



The Christ of the Red Planet

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The region of the senses is the unbelieving
part of the human soul.—GEORGE MACDONALD



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THE BRIDGE



I dared to long, but feared no more—
I did not think
That you and I, from either shore,
Could bridge each brink.

And all these years the stream has rolled
Between us twain—
Until, to-day, my soul grew bold
From silent pain,

And stirred itself—itsself despite,
While, strange as true,
Up rose the bridge that brought, to-night,
My soul to you.

—SISTER REBECCA.

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P R E F A C E

Whether in the body, or out of the body, I knew not.—*St. Paul.*

* * * * *

THE words in this book are real experiences, more varied and more sequential than the events which come to consciousness by means of the natural senses.

To many persons it may seem an overwrought tale, but every page is a page of verity, and adds force to an abiding conviction that planetary communication will be made possible by the work of the seers. There are many of these luminous minds on this small planet, but most of them are working in secret. A few are afraid of ridicule, while others feel that the time has not come for speech.

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Some of our so-called material scientists are, happily, among this number, and are firm in their convictions of the value of Thought as the chief factor in all progress. The wonderful evolution of electricity has opened their eyes to the fact that the forces they cannot see are far more potent than anything in evidence.

The first is cause ; the second, effect.

There is much in this narrative that I do not pretend to understand. I only know that I heard and saw what is here stated.

How much of the interview in

THE GROVE OF MEMORY

is the reproduction of a former visit I cannot now tell, but I am sure that I shall be given a full interpretation at the proper time.

Preface

One thing, however, is very plain. There was a mutual need of knowledge on the part of the visited and the visitor, and I believe that the Red God was more desirous of points concerning our planet than I was to pick up again the thread of Memory.

Astrologically speaking, Mars is not one of my planets. In this respect, he would seem to have less influence upon my life than almost any other of the starry host. He is neither an enemy nor much of a friend, and yet, ever since childhood, I have been peculiarly attracted to the so-called God of War. This has been quite inexplicable, because not one of the alleged attributes of Mars was agreeable to me. I have never believed in the necessity of war, and all warlike conditions and preparations have been a

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sorrow and distress to me. And yet, with all that has been said of the baneful influence of this planet, my friendliness toward it has been joyously unswerving. Venus, the peaceful and loving, is my birth-star, and other stars figure more or less conspicuously in the natural horoscope, but all of them put together are not of half the consequence in my thought as this beautiful Red World which seems so near a relative. This may, perhaps, be accounted for on the principle that the friends who are nearest and dearest to us are often found among those outside the domain of consanguinity. All the stars have ever been my most precious comrades, but Mars, my Mars, has been so much a part of me that it sometimes seems as if I had either lived upon it in the perhaps not very remote past, or that in some

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of my unconscious moments my sleeping hours were spent with these far-off brothers and sisters.

To dwell in limitation, and yet to be acutely mindful of the unlimited, is, no doubt, the experience of many persons. This has been mine to a wonderful and sometimes very annoying extent. To see and yet not to see ; to know and not to be able to explain, either to myself or to others ; to be constantly possessed by a consciousness of distant phenomena without fact or data, is not a very comfortable mental state for one aiming to be logical, and desiring above all things to be honest and the reverse of imaginative. But this has been my condition ever since I can remember.

My earliest grievance was the way in which almost every one I knew accepted the stars as a matter of course.

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To my mind distances were not barriers. A city ten miles away was far more remote than the sun 95,000,000 miles removed. I could not see the city except by an hour or more of travel. The sun I could see and feel every moment.

All who are attuned to the finer harmonies know that there are two voices, the voice of the Senses and the voice of the Spirit.

When Mendelssohn wrote his "Songs without Words," he recognized the voice of the Spirit. The words he did not hear with his outer ear were acutely apprehended by the inner sense, and were the basis and source of the music that has blessed so many and awakened them to a comprehension of the invisible.

In one sense these stellar experiences were and are inexplicable to me. To be

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lifted, comforted, and instructed without a word, to be sure of help and yet unable to explain the manner of ministration, seems a strange condition when one attempts to give it expression; but it was not strange to me. Indeed, it was the very breath of life.

When at school I was aware of certain phenomena that did not seem to be shared by either schoolmates or teachers. Still, some of them might have had similar experiences and were silent about them, as I felt obliged to be.

I think I must have been a very timid girl. I was afraid to be in the house alone of an evening, and when obliged to be I invariably sat on the steps if the weather was propitious or walked up and down before the house till the folks returned. Under the canopy of the stars I was never

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afraid. Whether I could see these sky friends or not I knew they were there, and the sense of protection was perfect.

A man-made roof between them and me seemed to shut them out entirely. Why this was so, who can tell? The feeling remains to this day, though I have learned to control the fear that once possessed me.

In disposition I was certainly very un-Martian; in fact, totally devoid of the fiery qualities which have been for all times attributed to the Red Planet. While my temper was uneven and my feelings easily hurt, it seemed almost an impossibility for me to resent an affront or in any way to assert my individuality when with others. Alone, I owned the universe. In company, I had nothing; at least, there was nothing worth my self-assertion. A

Preface

quarrel, a dispute, or even an argument was intolerable. These things made me ill, and as it seemed only a choice of evils, it appeared easier to give way than to make way. Even at this immature period I took no credit for this attitude. Conscience told me there were many situations which should be met promptly and squarely; but it is probable that my own constellation Libra, and the pacific character of my individual planets were responsible for this curious mental attitude. I had no inkling, then, that man was the greatest thing in the universe and contained within himself all knowledge and all power. This consciousness came much later.

I am thus particular in these statements in order to give the reader what information is possible in regard to the different steps or chains of circumstances

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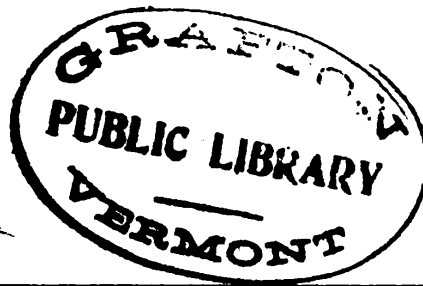
that led at last to my acquaintance with Mars. While these experiences seem to challenge many things in astrology, they strengthen its spiritual aspect and power, and prove, at least to my satisfaction, that the universe is simply one great family, and that we find our brothers and sisters from every point of natural attraction.

So, whether in the body or out of the body, when this conscious visit to the Red Planet was made I know not, but that I really saw a bit of this most beautiful and progressive star I well know. That I had been there many times before I am now sure. When, or how, is the Mystery.

Revelation, April 15, 1898.

Journey to Mars, May 6, 1901.

ELEANOR KIRK.



I.

“WRITE AND REMEMBER”

Let the soul be assured that, somewhere in the universe, it should rejoin its friend, and it would be content and cheerful for a thousand years.

—EMERSON.

Faith is the covenant or engagement between man's diviner part and his lesser self.—*Light on the Path.*

A truly divine revelation is that which brings to us through experience a knowledge of ourselves, and thus a knowledge of the universal life.—NEW-COMB—*All's Right with the World.*

* * * * *

IT would have been easy to weave into and around this story those characters of the imagination which would have produced the three dimensional literary effects so dear to the heart of the author, and considered so necessary by the pub-

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lisher. But when the Spirit said "Write," it also said "Remember," and it has taken many months to comprehend the full meaning of the latter command. Meanings are revealed by the travail of experience, for though we may not severely suffer in body or mind, yet are we led to question and look deeply into ourselves for the answers that will be in accordance with our inspiration.

This involves a searching of soul which is most beneficial to every enthusiastic seeker of the truth, and as truth proceeds on its mission—ever before and a little above us—we are oft-times led into by-ways and apparently unilluminated paths, where we lose for the moment our clue and not infrequently the patience and poise which are alone able to lead us into the realms of understanding; and so we

“Write and Remember”

grope and sorrow and discourage ourselves, making Breath a weariness instead of a joy.

“What can be more beautiful and sacred than imagination?” I asked.

And the Spirit said: “Nothing that the mind of God can conceive, for imagination holds all beauty and all truth.”

Whence this argument? Between two entities, one more endowed and advanced than the other, or between the two selves of myself which had not yet come to Oneness?

Ever and anon I stopped in my search for wisdom to make this inquiry, but the Spirit answered not. Silence was the only response, sometimes so deep and awful, so freighted with the thought of unendingness that it was grievous to bear.

Days after in a dream, the Breath said—for the voice was ever like a flower-laden inspiration :

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“All is spirit. Abandon your quest for personality.”

And then I knew—but after all so little, and yet I did not know, for the words held only a statement and a command.

The spirit said, “Write.” I took my pen, but the ink dried upon it. Again I threw it one side and went my way along the usual paths.

“Remember.”

As I walked or rode, wrote or read, this word still haunted me. It did not seem to float upon the Breath as had the other soon-to-be-forgotten uplifts and reproofs, leaving behind them an aroma of peace and a little knowledge. It remained with me. It danced upon every page, sang in every song. It was the first thing I heard in a friend's voice, the sound that lingered in every good-bye.

“Write and Remember”

And yet no one said Remember.

Once, before I knew this very little, I should have accused myself of nerves or of an unwholesome fancy. Not now. So little did I know, and yet too much to make such a mistake possible.

What was there to remember ?

Why could not the Spirit who had communicated so many other things tell me this? And I was so eager to know, so anxious to do the bidding of the Highest, so desirous of dipping my pen again into the ink and writing the words that I had been so long bidden to write—and desire did not avail.

I was first to “Remember.”

The days and weeks went on, enlightenment came not, and then I said unto the Spirit :

“ Gladly would I remember, but I can no

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longer follow what seems more like a will-o'-the-wisp than a reality. I have done my best, and now I shall strive to forget by giving my mind to use and my heart to God."

If thou hast ever felt the smile of the Spirit, thou knowest what St. John the Divine meant when he described the New Jerusalem.

"They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more ; neither shall the sun light on them, or any heat.

"For the lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

"All tears from their eyes !" And I had shed so many tears. Such a promise is beautiful to those who have wept almost without ceasing.

“Write and Remember”

The smile of the Spirit was like sudden sunshine in an icy country, and I felt that my words were in accordance with the universal spirit. There could be no compulsion or cruelty in love, and there was naught but love in the world.

Again the Spirit said “Write,” and I dipped my pen once more into the ink, while the thoughts came thick and fast and the story grew apace.

But why so little satisfaction in the work?

One night a beautiful woman, with eyes more true and tender than any that had ever before looked into mine, came to me and said :

“It is because you have written and have not remembered.”

“But how can I remember?” I asked with bated breath, for it seemed that if this glorious vision vanished without some

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word to help me in my search, I should indeed be comfortless.

“Seek the solitude and the silence,” was the answer. “Go alone with God and nature. Listen. Because of the stress of earth’s trials you have been careless of past experiences and the changes they have wrought in your life. Private grief has caused you lightly to pass over the events that have made for wisdom and righteousness. But every detail of every experience is still with you, yea though it came and passed centuries ago.”

With the tenderest of smiles the gracious presence departed, and as she slowly moved away I could plainly see the shine of her white flowing robes and the grace and majesty of her figure.

“Even though it came and passed centuries ago !”

“Write and Remember”

During all the years of conscious life I had held this thought of re-birth far from me, refusing to harbor it or speculate concerning it. I liked it not. It was out of the realm of logic, unprovable and inexplicable. It seemed a theme for philosophers and poets and for those who felt no responsibility for the practical affairs of existence. I was different. To aid and comfort the race was my desire, and what mattered the past near or remote? It was *this* time, NOW, that concerned me.

There was no answer to these objections; but the face of the woman lingered in my memory, and the words she had spoken fell into rhythm and sang themselves in my soul day and night.

What is it that stands ever between us and achievement? Did I doubt the vision? No. A woman had come to my

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assistance, whose rapt countenance and loving eyes spoke eloquently of the sorrows and dangers through which she had passed to reach knowledge; she had known what it was to desire and to wait, and by means of an inscrutable force had found her way to me.

As I asked this question of myself, myself seemed to answer, but the response was so different from anything I had ever thought that for the moment I was fain to pass it off as an idle word. But the more I reflected the more willing I became to acknowledge it as a truth which I could easily prove from my own experience. The word was

PREJUDICE.

So subtle are these leadings and conclusions, so convincing are they to the

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“Write and Remember”

intuition which perchance has wrought the marvel of the explanation, that the truly awakened soul needs no further teaching.

I loved and trusted my stranger friend, and yet because of something in her words that had brought to my consciousness an unwelcome thought, I had stopped to speculate and be sorrowful.

Then I looked about me and saw that prejudice was one of the most insidious and dangerous of serpents. If I might not bring to recollection the especial thing which the present exigency called for, I could remember scores of cases in which pre-judgment—decision before evidence—had so poisoned the mind as to make health and progress impossible. Indeed, the light was turned on with an awful brilliancy. Not only were the dark corners of my own mental house illuminated,

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but many another life was uncovered and the trail of the serpent was everywhere.

Then I said: "I will write no more until I remember. I will go alone with God into the solitude and the silence as I have been directed."

This is what the recognition of the character of prejudice had accomplished, and yet this thought was not expressed in the words of my visitor.

In such mysterious ways are God's wonders performed.

Did the bearer of this true and tender message know that this obstacle to enlightenment must be jarred from its foundations before I could fulfil the conditions which the Spirit had imposed? Did she recognize this serpent, and were her last words — spoken oh so graciously — the burden of her duty toward me?

“Write and Remember”

What consummate wisdom and tact if this were so !

Again I felt the smile of the Spirit, and then I heard these words with what seemed to be my outer ear. The voice was deep and rich and joyful, and vibrated so happily with love that my soul was filled with a harmony never before experienced.

“Dear heart,” said the Spirit, “stop not now to gratify thy curiosity. Thy sister has performed for thee an act of kindness, an example which forever thou must emulate.”

“*My* sister? *My* dear one?” I cried in ecstasy. And then the color which always illuminated the atmosphere when happiness was mine, and which was like the red of wine, faded. I was surrounded by a gray cloud which palpitated like a soul that was hurt.

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Again the voice—this time, like the minor of a 'cello :

“Prejudice and personality. Think on these things.”

This was hard beyond expression. For years I had recognized my sister only flittingly. A breath, a sigh, a touch upon my hair, a caress, and she was gone. And so much more than this did my heart hunger for. I had called her mine, and she had called me hers in the beautiful days when we thought and wrote, and made merry together, and considered it no sin to live for each other.

“Each other” ?

The echo that returned from the utterance of these words seemed like a chorus of reproachful voices.

“And you and yours did shut us out,” they moaned. “We, alas! were

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"Write and Remember"

the "solitary" that were never "set in families."

The loneliness of the world is a lonesome thing to contemplate. I had sensed it before, but now I saw that "private grief" and the sorrows of self had helped to exclude the sisters and brothers who were mine in the largest and truest sense. With this thought came the realization that the sister whom I had called mine might be more easily drawn to the help and comfort of another than to me.

Surely many doors were opening, very slowly perhaps, but once ajar they could never close again.

Prejudice, Personality, and Private Grief had kept me from my inheritance.

The days went on. Cares multiplied. There seemed a new enemy to conquer at

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every turn of the road ; and I could not “Remember” ; and because I could not remember I could not—dared not—write.

I had not forgotten the solitude and silence which I had promised to seek, but the new complications which had arisen made any departure from the practical and ordinary appear impossible.

“Impossible ? ”

Even as I write this word a protest, strong and sharp, reaches me from the invisible.

“Think it not ; pronounce it not,” I am told. “Nothing is impossible with God ; and are you not made of God’s substance in the image and likeness of the omnipotent one ? Stagnation and death are the results of the recognition of the impossible.”

“He who loses his life for my sake shall

“Write and Remember”

find it.” With what startling power did these words take hold of my soul as I opened the Bible for a line that would comfort me. Again I was suffused with the red light, and these words in white letters rested against the background of scintillating crimson :

“To lose the self is to gain the unself—the God self, the universal consciousness. To let go of the mortal self, with its doubts and fears and endless interrogations, is to open wide the door of the soul for the entrance of the Most High. This is the true life.”

One by one the words faded out, but the joy color was left—the indescribable beautiful red that was always a proof of the nearness of power, the presence of a mighty friend.

II.

ON THE WAY TO MEMORY

“For he shall give his angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways.

“They shall bear thee up in their hands lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

“Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him. I will set him on high because he hath known my name.”—*Ninety-first Psalm, 10th, 11th, 14th.*

* * * * *

HOW plain it all was! It was not so yesterday, and how would it be to-morrow? The great longing for poise and spiritual steadfastness caused me to forgive myself the question as soon as it was asked. There was no anxiety in the thought. It was born of my good intention in the line of future conduct.

This time there was no reprimand.

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As I recalled the many, many times that I had been borne up in their hands, how often I had been saved from tragic mistakes, my whole being was filled with gratitude and praise. But under the influence of this shimmering, rosy light, a light full of warmth and inspiration, every divine undertaking had seemed a simple thing.

These occasions, however, were rare. It was such a strange and wonderful revelation—this light. It seemed all my own, for although I might discern the color and even the shadings of the aura that surrounded other persons, this particular red I have never beheld in any atmosphere except my own.

Sometimes the impetus afforded by the tender glow remained for many days to cheer and strengthen, and sometimes the

On the Way to Memory

force, which always accompanied the color, came without any outward light. Then I would say : " The glow was present while I slept, and this is the result."

" To lose the self is to gain the unself."

What if I could not remember? I would not endeavor to remember nor strive to forget. I would do the will of my Father in silence and solitude. I would seek the place my soul loved, and find what the new green of the fields and my brothers and sisters—the trees—had to say to me. Many a message they had whispered the year a-gone, and much comfort and knowledge had I derived from their conversation. True, they did not always talk to me, but their words to each other were pregnant with joy and philosophy.

And so I went and walked among them

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and gave them my confidence. I told them that I desired their solace for another season, and that I could not remember. I recalled to them that during the months that they and I were comrades I had written and been happy; but that now I could not give the message assigned me, because between me and something in the past there was a strange hiatus. What I had forgotten I must recall before the pen that sought the ink could speak from the waiting paper.

Very joyous and playful were my green relatives this gorgeous morning in May. They treated the matter very lightly, in the manner of a wise mother whose little one falls and hurts itself. They seemed to say to me: "Never mind. After a while you will learn the use of all of your powers. Behold us! A month ago you

On the Way to Memory

might have said, 'My friends are dead'; but all through the winter we were growing the tender twigs, the substance of the leaves, and mixing the colors that were to bring joy to you and others in the days to come. Like us, you seem to wait in sorrow and darkness, but it is only a seeming. It is all Growth. Rejoice. Make merry. Be glad yourself and gladden the hearts of your friends. We will once again be comrades, and you will have Remembered."

Imagination?

Perhaps, but it certainly was permissible, or I could not even now repeat the happy conversation.

"Naught but truth must be found upon the pages which you are to scatter broadcast over the earth," seemed to be whispered in my ear as I lingered a moment

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longer in the tender embrace of my eloquent companions.

“Naught but truth?”

Did I not desire the truth more than all else that the universe could give me? And had I not been willing to write the truth?

It was all a mystery.

The hours sped on in precious converse with the spirit of the trees and the friends I loved. When the time came to part, a new treasure was mine—just what, I could not have told—but it seemed to underlie and permeate every thought, indescribable, yet actual.

Was I too literal in accepting the prophecy of summer companionship that the stalwart ones had made me? From a human standpoint this especial and much desired arrangement did not seem prob-

On the Way to Memory

able. The obstacles had appeared well-nigh insurmountable. I allowed the promise a glorious liberty, however, anticipating and planning all the way back to the city. Everything animate and inanimate consented to my pleasure and helped to emphasize the truth of the thought that had taken such full possession of me. Even the train, as it sped along, kept saying: "There is nothing too good for you. There is nothing too good for you. You can have what you want. You can have what you want. There is nothing too good for you." Not a single negative was there in this ceaseless rhythm.

The God of Sleep claimed me early that night ; it was a strange falling off, a sort of sinking into buoyant pink and purple clouds. The sensation was unlike anything I had ever before experienced.

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Whether my eyes were opened or closed, there was the same lullaby motion, the same colors. At last consciousness ceased, and after this where I went, what I did, or whom I saw on my way to Memory is to me a sealed experience ; at least, for the present. It matters not.



III.

THE GROVE OF MEMORY

I WAS alone in a great grove or garden, happy and expectant. A dense forest seemed to surround the grove on all sides, but as I walked on and on I found new and beautiful paths leading in every direction. The trees were of unusual size and of an endless variety. Birds sang, and strange and beautiful animals played merrily together. I was not afraid of them, nor were they disturbed by my presence. The most remarkable things about these unusual companions were their apparent intelligence, their grace, and their color. In this matchless place, color seemed to have run wild. The tree whose green could not be

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surpassed would, from another point of view, show forth a bright red or a rosy pink. The color of the animals changed in the same manner. There were marbles also, or what appeared as such, in every variety of color, exquisitely chiselled, and representing persons and scenes entirely unknown to me ; but as I studied one after another of these superb creations, a sense of knowledge and kinship dawned upon me, and I smiled to think how easy it was to forget and how difficult to remember.

The atmosphere was most invigorating, yet so soft and balmy as to make breath a luxury. A part of the time the air seemed to be visible, and the color varied from pink to purple and red. Then it would change to a silvery shimmer, which communicated to the nerves an ecstasy which no pen could ever describe.

The Grove of Memory

It did not seem in the least strange that I was the only person in this apparently limitless garden, nor was I surprised by the shape and color of the animals. All was grace and harmony. Occasionally I recognized a four-footed friend who bore some resemblance to the animals I had known. This was especially the case with dogs and horses.

These beautiful creatures made no noise. The murmur of the trees, the songs of the birds, and an undertone of some sweet and sentient power which I knew not how to explain, were all the sounds I heard.

This under-tone was rhythmic, and as I stopped to listen to its strange and regular cadences, it seemed like a cosmic force made musical, sphere talking unto sphere, and I said aloud :

“ It is the voice of God.”

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A very strange incident followed the utterance of these words. The animals which had before been friendly, though indifferent to my presence among them, gathered about me in great numbers. I stopped to speak to them, for I could not have walked on had I wished to do so. A great tawny creature, with most expressive eyes and long soft ears, was foremost among the group. His body was in proportion to the size of his head, and I instinctively felt that the magnificent one was a highly developed lion.

“Welcome, O King of Beasts!” I cried. At this my companion cast down his massive head, and a great stillness fell upon all the group. The roseate hue of the atmosphere faded out and I knew I had made a mistake.

“Forgive me,” I pleaded with all my

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The Grove of Memory

heart, for I saw that I had wounded these new friends.

“ Please forgive me,” I cried. “ I must have come from another world, and so am ignorant of the fashioning of this new and wonderful place. I love you ; I love you ; I love you, my dear ones.”

Then my huge friend drew nearer and looked affectionately into my eyes and caressed my hand. A snow-white, soft-wooled creature, with a splash of red upon the breast and about the neck, placed a pretty head in the other hand which I held out.

Suddenly these words came into my mind :

“ The lion and the lamb shall lie down together ” ; and then another wonderful thing occurred. The lion stretched himself gracefully in front of me and, opening

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his huge arms, took into his embrace the little white lamb.

The other animals scampered joyously away, and the voice said unto me :

“Every world has its correspondences and its scriptures. Everything that has being is formed of the substance of the Mighty One, all in different degrees of perfection. There are no beasts, here or elsewhere, not even among some of the mortals, whom you regard as bestial. Hold Perfection as your keynote and you will behold the blind seeing with eyes, the deaf with gladsome ears, the lame running, and those you love—for you love the whole universe—forsaking their false ways.”

I bowed my head and wept. Every tear was a pearl of joy, and when I lifted my eyes again I was alone.

IV.

THE WATER-BEARER'S MESSAGE

Open-mindedness is the key that unlocks the door of the intellect, and gives one access to the spiritual realm. He who bars this door with dogmas and creeds cannot know the *essence of truth*.

The practical worth of the spiritual life will not be generally apparent until men are willing to accept the teaching of Jesus at its par value and comply with its spirit.—SPRAGUE, "*Spiritual Consciousness*."

And he who sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new, and he said unto me, Write, for these things are true and faithful.—ST. JOHN THE DIVINE.

* * * * *

MARBLE gods and goddesses were everywhere, or at least what I took as such representations. So natural were they in form, pose, and expression that sometimes they seemed as if they were

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about to speak. They did not appear like cold and lifeless marble statues. Indeed, everything in this Edenic garden bore the aspect of life. It would not have surprised me to have seen the trees walking, and I rather expected that some brother or sister among them would approach and address me. Nothing could have surprised me in this grove except inharmony and dissension. The good and the desirable, the true and the beautiful were alone in evidence.

As I studied these figures and scenes, I recalled the legends of the stars, and I was impressed that to these legends they owed their foundation and inspiration.

I might forget many things that I should remember, but the stars were too much a part of my innermost self to make it possible to forget them.

The Water-Bearer's Message

A group guarded by a god in flashing armor seemed formed of scintillating yellow diamonds in nebula upon what appeared to be a blue marble background, but when I drew near and touched the substance which I expected to find solid, my hand came in contact with nothing more resistant than air.

I thought I recognized my friends Alcyone and Electra of the Pleiades, and their sisters who formed the sharp triangle of the Hyades on the other side of the god.

Was this Jupiter, I wondered, who had been accused of persecuting these charming sisters, and who now stood in the attitude of love and protection toward them?

Was it also a lesson to all who came this way, teaching the ultimate dethronement of tyranny and passion?

The Christ of the Red Planet

Such a conclusion seemed entirely in harmony with the spirit of the place.

Occasionally the sense of having seen all these things before almost overpowered me, and yet an inexplicable influence kept me quiet and observant. As I walked on still undisturbed by the strange isolation from beings of my own order, I came to the borders of a lake. At my approach there seemed a commotion upon the surface of the water. It was such a beautiful flutter that I construed it into a sort of tender welcome. The noiseless breakers that washed the shore were all of different colors. Not a color or a shade that I had ever known was left out of this beautiful phantasmagoria. Color blended into color and shade into shade, until overcome by the wondrous beauty I fell upon my knees in

The Water-Bearer's Message

awe and delight. When I looked again the waves had receded, and directly in front of me was a translucent water mirror in which I beheld a reflection of myself.

Glorious beyond words was this vision. For beauty I had always longed and prayed. It had been my one appeal ever since I could remember. As this thought of memory entered my mind a strange thrill swept over me. Somewhere, sometime, some one had told me to Remember. I had not then this form, these attractive features, these soulful blue eyes, this soft, winsome neck and superbly modelled arms. Ah, no.

Again I bowed my head, but not in prayer. I was overawed and overjoyed with this revelation of beauty.

I was ravished of myself.

There seemed nothing wrong about

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this intense personal pleasure, and yet the thrill which the breath of memory had caused became a chill. I was cold and there was a perceptible waning of color about me. The lake was not so friendly, and as I arose from my knees to observe my figure in its entirety, the water mirror became blurred, and I turned away to seek other enjoyments.

Since entering the grove I had not been conscious of my apparel. Now I found that my robe was of transparent silken gauze and was the only garment. It spoke of white and pink, and on my feet were soft silk sandals of a deeper pink.

My hair as I had seen it in the mirror seemed full of light, and that is all I knew. Now as I took the soft flowing locks in my hand I found the color a golden-brown—the shade I had always desired.

The Water-Bearer's Message

The ecstasy that filled my soul was little short of delirium—and yet, what was it that even at this supreme moment hinted of sorrow and—and remorse? It could not be remorse. How could such a thought in such a spot as this enter my mind?

As I passed on slowly I came to a beautiful statue representing a woman smiling and gracious, with a silver pitcher of water in her right hand, which was raised as if ready to pour into a golden goblet in her left hand.

She was the picture of peace and airy, fairy, almost *insouciant* loveliness, and this apparent marble yielded as readily to my touch as had the other.

“Dear heart,” I yet cried; “I am glad to see you. Just now I was growing comfortless. I have found myself beautiful

The Christ of the Red Planet

and the joy was like heaven. Then came a change, and the joy holds a bitterness which I fain would have you dispel. All beauty comes from God, does it not ? ”

Did the leaves whisper at this moment, or did my radiant companion speak ?

This is what I heard :

“ A little more or a little less brings trouble to the soul. At this moment you are over-endowed, and your self-consciousness has kept pace with your surprise at the richness of the gift. Be warned, O child of air and fire, for all realms are yours to see and to know. You must travel the earth and inhabit the water, and unless you can remember, often, far too often, it will seem a cruelty. If you forget everything else, be mindful of this. Your journey must needs be a rapid one. If you are torn by the way it will be

The Water-Bearer's Message

because your own spirit takes the lead and will have it so. You are born to conquer, but few even among the gods have had so many obstacles to overcome. In spite of sorrow must you be happy, and until that time arrives—the time when you can smile in the face of grief and death and know them not—disquietude will be your portion. By and by you will rejoice in everlasting happiness, as does your sister the Water-Bearer, who gives of the water of life freely.”

“And must I leave this place?” I asked in alarm.

“It will be no hardship,” was the kind answer.

“How came I here?” was my next question, “and what is this garden called?”

“This is the Grove of Memory—where situated you must discover for yourself.



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You are no stranger, however. Every tree is acquainted with you and every animal knows your name. Be not infatuated with your beauty, and strive not to impress it upon another. So close to the goal are you, my child, so near, so very near, and yet—and yet so far away.”

This was all. I waited a moment for more, but the stillness was not to be misunderstood and I walked on.



V.

A RED GOD

Through wisdom is an house builded ; and by understanding it is established ; and by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches.—*Proverbs*.

Knock there, and ask your heart what it doth know.—GOETHE.

* * * * *

A GAIN I sought the borders of the lake, hoping for another glimpse of myself in the water mirror. The words that I had heard were fully sensed by my spirit, but only dimly comprehended by my intellect. I had received comfort and warning and was grateful for both.

It must be that it was easy to forget and difficult to remember, for I could not recall my personal appearance nor my

The Christ of the Red Planet

former environment. I simply knew that the first had not satisfied me, that the present surroundings were most congenial, and this—that I would gladly remain among them forever.

It did not seem in the least strange to be talked to by the air, to be smiled upon by statuesque gods and goddesses, or to be followed by lovely and intelligent animals. I should have felt quite at home had it not been for a subtle and indescribable undercurrent of discontent.

There was something in the Water-Bearer's message which was not so comforting after all.

"I will rest a while," I said at last. "I know not how I came here, who I am or what I was. I only know that I am not what I once was, and that I shall be something quite different again in some

A Red God

other place. The sparkling gems that simulate the stars and a few of the mighty ones who seem to guard the spot are all that remind me of anything I have before known. Animals I have seen and loved elsewhere, but they were not like these."

There was a seat in a grotto formed by the spreading branches of a giant tree. and as I carefully arranged the folds of the soft robe that seemed to change in color, chameleon-like, with every movement I made, I saw a man of giant stature approaching me. He was the personification of grace and power. He wore a white silken robe with a broad crimson sash, and pure white sandals. His neck and arms were bare. His large dark eyes were masterful and the poise of his head most beautiful to behold. Dark hair

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waved back from a broad brow—and oh! wonder of wonders! his complexion was of a burnished crimson.

He was a Red Giant.

And still I had no fear. I had carressed the lion and seen him take the tender lamb into his embrace, and I knew that I was safe.

The stranger stood before me without reserve or apology. His eyes seemed to penetrate to the very heart of my spirit. He did not appear pleased or displeased. At this discovery of indifference something stirred within me which was most agreeable. A keen consciousness of my beauty took possession of me. Somewhere I had understood the power of feminine loveliness, and I affirmed that this stranger, this red man, the only person who had broken in

A Red God

upon my solitude, should feel its fullest force.

And all this after the warning just received :

“Be not infatuated with your beauty and strive not to impress it upon another.”

Wisdom's words to be remembered only after temptation, but still never wasted.

The stranger threw himself upon the velvety lawn at my feet, and after another critical examination remarked :

“Thou art a scribe.”

This was not communicated by means of any language that I had ever known. It appeared a musical vibration, a tender palpitation of the air. But these were words—beautiful words—which I heard and comprehended. And when my thought was ready for utterance the same wonderful vehicle of communication awaited me.

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It was the language of the spheres. For a brief space Gratitude had a race with Vanity because of the inestimable privilege which had been granted me of acquiring this knowledge. But Vanity was the first to reach the goal.

“Thou art a scribe,” the stranger had said.

Memory stirred again and I knew that somewhere I had wielded the pen. I recalled that I had written in dark places and under the stress of sorrow and despair ; and that at other times—perhaps in other domains—I had indited strange and beautiful things from the sun-lit heights of the highest peaks of Joy.

“How knowest thou that I am a scribe?” I asked, after sufficient time had elapsed for my charms to make the coveted impression.

A Red God

“There is a scribe’s light in thine eye and a stain upon thy finger,” my companion answered with a smile so warm and so sunny that the beauty of everything about us seemed enhanced.

I lifted my hands and regarded them with delight.

“The blot is in thine own eye,” I said.
“There is no stain here.”

“It casts no discredit upon thee. Thou hast long been a scribe, I see.”

“And is the stain so deep?”

“Just deep enough to establish thy right to the sacred gift and its eternal use. Ages have come and gone, or seemed to go, and yet through them all thou hast pointed thy thought to enduring issues by means of the little instrument which has been more powerful for good and evil than all the mighty weapons of the most mighty gods.

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You are a real scribe because your head, heart, and hand are in unison."

"Not always have I loved the work," I replied, as a consciousness of toil and sadness swept over me. Even at this moment, so strangely complicated and complex were my memories that I could not have told where or under what circumstances I had ever used the pen. As I tried in vain to recall some incident of the past that would help me, I was conscious of a great hurt, an awful sorrow—many hurts and many awful sorrows.

And here I was in this entrancing environment with a red god at my feet, for he had thrown himself carelessly upon the soft velvety grass and was looking into my eyes with a rapt and puzzled contemplation.

A Red God

For a little time interrogation had outstripped Vanity, but the admiring gaze of those eyes, the like of which I had never known, encouraged me to seek for more pleasure in this new and wonderful field of attraction.

“From whence do you come?” was the stranger’s next question.

“I know not whence I came or whither I am going. I only know that I am here in the loveliest garden that God could design or art carry to completion. And then—I am with *you*. Is that not enough?”

Oh! for the water mirror, that I could see the radiance of my countenance as I uttered these words!

Was I ever before conscious of beauty? I asked myself at this supreme moment, and the answer came back:

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“ You have had the consciousness, but have lost it. Remember your friend the Water-Bearer.”

Remember! Remember! Remember! How tiresome this word had become, and even in the midst of what seemed a mighty triumph, I felt for a moment that eternal forgetfulness would be a joyous fate to anticipate.

For a moment the face that was lifted to mine seemed overcast and perplexed. At last he said :

“ It is not enough. That you are with me is of no consequence except for the experience that this fleeting attraction may work out. What it will be I know not. Like everything else, it depends upon the use that is made of it. Have you no recollection of your former life or lives ?”

At this juncture some beautiful butter-

A Red God

flies flew about my head and shoulders. Their colors changed as did everything else in this wonderful garden. White and blue, and red and purple, yellow and pink and green, and every shade that these colors made possible blended into each other, and as they floated over my arms and my robe I made answer to the last question :

“In some remote garden of some unknown world I may have been like one of these.”

“It may be true,” was the calm and solemn response.

This did not please me, and in a thrill of irritation I lifted my hand and brushed the unoffending little creatures away. In an instant they had dispersed like bits of variegated clouds.

“Light you may have been, but never cruel,” my companion went on. “Were

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cruelty possible to your nature you would not now be here."

"Something has been cruel to me," I replied, and the great sobs that rose in my throat were so like the sobs that anguish had somewhere wrung from me that I forgot even the present most agreeable situation in the effort to remember.

"It takes so long to learn that all cruelty is self-imposed," said my friend; and the air vibrated with that tender sympathy which often brings the wayward child to repentance in the arms of its mother.

"What an absurdity!" I cried. "And you mean to tell me that I have been cruel to myself?"

"Very, very cruel, and most cruel to yourself at this moment."

"Why at this moment?"

A Red God

"For one thing, because in an hour of forgetfulness you would be cruel to another."

My secret was disclosed, but still the desire for admiration was not quenched.

As I caressed the hair that rippled over my shoulders and smoothed the folds of the royal robe that hung about me in the classic folds so agreeable to the lover of harmony, I grew more and more impressed with the power of Beauty.

"I thought you said that I could not be cruel," I responded, with a timidity that was not assumed.

"It is but a passing spasm born of the strangeness and subtlety of the occasion," and there was a smile in the beautiful dark eyes that angered me.

My companion was excusing and laughing at me at the same time. How insig-

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nificant I must appear in his thought to make such an attitude possible.

Again Memory stirred and I knew that this was not the first time that the exceeding charm of myself had overpowered me.

With wonderful tact the conversation was turned to the original question.

"Have you no remembrance of your home?" he asked.

"No and yes. Why do you wish me to remember? Is it not enough that I am here and longing to be happy?"

"It is not. Your mission here is not an idle one, and the work which awaits you because of this visit is of the gravest consequence. If you would be useful, learn truly to know the value of an experience. It is impossible to overestimate the importance of this one. Think,"

A Red God

he added, "think deeply,"—and then—"have you never seen me before?"

"Perhaps in my dreams, but I know not. You speak to me of cruelty," I went on, a feeling of being and having been forever hunted and hurt taking full possession of me. "This I know of myself, that I know not Rest. Always, always, always, I have been chased from pole to pole and from star to star, from the lowest depths to the highest heights, and I am as weary of the one as the other. Not of my own volition did I come hither. I did not ask for talking trees, for lakes of color and water-mirrors, nor for superior gods. But here I chance to be, and for a brief moment I was content. Then *you* came with your inquisitorial words and your talk of memory. Why am I not allowed to have an hour of peace?"

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"Peace comes from within," was the unruffled answer.

"From within? So I have heard before. Indeed, I have a thought that I have said as much myself."

"Where and to whom?"

"I know not where, but to those who were sick in soul and body, who were looking for happiness and found it not."

"Why did you tell them this?"

"Because it is true; the greatest truth that is. Surely, you know this."

"Yes, dear child, I know it well; and now can you not describe these brothers and sisters to whom you gave this message?"

With all my strength I strove to find the spring that would open the door to the knowledge that seemed so necessary, but the effort was useless. Occasionally,

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as when one repeats the alphabet in the the hope of recalling a name, there was a stirring of thought that seemed to promise success, but it came not. I buried my head in my hands and the tears trickled through my fingers.

“Why dost thou weep?” inquired my companion, in the light way that one would speak to a child.

“Because even now in the place of great light and beauty I am in outer darkness. I am empty of knowledge. I can tell you nothing, because I know nothing myself.”

“You have told me much. If you can communicate no more I am amply satisfied.”

I raised my head and looked with the keenest amazement into the serious face that was so sympathetically regarding me.

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"Yes," he continued, "you have given a proof of the highest knowledge. To know that the Within holds all, makes all, and *is* all, is to know wisdom. This is the precious nugget—the ruby of truth. Everything else will follow. Be patient."

"I was told a while ago that even the animals know my name. Please give me this word. It may aid me in my search for that which seems to be lost."

"You are known to us as Ellene," my companion slowly replied, and then added in a different tone :

"Ellene is here. Ellene, Ellene, Ellene."

At that moment the animals I had before seen and admired, with many more that had not previously presented themselves, came running toward us. Squirrels of every conceivable color and size

A Red God

scampered down the trees into my lap and over my shoulders. Dogs and horses, and scores of beautiful creatures all unknown to me, drew close in love. A pure white pony came behind me and rested his head upon my head.

“Why, this is Alceste,” I cried in sudden recognition. “This is my Alceste. Come around here, you dear white darling, and let me look into your eyes.”

“And are you not acquainted with any other of these animals?” my companion asked, as the beautiful pony came and knelt at my side.

“Some of them are like in form to those I have known——”

“Where?” as I hesitated and stopped.

The interrogation was quick and sharp, but it did not avail. Somewhere and for some reason the connection was cut off

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between myself and what my friend seemed so determined to hear.

“I thought I could tell you,” I said in a daze, “but it is gone again.”

“Be not disturbed,” was the kind answer; “enjoy yourself with your Alceste.”

“And here I am called Ellene? Oh! it sounds so natural—and yet—yet it is so different.”

“Different from what?”

“From that to which I answered, methinks, but an hour ago.”

“And what didst thou say?”

“Some one said to me—I know not whether spirit, god, or mortal——”

“Or what?” my friend again interrupted.

“Or mortal.”

“What is a mortal?” There is a qual-

A Red God

ity about that word that pleases me not. Somewhere—I know not in what clime—I learned its meaning. Mors? Death. Ah! yes, I remember. And now you see that I too can forget.”

“But the grave of your forgetfulness is not so deep as mine,” I replied. “You have only to stir the surface and the memory comes forth.”

“Is this word mortal much in use in your—your star?”

“It is the principal word,” I replied. “I well remember that. I think that where I come from we are all called mortals.”

“Death people,” said the red god. “Dost thou like that thought?”

“I hate it,” I cried with tragic sincerity. “That thought has destroyed every hope, blackened every ideal, shattered every as-

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piration of my brothers and sisters. It has chained them to indescribable bondage, made love a mockery, and God a fetish to be worshipped from afar. And it has broken *my* heart. I have seen the dear ones obedient to this sacrilege fall about me like the leaves in autumn, and the earth covered them as if they were of no more consequence than the outworn foliage."

"All is well, Ellene," my friend observed soothingly. "Endeavor to bear this in your memory wherever you go, Calmness is the fleetest of all travellers. It never grows weary, because it understands that the Breath of God *is* God and must be used and not wasted. To scatter it in idle protest is to fall into line with your enemy—the *mors* foe who should be simply ignored—not hated with such surpassing enmity. Endow naught with

A Red God

power that is not in the highest sense desirable and true. But what was it you were telling of the words spoken in some other place but an hour ago ? ”

“Some one said to me—El—El—it does not sound like Ellene—and yet that name seems a sweet part of myself——”

“What is yours neither God nor the one who is called devil can take from you. What is not yours, you can have no use for.”

“And you are sure that those words were not spoken here?”

“As sure as I can be of something I know not of.”

“It is so like our own thought that methinks it must come from a not too distant neighbor. Are you able to recall the aspect of the one who spoke these words ? ”

“It is one whom I call the Egyptian.”

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"Is he known as a mortal?"

"He is as old as the Pyramids. I know no more."

"And you think he spoke to you by the name you are accustomed to be called by your people?"

"So it seems to me."

"Are many of your people comforted and instructed by intelligences of other domains?"

"More than will acknowledge it, I think. Such companionship is considered a disgrace by most of those who inhabit our earth."

"What say you? What call you it? Earth? What mean you by Earth?"

"Oh! a place where there is travail of soul, where brother kills brother, and sister turns against sister. I verily believe that there can be no greater sacrifice of

A Red God

life, no more hatred and cupidity even in Mars, our near neighbor, than there is upon the Earth where I live sometimes, but surely not all the time."

The red god shook his head sorrowfully. He was evidently in deep thought.

"It is sad indeed," he said after a while, "that there should be such misunderstanding between neighbors; but you have remembered well, my sister, and after this sojourn you will have an added power which will help you to bring from the history of your travels anything that is of value to remember. One question more: What mean you by the Egyptian and the Pyramids?"

Then I told what I knew of Egypt and its people, and described the building of the Pyramids as this work had been pictured to me.

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With a rapt countenance did the red god listen, and when I had finished he said softly :

“ It needs be that every star must have its Egypt and its colossal, unintelligible Pyramids ? ”

“ Are there Pyramids here, ” I asked.

“ Yes, ” he replied with a smile.

“ Please take me to them. ”

“ Not this time. When you come again to see us, I will remember my promise to show you more of the wonders of our home. ”

“ What call you this place ? ”

“ I know not how to tell you, ” was the puzzled response.

I pointed to the red of his sash, an indescribably beautiful crimson.

“ That color gives the name, does it not ? It stands for valor, honor, ambition

A Red God

for high places—the Life Blood—which has been poured out like water since ever the atoms formed and the gods kindled a fire that should give them a standing, a prestige among the nations of the universe. What say you?”

For a few moments language ceased to vibrate and I reflected that perchance I had said too much. At last the pulses of the air commenced to stir and I heard these words :

“More wonderful is this than all the rest”—and then : “Is there a word by which your brothers and sisters designate this star?”

“Was I correct in my description?”

He bowed his head.

“Then by us it is called Mars.”

“And is translated by you as Carnage? Once it was what you have portrayed, but

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not now. There are still places where war is known, but they are growing smaller and smaller continually. Do you think you can remember to take this truth to your people?"

"I am weary of my people," I replied. "If you care aught for me let me abide with you a time. I desire no more than to remain in this grove and rest. Alceste will be my friend whether you will or not."

"To consent to such a sojourn would prove my disregard for all that concerns your past, present, and future. But you shall not go back until you wish."

"Have you aught to tell me of my presence here? Was my coming an accident or was I bidden to this spot, and if bidden who gave the word of command?"

"Yourself. No one else could give it."

A Red God

“And I alone am responsible for this visit?”

“You alone. It was necessary for you to seek the Grove of Memory, and your spirit was intelligent enough to find it.”

“Why am I not greeted by others?”

“Because it would be too confusing. There is one here who is far wiser than I—my brother counsellor and Supreme Lover—who sent me to welcome and question you.”

“Why did he not come himself? Surely that would have been more hospitable.”

“Wisdom may not always seem hospitable, but when Love loves it cares not for appearances or conventions. You have formalities to observe on your planet, I think.”

“I have never observed any on my

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planet that the feet of my spirit have trod, and I never will."

"That being the case, it is a wonderment to me why you abide so long in that place."

"The only convention I have ever observed is that of weeping, and to that have I been most obedient. But between times I have laughed and played and made very merry. And I have caused others to laugh and be merry, and this gives more joy to my soul than any bitter counsel I may have dispensed, and God knows there has been enough of that. Bitter counsel is the fashion where I have lived."

"From this moment give no more of it. Open your arms and take in every inhabitant of Love's great domain. To preach is to stumble. To practise in Love is to be rewarded as only Love can reward.

A Red God

There are no just and unjust with us. There are simply degrees of intelligence, and this must be the case in all worlds. Is it not so in yours? Think a moment."

"My thought so agrees with yours that I have no need to think. I feel that I have been endeavoring to live this thought and to place it before others."

"Tell me more about it, my sister."

Again I had become confused. It seemed such a marvel that for a moment event after event should dawn upon me, and in another moment the longed-for consecutiveness should be broken.

My smile must have been sad as I strove to do my companion's bidding, for he took my hand in his and the tender vibration was like far-off music.

"Forgive my selfishness," he said, "and let me thank you for the infor-

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mation you have given us. I may tell you now that your mission here is a double one."

"How is that?" I asked.

"You came to Remember and to Impart, and when in the home which is yours for the present, you recall, as you will, our interview in the *Grove of Memory*, know that the words you have spoken will be a help in our counsels and our intentions toward our neighbors. All progress in brotherly love and union must be made by means of the inner senses and not by the outer ones. When brain, hands, and feet do the behest of the One Spirit, we shall abide in the Universe unhampered by separateness, limit, or boundary."

The Red God placed my hand upon my lap, and after stroking thoughtfully

A Red God

the head of Alceste, arose, saying as he did so :

“The truth brings freedom to all,” and added playfully, “even Alceste seems to know this.”

“Tell me about Alceste,” I entreated. “How is it possible for me to know so much and yet so little? Upon what plains have he and I cantered? In what waving fields of glorious grain, that food of the gods, has he eaten from my hand and with shining eyes told me of his love?”

“The highest, fondest love will keep and guard you, Ellene,” was the kind answer; “but I may not tell you now. Know this; on every star that shines in the firmament of Love you have friends—some like this”—touching Alceste again, “and some”—with a radiant, almost mischievous smile—“like me.”

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“Why is there no woman here to greet me?” I asked. “Surely I have friends here like myself.”

“Wo-man?” repeated my companion. “That word brings tears to my eyes and makes the face of the planet seem cold. Speak it not again neither here nor elsewhere. You are all goddesses and we are all gods. Do you not understand?” and here the vibration became so intense that I felt as if falling, and I held out my hands for support. “Can you not comprehend,” he went on, “that the thoughts you think of yourself and the words that you speak of yourself are the food upon which you are nourished or destroyed? Love and Joy are twin hand-maidens. Wo and Mors go together, also hand-in-hand. Speak not such words of the beautiful and the deathless—remember—the—the deathless.”

A Red God

"Am I to go?" I asked, for there was something in my companion's manner that spoke of haste, and yet he seemed to be listening intently.

"Not yet," he replied, and then : "Do you desire to leave us?"

"I have no desires just now," I answered; "but once in a while I feel as if a chord were pulling me in another direction, and it hurts me—here"—placing my hand upon my bosom.

"It is the electric chord," he said. "I will relieve that tension."

In a second it was gone. He had turned his back upon me and lifted his hand. That was all.

"And now," my companion resumed, "we must attend to the work of Memory. I have here a stylus and some paper upon which we desire you to place a

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rapid history of whatever truths concerning your people you may wish to leave with us."

Where the pen and the paper came from I know not. There was no pen and no paper, and then there was a pearl pen with a ruby in the top, and a pad of satin paper with a red monogram which I could not decipher. For such implements I had longed like a child for a beautiful toy. Somewhere I had handled and enjoyed these very things. I looked into the face of my friend and he said :

"Memory is at work now, my dear Elene. I will go now and return shortly."

With this he strode away. Alceste made as if to follow him, but returned and hovered about me after the manner of an affectionate friend. Dear Alceste ! Most dear and beautiful one ! When shall I

A Red God

know thee better, and so the better know myself?

The stylus was a magical thing. It had a jewelled point and the characters which I formed came out in color like the red of wine.

I felt myself stimulated by a great pride. In some unaccountable way I was different from what I was a moment before. Ambition to excel rather than a desire to serve took possession of me. I would indite something so beautiful that it would be read on all the planets, and the most famous of the gods and goddesses would stop on their way to study the lines which they could never surpass.

I regretted that the Red God had left me. I would have liked him to see the ease with which I could toss off the flowers of prose and poetry, and have him

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become acquainted with the genius of a true scribe.

All the time the Spirit kept whispering to me of a previous experience of this kind. It seemed to say :

“Stop and think a moment.”

But pride and ambition and a real love for the work kept me negative to the still small voice. This was my opportunity for distinguishment. That I had been permitted such a one before was manifest to my thought, but this effort should exceed anything that I had ever before attempted.

The ruby flashed and the jewels shone as with lightning-like rapidity the pen traversed the satin sheets. There was song and poetry and love, and bits of sketches by way of more eloquent illustration.

At the height of this enthusiasm I saw

A Red God

the Red God approaching. He held a piece of blue ribbon in his hand.

"This is to fasten your screed," he said.
"Be quick, Ellene, for the time has come."

The excitement of desire to excel had kept me from feeling the tug at my bosom, but now the tension was a pain, and breath an agony.

Again my companion lifted his hand and the pressure was eased, but not removed. I handed him the package of silver paper, but instead of his taking it, it rose above his head and finally fluttered back to my lap.

Again he extended his hand and I passed him the manuscript. There was the same result.

"What legerdemain is this?" I said.
"Why do you allow the book to escape you?"

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“How can one hold thistle-down or the pollen of a flower?” he asked.

“But you *shall* take it,” I declared, and now with my own hand I placed the package in his and pressed it down, but as soon as I removed the pressure it again flew away.

This time, as it floated hither and yon above his head, he seemed to dismiss it with a wave of his arm, and the little blue-bound package floated up and away until I could see it no longer.

“Listen, Ellene,” said my friend, “and weep not. You long ago filled the measure of tears. This especial part of your visit is a simple reproduction of a previous experience. Our *interview* belongs to the present and has fulfilled its purpose of neighborly information.”

Once more the Red God took my hand in his and listened. Then he added

A Red God

with a smile that made the brightness brighter :

“Your screed will doubtless afford great pleasure to the butterflies, the gnomes, and the fairies. They once had from your fair hands a similar story. You will remember it, and come to know that TRUTH WILL ALWAYS BEAR ITS WEIGHT.

“Stories for the butterflies are not the facts now desired and demanded by the spirit of the age. In your future work you will not, I hope, be tempted to bedeck Truth with fancy. Know this, though, that there is nothing possible to your imagination that may not be true. When the fire is kindled in your soul for such work let it be understood as poetry—or prophecy if you please—but not as something you yourself have experienced. This is confusing and contrary to science.

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You, Ellene, will return to your people with a message. Give it with all possible accuracy. Be not disturbed by unbelievers. Enough minds will comprehend its breadth and meaning to make a larger frankness possible, and so help to usher in the glorious day which shall cause such communion as ours to be as simple and as natural as the Breath of Life. You have served us well, my sister—and you have *Remembered*. Hereafter we are no more strangers.”



VI.

THE NAME OF THE RED GOD
—MEMORY'S SUCCESSES
AND DEFEATS

Canst thou bring forth Mazareth in his season, or
canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?—JOB.

God screens us evermore from premature ideas.
Our eyes are holden that we cannot see things that
stare us in the face until the hour arrives that the
mind is ripened. Then we behold them, and the
time that we saw them not is like a dream.—EMER-
SON.

* * * * *

IT seemed strange that I did not feel
a keener mortification because of my
failure to write an acceptable account of
my home which I had been so kindly asked
to do, and also because of the reprimand
I had received.

I recalled that I had never accepted

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criticism with appreciation and a pleasant countenance.

"Never" had a strange sound, and I thrilled and chilled as the thought swept over me of the many homes that might have been mine. I could remember some of them, but it seemed that everywhere I had been a froward child and not amenable to counsel or discipline. Appreciation and caresses had been chiefly desired.

These caresses I now coveted, for I was lonesome, oh! so lonesome, even in this beautiful spot.

What cause was there for this powerful, all-absorbing unrest that kept tugging at my heart and made everything about me appear commonplace and almost undesirable?

I had wanted to stay. Now I desired to go—but where—in what direction?

Was this feeling caused by disappoint-

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ment at not being able to make the impression I had intended and to receive the laurels I had expected ?

Singularly enough this apparently recent episode seemed a long distance away. The Red God had told me it was a repetition of a former experience, but this was as inexplicable as all the rest of the things I had seen and heard.

"Do not strive for meanings or correspondences now, Ellene," said my companion, whose nearness I had quite forgotten for the moment.

"The jewels will all arrange themselves according to order, and whatever may be found worthless among them will be cast away. Remember this : to be unjust to yourself is quite as harmful as to be unjust to another."

"Am I unjust to myself now?" I asked,

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“Yes, and this is no uncommon condition with you.”

“But have I not always, wherever I have been, cared more for praise and admiration than for anything else? Why, I know that there have been times when I would almost have sold my soul for a caress. If I have a soul I am not sure that I would not sell it now for one hour’s sensation of true protection. I tell you that I have been too long in the cold, and I am lonesome and freezing and solitary—and oh! I want my home. In mercy show it to me; lead me to it—will you not?”

“Calm yourself, Ellene, and for the moment place implicit trust in me.”

The Red God’s face was very sad. His memories were alive. He knew when he had been lonely and cold and buffeted about by storm and sorrow. He remem-

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bered when he would have sold his own soul and perhaps a few other souls for the privilege of a knowledge of real happiness.

"I do trust in you," I responded. "I have trusted you ever since I came. I know you mean me well. But will you not tell me something, do something to help me? What is your name?"

The sadness faded from the Red God's face and he looked into my eyes with a smile so warm and so cheering that for the nonce it changed my discontent to the keenest pleasure.

"Here I am called Arcturus," he said.

"Arcturus?" I cried. "Arcturus? That is the name of one of my pet stars. Have you the same names here for the stars that we have?"

"I do not know," was the somewhat dazed response.

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“Were you named for a star?”

“Perchance a star was called by my name,” was the strange answer.

“Arcturus?” I repeated. “Then if you are he, you are an old man and have children, many children among the gods. And yet you seem young, and so—so—gloriously handsome.”

“Ellene, I am both old and young, and so are you. In some states I am bowed with years, in others I am as you see. I have had children and, as you say, they are all gods. You too have had children and they are also gods. Many children have you that you do not remember, and those you now remember and sometimes mourn for, are working out their destinies with success and a sweet thought of the mother who is even more a companion to them than she ever was. They love to

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see you as you now are, young, radiant, and full of power. Those whom you do not recall, who were born in other spheres, between whom and you a veil hangs, are your dear friends and advisers. There is no goddess in my memory who is richer in children, parents, and friends than are you. Rejoice, Ellene; you wrong yourself and those who love you when you allow your atmosphere to be overcast. You are a goddess and a star. See to it that the glow is undimmed, and this is only possible when the centre of the planet is steady and luminous."

"Then I am not so vain and impatient of reproof as I thought a while ago?" I asked. "Oh! but I am sorry you could not read my story. It was a very pretty one. Indeed it was."

"Pretty, and all true, Ellene, but not

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true in its relations. Very much do we want you to understand the difference."

"Who are we?"

"The inhabitants of this planet."

"What do they know of me?"

"Those who are seeking information and verification know of your presence."

"And you are the interlocutor and interpreter?"

"Yes."

"And you will be able to repeat this interview?"

"All that they have not already heard I shall be able to repeat," and now the smile of the Red God grew mischievous.

I looked about me in wonderment. There was nothing in sight now but some animals at play and Alceste.

"You do not understand our acoustics," my companion remarked, and the smile

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visibly deepened. "One word more about the story. Methinks the earnest ones in all the stars are weary of the blending of fact and fancy. It is most difficult if not impossible to find in any of the planets absolute correctness of statement in reference to the subjects that so vitally concern the progress and well-being of the universe. The material scientists are too literal and the winged scientists are too flighty and poetic. Do you understand?"

I made haste to assure my companion of a perfect comprehension of his words, and to express the hope that I should ever profit by them.

"You will be able to recall this visit in its fullest particulars," he resumed.

"But I have no companions, no listeners," I replied.

"How know you that? Our Ellene

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has much to learn, but she is not vain or inconstant or willing to sell her soul for praise and caresses—at least not now. Once——”

Here the vibrations died away.

“Yes, once,” I said. “Tell me about the once.”

“I am not permitted, and I have made a mistake,” was the somewhat sorrowful answer. “Forgive me.”

“It is not easy for me to call you Arc-turus,” I remarked, after a little spell of silence.

“And when you are so fond of Arc-turus. Is it not strange?”

Again the light seemed dimmed. The strain at my heart grew harder to bear, and that inexplicable something within me cried out for comfort and home.

What meant these spells of elation

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and depression? How could I have been so delighted with everything about me but a while ago, and so cold and miserable now?

The infatuation with my personal appearance had faded with all the rest. I cared not for the shining robe and the beautiful sandals, and the water mirror, for which I had longed at intervals during the whole interview, had no longer any charm.

"Come back to happiness," said Arc-turus with a new and most royal decision of manner. "This is as opportune a moment as could be desired for putting into operation your own views on the subject of Life—its everlastingness and its absolute perfection. I could give you the wine of the gods to drink, Ellene, and that would cheer and stimulate you for a time, but you claim to rely upon the cor-

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dial of the Word of the Infinite One, which has its well in your own heart, and through you flows out freely to others. Do you remember that these are your frequently-uttered convictions? Try and think."

There was something in these words that attracted me powerfully. I remembered and I did not remember. Consciousness of former conditions seemed to come in flashes. I remembered vividly for a moment, and then all was lost again.

"I am sure you speak truly," I answered, "and I know what you say is the truth. But the wine of the gods must be exhilarating. I would like to taste it."

"It is a pleasant beverage," was the smiling response; "but it is not for you to-day. A beautiful testing time is yours. See that you stand as high as your

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thought. Remember, my dear Ellene, to give counsel requires very little more than a trained vanity seasoned with intellect. To put into practice your own theories requires intelligence and an abiding faith in the Infinite Force."

My companion again took my hand and appeared to listen. After he had done so he walked away a few steps. When he returned he said :

"All is well. Now listen with your whole soul. There are goddesses even on this planet, rare and beautiful creatures, who are sometimes afraid."

There was a little contempt in his tone, I thought, and an added brilliancy in his eyes.

"Fear, Ellene, has been the greatest of all hindrances to your progress and usefulness. I tell you"—and now the vibra-

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tions about me were deep and almost fierce—"you must tread upon this serpent and forget that you have ever known it. The time has come. Now come with me."



VII.

A VIEW OF THE CONSTELLATIONS FROM MARS

Canst thou bind the sweet influence of the Pleiades or loose the bands of Orion?

Then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee.—JOB.

The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork.

Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night showeth knowledge.

There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard.—PSALMS.

* * * * *

“KEEP your promise!” said the Red God as he gave me his hand again.

“I have made no promise,” I replied.

“It does not require the outward vibration, Ellene, to enable me to hear the

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words of your soul. You said—‘I will show this Arcturus that I have no fear. More than this, I will never allow it to dominate my life again on any star that my feet shall tread.’ Did you not say this, my sister?”

“Yes.”

How curious, how wonderful it all was! How precious and how holy! But would I, could I, remember all these things? Did the Red God really know? Might he not be too sanguine? How could it be possible for me to remember this when I had forgotten so much?

Pregnant questions, and all telling of Fear, the serpent I had promised to annihilate.

“My statements, Ellene, are founded on the rock of everlasting truth,” said my companion, answering again my most

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secret thought. "The preparation for this especial awakening has been going on for a longer period than you or I could even imagine. You have builded a little here and there, and all this time it has seemed that you were accomplishing nothing. Love, unselfishness, determination, to be of use, have opened the door for the entrance of the gods and the goddesses from many spheres, and for those intelligences which we call divine. You have walked the paths of confusion and sorrow, and all the time have known that there was a better way, and have set your face toward it. In so doing you have planted many a flower that blooms in many a garden here and elsewhere.

"Tell this, my sister, to those who will listen, because from whatever sphere you come there are many others who are pass-

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ing through similar experiences, and do not realize any more than you the majesty of the Power that is leading them. Some other time you will doubtless meet here a few of your friends whom you have never accused of taking such flights. They have builded as have you, and oh! Ellene, my heart goes out with infinite compassion to those who do not know that they are delivered. To stand in chains when the fetters have been removed, or perchance have never existed, is the most harrowing of all sights. These children are the most difficult to deal with. The thought of bondage, the thought that has made a prison for countless races for countless ages holds them clutched and enslaved.

“Be very tender of these, Ellene, and yet strike a quick blow sometimes. Do you understand?”

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“Yes, I know. Be tender and yet send a thought that shall pierce them through and through. I feel at present, Arcturus, as though I possessed the power to send millions of arrows to their proper destinations. But when shall I do it?”

“We will see. You remember, Ellene, that I have your most sacred word to be still and un-afraid,” replied the Red God.

“I fear nothing,” I answered.

“Then come with me,” and again my hand was clasped in the warm, magnetic palm of my companion.

We ascended a few steps, and in a moment everything was changed. Darkness reigned, and chaos raged about us.

“Where are we?” I whispered.

“Be patient,” was the soft reply. “You will know before long. Close your eyes and listen.”

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I did as I was told, and then it seemed as if the encircling mass of feathery clouds by which we were surrounded, lifted, and I was aware of a rocking motion which was so grand, so wonderful, so inexplicable, that I could only grasp my companion's hand more tightly, and hold my breath in awe and wonder.

"What do you hear?" he asked.

"Rhythm," I replied.

"That is a strange thing to hear, Ellene. Have you ever heard it before?"

"Oh, yes, many times on our earth"—memory had full sway for the moment—"but there is a difference. Here it is wider and more forceful. It sings a higher, sweeter tune than with us."

"When have you been conscious of this movement, this rhythm, as you call it?"

"More or less all the time, but particu-

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larly at night, when the voices of the crying, jostling, unhappy creatures that work and worry and suffer are stilled. It is then I hear it well. At those times, I say, the old earth is rocking, and rocking and rocking, and I love it so—oh ! there are no words to tell, Arcturus, how dearly I love my home. And then I have such dear ones, and——”

“ And what ? ”

But memory had reached its limit.

“ I do not know,” I answered, and then the Red God laughed aloud. This laughter was so hearty, so spontaneous, so happy, so infectious, that I laughed as joyously as he did.

After a moment he said :

“ Are your eyes still closed, Ellene ? ”

“ Yes, you did not give the word to open them.”

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“Obedient little one,” he responded, still laughing. “Just a word more about this rhythm, if you please. Are you sensible of it when you are with many people—in a crowded thoroughfare, for instance? Answer carefully, for this is a point of much interest.”

“Oh! yes. I often hear it on Broadway. Sometimes, when walking in the midst of all the noise and traffic—and, Arcturus, it is a veritable Babel—I hear and feel that rhythm above and beyond all the din that is about me. It is beautiful, and then I say—‘Never mind, Eleanor, God reigns, and I am folded close to His throbbing heart. I know I must be or I would not hear its beating.’”

“Dear child,” said Arcturus. “And Broadway? What is Broadway?”

“I don’t know. Did I use that word?”

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Now Arcturus laughed again most merrily, but I did not join him. There was something in this matter of intermittent memory that hurt and saddened me.

“And Eleanor also? Who is she?”

“I think she must be some relative of Sylvia’s,” I responded with impatience and a glimmer of memory. “Where I came from that is what folks are asking about her. ‘Who is Sylvia?’ one hears everywhere.”

“You are the most amusing of all recent visitors,” said the Red God with a fresh burst of laughter. “Listen, Ellene. We know Sylvia well. Indeed, she is one of our dearest and loveliest goddesses. The power of her attraction is mighty, and it is no wonder that her fame has reached other stars. When you come again you shall see her.”

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“When I come again? How many ages from now?” I asked.

“That is not my meaning. You can come soon and knowingly when you and we wish. Believe that the highest judgment will be used in the matter. The last time you were here, Ellene—not in the part of the planet you have now seen—the first question you asked after looking about you was :

“‘Where is God?’ And then, as there was no answer, you inquired again :

“‘What time is it?’

“We often repeat these words and have found much amusement in them.”

“The last time I was here? Amusement?”

At this moment I had no conception of the meaning of these questions, so hazy and indistinct had the atmosphere of my memory again become.

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"This has been a fine, happy preparation for what we are about to see," said the Red God still lightly. "Now open your eyes gradually, very gradually, El-lene, and then tell me what meets them. You have been most eloquent in other respects, and I am sure you will do yourself credit in this one."

Tell him what I saw? Even at this supreme instant I could not help remarking his foolish request.

What I saw?

The first that met my eyes were worlds upon worlds, stars upon stars, and many another flashing thing with which I had not been previously acquainted. But east seemed to be west, and north, south. All my points of view were changed. I looked for my favorite constellations in the places where I had

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been wont to find them, but they were not there.

“See you nothing familiar?” my companion inquired.

“I seem to see all I have ever seen and well, but nothing aright. Things are upside down, Arcturus.”

“Have patience,” was the laughing response—Arcturus had certainly grown very merry. “I want you to remember, my sister, that haste and impatience have in many ways impeded your progress and delayed your happiness. You will not forget?”

“I have always found it exceedingly easy to remember disagreeable things,” I answered, and now there was another burst of laughter.

“See you not the fleecy path?” was the next query. “Surely you are acquainted

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with that avenue which every god who is able takes when he leads his loved one to the nuptial altar?"

"Is that poetry, fancy, or the truth that will bear its weight, Arcturus?" I asked, as the stars twinkled and the majestic constellations with their glowing planets swept about us.

"It is our legend, Ellene, but it appears to me a most delightful retreat for those who would be screened while engaged in their love-making. It is the infinite bridal veil, my sister, and I never tire of regarding it and of wondering what is going on beneath it."

"We call it the Milky Way," I remarked, again taken hold of by a memory, "and we, too, have a legend about fleece—Jason's fleece. You said fleecy, Arcturus?"

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"It is as I thought," said my companion, more to himself than to me. "What stupendous confirmation of the truth that the peoples of the Infinite are most closely related."

The heavens were becoming more intelligible every moment. I saw my Orion and the ever-chasing Sirius, and it came to matter not which way they were all going.

"The constellations seem nearer than ever before," I told my companion.

"That is because of the remarkable clearness of our atmosphere. Our clouds are but dainty caresses."

"Do you behold me up there, Ellene?" he added, in the same light tone that he had been using, but now he took both my hands in his, and I was aware of a tremendous vibration all about us. Rays of

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every color danced before my eyes, and with each ray there came a message of love that was almost overpowering. Love! Love! Love! nothing but love, and then the doors of some of the stars seemed to open, and I looked in and beheld that which I have no words to describe.

One dazzling, dancing, pure white ray seemed to have a wonderful power to touch and linger with me. I knew it instantly. It was not an old acquaintance, but it was pure and powerful. It gladdened my heart.

“You recognize this vibration, then?” Arcturus remarked.

“It is from Cecelia. I saw her name inscribed in white letters not long ago upon the face of the sun.”

“That is her present abode,” the Red God made answer. “But think

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you the word was really written upon the sun?"

"I know not, but that is where it appeared to be. Is Cecelia a friend of yours?"

"A very dear one. She comes to us frequently and assists us in our music. When Cecelia speaks the angels listen. When she sings there is a sweeter and a softer rhythm to the swing of the star."

"Why does she come to me?" I asked.

"Because you, too, love song and harmony, and she would gladly teach and stimulate you in the service of the Infinite. Cecelia tells me that in music you follow not your own advice."

"How well she knows me, Arcturus," I answered. "It seems to me that somewhere my singing soul has been shut up in a cave, and that for some reason I

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dared not, must not, give it the freedom that it ever demanded. It was not so with other gifts and other desires. How is it that this beautiful bird of song must be so caged?"

"It must be, Ellene, because *you* willed it so. No one else could have imprisoned the bird."

"Oh, no. Is one ever cruel to what one loves? And I, Arcturus, have always—yes, I say, always have had more joy in music than in all the arts and sciences put together. I think there was a time when I loved music more than Love. Is that not strange? And there was a time and a place where I was wont to sing. I see now the faces that were turned up to mine as I poured out my soul in melody. I sang none of the foolish ditties, my brother. I sang of the

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Infinite One, and the harmonies of the universe. But somewhere—of late——”

“Somewhere of late,” Arcturus repeated. “You yielded to a force which should never have been considered. At present you stand in the place you have yourself appointed. To emerge from this is the work that is now assigned you by a higher judgment. After a little, my sister, you will laugh even more heartily than we laughed a while ago at the foolishness which swayed you when you closed the door of a cage upon your songbird. At that moment remember Arcturus.”

Between the wonderful display of color, the flash of beautiful faces, I could still see the mighty planets, and the great nebulous highway, but this memory of music dimmed the grandeur of the scene, and I sighed from the depths of my soul :

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“Nay, nay,” said the Red God quickly. “That vibration results from long practice. It is not good for you or for any of your friends on any plane of any planet. See, Ellene,” he added quite seriously, “our white ray is dimmed and flickers like a light that is going out. Let us laugh. Oh, my sister, laughter is the medicine of the gods ; they need no other.”

The white ray danced merrily about us again, and the tender faces that looked into mine seemed all attuned to mischief. Somewhere I had heard much about joy. Now I realized that it was the keynote of the universe.

“I will laugh forever,” I replied. “I will sorrow and sigh no more. Come, dear Cecelia, come closer. Come sisters and brothers and lovers all. Come children and grandchildren, and fathers

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and mothers, and all who know and love me."

There was light and color everywhere now, and form after form flashed out of the pink and the purple, the red and the blue.

One little sprite clad in what resembled spangled gauze in rainbow shades, pirouetted mischievously about me. Her eyes were large and blue, her hair was wavy and golden, and her expression so innocent and withal so roguish that she seemed the very incarnation of laughter.

"You never saw me dressed like this," she said, in a voice that sounded like the tinkle of a silver bell; "but I have told you many times of my beautiful garments."

"Who is this dazzling creature?" the Red God inquired.

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"I am Fragaletta," the sprite replied.
"She knows me. I am her sister, and it is time she went home."

"A wise fairy," said Arcturus.

"Too wise to read my sister's story," the silver tones rung out from above us, "although you dedicated it to the butterflies."

There must have been authority in the Red God's arm, for with one motion the whole scene changed.

We were again alone with the stars.

"The little one spoke truly. It is nearing the time, Ellene, when you must leave us," said my companion.

"Favor us once more. Sweep the heavens with your keenest gaze, and see if any star or constellation especially attracts you.

"Listen. I think I know from whence

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you came. At first I gave your present residence in what is called the Star of Love. You have undoubtedly had a residence in that gracious and most hospitable domain—but it is not now your home.

“This is the time, Ellene, when our nearest star neighbor has overtaken us in her swifter circling about the sun. Her orbit and ours have made their closest approach. See if you can detect her beautiful glow and so recognize your kin.”

“Oh, Arcturus,” I said, “the cord is again tightening, and it seems like what I have heard of death.”

“Be not dismayed, Ellene. I am with you. Is it loosened now?”

Another wave of the graceful red arm and I could breathe again.

“Yes, oh! yes,” I cried; “but Fragalletta was right. I must go at once. I

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have been away too long. Why, Arcturus, I would not leave that blessed home if you would give me all the constellations for my very own. Oh! Love awaits me there, and there it is."

I pointed to a planet whose steady light, like the shine of gold, drew and attracted me beyond my power of resistance. "Is it not a beautiful star, Arcturus? Is it not the loveliest star in the firmament?"

The Red God laughed again, and said :

"It is as I thought. Is it not the greatest proof of Infinite Love that Home is always where one makes an abode?"

I knew that there was more that my companion desired to say, and more that I wanted to hear.

"Another time," he whispered in answer to my thought; "and now come, my Ellene."

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Again, for a brief moment, we trod the illuminated paths of the Grove of Memory.

“Farewell, my sister,” whispered Arc-turus.

“We will soon laugh again side by side. In the mean time laugh, and keep laughing wherever you are.”

At this point everything seemed to dissolve into nothingness.

A Red God and a White Horse were the last objects to meet my loving gaze.

VIII.

THE PRESENCE.

And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write, for these words are true and faithful.—REV. xxi. 5.

A poor man saved by thee, shall make thee rich,
A sick man helped by thee, shall make thee strong,
Thou shalt thyself be served, by every lease
Of service thou hast rendered.

—ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

* * * * *

DURING a time of great stress and sorrow something that seemed almost a miracle occurred. It was so remarkable and so beautiful that the first impulse was to communicate it to others, and as soon as possible I commenced to write. The incident or revelation was of

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so brief a character that a book was out of the question, and something within me rebelled against sending it forth in the form of brevity.

The Spirit said "Write," and when I wrote the same Spirit said "Remember," as set forth in the first chapter. No headway could be made. A few pages would be struck off at white heat, and then condemned by this ever-present voice.

There was no wish in my heart to depart from truthfulness in this narrative, and it did not seem an offence or an impropriety deftly to bedeck the true features of the story with the hues of imagination. I had done it before, and experienced the greatest comfort in the work, and I did not feel that any one had been harmed by the process.

This work could not be done in such

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fashion, and the responsibility of doing it properly was upon me.

All my life have I "dreamed dreams and seen visions." Many of them have seemed proper to tell, many more have been treasured in secret, in obedience to the voice of the Spirit, which counselled me to discretion.

The time had not come.

I have always been an ardent lover of the stars, and have had since childhood my favorites among them. All these favorites had for me a peculiar and an individual vibration. I have spoken to them as precious friends, and believed that the distant dear ones who inhabited these domains responded fondly to me.

For this faith I have been liberally rewarded.

Every inhabitant of our planet who is

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sufficiently intelligent to read and ask questions cannot fail to have been much interested in the argument, speculation, and attempted scientific investigation concerning our sister planet—Mars. To me it has been a most delightful subject of contemplation. The attention paid it by learned and scientific men has seemed like the coming true of a dream, or, better still, the vindication of a theory that I have always cherished.

It would have been a simple and a very agreeable work to have blended the real—that which I saw with my own eyes—with that which existed in my imagination. I could have described the atmosphere of that planet, its canals, its peculiar methods of irrigation, its glorious people, its architecture, its arts and sciences, with at least a touch of realism. I could have

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discoursed more or less learnedly of its position and its relation to other worlds, and made a few astronomical calculations which would have shown me as one who had given some time and attention to the study.

But such airing of research and fancy was not to be.

For years previous to the visit of this inhabitant of another sphere, sickness, death, and disaster had made sad havoc with those I loved. We will not stop to philosophize here or to declare that these negative appearances need not have been entertained by those who considered themselves their victims. This is admitted, but as a mother loves her little child who is not yet able to care for itself, so I dearly loved my ignorant ones, knowing that lack of knowledge and absence of

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faith were the only excuses for such conditions.

Details are unnecessary, and the above facts are recorded simply for the purpose of showing under what circumstances I was visited, inspired, and comforted beyond all power of my pen to portray.

Against these seemingly awful odds I had faced the world with a cheerful face, and a strong courage in both hands. I would not be cast down. I would be able to dispense to others some of the power that I clutched so tightly, and I would smile as I gave it, and keep silent concerning the ache that sometimes seemed tearing my heart in twain.

This was not perhaps the proper attitude, but it was the only one possible at the time. I was travelling the path of thorns, and I hid my feet among them

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that no one might see the blood as it gushed from the aching wounds.

At last this mental state was revealed in the physical or more grossly mental part of myself. There seemed no time even for ordinary precautions. There was something to do, some one to sustain and comfort from day's commencement to week's end. I could not stop, and I did not see how I could go on. Any physician with common sense would have sent such a patient to bed. Perfect rest seemed to me in this time of pain and weakness the only treatment that would avail. But to speak of the ailment even would be to beckon more suffering and sorrow to those who already had more than they could bear.

The time came when I could no longer ignore the gravity of the situation. It

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was night, and having the hours entirely to myself, I determined to master the trouble before the dawn of another day. Either "It"—the shadow, the no-thing, or I, the intelligent, living, breathing substance of God, must win the race.

The *Ego* decided to reach the goal first.

I had seven hours for the work, and these hours were not likely to be disturbed by any outside call.

My bed faced the south, and the shades of the two large windows were drawn up as far as they would go. Before lying down I looked up at the few stars I could see—for the sky was overcast—and told these friends my story. It was indeed a sorrowful tale, and as I thought of the thousands of striving ones who were doubtless unburdening their hearts at the same time and under similar circumstances, my eyes filled.

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I am glad that the tears were not wholly for myself. That would have been pitiful.

It was worship of the Highest that thrilled me as I sought my couch.

Turning from the window, I noticed the soft red light in my chamber which had been a help to me in many a moment of doubt and discomfiture. It was a welcome glow, and my resolution to conquer seemed fanned into a flame which must carry all before it.

But this pain—this racking pain, which I had borne so long with clenched fists and set teeth—seemed to clutch me with redoubled force as I closed my eyes in the determination to sleep.

I forced myself to lie perfectly quiet. Every time I opened my eyes I was a little comforted to notice that the roseate light had not faded.

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In my agony I called upon God and all His angels. I demanded help and ease from every spirit I had ever known. I said: "*I will* be free from this misery. Help me, help me, help me."

Still the pain raged on, and still the rosy red color vibrated and palpitated in the atmosphere about me.

At last I said to *Myself*: "Soul of God in this body, where are *You*? Come to the front and vindicate Yourself."

In an instant, in the twinkling of an eye, everything changed. The pain died down like the sobs of a child held close in its mother's arms.

The stillness of Paradise reigned in the room. I slept, for the first time in many weary hours.

How long I was held in this blissful unconsciousness I know not, but I awoke

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again to the desperate endeavor of the enemy to hold me in bondage. The agony was not so extreme, and the rosy light had grown richer and warmer. But I was not yet delivered.

Again I called upon Myself from the depths of Myself :

“No other can do this work!” I affirmed, “and it must be done *now*. Too long have I waited for outside assistance and the medicament of angels. Come out, O Soul of God in myself. Take the helm and keep it!”

Once more the pain seemed to breathe itself away, and I slept.

And still again the foe of my own conjuring arose to face me :

“You have not crushed me yet!” it seemed to say. “It will take more than the God in yourself to dispossess *me*. I

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am Pain, and master of every place, nook, and corner of this planet. I speak the word, and great and small, strong and weak bow to my command. Think not to escape me. In all the boundless ages not one ever did—and who are *You?* ”

“I am God in actual evidence,” I replied, “and master of myself and you. Mark these things. I am well, and strong, and useful, and happy this moment, and you are dead. You have had no life in me save the one I gave you, and that I have withdrawn. I know you not. Amen.”

This time the cessation of pain was not followed by unconsciousness. I was wide awake, free and joyful ; not the slightest hint or throb of suffering remained. I realized that I was in perfect health and perfectly able to cope with whatever con-

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ditions might be awaiting me on the morrow. I had learned the lesson of self-conquest. The God in myself had responded, as the God in all ourselves always does when called in earnest and relied upon.

The relief was most wonderful, and as I lay perfectly still resting in the Peace that passeth understanding, I noticed that the window at the foot of my bed was darkened. The air still vibrated with the red light, but the southwestern corner of the apartment was in deep shadow. Presently a streak of light between what seemed to be two doors appeared. Very, very slowly, these doors opened. The streak grew wider and brighter, and then the face and partial figure of a man became visible. The radiance and nobility of this face were beyond anything that my most

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fervent imagination had ever conjured—
and—

It was Red.

The forehead was broad, the head noble, and the hair dark. The eyes—but there are no words for these—so luminous and soulful, so tender and loving. Whether they were brown, or black, or gray, I know not. I sensed only their transcendent loveliness, and at the same time their awful power. A white robe floated away from the stranger's neck and arms, leaving them quite bare. His arms were folded upon his breast. I could see him breathe, and his eyes moved naturally as he steadfastly regarded me.

The rosy light filled the room, and a Breath which was like music stirred the air about me.

“There is no other God but me,” it

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said. " Know this and thou knowest all !
In every soul this God must reign
supreme. Except the Sacred Self, no
saviour can there be.

" By living thine own life in harmony
with Love's eternal Law, thou wilt save
thyself and help thy fellows on every
plane of every star.

" Know that life is a unit and that
thy mission is universal. Everywhere
in Love's domain thou hast a work
to do. Spoil it not by private grief
or selfish sorrow. Watch and wait. Let
the dead bury its dead, and go thy
way in Peace and Joy. *Thou hast con-
quered.*"

And now the doors closed as slowly as
they had opened until naught but a tiny
streak of light was visible, and then the
doors melted away and the window and

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the corner were as they had been before the visit of the Radiant One.

* * * * *

Days and weeks passed, and all the time I hungered for knowledge of my friend. Who was he? From whence had he come? What was his name, and why had he been attracted in my direction?

Early one morning I lay thinking and wondering of the great event, quite awake and very happy. It was just daybreak.

"If I only *could* know," I whispered eagerly. At that moment there was a light step, the soft swish of a robe, a sister's kiss upon my forehead, the flash of a sun-lit face, and these words:

"The Christ of the Red Planet."