# CLEOPATRA.

**Being an Account of the Fall and Vengeance of Harmachis, the Royal Egyptian,**

**AS SET FORTH BY HIS OWN HAND.**

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"But as I stood and gazed at the dead body of him who had taunted me, and at the carcass of the lion, a woman, even the same old wife, Atoua, who, though I knew it not as yet, had offered up her flesh and blood that I might be saved alive, came running toward me. For she had been gathering simples, wherein she had great skill, by the water's edge, not knowing that there was a lion nigh (and, indeed, the lions for the most part are not found in the tilled land, but rather in the desert and the Libyan Mountains), and from a distance had seen that which I have set down. Now, when she came near she knew me for Harmachis, and, bending herself she made obeisance to me, and saluted me, calling me Royal, and worthy of all honor, and beloved and chosen of the Holy Three, ay, and even by the name of the Pharaoh! the Deliverer!

But I, thinking that terror had made her sick of mind, asked of her what she would speak.

"Is it a great thing," I asked, "that I should slay a lion? Is it a matter worthy of such talk as thine? There live, and have lived, men who have slain many lions. Did not the Divine Tahutimes the Osirian slay with his own hand more than two hundred lions? Is it not written on the tablet that is between the paws of the living Koremku (the Sphinx) that is set beyond Memfi, nigh to the seven pyramids, that he slew lions aforetime? And have not others done likewise? Why, then, speakest thou thus, O foolish woman?"

All of which I said because, having now slain the lion, I was minded, after the manner of youth, to hold it as a thing of no account. But she ceased not to make obeisance and to call me by names that are too high even to be written.

"O Royal One!" she cried, "wisely did thy mother prophecy. Surely the Holy Spirit, the Knepth, was in her. O thou conceived by a god! See the omen. The lion there—he growls within the Capitol at Rome; and the dead man, he is the Ptolemy—the Macedonian spawn that, like a foreign weed, hath overgrown the land of Nile; with the Macedonian Lagidæ shalt thou go to smite the Lion of Rome. And the Macedonian cur shall fly, and the lion shall strike him down, and thou shalt strike down the lion, and the land of Khem shall once more be free! free! free! Keep thyself but pure, according to the commandment of the gods, O son of the Royal House! O hope of Khem! be but ware of Woman the Destroyer, and as I have said, so shall it be. Poor am I and wretched; yea, stricken with sorrow. I have sinned in speaking of that which should be hid, and for my sin have I paid in the coin of that which was born of my womb; willingly have I paid for thee. But I have still of the wisdom of our people, nor do the gods, in whose eyes all are equal, turn their countenances from the poor. The Divine Mother (Isis) hath spoken to me—but last night she spake—bidding me come hither to gather herbs, and read to thee the signs that I should see. And as I have said, so shall it come to pass, if thou canst but endure the weight of the great temptation. Come hither, Royal One!" and she led me to the edge of the canal where the water was deep and still and blue. "Now gaze upon that face as the water throws it back. Is not that brow fitted to bear the double crown? Do not those gentle eyes mirror the perfect majesty of kings? Hath not the Ptah, the Creator, fashioned that form to fit the imperial garb, and awe the glance of multitudes looking through thee to God?

"Nay, nay," she went on in another voice—a shrill old wife's voice—"I will—be not so foolish, boy—the scratch of a lion is a venomous thing, a terrible thing; yea, as bad as the bite of an asp—it must be treated, or else it will fester, and all thy days shalt thou dream of lions; ay, and snakes; and, also, it will break out in sores. But I know of it—I know. I am not crazed for nothing. For mark, every thing has its balance—in madness is much wisdom, and in wisdom much madness. La! la! la! Pharaoh himself can't say where that one begins and the other ends. Now, don't stand gazing there, looking as silly as a cat in a crocus-colored robe; but just let me stick these green things on the place, and in six days you'll heal up as white as a three-year child. Never mind the smart of it, lad. By Him who sleeps at Philæ, or at Abouthis, or at Abydos—as our Divine masters have it now—or wherever he does sleep, which is a thing we shall find out before we want to—by Osiris, I say you'll live to be as clean from scars as a sacrifice to Isis at the new moon, if you'll but let me put it on

"Is it not so, my good folk?" and she turned to address some people who had, unseen by me, assembled while she prophesied. "I've been speaking a spell over him, just to make a way for the virtue of my medicine—la! la! there's nothing like a spell. If you don't believe it, just come to me the next time your wives are barren; it's better than scraping every pillar in the Temple of Osiris, I warrant. I'll make 'em bear like a twenty-year-old palm. But then, you see, you must know what to say—that's the point—every thing comes to a point at last. La! la!"

Now, when I heard all this, I, Harmachis, put my hand to my head, not knowing if I dreamed. But presently looking up, I saw a gray-haired man among those who were gathered together, who watched us sharply, and afterward I learned that this man was the spy of Ptolemy, yea, the very man who had well-nigh caused me to be slain of Pharaoh when I was in my cradle. And then I understood why Atoua spoke so foolishly.

"Thine are strange spells, old wife," he said. "Thou didst speak of Pharaoh and the double crown and of a form fashioned by Ptah to bear it; is it not so?"

"Yea, yea—part of the spell, thou fool; and what can one swear by better nowadays than by the divine Pharaoh, the Piper, whom and whose music may the gods preserve to charm this happy land? What better than by the double crown he wears, grace to great Alexander of Macedonia! By the way, you know about every thing. Have they got back his chlamys yet, which Mithridates took to Cos? Pompey wore it last, didn't he? In his triumph, too. Just fancy Pompey in the cloak of Alexander—a puppy dog in a lion's skin. And talking of lions, look what this lad hath done—slain a lion with his own spear, and right glad you village folks should be to see it, for it was a very fierce lion. Just see the teeth and claws. His claws! Alack, he's an Osiris now, the body. And to think of it, but half an hour ago he was an every-day mortal like you or me. Well, away with him to the embalmers. Come, aren't you going to take away the body of that poor lad, and the lion, too? There, my boy, you keep those herbs on, and you'll never feel your scratches. I know a thing or two for all I'm crazy, and you, my own grandson! Dear, dear, I'm glad his Holiness the High Priest adopted you when Pharaoh made an end of his son; you look so bouncy. I warrant the real Harmachis could not have killed a lion like that. Give me the common blood, say I, it's so lusty."

"You know too much," grumbled the spy, now quite deceived. "Well, he is a brave youth. Here, you men, bear this body back to Abouthis, and some of you stop and help me skin the lion. We'll send the skin to you, young man," he went on; "not that you deserve it. To attack a lion like that was the act of a fool, and a fool deserves what he gets—destruction. Never attack the strong until you are stronger."

But, for my part, I went home wondering.

## CHAPTER III.

OF THE REBUKE OF AMENEMHAT; OF THE PRAYER OF HARMACHIS; AND OF THE SIGN GIVEN BY THE HOLY GODS.

FOR awhile as I, Harmachis, went, the juice of the green herbs which the old wife, Atoua, had placed upon my wounds caused me much smart, but presently the pain ceased. And of a truth, I believe that there was virtue in them, for within two days my flesh healed up, so that after a time no marks remained. But I bethought me that I had disobeyed the word of the old High Priest, Amenemhat, who was called my father. For till to-day I knew not that he was in truth my father according to the flesh, having been taught that his own son was slain, as I have written, and that he had been pleased, with the sanction of the Divine ones, to take me as an adopted son and rear me up, that I might in due season fill an office about the temple. Therefore was I sore troubled, for I feared the old man, who was very terrible in his anger, and spake ever with the cold voice of Wisdom. Nevertheless, I determined to go in to him and confess my fault and bear such punishment as he should be pleased to put upon me. So, even with the red spear in my hand and the red wounds on my breast, I passed through the outer court of the great temple and came to the door of the chamber where the High Priest dwelt. It is a great chamber sculptured round about with the images of the solemn gods, and the light of Ra (the sun) came to it in the daytime by an opening cut through the stone of the massy roof. But at night it was lit by a swinging lamp of bronze. I passed in without noise, for the door was not altogether shut, and pushing my way through the heavy curtains that were beyond, I stood with a beating heart within the chamber.

The lamp was lit, for the darkness had fallen, and by its light I saw the old man seated in a chair of ivory and ebony at a table of stone, whereon were spread the mystic writings of the words of Life and Death. But he read no more, for behold! he slept, and his long, white beard rested upon the table like the beard of a dead man. The soft light from the lamp fell on him and on the papyri, and on the gold ring upon his hand, where were graven the symbols of the Invisible One, but all around was shadow. It fell on the shaven head, on the white robe, on the cedar staff of priesthood at his side, and on the ivory of the lion-footed chair; it showed the mighty brow of power, the features cut in kingly mold, the white eyebrows and the dark hollows of the deep-set eyes. I looked and trembled, for there was about him that which was more than the dignity of man. So long had he lived with the gods, and so long kept company with them and with thoughts divine, so deeply was he versed in all those mysteries which we do but faintly discern, here in this upper air, that even now, before his time, he partook of the nature of the Osiris, and was a thing to shake humanity with fear.

I stood and gazed, and as I stood he opened his dark eyes, but looked not on me, nor turned his head; and yet he saw me and spoke.

"Why hast thou been disobedient to me, O my son?" he said. "How came it that thou wentest forth against the lion when I bade thee not?"

"How knowest thou, my father, that I went forth?" I asked in fear.

"How know I? Are there, then, no other ways of knowledge than by the senses? O ignorant child! was not my spirit with thee when the lion sprang upon thy companion? Did I not pray those set about thee to protect thee to make sure thy thrust when thou didst drive the spear into the lion's throat? How came it that thou wentest forth, O my son?"

"The boaster taunted me," I answered, "and I went."

"Yes, I know it; and because of the hot blood of youth, I forgive thee, Harmachis. But now listen unto me, and let my words sink into thy heart like the waters of Sihor into thirsty sand at the rising of Sirius. Listen unto me. The boaster was sent unto thee as a temptation, as a trial of thy strength was he sent, and see! it has not been equal to the burden. Therefore is thy hour put back. Hadst thou been strong in this matter, the path had been made plain to thee even now. But thou hast failed, and therefore is thy hour put back."

"I understand thee, not my father," I answered.

"What was it, then, my son, that the old wife, Atoua, said to thee down by the bank of the canal?"

And thereon I told him all that the old wife had said.

"And thou believest, Harmachis, my son?"

"Nay," I answered; "how should I believe such tales. Surely she is mad. All the people know her for mad."

Then for the first time he looked toward me, who was standing in the shadow.

"My son! my son!" he cried, "thou art wrong. She is not mad. The woman spake the truth; she spake not of herself, but of the voice within her that can not lie. For this Atoua is a prophetess and holy. Now learn thou the destiny that the gods of Egypt have given to thee to fulfill, and woe be unto thee if by any weakness thou dost fail therein! Listen! thou art no stranger adopted into my house and the house of the temple; thou art my very son, saved unto me by this same woman. But, O Harmachis, thou art more than this, for in thee and me alone doth flow the imperial blood of Egypt. Thou and I alone of men alive are descended, without break or flaw, from that Pharaoh Nekt-nebf whom Ochus the Persian drove from Egypt. The Persian came and the Persian went, and then after the Persian came the Macedonian, and now for nigh upon three hundred years have the Lagidæ usurped the double crown, defiling the land of Khem and corrupting the worship of his gods. And mark thou this; but now, but two weeks since, is Ptolemy Neus Dionysius, Ptolemy the Piper, who would have slain thee, slain; and but now hath the eunuch Pothinus, that very eunuch who came hither years ago, to cut thee off, set at naught the will of his master, the dead Auletes, and placed the boy Ptolemy upon the throne. And therefore hath his sister Cleopatra, that fierce and beautiful girl, fled into Syria; and there, if I err not, will she gather her armies and make war upon her brother Ptolemy; for by her father's will was she left joint sovereign with him. And meanwhile—mark thou this, my son—the Roman eagle hangs on high, waiting with ready talons till such time as he may fall upon the fat wether Egypt and rend him. And mark, again, the people of Egypt are weary of the foreign yoke, they hate the memory of the Persians, sick at heart are they of being called 'Men of Macedonia' in the markets of Alexandria. The whole land mutters and murmurs beneath the yoke of the Greek and the shadow of the Roman. Have not they been oppressed? Have not their children been butchered and their gains wrung from them to fill the bottomless greed and lust of the Lagidæ? Have not the temples been forsaken? Ay, have not the divine majesties of the eternal gods been set at naught by these Greeians babblers who have dared to meddle with the immortal truths, and name the Most High by another name (Serapis), confounding the substance of the Invisible? Doth not Egypt cry aloud for freedom? and shall she cry in vain? Nay, nay, for thou, my son, art the appointed way of deliverance. To thee, being sunk in eld, have I decreed my rights. Already is thy name whispered in many a sanctuary, from Abu even unto Athu; already do priests and people swear allegiance, even by the sacred symbols, unto him who shall be declared unto them. Still, the time is not yet; thou art too green a sapling to bear the weight of such a storm. But to-day wast thou tried and found wanting. He who would serve the gods, O Harmachis, must put aside the failings of the flesh. Taunts must not move him, nor any lusts of man. Thine is a high mission, but this must thou learn. An thou learn it not, thou shalt fail therein; and then, my curse be on thee! and the curse of Egypt, and the curse of Egypt's broken gods! For, know thou this, that even the gods, who are immortal, may, in the interwoven scheme of things, lean upon the man who is their instrument, even as a warrior on his sword. And woe be to the sword that snaps in the hour of battle, for it shall be thrown aside to rust! Therefore, make thou thy heart pure and high and strong; for thine is no common lot, and thine no mortal meed. Triumph, and in glory shalt thou go—in glory here and hereafter! Fail, and woe—woe be on thee!"

He paused and bowed his head, and then went on:

"Of these matters shalt thou hear more hereafter. Meanwhile thou hast much to learn. To-morrow will I give thee letters, and thou shalt pass down the Nile, even past white-walled Memphis to On (Heliopolis), and there shalt thou sojourn certain years and learn more of our ancient wisdom beneath the shadow of that sacred pyramid of which thou, too, art the Hereditary High Priest that is to be. And meanwhile will I sit here and watch, for my hour is not yet, and, by the help of the gods, spin the web wherein thou shalt hold the wasp of Macedonia.

"Come hither, my son; come hither and kiss me on the brow, for thou art all my hope, and all the hope of Egypt. Be but true, rise to the giddy height of thy destiny, and thou shalt be glorious here and hereafter; be false, fail, and I will spit upon thee, and thou shalt be accursed, and thy soul shall remain in bondage till that hour when, in the slow flight of time, the evil shall once more grow to good and Egypt shall again be free."

I drew near trembling, and kissed him on the brow. "May all these things come upon me, and more," I said, "if I fail thee, O my father!"

"Nay," he cried, "not me; but rather those whose will I do. And now go, my son, and ponder in thy heart, and in thy secret heart digest my words; and mark what thou shalt see, and gather up the dew of wisdom, and make thee ready for the battle. Fear not for thyself; thou art protected from all ill. No harm may touch thee from without; thyself alone can be thine own enemy. I have said."

Then I went forth with a full heart. The night was very still, and there was none stirring in the temple courts. I hurried through them, and reached the entrance to the pylon that is at the outer gate. And then, seeking solitude, and, as it were, to draw nigh to Heaven, I climbed the pylon's two hundred steps, until at length I reached the massive roof. Here I leaned my breast against the parapet and looked forth. And as I looked the red edge of the full moon floated up over the Arabian hills, and her rays fell upon the pylon where I stood, and the temple walls beyond, and lit up the visages of the carven gods. Then the cold light struck the wide stretch of well-tilled land, now whitening to the harvest, and as the heavenly lamp of Isis (the moon) passed up the sky, slowly did her rays creep down the valley, where Sihor, father of the land of Khem, rolls on toward the sea.

And now the bright beams kissed the water, that smiled an answer back, and now mountain and valley, river, temple, town and plain were flooded with white light, for Mother Isis was arisen, and threw her gleaming robe across the dark bosom of the earth. Beautiful it was, with the beauty of a perfect dream, and solemn as the hour after death. Mightily, indeed, the temples towered up against the face of night. Never had they seemed so grand to me as upon that night, those ancient shrines, before whose eternal walls Time himself shall wither. And mine it was to be to rule this moonlit land; mine to preserve those sacred shrines and cherish the honor of their gods; mine to cast out the Ptolemy and free Egypt from the foreign yoke! In my veins ran the blood of those great Kings who, sleeping in the tombs of the valley of Tapi (Thebes), await the day of resurrection. My spirit swelled within me as I dreamed upon this glorious destiny. I closed my hands, and there, upon the pylon, I prayed as I had never prayed before to the Godhead, who is called by many names and in many forms made manifest.

"O Amen," I prayed, "God of gods, who hast been from the beginning; Lord of Truth, who art, and of whom all are, who givest out thy Godhead and gatherest it up again, in the circle of whom the divine ones move and are, who was from all time the Self-begot, and who shalt be till all time—hearken unto me.

"O Amen—Osiris, the sacrifice by whom we are justified, Lord of the Region of the Winds, the Ruler of the Ages, the Dweller in the West, the Supreme in Amenti, hearken unto me.

"O Isis, Great Mother Goddess, Mother of the Horus—mysterious Mother, Sister, Spouse, hearken unto me. If indeed I be the chosen of gods to carry out the purpose of the gods, let a sign be given unto me, even now, to seal my life to the life above. Stretch out your arms toward me, O ye gods, and uncover the glory of your countenance. Hear! ah, hear me!" And I cast myself upon my knees and lifted up my eyes to heaven.

A CLOUD GREW UPON THE FACE OF THE MOON.

And as I knelt a cloud grew upon the face of the moon and covered it up, so that the night became dark, and the silence deepened all around—even the dogs far below in the city ceased to howl, and the silence grew and grew till it was heavy as death. I felt my spirits lifted up within me, and my hair rose upon my head. Then of a sudden the mighty pylon seemed to rock beneath me, a great wind beat about my brows, and a voice spoke within my heart:

"Behold a sign! Possess thyself in patience, O Harmachis!"

And even as the voice spoke a cold hand touched my hand and left somewhat within it. Then the cloud rolled from the face of the moon, and the wind passed, and the pylon ceased to tremble, and the night was as the night had been.

And as the light came back I gazed upon that which had been left within my hand. It was a bud of the holy lotus new breaking into bloom, and therefrom came a most sweet scent.

And as I gazed thereon, behold! the lotus passed from out my grasp and vanished, leaving me astonished.

## CHAPTER IV.

OF THE DEPARTURE OF HARMACHIS AND OF HIS MEETING WITH HIS UNCLE SEPA, THE HIGH PRIEST OF ON; OF HIS LIFE AT ON, AND OF THE WORDS OF SEPA.

AT THE dawning of the next day I was awakened by a priest of the Temple, who brought word to me to make ready for the journey whereof my father had spoken, inasmuch as there was an occasion for me to pass down the river to Annu el Ra. Now, this is the Heliopolis of the Greeks, whither I should go in the company of some priests of Ptah at Memfi who had come hither to Abouthis to lay the body of one of their great men in the tomb that had been prepared near the resting place of the blessed Osiris. So I made ready, and the same evening, having received letters and embraced my father and those about the Temple who were dear to me, I passed down to the banks of Sihor, and we sailed with the south wind. As the pilot stood upon the prow and with a rod in his hand bade the sailor men loosen the stakes wherewith the vessel was moored to the banks, the old wife, Atoua, hobbled up, her basket of simples in her hand, and calling out her farewell, threw a sandal after me for good chance, which sandal I kept for many years. And so we sailed, and for six days passed down the wonderful river, making fast each night at some convenient spot. But when I lost sight of the familiar things that I had seen day by day since I had eyes to see, and found myself alone among strange faces, I felt sore at heart, and would have wept had I not been ashamed. And of all the wonderful things I saw I will not write here, for, though they were new to me, have they not been known to men since such time as the gods rule in Egypt? But the priests who were with me showed me no little honor, and expounded to me what were the things I saw. And on the morning of the seventh day we came to Memfi, the city of the White Wall. Here for three days I rested from my journey and was entertained of the priests of the wonderful Temple of Ptah the Creator, and shown the beauties of the great and marvelous city. Also was I led in secret by the High Priest and two others into the holy presence of the god Apis, the Ptah who deigns to dwell among men in the form of a bull. The god was black, and on his forehead there was a white square and on his back was a white mark shaped like an eagle, and beneath his tongue was the likeness of a scarabæus, and in his tail were double hairs, and between his horns was a plate of pure gold. I entered the place of the god and worshiped while the High Priest and those with him stood aside and earnestly watched. And when I had worshiped, saying the words which had been told unto me, the god knelt, and lay down before me. And then the High Priest and those with him, who, as I heard in aftertime, were great men of Upper Egypt, approached wondering, and, saying no word, made obeisance to me because of the omen. And many other things I saw in Memfi that are too long to write of here.

On the fourth day came some priests of Annu to lead me unto Sepa my uncle, the High Priest of Annu. So, having bid farewell to those of Memfi, we crossed the river and rode on asses two parts of a day's journey through many villages, which we found in great poverty because of the oppression of the tax gatherers. Also, as we went, I for the first time saw the great pyramids that are beyond the image of the god Horemku (the Sphinx), and the temples of the Divine Mother Isis, Queen of Memnonia, and the god Osiris, Lord of Rosatou, of which Temples, together with the Temple of the worship of the Divine Menka-ra, I, Harmachis, am by right divine the Hereditary High Priest. I saw them and marveled at their greatness and at the white carven limestone and red granite of Syene that flashed in the sun's rays back to Heaven. But at this time I knew naught of the treasure that was hid in *Her*, which is the third among the Pyramids—would I had never known of it!

And so at last we came within sight of Annu, which after Memfi hath been seen is no large town, but stands on raised ground, before which are lakes fed by a canal. Behind the town is the great temenos (inclosure) of the Temple of the God Ita.

At the pylon we dismounted, and beneath the portico were we met by a man not great of growth, but of noble aspect, having his head shaven, and with dark eyes that twinkled like the further stars.

"Hold!" he cried, in a large voice that fitted his weak body but ill. "Hold! I am Sepa, who opens the mouth of the gods!"

"And I," I said, "am Harmachis, son of Amenemhat, Hereditary High Priest and Ruler of the Holy City Abouthis; and I bear letters to thee, O Sepa!"

"Enter," he said. "Enter!" scanning me all the while with his twinkling eyes. "Enter, my [illegible] son of me and led me to a chamber in the inner hall close to the door; and then, having glanced at the letters I brought, he of a sudden fell upon my neck and embraced me.

"Welcome!" he cried; "welcome, son of my own sister and hope of Khem! Not in vain have I prayed the gods that I might live to look upon thy face and impart to thee the wisdom that, perchance, I alone have mastered of those who are left alive in Egypt. Few there are whom it is lawful that I should teach. But thine is the great destiny, and thine shall be the ears to hear the lessons of the gods."

And once more he embraced me and bade me go and bathe and eat, saying that on the morrow he would speak with me further.

And of a truth he did, and at such length that I will forbear to set down all he said both then and afterward, for if I did so there would be no papyrus left in Egypt when the task was ended. Therefore, having much to tell, and perchance but little time to tell it, will I pass over the events of the years that followed.

For this was the manner of my life. I rose early, I attended the worship of the Temple, and I gave my days to study. I learned of the rites of religion and their significance, and of the beginning of the gods and the beginning of the Upper World. I learned of the mystery of the movements of the stars, and of how the earth rolls on among them. I was instructed in that ancient knowledge which is called magic, and in the way of interpretation of dreams, and of the drawing nigh to God. I was taught the language of symbols and the outer and inner secrets thereof. I became acquainted with the internal laws of good and evil, and with the mystery of that trust which is held of man; also I learned the secrets of the pyramids—which I would that I had never known. Further, I read the records of the past, and of the acts and words of the ancient kings who were before me since the rule of Horus upon earth; and I was made to learn all craft of state, the lore of earth, and with it the records of Greece and Rome. Also I learned the Grecian and the Roman tongues, of which indeed I already had some knowledge—and all this while, even for five years, I kept my hands clean and my heart pure, and did no evil in the sight of God or man; but labored heavily to acquire all things, and to prepare myself for the destiny that awaited me.

Twice every year came greetings and letters from my father, Amenemhat, and twice every year I sent back my answers asking if the time had come to cease from labor. And so the days of my probation sped away till I grew faint and weary at heart, for being now a man, ay, and learned, I longed to make a beginning of the life of men. And oftimes I wondered if this talk and prophecy of the things there were to be was but a dream born of the brains of men whose wish ran before their thought. I was, indeed, of the royal blood, that I knew; for my uncle, Sepa, the Priest, showed me the secret record of the descent, traced without break from father unto son, and graven in mystic symbols upon a tablet of the stone of Syene. But of what avail was it to be royal by right when Egypt, my heritage, was a slave—a slave to do the pleasure and minister to the luxury of the Macedonian Lagidæ—ay, and when she had been so long a serf that, perchance, she had forgot how to put off the servile smile of bondage and once more to look across the world with freedom's glorious eyes!

And then I bethought me of my prayer upon the pylon tower of Abouthis and of the answer to my prayer, and wondered if that, too, were a dream.

And one night, as, weary with study, I walked within the sacred grove that is in the temenos of the Temple, and thought such thoughts as these, I met my Uncle Sepa, who also was walking and thinking.

"Hold!" he cried, in his great voice; "why is thy face so sad, Harmachis? Hath the last problem that we studied overwhelmed thee?"

"Nay, my uncle," I answered. "I am overwhelmed, indeed, but not of the problem; it was a light one. My heart is heavy within me, for I am aweary of life within these cloisters, and the piled-up weight of knowledge crushes me. It is of no avail to store up force which can not be used."

"Ah! thou art impatient, Harmachis," he answered; "it is ever the way of foolish youth. Thou wouldst taste of the battle; thou dost weary of watching the breakers fall upon the shore, thou wouldst plunge therein and venture the desperate hazard

STILL SHE SITS LIKE YONDER SPHINX AND SMILES.

of the war. And so thou wouldst be going, Harmachis? The bird would fly the nest as, when they are grown, the swallows fly from beneath the eaves of the Temple. Well, it shall be as thou desirest; the hour is at hand. I have taught thee all that I have learned, and methinks that the pupil hath outrun his master." And he paused and wiped his bright, black eyes, for he was very sad at the thought of my departure.

"And whither shall I go, my uncle?" I asked, rejoicing; "back to Abouthis to be initiated in the mystery of the Gods?"

"Ay, back to Abouthis, and from Abouthis to Alexandria, and from Alexandria to the throne of thy fathers, O Harmachis! Listen, now; things are thus: Thou knowest how Cleopatra, the Queen, fled into Syria when that false eunuch Pothinus set the will of Auletes at naught and raised her brother Ptolemy to the sole lordship of Egypt. Thou knowest also how she came back, like a Queen indeed, with a great army in her train, and lay at Pelusim, and how at this juncture the mighty Cæsar, that great man, that greatest of all men, sailed with a weak company hither to Alexandria from Pharsalia's bloody field in hot pursuit of Pompey. But he found Pompey already dead, having been basely murdered by Achillas, the General, and Lucius Septimius, the chief of the Roman legions in Egypt; and thou knowest how the Alexandrians were troubled at his coming and would have slain his lictors. Then, as thou hast heard, Cæsar seized Ptolemy, the young King, and his sister Arsinoe, and bade the army of Cleopatra and the army of Ptolemy, under Achillas, which fly racing each other at Pelusim, disband and go their ways. And for answer Achillas marched on Cæsar and besieged him straitly in the Bruchium at Alexandria, and so, for awhile, things were, and none knew who should reign in Egypt. But then Cleopatra took up the dice and threw them, and this was the throw she made—in truth it was a bold one. For, leaving the army at Pelusim, she came at dusk to the harbor of Alexandria, and alone with the Sicilian Apollodorus entered and landed. Then did Apollodorus bind her in a bale of rich rugs, such as are made in Syria, and sent the rugs as a present to Cæsar. And when the rugs were unbound in the palace, behold! within them was the fairest girl on all the earth—ay, and the most witty and the most learned. And she seduced the great Cæsar—even his weight of years did not avail to protect him from her charms—so that, as a fruit of his folly, he well-nigh lost his life and all the glory he had gained in a hundred wars."

"The fool!" I broke in, "the fool! Thou callest him great, but how can the man who hath no strength to stand against a woman's wiles be truly great! Cæsar, with the world hanging on his word! Cæsar, at whose breath forty legions marched and changed the fate of peoples! Cæsar, the cold! the far-seeing! the hero! Cæsar, to fall like a ripe fruit into a false girl's lap! Why, in the issue, of what common clay was this Roman Cæsar, and how poor a thing!"

But Sepa looked at me and shook his head.

"Be not so rash, Harmachis, and talk not with so proud a voice. Knowest thou not that in every suit of mail there is a joint, and woe to him that wears it if the sword should search it out. For woman, in her weakness, is yet the strongest force upon the earth. She is the helm of all things human; she comes in many shapes and knocks at many doors; she is quick and patient, and her passion is not ungovernable like that of man, but as a gentle steed that she can guide o'er where she will, and as occasion offers can now bit up and now give rein. She hath a captain's eye, and strong must be the fortress of the heart wherein she finds no place of vantage. Doth thy blood beat fast in youth? she will outrun it, nor will her kisses tire. Art thou set toward ambition? she will unlock thy inner heart, and show thee secret roads that lead to glory. Art thou worn and weary? she hath comfort in her breast. Art thou fallen? she can lift thee up, and to the illusion of thy sense gild defeat with triumph. Ay, Harmachis, these things she can do, for Nature ever fights upon her side; and the while she does them she can deceive and shape a secret end in which thou hast no part. And thus woman rules the world. For her are wars; for her men spend their strength in gathering gains; for her they do well and ill, and seek for greatness and find forgetfulness. And all the while she sits like yonder Sphinx, and smiles; and no man hath ever read all the riddle of her smiles or known all the mystery of her heart. Mock not! mock not! Harmachis; for strong indeed must he be who can defy the power of woman, which, pressing round him like the general air, is oftimes most present when the senses least discover it."

I laughed aloud. "Thou speakest earnestly, O, my uncle Sepa," I said; "almost might one think that thou hadst not come unscathed through this fierce fire of temptation. Well, for myself, I fear not woman and all her wiles; naught know I of them, and naught do I wish to know; and I still hold that this Cæsar was a fool. Had I stood where Cæsar stood, to cool its wantonness that bale of rugs should have been rolled adown the palace steps, even into the harbor of mud."

"Nay, cease! cease!" he cried aloud. "Evil is it to speak thus; and may the gods avert the omen and preserve to thee this cold strength whereof thou boastest! O man, thou knowest not!—thou in thy strength and beauty that is without compare, in the power of thy learning and the sweetness of thy tongue—thou knowest not! The world where thou must mix is not a sanctuary as that of the divine Isis. But there—it may be so! Pray that thy heart's ice may never melt, so shalt thou be great and happy and Egypt be delivered. And now let me take up my tale—thou seest, Harmachis, even in so grave a story woman claims her place. The young Ptolemy, Cleopatra's brother, being loosed of Cæsar, treacherously turned on him. Thereon Cæsar and Mithridates stormed the camp of Ptolemy, who took to flight across the river. But his boat was sunk by the fugitives who pressed upon it, and such was the miserable end of Ptolemy.

"Thereon, the war being ended, Cæsar appointed the younger Ptolemy to rule with Cleopatra, and be, in name, her husband, though she had but then borne him a son, Cæsarion, and he himself departed for Rome, bearing with him the beautiful Princess Arsinoe to follow his triumphs in her chains. But the great Cæsar is no more. He died as he had lived, in blood, and right royally. And but now hath Cleopatra, the Queen, if my tidings may be trusted, slain Ptolemy, her brother and her husband, by poison, and taken the child Cæsarion to be her fellow on the throne, which she holds by the help of the Rome legions, and, as they say, of young Sextus Pompeius, who hath succeeded Cæsar in her love. But, Harmachis, the whole land boils and seethes against her. In every city the children of Khem talk of the deliverer who is to come—and thou art he, O Harmachis. Almost is the time ripe. The hour is nigh at hand. Go thou back to Abouthis and learn the last secrets of the gods, and meet those who shall direct the bursting of the storm. And then act, Harmachis—act, I say, and strike home for Khem, and rid the land of the Roman and the Greek, and take thy place upon the throne of thy fathers and be a King of men. For unto this end wast thou born, O Prince!"

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### In Black and White.

It is always difficult to make people appreciate the fact—which is certainly a fact—things said in the black and white forcefulness and permanence of a letter are far more effective than they would have been if they had been spoken. The writer meant them just as he would have meant them had he said them, and he does not in the least reflect that, by the loss of accent, look and gesture, the thing he writes may be widely different from the thing he would have said.

There have been countless quarrels engendered by things written in all innocence, and which would have had no such effect had they been delivered by the living voice.

People vent their petulance in word, and easily correct the impression by following it with a smile of apology, a glance that softens, or a word which modifies. All of these things are, of course, wanting in the case of a letter. The words tell for their worst, and in the absence of the writer there is nothing to moderate the annoyance to which they give rise.—Liverpool Courier.

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Jars concealed are half reconciled; while 'tis a double task to stop the breach at home and men's mouths abroad. To this end a good husband never publicly reproves his wife. An open reproof puts her to do penance before all that are present, after which many study revenge rather than reformation.—Fuller.