

An Egyptian Princess — Volume 09 eBook

An Egyptian Princess — Volume 09 by Georg Ebers

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CHAPTER XI.

According to the law of Egypt, Zopyrus had deserved death.

As soon as his friends heard this, they resolved to go to Sais and try to rescue him by stratagem. Syloson, who had friends there and could speak the Egyptian language well, offered to help them.

Bartja and Darius disguised themselves so completely by dyeing their hair and eyebrows and wearing broad-brimmed felt-hats,—that they could scarcely recognize each other. Theopompus provided them with ordinary Greek dresses, and, an hour after Zopyrus' arrest, they met the splendidly-got-up Syloson on the shore of the Nile, entered a boat belonging to him and manned by his slaves, and, after a short sail, favored by the wind, reached Sais,—which lay above the waters of the inundation like an island,—before the burning midsummer sun had reached its noonday height.

They disembarked at a remote part of the town and walked across the quarter appropriated to the artisans. The workmen were busy at their calling, notwithstanding the intense noonday heat. The baker's men were at work in the open court of the bakehouse, kneading bread—the coarser kind of dough with the feet, the finer with the hands. Loaves of various shapes were being drawn out of the ovens—round and oval cakes, and rolls in the form of sheep, snails and hearts. These were laid in baskets, and the nimble baker's boys would put three, four, or even five such baskets on their heads at once, and carry them off quickly and safely to the customers living in other quarters of the city. A butcher was slaughtering an ox before his house, the creature's legs having been pinioned; and his men were busy sharpening their knives to cut up a wild goat. Merry cobblers were calling out to the passers-by from their stalls; carpenters, tailors, joiners and weavers—were all there, busy at their various callings. The wives of the work-people were going out marketing, leading their naked children by the hand, and some soldiers were loitering near a man who was offering beer and wine for sale.

But our friends took very little notice of what was going on in the streets through which they passed; they followed Syloson in silence.

At the Greek guard-house he asked them to wait for him. Syloson, happening to know the Taxiarch who was on duty that day, went in and asked him if he had heard anything of a man accused of murder having been brought from Naukratis to Sais that morning.

"Of course," said the Greek. "It's not more than half an hour since he arrived. As they found a purse full of money in his girdle, they think he must be a Persian spy. I suppose you know that Cambyses is preparing for war with Egypt."

"Impossible!"

“No, no, it’s a fact. The prince-regent has already received information. A caravan of Arabian merchants arrived yesterday at Pelusium, and brought the news.”

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"It will prove as false as their suspicions about this poor young Lydian. I know him well, and am very sorry for the poor fellow. He belongs to one of the richest families in Sardis, and only ran away for fear of the powerful satrap Oroetes, with whom he had had a quarrel. I'll tell you the particulars when you come to see me next in Naukratis. Of course you'll stay a few days and bring some friends. My brother has sent me some wine which beats everything I ever tasted. It's perfect nectar, and I confess I grudge offering it to any one who's not, like you, a perfect judge in such matters." The Taxiarch's face brightened up at these words, and grasping Syloson's hand, he exclaimed. "By the dog, my friend, we shall not wait to be asked twice; we'll come soon enough and take a good pull at your wine-skins. How would it be if you were to ask Archidice, the three flower-sisters, and a few flute-playing-girls to supper?"

[Archidice—A celebrated Hetaira of Naukratis mentioned by Herod.
II. 135. Flute-playing girls were seldom missing at the young
Greeks' drinking-parties]

"They shall all be there. By the bye, that reminds me that the flower-girls were the cause of that poor young Lydian's imprisonment. Some jealous idiot attacked him before their house with a number of comrades. The hot-brained young fellow defended himself"

"And knocked the other down?"

"Yes; and so that he'll never get up again."

"The boy must be a good boxer."

"He had a sword."

"So much the better for him."

"No, so much the worse; for his victim was an Egyptian."

"That's a bad job. I fear it can only have an unfortunate end. A foreigner, who kills an Egyptian, is as sure of death as if he had the rope already round his neck. However, just now he'll get a few days' grace; the priests are all so busy praying for the dying king that they have no time to try criminals."

"I'd give a great deal to be able to save that poor fellow. I know his father."

"Yes, and then after all he only did his duty. A man must defend himself."

"Do you happen to know where he is imprisoned?"



“Of course I do. The great prison is under repair, and so he has been put for the present in the storehouse between the principal guard-house of the Egyptian body-guard and the sacred grove of the temple of Neith. I have only just come home from seeing them take him there.”

“He is strong and has plenty of courage; do you think he could get away, if we helped him?”

“No, it would be quite impossible; he’s in a room two stories high; the only window looks into the sacred grove, and that, you know, is surrounded by a ten-foot wall, and guarded like the treasury. There are double sentries at every gate. There’s only one place where it is left unguarded during the inundation season, because, just here, the water washes the walls. These worshippers of animals are as cautious as water-wagtails.”

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"Well, it's a great pity, but I suppose we must leave the poor fellow to his fate. Good-bye, Doemones; don't forget my invitation."

The Samian left the guard-room and went back directly to the two friends, who were waiting impatiently for him.

They listened eagerly to his tidings, and when he had finished his description of the prison, Darius exclaimed: "I believe a little courage will save him. He's as nimble as a cat, and as strong as a bear. I have thought of a plan."

"Let us hear it," said Syloson, "and let me give an opinion as to its practicability."

"We will buy some rope-ladders, some cord, and a good bow, put all these into our boat, and row to the unguarded part of the temple-wall at dusk. You must then help me to clamber over it. I shall take the things over with me and give the eagle's cry. Zopyrus will know at once, because, since we were children, we have been accustomed to use it when we were riding or hunting together. Then I shall shoot an arrow, with the cord fastened to it, up into his window, (I never miss), tell him to fasten a weight to it and let it down again to me. I shall then secure the rope-ladder to the cord, Zopyrus will draw the whole affair up again, and hang it on an iron nail,—which, by the bye, I must not forget to send up with the ladder, for who knows whether he may have such a thing in his cell. He will then come down on it, go quickly with me to the part of the wall where you will be waiting with the boat, and where there must be another rope-ladder, spring into the boat, and there he is-safe!"

"First-rate, first-rate!" cried Bartja.

"But very dangerous," added Syloson. "If we are caught in the sacred grove, we are certain to be severely punished. The priests hold strange nightly festivals there, at which every one but the initiated is strictly forbidden to appear. I believe, however, that these take place on the lake, and that is at some distance from Zopyrus' prison."

"So much the better," cried Darius; "but now to the main point. We must send at once, and ask Theopompus to hire a fast trireme for us, and have it put in sailing order at once. The news of Cambyses' preparations have already reached Egypt; they take us for spies, and will be sure not to let either Zopyrus or his deliverers escape, if they can help it. It would be a criminal rashness to expose ourselves uselessly to danger. Bartja, you must take this message yourself, and must marry Sappho this very day, for, come what may, we must leave Naukratis to-morrow. Don't contradict me, my friend, my brother! You know our plan, and you must see that as only one can act in it, your part would be that of a mere looker-on. As it was my own idea I am determined to carry it out myself. We shall meet again to-morrow, for Auramazda protects the friendship of the pure."

It was a long time before they could persuade Bartja to leave his friends in the lurch, but their entreaties and representations at last took effect, and he went down towards the river to take a boat for Naukratis, Darius and Syloson going at the same time to buy the necessary implements for their plan.

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In order to reach the place where boats were to be hired, Bartja had to pass by the temple of Neith. This was not easy, as an immense crowd was assembled at the entrance-gates. He pushed his way as far as the obelisks near the great gate of the temple with its winged sun-disc and fluttering pennons, but there the temple-servants prevented him from going farther; they were keeping the avenue of sphinxes clear for a procession. The gigantic doors of the Pylon opened, and Bartja, who, in spite of himself, had been pushed into the front row, saw a brilliant procession come out of the temple. The unexpected sight of many faces he had formerly known occupied his attention so much, that he scarcely noticed the loss of his broad-brimmed hat, which had been knocked off in the crowd. From the conversation of two Ionian mercenaries behind him he learnt that the family of Amasis had been to the temple to pray for the dying king.

The procession was headed by richly-decorated priests, either wearing long white robes or pantherskins. They were followed by men holding office at the court, and carrying golden staves, on the ends of which peacocks' feathers and silver lotus-flowers were fastened, and these by Pastophori, carrying on their shoulders a golden cow, the animal sacred to Isis. When the crowd had bowed down before this sacred symbol, the queen appeared. She was dressed in priestly robes and wore a costly head-dress with the winged disc and the Uraeus. In her left hand she held a sacred golden sistrum, the tones of which were to scare away Typhon, and in her right some lotus-flowers. The wife, daughter and sister of the high-priest followed her, in similar but less splendid ornaments. Then came the heir to the throne, in rich robes of state, as priest and prince; and behind him four young priests in white carrying Tachot, (the daughter of Amasis and Ladice and the pretended sister of Nitetis,) in an open litter. The heat of the day, and the earnestness of her prayers, had given the sick girl a slight color. Her blue eyes, filled with tears, were fixed on the sistrum which her weak, emaciated hands had hardly strength to hold.

A murmur of compassion ran through the crowd; for they loved their dying king, and manifested openly and gladly the sympathy so usually felt for young lives from whom a brilliant future has been snatched by disease. Such was Amasis' young, fading daughter, who was now being carried past them, and many an eye grew dim as the beautiful invalid came in sight. Tachot seemed to notice this, for she raised her eyes from the sistrum and looked kindly and gratefully at the crowd. Suddenly the color left her face, she turned deadly pale, and the golden sistrum fell on to the stone pavement with a clang, close to Bartja's feet. He felt that he had been recognized and for one moment thought of hiding himself in the crowd; but only for one moment—his chivalrous feeling gained the day, he darted forward, picked up the sistrum, and forgetting the danger in which he was placing himself, held it out to the princess.

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Tachot looked at him earnestly before taking the golden sistrum from his hands, and then said, in a low voice, which only he could understand: "Are you Bartja? Tell me, in your mother's name—are you Bartja?"

"Yes, I am," was his answer, in a voice as low as her own, "your friend, Bartja."

He could not say more, for the priests pushed him back among the crowd. When he was in his old place, he noticed that Tachot, whose bearers had begun to move on again, was looking round at him. The color had come back into her cheeks, and her bright eyes were trying to meet his. He did not avoid them; she threw him a lotus-bud—he stooped to pick it up, and then broke his way through the crowd, for this hasty act had roused their attention.

A quarter of an hour later, he was seated in the boat which was to take him to Sappho and to his wedding. He was quite at ease now about Zopyrus. In Bartja's eyes his friend was already as good as saved, and in spite of the dangers which threatened himself, he felt strangely calm and happy, he could hardly say why.

Meanwhile the sick princess had been carried home, had had her oppressive ornaments taken off, and her couch carried on to one of the palace-balconies where she liked best to pass the hot summer days, sheltered by broad-leaved plants, and a kind of awning.

From this veranda, she could look down into the great fore-court of the palace, which was planted with trees. To-day it was full of priests, courtiers, generals and governors of provinces. Anxiety and suspense were expressed in every face: Amasis' last hour was drawing very near.

Tachot could not be seen from below; but listening with feverish eagerness, she could hear much that was said. Now that they had to dread the loss of their king, every one, even the priests, were full of his praises. The wisdom and circumspection of his plans and modes of government, his unwearied industry, the moderation he had always shown, the keenness of his wit, were, each and all, subjects of admiration. "How Egypt has prospered under Amasis' government!" said a Nomarch. "And what glory he gained for our arms, by the conquest of Cyprus and the war with the Libyans!" cried one of the generals. "How magnificently he embellished our temples, and what great honors he paid to the goddess of Sais!" exclaimed one of the singers of Neith. "And then how gracious and condescending he was!" murmured a courtier. "How cleverly he managed to keep peace with the great powers!" said the secretary of state, and the treasurer, wiping away a tear, cried: "How thoroughly he understood the management of the revenue! Since the reign of Rameses III. the treasury has not been so well filled as now." "Psamtik comes into a fine inheritance," lisped the courtier, and the soldier exclaimed, "Yes, but it's to be feared that he'll not spend it in a glorious war; he's too much under the influence of the

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priests.” “No, you are wrong there,” answered the temple-singer. “For some time past, our lord and master has seemed to disdain the advice of his most faithful servants.” “The successor of such a father will find it difficult to secure universal approbation,” said the Nomarch. “It is not every one who has the intellect, the good fortune and the wisdom of Amasis.” “The gods know that!” murmured the warrior with a sigh.

Tachot’s tears flowed fast. These words were a confirmation of what they had been trying to hide from her: she was to lose her dear father soon.

After she had made this dreadful certainty clear to her own mind, and discovered that it was in vain to beg her attendants to carry her to her dying father, she left off listening to the courtiers below, and began looking at the sistrum which Bartja himself had put into her hand, and which she had brought on to the balcony with her, as if seeking comfort there. And she found what she sought; for it seemed to her as if the sound of its sacred rings bore her away into a smiling, sunny landscape.

That faintness which so often comes over people in decline, had seized her and was sweetening her last hours with pleasant dreams.

The female slaves, who stood round to fan away the flies, said afterwards that Tachot had never looked so lovely.

She had lain about an hour in this state, when her breathing became more difficult, a slight cough made her breast heave, and the bright red blood trickled down from her lips on to her white robe. She awoke, and looked surprised and disappointed on seeing the faces round her. The sight of her mother, however, who came on to the veranda at that moment, brought a smile to her face, and she said, “O mother, I have had such a beautiful dream.”

“Then our visit to the temple has done my dear child good?” asked the queen, trembling at the sight of the blood on the sick girl’s lips.

“Oh, yes, mother, so much! for I saw him again.” Ladice’s glance at the attendants seemed to ask “Has your poor mistress lost her senses?” Tachot understood the look and said, evidently speaking with great difficulty: “You think I am wandering, mother. No, indeed, I really saw and spoke to him. He gave me my sistrum again, and said he was my friend, and then he took my lotus-bud and vanished. Don’t look so distressed and surprised, mother. What I say is really true; it is no dream.—There, you hear, Tentrut saw him too. He must have come to Sais for my sake, and so the child-oracle in the temple-court did not deceive me, after all. And now I don’t feel anything more of my illness; I dreamt I was lying in a field of blooming poppies, as red as the blood of the young lambs that are offered in sacrifice; Bartja was sitting by my side, and Nitetis was kneeling close to us and playing wonderful songs on a Nabla made of ivory. And there was such a lovely sound in the air that I felt as if Horus, the beautiful god of morning,

spring, and the resurrection, was kissing me. Yes, mother, I tell you he is coming soon, and when I am well, then—then—ah, mother what is this? . . . I am dying!”

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Ladice knelt down by her child's bed and pressed her lips in burning kisses on the girl's eyes as they grew dim in death.

An hour later she was standing by another bedside—her dying husband's.

Severe suffering had disfigured the king's features, the cold perspiration was standing on his forehead, and his hands grasped the golden lions on the arms of the deep-seated invalid chair in which he was resting, almost convulsively.

When Ladice came in he opened his eyes; they were as keen and intelligent as if he had never lost his sight.

"Why do not you bring Tachot to me?" he asked in a dry voice.

"She is too ill, and suffers so much, that . . ."

"She is dead! Then it is well with her, for death is not punishment; it is the end and aim of life,—the only end that we can attain without effort, but through sufferings!—the gods alone know how great. Osiris has taken her to himself, for she was innocent. And Nitetis is dead too. Where is Nebenchari's letter?"

"Here is the place: 'She took her own life, and died calling down a heavy curse on thee and thine. The poor, exiled, scorned and plundered oculist Nebenchari in Babylon sends thee this intelligence to Egypt. It is as true as his own hatred of thee.' Listen to these words, Psamtik, and remember how on his dying bed thy father told thee that, for every drachm of pleasure purchased on earth by wrong-doing, the dying bed will be burdened by a talent's weight of remorse. Fearful misery is coming on Egypt for Nitetis' sake. Cambyses is preparing to make war on us. He will sweep down on Egypt like a scorching wind from the desert. Much, which I have staked my nightly sleep and the very marrow of my existence to bring into existence, will be annihilated. Still I have not lived in vain. For forty years I have been the careful father and benefactor of a great nation. Children and children's children will speak of Amasis as a great, wise and humane king; they will read my name on the great works which I have built in Sais and Thebes, and will praise the greatness of my power. Neither shall I be condemned by Osiris and the forty-two judges of the nether world; the goddess of truth, who holds the balances, will find that my good deeds outweigh my bad."—Here the king sighed deeply and remained silent for some time. Then, looking tenderly at his wife, he said: "Ladice, thou hast been a faithful, virtuous wife to me. For this I thank thee, and ask thy forgiveness for much. We have often misunderstood one another. Indeed it was easier for me to accustom myself to the Greek modes of thought, than for a Greek to understand our Egyptian ideas. Thou know'st my love of Greek art,—thou know'st how I enjoyed the society of thy friend Pythagoras, who was thoroughly initiated in all that we believe and know, and adopted much from us. He comprehended the deep wisdom which lies in the doctrines that I reverence most, and he took care

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not to speak lightly of truths which our priests are perhaps too careful to hide from the people; for though the many bow down before that which they cannot understand, they would be raised and upheld by those very truths, if explained to them. To a Greek mind our worship of animals presents the greatest difficulty, but to my own the worship of the Creator in his creatures seems more just and more worthy of a human being, than the worship of his likeness in stone. The Greek deities are moreover subject to every human infirmity; indeed I should have made my queen very unhappy by living in the same manner as her great god Zeus."

At these words the king smiled, and then went on: "And what has given rise to this? The Hellenic love of beauty in form, which, in the eye of a Greek, is superior to every thing else. He cannot separate the body from the soul, because he holds it to be the most glorious of formed things, and indeed, believes that a beautiful spirit must necessarily inhabit a beautiful body. Their gods, therefore, are only elevated human beings, but we adore an unseen power working in nature and in ourselves. The animal takes its place between ourselves and nature; its actions are guided, not, like our own, by the letter, but by the eternal laws of nature, which owe their origin to the Deity, while the letter is a device of man's own mind. And then, too, where amongst ourselves do we find so earnest a longing and endeavor to gain freedom, the highest good, as among the animals? Where such a regular and well-balanced life from generation to generation, without instruction or precept?"

Here the king's voice failed. He was obliged to pause for a few moments, and then continued: "I know that my end is near; therefore enough of these matters. My son and successor, hear my last wishes and act upon them; they are the result of experience. But alas! how often have I seen, that rules of life given by one man to another are useless. Every man must earn his own experience. His own losses make him prudent, his own learning wise. Thou, my son, art coming to the throne at a mature age; thou hast had time and opportunity to judge between right and wrong, to note what is beneficial and what hurtful, to see and compare many things. I give thee, therefore, only a few wholesome counsels, and only fear that though I offer them with my right hand, thou wilt accept them with the left.

"First, however, I must say that, notwithstanding my blindness, my indifference to what has been going on during the past months has been only apparent. I left you to your own devices with a good intention. Rhodopis told me once one of her teacher AEsop's fables: 'A traveller, meeting a man on his road, asked him how long it would be before he reached the nearest town.' 'Go on, go on,' cried the other. 'But I want to know first when I shall get to the town.' 'Go on, only go on,' was the answer. The traveller left him with angry words and abuse; but he had not gone many steps when the man called after him: 'You will be there in an hour. I could not answer your question until I had seen your pace.'

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"I bore this fable in my mind for my son's sake, and watched in silence at what pace he was ruling his people. Now I have discovered what I wish to know, and this is my advice: Examine into everything your self. It is the duty of every man, but especially of a king, to acquaint himself intimately with all that concerns the weal or woe of his people. You, my son, are in the habit of using the eyes and ears of other men instead of going to the fountain-head yourself. I am sure that your advisers, the priests, only desire what is good; but . . . Neithotep, I must beg you to leave us alone for a few moments."

When the priest was gone the king exclaimed "They wish for what is good, but good only for themselves. But we are not kings of priests and aristocrats only, we are kings of a nation! Do not listen to the advice of this proud caste alone, but read every petition yourself, and, by appointing Nomarchs devoted to the king and beloved by the people, make yourself acquainted with the needs and wishes of the Egyptian nation. It is not difficult to govern well, if you are aware of the state of feeling in your land. Choose fit men to fill the offices of state. I have taken care that the kingdom shall be properly divided. The laws are good, and have proved themselves so; hold fast by these laws, and trust no one who sets himself above them; for law is invariably wiser than the individual man, and its transgressor deserves his punishment. The people understand this well, and are ready to sacrifice themselves for us, when they see that we are ready to give up our own will to the law. You do not care for the people. I know their voice is often rude and rough, but it utters wholesome truths, and no one needs to hear truth more than a king. The Pharaoh who chooses priests and courtiers for his advisers, will hear plenty of flattering words, while he who tries to fulfil the wishes of the nation will have much to suffer from those around him; but the latter will feel peace in his own heart, and be praised in the ages to come. I have often erred, yet the Egyptians will weep for me, as one who knew their needs and considered their welfare like a father. A king who really knows his duties, finds it an easy and beautiful task to win the love of the people—an unthankful one to gain the applause of the great—almost an impossibility to content both.

"Do not forget,—I say it again,—that kings and priests exist for the people, and not the people for their kings and priests. Honor religion for its own sake and as the most important means of securing the obedience of the governed to their governors; but at the same time show its promulgators that you look on them, not as receptacles, but as servants, of the Deity. Hold fast, as the law commands, by what is old; but never shut the gates of your kingdom against what is new, if better. Bad men break at once with the old traditions; fools only care for what is new and fresh; the narrowminded and the selfish

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privileged class cling indiscriminately to all that is old, and pronounce progress to be a sin; but the wise endeavor to retain all that has approved itself in the past, to remove all that has become defective, and to adopt whatever is good, from whatever source it may have sprung. Act thus, my son. The priests will try to keep you back—the Greeks to urge you forward. Choose one party or the other, but beware of indecision—of yielding to the one to-day, to the other to-morrow. Between two stools a man falls to the ground. Let the one party be your friends, the other your enemies; by trying to please both, you will have both opposed to you. Human beings hate the man who shows kindness to their enemies. In the last few months, during which you have ruled independently, both parties have been offended by your miserable indecision. The man who runs backwards and forwards like a child, makes no progress, and is soon weary. I have till now—till I felt that death was near—always encouraged the Greeks and opposed the priests. In the active business of life, the clever, brave Greeks seemed to me especially serviceable; at death, I want men who can make me out a pass into the nether regions. The gods forgive me for not being able to resist words that sound so like a joke, even in my last hour! They created me and must take me as I am. I rubbed my hands for joy when I became king; with thee, my son, coming to the throne is a graver matter.—Now call Neithotep back; I have still something to say to you both.”

The king gave his hand to the high-priest as he entered, saving: “I leave you, Neithotep, without ill-will, though my opinion that you have been a better priest than a servant to your king, remains unaltered. Psamtik will probably prove a more obedient follower than I have been, but one thing I wish to impress earnestly on you both: Do not dismiss the Greek mercenaries until the war with the Persians is over, and has ended we will hope—in victory for Egypt. My former predictions are not worth anything now; when death draws near, we get depressed, and things begin to look a little black. Without the auxiliary troops we shall be hopelessly lost, but with them victory is not impossible. Be clever; show the Ionians that they are fighting on the Nile for the freedom of their own country—that Cambyses, if victorious, will not be contented with Egypt alone, while his defeat may bring freedom to their own enslaved countrymen in Ionia. I know you agree with me, Neithotep, for in your heart you mean well to Egypt.—Now read me the prayers. I feel exhausted; my end must be very near. If I could only forget that poor Nitetis! had she the right to curse us? May the judges of the dead—may Osiris—have mercy on our souls! Sit down by me, Ladice; lay thy hand on my burning forehead. And Psamtik, in presence of these witnesses, swear to honor and respect thy step-mother, as if thou wert her own child. My poor wife! Come and seek me soon before

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the throne of Osiris. A widow and childless, what hast thou to do with this world? We brought up Nitetis as our own daughter, and yet we are so heavily punished for her sake. But her curse rests on us—and only on us;—not on thee, Psamtik, nor on thy children. Bring my grandson. Was that a tear? Perhaps; well, the little things to which one has accustomed one's self are generally the hardest to give up."

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Rhodopis entertained a fresh guest that evening; Kallias, the son of Phoenippus, the same who first appeared in our tale as the bearer of news from the Olympic games.

The lively, cheerful Athenian had just come back from his native country, and, as an old and tried friend, was not only received by Rhodopis, but made acquainted with the secret of Sappho's marriage.

Knakias, her old slave, had, it is true, taken in the flag which was the sign of reception, two days ago; but he knew that Kallias was always welcome to his mistress, and therefore admitted him just as readily as he refused every one else.

The Athenian had plenty to tell, and when Rhodopis was called away on business, he took his favorite Sappho into the garden, joking and teasing her gaily as they looked out for her lover's coming. But Bartja did not come, and Sappho began to be so anxious that Kallias called old Melitta, whose longing looks in the direction of Naukratis were, if possible, more anxious even than those of her mistress, and told her to fetch a musical instrument which he had brought with him.

It was a rather large lute, made of gold and ivory, and as he handed it to Sappho, he said, with a smile: "The inventor of this glorious instrument, the divine Anakreon, had it made expressly for me, at my own wish. He calls it a Barbiton, and brings wonderful tones from its chords—tones that must echo on even into the land of shadows. I have told this poet, who offers his life as one great sacrifice to the Muses, Eros and Dionysus, a great deal about you, and he made me promise to bring you this song, which he wrote on purpose for you, as a gift from himself.

"Now, what do you say to this song? But by Hercules, child, how pale you are! Have the verses affected you so much, or are you frightened at this likeness of your own longing heart? Calm yourself, girl. Who knows what may have happened to your lover?"

"Nothing has happened,—nothing," cried a gay, manly voice, and in a few seconds Sappho was in the arms of him she loved.

Kallias looked on quietly, smiling at the wonderful beauty of these two young lovers.

“But now,” said the prince, after Sappho had made him acquainted with Kallias, “I must go at once to your grandmother. We dare not wait four days for our wedding. It must be to-day! There is danger in every hour of delay. Is Theopompus here?”

“I think he must be,” said Sappho. “I know of nothing else, that could keep my grandmother so long in the house. But tell me, what is this about our marriage? It seems to me . . .”

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“Let us go in first, love. I fancy a thunder-storm must be coming on. The sky is so dark, and it’s so intolerably sultry.”

“As you like, only make haste, unless you mean me to die of impatience. There is not the slightest reason to be afraid of a storm. Since I was a child there has not been either lightning or thunder in Egypt at this time of year.”

“Then you will see something new to-day,” said Kallias, laughing; for a large drop of rain has just fallen on my bald head, “the Nile-swallows were flying close to the water as I came here, and you see there is a cloud coming over the moon already. Come in quickly, or you will get wet. Ho, slave, see that a black lamb is offered to the gods of the lower world.”

They found Theopompus sitting in Rhodopis’ own apartment, as Sappho had supposed. He had finished telling her the story of Zopyrus’ arrest, and of the journey which Bartja and his friends had taken on his behalf.

Their anxiety on the matter was beginning to be so serious, that Bartja’s unexpected appearance was a great relief. His words flew as he repeated the events of the last few hours, and begged Theopompus to look out at once for a ship in sailing order, to convey himself and his friends from Egypt.

“That suits famously,” exclaimed Kallias. “My own trireme brought me from Naukratis to-day; it is lying now, fully equipped for sea, in the port, and is quite at your service. I have only to send orders to the steersman to keep the crew together and everything in sailing order.—You are under no obligations to me; on the contrary it is I who have to thank you for the honor you will confer on me. Ho, Knakias!—tell my slave Philomelus, he’s waiting in the hall,—to take a boat to the port, and order my steersman Nausarchus to keep the ship in readiness for starting. Give him this seal; it empowers him to do all that is necessary.”

“And my slaves?” said Bartja.

“Knakias can tell my old steward to take them to Kallias’ ship,” answered Theopompus.

“And when they see this,” said Bartja, giving the old servant his ring, “they will obey without a question.”

Knakias went away with many a deep obeisance, and the prince went on: “Now, my mother, I have a great petition to ask of you.”

“I guess what it is,” said Rhodopis, with a smile. “You wish your marriage to be hastened, and I see that I dare not oppose your wish.”

“If I’m not mistaken,” said Kallias, “we have a remarkable case here. Two people are in great peril, and find that very peril a matter of rejoicing.”

“Perhaps you are right there,” said Bartja, pressing Sappho’s hand unperceived. And then, turning to Rhodopis again, he begged her to delay no longer in trusting her dearest treasure to his care,—a treasure whose worth he knew so well.

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Rhodopis rose, she laid her right hand on Sappho's head and her left on Bartja's, and said: "There is a myth which tells of a blue lake in the land of roses; its waves are sometimes calm and gentle, but at others they rise into a stormy flood; the taste of its waters is partly sweet as honey, partly bitter as gall. Ye will learn the meaning of this legend in the marriage-land of roses. Ye will pass calm and stormy-sweet and bitter hours there. So long as thou wert a child, Sappho, thy life passed on like a cloudless spring morning, but when thou becam'st a maiden, and hadst learnt to love, thine heart was opened to admit pain; and during the long months of separation pain was a frequent guest there. This guest will seek admission as long as life lasts. Bartja, it will be your duty to keep this intruder away from Sappho, as far as it lies in your power. I know the world. I could perceive,—even before Croesus told me of your generous nature,—that you were worthy of my Sappho. This justified me in allowing you to eat the quince with her; this induces me now to entrust to you, without fear, what I have always looked upon as a sacred pledge committed to my keeping. Look upon her too only as a loan. Nothing is more dangerous to love, than a comfortable assurance of exclusive possession—I have been blamed for allowing such an inexperienced child to go forth into your distant country, where custom is so unfavorable to women; but I know what love is;—I know that a girl who loves, knows no home but the heart of her husband;—the woman whose heart has been touched by Eros no misfortune but that of separation from him whom she has chosen. And besides, I would ask you, Kallias and Theopompus, is the position of your own wives so superior to that of the Persian women? Are not the women of Ionia and Attica forced to pass their lives in their own apartments, thankful if they are allowed to cross the street accompanied by suspicious and distrustful slaves? As to the custom which prevails in Persia of taking many wives, I have no fear either for Bartja or Sappho. He will be more faithful to his wife than are many Greeks, for he will find in her what you are obliged to seek, on the one hand in marriage, on the other in the houses of the cultivated Hetaere:—in the former, housewives and mothers, in the latter, animated and enlivening intellectual society. Take her, my son. I give her to you as an old warrior gives his sword, his best possession, to his stalwart son:—he gives it gladly and with confidence. Whithersoever she may go she will always remain a Greek, and it comforts me to think that in her new home she will bring honor to the Greek name and friends to our nation, Child, I thank thee for those tears. I can command my own, but fate has made me pay an immeasurable price for the power of doing so. The gods have heard your oath, my noble Bartja. Never forget it, but take her as your own, your friend, your wife. Take her away as soon as your friends return; it is not the will of the gods that the Hymenaeus should be sung at Sappho's nuptial rites."

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As she said these words she laid Sappho's hand in Bartja's, embraced her with passionate tenderness, and breathed a light kiss on the forehead of the young Persian. Then turning to her Greek friends, who stood by, much affected:

"That was a quiet nuptial ceremony," she said; "no songs, no torch-light! May their union be so much the happier. Melitta, bring the bride's marriage-ornaments, the bracelets and necklaces which lie in the bronze casket on my dressing-table, that our darling may give her hand to her lord attired as beseems a future princess."

"Yes, and do not linger on the way," cried Kallias, whose old cheerfulness had now returned. "Neither can we allow the niece of the greatest of Hymen's poets to be married without the sound of song and music. The young husband's house is, to be sure, too far off for our purpose, so we will suppose that the andronitis is his dwelling.

[The Hymenaeus was the wedding-song, so called because of its refrain "Hymen O! Hymenae' O!" The god of marriage, Hymen, took his origin and name from the hymn, was afterwards decked out richly with myths, and finally, according to Catullus, received a seat on Mount Helikon with the Muses.]

[A Greek bride was beautifully adorned for her marriage, and her bridesmaids received holiday garments. Homer, *Odyss.* VI. 27. Besides which, after the bath, which both bride and bridegroom were obliged to take, she was anointed with sweet-smelling essences. Thucyd. II. 15. Xenoph. *Symp.* II. 3.]

"We will conduct the maiden thither by the centre door, and there we will enjoy a merry wedding-feast by the family hearth. Here, slavegirls, come and form yourselves into two choruses. Half of your number take the part of the youths; the other half that of the maidens, and sing us Sappho's Hymenaeus. I will be the torch-bearer; that dignity is mine by right. You must know, Bartja, that my family has an hereditary right to carry the torches at the Eleusinian mysteries and we are therefore called Daduchi or torch-bearers. Ho, slave! see that the door of the andronitis is hung with flowers, and tell your comrades to meet us with a shower of sweetmeats as we enter. That's right, Melitta; why, how did you manage to get those lovely violet and myrtle marriage-crowns made so quickly? The rain is streaming through the opening above. You see, Hymen has persuaded Zeus to help him; so that not a single marriage-rite shall be omitted. You could not take the bath, which ancient custom prescribes for the bride and bridegroom on the morning of their wedding-day, so you have only to stand here a moment and take the rain of Zeus as an equivalent for the waters of the sacred spring. Now, girls, begin your song. Let the maidens bewail the rosy days of childhood, and the youths praise the lot of those who marry young."

Five well-practised treble voices now began to sing the chorus of virgins in a sad and plaintive tone.

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Suddenly the song was hushed, for a flash of lightning had shone down through the aperture beneath which Kallias had stationed the bride and bridegroom, followed by a loud peal of thunder. "See!" cried the Daduchus, raising his hand to heaven, "Zeus himself has taken the nuptial-torch, and sings the Hymenaeus for his favorites."

At dawn the next morning, Sappho and Bartja left the house and went into the garden. After the violent storm which had raged all night, the garden was looking as fresh and cheerful in the morning light as the faces of the newly-married pair.

Bartja's anxiety for his friends, whom he had almost forgotten in the excitement of his marriage, had roused them so early.

The garden had been laid out on an artificial hill, which overlooked the inundated plain. Blue and white lotus-blossoms floated on the smooth surface of the water, and vast numbers of water-birds hovered along the shores or over the flood. Flocks of white, herons appeared on the banks, their plumage gleaming like glaciers on distant mountain peaks; a solitary eagle circled upward on its broad pinions through the pure morning air, turtle-doves nestled in the tops of the palm-trees; pelicans and ducks fluttered screaming away, whenever a gay sail appeared. The air had been cooled by the storm, a fresh north-wind was blowing, and, notwithstanding the early hour, there were a number of boats sailing over the deluged fields before the breeze. The songs of the rowers, the plashing strokes of their oars and the cries of the birds, all contributed to enliven the watery landscape of the Nile valley, which, though varied in color, was somewhat monotonous.

Bartja and Sappho stood leaning on each other by the low wall which ran round Rhodopis' garden, exchanging tender words and watching the scene below, till at last Bartja's quick eye caught sight of a boat making straight for the house and coming on fast by the help of the breeze and powerful rowers.

A few minutes later the boat put in to shore and Zopyrus with his deliverers stood before them.

Darius's plan had succeeded perfectly, thanks to the storm, which, by its violence and the unusual time of its appearance, had scared the Egyptians; but still there was no time to be lost, as it might reasonably be supposed that the men of Sais would pursue their fugitive with all the means at their command.

Sappho, therefore, had to take a short farewell of her grandmother, all the more tender, however, for its shortness,—and then, led by Bartja and followed by old Melitta, who was to accompany her to Persia, she went on board Syloson's boat. After an hour's sail they reached a beautifully-built and fast-sailing vessel, the Hygieia, which belonged to Kallias.

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He was waiting for them on board his trireme. The leave-taking between himself and his young friends was especially affectionate. Bartja hung a heavy and costly gold chain round the neck of the old man in token of his gratitude, while Syloson, in remembrance of the dangers they had shared together, threw his purple cloak over Darius' shoulders. It was a master-specimen of Tynan dye, and had taken the latter's fancy. Darius accepted the gift with pleasure, and said, as he took leave: "You must never forget that I am indebted to you, my Greek friend, and as soon as possible give me an opportunity of doing you service in return."

"You ought to come to me first, though," exclaimed Zopyrus, embracing his deliverer. "I am perfectly ready to share my last gold piece with you; or what is more, if it would do you a service, to sit a whole week in that infernal hole from which you saved me. Ah! they're weighing anchor. Farewell, you brave Greek. Remember me to the flower-sisters, especially to the pretty, little Stephanion, and tell her her long-legged lover won't be able to plague her again for some time to come at least. And then, one more thing; take this purse of gold for the wife and children of that impertinent fellow, whom I struck too hard in the heat of the fray."

The anchors fell rattling on to the deck, the wind filled the sails, the Trieraules—[Flute-player to a trireme]—took his flute and set the measure of the monotonous Keleusma or rowing-song, which echoed again from the hold of the vessel. The beak of the ship bearing the statue of Hygieia, carved in wood, began to move. Bartja and Sappho stood at the helm and gazed towards Naukratis, until the shores of the Nile vanished and the green waves of the Hellenic sea splashed their foam over the deck of the trireme.

CHAPTER XII.

Our young bride and bridegroom had not travelled farther than Ephesus, when the news reached them that Amasis was dead. From Ephesus they went to Babylon, and thence to Pasargadae, which Kassandane, Atossa and Croesus had made their temporary residence. Kassandane was to accompany the army to Egypt, and wished, now that Nebenchari had restored her sight, to see the monument which had lately been built to her great husband's memory after Croesus' design, before leaving for so long a journey. She rejoiced in finding it worthy of the great Cyrus, and spent hours every day in the beautiful gardens which had been laid out round the mausoleum.

It consisted of a gigantic sarcophagus made of solid marble blocks, and resting like a house on a substructure composed of six high marble steps. The interior was fitted up like a room, and contained, beside the golden coffin in which were preserved such few remains of Cyrus as had been spared by the dogs, vultures, and elements, a silver bed and a table of the same metal, on which were golden drinking-cups and numerous garments ornamented with the rarest and most costly jewels.

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The building was forty feet high. The shady paradises—[Persian pleasure-gardens]—and colonnades by which it was surrounded had been planned by Croesus, and in the midst of the sacred grove was a dwelling-house for the Magi appointed to watch over the tomb.

The palace of Cyrus could be seen in the distance—a palace in which he had appointed that the future kings of Persia should pass at least some months of every year. It was a splendid building in the style of a fortress, and so inaccessibly placed that it had been fixed on as the royal treasure-house.

Here, in the fresh mountain air of a place dedicated to the memory of the husband she had loved so much, Kassandane felt well and at peace; she was glad too to see that Atossa was recovering the old cheerfulness, which she had so sadly lost since the death of Nitetis and the departure of Darius. Sappho soon became the friend of her new mother and sister, and all three felt very loath to leave the lovely Pasargadm.

Darius and Zopyrus had remained with the army which was assembling in the plains of the Euphrates, and Bartja too had to return thither before the march began.

Cambyes went out to meet his family on their return; he was much impressed with Sappho's great beauty, but she confessed to her husband that his brother only inspired her with fear.

The king had altered very much in the last few months. His formerly pale and almost noble features were reddened and disfigured by the quantities of wine he was in the habit of drinking. In his dark eyes there was the old fire still, but dimmed and polluted. His hair and beard, formerly so luxuriant, and black as the raven's wing, hung down grey and disordered over his face and chin, and the proud smile which used so to improve his features had given way to an expression of contemptuous annoyance and harsh severity.

Sometimes he laughed,—loudly, immoderately and coarsely; but this was only when intoxicated, a condition which had long ceased to be unusual with him.

He continued to retain an aversion to his wives; so much so that the royal harem was to be left behind in Susa, though all his court took their favorite wives and concubines with them on the campaign. Still no one could complain that the king was ever guilty of injustice; indeed he insisted more eagerly now than before on the rigid execution of the law; and wherever he detected an abuse his punishments were cruel and inexorable. Hearing that a judge, named Sisamnes, had been bribed to pronounce an unjust sentence, he condemned the wretched man to be flayed, ordered the seat of justice to be covered with his skin, appointed the son to the father's vacant place and compelled him to occupy this fearful seat.—[Herodot. V. 25.]—Cambyes was untiring as

commander of the forces, and superintended the drilling of the troops assembled near Babylon with the greatest rigor and circumspection.

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The hosts were to march after the festival of the New Year, which Cambyses celebrated this time with immense expense and profusion. The ceremony over, he betook himself to the army. Bartja was there. He came up to his brother, beaming with joy, kissed the hem of his robe, and told him in a tone of triumph that he hoped to become a father. The king trembled as he heard the words, vouchsafed his brother no answer, drank himself into unconsciousness that evening, and the next morning called the soothsayers, Magi and Chaldaeans together, in order to submit a question to them. "Shall I be committing a sin against the gods, if I take my sister to wife and thus verify the promise of the dream, which ye formerly interpreted to mean that Atossa should bear a future king to this realm?"

The Magi consulted a short time together. Then Oropastes cast himself at the king's feet and said, "We do not believe, O King, that this marriage would be a sin against the gods; inasmuch as, first: it is a custom among the Persians to marry with their own kin; and secondly, though it be not written in the law that the pure man may marry his sister, it is written that the king may do what seemeth good in his own eyes. That which pleaseth thee is therefore always lawful."

Cambyses sent the Magi away with rich gifts, gave Oropastes full powers as regent of the kingdom in his absence, and soon after told his horrified mother that, as soon as the conquest of Egypt and the punishment of the son of Amasis should have been achieved, he intended to marry his sister Atossa.

At length the immense host, numbering more than 800,000 fighting men, departed in separate divisions, and reached the Syrian desert in two months. Here they were met by the Arabian tribes whom Phanes had propitiated—the Amalekites and Geshurites—bringing camels and horses laden with water for the host.

At Accho, in the land of the Canaanites, the fleets of the Syrians, Phoenicians and Ionians belonging to Persia, and the auxiliary ships from Cyprus and Samos, won by the efforts of Phanes, were assembled. The case of the Samian fleet was a remarkable one. Polykrates saw in Cambyses' proposal a favorable opportunity of getting rid of all the citizens who were discontented with his government, manned forty triremes with eight thousand malcontent Samians, and sent them to the Persians with the request that not one might be allowed to return home.—[Herod. III. 44.]

As soon as Phanes heard this he warned the doomed men, who at once, instead of sailing to join the Persian forces, returned to Samos and attempted to overthrow Polykrates. They were defeated, however, on land, and escaped to Sparta to ask help against the tyrant.

A full month before the time of the inundation, the Persian and Egyptian armies were standing face to face near Pelusium on the north-east coast of the Delta.

Phanes' arrangements had proved excellent. The Arabian tribes had kept faith so well that the journey through the desert, which would usually have cost thousands of lives, had been attended with very little loss, and the time of year had been so well chosen that the Persian troops reached Egypt by dry roads and without inconvenience.

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The king met his Greek friend with every mark of distinction, and returned a friendly nod when Phanes said: "I hear that you have been less cheerful than usual since the death of your beautiful bride. A woman's grief passes in stormy and violent complaint, but the sterner character of a man cannot so soon be comforted. I know what you feel, for I have lost my dearest too. Let us both praise the gods for granting us the best remedy for our grief—war and revenge." Phanes accompanied the king to an inspection of the troops and to the evening revel. It was marvellous to see the influence he exercised over this fierce spirit, and how calm—nay even cheerful—Cambyses became, when the Athenian was near.

The Egyptian army was by no means contemptible, even when compared with the immense Persian hosts. Its position was covered on the right by the walls of Pelusium, a frontier fortress designed by the Egyptian kings as a defence against incursions from the east. The Persians were assured by deserters that the Egyptian army numbered altogether nearly six hundred thousand men. Beside a great number of chariots of war, thirty thousand Karian and Ionian mercenaries, and the corps of the Mazai, two hundred and fifty thousand Kalasirians, one hundred and sixty thousand Hermotybians, twenty thousand horsemen, and auxiliary troops, amounting to more than fifty thousand, were assembled under Psantik's banner; amongst these last the Libyan Maschawascha were remarkable for their military deeds, and the Ethiopians for their numerical superiority.

The infantry were divided into regiments and companies, under different standards, and variously equipped.

[In these and the descriptions immediately following, we have drawn our information, either from the drawings made from Egyptian monuments in Champollion, Wilkinson, Rosellini and Lepsius, or from the monuments themselves. There is a dagger in the Berlin Museum, the blade of which is of bronze, the hilt of ivory and the sheath of leather. Large swords are only to be seen in the hands of the foreign auxiliaries, but the native Egyptians are armed with small ones, like daggers. The largest one of which we have any knowledge is in the possession of Herr E. Brugsch at Cairo. It is more than two feet long.]

The heavy-armed soldiers carried large shields, lances, and daggers; the swordsmen and those who fought with battle-axes had smaller shields and light clubs; beside these, there were slingers, but the main body of the army was composed of archers, whose bows unbent were nearly the height of a man. The only clothing of the horse-soldiers was the apron, and their weapon a light club in the form of a mace or battle-axe. Those warriors, on the contrary, who fought in chariots belonged to the highest rank of the military caste, spent large sums on the decoration of their two-wheeled chariots and the harness of their magnificent horses, and went to battle in their most costly ornaments. They were armed with bows and lances, and a charioteer stood beside each, so that their undivided attention could be bestowed upon the battle.

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The Persian foot was not much more numerous than the Egyptian, but they had six times the number of horse-soldiers.

As soon as the armies stood face to face, Cambyses caused the great Pelusian plain to be cleared of trees and brushwood, and had the sand-hills removed which were to be found here and there, in order to give his cavalry and scythe-chariots a fair field of action. Phanes' knowledge of the country was of great use. He had drawn up a plan of action with great military skill, and succeeded in gaining not only Cambyses' approval, but that of the old general Megabyzus and the best tacticians among the Achaemenidae. His local knowledge was especially valuable on account of the marshes which intersected the Pelusian plain, and might, unless carefully avoided, have proved fatal to the Persian enterprise. At the close of the council of war Phanes begged to be heard once more: "Now, at length," he said, "I am at liberty to satisfy your curiosity in reference to the closed waggons full of animals, which I have had transported hither. They contain five thousand cats! Yes, you may laugh, but I tell you these creatures will be more serviceable to us than a hundred thousand of our best soldiers. Many of you are aware that the Egyptians have a superstition which leads them rather to die than kill a cat, I, myself, nearly paid for such a murder once with my life. Remembering this, I have been making a diligent search for cats during my late journey; in Cyprus, where there are splendid specimens, in Samos and in Crete. All I could get I ordered to be caught, and now propose that they be distributed among those troops who will be opposed to the native Egyptian soldiers. Every man must be told to fasten one firmly to his shield and hold it out as he advances towards the enemy. I will wager that there's not one real Egyptian, who would not rather fly from the battle-field than take aim at one of these sacred animals."

This speech was met by a loud burst of laughter; on being discussed, however, it was approved of, and ordered to be carried out at once. The ingenious Greek was honored by receiving the king's hand to kiss, his expenses were reimbursed by a magnificent present, and he was urged to take a daughter of some noble Persian family in marriage.

[Themistocles too, on coming to the Persian court, received a high-born Persian wife in marriage. Diod. XI. 57.]

The king concluded by inviting him to supper, but this the Athenian declined, on the plea that he must review the Ionian troops, with whom he was as yet but little acquainted, and withdrew.

At the door of his tent he found his slaves disputing with a ragged, dirty and unshaven old man, who insisted on speaking with their master. Fancying he must be a beggar, Phanes threw him a piece of gold; the old man did not even stoop to pick it up, but, holding the Athenian fast by his cloak, cried, "I am Aristomachus the Spartan!"

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Cruelly as he was altered, Phanes recognized his old friend at once, ordered his feet to be washed and his head anointed, gave him wine and meat to revive his strength, took his rags off and laid a new chiton over his emaciated, but still sinewy, frame.

Aristomachus received all in silence; and when the food and wine had given him strength to speak, began the following answer to Phanes' eager questions.

On the murder of Phanes' son by Psamtik, he had declared his intention of leaving Egypt and inducing the troops under his command to do the same, unless his friend's little daughter were at once set free, and a satisfactory explanation given for the sudden disappearance of the boy. Psamtik promised to consider the matter. Two days later, as Aristomachus was going up the Nile by night to Memphis, he was seized by Egyptian soldiers, bound and thrown into the dark hold of a boat, which, after a voyage of many days and nights, cast anchor on a totally unknown shore. The prisoners were taken out of their dungeon and led across a desert under the burning sun, and past rocks of strange forms, until they reached a range of mountains with a colony of huts at its base. These huts were inhabited by human beings, who, with chains on their feet, were driven every morning into the shaft of a mine and there compelled to hew grains of gold out of the stony rock. Many of these miserable men had passed forty years in this place, but most died soon, overcome by the hard work and the fearful extremes of heat and cold to which they were exposed on entering and leaving the mine.

[Diodorus (III. 12.) describes the compulsory work in the gold mines with great minuteness. The convicts were either prisoners taken in war, or people whom despotism in its blind fury found it expedient to put out of the way. The mines lay in the plain of Koptos, not far from the Red Sea. Traces of them have been discovered in modern times. Interesting inscriptions of the time of Rameses the Great, (14 centuries B. C.) referring to the gold-mines, have been found, one at Radesich, the other at Kubnn, and have been published and deciphered in Europe.]

"My companions," continued Aristomachus, "were either condemned murderers to whom mercy had been granted, or men guilty of high treason whose tongues had been cut out, and others such as myself whom the king had reason to fear. Three months I worked among this set, submitting to the strokes of the overseer, fainting under the fearful heat, and stiffening under the cold dews of night. I felt as if picked out for death and only kept alive by the hope of vengeance. It happened, however, by the mercy of the gods, that at the feast of Pacht, our guards, as is the custom of the Egyptians, drank so freely as to fall into a deep sleep, during which I and a young Jew who had been deprived of his right hand for having used false weights in trade, managed to escape unperceived; Zeus Lacedaemonius and the

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great God whom this young man worshipped helped us in our need, and, though we often heard the voices of our pursuers, they never succeeded in capturing us. I had taken a bow from one of our guards; with this we obtained food, and when no game was to be found we lived on roots, fruits and birds' eggs. The sun and stars showed us our road. We knew that the gold-mines were not far from the Red Sea and lay to the south of Memphis. It was not long before we reached the coast; and then, pressing onwards in a northerly direction, we fell in with some friendly mariners, who took care of us until we were taken up by an Arabian boat. The young Jew understood the language spoken by the crew, and in their care we came to Eziongeber in the land of Edom. There we heard that Cambyses was coming with an immense army against Egypt, and travelled as far as Harma under the protection of an Amalekite caravan bringing water to the Persian army. From thence I went on to Pelusium in the company of some stragglers from the Asiatic army, who now and then allowed me a seat on their horses, and here I heard that you had accepted a high command in Cambyses' army. I have kept my vow, I have been true to my nation in Egypt; now it is your turn to help old Aristomachus in gaining the only thing he still cares for—revenge on his persecutors."

"And that you shall have!" cried Phanes, grasping the old man's hand. "You shall have the command of the heavy-armed Milesian troops, and liberty to commit what carnage you like among the ranks of our enemies. This, however, is only paying half the debt I owe you. Praised be the gods, who have put it in my power to make you happy by one single sentence. Know then, Aristomachus, that, only a few days after your disappearance, a ship arrived in the harbor of Naukratis from Sparta. It was guided by your own noble son and expressly sent by the Ephori in your honor—to bring the father of two Olympic victors back to his native land."

The old man's limbs trembled visibly at these words, his eyes filled with tears and he murmured a prayer. Then smiting his forehead, he cried in a voice trembling with feeling: "Now it is fulfilled! now it has become a fact! If I doubted the words of thy priestess, O Phoebus Apollo! pardon my sin! What was the promise of the oracle?"

"If once the warrior hosts from the snow-topped mountains descending, Come to the fields of the stream watering richly the plain, Then shall the lingering boat to the beckoning meadows convey thee, Which to the wandering foot peace and a home can afford. When those warriors come, from the snow-topped mountains descending, Then will the powerful Five grant thee what long they refused."

"The promise of the god is fulfilled. Now I may return home, and I will; but first I raise my hands to Dice, the unchanging goddess of justice, and implore her not to deny me the pleasure of revenge."

"The day of vengeance will dawn to-morrow," said Phanes, joining in the old man's prayer. "Tomorrow I shall slaughter the victims for the dead—for my son—and will take no rest until Cambyses has pierced the heart of Egypt with the arrows which I have cut

for him. Come, my friend, let me take you to the king. One man like you can put a whole troop of Egyptians to flight.”

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It was night. The Persian soldiers, their position being unfortified, were in order of battle, ready to meet any unexpected attack. The foot-soldiers stood leaning on their shields, the horsemen held their horses saddled and bridled near the camp-fires. Cambyses was riding through the ranks, encouraging his troops by words and looks. Only one part of the army was not yet ranged in order of battle—the centre. It was composed of the Persian body-guard, the apple-bearers, Immortals, and the king's own relatives, who were always led into battle by the king in person.

The Ionian Greeks too had gone to rest, at Phanes' command. He wanted to keep his men fresh, and allowed them to sleep in their armor, while he kept watch. Aristomachus was welcomed with shouts of joy by the Greeks, and kindly by Cambyses, who assigned him, at the head of one half the Greek troops, a place to the left of the centre attack, while Phanes, with the other half, had his place at the right. The king himself was to take the lead at the head of the ten thousand Immortals, preceded by the blue, red and gold imperial banner and the standard of Kawe. Bartja was to lead the regiment of mounted guards numbering a thousand men, and that division of the cavalry which was entirely clothed in mail.

Croesus commanded a body of troops whose duty it was to guard the camp with its immense treasures, the wives of Cambyses' nobles, and his own mother and sister.

At last Mithras appeared and shed his light upon the earth; the spirits of the night retired to their dens, and the Magi stirred up the sacred fire which had been carried before the army the whole way from Babylon, until it became a gigantic flame. They and the king united in feeding it with costly perfumes, Cambyses offered the sacrifice, and, holding the while a golden bowl high in the air, besought the gods to grant him victory and glory. He then gave the password, "Auramazda, the helper and guide," and placed himself at the head of his guards, who went into the battle with wreaths on their tiaras. The Greeks offered their own sacrifices, and shouted with delight on hearing that the omens were auspicious. Their war-cry was "Hebe."

Meanwhile the Egyptian priests had begun their day also with prayer and sacrifice, and had then placed their army in order of battle.

Psamtik, now King of Egypt, led the centre. He was mounted on a golden chariot; the trappings of his horses were of gold and purple, and plumes of ostrich feathers nodded on their proud heads. He wore the double crown of Upper and Lower Egypt, and the charioteer who stood at his left hand holding the reins and whip, was descended from one of the noblest Egyptian families.

The Hellenic and Karian mercenaries were to fight at the left of the centre, the horse at the extreme of each wing, and the Egyptian and Ethiopian foot were stationed, six ranks deep, on the right and left of the armed chariots, and Greek mercenaries.

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Psamtik drove through the ranks of his army, giving encouraging and friendly words to all the men. He drew up before the Greek division, and addressed them thus: "Heroes of Cyprus and Libya! your deeds in arms are well known to me, and I rejoice in the thought of sharing your glory to-day and crowning you with fresh laurels. Ye have no need to fear, that in the day of victory I shall curtail your liberties. Malicious tongues have whispered that this is all ye have to expect from me; but I tell you, that if we conquer, fresh favors will be shown to you and your descendants; I shall call you the supporters of my throne. Ye are fighting to-day, not for me alone, but for the freedom of your own distant homes. It is easy to perceive that Cambyses, once lord of Egypt, will stretch out his rapacious hand over your beautiful Hellas and its islands. I need only remind you, that they be between Egypt and your Asiatic brethren who are already groaning under the Persian yoke. Your acclamations prove that ye agree with me already, but I must ask for a still longer hearing. It is my duty to tell you who has sold, not only Egypt, but his own country to the King of Persia, in return for immense treasures. The man's name is Phanes! You are angry and inclined to doubt? I swear to you, that this very Phanes has accepted Cambyses' gold and promised not only to be his guide to Egypt, but to open the gates of your own Greek cities to him. He knows the country and the people, and can be bribed to every perfidy. Look at him! there he is, walking by the side of the king. See how he bows before him! I thought I had heard once, that the Greeks only prostrated themselves before their gods. But of course, when a man sells his country, he ceases to be its citizen. Am I not right? Ye scorn to call so base a creature by the name of countryman? Yes? then I will deliver the wretch's daughter into your hands. Do what ye will with the child of such a villain. Crown her with wreaths of roses, fall down before her, if it please you, but do not forget that she belongs to a man who has disgraced the name of Hellene, and has betrayed his countrymen and country!"

As he finished speaking the men raised a wild cry of rage and took possession of the trembling child. A soldier held her up, so that her father—the troops not being more than a bow-shot apart—could see all that happened. At the same moment an Egyptian, who afterwards earned celebrity through the loudness of his voice, cried: "Look here, Athenian! see how treachery and corruption are rewarded in this country!" A bowl of wine stood near, provided by the king, from which the soldiers had just been drinking themselves into intoxication. A Karian seized it, plunged his sword into the innocent child's breast, and let the blood flow into the bowl; filled a goblet with the awful mixture, and drained it, as if drinking to the health of the wretched father. Phanes stood watching the scene, as if struck into a statue of cold stone. The rest of the soldiers then fell upon the bowl like madmen, and wild beasts could not have lapped up the foul drink with greater eagerness.— [Herodotus tells this fearful tale (III. ii.)]

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In the same moment Psamtik triumphantly shot off his first arrow into the Persian ranks.

The mercenaries flung the child's dead body on to the ground; drunk with her blood, they raised their battle-song, and rushed into the strife far ahead of their Egyptian comrades.

But now the Persian ranks began to move. Phanes, furious with pain and rage, led on his heavy-armed troops, indignant too at the brutal barbarity of their countrymen, and dashed into the ranks of those very soldiers, whose love he had tried to deserve during ten years of faithful leadership.

At noon, fortune seemed to be favoring the Egyptians; but at sunset the Persians had the advantage, and when the full-moon rose, the Egyptians were flying wildly from the battle-field, perishing in the marshes and in the arm of the Nile which flowed behind their position, or being cut to pieces by the swords of their enemies.

Twenty thousand Persians and fifty thousand Egyptians lay dead on the blood-stained sea-sand. The wounded, drowned, and prisoners could scarcely be numbered.

[Herod. III. 12. Ktesias, Persica 9. In ancient history the loss of the conquered is always far greater than that of the conquerors. To a certain extent this holds good in the present day, but the proportion is decidedly not so unfavorable for the vanquished.]

Psamtik had been one of the last to fly. He was well mounted, and, with a few thousand faithful followers, reached the opposite bank of the Nile and made for Memphis, the well-fortified city of the Pyramids.

Of the Greek mercenaries very few survived, so furious had been Phanes' revenge, and so well had he been supported by his Ionians. Ten thousand Karians were taken captive and the murderer of his little child was killed by Phanes' own hand.

Aristomachus too, in spite of his wooden leg, had performed miracles of bravery; but, notwithstanding all their efforts, neither he, nor any of his confederates in revenge, had succeeded in taking Psamtik prisoner.

When the battle was over, the Persians returned in triumph to their tents, to be warmly welcomed by Croesus and the warriors and priests who had remained behind, and to celebrate their victory by prayers and sacrifices.

The next morning Cambyses assembled his generals and rewarded them with different tokens of distinction, such as costly robes, gold chains, rings, swords, and stars formed of precious stones. Gold and silver coins were distributed among the common soldiers.

The principal attack of the Egyptians had been directed against the centre of the Persian army, where Cambyses commanded in person; and with such effect that the

guards had already begun to give way. At that moment Bartja, arriving with his troop of horsemen, had put fresh courage into the wavering, had fought like a lion himself, and by his bravery and promptitude decided the day in favor of the Persians.

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The troops were exultant in their joy: they shouted his praises, as “the conqueror of Pelusium” and the “best of the Achaemenidae.”

Their cries reached the king’s ears and made him very angry. He knew he had been fighting at the risk of life, with real courage and the strength of a giant, and yet the day would have been lost if this boy had not presented him with the victory. The brother who had embittered his days of happy love, was now to rob him of half his military glory. Cambyses felt that he hated Bartja, and his fist clenched involuntarily as he saw the young hero looking so happy in the consciousness of his own well-earned success.

Phanes had been wounded and went to his tent; Aristomachus lay near him, dying.

“The oracle has deceived me, after all,” he murmured. “I shall die without seeing my country again.”

“The oracle spoke the truth,” answered Phanes. “Were not the last words of the Pythia?”

‘Then shall the lingering boat to the beckoning meadows convey thee,
Which to the wandering foot peace and a home will afford?’

“Can you misunderstand their meaning? They speak of Charon’s lingering boat, which will convey you to your last home, to the one great resting-place for all wanderers—the kingdom of Hades.”

“Yes, my friend, you are right there. I am going to Hades.”

“And the Five have granted you, before death, what they so long refused, —the return to Lacedaemon. You ought to be thankful to the gods for granting you such sons and such vengeance on your enemies. When my wound is healed, I shall go to Greece and tell your son that his father died a glorious death, and was carried to the grave on his shield, as beseems a hero.”

“Yes, do so, and give him my shield as a remembrance of his old father. There is no need to exhort him to virtue.”

“When Psamtik is in our power, shall I tell him what share you had in his overthrow?”

“No; he saw me before he took to flight, and at the unexpected vision his bow fell from his hand. This was taken by his friends as a signal for flight, and they turned their horses from the battle.”

“The gods ordain, that bad men shall be ruined by their own deeds. Psamtik lost courage, for he must have believed that the very spirits of the lower world were fighting against him.”

“We mortals gave him quite enough to do. The Persians fought well. But the battle would have been lost without the guards and our troops.”

“Without doubt.”

“I thank thee, O Zeus Lacedaemonius.”

“You are praying?”

“I am praising the gods for allowing me to die at ease as to my country. These heterogeneous masses can never be dangerous to Greece. Ho, physician, when am I likely to die?”

The Milesian physician, who had accompanied the Greek troops to Egypt, pointed to the arrow-head sticking fast in his breast, and said with a sad smile, “You have only a few hours more to live. If I were to draw the arrow from your wound, you would die at once.”

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The Spartan thanked him, said farewell to Phanes, sent a greeting to Rhodopis, and then, before they could prevent him, drew the arrow from his wound with an unflinching hand. A few moments later Aristomachus was dead.

The same day a Persian embassy set out for Memphis on board one of the Lesbian vessels. It was commissioned to demand from Psamtik the surrender of his own person and of the city at discretion. Cambyses followed, having first sent off a division of his army under Megabyzus to invest Sais.

At Heliopolis he was met by deputations from the Greek inhabitants of Naukratis and the Libyans, praying for peace and his protection, and bringing a golden wreath and other rich presents. Cambyses received them graciously and assured them of his friendship; but repulsed the messengers from Cyrene and Barka indignantly, and flung, with his own hand, their tribute of five hundred silver mince among his soldiers, disdaining to accept so contemptible an offering.

In Heliopolis he also heard that, at the approach of his embassy, the inhabitants of Memphis had flocked to the shore, bored a hole in the bottom of the ship, torn his messengers in pieces without distinction, as wild beasts would tear raw flesh, and dragged them into the fortress. On hearing this he cried angrily: "I swear, by Mithras, that these murdered men shall be paid for; ten lives for one."

Two days later and Cambyses with his army stood before the gates of Memphis. The siege was short, as the garrison was far too small for the city, and the citizens were discouraged by the fearful defeat at Pelusium.

King Psamtik himself came out to Cambyses, accompanied by his principal nobles, in rent garments, and with every token of mourning. Cambyses received him coldly and silently, ordering him and his followers to be guarded and removed. He treated Ladice, the widow of Amasis, who appeared at the same time as her step-son, with consideration, and, at the intercession of Phanes, to whom she had always shown favor, allowed her to return to her native town of Cyrene under safe conduct. She remained there until the fall of her nephew, Arcesilaus III. and the flight of her sister Pheretime, when she betook herself to Anthylla, the town in Egypt which belonged to her, and where she passed a quiet, solitary existence, dying at a great age.

Cambyses not only scorned to revenge the imposture which had been practised on him on a woman, but, as a Persian, had far too much respect for a mother, and especially for the mother of a king, to injure Ladice in any way.

While he was engaged in the siege of Sais, Psamtik passed his imprisonment in the palace of the Pharaohs, treated in every respect as a king, but strictly guarded.

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Among those members of the upper class who had incited the people to resistance, Neithotep, the high-priest of Neith, had taken the foremost place. He was therefore sent to Memphis and put in close confinement, with one hundred of his unhappy confederates. The larger number of the Pharaoh's court, on the other hand, did homage voluntarily to Cambyses at Sais, entitled him Ramestu, "child of the sun," and suggested that he should cause himself to be crowned King of Upper and Lower Egypt, with all the necessary formalities, and admitted into the priestly caste according to ancient custom. By the advice of Croesus and Phanes, Cambyses gave in to these proposals, though much against his own will: he went so far, indeed, as to offer sacrifice in the temple of Neith, and allowed the newly-created high-priest of the goddess to give him a superficial insight into the nature of the mysteries. Some of the courtiers he retained near himself, and promoted different administrative functionaries to high posts; the commander of Amasis' Nile fleet succeeded so well in gaining the king's favor, as to be appointed one of those who ate at the royal table.

[On a statue in the Gregorian Museum in the Vatican, there is an inscription giving an account of Cambyses' sojourn at Sais, which agrees with the facts related in our text. He was lenient to his conquered subjects, and, probably in order to secure his position as the lawful Pharaoh, yielded to the wishes of the priests, was even initiated into the mysteries and did much for the temple of Neith. His adoption of the name Ramestu is also confirmed by this statue. E. de Roug, *Memoire sur la statuette naophore du musee Gregorian, au Vatican*. *Revue Archeol.* 1851.]

On leaving Sais, Cambyses placed Megabyzus in command of the city; but scarcely had the king quitted their walls than the smothered rage of the people broke forth; they murdered the Persian sentinels, poisoned the wells, and set the stables of the cavalry on fire. Megabyzus at once applied to the king, representing that such hostile acts, if not repressed by fear, might soon be followed by open rebellion. "The two thousand noble youths from Memphis whom you have destined to death as an indemnification for our murdered ambassadors," said he, "ought to be executed at once; and it would do no harm if the son of Psamtik were added to the number, as he can some day become a rallying centre for the rebels. I hear that the daughters of the dethroned king and of the high-priest Neithotep have to carry water for the baths of the noble Phanes."

The Athenian answered with a smile: "Cambyses has allowed me to employ these aristocratic female attendants, my lord, at my own request."

"But has forbidden you to touch the life of one member of the royal house," added Cambyses. "None but a king has the right to punish kings."

Phanes bowed. The king turned to Megabyzus and ordered him to have the prisoners executed the very next day, as an example. He would decide the fate of the young prince later; but at all events he was to be taken to the place of execution with the rest.

“We must show them,” he concluded, “that we know how to meet all their hostile manifestations with sufficient rigor.”

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Croesus ventured to plead for the innocent boy. "Calm yourself, old friend," said Cambyses with a smile; "the child is not dead yet, and perhaps will be as well off with us as your own son, who fought so well at Pelusium. I confess I should like to know, whether Psamtik bears his fate as calmly and bravely as you did twenty-five years ago."

"That we can easily discover, by putting him on trial," said Phanes. "Let him be brought into the palace-court to-morrow, and let the captives and the condemned be led past him. Then we shall see whether he is a man or a coward."

"Be it so," answered Cambyses. "I will conceal myself and watch him unobserved. You, Phanes, will accompany me, to tell me the name and rank of each of the captives."

The next morning Phanes accompanied the king on to a balcony which ran round the great court of the palace—the court we have already described as being planted with trees. The listeners were hidden by a grove of flowering shrubs, but they could see every movement that took place, and hear every word that was spoken beneath them. They saw Psamtik, surrounded by a few of his former companions. He was leaning against a palm-tree, his eyes fixed gloomily on the ground, as his daughters entered the court. The daughter of Neithotep was with them, and some more young girls, all dressed as slaves; they were carrying pitchers of water. At sight of the king, they uttered such a loud cry of anguish as to wake him from his reverie. He looked up, recognized the miserable girls, and bowed his head lower than before; but only for a moment. Drawing himself up quickly, he asked his eldest daughter for whom she was carrying water. On hearing that she was forced to do the work of a slave for Phanes, he turned deadly pale, nodded his head, and cried to the girls, "Go on."

A few minutes later the captives were led into the court, with ropes round their necks, and bridles in their mouths.

[This statement of Herodotus (III. 14.) is confirmed by the monuments, on which we often see representations of captives being led along with ropes round their necks. What follows is taken entirely from the same passage in Herodotus.]

At the head of the train was the little prince Necho. He stretched his hands out to his father, begging him to punish the bad foreigners who wanted to kill him. At this sight the Egyptians wept in their exceeding great misery; but Psamtik's eyes were dry. He bowed his tearless face nearly to the earth, and waved his child a last farewell.

After a short interval, the captives taken in Sais entered. Among them was Neithotep, the once powerful high-priest, clothed in rags and moving with difficulty by the help of a staff. At the entrance-gate he raised his eyes and caught sight of his former pupil Darius. Reckless of all the spectators around him, he went straight up to the young man, poured out the story of his need, besought his help, and ended by begging an alms. Darius complied at once, and by so doing, induced others of the Achaemenidae,

who were standing by, to hail the old man jokingly and throw him little pieces of money, which he picked up laboriously and thankfully from the ground.

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At this sight Psamtik wept aloud, and smote upon his forehead, calling on the name of his friend in a voice full of woe.

Cambyses was so astonished at this, that he came forward to the balustrade of the veranda, and pushing the flowers aside, exclaimed: "Explain thyself, thou strange man; the misfortunes of a beggar, not even akin to thee, move thy compassion, but thou canst behold thy son on the way to execution and thy daughters in hopeless misery without shedding a tear, or uttering a lament!"

Psamtik looked up at his conqueror, and answered: "The misfortunes of my own house, O son of Cyrus, are too great for tears; but I may be permitted to weep over the afflictions of a friend, fallen, in his old age, from the height of happiness and influence into the most miserable beggary."

Cambyses' face expressed his approval, and on looking round he saw that his was not the only eye which was filled with tears. Croesus, Bartja, and all the Persians—nay, even Phanes himself, who had served as interpreter to the kings—were weeping aloud.

The proud conqueror was not displeased at these signs of sympathy, and turning to the Athenian: "I think, my Greek friend" he said, "we may consider our wrongs as avenged. Rise, Psamtik, and endeavor to imitate yonder noble old man, (pointing to Croesus) by accustoming yourself to your fate. Your father's fraud has been visited on you and your family. The crown, which I have wrested from you is the crown of which Amasis deprived my wife, my never-to-be-forgotten Nitetis. For her sake I began this war, and for her sake I grant you now the life of your son—she loved him. From this time forward you can live undisturbed at our court, eat at our table and share the privileges of our nobles. Gyges, fetch the boy hither. He shall be brought up as you were, years ago, among the sons of the Achaemenidae."

The Lydian was hastening to execute this delightful commission, but Phanes stopped him before he could reach the door, and placing himself proudly between the king and the trembling, thankful Psamtik, said: "You would be going on a useless errand, noble Lydian. In defiance of your command, my Sovereign, but in virtue of the full powers you once gave me, I have ordered the grandson of Amasis to be the executioner's first victim. You have just heard the sound of a horn; that was the sign that the last heir to the Egyptian throne born on the shores of the Nile has been gathered to his fathers. I am aware of the fate I have to expect, Cambyses. I will not plead for a life whose end has been attained. Croesus, I understand your reproachful looks. You grieve for the murdered children. But life is such a web of wretchedness and disappointment, that I agree with your philosopher Solon in thinking those fortunate to whom, as in former days to Kleobis and Biton, the gods decree an early death.

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[Croesus, after having shown Solon his treasures, asked him whom he held to be the most fortunate of men, hoping to hear his own name. The sage first named Tellus, a famous citizen of Athens, and then the brothers Kleobis and Biton. These were two handsome youths, who had gained the prize for wrestling, and one day, when the draught-animals had not returned from the field, dragged their mother themselves to the distant temple, in presence of the people. The men of Argos praised the strength of the sons,—the women praised the mother who possessed these sons. She, transported with delight at her sons' deed and the people's praise, went to the statue of the goddess and besought her to give them the best that could fall to the lot of men. When her prayer was over and the sacrifice offered, the youths fell asleep, and never woke again. They were dead. Herod. I, 31. Cicero. Tuscul. I. 47.]

"If I have ever been dear to you, Cambyses—if my counsels have been of any use, permit me as a last favor to say a few more words. Psamtik knows the causes that rendered us foes to each other. Ye all, whose esteem is worth so much to me, shall know them too. This man's father placed me in his son's stead at the head of the troops which had been sent to Cyprus. Where Psamtik had earned humiliation, I won success and glory. I also became unintentionally acquainted with a secret, which seriously endangered his chances of obtaining the crown; and lastly, I prevented his carrying off a virtuous maiden from the house of her grandmother, an aged woman, beloved and respected by all the Greeks. These are the sins which he has never been able to forgive; these are the grounds which led him to carry on war to the death with me directly I had quitted his father's service. The struggle is decided now. My innocent children have been murdered at thy command, and I have been pursued like a wild beast. That has been thy revenge. But mine!—I have deprived thee of thy throne and reduced thy people to bondage. Thy daughter I have called my slave, thy son's death-warrant was pronounced by my lips, and my eyes have seen the maiden whom thou persecutedst become the happy wife of a brave man. Undone, sinking ever lower and lower, thou hast watched me rise to be the richest and most powerful of my nation. In the lowest depth of thine own misery—and this has been the most delicious morsel of my vengeance—thou wast forced to see me—me, Phanes shedding tears that could not be kept back, at the sight of thy misery. The man, who is allowed to draw even one breath of life, after beholding his enemy so low, I hold to be happy as the gods themselves I have spoken."

He ceased, and pressed his hand on his wound. Cambyses gazed at him in astonishment, stepped forward, and was just going to touch his girdle— an action which would have been equivalent to the signing of a death-warrant when his eye caught sight of the chain, which he himself had hung round the Athenian's neck as a reward for the clever way in which he had proved the innocence of Nitetis.

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[The same sign was used by the last Darius to denote that his able Greek general Memnon, who had offended him by his plainness of speech, was doomed to death. As he was being led away, Memnon exclaimed, in allusion to Alexander, who was then fast drawing near: "Thy remorse will soon prove my worth; my avenger is not far off." Droysen, Alex. d. Grosse, Diod. XVII. 30. Curtius III. 2.]

The sudden recollection of the woman he loved, and of the countless services rendered him by Phanes, calmed his wrath his hand dropped. One minute the severe ruler stood gazing lingeringly at his disobedient friend; the next, moved by a sudden impulse, he raised his right hand again, and pointed imperiously to the gate leading from the court.

Phanes bowed in silence, kissed the king's robe, and descended slowly into the court. Psamtik watched him, quivering with excitement, sprang towards the veranda, but before his lips could utter the curse which his heart had prepared, he sank powerless on to the ground.

Cambyses beckoned to his followers to make immediate preparations for a lion-hunt in the Libyan mountains.

ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:

Between two stools a man falls to the ground
Human beings hate the man who shows kindness to their enemies
Misfortune too great for tears
Nothing is more dangerous to love, than a comfortable assurance
Ordered his feet to be washed and his head anointed
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