

Marx Hardy Machiavelli Joyce Austen
Defoe Abbot Melville Montaigne Cooper Emerson Hugo
Stoker Wilde Christie Maupassant Haggard Chesterton Molière Eliot Grimm
Garnett Engels Byron Schiller
Goethe Hawthorne Smith Kafka
Cotton Dostoyevsky Hall
Baum Henry Kipling Doyle Willis
Leslie Dumas Flaubert Nietzsche Turgenev Balzac
Stockton Vatsyayana Crane
Burroughs Verne
Curtis Tocqueville Gogol Busch
Homer Tolstoy Whitman Twain
Darwin Zola Lawrence Dickens Plato Scott
Potter Freud Jowett Stevenson Andersen Burton Harte
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Poe Aristotle Wells Bunner Shakespeare Cooke
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**An Egyptian Princess –Volume
09**

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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."

"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."

"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. Zopyras 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.

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.

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." "Psamitik 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 glori-

ous war; he's too much under the influence of the 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, in-

deed, 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!"

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 wrongdoing, 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 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.'

"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 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, saying: "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 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 Anacreon, 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 . . ."

"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."