you? And then it *happens*, you know. Quite suddenly. And everything that looked all dull and dead comes to be *real*. I hope it will begin in the Museum this time."

It did. But before it happened, and as a last treat for her niece, Aunt Hester took both children to the circus at Olympia.

"What is *Olympia*?" asked Diana, suddenly, when she and Rachel, full of anticipation, were walking with Aunt Hester to the omnibus.

"It's where the circus is held," said Aunt Hester. "It's a good long ride, so we must make haste."

"But I mean what *is* it?" persisted Diana.

"Oh, it's a great building. Big enough for all sorts of entertainments, as well as the circus, to go on inside it."

"Why is it called Olympia?" asked Rachel. "It's such a funny name for a place where there's a circus."

"You must ask Mr. Sheston," returned Aunt Hester, vaguely. "He'll tell you why, better than I can. By the way, he's going to take you both to the Museum to-morrow. I had a note from him this morning. Come along," she exclaimed, hurriedly, as

they turned a corner, "there's the omnibus just starting. We must run for it."

Seated opposite to one another in the omnibus when rather breathlessly they had settled down, Rachel and Diana exchanged meaning glances.

"It *is* going to begin there, you see," whispered Rachel at the earliest opportunity, and Diana agreed with a nod and smile of secret delight.

They enjoyed the circus immensely, but beautiful as the horses were, and much as they admired them, both children thought of another and still more wonderful horse than any that appeared in the ring.

"But, then, Bucephalus was the loveliest and cleverest thing in the world," observed Diana, in a low voice, after Rachel had murmured his name. "And I'm sure he would hate to do tricks in a circus. He was a *war* horse."

"And used to real battles," agreed Rachel, in an answering whisper.

"Well," said Mr. Sheston next day, when Miss Moore had left both the children with him at the entrance to the Museum. "Well, How did you like the circus at Olympia yesterday?"

"Oh, it was lovely!" they exclaimed together.

"Aunt Hester said we were to ask you why it's called *Olympia*," put in Rachel, as they began to walk slowly through a statue-lined room that had become familiar.

"We may find the answer this afternoon," answered the old gentleman, turning into a room that Rachel knew already. It was the room containing the statues of the headless women clothed in beautiful drapery.

"These are Greek statues, aren't they?" she began, pointing to the group in the middle of the room. "They were on the outside of a temple once, weren't they? I forget what it was called."

"The Parthenon in Athens," Mr. Sheston told her. "There's a model showing the temple as it stood in ancient days, over there in that glass case. We'll go and examine it in a minute. But first look up and see those young men riding on horseback."

He pointed to a frieze in marble which ran the length of the walls and represented a procession of youths mounted upon beautiful horses.

"Now let us have a look at this model which shows part of Athens as it appeared two thousand years or so ago," he went on, after a moment. The children followed him to a stand upon which, modelled in plaster, was a rocky hill with various buildings like fair-sized toys scattered over its slope. The names of these buildings were written below them, on the white plaster hill, and Diana had just exclaimed, "*Here's* the Parthenon!" when a young voice, which neither of the children recognised, but which sounded close at hand, said:

"*Seven times with closed eyes shall you bow.*"

"Diana!" cried Rachel, a few seconds later, "It's Athens. *Real* Athens, you know!"

There was no doubt about its reality, for they felt the warmth of the sun, saw the overarching blue sky, and gazed with wonder and delight upon a beautiful scene.

A hill-side stretched before them, no longer of plaster, but a *real* hill-side, scattered over with marvellous buildings in white marble, with groves of trees, and stretches of gardens between them.

"Look! Look!" exclaimed Diana, recognising at least one of the buildings. "That's the Parthenon. There are the great beautiful women up in that pointed place above the columns."

"And they're not broken!" cried Rachel, excitedly. "They're quite perfect. Look at their faces, and their arms. They had no faces and no arms the last time we saw them."

"And there's the procession of boys on horseback!" cried Diana, pointing to the frieze. . . .

"Will it please you to come with me, O maidens?" enquired a voice, so near that both the children started before they turned round.

Behind them stood a boy of perhaps eleven or twelve years old. He was dressed in a shirt or tunic of white wool, without sleeves, and over it a white purple-bordered cloak wrapped about him in

such a way as to leave his right arm and shoulder free. His legs were bare, but on his feet were sandals fastened with slender cords of leather strapped about his ankles.

His head was covered only by its thick crop of red-gold hair which curled closely about his head, and was one of his many beauties. For he was an exceedingly handsome boy—slim, yet strongly built. He held his head and body well, and all his movements were quick and graceful.

"Who are you?" stammered Rachel, the first to recover from surprise.

"My name is Agis," said the boy. "I am commanded by Sheshà, greatest of magicians, to be your guide through our city of Athens. Later, I understand, he himself will conduct you to the Olympian games."

Again, as it had so often happened before, though the language spoken by the boy was not her own, Rachel understood him perfectly.

"I suppose it's Greek he's talking," she thought hurriedly before she began to ask questions.

"That's the Parthenon, isn't it?" she asked, pointing to the gleaming temple. "We've seen those statues up there before. At least, we've seen——" She was going to say "bits of them," but Diana pulled her sleeve, and she stopped just in time to remember that it was no use trying to explain to a boy who lived thousands of years ago, all about the British Museum!

"Will you tell us what god is worshipped here?" put in Diana, politely.

"No god, but a goddess, the great Pallas Athene," returned the boy, glancing at her with his bright eyes.

"She's the same as *Minerva*, you know," whispered Diana quickly, having learnt this from her father.

"Within," the boy went on, "stands the statue of the goddess made by Phidias, the wondrous sculptor."

"Is he alive now?" enquired Rachel.

Agis laughed. "Nay. He has been dead two hundred years and more. You must have come from a very far country, O maidens, to be so ignorant!"

"We have," said Rachel, smiling in her turn. If only the boy could have known. It was only two hundred years for *him* since the sculptor Phidias died, while for her and for Diana it was considerably more than two *thousand* years. "We don't know anything about your country," she continued, "so will you please explain everything."

"That would take me far too long, because I must soon return to the gymnasium, whither you may accompany me. I have only brought you here for a moment that you may glance at the most famous of our temples and public buildings. The city itself lies down yonder." He pointed to a sea of white flat-roofed houses below.

"What is that place, high up on the hill?" asked Diana.

"The citadel—our fort of defence which we call the Acropolis. Beneath it, as you see, and under its protection, as it were, are the other buildings, of which the most precious is the Parthenon."

"Can't we go in, and look at the statue of the goddess?" begged Rachel.

Agis shook his curly head.

"Time is lacking. But it may be that, some days hence, you will see another, and perhaps even more famous statue, carved also by Phidias. It stands in the temple of Zeus at Olympia."

The children exchanged quick glances at the mention of the word.

"What *is* Olympia?" asked Diana, and as she put the question she suddenly remembered asking it before. Yesterday, was it? . . . It seemed ages and ages ago, or like something in a dream. She and Rachel had been then on their way to the circus at *Olympia*, and she had asked Aunt Hester——

Her bewildering thoughts were interrupted by a long shrill whistle from Agis. It was so like the sort of whistle her brother Jack gave when he was teasing her, that Rachel laughed. After all, Agis was very much like an ordinary schoolboy, even though he did talk in what she called "an old-fashioned long-ago" style.

"You know not *Olympia*, maidens? What then have you to live for, if you know not the Olympic games?"

"We really *don't* know anything about them," said Rachel, apologetically. "You see we live in a different country, and—well, in a different time."

She couldn't help adding this, in her desire to defend herself from the charge of ignorance, but the boy took no notice of the last remark.

"Come with me, and by degrees it may be I shall enlighten you," he said, still in a mocking voice.

He turned quickly, and Rachel and Diana, after one backward glance at the snow-white temple adorned with its perfect sculpture, followed him meekly down the hill. In a few moments they found themselves threading their way through the narrow streets of the city of Athens. These streets were bounded on either side by blank walls, broken here and there by a door.

"But where are the houses?" enquired Diana presently.

"These doors lead to our houses," returned the boy, tapping one of them as he passed.

"There aren't any windows!" objected Rachel.

"Would you have windows upon the street?" said Agis. "An idea comic indeed, O maidens!"

The children were too occupied with the strangeness of everything around them to reply to this. Every now and then they emerged from narrow roads between walls into a great square, and here the surrounding buildings were magnificent. There were long colonnades where people, dressed more or less in the same fashion as Agis, lounged or walked, and often in the midst of the square they saw beautiful statues.

"Look!" said Diana presently, pointing to a garland of leaves hung upon the knocker of a door. "Why is that wreath put there?" They had turned into another narrow street by this time.

"A new-born child is in the house without doubt," returned Agis carelessly. "A boy."

"How do you know?" asked Rachel.

"If it had been a girl, there would be a wreath of wool, instead of olive leaves. You may see such a one over there," replied Agis,

nodding in the direction of another door further on, where a twisted loop of violet wool hung from a knocker.

The children were much interested.

"It's awfully nice to know like that about the babies," declared Diana. . . . Where are we going, Agis? What is this place?" she added curiously, as the boy ran on in front of them up a broad flight of steps leading to an imposing building.

"This is the gymnasium, and unless we hasten, I shall be late, and my instructor will be angered." Agis looked over his shoulder to say this. "Follow me, and pay no heed to anyone, for no one will pay heed to you. Sheshà has put you under my guidance—I know not why. But I know that, except to me, you are invisible. Go boldly into yonder courtyard and watch. I must first leave my garments in the corridor." He ran quickly down a passage to the right, and the children, full of wonder, walked on into a sunny square, enclosed by high walls, where little boys were going through all sorts of exercises.

"Oh, don't they look pretty without their clothes!" was Diana's first exclamation. For all the boys were naked, and as they ran and leapt, and the sunshine fell upon their little white bodies, they did indeed look beautiful.

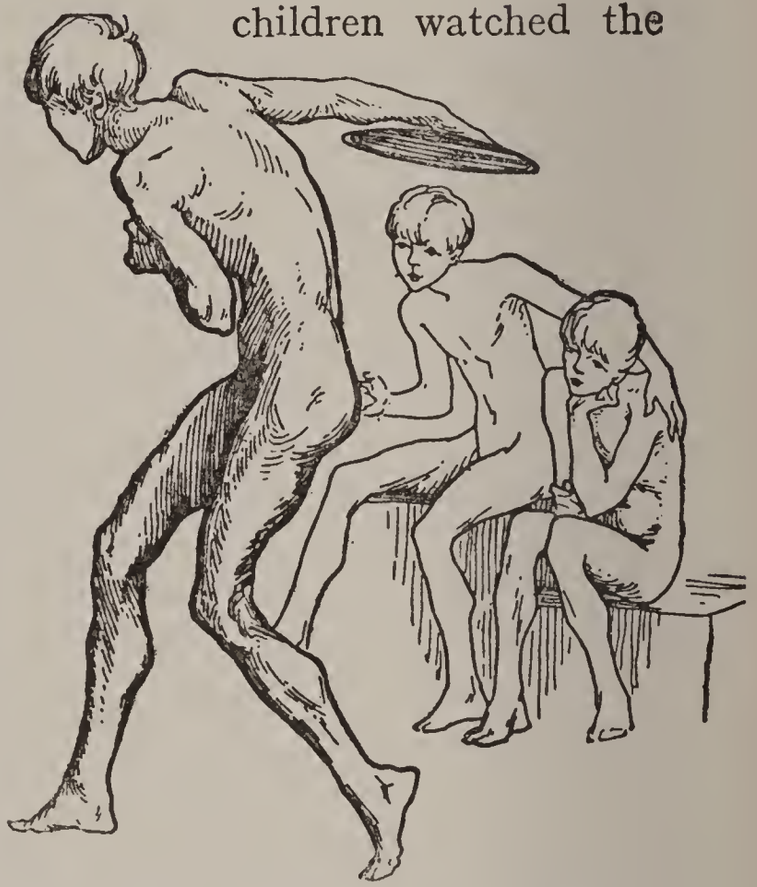
"He said it was a *gymnasium*," said Rachel. "But there aren't any rings and poles and things, like there are in our gymnasiums. I suppose this was the *first* sort of gymnasium, and ours are named after it?" she went on suddenly, as the idea struck her.

"There's Agis!" cried Diana, as the now naked boy appeared. "Doesn't he look like a statue come to life? Oh, look, Rachel! What is he going to do? That man—I suppose he's the master?—is rubbing him all over with something. It's oil, isn't it? and those other boys are being rubbed with it too."

"It's to make them move their bodies easily, I expect," said Rachel. "You know how oil makes stiff things like rusty locks quite smooth and easy. I suppose it's the same with people's joints."

"Now they're throwing sand over one another!" Diana exclaimed. "What's that for, I wonder? Oh! they're going to wrestle. Agis and that dark boy together. Do you see?"

"That's why they put sand on themselves then," suggested Rachel. "They'd be too slippery to hold one another without. Oh, *do* look! Isn't it jolly to see them? Agis is winning! I'm sure he's winning."



With breathless interest the children watched the boys as they turned and twisted—all their movements swift and graceful as the movements of beautiful wild forest animals. After the wrestling they saw several races between companies of boys, and then looked on at exercises in throwing a round object something like a quoit made in lead.

It was all wonderful to see. To sit in the sunshine, to hear the voices and laughter of the boys, to watch their graceful movements, and yet to know that the scene before them was really far away—back two thousand years and more into the Past, indeed, was a strange-enough experience. Every now and then, when they realised this, it made both of the children very quiet, and even a little sad.

They forgot this impression however when, at last, the training over, Agis beckoned to them to follow him out of the gymnasium.

In a few moments he was dressed again, and as the children walked on either side of him, through squares and streets, they kept up a fire of eager questions.

"This is the last day of our training," explained Agis. "To-morrow we start on our journey, and in three days begin the great games in Olympia. May the gods grant me patience to live till then!" he went on excitedly.

"But you haven't yet told us what Olympia *is*," urged Diana.

"Strange that you are ignorant of the Olympic Games which are renowned throughout the world," sighed Agis. "Yet do I remember that Sheshà bade me have patience to tell you everything.

"Know then, as all the world but you, O maidens, are aware, that every five years, at Olympia, which is in a part of Greece called Elis, games are held at which it is the highest honour in the world to compete. For the four years between the great year of the games, all youths who are Grecian by birth are trained at schools called gymnasia—one of which you have lately beheld.

"Towards the end of the fourth year, in every part of our country, those who have best acquitted themselves in the training are chosen to go to Olympia and contend for the prizes."

"Then *you* are chosen," said Rachel joyfully.

"I to my great content am to run in the first race, and my elder brother, Phidolas, is also among the athletes. *He* is to compete in the horse race, for he is a skilled rider, and has the most perfect mare that was ever bred," he added enthusiastically. "Her name is Aura, and presently, if it please you, we will see her."

"Oh, we *love* horses!" exclaimed Diana. "Do tell us some more about the games. Who began them? How long have they been going on?"

"For a thousand years and more. Zeus, father of all the gods, first commanded them to take place, to celebrate his victory over the giants who, before him, ruled the world. Since then, they have been held, as I have already said, every four years, for the honour and glory of heroes."

"*Zeus* is the same as Jupiter, I think," whispered Diana to Rachel. "Yes. I remember. Father told me so."

By this time Agis had stopped at one of the doors set in the blank wall of a narrow street, and he lifted and let fall the knocker with a resounding clang.

"This is my home. I must set some repast before you, for indeed you must need it, O strange and ignorant maidens," he added, with his teasing schoolboy smile.

The door was opened at the moment by an old man whom the children at once guessed to be a servant.

"Or a *slave*, I expect," said Rachel, as Agis hurried on in front. "They had slaves in Greece, didn't they?"

"Now we shall see the inside of a Greek house as it was thousands of years ago," returned Diana eagerly. . . . "Isn't this a *splendid* adventure?"

They found themselves in a passage which led into a square courtyard roofed by the blue sky. A colonnade ran the length of the four sides of this courtyard, and from it on the side away from the open space, they saw various rooms. Agis pushed back a door, and called to the children to follow him.

"It is past noon," he said, "and our meal is already served. Enter and eat with us."

Full of curiosity, Rachel and Diana followed the boy into a room whose walls were covered with large black panels upon which were painted figures in brilliant colours. Surrounding each panel there was a rich border of painted flowers. In the midst of the room, placed on trestles, was a table, at which the men of the family were already seated. The father, a middle-aged man, dressed very much in the same fashion as Agis, except that he wore a saffron-coloured instead of a white cloak, looked up and smiled as the boy entered. But he took no notice of the two little girls, and they felt quite sure he neither saw nor heard them.

Seated near to him was a very handsome young man who looked about nineteen or twenty. Except that his curly hair was dark and his eyes brown, instead of grey, he was so like Agis that the children knew he must be the brother Phidolas, of whom he had spoken.

Agis swung himself into his place at the table, which was spread with dishes containing olives, figs, a sort of cream cheese, and flasks of wine, and passed some of these things to his invisible guests.

"Phidolas and I are, as a matter of course, in training for the games," he said. "Therefore we must eat only of such diet as this. But it may be that simple food pleases you? Eat and

drink, and fear no questions from my father and brother. The magic of Sheshà protects you, and they are ignorant of your presence."

Rachel and Diana were too interested to care much for food, though the ripe figs they tasted were delicious. They cast quick glances about a room so strange to them, and noticed that it contained scarcely any furniture. Except for the simple trestle table, and the chairs round it which were of a beautiful shape and had curved arms, there were only two tripods, each holding an elegant vase, placed in corners against the walls. The door opened upon the colonnade, and beyond it they saw the courtyard with its roof of wonderful blue sky.

"To-morrow at this hour we shall be upon the journey!" exclaimed Agis, addressing his brother. "And at this hour three days hence thou wilt without doubt be in the midst of the race, Phidolas!"

"The gods grant thee victory, my sons," said the father gravely. "I pray to them for their favour and protection."

Before long the three were in animated talk about the games, and the children listened eagerly to discussions as to which of the candidates from Athens had the best chances of victory.

"All goes well with thy mare, I trust?" asked Agis, presently, turning to his brother.

"With Aura all is well," returned Phidolas cheerfully. "Let us now go to her stable and see that she is fed."

The boys rose, and at the moment two slaves entered, who, taking the dishes from the table, removed the board and the trestles, thus in less than two minutes leaving the room practically empty.

"*Our* dinners take much longer to clear," murmured Rachel. She looked at Agis. "Haven't you any mother? Or any sisters?" she asked.

"Oh, yes," said the boy. "My mother lives, and I have two sisters. But they are not with us, of course."

"Why not?" demanded Diana.

Agis stared. "Always I forget you are strangers!" he declared, laughing. "They are in the women's part of the house,

where they live. They do not pass their time with us. In our country such is not the custom. Look yonder!" He took them out into the courtyard and pointed to where, through a passage, they saw another open space surrounded by a colonnade.

"That is the women's quarter," he explained, carelessly. "There my mother and sisters live and do their work."

"What sort of work?" asked Rachel.

Agis shrugged his shoulders. "The usual work of women. They and the female slaves spin wool for our garments and cook our meals and prepare medicines and cordials in case of illness. . . . But come, follow me, and you shall behold Aura, who is well worthy of your regard."

"I shouldn't like to have been a Greek girl in Athens long ago, would you?" whispered Rachel to Diana. "It must have been horribly dull!"

"I wonder what Agis thinks of *us*," chuckled Diana. "He's never met girls like us before. You can see that. Sheshà seems to be able to do anything he likes in any country. No wonder everyone calls him 'greatest of magicians.'"

They were following Agis and Phidolas all this time, and presently through a door that led from the covered colonnade came to a yard, in which stood a stable built of rough stones. Aura, the mare of which they had heard so much, was looking over its low door, and, at the sight of her, both children cried out in delight.

"She's almost prettier than Bucephalus," Rachel declared. "Look at her lovely brown satin coat, and her sweet beautiful eyes!"

"And doesn't she simply *love* Phidolas?" exclaimed Diana. "Look at her now." The beautiful creature was rubbing her head against the young man's shoulder while he talked to her, as though she were a human being.

"Thou wilt win me the race, is it not so, my lovely one?" he murmured in her ear, while Agis, after patting her shining neck, went to fetch a handful of corn.

"Oh, Rachel, if *only* we could go to Olympia and see the

games!" sighed Diana. "But you heard what Agis said. The journey will take about three days, so of course we couldn't——"

She broke off in the midst of the sentence to rub her eyes. Rachel was rubbing hers also.

"Where are we?" she began incoherently, gazing about her.

"We were looking at Aura—and now—oh, Rachel, I do believe it's *Olympia*!" the last words were uttered with a gasp of excitement.

"It *is*. I'm sure it is," Rachel agreed.

"Then we must have passed over three days in just that second while we stood by the stable. How could we possibly have done that?"

"Sheshà says Time is a magic thing," returned Rachel, dreamily. "And it isn't, anyhow, more wonderful than all the other things that have happened. . . . Just see how lovely everything looks, Diana. Don't let's bother about how we got here."

"The sun is just going to rise, isn't it?" whispered Diana, still bewildered and rather awed by the suddenness of this change of scene.

They were standing on a rocky spur of mountain looking down upon a huge circular space, enclosed by tier above tier of empty seats.

On the left, through a gap in the hills, they saw the calm blue sea, stretching away to where above the horizon the sun, like a shield of fire, was just rising. In front of them, and overshadowing part of the enclosed space (which at once reminded the children of a huge circus ring) there lay a thick wood.

Everything was very still. Not a sound broke the silence, and there was something in the appearance of the vast empty ring with the empty seats about it, and the mountains and the sea as background, which for a moment was rather terrifying.

Diana drew closer to Rachel.

"I wish someone would come," she murmured.

It was just then that a well-known voice made the children turn with joyful relief to see Sheshà. They knew him at once,

though he was dressed in the Grecian costume to which they were now growing accustomed.

"Oh, we're so glad you've come!" sighed Rachel. "It was getting lonely here. This is Olympia, isn't it? But where is Agis?"

"And Phidolas?" put in Diana.

"This is Olympia, on the western shores of Greece. Here, when the sun has fully risen on this the first day of the games,

will be held those contests renowned throughout the world. From every part of Greece the competitors have already arrived, Agis and Phidolas among them. The youths are lodged in yonder town; and in all the villages near, other athletes, as they are called, have found lodging. Ere long they will begin to assemble."

"And you will tell us all about it!" exclaimed Diana. "Better than Agis, because *you* know who we are, and he can't understand —lots of things. But he's awfully nice," she added hastily.

THE OLYMPIC GAMES

Sheshà smiled.

"Come with me, and, before the games begin, I will show you what I can. First shall you see the temple which encloses one of the Wonders of the World."

"One of the Seven Wonders?" asked Rachel.

"One of the Seven Wonders," repeated Sheshà.

In another second, and without knowing how they reached it, the children found themselves standing near a temple in front of which stretched the wood they had seen from the mountain side.

"This is the famous temple of Zeus or—to give him the name more familiar to your ears—of Jupiter Olympius. He it was who, according to the Greeks, first commanded these games—the Olympic Games—to be held. Later you shall behold the great statue it contains. For the moment let us wander a little through this wood, sacred to Jupiter."

"These are oak trees. It's an oak wood," said Rachel, who was wise in knowledge of the country and its trees and flowers.

"Yes, because the oak is the special tree of Jupiter—his sacred tree. Therefore, very rightly, an oak wood stretches before his temple."

"Oh, there's a statue!" exclaimed Diana suddenly, pointing to where, between the trees, she had caught sight of a gleam of white.

"There's a whole line of them," she went on. "Do let us go and look."

"Patience," counselled Sheshà. "We shall pass them on our way. "These," he said, when in a moment or two they had reached the marble figures, "these are the statues representing those youths who, as victors in the Olympic Games, claimed the right to have their statues set up in the sacred wood. Some of them, as you behold, are already ancient, for it is long, long ago since these contests first began."

"Where are we exactly—in the 'Past,' I mean?" asked Rachel. "Has Alexander the Great conquered Greece yet?"

Sheshà shook his head. Alexander is as yet unborn. The games you will behold to-day are full a hundred years before his time. Greece, though declining from the height of her glory, is still free."

"Oh, look! There's quite a little boy here," cried Diana, who was carefully examining the statues. "Anyhow, he doesn't look any older than Agis. But *he* must have won a prize, I suppose, or his statue wouldn't be here?"

"It has sometimes happened that young children have been victors," said Sheshà. "That child was one of them."

Rachel and Diana gazed admiringly at the slim graceful figure of the boy.

"How pleased he must have been!" exclaimed Diana. "Oh, wouldn't it be joyful if Agis should win to-day?"

"The funny part of it is," began Rachel, slowly, "that it's settled—one way or the other. We shall be seeing all over again something that's already happened, you know. It's awfully uncanny when you come to think of it, isn't it?"

Sheshà smiled, and gently smoothed her hair.

"All new ideas appear 'uncanny' at first, little maid. Yet the familiar is really quite as marvellous as the little known. . . . Come now, it is time we returned, for the sun is mounting higher, and the competitors will be arriving. We will return to this sacred wood, and to the temple, at the end of the day. Then shall you behold the great statue of Zeus, the Seventh Wonder of the World."

Almost before he had finished speaking, the children found themselves back again in the huge "circus-ring" with its background of mountains! But now it was no longer empty. An enormous multitude of people filled the seats surrounding the hollow space, and from the crowd there rose a murmur like the hum of thousands of bees.

Rachel and Diana, seated on either side of Sheshà, in "the best places of all," as Diana excitedly whispered, looked round them with amazed curiosity. First they let their eyes wander over the rows of spectators, clad in the Greek dress that was still

strange to the sight of little English girls. The general colour of the crowd was white, varied by patches of the crimson and green and blue of many of the cloaks.

Overhead was the glorious blue sky, and the sun's rays, warm but not as yet too hot, streamed over and lighted up the wonderful scene, which every moment grew more interesting and animated.

"That," said Sheshà, pointing to the clear space below, "is the place of combat, called the *stadium*. And, now, behold the judges are just about to take their places."

There was a raised platform or daïs in the middle of the stadium, and towards this the children saw several stately figures advancing. In a few moments these men, seated in chairs of a shape like those they had already seen in the home of Agis, had taken up their position on the daïs, each one holding on his knee a crown of olive leaves, and in his hand a palm branch.

"What are those for?" Rachel asked.

"To crown the victors. They are the only prizes, and are more eagerly coveted than gold or precious stones. To win those simple crowns the youths of Greece train strenuously for years. You have already in Athens seen a gymnasium. That to which Agis belongs, is only one of hundreds, as such training schools exist all over Greece, for the teaching of these physical exercises which have made the Greek nation the most beautiful in the world. . . . Here come some of the competitors—the *athletes*, to give them the right name. Behold them!"

"Oh, look! look, Diana!" shouted Rachel, pointing to where a procession of boys on horseback came riding into the stadium.

"What does it remind you of?" asked Diana quickly.

"Why, it's exactly like that marble picture of boys riding we saw—where was it? Why, on the Parthenon temple, of course!"

"But we saw it first in the British Museum," Diana reminded her.

"Where it rests now, having been torn from one of the noblest temples in the world," said Sheshà, sadly. "The sculptor who

made that frieze, the great Phidias, must have many times seen processions like to this," he added, pointing to the beautiful boys who, mounted on no less beautiful horses, were now cantering round the stadium while the crowd applauded loudly.

"Yes! Yes! It's just as though those marble boys had come to life," declared Diana, excitedly.

"Oh, look!" interrupted Rachel, still more thrilled. "There's Phidolas riding upon his lovely horse! Oh, don't they look splendid together?"

"And there's Agis!" cried Diana, jumping up and clapping her hands. "Do you see? With a crowd of other boys, just coming in. Oh, this is simply *frightfully* exciting!"

Sheshà laughed. "Listen to the heralds," he counselled. "The games are just about to begin."

A silence all at once fell upon the vast swaying crowd, while several men with trumpets, advancing from the centre of the stadium and addressing the people, cried out the names of the competitors, and the cities from which they came.

Rachel and Diana exchanged delighted glances when the name of Agis of Athens was announced among the rest, and, after the last notes of the trumpets had died away, they saw the athletes being arranged for the first race.

"That's the umpire, I suppose?" whispered Rachel, pointing to a man who was marshalling the boys.

Sheshà nodded, and, a second later, Diana asked eagerly: "What are they doing now?" For one of the umpires was reciting something in a loud voice, to which all the competitors replied with a shout of assent.

"The athletes are taking the oath to observe all the rules of the games, and to gain no advantage by means unfair and dishonourable," explained Sheshà.

"Look! Look! They're off," cried Rachel, as she pranced up and down, quite unable to keep still.

Like a streak of white lightning round the ring, the boys and young men rushed with a swiftness which made the children hold their breath. Shouts of encouragement and of delight from the

audience accompanied their course, and, after a few moments of tense excitement, the trumpets blew, and, yes—! It *was* the name of Agis that resounded through the stadium! There came a hurricane of applause in which the children madly joined. Then other contests took place.

Each one of these, the wrestling, boxing, quoit throwing, and especially the chariot racing, had its separate thrill, and was followed with breathless interest by the crowd. But it was the great horse-race to which both the children looked forward with the most intense longing—the race in which Phidolas and his beautiful mare, Aura, were to compete. At last it came. There were many competitors, all of them splendid youths, mounted upon splendid horses. But, while preparations for the start were being made, Rachel and Diana's eyes strayed oftenest to Phidolas and Aura.

A deep sigh from both of them told of their suspense, when like an arrow from a bow, Aura sprang forward with her rider, and the whole crowd of horsemen were off like the wind.

Once round the stadium had the racers been, when suddenly a great cry arose from the spectators. Phidolas had been thrown! For a second he lay on the ground, till the umpires, rushing forward, dragged him out of the way of thundering hoofs. Then a mighty clamour arose. . . .

"What are they saying? Oh, what *is* it they're shouting?" begged the children, wild with anxiety.

"They are pitying Phidolas, since it was to keep faithfully the rules of the race that he was unseated," explained Sheshà. "Did you not see how he swerved to avoid hindering the rider that followed him in his course?"

But the children scarcely listened, for another shout, this time of amazement, made them look to where everyone was pointing.

Wonder of wonders, Aura, unchecked in her speed by the fall of her master, was racing as though he had still been on her back to guide her!

On she flew, keeping the pace well, though two or three other

horses had already outstripped her. The crowd had become silent, too full of wonder and interest to shout, and all eyes followed Aura, who was still a little behind the foremost riders.

And now, at the last round, according, as Sheshà explained, to the usual custom, the heralds raised their trumpets, and blew strong blasts to encourage the racers.

At the sound, pricking up her ears, Aura gathered herself together, and, with a flying leap, outdistanced the foremost horsemen, and amidst the deafening cries and applause of the spectators, was first to reach the goal!"

Nor was this all. No sooner was the race at an end, than, throwing up her graceful head, she trotted to the daïs where the judges sat, and stood meekly before them.

"Oh, the darling lovely thing!" cried the children, incoherently, amidst the tumult. "She's won! She's won! The judges *must* say she's won!"

And they did. In another moment the children saw two umpires leading Phidolas, unhurt, between them. Lightly he sprang upon the back of his mare, and as wild shouts rent the air, the judges placed the wreath of olives upon his close-cropped curly head, and proclaimed him and his horse joint victors.

After this wonderful thing had happened, it seemed almost impossible that there should be any greater excitement in store. Yet when, preceded by heralds blowing trumpets, the successful athletes marched round the stadium and the air rang with the shouting and applause of the multitude, it seemed that *this*, after all, was the greatest moment of the day. It was difficult to decide which of the two brothers, Phidolas or Agis, was received with the wildest enthusiasm. When Agis was crowned, the people roared their applause because of his youth (and, indeed, as he followed the heralds he looked a charming, but very little boy). And when Phidolas, in his turn, rode round the stadium, the people were again worked up to a frenzy of delight, and Aura, as though she knew that part of the applause was meant for her, stepped proudly, and arched her glossy neck, while her beautiful dark eyes thanked the people for praising her.

"Oh, won't their father be proud!" exclaimed Rachel. "Fancy having two sons winning the olive wreath!"

"Will they have their statues put up in the sacred wood?" Diana asked.

"Yes—and there also will be the statue of the mare, Aura," said Sheshà.

Diana jumped for joy. "So she ought! So she ought! She deserves it," she cried.

"Nor does the triumph of those athletes who have conquered end here," Sheshà went on to say. "When they return, each to his native city, the whole population will come forth to greet them. The victor belonging to each city, wearing his olive crown, will be placed in a chariot. Torch bearers will receive and run before him, and, when he approaches the wall of his native town, he will find that a breach has been made in it through which he will drive in triumph instead of entering at any one of its gates. In such honour do the citizens of Greece hold a victor in the Olympian Games."

"I expect Phidolas and Agis will drive in the same chariot when they get back to Athens?" suggested Diana. "Oh, won't their father be pleased. I'm glad. He looked such a nice man."

"He *has* been pleased, you mean," said Rachel, rather quietly. "It all happened long ago."

"It's so difficult to remember that," murmured Diana.

There was a little silence, and then Rachel exclaimed:

"See, the people are going. Is this the end of the games?"

"It is the end of the first day's contests," Sheshà replied. "There will be yet four days, but these will not be wholly occupied by the racing and wrestling and quoit-throwing. Poets will read their odes in praise of the victors. Plays by the greatest dramatists in Greece will be judged and acted, and musicians will play the music they have composed. Olympia does not exist solely for the body. It is for the spirit also. And some of the most famous plays in the world have been acted here."

"Oh, can't we see them too?" begged the children. "Why need we go on into the Present at all?" added Diana. "The Past is so wonderful."

Sheshà smiled at her kindly. "The Present is wonderful too. It's *all* wonderful. Come now, and you shall behold yet another wonder, for the people are going to the temple of Zeus, where the victors will worship and give thanks. We will follow them, and you shall have a glimpse of the statue which Phidias made in honour of Zeus, or to give him his other name—of Jupiter Olympius."

"He's called that because his temple is here at Olympia, I suppose?" Rachel said. "Agis told us something about Phidias. He made the statue of Minerva in the Parthenon, didn't he?"

"And the frieze of riding boys too," put in Diana.

"Yes—he was the sculptor who adorned the Parthenon at Athens," said Sheshà, as they followed the huge crowd that was moving towards the temple of Zeus. "But the citizens were ungrateful to him. Therefore he left Athens, and came to live here, near Olympia. And for the people of this part of Greece, he carved a statue even larger and more famous than that of Minerva in the Parthenon—the statue you are about to behold."

"Look! The doors are open now. They were shut when we saw the temple before," cried Rachel.

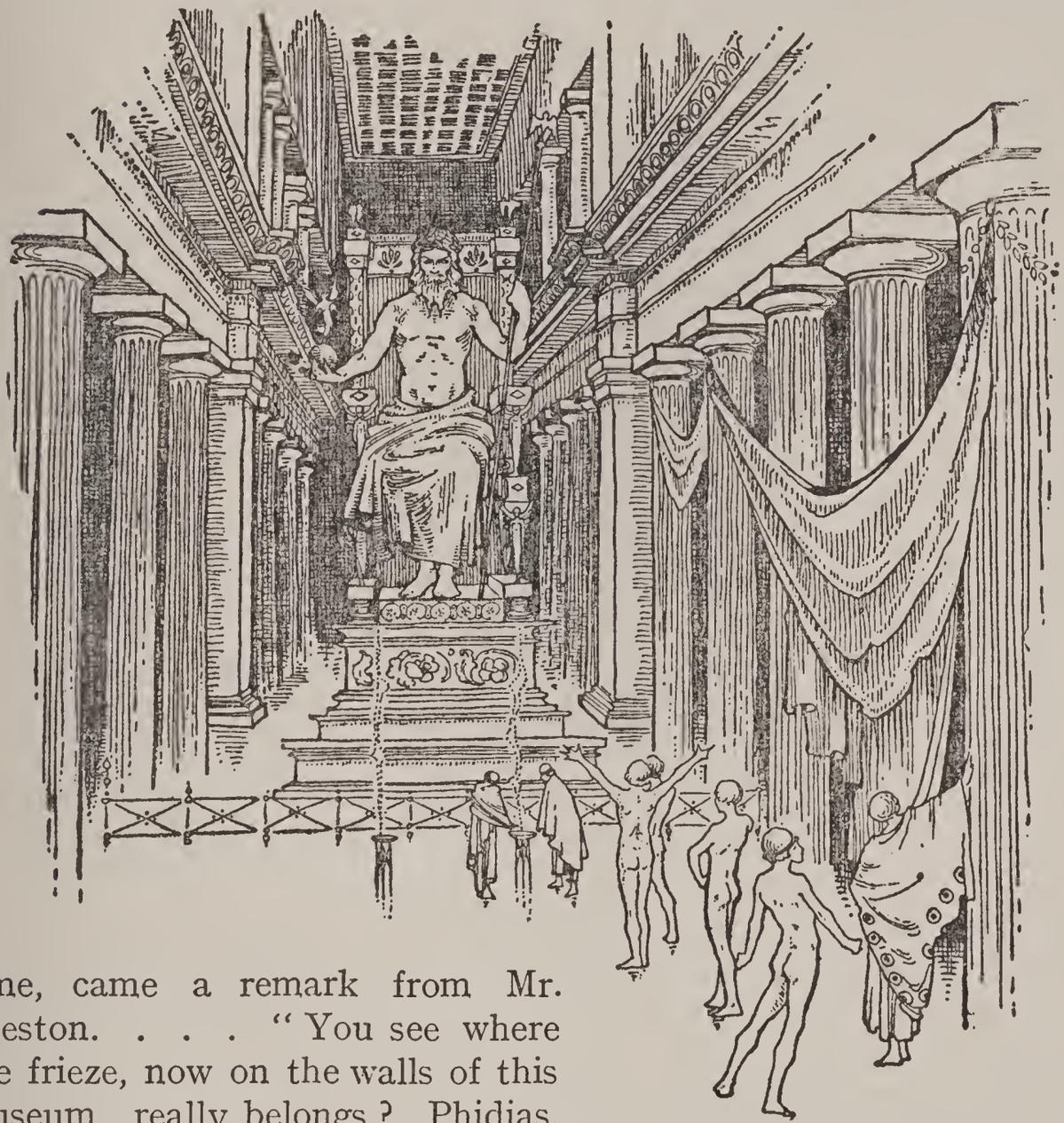
"Let us walk where we may gain a view through the gates," Sheshà suggested, In another moment the children saw the interior of the temple.

There, towering upwards to the height of sixty feet, they caught a glimpse of a majestic figure. It gleamed with the white ivory and flashed with the gold which crowned it, and for a second they saw a grand calm face looking down upon the olive-wreathed victors who bowed low before the shrine.

"You behold the masterpiece of Phidias—the Seventh Wonder of the World," murmured Sheshà. "Jupiter Olympius from his temple blesses the victors in the games he was the first to institute."

The voice of their guide sounded so faint and far away that the children scarcely caught the last words.

But blending with them, uttered in fact almost at the same



time, came a remark from Mr. Sheston. . . . "You see where the frieze, now on the walls of this Museum, really belongs? Phidias, the sculptor, in all probability, saw just such a procession at the Olympic Games, celebrated throughout the world, and even now not forgotten. Didn't you ask me what the word *Olympia* meant? Now you know. . . ."

"Yes, now we know," said Rachel, slowly. She and Diana were still standing by the glass case containing the model of the Acropolis of Athens.

They both glanced quickly at Mr. Sheston, but his face was quite grave as he looked at his watch.

"I think it's time to go to my house for tea," he said. "I expect you're tired?"

The children glanced at one another now, and smiled.

"We *ought* to be—because we've been away about four days, really," whispered Diana, lingering a moment after Mr. Sheston turned to go.

"And yet I expect it wasn't even four *minutes*!" was Rachel's hurried answer.

A week from the day on which the children had seen Athens, sat through the Olympic Games, returned to the British Museum and had tea with Mr. Sheston—they were both in Aunt Hester's drawing-room.

Rachel's father and mother were also there, and the following morning she and Diana were to return with them to the Seven Gables.

"Rachel looks in the seventh heaven of delight!" remarked Aunt Hester, glancing with a smile at her niece, who sat on the arm of her father's chair.

"There's *another* 'seven,'" Rachel whispered meaningly to Diana, when the grown-up people began to talk amongst themselves. . . .

"The Pyramids are amazing," Rachel's mother was saying, after she had been describing what they had seen in Egypt. "Weren't they counted among the Wonders of the World? I'm not surprised."

"It was the first Great Pyramid that was one of the Seven Wonders, I think, wasn't it?" Rachel's father returned. "What were the others? I don't believe anyone knows!"

"We do!" exclaimed Rachel, suddenly. She really couldn't help it.

Her mother and father laughed, but looked surprised.

"Well, what are they?" asked both of them, speaking together.

"There's the Great Pyramid, and the Hanging Gardens at

Babylon, and the Colossus at Rhodes—" began Rachel, very quickly.

" And the Temple of Diana at Ephesus, and the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, and the Pharos at Alexandria," added Diana with equal speed.

" And the statue of Jupiter Olympius."

The last one they said together, almost in the same breath.

" That's seven," was Rachel's last word.

" Well, I never ! " exclaimed her father. He looked across at Aunt Hester and laughed again. " How on earth have they learnt all that ? "

" Mr. Sheston, I expect," returned his sister. " He was always taking them to the British Museum."

At the mention of the old man's name, Rachel's father glanced quickly at his little daughter, who returned the look with a smile.

" Mr. Sheston is a wonderful old boy, isn't he, Rachel ? " he remarked quietly.

" Oh, yes ! . . . And, Dad," she began, moving even closer to him. " It's lovely to be going home, but I've enjoyed it *awfully* here with Aunt Hester, and Diana, and—Mr. Sheston. And it would be dreadful never to come back again. I may—some time or other—mayn't I ? " she begged earnestly.

" Oh, yes ! " cried Diana, with equal fervour.

Rachel's father put his arm round her.

" Of course you may," he said, " if your aunt will have you."

"Of *course* I will," returned Aunt Hester, looking gratified.

"I'm glad you like Mr. Sheston," observed Rachel's father, smiling first at his little daughter, and then at Diana.

"Let's give *seven* cheers!" exclaimed Diana. And both children laughed.