



The Tomorrow of Yesterday

Margery Lawrence



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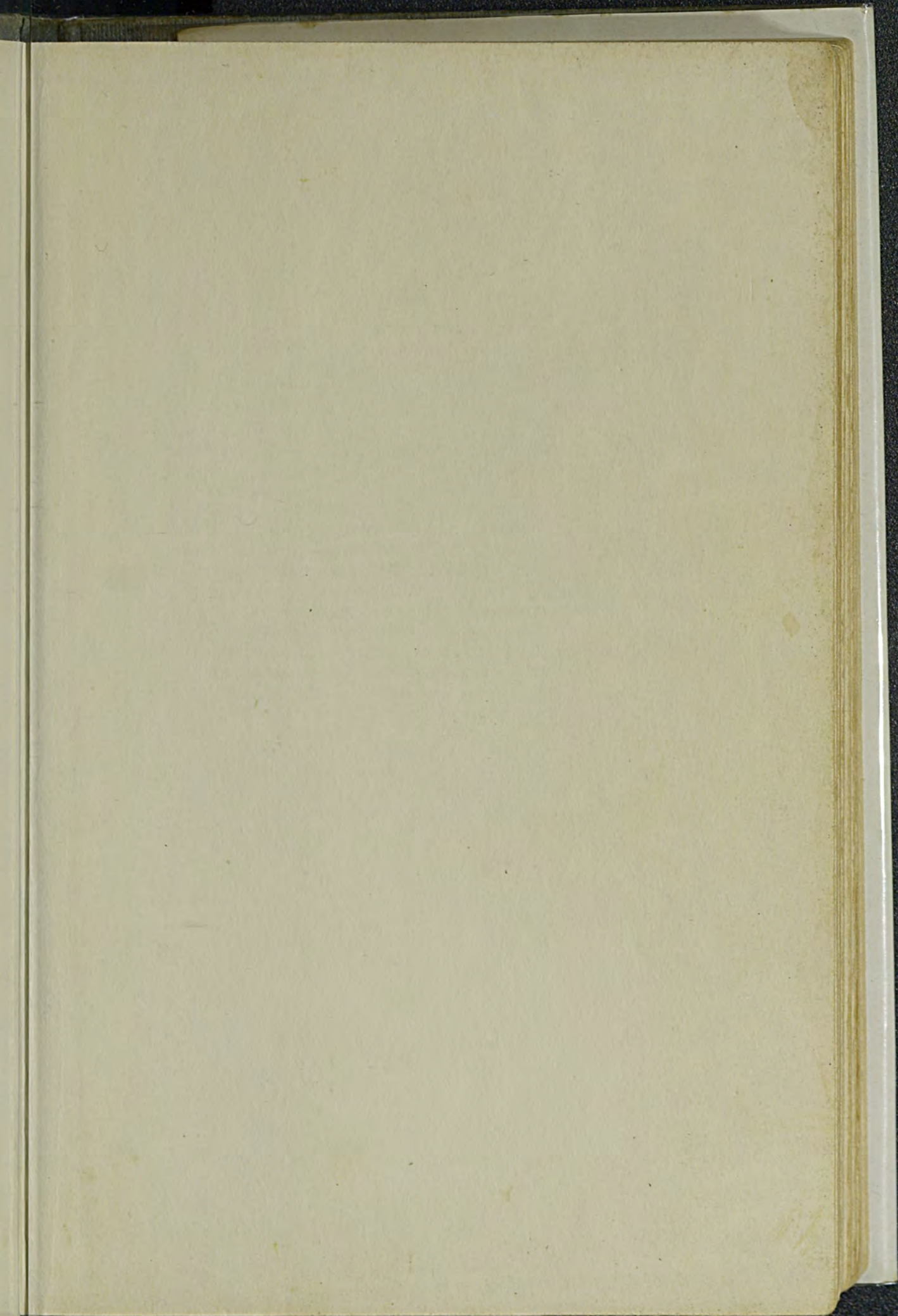
Margery Lawrence

IN THE DAYS when Man was an ape-like brutish creature, the great civilization which had flourished on Mars was in turmoil. A few Martians managed to reach Earth, and in what is now Egypt they set about building civilization anew. They found Man brutish indeed, but not without intelligence, nor yet ineducable. By careful training and controlled breeding Man was raised above the other animals, and from the descendants of the Martians and the Earthlings arose the civilization of Greece.

The pure Martians then withdrew to the great city of Atlantis. But their stay on this earth was only to be temporary, for the corruption of the blood by admixture of Earthling stock gave rise to jealousy and all the other sins. The Pacific colony was destroyed by the experiments of the scientists, and Atlantis was overwhelmed by the sea. Thus Man, imperfect but capable of improvement, was left to rule on the earth.

A fantastic story? Incredible? *The Tomorrow of Yesterday* is told with such convincing detail, such a wealth of corroborating evidence, that the reader, sceptical though he may be, is convinced at last.

Jacket design by BIRO



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THE TOMORROW OF YESTERDAY

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By the same author

NOVELS

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Silken Sarah	The Madonna of Seven Moons
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The Terraces of Night	The Floating Café
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GENERAL

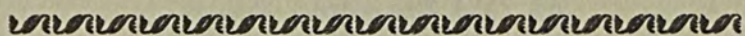
Ferry over Jordan

POETRY

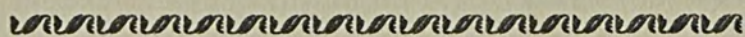
Songs of Childhood

Fourteen to Forty-eight

Margery Lawrence



THE
TOMORROW
OF
YESTERDAY



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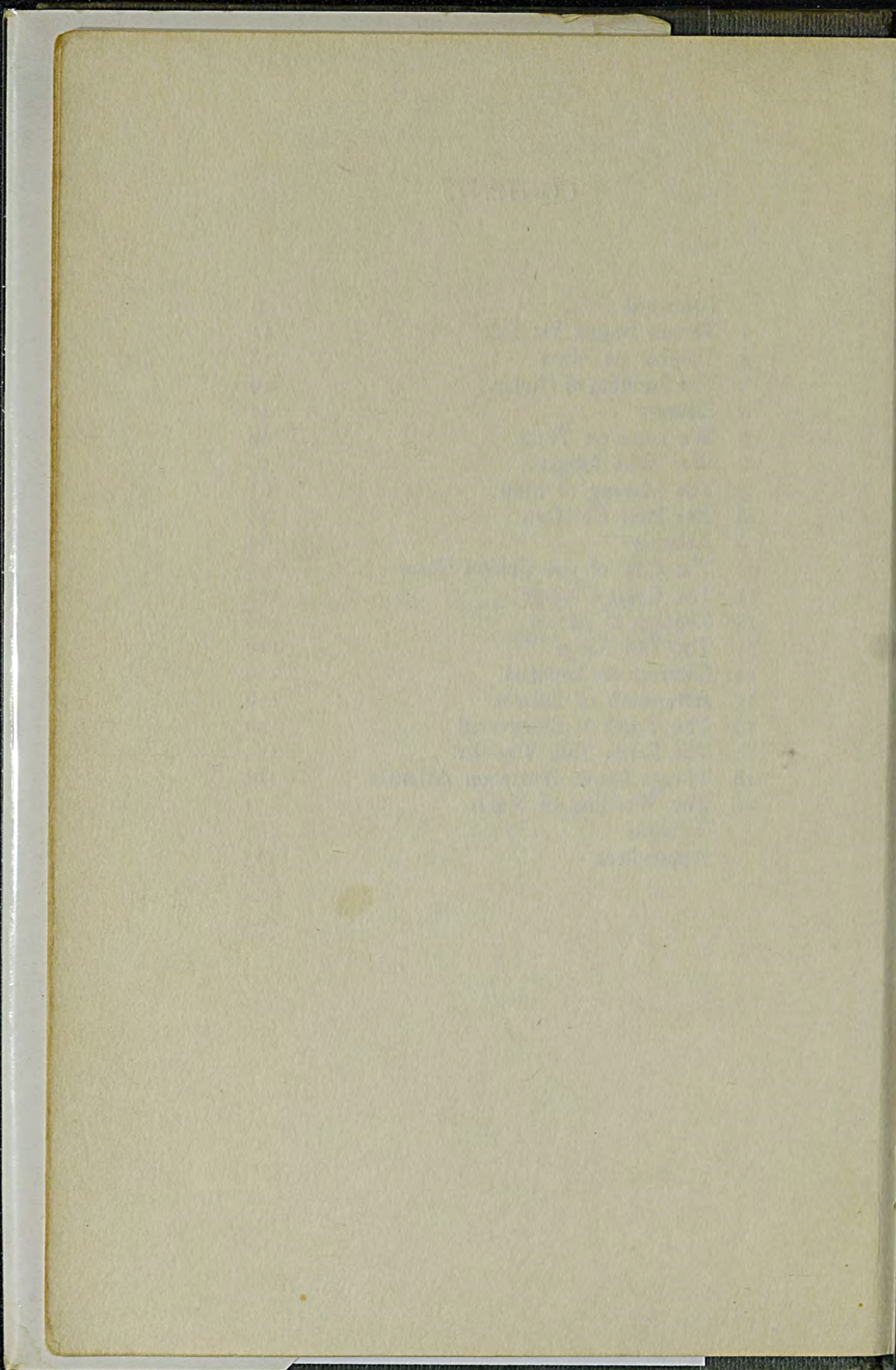
To Chang Loo, who gave
me the outline of this
story and my good friends
George and Bobbie
with my love

Today is the Tomorrow of Yesterday

MARIA EDGEWORTH

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AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

Inevitably, by many readers I shall be accused of trying to write a science fiction story—but it would not be true. Actually, this is not my story at all! It was told to me in fragments, spreading over a long time, by the spirit who tells the story, speaking through a medium whom I have known for years. This Spirit explained that he had come originally from Mars, with very many other compatriots, to settle on the planet Earth because Mars, their home planet, had, to their great grief, become uninhabitable so that they had to leave it and find a home elsewhere.

Teraon's story as it unfolds is indeed dramatic, as it tells the story of how *homo sapiens*, from a shambling, beastlike creature without the power to speak beyond the grunts and snarls common to all animals, gradually rose to become truly human—thanks to the wonderful Martians who came to live with him to teach and help him develop true manhood.

True? Who can say? All I can say is that to me it seems eminently possible. I see no reason why the emergence of man from his animal beginnings should not have started in this way—and a few far-sighted modern thinkers seem to share my view. For instance, certain advanced scientists consider it by no means impossible that life might have been brought to Earth from somewhere outside it.

In a paper Professor Gold, a well-known American scientist, read in Los Angeles at the Congress of Space Scientists in January, 1964, he suggested that life may have existed elsewhere in the Universe for countless millions of years before taking root on Earth! How did life reach the Earth and begin its long ascent culminating in Man? Perhaps it was brought here by spaceships? "Space travellers" says Gold "may have visited the earth a thousand million years ago." (This is quoted from that fascinating book "The Dawn of Magic" translated

from the French by Louis Pauweis and Jacques Bergier and published by Gibbs and Phillips).

What Teraon told me was taken down during sittings on a tape recorder and subsequently transcribed, and I have, of course, drawn on this as the basis of my story; though I have written it in my own style, as much of Teraon's account was given in a rather archaic and involved way.

I am not allowed to reveal the name of the medium who was the "telephone" through which this strange story was given to me. But I have known him for many years, and know that outside his mediumistic work (which he does not do for a living, but outside his normal business activities) he is quite incapable of the wide range of imagination that would be needed to invent this story of how Man as we know him came into being on earth.

M.L.

I

Teraon Begins His Tale

GREETINGS to you all. My name is Teraon and I come from Mars. I do not mean the Mars of today, the planet that you can see in your sky, for alas, the great and wonderful civilization that ruled there for untold thousands of years—the civilization to which I belonged—has long vanished. And the life that still exists on Mars is a very low and undeveloped form indeed—and the story that I come to tell you is the story of how this all happened. The story of how we Martians, alas, were forced to quit our beautiful planet—for beautiful it was, though to your eyes it may perhaps not have been so, since each race sees beauty in its own individual way—and seek a home outside it. We came finally to your earth, which then we called Terra, there to settle and try to accustom ourselves to the new and strange conditions, so different from those on our own planet, that prevailed here.

I could write many books, if only I had the time, about Mars at its zenith; but this book that I am told by the Higher Powers to write—though it is not writing, since I must dictate what I have to tell through the mediumship of one of your more gifted Earthlings—must not grow too long and unwieldy. Thanks to this good man's gift, I can tell my tale in this way—and it is a great and wonderful gift that he possesses. Thanks to such as this medium and others similarly gifted, many Beings of higher development than you

Earthlings can communicate with you and teach you many things. By other Beings I mean other forms of life living on other planets—or sometimes not living at all, as you know it; I mean, not living in physical life. Though I know that, alas, too many of you will not accept that this gift of mediumship is God-given and wonderful, and in the past on your earth very many poor souls have been put to death as witches and wizards, simply because their neighbours, not understanding the gift of mediumship that they possessed, feared it, and so murdered them. Thank goodness those days are past; though amongst you Earth people those whom you call mediums are still regarded askance by many—but to my tale.

Now I cannot tell you details of the vast span of ages since Mars first developed its great civilization—even I, with my long memory and knowledge that outpasses yours by so much, could not venture to try and go back so far. But as I remember my beloved planet, it seems as though it had always been a happy land, ruled by fine rulers and occupied by happy and contented people. Alas, that the slow poison of evil at last crept in, and after many years the perfection of that civilization began to weaken—but first, I am sure you will want to know something about my planet and my people.

Your first question will be “were the Martians like us?” And my answer is both “yes” and “no” together. We were made of material atoms, as you are and, as I believe, are all things in the physical universe created by our Father-Mother-God in the early Dawn of Time. But that does not mean that every type of atom is the same; and certainly, though in some ways we resembled you, and our bodies were certainly physical bodies and seemed solid enough to us, they were at the same time far more delicately made, more ethereal, than yours are.

We were a tall people, averaging ten to twelve feet in height, slenderly made and very graceful, though far stronger than you earth folk are. I doubt whether you would have called us beautiful, for our faces were much longer than

yours—I find your round pudding-faces dull and cloddish; so there you see what I mean when I say that all races have a different idea of beauty! Also, we had no ears—we did not need them, as we “heard” as your mediums hear, with a sort of inner sense, as we could communicate with each other in silence, by thought, if we did not wish to speak or were far from each other. Also, we did not have long hair like yours—ours lay close and sleek to our heads, more like the hair of an animal; and moreover, on the front of our foreheads was a projecting lobe, long in shape, which was actually the gland which gave us much of our strong psychic power.

You will find, in some very ancient Chinese carvings, figures with those long lobes that look like oblong shapes standing upright above the eyebrows, and most people will think that these lobes are part of some strange head-dress worn by these ancient folk. But the artist who carved these figures has thrown back mentally to his old incarnations, when he knew and saw the Martians as they walked the earth, teaching and helping the Earthlings—and he has carved truly and faithfully what he saw.

In features we much resembled you, though our eyes were far larger and more beautiful and our mouths never ruined by bad teeth—but you Earthfolk of today would, I think, have called us gangling, for our great height and slenderness, and wondered how it was possible to tell men from women; and this I can understand, for in those days on Mars there was no such sharp differentiation between the sexes as there is now. Men and women we were, in fact; but the physical characteristics of the two sexes were much less strongly marked than with you. The great differences between the sexes in bodily build which exist now, came into being in later days, when we had to come to earth; and there was a definite reason for this, which I shall explain in due course.

Did we wear clothes and live in houses? Yes, indeed we did. Though often, when we went swimming in the warm seas and lakes of Mars, we wore nothing at all—there was no false shame on Mars—or when we ran races or played strenuous

games. In ordinary life we wore garments that were beautiful to see, and on ceremonial occasions, such as the periodic festivals at the great Temple of Surun, the chief city of Mars, we donned robes and cloaks and jewels, gorgeous in the extreme.

The robes our women wore resembled in some degree those beautiful robes that still exist in a measure in some countries on earth; the sari I speak of, or the Greek chiton. For men, the long robe or a form of toga for the elder, and for the younger men a form of tunic worn with a belt; and both sexes wore long graceful cloaks against the cool of the night or in rainy weather. And houses? Indeed, we had beautiful houses and great and wonderful cities, to see which would dazzle your eyes; for besides possessing various wonderful kinds of stone that we used for building, we Martians knew how to create artificial stone, much as you have learnt how to make glass, from sand and other things mixed together. This artificial stone could be made in all colours, or in mingled colours like the rainbow—so you can imagine how our cities shone and glittered in the sun. Though of course, the shape and style of the houses, as the layout of the cities, were entirely different from yours, as our needs and habits and lives were different. There were glorious gardens, for flowers and flowering trees of a kind you could not imagine grew plentifully in our country, and often the people in the cities, when their work was done, would take their children—for we were great family people—or their friends and set out for a picnic in one of the forests that lay close outside the city. Did we have cars or carriages of some sort? Yes, if we wished, and for older or greater folk who came to visit, there were fine and beautiful air carriages; but for the most part we did not need them. I told you that the particles of which our bodies were composed were essentially light so that we could levitate ourselves at will whenever we wished, and go whither we wanted.

With regard to how we ate, which is a matter, I know, of great interest to you earthfolk—we would have regarded the food that you eat today with the greatest horror!

The idea of eating flesh-foods would have revolted us—and indeed, had we had the habit we could not have done so, as on Mars as I remember it, with the sole exception of the little creature known today as the lemming and found (I think) only in the northern portions of your earth, there were no animals. In the very ancient days, before our civilization had come fully to birth, there had been strange and fearsome animals, as there were on Earth in what you call your pre-historic days. But these had died off, as yours did, and only the lemming remained; but beautiful birds, butterflies and so on were plentiful and gleaming gold and silver fish in the lakes and rivers. But these were our pets and our friends, and we would not have dreamt of eating them! We lived upon fruit and vegetables, bread and cakes made from grain that we ground and cooked for ourselves and ate with honey, or with sweet conserves made from fruit and honey, and that was all we needed.

Some of us were artists and painted pictures and murals or carved the panels, fittings and furniture that were needed for the Temple or for the great houses of our rulers; and others wove glorious materials made from fibres of some of the myriad plants that grew there—much as you make fabrics today from the plant called cotton. Others worked out of doors in the great gardens, or studied in our Halls of Learning, where there were fine teachers who taught students the mysteries of the heavens, the constitution of the Cosmos, the difference between Mars and its sister planets; for in those days it was well known that certain of the planets were inhabited, though not all. Indeed, visits were frequently exchanged between the inhabitants of various planets except when the different conditions of the two were so marked that to exchange visits might have been not only not enjoyable, but even dangerous.

Were there books and music and dancing, all that sort of thing? Yes, indeed! There were great libraries full of books, and since Martians loved music, concerts were frequent and greatly enjoyed—and as for dancing, if you had watched, as I have done so often, the tall figures of my compatriots, men and women, clad in their flowing robes of many colours,

moving gracefully through the figures of a complicated dance to the music of flutes and tabors, set against the sylvan setting of a grove of great trees, you would know what dancing truly is.

But it is difficult for you to visualize such a scene, for your mind would at once picture it as green, the green that is the prevailing colour of the earth; and the prevailing colour on my beloved Mars was red!

I do not mean that everything was one shade of red—any more than your greens are all one shade of that colour. In your forests and fields can be found every possible shade of green, from the darkest shade that is almost black to pale and delicate shades that are all but yellow. And in the same way the forests and fields of Mars showed every conceivable shade of red, from the deep shade that is like iron rust to the palest shades like the pink of the inside of a seashell; and if you find it hard to imagine beauty in a landscape like that, I would ask you to remember that in certain places on your earth, for instance, in the provinces in England called Cornwall and Devonshire, there are to be found cliffs, and sands at their feet, of rich deep red! Further, I am told that folk come from far away to admire these, and even paint or photograph them; so you see, to find beauty in red as well as in green is not so far away from the possibility as you may at first think.

To think back over the many years when I lived happily on Mars and never dreamt of the tragedy looming ahead, gives me a great feeling of sorrow and nostalgia for those good days, now gone forever. I have reason to thank God, for I am now united once again with my beloved, my Zenobia, my Twin Soul, who was born mine and is now my own again—but what untold aeons of pain, distress and separation have we two not endured before that re-union! For you must know that we Martians were fortunate enough to be born mated to our true loves. Soon after birth we gravitated towards each other, drawn by the magnetism of a love that had existed through untold numbers of lives together—so that on Mars there was

no such thing as a broken or unhappy marriage, infidelity to each other, or anything like that.

Birth was easy to us, for we did not possess such clumsy things as earthly genitals. Our bodies were of such light essence that the fusion necessary for marriage could be obtained without such clumsy implements, if I may call them so—and either sex could, and did, produce the eggs in which our children lived before they came to birth. Does this surprise you? Yet what is a woman's womb but an egg in which the growing baby lives until the time is ripe for him to force his way—through pain and fear and distress such as we never knew—into the world outside?

Our babies were born likewise in eggs; but these were painlessly shed by the parent, and placed at once in a warm and shaded spot where the rays of the sun and the breath of the life-giving air would play on them; and in time another little one would break from the protecting shell and find itself in the welcoming arms of mother or father.

How well I remember those days, and how heavy is my heart at the knowledge that they have fled, never to come again! But I must not waste my time in regrets, but continue with my tale. And tomorrow I will tell you something of the manner in which Mars was governed.

2

Trouble on Mars

MARS was a large planet, and it was divided into provinces or nomes, as we called them—a name that was later used in Egypt on your earth. We had no such things as kings or princes, nobles or anything like that—all were socially equal, and those more advanced in learning, art, craftsmanship or anything else took pride in helping those less advanced.

A Governor was placed over each nome and in general was responsible for keeping it in order; but the central controlling power was vested in a group called the Council of Seven, consisting of four men and three women, of which my beloved Zenobia was one.

On Mars there was not the differentiation between men and women that you have on earth—nor in any way the outlook held by many of your Earthfolk, that the intellect of woman is less strong and worthwhile than man. On the contrary!

On the Council of Seven, as on any other similar groups throughout the country, women figured as well as men. Zenobia, amongst many brilliant women on Mars, was rightly ranked as one of the most brilliant. For years she had been one of the most powerful figures on the Council—on Mars our life-span far exceeded yours, the average life-time being about 350 years and often more—but there was no jealousy or envy of Zenobia's position. It was merely accepted as natural, and

we thanked God for it, for Zenobia's judgement and advice was well known for its value, and appreciated accordingly. The names of the other members of the Council at that time of which I write were Algon, the eldest of the four men; myself, Derek and Huran; Zenobia, Forse and Lynthia the women.

Now to the Council of Seven, who lived in Mars' capital city (which was named Surun) came regular reports from the Governors of the various nomes, and for many long ages no real trouble of any kind was reported; and perhaps it was partly due to an unconscious relaxing of vigilance, a sort of assumption that since no serious trouble had been reported for untold years, it was unlikely that any would develop now, that trouble at last came upon us and found us, alas, unprepared. You will ask what sort of worship was conducted on Mars, and I will tell you, for this is linked with the trouble that came upon us.

In our principal city, Surun, was the Temple, which was copied on a smaller scale in the chief city of each of the distant nomes. It was built in a gigantic cone-shape, made of the glistening many-coloured stone that was the glory of Mars' architects. The secret of making this is long lost, and is never likely, I fear, to be discovered on earth. The shape of a cone is one that gathers within it great psychic strength, and this was well known and understood in my country—as amongst certain people it was, and still is, understood on your earth. The pointed wigwam of the Red Indians—those now-scattered people who were descended from the old settlers sent there in early days from both Atlantis and Lemuria—the tent of the Shamans amongst those people of the ice called Eskimos, and by many of your mediums also, who use a tentlike erection at their sittings, all these realize that the cone-shaped enclosure greatly concentrates and increases the psychic power that works through them.

Within our Great Temple it was truly beautiful and impressive. The floor was set in squares and patterns of black and white marble, each design having an esoteric meaning clear to

the initiated but not understood by the simpler folk; and as the vast building rose to its pointed apex, there rose with it a group of pillars, seven in number. These were arranged in a cluster near the centre of the floor, immediately below the apex of the Temple, and there, high up in the heart of the cone's light, the God-Light shone eternally. On the ground, at the base of each of these pillars, was set the seat of one of the Council of Seven who, at every service, attended the Temple and received the power of Light. The Light of God. . . .

It was always there, though normally speaking, comparatively faint, a blur of light, so to speak, rather than a shining glow. But when the Seven were present and the vast congregation crowded the rest of the Temple, the Light would increase in power until it shone brilliantly pure white and dazzling; and on the head of the member of the Seven chosen to receive and give out any special message, instructions or teaching, a long ray would rest like a shining finger. Then all the vast watching crowd would be stilled to listen to what the chosen member would say when he or she had received the holy message.

The walls of the Temple inside were covered with brilliantly coloured designs, some pictures of long-dead rulers, or gods and goddesses of old, or in symbols, and ancient esoteric designs—spells if you like. These were carried out in painting and carving, in stone and mosaic, hammered metal and inset jewels, and ever in a golden brazier set on a low white stone in the centre of the group of pillars, there burned a wonderful scented incense whose fumes spread wide across the Temple and helped to steady the nerves and increase the courage of the nervous, the shy, the newcomers to our form of worship—and sincere to a degree that worship was.

We worshipped the source of All Life. That which was, and is, known by so many names—God, the Creator of the Cosmos—and we needed no priests to negotiate between ourselves and that God. Martians were all psychic in varying degrees, and belief in and worship of God was part of our natural lives—and on the days of meeting in the Temple, it

was the Council of Seven through whom the knowledge, the wisdom and instructions were passed from on High.

On these days the ordinary people were massed in a vast ring outside the central portion of the Temple. They were not allowed to enter the Holy Centre, the part where were set the Seven Pillars, and when the procession appeared of the Council, walking in line and headed, as a rule, by Zenobia, all fell on their knees and began the Holy Chant, the welcome to those Higher Beings whom we knew to be awaiting this chance to get in touch with us all.

The Seven would take up their places, each before his special pillar, and join in the singing, after which there would be the sacred silence during which the psychic power, drawn from the people assembled there, would be gathering strength for its work. Sometimes one of the Higher Ones would take possession of one of the Seven and speak in his own sonorous voice to the assembled multitudes, and these were great occasions. But the greatest occasion of all was when, at one of the four great festivals that were held in the year, one of the Great Ones would actually appear in person, clad in shining light, in the Centre of the Holy Circle formed by the Seven seated before the Seven Pillars that soared upwards to the pointed heart of the cone! But normally speaking, it was in speech through one of the Seven, that the teachings were given, heralded, as I have said, by the appearance of a white ray of light, a giant finger that reached down from the blaze of light overhead, in the apex of the Temple, and rested upon the head of the chosen one.

It was never known which would be chosen. Those Powers who at that time guided us so wisely and surely, knew which of the Seven was most suitable for the particular words to be given out; and when those were delivered, and careful note taken of them by the special scribes trained by the Seven for such work, the service ended by more singing and the final blessing from Above. After which the Light would slowly fade from its blazing brilliance and become the soft moon-coloured blur that always hung there in the air high above the

group of pillars, and quietly and reverently the congregation would disperse.

For the general governance of the country, the Council of Seven would meet at stated days to read the reports sent in by the Governors of the different nomes, discuss the problems raised in them, and decide on the help and advice to be given them. Not that these problems were ever what one might call very serious ones. In that halcyon time, you see, there was no poverty or sickness and no housing difficulties, as on this earth of yours, as Mars was a vast planet and not over-populated as yours is; moreover, the climate was so equable that many people did not trouble with houses at all, but lived gypsy-fashion in the forests and the beautiful fields and valleys that lay about the principal cities. Here they would gather all the food they needed to sustain them, they could sleep on beds of soft fern and bracken, swim in the rivers and the lakes and be healthy and happy both. Yes, I know that it seems I am describing an earthly Paradise! And on looking back, it seems to me that at the zenith of her great civilization, Mars was indeed a Paradise! And it may be that because life was so pleasant and easy for us, we grew slack and lazy, and so made is possible for the germ of evil to creep in and lay hold of weak ones among us—for this, alas, is what happened.

The first hint of trouble came from two of the more outlying nomes—those named Trant and Hurex—and how this arose I will tell you. The cause of it was jealousy—though jealousy was so rarely known on Mars that at first the Council of Seven were inclined to pooh-pooh the report.

You see, although there was plenty of rivalry, in the nomes between the great scientists, artists, craftsmen and so on who lived in each, it had up to this time always been friendly rivalry, without a trace of bitterness or jealousy. Once a year a festival was held in the chief city of each nome, where each leader in art, science and music would produce the finest work for the credit of his nome—and once a year a great Festival was held in Surun. Here the winners from each nome came to compete with those of Surun, and if possible, win the coveted

prize from them—the prize being three years spent in the Halls of Learning of Surun, which were the finest and most advanced on Mars.

But even when they lost, up to date there had been no resentment or jealousy from the losers of the various contests. Disappointed they were, as was natural—but they conceded the superiority of the work of those who won, and bore them no animosity—until, alas, the rot began to set in! Thanks of course, to the Forces of Evil, who lie always in wait to undermine the peace, the happiness, the content of all men, and to lead or tempt or frighten them into following their evil ways.

Naturally, we on Mars were perfectly well aware of the Black Forces and the harm they were doing in other parts of the Cosmos. Part of the work of the Council of Seven, undertaken on those nights when they sat in secret session together, was to concentrate and send forth a strong power for good that might strengthen the arms of the White Brotherhood—the “Heavenly Police” as I have heard them called by some of you Earth people who know of their existence. This would help to defeat, or at least to drive back for a time, those evil beings who were as a dark fungus, growing and ever growing, despite all efforts to control them, and spoiling the nature and character of so many of the beings gradually growing to maturity on the various worlds that our Father-Mother-God had planned to be so fair.

Now it appears that the germ of the trouble that was to have such truly disastrous effects was the rivalry between two scientists, one of Trant and the other of Hurex. Their names were Manel and Jain, and both were young and greatly gifted. Actually, Jain was the most brilliant of the two; but Manel was a type who would go farther in the world than Jain, as Jain was a quiet, diffident type, while Manel was dominant, aggressive and loved to what you call “show off.”

They had met and been rivals when they, as mere boys, had both studied in the Halls of Learning of Surun. There were, of course, fine schools in all the nomes, but those of Surun

represented what Oxford and Cambridge do to you English people, and there was much competition to spend at least a few years in Surun before any scholar's education could be considered complete.

Rivals Manel and Jain had always been; but it was at that time still a friendly rivalry, though there were times when Jain, seeing Manel gaining plaudits on all sides for work that Jain knew he could, and had, himself done better, felt a pang of envy pass through him and wished that he possessed the younger man's self-confidence.

Now mark this well! During their time in Surun both young men had, as a matter of course, attended the services held at the Temple, and on more than one occasion they had been present when one of the Great Ones deigned to come down and take on himself, for a brief period, a body solid enough (ethereal though in fact it was) to be seen by all the awed congregation gathered in the Temple.

Now these divine Shapes never appeared anywhere but in the Temple at Surun, and Manel wondered and fretted greatly at this. Why, he would ask Jain, since the Temples in the other nomes were used for Divine Worship just as was the Great Temple in Surun, did not the Great Ones visit and show themselves to their worshippers in the smaller Temples? It was not fair, since only a comparative few could travel all the way to Surun and even then, one could never say when an Appearance would come! Those of the Hierarchy could not be *summoned* to appear, but sent a mental message to one of the Seven, generally to Zenobia, to say that they would come . . . but why did they come to no Temples other than the Great Temple in Surun?

To this Jain had no reply, and the matter dropped. But though on finding his companion unsympathetic, Manel ceased to talk about his grievance, it rankled in his mind; and on his return to his own nome, which was Trant, he continued to fret and worry about it unceasingly. Now, Trant was a beautiful province, one of the most beautiful of all the many nomes on the land of Mars, and Manel's

sister was married to the Governor of Trant, which gave him considerable social standing; and unhappily this Governor was a weak man and much under the influence of Manel's sister, who was beautiful, but vain and silly as are, alas, many beautiful women. Oh yes, we Martians had the same faults as you Earthfolk, though maybe not in such exaggerated forms—but to my tale.

Now the name of Manel's sister was Astia, and that of her husband Gondal, and it was to these two that Manel now confided a certain matter of great importance. He had, he said, after many months of experiment, succeeded in making an appearance come forth, as they came in the Temple in Surun—for, he said, why should all the signs and wonders be concentrated in Surun alone? And though at first Gondal was a little frightened, Astia listened eagerly, for she had always felt a certain jealousy of the beauty and the power of Zenobia and longed to emulate her—and lo, if her brother Manel could duplicate some, at least, of the marvels that were shown on stated occasions in the Temple in Surun, why should she not emulate Zenobia and perhaps in time even surpass her in power and position? It will be seen by this that she was a very silly woman not to have realized that Zenobia held her position by virtue of her great psychic gifts, which Astia did not and could not ever possess; but alas, this would not be the first or the last time that a silly woman has somehow managed to persuade intelligent men to listen to her; and this is what happened.

Astia begged her brother to show her and Gondal this wonder that he had learnt to create—and one evening when they were alone in their handsome house, Manel produced his "miracle" as his admiring sister called it. It was, I believe, a flimsy, shadowy shape only, but still it was a tall shape in a long white robe—though how it was that Manel learnt how to create this Shape, I do not know; but it is certain that one of the Evil Ones, who are continually on the watch to teach mankind wickedness, somehow managed to become friendly with Manel—probably wearing the form of a fellow-Martian,

which would be easy for one of Them to assume if it suited them. Working on Manel's ambition and vanity both, it was not difficult to persuade him that the experiment was more than worth trying, though it might be frowned upon by the older scientists who were, the Dark Counsellor assured Manel, old-fashioned and afraid of the younger scientists who had the daring and courage they themselves lacked—see how history repeats itself! Is not the very same argument used today on your earth?

When the Council of Seven (said the Counsellor) realized the brilliance and power of Manel, they would capitulate and accord him the gratitude and admiration which would be his due—they might give him the prize he longed for—a further two years in the Halls of Learning and the title of Scholar of the Year! Manel, swelling with satisfaction at the success of his experiment, swallowed all this nonsense as a child swallows a sugared cake, and when his sister showered praises upon his head, took these as no more than his due. Gondal, her husband, was less enthusiastic, though he could not fail to be impressed—but he was frightened also, as within himself he had a feeling that these experiments were somehow both wrong and dangerous. Only in the Great Temple, and on stated occasions chosen by themselves, did the Great Ones deign to appear, and he had never in his life dreamt it might be possible to summon them up, to bid them come and lo, they came!

This, it appeared, was what Manel had done—and though Manel enjoined secrecy upon both Gondal and Astia, he should have known better than to trust a silly woman's tongue. On the first chance Astia told her friends, and Manel was bombarded with pleas from all the leading citizens of Trant, to let them see the marvel he had learnt to create—and Manel was torn between gratified vanity, an irresistible urge to display his creation, and a secret intuitive fear that, despite all the advice of his evil Counsellor, persisted in the back of his mind.

Although such experiments had never been expressly forbidden on Mars, since it did not occur to the Council of Seven

that anyone would wish or dare to do this, yet instinctively Manel felt that the Council would take a firm stand against it; and so he refused, strong as was the pressure brought to bear upon him, to hold a special session in the Temple in the chief city of Trant—the name of this city was Lleyln—so that the people as a whole might see and applaud the mighty powers of their leading scientist, Manel. Manel felt that as long as he confined his “showing” to private gatherings in the house of the leading citizens, he would be safe; so this is what he did. But naturally, despite his repeated requests that his audience kept silent about what they had seen and heard, reports of this new and amazing thing got abroad with speed, and the people of Trant rubbed their hands and gloated. For although as I have said, the rivalry between the various nomes and cities was on the whole a friendly rivalry, yet Trant was the next largest nome to Khnum (the nome of which Surun was the capital city) and there were times when some of its leading citizens grew restive at playing a comparatively subsidiary role compared to Khnum, and would argue between themselves that the Government of the country could perfectly well be conducted from Lleyln; that the Temple in Lleyln was as beautiful, if not as large as the Great Temple in Surun, and why not . . . and so on and so forth. . . . You can imagine the sort of talk that would sometimes go on between restless and ambitious souls; and this was, you may be assured, stoked up and kept going by those Evil Ones who, alas, under one guise and another, are always present at such gatherings.

And now, having seen such a promising fire of discontent set going, the Evil One who had succeeded in luring Manel into sin, summoned a wily colleague of his and sent him into Hurex to seek out Jain and try to goad him, through jealousy of the admiration that Manel was receiving for his invention, into sinning in like fashion. And this, alas, he did! Stung by hearing the reports of Manel's success, Jain set to work to outdo him; and being a trained metallurgist, amongst many other things, he succeeded in making a strange and horrifying-looking animal of mingled metals! Now this animal could

move, walk, roll its eyes and even grunt in true animal fashion, for the Black Counsellor, with his evil knowledge of black magic, had somehow managed to trap a small but effective quantity of the Life Force within the creature—just enough to give it a semblance of life at times—and the people of Hurex clamoured aloud with delight and came in swarms to see the marvel!

The news of this strange invention naturally spread wide, and many people came to Hurex from Trant, anxious to see the thing that was made of metal and yet seemed to move and breathe and live. The Evil One rubbed his hands as he sensed the jealousy between the nomes and their people growing stronger—and when finally an angry group of young men from Trant broke into Jain's house and seized and carried away the metal creature with them back to Trant, things came to a head at last!

3

The Building of Phobos

NOW of the younger folk in Hurex, who were immensely proud of their star scientist, Jain, and especially of his latest achievement, were furious when they heard that the metal creature had been stolen and removed to Trant; and a crowd of them stormed over the border between the two nomes and attacked the Temple where they had heard the stolen creature had been lodged! They did not discover it, though in their frenzied searching for it and in the fighting that, alas, took place between them and the guardians of the Temple a great deal of damage was done to the interior of the Temple—and it was this that brought the whole tragic business to the notice of the Council of Seven. One of the leading citizens of Trant, alarmed at the unprecedented way in which things were developing—for as I have said, rivalry between nomes and people had up to date been entirely friendly, and anger, even leading to bloodshed, was unknown—came privately to Surun and requested an audience with the Seven; and when they had heard his report, Algun at once sent a message to summon the Governor of Trant, Gondal, to Surun for an interview.

Gondal was much alarmed at this, as he knew that the trouble between Trant and Hurex was growing stronger; and now the men of Trant, furious at the damage done to their Temple, retaliated, and fighting was taking place all along the borderline between the two nomes. But he dared not refuse,

and when he came at last, slowly and reluctantly, to Surun and stood before the Seven, he dared not raise his eyes from the ground as Algun spoke. By this time every detail of the trouble was known to the Seven, for they had sent secret investigators into both Trant and Hurex—and Algun spoke gravely.

"Gondal, you have sinned! You should never have been persuaded into allowing your brother-in-law Manel to toy with forbidden things. You know that although we know how to create temporary bodies, that this is *never* done except under direct orders from the Hierarchy, and for some good and worthy purpose; but this has been done simply to impress onlookers, and give them an exaggerated idea of Manel's powers as a scientist and magician! It is Manel's vanity which has allowed him to listen to the tempting of one of the Dark Ones, who ever lie in wait to seize on any chance; and alas, that same Dark One or another followed Jain to Hurex, and playing likewise on his vanity and envy of Manel, lured him into making this magical animal. And all this could have been prevented had you done your duty in the beginning and forbidden Manel to experiment!"

All were silent as Algun spoke. After a moment Algun went on.

"Both Manel and Jain have sinned gravely, and the evil that they have set going may well have developments that would terrify you even to dream of! For of course, the moment that evil passions were set going between Trant and Hurex, swarms of the Dark Ones came hurrying to the scene to encourage and arouse those passions to their height, and even as I speak, blood is being shed on Mars! The blood of those who until now were as brothers, sharing each others joys and rejoicing in each other's achievements—and this could and should have been prevented, Gondal, by you. So from now you are no longer governor of Trant. You are banished from the main city, you and your wife, and Manel with you! Go, live retired where you will, and spend what is left to you of your life, praying forgiveness of the High Ones

for the grievous harm that your weakness and folly has brought upon this planet. Go!"

So Gondal and his foolish wife were banished, and Manel with them, and Jain also received a sentence of punishment—but alas, the evil had now grown too strong to stem, and the hatred between Trant and Hurex waxed greater and even greater as Hurex demanded the return of the metal creature and failed to get it. For in truth, Jain, terrified of the consequences of his folly, had himself followed the metal creature to its hiding-place in Trant, and finding it there, had destroyed it completely and buried the pieces into which he had broken it! But alas, the mischief was done. Nome after nome became, so to speak, infected with the germ of warfare, and as the Dark Ones worked, grim enjoyment in the act of destruction began to grow—and in each nome scientists began to work feverishly, competing with each other as to which could produce the most lethal weapon. Oh, there were many, I thank God, who refused to take any part in the senseless race, and some of these crept away with their wives and families and came to Surun, saying that life in Trant and Hurex—and now, alas, in other nomes also—was becoming poisoned! Mentally by the daily increase of cruel and evil thoughts, and physically by the dissemination of vile chemicals that, as the scientists experimented, floated out upon the air, poisoning it and spoiling the vegetation which made, for the normal Martian, so large a part of his diet.

Nightly the Seven sat together to send out waves of goodwill and peace to aid the unceasing efforts of the White Brothers against the Lords of the Dark Face; and in their homes many of our citizens who longed to try and help to stem the tide of evil that was sweeping the planet, sat also, either with their families or in groups of chosen friends, to send out waves of prayer to aid the White Brothers who were fighting so grim a fight.

Yet bit by bit, despite all we could do, the fighting and the enmity spread amongst the nomes, and it came as no surprise

to us when one night Zenobia told us that she had received a mental message from the Hierarchy, and that we and a chosen group of the leading men and women of Surun were to sit together in the Temple on the following night. The Great Ones themselves would appear, and give us instructions as to what steps to take next.

So duly we gathered at the Temple, at night-time, when most of the citizens would be asleep—for none but specifically chosen ones, those who were already well on the way towards full initiation, were allowed to join the Seven at these meetings when the Great Ones were to appear. And although I was well accustomed now to the wondrous sight of Those who appeared, tonight it seemed to me that the sight of them was more wondrous than ever.

As we sat in our accustomed places beneath the apex of the vast cone that was the Temple, with our guests ranged on seats a little behind us, we all sang softly the Chant of Invocation, and as we sang, a luminous mist built up in the centre of the floor, where stood the brazier burning scented incense . . . and within a few moments there stood three Figures, two male and one female. So clearly materialized that they seemed as solid and as real as we ourselves!

Poised in the air above the cloud of burning incense they stood, and all were clad in sweeping robes, the men white, the woman in clear blue, and about their heads flamed the Golden Nimbus, the foot-wide halo that you see so often in your world depicted as surrounding the angels and other holy ones in your ancient pictures. The artists who lived then were many of them clairvoyant, and could see the actual light of holiness that encircled the heads of those they were painting. The faces of the three were grave and sad, especially that of the elder of the two men, a tall white-bearded patriarch who wore the jewelled headband of a king of old.

In a voice of the utmost sadness he told us that so serious had the situation become that there was no choice as to what must be done.

In their mad experimentation the scientists had released so

many dangerous chemicals into the air of the planet that, as I have said, not only was the vegetation being poisoned, but the very air itself was becoming dangerous to breathe! We drew long breaths of horror and glanced at each other as the Speaker told us that the only thing to do now was to devise a means of living that would mean withdrawing from all contact, as far as possible, with the outer world! We must remove ourselves from our beautiful cities, and go and live in the vast catacombs of caves that lay within the many mountain-ranges on Mars. Within these we could seal ourselves against the poisons of the outer air, and there our faithful scientists—of which, thank heaven, there still remain many—could manufacture pure air for us to breathe. There we could grow the vegetables and fruits that we needed, and in time make homes there, in the friendly shelter of the hills, only venturing out when it became necessary, and then wearing the special protective garments that again, our scientists would devise.

There was a grim silence when the ancient King ended his speech, and the woman spirit said as though to comfort us, "We hope and pray that this may be a temporary measure only. We are fighting hard to thrust back the Dark Ones who now, alas, rule so many of our once-peaceful nomes. We hope and trust that we shall defeat them, when you will be able to resume your old life in your beautiful cities. But till then. . . ."

We left the Temple that night with steps as heavy as our hearts—but there was no gainsaying the wisdom of the Great One's words. Of late, even near Surun, which was on the far side of the planet and so distant from Trant and Hurex, where the worst of the trouble was raging—we had had several cases of children and even adults collapsing as they went abroad in the woods and fields as of old, for an evening walk, and being brought home seriously ill. Sometimes from breathing the vile vapours that were spread abroad in the air, and sometimes by chemicals that had been on some plant or fruits that they had eaten—see how history repeats itself! For are you Earthfolk not doing much the same evil now, with your radio-

activity that poisons the air, and your hateful chemical sprays?

So, sorrowfully enough, we set about planning the great move into the caves.

Now fortunately, on Mars, there were many thousands of miles of wonderful caverns of great size—the rolling hills were honeycombed with them—and safety lay within them. The people could live and the scientists manufacture air that was pure and fit to breathe. Seeds could be sown and roots planted in some of the larger caves that would be stimulated into quick growth by fertilizers and by the artificial sunlight that we knew how to produce, and homes could be built, of a sort at least, if they lacked the beauty and spaciousness of those in our beautiful cities.

So driven by fear, our people worked like beavers, for the open air outside was rapidly becoming so poisonous that at last nobody dared go out without a protective mask and a container strapped to his or her back containing pure air that, fed into the mask, would make it possible to go out and about in safety.

Now I make a momentary break to tell you of something that may, I think, interest some of you.

The writer, Margery Lawrence, who is what she calls “editing” this story that I am telling you, is not a medium in the full sense of the word, yet at times she is curiously perceptive; and she had, about the time when I first began this story, a mental vision that puzzled her a great deal, until she told it to me and I was able to explain.

She was sitting doing some sewing work in her flat and thinking over the beginning of this story, when she mentally saw a scene of a great stretch of country, sloping upwards, up which two odd figures were climbing. They were very tall and thin—“spidery” was the term she used in describing them later on to me. They were pale in colour, either unclothed or wearing skintight garments, and on their heads were large round glass balls, like the head-dress of a deepsea diver, and on their backs were strapped tubeshaped containers—again look-

ing like the equipment worn by modern divers, which Margery Lawrence could not understand at all, as she saw no seas or water in the picture. The two figures continued to climb upwards, and then she saw that they were making their way towards a range of hills that ran across the top of the picture. But there was something very odd about the hills! At the end of the range, where the hill broke off, so to speak, there seemed a huge shining globe, like a vast soap-bubble, pushing out of the hillside, as though the end of the hill had been broken off and somebody inside it had blown up an immense bubble to fill the gap! The bubble spread wide outside the hole in the mountain range—for now she could see that there was, indeed, a vast hole there—and within the bubble, to her great astonishment, could be faintly seen the shapes of houses, people moving, and so on. Then the picture faded. But when she told me later on about it, I told her that she had been given a mental picture of the latter days of Mars, when we had all been driven to live in the caves, since the air had become too poisoned for us to live as we used to do. . . .

Now, for a very long time somehow we contrived to live like this; a people driven underground, not daring to venture out without these protective masks and instruments that carried a supply of pure air, and all the time we hoped and prayed for better times. We hoped that the stream of pure goodwill that we knew was being directed night and day by the White Brotherhood upon the warring factions might gain the upper hand of the evil that was at the moment, alas, proving rampant. But there came a time when the Council of Seven summoned the leading citizens again on another midnight conference, and this time the news was even more distressing!

This time only the ancient King appeared, and his face was lined with sorrow—and indeed, what he had to say came to us all like a heavy blow upon the spirit. He said that, alas, the Lords of the Dark Face had succeeded in gaining the upper hand to such a degree that our beloved planet was doomed!

Evil had spread like the plague, and now there was only one thing to do—those who remained uninfected by evil must leave Mars and find a home elsewhere!

We were (he said) at once to build a great spaceship in which many of our chief treasures, books, instruments, paintings, garments, jewelwork, furnishings and so on would be packed; and with these priceless things would travel many of our leading men and women scientists, artists, doctors, writers, craftsmen, all of those who had stood out most strongly against the Dark Ones; many of their relatives, their friends, and children.

When this great craft should be built, the King said, it would set off from Mars to seek a new home; and he said that Terra, your planet, which we knew well through our long-distance telescopes (which could see far further and more clearly than yours) would be, in the view of the Heavenly Ones the most suitable.

Terra was a beautiful planet, and so far only inhabited by a very low type of race that could scarcely be called Man as yet, though the seeds of true manhood were in him and could, rightly treated, be awakened to life; and this (so said the King) was one of the chief reasons why they wished us to seek our new life on the planet Terra. It was to be an important part of our new life to meet and teach the Earthlings—as we were always to call the strange uncouth creatures that at that time occupied the earth, or at least parts of it. For at that time most of the planet Terra was heavily forested, and such animals as we could see were of the crude, gigantic prehistoric type such as the dinosaur, the stegosaurus, the pterodactyl and others.

Now as I have told you, as a people we were well accustomed to the making of spacecraft, and the prospect of getting away from the planet, which was plainly doomed, nerved the workers who were called together to perform prodigies of industry; so that in a space of time, that even now, looking back, seems to me astonishingly short, the great ship, which we named Phobos, was completed and lay displayed on the wide plain before the range of hills in which

hid the new Surun. People came from miles around to see and wonder at it.

Circular it was in shape, a great disk of smooth and shining metal, and in your measurements it measured ten miles round.* But vast as that may seem, considering what was to be packed into it, from countless men, women and children to immense quantities of valuables that were to be taken to Terra, there to start a new life in which the culture and knowledge of our forefathers could be cherished as it deserved, it could not be thought too large. At last all the things that the Seven had been instructed to put within it were duly taken aboard, and the time came for it to depart.

Weeping, for all their high courage, those who had been chosen to go took leave of their friends, of Algun and the rest of the Council of Seven, who had come to see them off. Then one by one they mounted the ramp into the great ship until the last had entered, and the door slid silently into place, sealing the adventurers from those of us left behind.

It was, I remember, a glorious day of sunshine, and I stood beside my Zenobia, her hand in mine, for well I knew that this moment would be for her, as for me, one of great emotional stress. I remember cursing the great glass shape that we both had to wear on our heads for safety's sake, and thinking back with the most passionate regret of the happy days before the Dark Brothers gained a footing on our beloved planet. Of the days when we could wander freely together, bathe or climb or swim or fly as we chose, without any of these hideous inventions fastened on us! Zenobia looked at me through the glass dome that could not hide her beauty, and though we did not speak—we rarely used vocal speech, it was not necessary, as I have explained—I knew that she said to me words like this.

"You will remember, my dear one, that when we first came together—how many hundreds of years now?—we decided that we would not have children, since both my work and

*See Appendix One

yours on the Council meant that any sort of family life would be well nigh impossible."

I nodded, for I well remembered the decision we had taken, after long and painful thought. You see, the Higher Ones never force anything upon one. They leave it to each individual to decide what he feels is the best for him and for his work; and since both Zenobia and I were members of the Council of Seven, though They indicated what They felt would be the right thing to do, They left it to us to choose, and choose we did. Each of us on the Council had his own type of work; and on your Earth I imagine my position would be equivalent to the Head of the Ministry of Works, for I was, and always had been, deeply interested in architecture, in building and construction in all its details. This meant that I travelled much on Mars and on other planets also, advising and helping, which would mean but little time to spend at home; and Zenobia was so specially sensitive in the psychic way that perforce she spent much of her time in and about the Temple. It was mostly through her that the Great Ones spoke at the Temple gatherings; and when, on the rare and wonderful occasions that they condescended to come down and form a temporary body of material drawn from the group awaiting them, it was mainly on Zenobia that they would draw, as she was a terrific battery of psychic power, and ready to give it out eagerly and willingly whenever it was needed.

So we had decided that to do our work properly we should do without children, though this cost us a good deal, as we both loved children. But seeing the families filing up the gang-plank into the vast glistening machine and watching the tears on the faces of those left behind, I knew what Zenobia meant, and nodded as she went on.

"If we had had children, it might have been our duty to send them away with the others and ourselves stay behind—and think how we should have felt!"

I glanced quickly at her and said no word, for a sound like a long sigh arose from the great crowd—the ship was moving!

It was an impressive thing to see as the vast round shape that was the space-ship Phobos, the silvery metal of which she was built glistening and shining in the light, raised herself slowly from the flat plain where she lay, and rose into the air. For a moment she hung high above our heads, and from the rows of tiny windows that ringed her shape we could see faces looking out and hands waving to us, standing staring up at her—and to the accompaniment of tears and cries of farewell from the assembled multitude, she soared up and away on her strange voyage!

The moment was too tense for cheering and applause, and after a few moments watching the great ship dwindle into the distance, the crowd began to disperse to their various homes—now, alas, within the heart of the vast labyrinth of caves within the mountain ranges behind Surun; and sadly Zenobia and I went back to the home we shared there. This was a high-placed cave which had been enlarged in which was a window, a happily-placed cleft in the mountain-side that has been filled with protective glass; and through this we watched, with the strong glasses that were made on Mars, the progress of the ship Phobos.

When at first we could not see it we were glad, for we concluded that it had gone faster than was expected and was by now too far away to see even with our glasses. But we were wrong! We went to sleep sad, but content that we had obeyed orders of the Great Ones—and in the morning we received a rude shock. We had pictured Phobos well on its way to Terra, perhaps even arrived there—for you on earth have no knowledge of what speed can really be—and when, to our blank astonishment, the great ship slid into sight, we realized that it had not, as it should have, left Mars! It was circling round and round Mars, caught and helpless in the magnetic field of the planet—and even as Zenobia and I looked at each other, speechless with horror, the voice of Algun, the oldest and wisest of the Council, came to our ears. Not through a mechanical contraption like your telephone—no. I told you that on Mars we were attuned to much finer vibrations of

hearing than you are, and those of us who were sufficiently advanced and trained—as all were who were on the Council—could speak at will to each other, no matter how far they might be separated in a physical sense.

“Alas!” said Algun, and his noble voice was laden with tears. “Somehow, in constructing this, the largest ship we have ever built, we have gone wrong, and Phobos, instead of sailing out straight into the unknown blue, is caught in the planet’s orbit and must now go on circling round and round indefinitely! All those within her must now be dead, for the captain of the ship had strict orders, if anything went wrong, to release a scentless gas into the ship, so that quietly and without knowing it, the people would fall asleep and so into death. And so our first attempt at escape has failed—and the only thing to do is to make another attempt!”

4

Deimos

WORDS could not describe the horror and despair of our people when the news appeared that the great spaceship in which were hidden so many of our greatest treasures, to say nothing of the infinitely more precious lives that accompanied them, had failed! We had built many spaceships before, but never one of such a size, and evidently somewhere in the building our designers had gone wrong—but there was no time to waste. The stern order came at once from the Hierarchy to build on, to build another ship, a smaller one this time, and to take the greatest care in its building! And as rumours of the bloody trouble in Trant and Hurex and alas, now in other nomes too, came to us more and more strongly, we threw ourselves again into the task of building another ship. A fellow-ship to that ever-to-be-mourned bark that we could see on fine nights, far distant in the sky, circling round and round the planet that had given it birth, but that at the last would not let it go.

Within an incredibly short time, the second ship, *Deimos*, was built, and once more packed with treasures of art, literature, industry, culture of every sort, and once more filled with eager passengers, quite sure that this time all difficulties must have been overcome, and they would soon be safe on the strange soil of their new home. But would you believe it? The

same thing happened! Somehow in the building of Deimos the designers had made the same mistake as with Phobos—and in despair we watchers in Surun saw the smaller satellite rise into the air and after a while join its bigger brother in the circling round and round the planet. It was caught, like Phobos, helpless in Mars' magnetic field! We had failed again....

Yet we could not leave it at that. Things were getting worse and worse on Mars, and now the messages urging us to hasten and prepare to leave our beloved homeland were coming more and more often, and we were assured by the Great Ones that now we should have no more disappointments. A special watch was being kept on our work, and mistakes avoided—and indeed it was so. We all, nerved by desperation, worked with all our hearts on building ship after ship—and we found, as They had promised, that we had no more failures. As the ships were built and filled they set off into the blue and vanished—for emigration was now the only thing left to us. Our homeland was beleaguered by evil, and life on it becoming more and more impossible. One or two of the departing ships went to Venus and others to Jupiter—planets that we had visited, where our people would be welcomed—but it was told to us that the Council of Seven was to go to Terra, Zenobia and I, Jeroam, Derek, Huran, Forse and Lynthia, along with many other chosen ones. There we were to start our work of meeting, teaching and training those strange animal-like creatures who lived on the planet called Terra, and whom we called the Earthlings.

It would take several ships to transport the number of people directed to go to Terra, to say nothing of the enormous quantity of cultural material that we were taking, and much cargo-space would be taken up by the quantity of food and drink that the travellers would need, both for the journey and for the early stages of their life on earth. For we had no idea of what we might find to eat and drink on Terra, and it would obviously not be possible to start growing vegetables, fruit and the like at once, as we knew so little of Earth conditions.

But luckily our scientists on Mars were very advanced, and had prepared enough food and drink in capsule or tablet-form to sustain us for a long time if need be; and while we worked at our packing and last-minute preparations, they also began to train our bodies to try and accustom them to the climate of Terra. The air we breathed was so fine on Mars that the scientists knew that we should find it very hard at first to breath the heavier air on Earth; and realizing this, we submitted to daily training, special diet, breathing exercises and all manner of other instructions so that we might be well prepared for our new and strange life.

It was with a strange mixture of feelings that the morning came when we, the last emigrants from Mars were to embark in our chosen craft and set forth on our journey. Our hearts were heavy with sorrow, for our beloved planet was now plainly beyond saving; the rot of evil had spread so widely that practically all the worthwhile souls, those who remained faithful to the old teachings and the old faith, had already been sent away to find new homes on other planets. Those who remained on Mars were lost, alas, having thrown in their lot with one or other of the two warring sides—and our ship was the last to go. We, the Council of Seven, had remained behind to cheer off the other departing colonists—for colonists in a sense we all were—and now it was our turn.

We were deeply sad, and yet in a way both excited and exalted, for was it not a great honour to be entrusted by the Great Ones with the task of teaching and training the Earthlings? Through our strong telescopes we had caught occasional glimpses of these, and though children of God, they still seemed strange and to us, horrible! Yet however they looked, they had within them that spark of God without which nothing can exist—and it was our appointed task to bring forth this spark, feed and strengthen it until it became a steady and conscious flame.

Only Algun had begged permission to remain behind, and another fine soul, one Jeroam, was appointed in his stead. Algun had spent many years on Mars, many lifetimes, and

now he longed to spend one at least with a beloved daughter of an earlier incarnation, on the planet Pluto. He knew that his life-span was coming to an end, but though death, to us on Mars, did not mean what it does to you Earthlings, he did not wish to reincarnate again on Mars. (I will explain the mode of our death in a later chapter).

So we bade goodbye to our dear old friend Algon, with many tears, and climbed aboard our vessel; and as it rose slowly and steadily into the air, through the windows that were ranged in a ring round the circumference of our boat—which, like the others, was built in disc form—we looked our last on our beloved country. Zenobia sat beside me, her hand fast in mine, and our eyes met in silence—what was there to say? As we gazed our ship rose high and swung at once into the easy rhythm that meant a speed far faster than any mortals have ever dreamt of—and we were off!

Off on the strangest journey ever taken—and as our old home dwindled into a mere dull red shape like an orange hanging in the sky, we settled down with a sigh to await our landing in our new home.

On long journeys by air we were all taught to send ourselves into a sort of hypnotic sleep, and we slept what must have been many hours as reckoned in your earth time—for when we awoke at last we were actually in sight of Terra! And very strange at first it seemed to look upon a world all green instead of one whose colour was graded in shades of red.

And yet, once our eyes became accustomed to it, the colour green seemed restful—and there was much of it. For at that early period Terra was far more heavily-forested than it is now; and as we slowly descended, seeking a place that would seem good for us to land, Zenobia, looking keenly out of the window close to her, sent a message to the pilot to try and pick a place where there was water. For Zenobia was one of those who dearly loved to bathe and swim, and moreover, she knew that drinking water was essential to us Martians; and

though the special capsules with which the scientists had provided us cured thirst as well as hunger, they would not be good to use indefinitely.

From what our scientists had told us about conditions on Terra, we knew that seawater would not serve, though as we descended we could see wide stretches of blue, shining water—and then we saw beneath us a deep green valley wherein were scattered lakes, looking like jewels set in the green. Then we saw far up the valley, a river that ran into the valley or rather into one of the lakes—the river was the Nile, and the valley was what you now know as the Mediterranean Sea. It was many years later on that this valley became a sea, when the ocean burst through at the far end of the valley and flooded it; but it was then only a valley filled with forest, great green trees spreading like a vast cloak over the land and over what is now called the Sahara Desert. Yes, the Desert was then a fertile forestland, which doubtless sheltered many of the Earthlings whom we had come to meet—and Zenobia was right when she bade the pilot try to find a clearing space there in which our ships might descend. But, alas, something happened that we had not anticipated! The speed with which our ships had travelled through the myriad miles of space since we left Mars, had generated such terrific heat in the outer skin of our vessels that when they descended near the trees, lo, they set fire to them, and we were forced to rise high in the air above and watch with dismay the grim sight of the forest flaming below us, a solid sheet of fire that seemed to spread and spread as we watched it!

Now this, my readers, is the true beginning of your Sahara Desert; for except for the valley, which remained untouched, a thin fringe of green along the borders of the river which is now called the Nile, and in a few swampy or boggy places in the Delta, where the dampness refused fuel to the fire, the forestland was laid waste for countless miles and the land has since never recovered from it. Alas, there was nothing that we could do about it. Thankful for the foresight of our scientists that had provided us with enough concentrated food and drink

to last many moons, if it was needed, we remained hovering high in the air above the burning land, where we knew we had to wait until the fire burnt itself out at last and the burnt earth below became cool enough to allow us to land. We debated between ourselves whether to move on and find another landing space; but Zenobia vetoed this. This, she said firmly, was where the Great Ones wished us to land—and knowing how closely Zenobia was linked with the Other Side, we said no more. We passed the time of waiting by working hard with the doctors and scientific men who were with us in practising the new form of breathing that would be needed in the heavy air of Terra, in accepting special treatments that would lend weight to our almost weightless bodies, in learning and studying many things that would be needed, we knew, in the new and strange life that lay ahead of us. It took very many moons indeed before at last the fires burnt themselves out, the land cooled and we were able to descend—and in truth it was on a desolate scene that we at last disembarked! Cautiously, and wearing at first the dome-shaped helmets that we had worn on Mars, for we did not know how much our yet unaccustomed lungs would stand of the heavy air of Terra, we descended from our ships—five in all, they were—and began to set up temporary shelters on the earth; although we meant, of course, to live in our ships until such time as we had made sufficient progress with the Earthlings as to teach them the art of building and many other necessary things.

Had we guessed, as we did not then, how wearisomely long and hard the way would be before that time came, our hearts might have failed us! But we did not; and anyway, the Seven were united in their efforts to cheer and encourage all, and Zenobia in particular. She was asked why she had seemed so anxious that we should land at that especial point on the earth, and she said she did not know, but that somehow she had known it was the right place; as indeed it was, for it was there that there sprang up our first and greatest colony on Earth, that which was later on to develop into one of the greatest civilizations ever known—the Egyptian. A civiliza-

tion whose wondrous attainments in the arts are still the wonder of the whole world, and have never been surpassed.

As we worked a strong wind sprang up and aided us by blowing away much of the ash and charred fragments that hindered us, though thanks to our gift of levitation we did not need actually to tread the earth; and after a while we had cleared a space large enough to allow us to set up tents and other things that we should need in working on Terra. We also soon found, to our great satisfaction, that the treatment and training we had all undergone from our scientists had so improved our breathing that we did not need our helmets; so when we had set up our tents and other equipment many of us went exploring here and there. Once or twice we found the burnt bodies of giant animals—terrible creatures to look at, so huge they dwarfed even us tall Martians—but nowhere did we find the bodies of any of the Earthlings.

This puzzled us for a little; but long afterwards we discovered that since occasional forest-fires were not unknown to the Earthlings, they rarely went into the depths of the forest except when hunting. They lived near the outer fringe and as close to a lake or river as possible, so that they could run to it and fling themselves in and hide in the water until the danger was past. And they had done so in this case. The Earthlings lived clustered amongst the outer fringe of the trees or in holes in the ground near the river; and when the fire started they had flung themselves into the Nile and remained there until such time as the fire died out, the ground had cooled and it was safe to reappear.

They were timorous creatures, and after we had seen one or two of the truly fearsome beasts that at that time stalked the earth we did not wonder; but it was a considerable time before we ever saw an Earthling at all, though much later on we learnt that they had seen us from the first, having the sharp eyes and quick instincts of the wild animals that, in a large part, they were. And it was not until a long time had passed, during which they watched us eat and live and talk amongst ourselves, that they had decided that we seemed harmless and

at least unlikely to catch and eat them—as they were wont to do to each other, horrible as it sounds, when they got a chance!

And certainly, the first time that Zenobia and I caught sight of one of these strange creatures we shall never forget!

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5

We Land on Terra

IT took something like two of your Earth years before the land below us cooled down sufficiently to allow us to descend permanently from our airships and try to plan a regular life on Earth.

Your airships cannot hang motionless in space, but must keep moving all the time; but fortunately ours were so constructed that hovering, or even remaining still, suspended, as it were, in space, was easy; and so we adventurers from Mars lived for many long moons mainly in our ships. Moons which we spent in the constant training, diet and doctoring of our bodies to prepare them for the very different and vastly more difficult life on Terra.

Needless to say, we were most eager to try and explore this region, at least, of our new country, but we had to go cautiously about this.

Despite the treatment, injections, breathing, diet that we had undergone before leaving Mars and continued during our sojourn in our ships, our lungs, accustomed to the delicate, refined air of Mars would inevitably find the far heavier atmosphere of Earth very difficult to breathe, and so indeed we found at first. So much so that, as I have said, for the first few months after we landed and proceeded to leave our ships in order to try and find out something about our new home, we were obliged to wear the dome-shaped protective helmets

that we wore on Mars during the last pitiful years. Within our ships the air was, of course, conditioned to suit us; yet it was surprising how soon, on the whole, we became accustomed to breathing the heavy air of Terra, and became sufficiently valiant to dare to venture out without our helmets, and away from our group of safely anchored ships.

Fortunately for us, although for many months deliberately our doctors and scientists had been training and treating us to become more solid and weighty than we had been in our own ethereal country, we still retained the power of what you would call levitation, and could float at will over the land around us without ever touching the earth itself unless we chose.

This was a good thing, as even after the active fires had burnt themselves out, the ground surface was so black and thick with ashes, charred wood fragments and so on that blew about in clouds if trodden on, that we should never without levitation have been able to explore as we did—luckily without even brushing the surface of the devastated country.

Yet after a time, the worst of this covering of ashes blew off or else settled down into the earth and a few green shoots began to show here and there.

In those early days on your Terra most of the planet was thickly forested, and the trees were mostly conifers, immense treeferns, palms, cactus, giant fungi and undergrowth of a lush sprawling kind; the last in particular sprang into attempted life once the fires had died out, especially in the damp places where the fire had not been able to get a strong hold. But long before that we, Zenobia and I and many others, had gone far afield trying to catch a glimpse of the strange creatures called Earthlings who somehow, when we had succeeded in making some sort of a settlement on this strange earth, we were commissioned to meet, teach and train towards true manhood.

I have said that though most of the land below us was burnt flat by the fire, much of the country that bordered the great river which I shall call the Nile, for your convenience' sake,

was damp and swampy, and long belts of forest-land along the borders were still standing green and untouched. Especially in the region now known as the Delta, where the great river split into half a dozen smaller river-mouths which spilt their waters down the sloping hills that led down into the green valley that was in time to become the Mediterranean Sea. Now in the Delta, we guessed, most of the Earthlings would have taken shelter, knowing that in this region of deep pools and winding streams and muddy islands hidden under sweeping trees, they would be safe from fire at least, if still in danger from the various wild beasts that prowled around—yet though we roamed for miles keeping a sharp lookout we never saw an Earthling for many months. Much later on we learned that most of the Earthlings lived in caves, when they could find them, or, if not, in holes dug into the earth, where the greater monsters at least were unlikely to find them. A few Earthlings climbed the trees and made themselves a kind of nest there; but this was by no means safe, as some of the monsters had such long necks soaring up from their ponderous bodies that they could—and did—poke their ugly heads in amongst the branches when they scented prey, drag the unhappy Earthlings out and eat them!

Through many years of experience the Earthlings had grown clever at hiding themselves, and it was long before we caught even a glimpse of them; though long afterwards they told us that they had seen us from the beginning—from, I meant, the moment when they first saw our ships high in the air approaching the earth.

At first they thought the ships were merely another form of dangerous monster like that horrible flying creature, a mixture of bat and lizard and bird, the pterodactyl, that was common then; and after the fires died down, the ships landed and in time disgorged our tall forms, so utterly different from the stunted dwarfish shapes that were the Earthlings, they were more terrified than ever! But when after a while they saw that we ate no meat and did no harm to anyone, they grew less alarmed; and when, as we went exploring, they

watched us sailing along in the air a few feet above the ground to which they clung, they ranked us as gods at once and were thrilled with awe and wonder—but they were still very reluctant to show themselves. It was only through Zenobia and a little Earthling child that at last we managed to make contact with these strange creatures who were to be our pupils and at last inherit the Earth.

When the news spread amongst the watching planets that Mars was to be left to its dismal fate, while all its worthwhile citizens departed to find homes elsewhere, great sympathy was felt and many offers of help received; and, as I have said, some of our people, when they departed, went to Jupiter, and others to Venus and other planets. And Venus, who was the sister planet of Mars, sent us who were to go to Terra a present which was to prove of infinite value to us and to the Earthfolk in the far future. She sent us several swarms of bees, that wonderful little insect that was then only found on Venus; and on our long wait to land on Terra, those swarms had flourished and multiplied exceedingly. There was not then the hostility between man and the lower creatures of creation that has developed since, and the little creatures were tame and affectionate and worked away busily in the special hives in which they travelled; and we certainly found their delicious honey a great addition to the concentrated food that we had taken with us in our ships.

Whenever Zenobia and I went off exploring the strange terrain on which we were now living—still inside our ships, anchored securely in a large clearing, though many of our younger folk chose to live in tents put up amongst the new thickly-springing young green—we took with us some packed food, as we might have to be away for some considerable time; and it was thanks to this habit that at long last we managed to establish contact with the Earthlings.

We had had a somewhat exhausting few hours travelling about the swampy stretch of country that is now called the Delta, and sitting together at the foot of one of the tall palm-trees that grew there, we ate our mealcakes, which were cut

open and smeared thickly with honey. We were discussing the qualities of the two sorts of fruit that we had found grew on many of the palm-trees—I mean the date and the coconut; though these were in their primitive form and would scarcely be recognized by you people of today. Naturally we were anxious to find and use such foodstuffs as our new land might contain, and very early after our landing, we had sent out scouts to gather and bring back whatever grain, roots, berries and fruits of all kinds that could be found. Grain we found, but it was wild grain, as plainly the Earthlings had no idea of growing crops or cultivating the earth in any way. We found later on that they lived in the most disgusting fashion, eating snakes and rats and lizards and any animals small enough to trap and kill; and even, at times, each other, terrible as this sounds! Though members of the same tribe or community would not kill or eat each other, if there were a quarrel with another tribe and killing took place, which often happened, they would eat those they fought against. They also ate roots and the young leaves of plants, and of course any fruit they could find; so it was plain that one of the first things we had to do would be to teach the Earthlings to grow food instead of grubbing for it and eating each other!

These two fruits, the date and the coconut, were the best we had found as yet—the latter especially, as we had found that when cut young it contained a delicious milky essence that was good to drink, as well as the toothsome, crisp white nut meat that lined it. The shell was hard to break; but as a rule I broke it in the early dawn before we set out on our journey, and one day Zenobia and I were eating and enjoying it as we talked when lo, a litte below us, on the margin of a small stream, we saw our first Earthling!

It climbed out of the water and shook itself, and we gaped, for it was plainly a small child, though as unattractive in appearance as we had always been told. The tallest Earthling male, we found, was no more than four feet high, the women less, and this child was, I imagine, about four or five years old and barely two feet in height. He was a sort of oily

brownish green in colour, rather like the colouring of a young toad, and young as he was, he was hairy. The hair of his bullet head was black and tousled, there was a sprinkling of hair already on his chest and forearms and a thick stripe of hair ran down his spine, to end in a stumpy tail—yes, those early men had tails, and if you scoff, ask your doctor if the coccyx bone which ends your spinal column is not the remnant of a tail?

His face was flat and ugly with receding chin and forehead, his legs short and bowed beneath a potbellied torso—but there was strength in those small twisted hands, as we could see as he pulled himself up from the water by seizing the branches of an overhanging bush. He did not see us, and we remained utterly quiet until Zenobia, laying half of her honey-smeared cake upon the twigs of a long branch that lay upon the ground close to her, pushed it gently in the direction of the child. Its gaze was directed to the further side of the stream as she did so, but when he turned he saw the white cake, pounced upon it and bit into it with his strong white teeth that were the only attractive feature the Earthlings possessed. At the taste of the sweet honey his face broadened into a grin of delight, and he sat for several minutes cramming his large mouth with the cake; when it was finished he turned to see if he could find some more—and he saw us! At first he stiffened sharply with fright, and we feared he might turn and bolt—but Zenobia had prepared for this, and was holding out another piece of honey-smeared cake. His eyes fastened greedily upon this as she spoke, in that velvety soft voice that could, as your saying is, have lured a bird from a tree.

“Come dear,” she said, “don’t fear us! We are your friends—come, take this cake. It is for you.” Cautiously the child approached, and just then I caught a sharp movement amongst the branches of a bush on the far side of the stream. The movement ceased as I stared, but I had seen the cause of it—a ragged black head hidden behind the bush, and I was sure that this was the mother of the child, come to find it! My heart rose high. If we could only make friends with this

child and its mother we would have made a start at least amongst the Earthlings . . . and it was just then that the tragedy very nearly happened. An evil green head peered from a pile of leaves close to my feet, obviously preparing for a dart at the child's heel—a snake! Of what venomous kind I had no idea, but I knew enough already to know that this new world to which we had to come was overfull of every sort of dangerous creature! Neither the child saw it, or Zenobia, for she was looking at the child who, with its narrow eyes set under overhanging brows, was eyeing her cautiously as slowly he approached—but mercifully, I saw it, and with one quick sweep of the hand, in which I was still holding the broken half of the coconut I had been eating, I struck the wicked thing across the back just behind the head and killed it. The hard sharp edge of the coconut shell broke its spine, it lay writhing for a moment and then died—and we heard a wild splashing in the stream as the child's mother, flinging herself into the water, thrashed her way across to us and fell at our feet. She had seen it all, and was prepared to worship and adore us for saving her child—and within a few moments, it seemed, she was sitting hugging her child to her breast, eating a piece of the honey-smeared cake that had first allured the child, and eyeing me and then Zenobia with great eyes, humble and wondering, but thank the gods, no longer alarmed!

She was fully as ugly as her child, if not uglier—stocky, short, bowlegged and hairy very nearly all over—and of the same ugly greenish-brown colouring as the child—but we knew that it was of the utmost importance that she regarded us as friends, for we hoped through her we might be able to persuade her fellow creatures, the other Earthlings, that we were not to be feared—and indeed, that was what happened. When at last we rose to go on our way, she grovelled before us and plainly tried to express her thanks, though in truth the Earthlings could scarcely be said to speak. Their speech was a series of gurgling, spluttering, guttural sounds more like an animal than a human speaking—and in truth they were not as yet

human, only potentially so; so speech was again one of the thousand and one things that we Martians had somehow, though how, we did not know, to teach these curious and pathetic children of God.

As the two strange creatures vanished amongst the trees I said grimly to Zenobia, "Well, thanks to you, we have made a start! But how, when they can't even talk, are we to teach them anything?"

6

We Make Progress

WHEN we got back to our ship we related our adventure with great excitement, and our companions were delighted and congratulated us with all their hearts. So also did the Great Ones, who, after sending their usual mental message to Zenobia to summon us together, came to congratulate us that very night at a special meeting arranged in the centre of the clearing where lay our ships. These, which were five in number lay in a rough ring leaving a wide empty space in the middle; and fortunately the climate, on the part of Terra, at least where we had landed, was warm and equable for most of the year, so that meetings in the open air were easy to plan.

In the centre of the group of ships was set the precious golden brazier that we had brought with us from Mars, and we Seven sat around it, seated on folding seats brought out of the ships while the others crowded round in a great ring, waiting and holding their breaths with excitement and expectation—for many wondered whether it would be possible, in these new and strange conditions, for the Great Ones to come and speak to us. But lo, they came—and not only to speak, but to be seen! The ancient King showed himself first, hovering in the cloud of fragrant vapour that ascended from the burning incense in the brazier; and after a moment or two his two companions, the man, and the

woman in blue, and they smiled upon us and told us how pleased they were that all was going well. A circumstance would soon arise (said the King) that would help to consolidate and extend the friendly link we had already made with the Earthlings; and so indeed it turned out, though by a happy accident rather than by any intention of ours.

Naturally, after the successful contact we had made with the Earthlings mother and child, we frequently visited the place where we had met them; and sure enough, after one or two fruitless visits, we saw the woman and child again; though to us who knew the tall slender beauty and fair colouring of our women, she scarcely seemed a woman at all! And with them came, slowly and shambling and plainly afraid, two shapes that were male, although they were so shaggy with hair that at first sight it was hard to tell whether they were men or animals.

These hung back until they saw the woman and child approach us, and take from our hands the honeyed cake, and begin to eat it—we had, of course, come provided with a good supply of this, seeing how excellent a bait it was—and after a while they ventured to come closer and even accept a fragment of cake; with this their confidence was gained, and after that they approached us freely and brought day by day more of their fellows with them.

Seeing how much they loved the sweetness of the honey, Zenobia, when next our bees swarmed, released them and placed their hives, which we had brought with us, outside our ships; and the bees settled down at once and set to work collecting honey from the many varied sorts of flowers that they found. And indeed, though Terra was utterly different from our homeland Mars, once our eyes had grown accustomed to the universal green, we found it restful, and the flowers even beautiful.

With the burning of the forests that had covered so much of the country round, naturally many of these had perished, of course; but there were plenty of blossoms still to be found amongst the shrubs and trees that still remained in the Delta,

in the valley below, and along the shores of the river—and even on the river itself. For in the quiet reaches and creeks here and there grew various water-flowers, especially one of blue that Zenobia called the lotus; and this, many years later was to be regarded as a sacred flower and to be incorporated in the Egyptian system of worship.

So drawn at first by the lure of the honey, but afterwards by curiosity mingled with awe and not a little fear, these curious beings, the Earthlings, came to us one by one; but our great effect was made one day some time later, just when we were beginning to grumble at the slow progress that we were making.

The fires that had denuded the wide plain of its forested covering had, of course, killed off many of the monstrous creatures that had haunted it; but a few had made their escape, as had most of the Earthlings, to the borders of the river and the swamps that lay about its mouth; and one day we, Zenobia and I, were sitting beside a wide stream in the shade of a giant treefern talking, or rather trying to talk, to a group of Earthlings, when we heard a mighty crashing in the undergrowth and the Earthlings started up in terror, for it was plain that something they dreaded was approaching. And indeed, as we saw it, we realized how right they were to be afraid!

A giant monster was crashing its way through the juicy green undergrowth of the swampy land on which we stood—a huge lizard-like creature with short forearms that were nevertheless armed with formidable clawed “hands”; a stout scaled body ending in a long tail, that was balanced on great thighs and clawed feet; and above all, a small head with a jutting snout furnished with huge jaws and lance-like teeth*, ready to rend and tear without pity—which, alas, we had already seen in one or two fights that we had witnessed between two of these monsters! With guttural cries of terror

*The creature sounds like a *Tyrannosaurus*, the most formidable of the giant reptiles of the Age of Monsters; this because of Teraon's description of its teeth. Monstrous as they were, most of the prehistoric reptiles were vegetarians. (See Appendix 2).

the Earthlings fled in all directions, and for a brief moment I felt fear myself—for no such monstrous creature had ever been seen on Mars! But then I remembered that I had with me what I hoped would prove a weapon. It was what on Mars we called a "flare-gun"—a small metal instrument rather like your revolver to look at, but used on Mars in cutting out the hard stone from our quarries; it sent forth a powerful ray instead of a bullet. Ever since we had landed I had carried one of these with me, slipped into a leather sheath along with the pouch that I always had slung from my girdle. Many of our younger men carried them also, as we had no weapons to speak of beyond the knives necessary to cut up our food. Though there were plentiful things on Mars like knives, hatchets, saws, daggers and such, these were only needed for our various kinds of manual work, carving, carpentry and so on; they were never used except by those engaged on this work, never, I mean, as weapons—for indeed, until the desperate trouble broke out between Trant and Hurex, there was no need on Mars for any weapon at all!

But now, as I saw this awful creature, I snatched my "gun" from its sheath and fired it directly into the face of the monster, so that its strong beam shone right into the creature's eyes as it reared its vast height above us. Zenobia stood straight beside me, motionless, for she would not leave me, and even as I fired I wondered at her courage, for indeed, the monster was a fearsome sight—and then the miracle happened! The ray that shot forth from the flare-gun was of a kind that was not known on earth—piercingly strong and able to cut through solid stone or even metal, and even on Mars those who worked with these instruments had to wear protective glasses. Shining direct into the horrible green eyes of the rearing monster, it burnt those eyes right out, and it fell, splash, into the stream nearby, roaring with pain and fright! As it lay blinded and helpless, thrashing about madly with its clawed feet, several of the Earthlings rushed forward, and with a courage that I could not but admire, leaped upon the gigantic body and despatched it by stabbing it in

the soft underparts of the belly and breast with their sharp knives and spears, made of a hard stone called, I think, obsidian.

It was a horrible sight, and more horrible still was to see the Earthlings, even before the creature was dead, begin to tear out chunks of its flesh and eat them raw, even the children coming eagerly to lap the monster's blood! The sight was more than we could endure; and so, though we knew that this adventure would establish us not only as friends with the Earthlings, but as helpers who had assisted them in finding a supply of meat, Zenobia and I were depressed as we went back to our clearing. For remember that to us the eating of flesh was anathema, and the very thought made us feel sick. More and more we realized that it would take us a very long time to teach these backward children of God the right ways of living. Why, we could not as yet even speak to them, though a whole group of our experts, teachers, and professors and others experienced in the science of language, had been, ever since we landed and made contact with these strange little people, trying in vain to grasp the language in which they talked.

Yet somehow it happened. Bit by bit our experts managed to understand the conglomeration of clicks, snarls, splutterings and other uncouth sounds that made up the language (if one could call it that) of the Earthlings: and as they became more and more used to us, we began to understand what they were trying to say. Now that they realized that we were their friends and willing to use what naturally they regarded as magic to help them, they came in throngs to hover about our clearing, to stare in amazement at our ships, and above all, to watch and worship us—for indeed, they thought of us as gods; and I suppose it was not wonderful that they should do this.

We were tall and fair while they were squat and brutish—we could speak and sing in clear voices while they could only grunt and gibber—we wore clothes while they were naked

but for the thick hair that was their only covering. I heard that for part of the year on Terra, in special parts of it that is, the climate grew colder and that then they would don the skins of slaughtered animals to keep them warm; though to us this was almost as horrible as eating the flesh of animals! We could "walk on the air," as they described it later—and we could live without eating, for they did not regard the eating of fruit or nuts or vegetables as real food at all. To them, only some sort of animal flesh was really food. But somehow as time went on we managed to grow to understand these strange people, and to find that, carefully trained, they could be of much use to us. The men in especial were amazingly strong, small as they were; and when they found that they could serve us by helping in the clearing of the ground, in digging, which they did with sharp-pointed sticks, in the felling and hauling of trees to make the huts that we had decided to build, they were delighted, and went to work with a will.

After much discussion we had decided that while we would, of course, maintain our ships in case of need, it would be better and easier for us, less cramped, did we live on the ground, in the clearing; by this time we were all so thoroughly accustomed to the atmosphere of the Earth that we could breathe without any distress at all. So bit by bit, small but well-built wooden houses or huts sprang up in the clearing, and these were soon furnished, partly with furnishings taken out of the ships and partly with things made by our Earthlings under our instructions. Childish as they were in many ways, we soon found that they were not lacking in a certain intelligence, and once instructed, could be trusted to carry out instructions to the letter. So when they had grown expert in the building of our little houses, Zenobia told them that they should build a house for God. The great God, the chief of all gods, she explained—for remember, they still persisted in thinking that we Martians were gods. So the idea of there being a greater God still, one that they could not see, took a great deal of explaining. But whether they really understood or not, they

obeyed and set to work to make the "god-house" as they called our little Temple.

Zenobia meant to make a Temple as nearly like our beloved Great Temple as could be; and in the end, primitive as it was, there was a sufficient "echo", so to speak, about it as to bring a pang of nostalgia to our hearts as we assembled there for our first Service under shelter. For of course, until now our weekly Service of Worship had had to be held in the open in the middle of the clearing.

The wooden Temple was built, like the old, in a cone shape, and in the middle seven slender tree-trunks, set about the golden brazier in the middle of the floor of beaten earth, rose to the apex with, placed at the foot of each, a seat for each member of the Seven. On the wooden walls we had hung our loveliest paintings, embroideries and other things taken from the ships; and all around, on benches fashioned by the Earthlings, were gathered the rest of us emigrants, exiles from our beloved country. And when as we chanted the Chant of Invocation, we saw, high up in the apex of the cone, the pale glimmer of the God Light come again, our hearts rose high with thankfulness, and we knew that far as we were from our home, we were still in touch with the gods we knew.

That, then, was the beginning—and a good beginning it was, as we were told by the Great Ones at that first and most memorable service in our little wooden "god-house" in the wilderness. And now I am going to skip forward many years in time, as I have much to tell and cannot spend too much time over any one period of this our sojourn on Earth.

As time went on we grew more and more accustomed to those strange Earthlings and they to us; and though it seemed slow going to us, bit by bit we managed to begin, at least, to train them in the direction we wanted them to go.

We were heartened by seeing here and there, shining out amongst the pure animalism that was their main feature, sparks that encouraged us, showing us, as they did, that

despite everything, the flame that was the Divine was there somewhere in them. For instance, some of them plainly loved each other and showed it after a simple, animal fashion; they adored their children, and now and then one of them would give up something he wanted to give it to a child or to his mate. They cared for their wounded, after the fierce battles that occasionally arose between different groups or "clans"; and so, even when we were most depressed, we would remind ourselves that *somewhere* within them there was that spark that must be fanned into flame, and we would apply ourselves to our tasks with renewed vigour.

We found it quite impossible to turn them from eating flesh to the eating of fruits and vegetables; and indeed, it would have been difficult to do this, as they had no knowledge of agriculture, and what remained of the forestland was not productive of much in the way of vegetable food, with the exception of some few fruits and nuts such as I have already mentioned. But we managed to tame a few jungle fowl, and we made the Earthlings build these a large pen or aviary where they could be kept from flying away; and these provided eggs, which we found the Earthlings already knew and liked. Knowing this, we had to warn them that any attempt to steal either eggs or hens would be met with our severe displeasure; and as they remembered the death of the monster from the flare-gun, they paid due heed to our warning. As time went on we managed to instil some ideas about growing things, roots, vegetables, corn and so on into their heads, and were able to get the men to dig and clear several patches of ground; though that was all they would do. They left the women to do the planting, weeding and so on, thinking it unmanly; and indeed, this feeling and this system still prevails in many savage tribes in your world today.

Meantime, many of the younger members of our little community of Martians ranged far and wide over the country, and one day a group of young men came back to us with very exciting news. They had discovered a range of hills far up the great river, and these hills were made of stone much like the

stone we had known on Mars, though lacking its vivid and varied colour.

Zenobia's eyes grew wide and bright as she listened. This was wonderful news, she agreed, and gave us an opening for many grand plans for the future. Stone could be cut from these mountains and either dragged overland on wooden sledges by the strong Earthlings to where it was needed or else floated down the river on rafts, which we could show the Earthlings how to build, and in time our wooden Temple could be replaced by a stone one, as in Atlantis!

Other explorers told us that they had found not only gold, copper and other metals, but rough jewelstones in the rivers and amongst the hills whence the great river Nile rose; and this news cheered us immensely, as it gave promise of finding occupation for those amongst us who were craftsmen in this kind of work, and sorely bored without it. Also it meant that the Temple, when at last we could build it in stone, could in time boast the beauties of jewelled and metal-work decoration that we had had on our beloved Mars; and great was our rejoicing when some of these valiant explorers actually brought back with them chunks of raw gold and other metals, together with a collection of dull-looking lumps of translucent stuff that could be in time, we knew, cut and polished so that the true beauty of the jewels hidden within the dull-looking stone could be brought out. Further, some sort of plant was found to produce a kind of fibre that after long beating and soaking in water, could be used for weaving; and our women rejoiced, and set to work at once on making as much wearable material as they could out of it. Eager to emulate our women, the Earthling females clamoured to be taught this new art, and clumsy as were their thick fingers compared with ours, they succeeded in a surprisingly short time in learning to weave after a fashion. Certainly the stuffs made out of this plant-fibre were coarse and harsh enough, to be sure, compared with the soft and delicate stuffs that were made on Mars; but it was still a beginning, and we all rejoiced at this.

So one way and another life went on, and our settlement,

which we called Khem, extended as our work amongst the Earthlings extended; until one night an order came from the Great Ones that startled and dismayed us beyond words. What this was I will explain in the next chapter of this chronicle.

7

The Making of Man

Now this, the gradual but successful approach to the Earthlings, of course took up much time, and progress was slow, although, since we Martians lived so much longer than your people of Terra, this might not have seemed slow to you. But we were eager to try and instil something of real humanity into these animal-like creatures; and when at last, in a private session with the Great Ones in our Temple, we were told what we must do to hasten this process, at first we were truly appalled!

We were told that in order to induce a higher form of development in these creatures, we must ourselves, psychically, though not of course physically, take some share in their mating, so that a certain amount of the spiritual qualities that belonged to us Martians, who were so infinitely further advanced than these poor creatures, might be infused into them. We were thankful that it was only the males amongst us who would be asked to perform this supremely distasteful task; but even thus, at first, although of course we dared not argue or question the Great Ones who had given us these orders, there was much agitated discussion amongst us later on, and for days and days the argument continued. You see, we had never before, until our arrival on Terra, witnessed the physical mating of animals. With the exception of our little friends the lemmings, there were no animals on Mars, and

our mating was a thing so delicate and beautiful that in comparison, the crude physical mating of the Earthlings offended and shocked us beyond words.

You see, the bodies that we Martians wore were composed of such ethereal elements that when two lovers came together, in a supreme passion and ecstasy of which you Earth people can never dream, the two bodies, in the nuptial embrace, literally melted into each other and became one—from which fact is derived the words “and the twain shall be one flesh.” In Mars, in marriage, this was literally true; and as you know, we were “born mated”, so such things as infidelity, using sex for mere amusement and so on, were simply not known. So the idea of having to enter unseen the aura of the male Earthling when he was about to embrace his chosen mate was so utterly repugnant to us that had we dared, we would have refused—but we did not dare.

This was our main task on Terra, our new home. We *had* to teach and train up these crude, apelike creatures into true manhood; and since the Great Ones had said there was no way but one to do this, and that was to infuse into them at least a portion of the spiritual qualities that we Martians possessed—well, we set our teeth and realized that we could not shirk our duty. But our women suffered as much as we did. Many of them felt that for their beloved mates to have to approach close to one of those disgusting creatures, and in the mating embrace too, was both hurtful and offensive, and they felt it a spiritual as well as a physical defilement; and it took another and very important session with the Great Ones before their fears and their distaste could be soothed—and in this my beloved Zenobia played a large part. She knew that it would be for me, as one of the Elder Ministers, one of the Seven, to take the lead in this matter so that the younger men would not hang back, but must follow suit; so hiding her own distaste at the idea, she talked seriously to the women, showing them that it was their solemn duty to accept this sacrifice on the part of their men, who disliked it as much as themselves—and at last they gave in.

It was plainly the duty of the four of us, the men of the Council of Seven, I, Teraon, Jeroam, Derek and Huran, to lead the way; and we were heartened, the night before the first of this great experiment, by a special message brought over the ether from our old leader Algon, who was watching from his new home on Jupiter, and sending us his prayers and his thoughts to strengthen us in our ordeal. We four knew that once we had set the example we could depend on the younger men to follow suit; though it was with heavy hearts that the destined hour approached, yet we should, I think, have known better than to be so much afraid—for our wonderful friends among the Great Ones saw to it, as I will tell you, that all passed off a thousand times better than we had dared to hope.

On the night set for the first great experiment, we four, together with our women mates, were gathered together for supper around a table set out in the clearing before the group of wooden houses that were now our homes; and the women, in a vain but kindly effort to cheer our downcast spirits, had set out quite a feast.

Since our landing on Terra we had been given instructions to modify our diet somewhat, as it was essential that our light bodies became more substantial than they were by nature, so as to withstand the heavier pressure of air around us; and though we were never, thank the gods, asked to try and eat flesh foods, which would have nauseated us beyond endurance, we were told to eat eggs and to drink the milk of such animals as produced this. Now despite the alarming presence of the giant reptiles, there existed quite a number of small mammals, and among them was the ancestor (then only about the size of your pigs) of your cow, which gave good milk; and we were told how to obtain this. These animals, like all the smaller creatures, would not come near the Earthlings for fear of being caught and eaten. But they did not fear us, since we knew how to diffuse an atmosphere of peace and confidence when we approached them; and when we told our Earthlings that on no account were they to kill any of these particular animals,

who were our particular charge, we knew that since they regarded us as gods they would not dare to disobey.

So that night we four drank our milk and ate our eggs and a sort of cheese that our women had learnt to make, with fruit and nuts and mealcakes with honey, and tried to behave normally to each other; though we were all dreading the moment when we men would have to leave and go down to the belt of forestland in the Delta where our chosen partners—if you could call them that!—awaited us. Then suddenly Zenobia spoke, and she was smiling happily.

"I have something to tell you, my brothers, that will greatly lighten your hearts," she said. She looked round the table at the eager faces turned towards her and continued. "You know how often our blessed brothers on the Other Side communicate with me in sleep, and last night I had a dream, and in it I was told what we must do. After our meal here, each of of you men must go back to your home, lie down and go to sleep—and while your body lies drowned in sleep, your second self will slip out and enter the aura of the Earthling male, who is unconsciously awaiting you, and remain within his aura until the mating is over. Then your second self will slip out of his aura and return to you, and you will awake. But you, your conscious self, will have nothing at all to do with all this. You will know that it has happened only when you see the physical results upon the next child that is born to the chosen Earthlings—the child who is to receive the blessing of impregnation, not only by its Earthly father, the Earthling, but by you, its spiritual father! And all will be well. . . ."

Now I know that certain of you, backward as you are in your knowledge of psychic matters, do know that man does not consist of one body only, the physical, but of three, the physical, the astral (or the etheric, as it is sometimes called) and the purely spiritual; and it was, of course, in the second body, the astral body, that we four fulfilled our duties and obeyed the law that night. When we awoke we had no memory, no knowledge of what had happened and what we

had done or how, and we were more than thankful for this; and when the younger men realized that the distasteful task laid upon them could be done without their being conscious of it, they were willing to follow the example set by the four of us from the Council. And so the seeds of true manhood were sown in the bodies of the animal creatures that we called Earthlings. . . .

In those early days on Earth, women bore children far more often than they do today, and bore more at a birth, so that twins, triplets and sometimes even more were common; and as we went about our tasks in our settlement, we could not help looking forward with an eager curiosity to the day when the first Earthchild who had inherited not only the animal blood of his parents, but the spiritual spark from one of us Martians, would be born. Would he look different, or would he be simply another shambling clumsy, ugly little creature, oily-skinned and hairy?

Speculations of all sorts occupied our minds—and tongues—as we went about our business; and those days we were indeed busy! Now that stone had been found far up the Nile, we realized that our dream of replacing our wooden Temple for a more solid one might possibly come true. So we taught the Earthlings—who were strong, as I have told you, far beyond what one could have thought from their small size—to fell trees from the stretches of woodland far up the river that had luckily escaped the fires that had devastated the central part of the land, and make these into strong rafts on which the blocks of stone that we, with our flare-guns, cut out from the sides of the mountains, could be floated down the river to the Delta, and then drawn on sledges to the site we had chosen for the new Temple.

This stood high on the edge of the Desert, so that the Temple would dominate the whole landscape, and it would, of course, be cone-shaped, as on our beloved Mars; but within, it would be planned differently, the Great Ones said, and before we built anything else we were to build a series of strong stonebuilt rooms, with steps and corridors connecting

them, in which the treasures we had brought in our ships from Mars could be stored in safety; for stout as were our ships and carefully as we looked after them, they could not last for ever. Moreover, our Brothers on the Other Side said we would need our ships later for travelling about the Earth to find a permanent home—for Khem, they said, was only a settlement in which to start the great experiment, not a permanent home.

We were a little sad to hear this, as by this time we had grown attached to our simple wooden huts and our little Temple. But we knew, of course, that there would be no gain-saying the orders from Above; and when we had a sufficient supply of stone we started with good hearts on the building of the maze of chambers, corridors and so on that were to contain our treasures—and besides that, to contain the entire story of our departure from Mars, and our final arrival upon Terra. This was to be engraved on tablets of stone and of metal, and the engravers set eagerly to work while we delved deep into the sandy earth to make a foundation for the giant blocks of stone now floating to us by raft down the Nile, or hauled to us by the strong Earthlings, who were only too eager to join us, feeling it an honour to work with their gods.

Our architects and draughtsmen, masons and carpenters, were constantly at work, while the gold and silver and precious stones that we had found were being worked upon by our specialists in jewel-work, hammering and engraving; and as the walls arose of the maze of rooms that were ultimately to lie under the Temple that became the Pyramid, all were busy and happy. Metal-workers, gemsmiths, gold and silversmiths sang as they worked, for all were bent on making our new Temple as beautiful as our old; the weavers worked at their looms, making hangings and carpets, as well as garments for us all, since by this time, despite the reserve stock we had brought with us, we needed new clothes and cloaks in particular, against the rainy season that arrived once a year and hindered our outdoor work, greatly to our vexation. But by this time much of the base of the Temple was built and roofed

temporarily with leaves and reeds plaited together; and under this shelter our artists painted pictures to adorn the new Temple, women workers had to embroider the lengths of the material made by the weavers, and sculptors carved wonderful figures, busts and reliefs from the fine pieces of diorite or marble that we had found—alas, that you cannot see any of these marvels. Yes, many of them still exist, hidden in the store-rooms that we built in those early days; but they are buried deep down below the sand that has buried so much of the ancient land, now Egypt, that was our first home on Terra. The level of the land has risen by many feet since then, and only the upper part of the vast monument that we built still remains standing up above the sea of sand about it; and discussion, controversy, argument, rage perpetually throughout the world over these magnificent stone-built peaks that you call the Pyramids. Tombs, say you? Never!

Though in later days they were sometimes used as tombs by one or two of the Pharaohs who wished to borrow some of the glory of the unknown ancestors who had built them, that was not the purpose for which they were built—and one Pharaoh, Cheops, had the temerity to claim that he built that Pyramid which bears his name! But he did not build it. A few of the later Pyramids, especially those called the Stepped Pyramids, were built by Earthmen, our descendants. But the true and most ancient Pyramid, that known as the Great Pyramid, was built by us, and it was used for sacred purposes such as initiation chambers, sanctuaries, priests' rooms, store-rooms for the holy things, robes, jewels, instruments used in our worship; while beneath, as I have said, lies a veritable labyrinth of stone wherein are stored endless treasures of carved wood and stone, furniture, garments, plate and the tablets of metal and stone on which are inscribed the whole story of our life on Mars, the reason why we had to leave it, our landing on Terra and our dealings with the Earthlings, and endless other things; though whether, in the fullness of time, you men of Earth will ever find them, I do not know. If you do, you would never understand the language in which

we engraved our story—but that lies on the knees of the gods who will decide in the future.

And so we worked and waited and hoped—and some months later a young man who had been down to the Delta to collect a supply of the fruit that was the forerunner of that fruit you now call dates, came running into the clearing in great excitement. The first child had been born!

8

The First Children

IT was not easy to find the women when they were to give birth, as when the pains of labour came upon them, they hid themselves behind bushes or in caves, or anywhere where the birth might take place quietly and alone, as many of your animals still do today. Though I speak wrongly when I speak of the "pains of childbirth", for indeed, the Earthling women bore their babies as easily as do most animals, with the minimum of pain; and were up and about suckling the newborn within a matter of hours after its birth. But we had commissioned certain of our younger men to act as scouts, knowing that they could do this in safety and easily, thanks to their power of levitation, which would make it possible for them to follow the Earthlings silently and unseen unless those odd beings happened to raise their eyes and see them. Which rarely happened, as they tended to keep their eyes directed downwards, which was partly due to their physical formation, which tended to keep the head poked forward, and somewhat down; except when they heard a noise above them and looked up to see if this portended danger.

Unhappily we found that this gift of levitation was not among those Martian traits that we managed to hand on to the newly-born creatures who, were, in effect, partially at least, our offspring.

So, following the lead of our young scouts, we four men

and our companion women went down to the tangled forest-land that still lay along the borders of the Nile, in the Delta and down the wide green slopes to the valley that one day, many aeons ahead, was to become the Mediterranean Sea; and at last Zenobia and I found ourselves gazing down at the first child formed by the fusion of ape-man and Martian.

Would there, we had wondered, be a difference in the children of this strange double fathering? Yes, indeed there was! Young as was the little creature folded within the arms of its Earthling mother, one could see at once that it was taller, more long-limbed, paler in colour and less hairy than the babies usually born to the Earthlings—and it was the same with all the others. There were more babies than we had expected. As I have told you, in those days the Earthling women frequently bore several at a birth, as they were closer in type to animal than to men; and as animals bear several at birth, so did many of these ape-women. Two had triplets and one twins, and actually, the child that Zenobia and I had first seen happened to be the only single birth amongst the four.

Moreover, the children of these people grew to maturity very quickly and were ready and eager for mating at the age of twelve or thirteen, sometimes even younger; which meant, we could see, that our "descendants", developing more and more towards true humanity in each succeeding generation, would come forward far more quickly than we had dared hope! Realizing this, also that they could play their distasteful rôle in the fathering of these new creatures without sensing their actual participation in it, plenty of our younger men now accepted that it was their duty to do this; with the result that as time went on there grew up amongst the ape-like Earthlings a new and different type of being which was the wonder and admiration of their earthly parents.

In those days, again like many animals, women could conceive and give birth far faster than they do nowadays; and as we Martians, guiding and controlling the hordes of Earth-

ling workers as they toiled with us at the building of the immense stone structure that in ages yet to come would be called the Great Pyramid, watched the growth and development of this new breed of creature, we felt within ourselves a warm sense of satisfaction, knowing that we were indeed fulfilling the heavy task that had been laid upon us. The development of the Earthling race from near-animals to full manhood.

When we had first set eyes on those shambling, hairy, stunted little creatures, it had been hard to believe that anything in the world could make them into anything really human; and yet, already our initial efforts had proved that it might, in the fullness of time, be possible. So with hearts eager and hopeful we worked on, living now, in the rainy weather that we discovered came once a year, in the maze of stone-built rooms that was the foundation of what was to be the Pyramid; those rooms that were still without roofs were covered with thatched roofs of plaited reeds or rushes made by the Earthlings, who made this sort of shelter for themselves against the rains, and in the warm weather, which prevailed for the most part, we lived in our wooden houses or in tents pitched in or near the clearing. Mindful of the horrible experience of Zenobia and myself, we were careful not to settle anywhere too far from help, and as a matter of course now we men always carried one of our flare-guns that had proved themselves such valuable assets. But, in point of fact, we rarely saw one of the monsters, except now and then a pterodactyl winging its way overhead; already, I think, the great reptiles were dying out.

We did not lack advice and encouragement from the Hierarchy, for they were in touch with us very often. When we held our Services in our Temple, to which we still clung, though we were now busy building and decorating a larger and more beautiful one in the stone labyrinth that was the foundation of the Great Pyramid. Then our Great Ones would come and speak to us as of old on Mars, and sometimes they would appear in person, especially the ancient King, who

seemed to have us in his special care; and they would bless and encourage us, and tell us to keep on with the good work, for all was going well.

We had by this time grown quite accustomed to life on our new home, Terra, and having now become familiar with the so-called language spoken by the strange creatures with whom we had come to live, we had managed to teach them many things. Like the apes, to whom they were so nearly related, they were extremely imitative, and once shown how to do a thing, rarely needed showing twice.

In many of the clearings that we had made in what remained of the forest, and on stretches of sandy earth that we had made fertile once more by constant watering, now grew crops of grain, root-vegetables and many other things; though we did not trouble with fruit, for we had found so many eatable fruits growing wild that it was not worth the trouble of trying to cultivate them. But grain we needed indeed, and we soon found that the wild grain that grew so freely could be cultivated and gathered and made into meal that, if not like the delicious stuff we were used to on Mars, was at least eatable; so one of our basic needs was, thank the gods, quickly supplied. We had plenty of our delicious honey, we could get what milk we liked from the strange little water-buffaloes, and the birds came readily to our hands and gave us their eggs. Those we were allowed to eat, since in them the lifespark was dormant, and not living, as it was in the bird itself. At first it was difficult to get the Earthlings to understand that they must not steal these eggs, nor our meal, nor the honey they loved, nor kill our little buffaloes for their food; but after a while we succeeded. Certain things, we told them, were sacred to the gods (which meant ourselves) and so must not be touched; the eggs of some of the birds they might take, but not those of others, and we named the particular birds that were sacred and so must be left alone; and as for the honey, by this time many swarms of our bees had left us and founded new homes in the trees and bushes in the forest land. So we told the Earthlings that they might take the honey from these

wild bees, if they could find them and face the stings—the stings of the bees that would undoubtedly defend their stores—but those that lived in the hives were ours alone. So all went well, and as time went on the number of children who were part-Earthling but also part-Martian greatly increased; and we watched the long-limbed, paler-skinned youngsters with pride and hope as they played with their stunted bow-legged fellows, so different from them. And all this time the building of the Pyramid went slowly but steadily on and our lives with it—though by this time the life-span of more than one of us was coming to an end. And this brings me to something I must explain to you.

Long as was the life-time of a Martian, some 350 years or even more, still, the time always came when the physical body he or she was using began to wear out; and it was then that we faced death, but not death as you know it. With us, when the appointed time came, the person in question took leave of his or her family, and withdrew into a private place somewhere, sometimes a room sacred to this tremendous experience in the house of the person concerned, sometimes in a room in the Temple; but anyway, somewhere where for seven days it could lie alone and undisturbed.

Now with our delicately ethereal bodies, disintegration was comparatively easy, since the atoms that composed those bodies were so loosely linked that to separate them was a simple matter for the spirit-scientists and doctors who were assembled there whenever a death was due to take place. The person who knew he or she was to die would lie down on a soft, smooth couch strewn with flowers and leaves that had the property of inducing sleep, like the Greek plant Dikte that is still used by the peasants for that purpose. Thus they would gradually drift into sleep and so into a coma that became death; and there they would lie silent, alone, for seven whole days, but after the first day anybody looking in would say that the body had been removed—for it was no longer there! The physical body would have been disintegrated. In other words, separated into atoms, while the spirit that had

inhabited it slept quietly in the care of the guardian spirits while a new body was being prepared for it to enter.

Before going into the Great Sleep, as we always described death, the person in question would of course have been asked if, when he awoke, he wished to continue living on the planet he had left, or whether he wished to go to another, as old Algun had wished to do. Did the person wish to go to another planet, the death-room would be found empty when at last it was opened, and the new body would be prepared and waiting on the new planet. But did the person wish for a further life-span on the planet where he had died, on the seventh day, when the room was opened, those entering would see their friend lying there awake and smiling at them, young and strong and beautiful just as they had known him in his early life! He had been given a new body. . . .

So it was with us on Terra, and as time went on and the years lengthened into hundreds and again hundreds, we lived on, since we could renew our lives, and we watched the frequent deaths of the Earthlings with mingled wonder and pity, for we had never seen anything like this in our own world. We were but slightly consoled when we were told, in one of our special sessions with our beloved Guides, that when the Earth body of one of these poor ones died, it went back into the earth to which it truly belonged; but the spark of the Divine that was within it, though as yet dormant and undeveloped, was nursed and cared for on the Other Side until the time came for it to take on yet another incarnation. They told us that those young Earthlings to which we had imparted, at the moment of impregnation of the mother, something of ourselves and our higher powers, would grow and develop mentally as well as spiritually; that their children, and even more their children's children, would grow more and more away from their ape-like ancestors and more and more into true men; and they told us we should rejoice because we had done so much to help the development of these creatures towards true humanity.

Though it must not be thought that we were able to make

contact with more than a percentage of the Earthlings. Truly, as our building went on and the rising Pyramid loomed tall and magnificent against the sky, more and more Earthlings came to stare and wonder, and often some of them stayed to join the throngs of eager workers who now followed our lead and who were, with their tremendous muscular strength and endurance, invaluable helpers to us in our heavy tasks. But very many, curious as they were, feared us too much to approach closer than the bushes and undergrowth in which they could hide as they watched; but beyond those of the first tribe (for we soon found that they lived in tribes or communities, these strange folk) with whom we had succeeded in making friends, thanks to having saved the child from a snake, we could not count on more than a limited number of "converts", so to speak.

We travelled about a great deal to try and find out what sort of planet was Terra, and we used our ships for long journeys. We were at great pains to keep them in first-class condition, as our Great Ones had told us that sooner or later we should leave this our first settlement on Earth and find our permanent home elsewhere. And we had found in many places indications that these ape-like, dwarfish folk were, it seemed, the only inhabitants of Terra except for the wild animals, birds and fish and so on; and we made many efforts to become friendly with the Earthlings who lay outside the circle of those who were already our friends. Though "friends" is perhaps not quite the right word to use, as their feeling for us was one of awe and not a little fear, mingled with admiration and respect. I think that the mother of the child we had saved—she was called, as far as we could understand from their uncouth speech, En-ko—came the nearest to feeling a real affection for us and for me especially, since I had killed the snake that would have killed her child.

She would grovel on the ground when I appeared, endeavour to kiss my feet, bring me pathetic little offerings of flowers, fungi (many of which we found were good to eat) or wild honey; and it was thanks to this, plus the awe we

inspired, that enabled us gradually to wean these creatures from their most disgusting habit, that of eating each other if no better food offered. Though, even amongst such lowly creatures as these, we found there was some sort of law and order; for though, when two "clans" fought each other, they would drag away and eat any one of the opposing tribe who had been wounded or killed in battle, they only ate the bodies of their own tribes-folk who had died or been killed by accident; they would not kill one of their own "clan" deliberately for food, I mean. But as eating the flesh of their own kin under any circumstances was anathema to us, we did our best to cure them of this loathsome habit, and to a great degree succeeded, as they feared our anger.

But we had to give up any idea of trying to civilize those other Earthlings that would not approach us or let us approach them. And so, as time went on and our own tribe, so to speak, grew, generation by generation, taller and straighter, less hairy and more and more intelligent, those others withdrew deeper and deeper into their own places, and so remained the ape-folk they had been for untold centuries. And it is from those that the many thousands of apes and monkey-creatures in your world are descended.

9

Atlantis

NOW it must be understood by my readers that this story that I am telling you was spread over very many hundreds, even thousands, of your Earth years, though in the telling it has to be much condensed. I could spend many hours in telling you details of our life on Terra, our adventures, which were many, in exploring the strange and wonderful, often beautiful and sometimes terrifying land in which we found ourselves—but space forbids.

You will understand that the formation of the world as you know it was by no means then as it is now. The shapes of the continents, as you know them now, were different—some of them did not even exist at all, but arose later on from the waters while some of the older lands sank below it and vanished. Many of the vast chains of mountains, for instance, had not arisen; some of what are now rolling seas were then flat green plains or waste deserts, and there were lands existent on the globe that no longer exist—and of these two of which I must tell you in particular.

The country that later we called Atlantis was a large and beautiful continent set in the middle of what is now called the Atlantic Ocean—strange echo of its name!—and there was another great space of land set in the Pacific Ocean which later we called Lemuria. Travelling in our space ships which were still, thanks to the constant care of our mechanics and

engineers, sound and usable, we had visited, along with many other lands, both these countries, and had especially admired Atlantis, which was wonderfully wooded and boasted several great groups of magnificent mountains set back not far from the coastline. So that we were scarcely surprised when one night at our Service of Worship, the Great Ones spoke and told us that the continent we had liked so much was to be our future home.

As soon as possible we were to set forth for Atlantis! They gave us this name for it, and that has gone down to history, sometimes as fact, sometimes as mere legend; but it has never faded out entirely. We were to leave, in charge of our first home, the settlement in Khem, now your Egypt, certain chosen Martians, with their women "halves," to finish the building of the Great Pyramid, now nearing completion, and to consolidate and govern the settlement, which we should revisit from time to time. Khem was to be our first colony, the first of many others on Terra, and in time would become one of the greatest civilizations the world had ever known—all of which, as you know, came true. Those of us who remained there would continue to teach and train the Earthlings, though some of these, the most mentally advanced, we were to take to Atlantis with us. The Earthlings varied very much, we found, as their numbers increased and we were able to judge them individually.

This we did not wonder at. All things vary in their development, from plants to mankind, and some will "come on" very quickly, others are slower but perhaps more thorough; while some are so painfully slow that at times one wonders whether any improvement at all is to be looked for! But improve they did and by now, instead of the old crowd of dwarfish, yellow-skinned crook-legged animal creatures about us, who chattered and mumbled as animals do, instead of talking, we had many hundreds, even thousands, of straight-standing creatures about us who were very different from their forebears. They were far taller and less hairy, with eyes wide and well-opened, not squinty, slanted eyes under beetle brows, with muscles just as

strong and, thank the gods, able to speak with us! For the new race that was so rapidly emerging from its old condition of pure beasthood, could now speak comparatively clearly; and somehow (though do not ask me how!) some definite language had emerged, thanks to the tireless efforts of the scholars and teachers who had worked with them from the beginning. Naturally, now we could all speak this uncouth tongue; and as here and there an unusually intelligent Earthling could be heard trying hard to mouth a word or two of the Martian language that of course we used amongst ourselves, we were not without hopes that a time might come when our two races, so dramatically different and so more-than-dramatically brought together, might truly understand each other and be able to talk as friends do who belong to the same country.

So, greatly cheered, we spread the news of our departure abroad and there was much excitement among the Earthlings as to who would be chosen to go with us and who left behind—for after the fashion of the young, all were anxious to go and see the new country. In the changing of their personal physique, there had also gone a gradual but marked change in their characters, tastes, habits and so on; so much so that the new breed of Earthlings, as time went on, withdrew increasingly from the society of their progenitors, the ape-like Earthlings. They refused to speak to these or even allow them to approach them, and although they could not entirely deny their blood with them, would declare with passion that they had nothing in common with them and would never associate with them in any way. They were pigs, beasts, animals, crawling in the dirt—while *they*, the new Earthlings, were Men!

This was inevitable, although of necessity it caused great distress amongst the female elements among the older Earthlings—as always, the love instinct was stronger amongst the women, since they were the mothers and grandmothers of these changing creatures, than amongst the men; the men took little heed of their children, being bent on hunting and feed-

ing and finding safe and comfortable places in which to live and sleep, safe from prowling wild beasts. Some of these beasts were still around. Though for long we had noticed that numbers of the dreadful reptiles that had so alarmed us at first, seemed to be lessening, or else they had decided not to show themselves as often in the past as they had been wont to do—though truth to tell, in their immenseness it would have been difficult to hide themselves very easily! Even in the depths of the forests that clothed so much of the valley in Khem and the slopes that led down into it, the shaking of the treetops would have given warning of their approach as they crashed their way along. Actually, I realize now that slowly but inevitably, all over the then world, these horrible armoured monsters were dying out, and soon all that would be left of them would be their skeletons or scattered bones that, many thousands of years later, would be found by man and fill him with wonder at the dread creatures that once walked the Earth.

With the gradual fading out or withdrawal of the monsters the smaller creatures that had existed alongside them became not only far bolder and more venturesome, but also larger in size. Originally only the size of your sheep, for instance, we soon saw that the little water buffaloes from which we drew our milk were growing larger and stronger with every generation; and there were times when I wondered whether it might be possible that our impregnation of the Earthling women, purely spiritual as it was, might not have made, in some occult way, an effect on the whole animal world as well? To that question I have never had a complete answer, but the vague possibility still hangs in my mind. But to my tale.

So we commenced our arduous task of preparing to seek Atlantis, our new and, we hoped, permanent home. We knew that it would take several journeys to carry all our treasures, as well as ourselves and as many of the new Earthlings that we could cram in, to Atlantis—though according to instructions given by the Great Ones, we left, safely hidden in the depth of the labyrinth of underground rooms that now lay

beneath the rising Pyramid, most of the original treasures that we had brought from our old country, Mars. This, They said, was to be done so that some day in the very far future, Man might discover them and begin to realize how he began, and how great and wonderful was the Martian civilization that begot him. Yes, they still say that some day you will be led to dig beneath the sands that now hide the magnificent stone labyrinth that underlies the Pyramids, and will discover the treasures that we hid there. Though, as I said before, if you are to understand and translate the story that is engraved on the stones and the tablets that lie there, you will have to study and probe with endless patience, as by that time all memory of the language in which our story is written will long have vanished from the Earth.

Of course, during the many years that we had now spent on Terra, we had acquired very many new treasures made by our craftsmen, sculptors, workers in copper and wood, paint and embroidery and enamels; so it was not long before our ships were loaded with as much as they could carry, plus food and clothing, ourselves and the eager Earthlings who, had we not restrained them, would have rushed our ships and taken up every corner they could find, such was their keenness to come with us. But we soothed them by telling them we would be returning, probably several times, and would then take aboard more—and leaving behind us a large crowd waving, cheering and many of them weeping, in the clearing that had been our home for so many years, one by one our ships rose into the air and sped away.

After the extensive travelling we had done about Terra in our air-ships, it seemed but a short journey from Khem, our first settlement, to the great stretch of blue water which bore, like a green jewel on its vast bosom, the country called Atlantis.

Looking down at it as we circled around to find a good landing-place, we realized afresh how beautiful was our new home, a land of tall waving trees, green pastures, lakes and

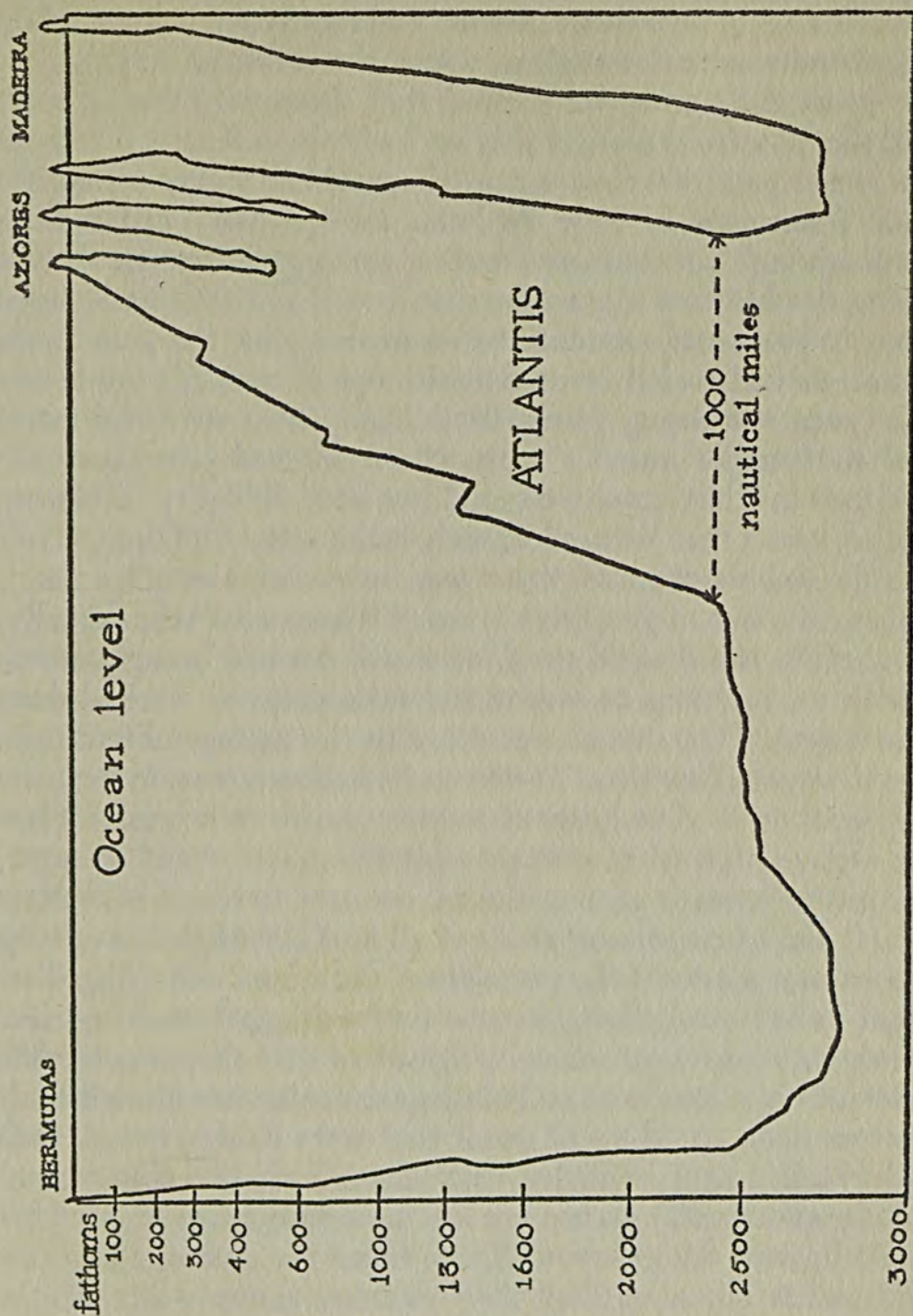
rivers, and mountains that rose to a magnificent height from a wide green plain. Here there was room for our ships to settle; so one by one we landed and, descending from our ships, found our feet once more on firm earth.

The air was soft and balmy, the sweet scents of the flowers that patterned the green grass on which we trod came to our nostrils, the sun was warm, and Zenobia held out her hands to it and smiled.

"Here we are, landed safely, praise be to the Great Ones," she said softly. "And now let us kneel down and give thanks to Those who have helped us and guided us here! Implore their further help in this strange place—and then, my friends, to work!"

"To work," was right—for indeed we had to work, and work harder than ever we had worked in our first settlement! Back and forth went our ships between Atlantis and Khem, bringing goods for which there had been no room in our first voyage, also bringing other Earthlings who were needed in our new home, although we had to refuse many, as our Great Ones had said, that our first home was not to be denuded of inhabitants, as it might well be, did we accede to the request of everybody to come with us. The seeds of true humanity had first been sown in the land of Khem, and there many who were showing so clearly the proof that those seeds were growing apace, who should be left, with a group of Martians to look after them, to develop both themselves and the little town—in time to be a city—that was slowly but surely building itself around the Pyramid. And so we took up our lives in our new country, and from the first things went well.

The general outline of the country can be seen from the diagram, drawn from an official record made from soundings taken by two ships in your modern time, which faces this page. Between two groups of high mountains stretched a wide and fertile plain, and it was here that we decided to build our first city; but first we merely



THE PROFILE OF ATLANTIS

As revealed by the deep-sea soundings of H.M.S. *Challenger* and the U.S ship *Dolphin*. From Ignatius Donnelly's book *Atlantis: the Antediluvian World*.

made a camp settlement of tents and hastily-made huts, while we conducted a thorough survey of the country.

From the survey we decided that there were few, if any, of the monstrous reptiles that we had met in Khem. But there was one great beast who proved surprisingly easy to tame—the forerunner of your elephant, though hairy rather than smooth and with immense curling tusks, and between them a long flexible nose like a tube that it used as a fifth limb; these beasts proved of immense value in dragging the great trees that we had to fell for our needs, and other loads too heavy for even our strong young Earthlings. There were also many of the smaller animals with whom we had already made friends in Khem, and we found but little difficulty in taming other beasts that we needed, such as the water-buffaloes, many birds and so on; and there we discovered a small animal, about the size of your pigs of today that proved very friendly, especially if fed with grain, of which we had brought much with us, meaning to sow it and raise crops as we had done on Khem. This animal was a joy to the younger Earthlings, as it would allow them to ride on its back—it was, indeed, the progenitor of your horse of today—and in later years, when it grew, as the other animals were doing, larger and stronger, it was to prove of great use to us; not only to ride, but to draw carts and carriages and goods of all kinds, though it was long before we mastered the principle of the wheel. All things that had to be brought long distances were dragged on things like sledges. Two long runners, polished so that they would slide smoothly, with a sort of box-shaped container of wood built across them to take any goods that were being carried, with planks laid across this for seats. Something like this ancient sledge-cart is still in use on the mountain roads of Madeira which, with the group of islands called the Azores and a few others, is all, alas, that now remains above water of the beautiful land of Atlantis.

You would have scorned this as primitive, and indeed it was. Compared with the elegant air carriages we had known on Mars, we also deplored it, but it was better than walking, and

perforce we Martians found ourselves using it very often as we found, to our dismay, that as time went on our old gift of levitation was, if not actually leaving us, becoming less facile and dependable than of old. The fact was that during the many years of life on Terra our bodies had lost much of the weightlessness they had possessed on Mars; and that mysterious gift known as levitation was probably dwindling and growing feeble as our physical weight was increasing.

But we had no time to worry about this, as we were busy in laying out the foundations of our new city. It was to be situated on the wide plain at the foot of a group of the great mountains that rose high and abruptly from the plain, soaring with their splendid peaked crests into high heaven—and looking up at them, Zenobia nodded.

"It is there, up there, among those peaks, that we will build our Temple," she said. "There it shall look out over the city below, out to the far horizon and into the very eye of the Lord Sun himself!"—and we saw that she was right. True, it would not be easy to get into the Temple once it was built—the sides of the mountain peaks were all but sheer; and yet here and there, one could see where a winding staircase of steps cut into the rock could be made so that the heights could be scaled by those unable to waft themselves upwards, as those of us who could still levitate were able to do so. . . .

But for the time being, once more we had to be content with our wooden Temple, which we had brought with us from Khem where it was no longer needed, now that the stone Temple under the Pyramid was built and in constant use; and we were thankful when the Great Ones once again came to us, through the usual channels. They told us that we had done well and encouraged us to further efforts. In Khem (they said) the weekly Service would still be carried on; though they would no longer appear in person, they could still speak through the group of Martian men and women who were, so to speak, our understudies; and on the occasions when one of us, the Seven who had come to Atlantis, visited Khem, they would then show themselves in person as well as speak.

So, living either in tents or huts set up beside our ships or in the ships themselves, we spent many weeks studying the plans and diagrams that our architects had designed for the new city, while our geologists and other scientists travelled around to try and find out what sort of materials lay handy for our use. The wood was easy to find, as the forests that bordered the great plain were full of magnificent trees, albeit not all were of the hard, firm quality we needed. In those early days, as I have already explained, in the world that you call prehistory many trees were, in effect, giant fungi rather than trees; gigantic specimens of what are now called, I believe, succulents, the type of which the cactus and the yucca, the prickly-pear and others, remain today the most common representatives. These had trunks made of a sort of doughy, pulpy material that was useless to use for building or carving. But there were enough trees of a tougher type to provide us with what we wanted; and our geologists were delighted to discover plenty of stone of various sorts, notably a red,* a black and a white lava stone which they declared would make the most decorative effect in building when cleverly used; and indeed they proved right.

In our exploration of our new country we discovered many desirable things. It was plainly volcanic, for in many places we found hot springs, which we welcomed with enthusiasm, though the Earthlings at first showed reluctance to approach these, as they had never in their lives seen water that was anything but cold. But in this they were teachable, as in everything else, and they proved of the greatest help in everything; everything, that is, except anything to do with their distant relatives, the ape-like Earthlings, of whom there were, of

*It is of some interest to note that while Plato, in his famous description of Atlantis, mentions the use of three coloured rocks of red, white and black, Ignatius Donnelly, in his classic work "Atlantis" declares that on the Azores red, black and white rocks are to be found today! This is significant, as the Azores, like Madeira, are supposed to be part of submerged Atlantis; the mountain peaks left sticking above the sea when the continent was sunk. A glance at the diagram on page 89, which I copied from the design published in Donnelly's book, will show clearly the "layout" of the new continent.

course, some hidden in the thick bush on the verge of the forests.

Now here I must tell you something of great importance. We had been told by the Great Ones who were guiding and helping us, that after serving seven generations of Earthlings there would no longer be any need for us Martians to take part in the impregnation of Earthling women. Which was, as you may imagine, a thing that came as a great relief to us, and especially to our women.

The strain, They said, was now "set", and true man, *homo sapiens*, though still far from what they wanted mentally and spiritually, was physically all that could be desired—and in truth, mankind then was beautiful as he has never been since! Tall and straight and long-limbed, men and women both, clear-skinned and bright-eyed, with long streaming hair, golden or bronze, black or brown or sun-colour—you can catch a glimpse of their beauty in some of the old Greek statues which still make the world catch its breath in wonder and admiration. And as they mated and multiplied rapidly, we could now count on not merely hundreds, but thousands of these new beings, *homo sapiens*, our "children", of whom we could not but feel proud, knowing how much of ourselves, unknown to them, had gone into their making. And now there came about something that was of the greatest help to our growing community, which could not have happened until the Earthlings had emerged from their first beasthood.

As their bodies grew finer and more beautiful their intelligence grew too, and as they developed it became possible for many great and unselfish souls to incarnate within the more advanced individuals; and for this we were more than grateful. We realized, of course, that to incarnate in these Earth-bodies, vastly improved as they were, would be painful, cramping and difficult to a degree for the souls who volunteered to help us—a true crucifixion for those who know the ease, the freedom and happiness of life on the Other Side. But true to their fineness of soul, still many came, and entered into fleshly incarnation—not only in our new settlement in Atlantis, but in our

first colony in the Land of Khem. And it is from a group led and helped by several of these advanced beings that the great and wonderful civilization of Greece sprang. And all the while our civilization on Atlantis was making progress. . . .

IO

The City of the Golden Gates

NOW, many thousands of years later, when a new colony from Khem that had settled in Greece had become a great and wonderful nation, a certain wise man, a philosopher called Plato, made a writing of what he had been told of his ancestor Solon, who was a great law-giver of Athens 600 years before the birth of the Christ.

Now, this Solon had visited Egypt and there held converse with many wise Egyptian Priests who had preserved records of ancient days long before the Flood, of which I shall tell you in due course, changed the face of the world. Plato in his turn recorded the Tale of Solon in the form of a dialogue between one Critias and Socrates; and for very long you people of today have regarded this either as a legend, or *perhaps* as a true record of what happened—and, in truth, it partakes of both of these things.

Plato's account states that man was created by the god Poseidon, who fell in love with an Earth-born maiden called Cleito who lived with her father and mother upon the Island of Atlantis; and of their union was born the race of man called *homo sapiens*. This is untrue, since I am telling you how truly the race *homo sapiens* began—and yet there is a hint of truth in it, since *homo sapiens* was, in effect, born of the union between the gods—ourselves—and the crude fore-runners of man. Then although much of Plato's story is true,

there is much that is incorrect, the cause of this being that the report on which the story was based came to him, so to speak, at third or fourth hand, not complete from one person; and this always means, as you will know, that details become confused. Points hard to understand become changed as the teller of the tale tries to elucidate them, other points become misunderstood, and so many changes take place in the story.

Still, in the main it is a true outline of events, and the ten kings of which he speaks are the rulers, the Governors—call them kings if you like, and in effect they were kings, of course—of the ten provinces into which, after the passage of many years, Atlantis was divided. But that time lay far ahead, and at the moment of which I am now speaking, Zenobia and I were standing together talking and leaning over the rampart, looking over the wide and gracious scene that lay spread before us. Very many years had passed since we had begun the building of our city, and it was now great and beautiful indeed.

Built as it was on the foothills of the giant group of mountains that soared heavenwards behind it, it was watered by a group of streams that, descending from the heights, ran together to form a magnificent cascade on the far side of the city. The cascade, after descending onto the plain, formed a large pool or lake before the foothills from which a winding river ran out and away to an arc-shaped bay that opened upon the sea some three miles away; and this was the chief reason why we chose this situation for our city.

A plentiful supply of pure water is one of the first needs of any city, and here it was, waiting for us in abundance! So we built our first city on the hill side of the pool, its houses and shops, municipal offices, schools, libraries and other similar buildings—crowned, many of them, with domes, pinnacles or cupolas of copper, silver, gold or other metals that flashed and gleamed in the sun—rising, as it were, in terraces, according to the rises in the foothills on which we had to build. Backed as the city was with the all-but sheer sides of the moun-

tains, there would be little need, we thought, for protective walls there at least. But as we still did not know what danger might arise from dangerous beasts living in or able to swim the river, we built ramparts all along where our town fronted the pool, leaving in the ramparts two great gates that could be opened to allow the exit or entry of our people when they wished to go swimming or fishing or sailing the boats that were the passion of most of our young Earthlings. These gates were of metal overlaid with gold, with copper or with oricalchum, a new and beautiful reddish-coloured metal that we had discovered on Atlantis; so our city was called "The City of the Golden Gates."

Leaning on the ramparts, watching the colourful sight of a score of small boats with their coloured sails and painted sides racing each other, Zenobia and I smiled, remembering our early days in Khem, when we had to teach our developing "children" how to make a floating log into a boat by hollowing it out by burning or cutting, and using a stick or long pole to guide it. From that beginning our Earthlings had quickly learnt, as their intelligence increased, how to make a true boat; and we knew, when we came to settle in Atlantis, that given time, we could make a fine harbour at the mouth of the river and build there, not mere boats, but fine ships that would serve to carry us and our children all over the globe when at long last our faithful aircraft became useless.

We were greatly helped in the necessary pulling and hauling of the great trees, the blocks of stone and loads of brick that we needed, by the elephants that we found in Atlantis, who were hugely strong and fortunately easily tameable.

Horses we found running wild, though still only about the size of what you call Shetland ponies, and these also we found easy to tame; and we welcomed this finding, as our young folk loved to ride and race; and as the city took shape the wide plain before it became a vast arena in which all manner of shows, festivals, races, feasts, mock battles, dancing, wrestling matches and others were held for the amusement of our people. Outside the great space set aside for all this were market

gardens, orchards and nurseries for flowers, and farms where goats and hens, pigs and other creatures were bred who were useful to the community, along with dwellings for those whose duty it was to care for all these things. Outside still lay green fields where herds of sheep, goats, cattle and deer fed and wandered under the watchful eyes of their herders; and beyond these fields began the pattern of tilled lands, now coloured with the golden, russet, green and red of the crops that had been sown for the market in the city.

In a special place at the entrance to our green enclosure we had set our little wooden Temple brought from Khem, and here we held special Services for all who could attend on great days of festival and remembrance. For never did we forget Mars, the beloved planet from which we had come, and we taught our Earthlings to remember and respect it by holding a special feast as a service of thanksgiving on the day on which, now how many centuries ago, we had left it and landed our ships on Terra.

Ancient and battered now, its wooden walls weathered to a shabby pallor by untold years of exposure to every kind of climate, we still loved our little Temple and cared for it, mending and repairing it patiently time and again, although for long now there had stood on the heights above us a new and lovely Temple; built just where Zenobia had wished it, perched on a flat space that we had found lying high up between three of the soaring peaks of the mountains that rose behind our city. Those of us who still retained the power of levitation had risen up and found the place first, and others had climbed up and approved it mightily—a beautiful plateau, hedged around by the towering peaks, with a wide stream running across it that would serve the Temple's needs, and those of its servers. A stream that ran down from the plateau to join two others in the mighty cascade that descended into the plain far below.

Access to the Temple had not been easy. But our engineers were brilliant, and soon devised a winding stairway cut into the steep sides of the mountain, with a hand-rail sunk into the

rock beside it to help the climbing of the steps; and there were so many fine trees and so much beautiful rock and stone to be cut out of the mountainsides that ringed the small plateau on which our Temple was to stand, that the question of hauling heavy building material up from the plain did not arise. So within a surprisingly short time our new Temple, which was far more beautiful than any we had yet attempted to build, rose, in its customary ancient cone-shape, heavenwards between the peaks.

There was a great feast held on the day on which it was formerly opened, and the Great Ones came to us there in gorgeous array, and blessed us and told us that we had done well; and the new Earthlings, so different from the coarse, brutal and beastlike creatures that we had first known, fell on their knees in awe and wonder and thanked them for coming. When the new Temple was complete we did not destroy the wooden Temple that had served us so well, but left it intact; for not only had we now a deep sentimental attachment to it, but we saw that it would serve to be used for worship by those who were too old or ill to tackle the long climb upwards to the plateau. And the Great Ones said that we did well.

Quite early in our building of the city we decided against enlarging the river that ran down to the harbour, as we had at first intended. We had meant to widen it so that it could take the largest type of cargo-ship right up to the city walls. But after much thought we decided that this might well mean, as time went on and our commerce with our colonies and settlements in the outside world grew greater, that too much heavy cargo stuff might then be brought up to the city, bringing with it dirt and stinks and litter of all sorts which had better remain in the harbour, on the sea front, where the strong tides would bear it all away. But the river as it stood was more than wide and deep enough to carry smaller vessels, and many of these would sail up the river and land their cargoes actually at the town itself. So that in time there grew up beneath the ramparts a sort of second, smaller harbour; a fishmarket and paved walk where the townsfolk could stand

to buy from the boats and the stalls that soon fringed the walls, decks, quays and jetties where private boats could lie at anchor, and everything that was needful to a harbour. And indeed, it was a joy to lean on the ramparts above the walls that ringed the city, and watch the colourful panorama in the lagoon below, the cargo ships lying at anchor while their owners and deckhands worked to sell or unload their cargoes, the smaller boats plying here and there, the little boys diving and splashing and shouting to each other, and behind all, the town itself, rising in tiers and terraces against the mountain-side behind . . . yes, the City of the Golden Gates was a fine and wonderful sight in the days of its zenith, and the world is never likely to see the like of it again!

Zenobia had just returned from a long voyage in one of our ships, a voyage to Lemuria, the greatest of our distant colonies—for this conversation of which I speak, beside the ramparts of the City of the Golden Gates, took place, you must understand, very very many years after the events I have been describing to you, the beginnings of our life on our new country Atlantis. Perforce I must skip, in effect, untold years of developing, of growth and the spreading of the new Earthlings over the Earth. By the time that Zenobia and I, such old, old friends, stood talking with each other, leaning on the rough stone-work of the ramparts, our “children,” now alert, intelligent, adventurous, had spread into colonies in many parts of the Earth beside Greece, the first colony after our first settlement in Khem.

A large and important settlement had been made in the land called Lemuria. It was this colony that Zenobia had just been to visit, and she had returned from it with a shadow in her dear eyes that I did not like to see. For long we stood together looking over the wide plain, patterned now with groups of bright-clad figures streaming out of the city across the flying bridge that, many years ago, had been built across the river at the foot of the cascade. For on the morrow there was to be one of the great Fairs of the year where races and competitions of all sorts were to be held for prizes—and these

fairs our people loved of all things. Watching them, Zenobia drew a little sigh.

"May the Great Ones bless and guide them!" she murmured, "but there are times, my beloved Teraon, when I have within my heart a deep fear!"

I laid my hand on hers, so white and delicate against the rough stone.

"What do you fear?" I asked. She frowned.

"I have never voiced it—and even now I half fear to voice it," she said. "But this fear has been growing in me, slowly, and surely ever since—you will remember? Since we had to make the Great Change."

I I

The Great Change

NOW to explain to you what Zenobia meant when she spoke thus, I must go back many years—back to comparatively soon after we had settled into our new country, Atlantis, built our fine chief city and even several others in other parts of that fertile and beautiful country.

I have already told you how rapidly the new *homo sapiens* was multiplying; and it took a long time before we Martians began to realize that this very development, the growing up of a large population who were alert and intelligent with, many of them, inquiring and independent minds, was likely to create difficulties for us of which we had never dreamt.

You see, to the Earthlings we knew at first, we were, quite literally, gods—and so the problem of how we went on living for so many years while they died was no problem to them. They accepted it as the way the gods lived, and would not have questioned it or puzzled about it even had they possessed the mental capacity to think about it; which at that stage, of course, they did not.

But as time went on and their intelligence grew, they began to do just this! They did not lose their respect for us Martians; but they began to wonder and worry as to why they, the Earthlings, should live at most not more than three score years and ten, while we Martians, it seemed, went on living indefinitely; for of course we did not tell them how, when our

long life-span ended, we could renew ourselves and rise to live again in the way I have already described to you. And even when they had grown to true manhood, and we knew were arguing and discussing the subject eagerly among themselves—though their awe of us was still too great to allow them to ask any of us direct—we knew we could not tell them, for they would never understand. Some way round the problem must be found—and as usual, the Great Ones found it.

Now, when we were settled in Atlantis, it had been arranged that both the men of the Council of Seven and the women should gather round them groups of young children, boys and girls, who could be taught and trained in the ways of the Temple and become assistants—assistant priests and priestesses, if you like—to the Seven. On the advice of the Great Ones, directly our Earthling children had become sufficiently intelligent to understand, we had guided them into training centres where they could learn the management of schools and offices, shops and farms, shipping and agriculture and other centres of control of the life of Atlantis; and especially in the affairs of the City of the Golden Gates. This was at the wish of our Great Guides. We on the Council would remain always in the background ready with advice or help if they needed this. But so that man could become truly independent, he must now gradually learn to manage his own affairs for himself and not rely too much upon us; and we did not know whether to smile or to sigh at the eagerness with which our Earthling children received these instructions when we gave them forth at a great meeting convened in the Central Hall of the city.

So keen, so eager, so sure of themselves! Not even the many mistakes they made at the outset made any difference to their eagerness; and in time, indeed, they, or a large percentage of them at least, became eminently successful business men as well as traders, merchants, farmers, sea-captains and a dozen other things besides.

They learnt to stand on their own feet, and our country flourished and grew prosperous; and while this was develop-

ing, we Seven maintained our close contact with the Temple and the Great Ones, visited from time to time our growing colonies overseas, and taught and trained the young people who were in our especial charge. And it was in regard to these that what we were to call the Great Change came about, in consequence of a question put privately by Zenobia at a special session with the Great Ones one night in the warm delicious summertime that we loved so much.

We listened with bated breath as she spoke, for what she said was what for a long time past we had all felt, yet hesitated to mention as one hesitates to put into words something that one dreads and hopes may not be true. But Zenobia spoke steadily and well, and the Great Ones listened as well as we did as she spoke.

She said that for a long while past the "re-birth," the renewal of the physical body that we Martians had worn for so long, had slowly but surely become more and more difficult; and that we all, though Their servants and always ready to obey Their Will, felt this, and were growing increasingly troubled about it. Oh yes, the renewal could still take place as I have described it to you! The Martians whose long life-span was drawing to a close would withdraw and lie down in a private place, hallowed by flowers and incense and the prayers of his fellows, and after a lapse of time the old body he had worn for all but four hundred years would disintegrate and disappear; and then after a short lapse of time, new groups of the delicately-ethereal atoms of which the Martian bodies were composed, would assemble themselves around the empty couch, and slowly a new body would take shape upon it, in the exact likeness of the Martian who had died. But (said Zenobia) the assembly of the new atoms was no longer the smooth and easy process it had once been!

It took far longer, and in the end the new-born one would not be, as heretofore, the *exact* replica of the Martian who had died, but different in small details, mentally as well as physically—and this was seriously disturbing the Seven. What was happening?

Was it that the atmospheric conditions on Earth—the psychic conditions also—were so different, and so much heavier than those we had known on Mars that they were, at long last, beginning to affect us Martians, to make it more and more difficult to renew our bodies when we died? We knew that, alas, we were gradually losing the power of levitation, and even, to a certain degree, the power of telepathic communication with each other; for finding the use of vocal speech essential in our dealings with the Earthlings, we now used this more and more between ourselves instead of depending on telepathic talk, as in the old days had been our invariable habit. If this was happening, was it right that we should remain on Terra? We were fearful that if these changes went on we might well lose our Martian characteristics, which would be unthinkable!

It was the ancient King who replied at last when Zenobia had finished speaking. He nodded his white head, crowned with the jewelled circlet, and told us that They on the Other Side had been watching us for many years, and noted the increasing difficulty of renewing the body in the old way—the difficulty was due, he said, as we had thought, to the coarser atmosphere that prevailed on Terra, that was rendering the scientific work of the doctors and experts on the Other Side who were concerned with the specialized duty of “building” the new body, more and more difficult.

We should not lose our Martian characteristics, he said, though these would, as we had noted, become modified as we became more and more adapted to a life on Terra; but we must stay with *homo sapiens* until he had learned to stand on his own feet in his own world.

And in order to do this after long discussion among Themselves, They had decided upon making a great change. Instead of renewing our bodily cells—or rather, having new bodies formed of fresh cells built around us—we must use another alternative method that had occasionally, though rarely, been used in the past. And this was (to use a slang expression of your day) “body swapping.”*

*See Appendix III.

It had been with this possibility in mind, the King said, that they had first advised us to gather round us two groups of young children, boys and girls; teach, train and care for them and keep them in our especial atmosphere from their earliest youth. From among these we could choose, when the time came that this was necessary, a young body to which the dying Martian could be transferred when his life-span came to an end, yet this work must be carried on; while the young person who had made the sacrifice of life on Terra went onwards to the spirit world to receive his just reward for his deed.

Now this idea was not new to us, as we had heard of its use before on other worlds. Infrequently, it is true; but it *had* been used in cases where the wisdom and experience of an ageing person had been so bitterly needed by the world in which he lived that a younger person had willingly given up his body so that the older one might enter into it and use it for another spell of years on Earth. But all the same, it was startling; and though we bowed our heads and accepted in obedience the words spoken by the King, it took many long and anxious talks before we could make up our minds to follow his instructions.

Now, to some of you who read this record, it may seem cruel and unfair that a young man or woman with all their lives before them should be asked to give these up, and with them all the normal human hopes of love and marriage, children, success in life and all the rest; but actually it was not cruel, as I will explain.

The two groups of children who were guided towards the Seven for training in the service of the Temple were deliberately chosen from amongst those who, alas, for one reason or another had no Earthly relatives; so that leaving the world meant no breaking of tender ties formed in babyhood with older folk. And moreover—this is important—you must know that many eager souls, anxious to help us, and also themselves, had chosen to incarnate amongst these new Earthlings who were, under our tuition, rising to such promising heights both

physically and mentally; and these children who came to us were *all* of them, of these deliberately incarnated souls—again, specially chosen because of this. And *before* they were allowed to incarnate, they were told that did they enter into the body of one of the group of children who were to come to the Temple, they must be prepared to be ready, when one of the Seven needed a new body in which to carry on the work upon which he had embarked, to give up their own body and die, leaving their young body empty, to be occupied and used by the person who needed it.

There was rarely any hesitation in agreeing to this plan, for all who incarnated in this group of children were old and wise souls who knew that by giving up their Earth bodies over-early, they would acquire great merit in the spirit world; and what was more important, they would be giving the greatest possible help to those Martians living on Earth who had worked so hard and so long since their settlement on Terra. Yet if after their incarnation on Earth, here and there one showed reluctance to give up his or her body, no pressure was brought to bear upon them. They had used their freewill, which they had a right to do, and they were allowed to leave the Temple service and live out their lives as ordinary Atlantean citizens. But as I have said, on the whole these were exceptions.

So this new plan, the Great Change, as we called it, was put into operation, and all went smoothly and well for many long years; and yet now my wise Zenobia, newly returned from a visit to our "other country" as sometimes we described it, the lovely land of Lemuria, way out in the Pacific Ocean, was plainly not happy. And why, I will tell you in the following chapter.

I 2

Zenobia is Afraid

I LOOKED at my beloved in silence for a moment. When I spoke.

"You fear something, my dear—that I can see. But what is it?" She remained silent for a long moment, watching the stream of figures, all gathered together to make joyous preparations for the fair, with the feast to follow, that was to be held on the following day. Then she sighed faintly and turned to me.

"Yes, I have feared something for a very long time now—but it is only to you that I dare speak of it. You who are my Other Half!"

I frowned faintly and laid a hand on her bare arm. "I wish you had told me before," I said. "What is it?"

"I have had this secret fear," said my love, "ever since, according to the Great Ones' instructions and because it was necessary, we made the Great Change." She looked at me and in her deep eyes I read a query. "Have you not yourself, my dear, though perhaps only in the very deepest recesses of your heart, also felt—a qualm at times? A qualm almost amounting to fear?"

I nodded—for I could not lie to her. Yet I had fought off that little sneaking fear—less, actually a fear than a sort of unease in my heart—so hard for so long, telling myself that the Great Ones could not be wrong, that I had all but

succeeded in lulling it to sleep. But now suddenly Zenobia's abrupt question had brought me sharply awake and I knew—and accepted—that what I had soothed to sleep for so long was, in truth, fear. I listened as Zenobia went on.

"So? Your silence answers me! I knew it, and I knew also why you would not mention it to me. From loyalty to our Guides you wouldn't let yourself question their instructions, nor would I—and yet I am forced now to tell the truth, and to tell you that I fear that the Change, inevitable as it was, has brought with it great if hitherto unsuspected dangers!"

"What dangers have you in mind?" I asked.

"This danger," said Zenobia, "that under our old system of being re-born, after one life-span is over, into a new body composed of purely Martian elements, we remained Martians, and so pure and apart from any possibility of contagion from any Earthly body. But"—she turned and fixed me with her compelling stare—"now, although we remain Martians mentally and spiritually, physically we are obliged to make use of Earth-bred bodies! And no matter how carefully chosen and how carefully segregated from other Earthlings, despite the fact that our Temple children are all picked from those in whom advanced souls have chosen to come into incarnation, their bodies are still Earth-bred! And that means that within them somewhere, no matter how carefully trained and kept apart they may be, they have deep down the seeds of Earthliness that in time may rise and go to war with the higher, more spiritual side that was infused into them when we Martians took part in the impregnation of the Earthling women!"

"You mean," I said slowly, "that even with this strong Martian spirit within them, there might become a time when the coarse and evil vibrations of the Earth-body might try to overcome the Martian spirit and gain command? Oh, Zenobia, you have put into painful words the secret fear that had haunted me as well as it has haunted you ever since the Change!"

"I knew you would feel it so," said Zenobia. "And I know by

instinct also that this fear haunts several others of the Seven—especially Derek, who, if you remember, was against the Change as soon as it was proposed, and held out against it as long as he could! Yet in the end he had to give in and accept the body that young Kier, the chosen Temple child, so eagerly offered him. . . .”

“What has happened,” I asked abruptly, “in Lemuria to make you suddenly speak to me of this? For I have noted that the last two visits you have made there have made you silent and oddly sombre, and there must be some reason for it. Why have you never mentioned it to me before?”

“Because,” said Zenobia slowly, “to talk of a thing is to give it life, and hoping against hope I have been for a long time now, that my inner fears might be mainly the result of imagination . . . but you are right! It is during these two last visits of mine to our colony of Lemuria that I have noted, alas, certain ominous signs that the Dark Forces that beset us on Mars are at work once more—and in this new world that we hoped to make so good!”

I listened with a sinking heart as she went on talking. “We have felt proud of Lemuria, after Atlantis the largest colony we possess.”

It was one of the youngest in actual years, and indeed a fine and fertile land it was, set in the Pacific Ocean as Atlantis was set in the Atlantic. Those pioneers from Atlantis who had first visited it had returned with such glowing tales that they had no difficulty in recruiting many others to accompany them, on their return to settle there. There they had built a city, a Temple, harbour, roads and dwellings as well as fields and gardens, factories, stockyards and everything else needed as the colony grew into a solid settlement, and spread widely abroad from its centre. As time went on and the colony enlarged, the Great Ones chose a second Council from among the Martians on Atlantis, and sent it out to settle in the new city of Lemuria called Lemnos, to help and advise as the settlement grew.

So the original Council of Seven became, in effect, a Council

of Fourteen, as the Lemurian group was closely linked with the original group in Atlantis; and one of us from the original Seven, was frequently sent by the Great Ones to visit Lemuria and to do what we could to help our people there. And so well and quickly did Lemuria advance that we were truly proud of it!

"So," said Zenobia, "you will know, my Teraon, how deeply sad I was to detect, as I did, in this visit of mine, signs that the old curse that first brought trouble on Mars was at work again. Jealousy! Jealousy, greed and envy—the Unholy Trinity that has wrecked so many civilizations on so many planets of which we know."

"But how terrible!" I exclaimed. "With the double help these new Earthlings are receiving—not only the inherited spirituality that we Martians infused into them, but the help of so many fine souls who have willingly incarnated in their bodies. I would have thought they were so thoroughly protected from the ancient stirrings of evil that this was never likely to recur. Don't tell me that the evil that developed on Mars and sent us into exile here is following us?"

Zenobia sighed,

"I told you," she said, "that there were ominous signs that were disquieting me greatly—but as yet, signs only. But we must remember that although the souls you speak of—the souls who offered to come into flesh in the bodies of the more advanced of our Earthlings—are fine and unselfish souls, and had every intention of following the spiritual laws they had been taught on the Other Side while they lived out their new lives on Terra; yet, once re-born into the flesh, they became subject once more to the temptations, the rivalries, the ambitions, the jealousies of the flesh! And alas, I fear very much from what I have seen and heard in Lemuria that certain of these souls, advanced in incarnationary experience and brilliant in mind as they are, are showing signs of allowing Earthly impulses to take command of them once more, as they have done in earlier incarnations." She sighed deeply "Teraon, I must speak privately with our Great Ones. You know that

when I ask it of them, they will send a messenger to speak through me and answer my questions and anxieties. I will write down the points on which I need advice, and you will ask them for me and write down the answers."

"Why not hold one of our special sessions of the Seven?" I asked, but she shook her head.

"No. You see, it may well be that the fear that haunts you and me has not touched all of the Seven, though I suspect that Derek at least shares it. But even to him I would not mention our fear—to admit it and to discuss it amongst ourselves would be perhaps to bring it into being in the hearts of those who at present do not suspect it, and so to give it power to grow stronger. So unless the Great Ones advise us to speak of it to the others, let it remain a secret between you and me."

We parted company that day with heavy hearts and anxious minds, for well I knew that Zenobia would never have voiced so painful a matter unless she had been deeply convinced of its truth; and when, one evening a few days later, we sat together in the pretty living-room of the home we shared together, I had in my hand the list of questions that Zenobia wished to have answered, also my wax tablets and stilo, a pointed stick of metal, to note down the answers.

Our home was now a small stone-built house high up on the cliff, near the mouth of the river where it spilt over and down into the plain in a glorious cascade; and I remember that the sound of it, the soothing sound of tumbling water accompanied by the soft notes of birds that twittered together in the branches of the trees outside came to me as Zenobia stretched out her lithe body, long and slender still—although it was, in fact, the body that had been that of one of her most devoted followers, a girl named Kurwenda—on the divan covered with soft striped rugs and cushions that was set against the wall of the room. For one thing I was truly thankful, and it was this. That although the new bodies in which these later days we Martians were forced to live and work were those of advanced Earthlings, it was always easy for a Martian to recognize a fellow Martian who had undergone the

change. The body might be that of the person who had voluntarily laid it aside; but the face, especially the eyes, the voice, the gestures, the movements, would always be those of the Martian who had entered into it. So though it was Kurwenda's body that now housed my beloved Zenobia, it was Zenobia and nobody else who spoke and moved, looked and gestured; it was my beloved herself who smiled at me from the divan, arranged her long blue robes—she often wore blue, for she loved the colour of the sea and the sky—closed her beautiful eyes and slipped easily into trance.

I sat quietly in my comfortable chair watching her, and heard as I watched the voice of the young girl who that day was caring for us and our home. They took it in turns, the Temple children, to do this, and took great pride in it as in their duties in the Temple; and when I heard the accompanying voice of the youth who had come to meet her when her daily work finished, she left our house, I smiled affectionately. Those two were in love, I knew, and would in time marry; for there was free coming and going between the youths and maidens attached to the Temple and, as I have said, there was no sort of compulsion put upon them to offer up their bodies to us Martians for our use if they preferred to live out their lives as normal Earthlings. They all had *freewill*, as we had; and at no time would we have been willing to demand the use of the body of a young Earthling if they were in the smallest degree unwilling to give it.

The room was dark, though not entirely dark, and against the shadowy background I saw, as always, a faint vapour arising from Zenobia's prostrate form as the material that today you call ectoplasm exuded from it, and by degrees built itself into the tall shape of a man in a long white robe. He rapidly became more and more distinct until it might almost have been the figure of a living man who stood at last before me. He was not the ancient King, but a younger man with curling auburn hair crowned with a wreath of green leaves. About him shimmered an aura of golden mist about a foot wide that round his head deepened into almost flame-colour,

and in one hand he held a branch of lilies whose fragrance spread wide round the apartment, as he spoke in a voice low and melodious.

"Greetings, my son! Ask of me what you will, for I know that you and your twin soul who lies here are much troubled anent the development of the creature now called man."

"Greetings Lord," I said, speaking very humbly, for I knew by instinct that here I had the honour to be speaking with one of the Greater Hierarchy. One of those who stood even higher in the world of spirit than the wonderful Great Ones who had helped and guided us for so long.

"My humble greetings to you—and from the way you speak I feel that there is scarcely any reason to ask you the questions that my beloved here has written, for you know them all in advance."

"I do indeed," said the Man with the Wreath. "She is troubled, and rightly, lest these creatures on whom so much time and love has been spent should not develop along the lines that she—and indeed all of us—had hoped. And unhappily her fears and her suspicions seem only too well justified! The Black Forces have long yearned to get a foothold on Terra, and hard as we have fought them to keep them out, it seems, alas, that in a certain degree at least, they are succeeding. If *homo sapiens*, this race called Man that, with your help, we have called into being from the beasthood in which he was born—if he, Man, deliberately invites Those of the Dark Face to enter in and work with him—there is little that we can do to prevent it!"

"But why?" I cried aloud. "Are you not stronger than the Lords of the Dark Face?"

"Indeed we are, else Heaven itself would be invaded!" replied the Man with the Wreath, "But do you not understand, my son Teraon, that in giving this new creature called Man, this chance of living a life above that of the beast to which he had first belonged, He, the Creator" (as he spoke the word he bowed and I also, and the golden nimbus flared up flame-like for a moment about his beautiful head), "the Creator has

given him freewill? And with that freewill not even we, who are as gods to him, may interfere!"

I was silent, and after a moment he went on.

"Thanks to you Martians, acting on the instructions of the Great Guides who have helped and advised you all along, Man has two forces now, alive and vital, within him. The animal nature with which he was born, and the spiritual nature which you infused into him. These two forces, alas, are all too often set against each other, and the future of Man, both body and soul, depends on which of the two forces ultimately becomes master. You may try to help by teaching, by example, in many other ways—but more than that you cannot and may not do. *Man has been given control of his own destiny—and he alone is responsible!* We can only watch and pray, and rush forward to help *when* Man calls upon us. But this he must do of his own accord, not because he is urged or coerced into it."

I was silent, and after a moment the Man with the Wreath went on.

"I think that sometimes you Martians, good and devoted servants of ours as we know you all are, forget that by now you are dealing not with a purely animal being, but with a new breed of creature entirely—*homo sapiens*, or True Man. Although within him still lives the brute animal from which his original stock sprang, this is now, thanks to you and to your loyal help and obedience to our decrees, companioned by a spiritual half that will in the end, we hope and believe, grow to dominate that animal side completely. *But this he must do for himself!* You cannot do it. We must in no way seek to dominate or control this new creature. Not even when we see him taking the wrong path as, alas, too often he is apt to do." Now Zenobia spoke, for in her trance state, though her body remained inert, often her mind awoke to consciousness so that she could both see and speak to Those who took shape through her. Which is a marvel indeed, and in your day unknown.

"Then," said Zenobia in a small voice, "must we let Man go on to do evil unhindered? Even when we know that to do

evil means to invite the entry of the Lords of the Dark Face into this peaceful land? And if they enter, will this not mean once again ruin and despair, as it did to Mars?"

"Alas, my daughter!" The wondrous face bent towards Zenobia and the melting eyes were tender. "Alas—but this is the risk that must be taken! He Who is our Supreme Lord, He Whose Name is not to be mentioned, does not wish for his followers, slaves or mechanical robots! He wishes Man to turn to him willingly, of *his own accord*—and to this end he has given him the gift of freewill. Freewill to bring either ruin or triumph upon his own head."

"Then tell us, Lord," I said, "what can we do to help?" For it went to my heart to see the great sad tears standing in my dear one's eyes, and to know how little there was that I could do to stop them.

"My son Teraon, you can do no more than you have done for countless years past, and are still doing," said the Man with the Wreath. "True Man has now developed, and he must learn to stand on his own feet. And though we shall, from our Side, continue to do all we can to strengthen his spiritual qualities, and to hinder the increase of the power of the Dark Lords, and you must do the same, yet if Man persists in opening the door to those same Lords, there is nothing we can do to prevent them entering! It may be that disaster and unhappiness untold, caused by his own sin and folly, may be needed before Man can understand fully what he is doing and what he is risking—in other words, he may have to learn the hard way. But either way, all that we can do is to give him his head! Give him all the responsibilities he needs in his life on Terra—and trust and pray that he uses them wisely. More we cannot do—neither you nor ourselves."

There was a long pause, and in the pause we saw the magnificent shape before us begin to waver and grow dim in its outline—sure sign that the power was waning and our Visitor would shortly take his leave.

"For the moment, dear son and daughter," he said, "this is farewell. Take heart, for whatever man does now *he* is re-

sponsible for, and you are not. The time will come when you Martians will leave Terra and start a new life elsewhere, but that time is not yet. Here you have done the work you were sent to do, and done it well, and long and arduous work it has been, and well deserves the reward that will be yours in the end. Stand back now, and watch! Continue to give out teachings and advice, but grieve not when they are unheeded, for Man is still a child, and a wilful one—and when have children heeded advice from their elders?"

"Before you go, Lord," said Zenobia, "will you tell us if it is your wish that the rest of the Seven should know of this meeting with you?"

"No," said the Man with the Wreath. "But summon a special session next week when all the Seven can be present. The Guides who have been your friends for so long will be there—and do not show surprise if they give out instructions for placing even greater responsibilities upon the shoulders of the new men around you! For it is the wish of Those on High that this land of Atlantis be divided now into provinces, and a Governor be set over each province, as it was on Mars. They long to govern themselves now, these new men and women—so it is decided to let them do so, and see how well or how badly they treat their new chances."

"Stay one moment longer!" begged Zenobia. "Are you disappointed with these older souls who have, in very many cases now, chosen to incarnate in the bodies of these new men and women? They came to help, and if the rapid increase in the mental powers and accomplishments of these men and women are any criterion, they have certainly done this, from the physical standpoint. Yet, I am disquieted! For it seemed to me that in Lemuria I sensed a feeling of rivalry abroad between two rival groups of scientists, both engaged in delving into the secret forces of the Earth. For instance, there is a network of underground gas-chambers below Lemuria—this we know, but they do not, as yet. They are but probing, and declare if they find gas, as they think they may, they will try to tap the gas in this network and bring it into use for the

benefit of mankind. I do not know why, but this knowledge brought fear to me—and is that fear justified?”

“To a great extent, yes,” said the Man with the Wreath. “It is true that the two groups of scientists are rivals in that each wishes to be the first to bring the benefits of these powerful natural forces into practical use for mankind. And though now it is in the main a reasonably friendly rivalry, where there is rivalry there is always the possibility of jealousy, as you know! And, alas, we know only too well that the Dark Lords are working hard in Lemuria to create envy and jealousy between these two groups—both led by two old souls who were great and famous scientists in previous lives and who, in their new life on Terra, are bent on creating new and even greater fame for themselves!” The speaker sighed. “That there is danger—grave danger—I will not disguise from either of you. For men, no matter how skilled, to go playing about experimentally with great natural forces of which as yet they know nothing, is taking risks they wot not of. Had they been wise, they would have asked the advice of the Council of Seven that rules—or should rule, at least—in Lemuria. That Council sits regularly, and in the Temple the Guides come to help them as they do here. But I fear that nowadays the leaders of the people go less and less often to ask the advice of the Council and the Guides. Again, they are as children who, beginning to grow up, resent and try to avoid meeting—and above all, resent asking the advice—of their elders. So once again, my children, all you—all we can do—is to wait and see. And now my blessing be upon you, and take heart, for whatever is to come no blame can be placed on you. And now, my children, I must leave you. . . .”

I 3

The Ten Kings

THE news that it was the desire of the Great Ones that Atlantis should be divided into ten provinces or nomes, as in Mars, and a specially appointed Governor set to rule over each, was received with joy and acclaim by our "children".* For long they had been burning with the desire to govern themselves; and though they never showed it, being still somewhat in awe of the Council of Seven, simmering with restlessness and resentment that they who were Men should still be treated as though they were but children, and had to be ruled and directed by their elders! Among themselves they were continually saying, "See what we have done!"

The cities, the ships, the splendid buildings they had built—the magnificent roads that now traversed Atlantis almost from end to end—the mining operations that provided us with all the precious metals and gleaming stones that we could need—all these things and many more had been brought into being by themselves, and by no other means. So surely they had proved by now that they could run life for themselves?

Poor children! They did not know, and would not have believed, how much they had been helped in all these projects by us and by countless other older and wiser souls, working through their as yet immature minds! So we said nothing; but out of the crowd of candidates who clamoured for the post of

*See Appendix IV.

Governor to one of the new provinces, we set aside twenty who we felt would be the most suitable. This twenty was chosen from a group of old souls who had held high office in earlier lives on other planets, so understood the difficulties and dangers of so high a position.

Out of these, we said, the ten Governors would be chosen. Lots would be cast for them, and the Great Ones would guide the dice so that they fell aright—and later on we heard that there was much secret grumbling at this. It was said that it was unfair—that the dice, which would be provided by the Temple, could be weighted, and so would fall on the thrower chosen, and that already the Seven had decided who should rule the new provinces and would see to it that the dice fell only on those of their choice!

In order to try and silence these grumbles—which we heard, of course, through covert means, but could not deal with in the open—we arranged that each throwing should be done by a different member of the Seven. But even that, it appeared, did not satisfy the grumblers—those, at least, who coveted the new positions for themselves or for their nominees.

Now, acting on the advice of our Guides, we had taken care not to choose men who were interested in exploring into the secrets of nature, being mindful of the dangerous state of things in Lemuria due to over-interest in these matters. The dice fell, as we had hoped, on three men who had been ruling kings in earlier lives on other planets, and on two great statesmen of character and strength, who in their earlier lifetimes, again on other planets, had had vast experience of handling men and affairs; and of the remaining five, all of them had excellent incarnationary records so that we regarded them as truly safe and reliable guides and guardians of the groups of people who would in future be committed to their care.

So it was with high hopes that we appointed the ten kings—kings they wished to be called, and we consented, for what did it matter what title they used? And if, children still, they wished to play at kingship, again, it did not matter. What

mattered was that they undertook and conscientiously carried out the great and responsible tasks they had undertaken. But, alas, once again we had not reckoned with the power of the Lords of the Dark Face, nor with the innate weakness of the creatures we had created! I think that here I could do no better than to quote what the great philosopher Plato wrote on this matter in his tale of Atlantis. Alas, that that tale breaks off before the end, which is lost—but thus it goes.

“For many generations, as long as the divine nature lasted in them,” (speaking of the inhabitants of Atlantis, and especially the Kings who then ruled the country) “they were obedient to the laws, and well-affected towards the gods who were their kinsmen. For they possessed true and in every way great spirits, practising gentleness and wisdom in the various chances of life, and in their intercourse with one another.

They despised everything but virtue, not caring for their present state of life, and thinking lightly of the possession of gold and other property, which seemed only a burden to them. Neither were they intoxicated with luxury, nor did wealth deprive them of their self-control; but they were sober and saw clearly that all these goods are increased by virtuous friendship with one another, and that by excessive zeal for them and honour of them, the good of them is lost and friendship perishes with them.

But when the divine portion began to fade away in them and became diluted too often, and with too much of the mortal admixture, so that the human nature got the upper hand, they, being unable to bear their good fortune, became unseemly, and to him who had an eye to see, they began to appear base and had lost the fairest of their precious gifts. But to those who had no eye to see the true happiness, they still appeared glorious and blessed at the very time when they were filled with unrighteous avarice and power. . . .”

Now it was arranged in the beginning that thrice a year the ten kings should journey up from their nomes to the City of the Golden Gates, and there take part in our traditional worship in the great Temple on the heights above the city.

There they would receive advice and good counsel from the Great Ones on their dealings with the people under their care, and obtain answers to the questions that were puzzling them or solutions to the problems to which, alone, they could not find the answer. And so for a very long time, many years in your reckoning, things went well.

The Kings came to the Temple, each with his followers, all arrayed in their finest garments, jewelled and adorned, riding upon the horses which were now grown tall and strong as in your present day; and we Martians were secretly amused amongst ourselves at the childish rivalry amongst the kings as to which should have the handsomest suite of followers, the most obsequious servants, the loveliest wife—and this brings me to a point which began, after a time, greatly to disquiet the Seven. Or rather, to two points which I must explain to you before you can understand the rest of my story.

I have already told you how and why we were forced to make what we always called "the Great Change". The abandonment of our old method of dying and being re-born, as in Mars, since after many years it was found that the great difference in conditions between Mars and Terra (also doubtless the gradual changes in ourselves through countless years of living on Terra) made this method no longer practicable. And when, perforce, we had to change to being "re-born" in one of the willingly-offered bodies of our Temple pupils, we had to explain this as best we could to our growing Earthlings. This had to be, so that they might understand why, almost overnight, a girl or boy they had known by name, met and played with and gone to school with in youth, could suddenly change and become an absolute authority over them. They had become, though still in appearance their old selves, someone who was a member of the Seven; one who had "died" and taken over the body of this, his or her pupil, in order to continue their work.

I have told you that those who knew the Martian who had done this could easily recognize that Martian, even functioning in a strange young body. They were recognizable by the

look in the eyes, the voice, the gestures and everything else—for of course, the Martian *remained* his or herself, very emphatically, while the original owner of the loaned body had gone on elsewhere to earn a just reward.

It seemed to us that the Earthlings had accepted this, our explanation quite normally and without question; but after some time we found that they had “translated” our explanation in their own way. This was to decide that some, if not all, of the Temple children, were children born to members of the Seven, their own offspring, born of mating between the women and men of the Seven! And that thanks to this, when one of the Seven faced the ending of his or her life-span, it was easy to take possession of the young body of one of their own children and continue to function in this.

This they accepted, at first, at least, since those who had known Zenobia, for instance, could not fail to recognize her distinctive walk, her mellow voice, her penetrating eyes and the typical gestures she used when teaching or explaining anything, even when she was functioning in a body not her own, the borrowed body of a young woman. And yet, as time went on, we found that many of the young growing Earthlings (those, for instance, too young to have known Zenobia in her Martian shape) were not willing to accept this, but believed that the young woman who called herself Zenobia and who, their elders said, resembled the first Zenobia so strongly, did so because she was the actual daughter or descendant of Zenobia! The new members of the Council who from time to time appeared were, they believed, simply physical children born to the Seven and trained to take over their duties and their responsibilities from childhood so that the “succession”, so to speak, remained assured.

As this belief spread, slowly but surely—a belief aided, you may be sure, by those enemies of ours, the Lords of Darkness!—although our Earthlings still accepted the Council of Seven in Atlantis and its counterpart in Lemuria, since they had never known any other authority, yet their faith in it and in its wisdom began slowly but surely to weaken; until at

last the time came when the congregation that assembled to worship in the Temple attended more because they had always done so and dared not stay away rather than from any desire to offer up their thoughts and prayers to Those so much higher than themselves! And so the hold of love, humility, obedience to the Great Ones and to He Who is far above them—that hold we had fought so long to establish—began insensibly to loosen; and though as time went on we guessed it, and tried our hardest to strengthen our power over the minds of these Earthlings whom now we had grown to love so much, we could not but realize that we were failing. We no longer meant, to these children of ours, what we had once meant. . . . And there was another thing that greatly worried the Seven—and worried also our colleagues across the sea in far Lemuria. And that was—sex!

Now, I have already told you that on Mars we were born mated, and soon after childhood, in fact, would find our way somehow to the one who was born to be our "other half", also that in our mating, in which our impalpable bodies literally melted into one another in the nuptial embrace, we knew an ecstasy so infinitely more beautiful and satisfying than the crude physical mating known on Earth that there is simply no comparison between them. But on Mars we knew absolutely nothing about sex considered as an amusement, as it is regarded so sadly often on Earth! We came together, the two of us who were made for each other, and loved each other eternally, with no thought for anyone else; and when we found, as inevitably at last we did find, that even amongst the advanced Earthlings we were training, sex was treated casually, as a sort of appetite to be satisfied as soon as possible and with anybody, alas, who happened to be there when desire arose within them, we were both puzzled and horrified!

Many were the anxious discussions that took place between the Seven and our fellow Martians who were working with the Earthlings; in Khem we had paid little heed to the way in which the Earthlings used their sex instincts, feeling that as they grew in stature, intelligence and spirituality they

would learn to treat sex with reverence and respect. But, alas, it was not so! And when, very many years later, we saw that even amongst us, the Martians, these began to show interest in physical sex, not for love, but for the stimulus, the thrill, the excitement it could produce—then indeed we began to feel seriously disquieted!

We talked earnestly to our Guides, but they could give us little comfort. They reminded us that in the enforced taking over of Earth-bodies we Martians had taken over the risk of "infection" from those very bodies; and though being more highly spiritualized than the souls who were incarnating in the later bodies of the Earthlings, we could count on remaining immune from many of the tendencies that might influence lesser souls, yet we could not count on escaping completely from *all* danger! It was up to us to fight temptation to the sin of misuse of sex, and to try and teach our Earthling children how wrong and unwise this was—and so indeed we tried. But, alas, without avail! And so it came to pass, as your Good Book has it, that "the Sons of God looked upon the daughters of men and found them fair. . . ."

I 4

Disaster on Lemuria

NOW one of the things that tried not a few of us male Martians was the fact that not all of us were lucky enough to be companioned by our feminine Twin Halves, as I was.

Although most Martians working on Terra did have their Counterparts with them, this was not so with a few; as will be seen by the fact that the numbers of the two Councils of Seven, the first one on Atlantis, the second on Lemuria, are uneven; four men to three women—which meant that one of the men must needs lack his true partner. For some wise reason, no doubt, though what it was I never knew, the women-halves of these men, on the emigration from Mars, did not accompany them to Terra, but were directed elsewhere where they were needed; and at first this separation, although painful, was less important than later on, for in the early days the telepathic link between two Twin Souls was so strong that no matter where each might be in the Universe, they could make contact mentally whenever they chose; so they could companion each other truly, even though they might be separated in the physical.

But alas, as the endless years wound by, this power, like other physical powers that we had brought from Mars, began to weaken; and then, when the Great Change was made and the lonely men grew accustomed to wearing Earthly bodies borrowed from young people, they became, slowly but surely,

the prey to Earthly temptations, especially by the lusts of the body of Earth—knowing nothing on Mars of lust, we had not reckoned with the strength of this. Nor of the loneliness that, alas led many of us who should have known better into placing a woman of Earth in the place of their missing true love; and so the insidious rot set in.

I have already said that these new Earthlings, these children of Earth and Heaven combined, were exceedingly beautiful, and it was true. But when, to spare Zenobia, I myself undertook the next voyage to Lemuria and found one, Muran, of the leaders of the Council of Seven there—yes, even amongst these—living openly with a lovely woman of the Earthlings, whom he said he had married, I was both shocked and alarmed, for I knew that for a son of Ours to have fallen so low meant mischief indeed!

I tried hard to get Muran to realize this, but he was stubborn, and argued with me and would not see. Yes, indeed, he knew very well that in time to come his Other Half who, alas, had not accompanied him to Earth, would reproach him for his unfaithfulness. But that he had to accept—and in any case, that time was a long way off. I (he pointed out, not without acerbity) had no right to reproach him, as I was one of the fortunate ones in having my beloved partner, Zenobia, on Terra with me! I was not a lonely man, as he was, so I could neither understand nor sympathize with his need of a woman-companion! And so I shrugged my shoulders and left him.

There also I took the opportunity of speaking seriously to the three scientists who were delving into the mysteries of the Earth beneath Lemuria. Their names were Mel, Sarn and Kihom, and all three had been brilliant scientists, alchemists, magicians, physicists and so on in earlier lives on other planets; but while they listened courteously enough, and even agreed with much that I had to say, it was plain to me that although they listened and agreed with the upper surface of their minds, their inner minds were still hell-bent on going their own way! Mel, the eldest of the three, argued that even if there was some slight danger in the underground experiments that they were

conducting, surely nothing worth doing was worth dropping simply because of danger? He was convinced that to harness as he was sure in time they could and *would* harness, these giant forces of nature and make them work for mankind, would be doing their race an inestimable service; and so on and so forth . . . so at last, realizing that I was making no headway at all, I shrugged my shoulders again and said no more.

It had been some time since I had last visited Lemuria, and I was impressed and amazed at the handsome city and its well-tended and fruitful environs, shipyards and factories, gardens and farms and fields; and I visited also a place of which they were very proud—the quarries, some distance from the city, where the great stone figures were made that I found standing here and there about the city. Figures carved in stone, long-faced, with thin close-folded lips and pendulous ears, and on their heads curious round hats made of red tufa. Alas that that ancient quarry is all that is now left standing above the water!* And still on it there stand a few of these strange figures, and your scientists and explorers are constantly trying to find out who made these figures, why, and for what reason.

The Temple that the Lemurian Settlers had built in Lemnos, their chief city, was constructed, in the ancient fashion, in a great peaked cone-shape, and within, it bore a strong resemblance to our classic design. The group of pillars with a seat for one of the Seven at each base, the glimmering God-Light overhead and the brazier for the holy incense beneath. Yet despite all this, there was in some elusive way a flavour, shall I say, that disquieted me; and though I sat through several Evenings of Worship, being accorded a special seat as an emissary from the Original Seven, and saw nothing that I could possibly put my finger on or to disapprove of, that odd feeling of inner disquiet remained; and I understood just what Zenobia had meant when she told me that somehow she felt *fear*!

Fear I felt also. It was not merely physical fear, though that

*Easter Island.

was there, fear of the physical disaster that might only too easily befall this fair land and the people living on it, did things go wrong in these mad experiments that the scientists, despite our efforts to dissuade them, were trying out below the surface of the Earth. I had refused to go down with them to inspect the "workings", as they called them, although all was well arranged for the descent. There were scores of fine engineers who had incarnated into the new race who were only too delighted to be able to employ their old skill again, acquired in many earlier lives; and I soon realized that even did I succeed in holding back the leaders of the experiment, the scientists whose guidance they were following, I would have to reckon with the bitter anger and resentment of these their followers, who were racing ahead, almost, of their leaders in their eagerness to try to catch and harness this strange new Force that, the scientists assured them, could transform their entire world. As indeed it did, though not in the way they had hoped....

Try as I would, I could not get any explanation either of the reason for or the meaning of the strange stone figures. The men who were set to carve them from the living stone of the vast quarries where we found most of them, were vague—said that they were gods of long ago—though where, again, they found the idea of "gods" I could not fathom. Unless these new Earthlings had somehow twisted the teachings we had given them about the Great Ones and He-Who-may-not-be-Named into some idea of actual beings, and tried to portray them in stone!

It was about this that I was talking as I leant on the rail of the great ship that was conveying me, with many of my fellows and certain Lemurians, back to Atlantis, one fine day that spring. My companion was Muran, the member of the Seven on Lemuria who had married a woman of the Earthlings; a woman certainly lovely to look at, I had to admit, but with a certain, to me, sly and faintly sinister look in her great dark eyes that I did not altogether like. She was travelling with Muran now, having expressed a great desire to see the

City of the Golden Gates of which she had heard so much; and she had brought with her her brother, whose name was Undaar, as hers was Undred, for they were twins. I had pointed out, I fear rather sourly, to Muran that our ship was already overloaded and should not be asked to take two extra passengers, their servants and their baggage; of which there was much, as Undred was vain of her beauty, and was, moreover, anxious to make a great impression in the high society of the great city of which she had heard so much. But it had been useless my talking, since Muran was hopelessly under the thumb of this woman; and though I had known him well in Atlantis before he was sent to Lemuria, and reckoned him an intelligent and experienced member of our people, I felt that I scarcely knew him when I heard him giving assent after assent to anything his wife might ask of him!

Yet I liked him, and he was one of Us. So as we sailed smoothly onwards in the great dragon-prowed ship over the blue-green depths, and watched the great leaping dolphins and the silvery flying fish break surface now and then as though to stage a circus for our amusement, I was asking him about the stone statues, and he shrugged his shoulders and made a faint grimace. How it had started, he said, he really could not say. But certainly a long time ago, and it was said that the carving of the statues was done to placate certain gods that of old had ruled Terra. I raised my brows.

"How can that be?" I asked. "We Martians are surely the only beings that could be regarded as gods by these Earthlings, since we came down from our old home, and since then have lived with them, teaching and training and helping them until they are now ready to govern themselves."

But again he shrugged—he did not know. It was from his wife—or perhaps from her brother—that he had first heard the tales of gods.

He had (he said) personally paid but little attention to the story, regarding it as a thing childish in itself, something that had been invented by a few people by way of finding amusement for themselves and their fellows, as children invent fairy

stories; he was convinced that that was all it was. It sounded plausible. But somehow, though outwardly I accepted what he said and appeared satisfied, I was not; though I made up my mind not to mention this particular anxiety to Zenobia when we met again, as she had quite enough on her mind to worry about without my adding a fresh item.

Two of the Lemurians who were returning with us in our ship to Atlantis were two of the scientists, Mel and Sarn, who had been working on the gas experiments underground near the capital—indeed, the only great city—of Lemuria. Finely as this our largest colony had progressed, it had up to date built only one large city, but on it had concentrated most of its energies. But for a few scattered townlets, mostly situated on harbours that were useful to shipping, the capital city, Lemnos, was the only considerable collection of large buildings in Lemuria; though along the coast nearby there was a rising collection of villas belonging to leading citizens, together with the main Temple and two or three other handsome buildings whose purpose puzzled me, as beside each of them stood one of the new statues, its cold, thin-lipped face staring woodenly out to sea. . . .

I asked Mel and Sarn what these buildings might be, but they glanced at each other and made evasive answers. I asked why Kihom, who was the third scientist, had elected to remain behind while his two colleagues visited Atlantis, and they told me that Kihom had preferred to stay behind to keep watch over the complicated array of machinery that was connected with the gas experiments; these were delicate and he dared not trust them, even to his highly-trained assistants, lest something go wrong and all their plans be spoilt. So they had left him in charge of the workings, and came themselves to consult the Great Ones for advice as to how best to proceed with their investigations.

This again puzzled me, as at the weekly Services of Worship in the Temple of Lemuria, as they had promised, the Great Ones had spoken through the entranced body of one of the Seven who had been appointed there. Though they did not

appear in person, as in the Temple in Atlantis, they could and did speak in this way, give advice and answer questions; and it seemed to me odd and rather sinister that all the same, Mel and Sarn had chosen to visit Atlantis to consult the Great Ones there. And this fact confirmed me in my suspicion that on Lemuria, the Council of Seven did not have the influence over their followers that the original Seven had, and to an extent still had, in Atlantis.

But this again, I did not mention, when to my great joy I was once more united with my beloved Zenobia. On the arrival of our ships we were greeted by enthusiastic crowds, and our guests received the welcome and acclamation they deserved, and so for awhile all went well. Although we could soon tell that neither Mel nor Sarn were pleased with the reaction of the Great Ones to the great scientific experiments that were going on in Lemuria.

Truly, the ancient King said at the first Service of Worship when, as usual, he appeared, that it was right and wise to try and learn to harness and bring into practical use the powers of the natural Forces; but this should be done with very great care, as those Forces were the elemental Forces of Nature and if they got out of hand would be quite impossible for the wisest scientist to control. Much wise advice he gave beyond this, and they listened in silence, though I could tell that they did not like the substance of what the aged King had said; which was to go slowly and very cautiously in the work on which they were bent, and whether they would follow it or not when they returned to Lemuria was, I felt, more than doubtful.

Since among the visiting Lemurians were many friends and relatives of folk living in Atlantis, there was great gaiety and rejoicing in the City of the Golden Gates, and the visitors were much admired and envied; especially Undred, the wife of Muran, and her handsome brother Undaar, who was her twin. (In saying this I do not mean that they were Twin Souls, as were Zenobia and I. Merely that they had been born two at the same birth—physical twins, that is all).

They were so much alike to look at that it was common talk that they could exchange clothes and be mistaken for each other; and it was certain that Undaar shared his sister's love of jewels and finery, so that he would wear garments and ornaments far too ornate to suit a man—at least, according to our ideas. Undred was plainly all set to become the most glamorous and envied woman in Atlantis and made no secret of the fact that she much preferred Atlantis, a large and beautiful country with many cities and much wealth, to Lemuria; she was bitterly jealous of Zenobia, whose ancient beauty always shone through the mask of whatever body she might be using, and of her power—which again shone out of her despite herself. Although these days Zenobia tended to avoid appearing at the great feasts and entertainments that rejoiced the heart of Undred.

Zenobia spent much time in the service of the Temple, in teaching the children and young folk who still flocked to her, in the study of ancient scripts and in silent meditation. She had told me long since that as time went on she felt herself more and more drawn out of the world of everyday things, though why, she did not know. She had felt strangely troubled at this and wondered much about it, and the Great Ones, when she questioned them about it, remained evasive. But they did tell her that her spiritual side was being more and more highly developed and that in time she, with me, would be translated to a higher and freer existence than the one that we were leading at the present on Terra. But speaking of everyday life, she was not so far divorced from it that she missed perceiving certain aspects of it that disquieted her considerably; and one that she mentioned to me was in particular the effect that the beautiful Undred was having on Xaxis, the Governor—or king, as they preferred to be called—of the chief nome of Atlantis; the one in which the City of the Golden Gates was placed.

Muran, Undred's husband, spent much time with the two scientists, Mel and Sarn, who were intimates of his; and alas, in his absence Undred did her best to net Xaxis in the web of

her beauty, and her brother Undaar undoubtedly did his best to help her. Unhappily Xaxis, again, was one of those who, despite Martian descent, had no soulmate to companion him on Terra, in his handsome palace situated on the outskirts of the City of the Golden Gates.

Owing to his fear of the disapproval of the Great Ones, Xaxis had formed no close link with an Earthling woman as alas, had so many others. But it was soon plain that the woman Undred was attracting his attention—it was, indeed, inevitable that it should be so, as she was always conspicuous by her beauty, and as the wife of Muran had a prominent place near Xaxis at any feast or entertainment. So both Zenobia and I found ourselves increasingly anxious and worried, and looking forward to the time when Muran and the others, with their attendants and entourages, would have to return to Lemuria.

Once deprived of Undred's influence, we were sure that Xaxis would recover his old balance and continue doing the good work that he had done up to date as king of the chief nome of Atlantis—but it was not to be!

Early one morning I was awakened by a loud cry from the room occupied by Zenobia, which led out of my own sleeping chamber.

I rushed in to see her writhing and crying out on her bed as though she was suffering great pain—her eyes were wide and fixed, and when I begged her to tell me what was the matter, for two or three moments she could not speak. Then suddenly she stilled and lay flat, and there was a long silence. Then she laid one hand on mine and spoke in a horrified whisper.

"Teraon, my own, I have been out of my body, and seen with my own eyes the death of a nation!" She closed her eyes, and two great tears welled out from under the long lashes that shaded them as she went on. "Lemuria, our greatest colony—*Lemuria is dead!* Blown up! Kihom, eager to outstrip his colleagues who are here, could not resist the temptation to try out a further experiment, with the result that the network

of gas chambers that lies beneath the main part of Lemuria caught fire and blew up! I saw it—I saw it—and never shall I forget the sight! And now—now the salt sea rolls over Lemnos, that fair city, and all those who made it and lived in it!”

15

Aftermath of Disaster

I GAVE my beloved some wine to drink and soothed her as best I could until at last she fell into a restful sleep; but there was no sleep for me. Soon after Zenobia fell asleep I received a telepathic message from Derek. He and I were great friends and had worked together on previous worlds; so here on Atlantis we were brother workers once more, and I knew that he depended much on me, as I on him. As I picked up his telepathic message my heart sank, for it was weighted with gloom! My Zenobia's vision had been only too true—Lemuria, the greater part of it at least, had vanished from the face of Terra!

Thanks to Kihom's unfortunate meddling, urged on by his desire to win to his goal ahead of his two fellow-scientists, the tangle of gasbelts that underran, like a giant network of veins and arteries, the whole country of Lemuria, had caught fire, and an explosion had taken place the like of which had never been seen on Earth! But for a few stray survivors who had either been living on very high points of ground or who had been lucky or foresighted enough to climb there before the worst occurred, those who had peopled Lemuria, Lemnos its beautiful capital, and the smaller towns scattered along the coastline, had all perished in the terrible catastrophe! Tomorrow the dread news must be announced to the public in the Central Square of our city by one of the Public Criers,

according to custom; and in the evening there must be a special session of the Council of Seven to see what would be done, if anything, to send help to the stricken land.

So within a matter of a few hours the gaiety and laughter and rejoicing that had prevailed in the City of the Golden Gates changed to gloom and distress unspeakable, and in crowds the people milled and clamoured about the Square in which the Crier had called his news, shouting for help to be sent, ships, food, men. To still the clamour for at least a little, Jeroam stood forth on the rostrum from which the Crier had cried his tragic news, and told the assembled multitude that that very night a special meeting of the Seven was to be held at which the Guides would advise us, and that everything that could possibly be done to send help *would* be done. This news served to calm the excited populace for at least a time, and they drifted away from the Square to their own homes, or to cafés and outdoor restaurants where they could sit and discuss the situation, what possible steps could be taken to rescue the survivors, and so on; and indeed, beside the natural shock and horror of such a catastrophe, many Atlanteans had had relatives and friends amongst those who had settled in Lemuria; so great was the sorrow and mourning all over the City of the Golden Gates.

Muran, his wife and brother-in-law had been given sumptuous quarters in the Palace by Xaxis because (or so Xaxis had it put about) Muran, as the Head of the Council of Seven on Lemuria, deserved especial honour. But this did not deceive our Council, though the common people might well have believed it. We knew that it was because more and more Xaxis desired to have Undred, Muran's wife, in close proximity to himself, and our hearts were heavy; yet there was nothing that we could do!

When the news of the disaster was conveyed to Undred, she staged a dramatic scene of shock and distress, fainting, it appears, and thereafter going into one hysterical fit after another; though knowing her theatrical ways, I had no belief that that swoon was anything but a clever pose to impress

Xaxis with her sensibility—and her brother followed suit. Divesting himself of the jewels and richly coloured and embroidered clothes he loved, he went about clothed only in white, with hair uncombed and a face of woe which, like his sister's swoon and hysterical tears, did not impress me at all, nor any of the Seven. But it was plain that all this, especially Undred's performance, vastly impressed Xaxis; and that, you may imagine, did nothing to improve our feelings as we assembled that evening in the Temple for the Special Session with the Guides that they had ordered.

The Temple was packed to its walls, for the people, frightened and longing for help, came crowding in, even those who disliked the climbing of the steep stairway that led to the heights whereon the Temple stood; and what they saw was worth any and every effort, for when the forms began to appear, lo, they were headed by the Man with the Wreath! He was supported by the Old King, the Woman in Blue and the Guardian Brother who always appeared with these two; and against the dusk in which, for this magical moment, the Temple was clothed, the four figures shone forth with a majesty resplendent in the extreme.

Surrounded as they always were with a sort of luminous cloud that could not be called light, and that yet seemed to serve the purpose of light, the Man with the Wreath stood forth before his three companions and spoke to the multitude that watched him, kneeling, with awed minds and reverently bowed heads. He told us sadly that alas, there was little that he could say that would mitigate the distress, the shock and horror that was, he knew, riding us all, since the news of the catastrophe. All that he could tell us was that the death that overcame Lemuria had been sudden and very complete, and there had been no lingering agonies. Most of those caught in the explosion, or overwhelmed by the tidal wave that followed it, had died so quickly that they found themselves awake at once on the Other Side, in the company of those who were waiting for them; and he assured us that those of us who had lost loved ones in Lemuria would, in God's good time, either

be given news of these or be allowed actual speech with them, when they had got over the shock of their sudden passing. And for those who had lost friends and relatives in the disaster, of whom there were many, this was a great consolation.

But the Man with the Wreath went on to say that it was useless, at the moment, deeply as he regretted having to say this, to try and send rescuing ships to the vast ocean in the midst of which Lemuria had once lain. The underground network of natural gaschambers that had unhappily been set alight by Kihom's unfortunate experimenting was widespread, and the explosion had "travelled" in many directions, so that even now, though the worst seemed to be over, there was still a possibility that fresh explosions might occur—and anyway, the state of the sea was like a boiling pot, its waters churned and hurled abroad in huge tidal waves caused by the explosion! No ship, at the moment, could have lived in such seas. At least three days to a week must elapse before the waters calmed down sufficiently to allow the passage of any rescue ships going to try and save such survivors as might have found a refuge on one of the mountain peaks, now mere scattered islands just showing above the raging sea; and at this dire news the people wept indeed, and so did we.

But there was nothing to do but wait and long, as indeed we Martians did, most bitterly, for the airships of old that would have served us so well now! However, there was no use grieving over the past; and when a week later we received the report that the wild seas were at last quieting down, we sent our ships, all that could be spared, which we had spent the intervening days feverishly fitting out and filling with supplies, food, nursing and medical materials, clothing and so on.

But alas, when the ships at last managed to draw somewhere near the wide expanse of ocean where once Lemuria had reigned as queen, they could see nothing but a few green-capped islands lying at a long distance from each other, and in between the seas, still raging so violently that it took our pilots and captains and rowers all their skill to keep us afloat,

let alone approach one of the islands to see if it might perchance contain a few survivors of the disaster who had taken refuge there! Yet at last, by the exercise of great skill and patience, one or two of the rescuing ships managed to find a comparatively sheltered bay where they could put in on one of the larger islands, and some daring sailors went ashore; and lo, hiding in caves or in the undergrowth they found a few terrified folk, naked and starving, one or two of which, to our horror, had taken to cannibalism in order to survive!

Later on, when we questioned these poor ones, they sullenly declared that they killed nobody for food. But many were the dead bodies flung up on the shores by the raging sea; and as the islands on which the survivors were stranded were but the peaks of the mountains of the lands they had known, there grew on them no crops of fruit or herbage that they could eat. So perforce, sooner than starve they made use of the already dead bodies of their fellows, and they could not and would not see that that was wrong, since it was a choice between that and death by slow starvation!

So back the ships came at last with the few poor souls that they had been able to save, and the rest of us tried to get back to normal life, though this was very difficult. The shock of the catastrophe had changed us all in some ways—and indeed, the collapse of Lemuria had changed the face of much of the world that we had known. The colossal inrush of tidal waters had invaded much of the middle region of what is now America and created the “waist” of that country; and much that was, when Lemuria existed, on the same level as the ocean, was now elevated sometimes for miles above its surface.

Even today many an ancient shoreline, with fossils, shells, pebbles and other traces of its old life on the verge of, or even under, the sea, are found high up amongst the mountains of many lands; especially South and Central America, where many of the Atlantean Settlements in the part which is now Peru, survived the disaster that swamped Lemuria, though it changed them in many ways. Because the explosion did not sink them, but *raised* the ground of these settlements many

feet, even many miles in places, above where the furious waters raged and boiled. And so it is that the mysterious city known today as Tiahuanoco* still stands in much of its ancient stone-built glory, as our colonists from Atlantis built it, although today it faces only a lake, called Lake Titicaca, high up amongst the mountain peaks, and does not overlook the seas as it once did.

It took much time before the tragic remnants of the people of Lemuria were re-habilitated amongst us Atlanteans, and so much attention was concentrated upon them that other matters were unheeded, by the public at least. But not by us, and especially not by my Zenobia.

One day she asked me what I thought of the reported illness of Muran. I raised my brows and said that there was nothing much in it, I thought. The weather was hot, and perhaps Muran, who was a good trencherman, had over-eaten himself at one of the frequent feasts that Xaxis loved to give to entertain his guests.

Zenobia shook her head.

"I am not satisfied that it is anything so simple," she said drily. "The woman Undred is playing a cunning game—and it is in my mind that she plans to get rid of Muran, her husband, and fasten upon Xaxis instead! After all, Xaxis is King—King of this nome at least. And perhaps, in time, of all Atlantis. . . ."

I stared at her in horror.

"Do you mean that she plots—murder?" I asked, sinking my voice to a mere whisper, for I had no mind for our talk to be overheard and so set gossip going in a place already too fond of gossip. Zenobia raised her brows.

"I said not so," she said, "but now that you have mentioned it, my Teraon, well, I would not put it past her! She is, I am convinced, a woman totally without either heart or scruple, and if she cannot rid herself of Muran in a natural way, I believe that she might try—shall we say—other ways?"

*For details of this remarkable city now high up in the Bolivian-Peruvian Andes, read H. M. Bellamy's book *Built Before the Flood*.

As I sat silent from sheer horror, Zenobia went across the room. We were sitting after our modest supper one evening in the pretty sitting-room of our house on the mountain side, and taking up a handsome metal box that stood on a side-table, she opened it with a tiny key that, along with other keys, she always carried slung from a gold chain about her waist.

I had given her the box long ago, and it was made of that strange and beautiful reddish-coloured metal called orichalcum that you no longer have on Earth; its sides were hammered and ornamented with the large green stones now known as chrysoprases, and on the top of the lid was a great round ruby to act as a sort of handle by which to raise the lid of the box. I watched her unlock the box and thought of the days on Mars when such a thing as thieving was unknown, and locks and keys neither made nor needed! Zenobia glanced at me and smiled sadly, and I knew, as so often, she shared my unspoken thought.

Picking up the box, she brought it across the room to where I sat on the cushioned window-seat, and I thought as I saw her move, in the graceful long robe of sea-green that was her choice to wear that day, how wondrous it was that in spite of the strange bodies that she was forced to occupy, still there shone through every one of them, the grace and beauty of my Martian love! Zenobia of the curling hair, the dark eyes, the long and slender limbs—for only one thing did my love stipulate when she was forced to start afresh in a borrowed body, and it was this. She would only accept those bodies which were tall and slender, as she herself had been—and on this she insisted, refusing, though ever kindly, to make use of a short or dumpy shape, no matter how earnestly the possessor of that shape might beg her to accept it. No! In that matter she was truly all woman, was my love, and I loved her the better for it.

She set down the box beside me and then, going to a tall vase made of the ruby-coloured glass that we loved in Atlantis, took from it one of the flowers with which it was filled. A tall

and lovely white lily whose pungent fragrance filled the air—the ancestor, actually, of the “Madonna” lily that you have in your modern world, that flower that is still loved and admired more than any other flower, except perhaps the rose.

She brought the flower to me and laid it carefully down upon the surface of the small table where stood the metal box, and then taking hold of the ruby, she raised the lid of the box. I looked within and exclaimed in surprise, for usually it was filled with a glittering mass of jewels; but now it was empty but for a small gold box about the size of one of your boxes of cigarettes.

Zenobia smiled.

“I have removed the jewels to another box for the moment,” she said, “since there is that within the little gold box that I wish to keep apart. When you open it, do not touch what lies therein. If what I fear is proved true, my Teraon, then the less we contact these intruders who, alas, seem now to have come to stay permanently in Atlantis, the better. Open the box!”

Cautiously I raised the lid of the gold box and saw within it a lock of hair—and at once I knew whose hair it was! It was a lock of the colour now called auburn, a rich deep red—a colour still much admired on your Earth, and then so rare in our early world as to be remarkable and greatly admired. It was the hair of Undred!

“How did you get this without her knowing?” I asked, amazed.

“It was easy,” said Zenobia. “You know that Undred is very vain of her hair and loves to wear it streaming about her. So that last time we attended one of poor Xaxis’ banquets that he so loves to give, I bade one of my maids bring with her a small pair of scissors, and at some moment, when the attention of everybody was either on the supper or else on the entertainments, the dancers and singers and acrobats who came in afterwards to amuse the guests, to snip off a lock of Undred’s hair, hide it in this little box, which I gave her, and afterwards bring it to me. And so she did. After the meal

everybody was so occupied in watching the entertainment that it was easy to do—and here I have hidden it ever since. And now—now we will try and see if I am right about this woman, or if my suspicions are not justified!”

She took the box from me, laid it on the table and drew the curtains close. It was evening, and our young servitors long gone home, their daily service done; and yet it was well to be sure of privacy, for what we were about to do was strange, and if news of it got abroad might cause much gossip, which we were always anxious to avoid.

Within the dusked room now there was only the soft light of a single lamp carved out of moon-coloured alabaster; and as Zenobia opened the box (being, I noted, careful not to touch the hair that lay therein), I saw again the strange auburn lock, and seemed to see the handsome head of its owner, flung back as though proud of the length of the flaming aureole it carried. Then Zenobia took up the flower, the white blossom that meant purity, and with it softly touched the lock of hair. And lo—the lock, at its touch, curled instantly into a tight knot, as though it had been hurt! Curled and remained tangled—and Zenobia, nodding gravely, laid down the flower.

“I was right,” she said briefly. “She is evil—and her hair, being part of her, revolted, terrified, at the touch of purity! Teraon, we have discovered something that was necessary for us to know—but now we must go further! I must project myself into Undred’s aura, watch where she goes, and try to find out what she is doing—we know much, but we must know all, and there is no way but that.”

“But is there no other way?” I asked. “Wonderfully as we Seven are always protected, we do not know whether that protection will extend if we deliberately put ourselves in the hands of evil.”

“I know,” said Zenobia. “But there is no other way. I know that on certain nights she and her brother Undaar—who I believe to be more to her than merely her brother, vile as it sounds to say this!—absent themselves from others, on the pretext of praying and meditating for the help of those friends

and relatives who died in Lemuria. I am quite sure they do no such thing—and I *must* find out what they do! But for my protection I shall need two, and I had thought of asking our friend Derek to join you. He is a strong soul, and like me, has long mistrusted these two.”

16

The Truth is Discovered

D E R E K was eager to help us, and we arranged to meet on the following night, on which, Zenobia told us, Undred and her brother were due to withdraw themselves apart together. We three ate our supper together of eggs, cheese, vegetables, curds and meal-cakes with fruit, in the sitting-room of our house on the mountainside; and when our young servitors had removed the meal and departed to their own homes, we prepared, with hearts grave but hopeful, for our sitting.

We had mentioned nothing of our intent to any other of the group of Seven, and especially not to any member of the Lemurian Seven, several of whom had accompanied Muran to Atlantis. Since the defection of Muran, we had begun to distrust his fellow-members, or at least to treat them with great caution. If the Leader of the Group had fallen so far below the standards demanded by his high office, how could we expect his fellows to maintain theirs? We had also refrained from speaking of our plan to others of our own Seven, partly because we knew that several of them were friends—Forse, indeed, was a relative—of those belonging to the Lemurian Seven; and we feared lest, without intending it, something of our intention might leak out and put those we meant to trap on their guard. More than three were not needed for our dangerous venture. Three, the Sacred Trinity, were sufficient; and so Derek and I sat facing each other, with Zenobia lying flat on her back on

the low couch that had been drawn out into the centre of the room. Derek and I sat on each side of the couch, and all three of us were wearing new robes of the finest and whitest linen, and each of us holding a branch of the Holy Lily.

More lilies stood about the room in tall vases, and in a golden incense-burner there burnt some of the precious Temple incense. This Zenobia, as High Priestess, had the right to do; though to no other person was this right granted, to use the sacred incense outside the Temple itself, did she deem it wise and needful. The curtains were drawn so that the room was dusked but for the pale moon-coloured light from our alabaster lamp; and the fragrance of the lilies, mingled with that of the incense, was strong in the room.

On her breast Zenobia wore an ancient and powerful amulet carved out of an emerald, strong to protect against the Power of Evil; and as she settled back against the pillow she smiled at me and then at Derek, and held out a hand to each.

"Farewell for the moment, my brother Derek and my love Teraon!" she whispered. "I go on a perilous journey, that I know; but my faith is strong that I shall return unharmed, for I go to find the truth and to see how the evil that we sense has entered Atlantis may be defeated! Take down my words as I speak them, Derek, so that we have a record that mayhap must later on be shown to the rest of our Seven in order to convince them of the truth. And so, for the moment fare you well!"

His voice ceased, and a deep silence settled down upon the room. Derek, who had his tablets—several of them, I noted, in case Zenobia's story proved a long one—arranged beside him on a small table, and his stilus beside them, sat upright in his chair, his strong face set and grave, his hands folded one over the other, and his eyes fixed on the sleeping face of Zenobia. The silence grew and deepened, and then suddenly Zenobia began speaking and Derek, snatching up the nearest tablet, set it on his knee and began to write.

There was nothing for me to do but listen and lend my psychic and mental strength to my beloved who lay there—whose body, at least, lay there, though I knew that the greater

part of her sweet and gallant self was already separated from it, travelling afar on the track of the evil that she had sensed and dreaded. With all my might I prayed that strength should be drawn from me to help and protect her—drawn to the uttermost farthing!—and marked as I prayed the strange and terrifying change that comes to the countenance of those who have deserted their physical bodies for one reason or another. Zenobia's face was pale and pinched, and heavy blue shadows lay beneath her closed eyes, and her mouth seemed fixed in something like a grimace of pain, or possibly fear—and as she spoke I knew well what it was she felt.

"I am standing in the private rooms of Undred and her brother Undaar is there, and I now know that my feeling that there was more than a mere brotherly and sisterly love between those two is true! They are lovers, and have been so for long! They are laughing and talking together—no sign of any praying or kneeling or making invocations for the dead!—and I know now that Undred has been wed, before, to a rich man in Lemuria who died shortly after his marriage to her. I am minded to wonder whether he died naturally or whether these two did not have a hand in it!" She frowned.

"It was after she found that Muran was taking notice of her that her husband died, and she never rested until she had got rid of him and captured Muran—and again, it is in my mind to wonder whether she thinks now to rid herself of Muran so that she may capture Xaxis and become Queen of Atlantis!"

"How could she become Queen of Atlantis?" I asked, "For Xaxis is King of one nome only, and there are nine others who rule the different nomes of the land of Atlantis!"

"This I know," said Zenobia, "but what you do not know, my Teraon, is that since the coming of Undred and her brother and those other evil ones they have brought in their train, the poison of ambition has been instilled into the heart of Xaxis and already he sees himself the only ruler in Atlantis! He is easily the most powerful of the ten kings, as you know, and did it come to physical violence between the nomes. . . ."

"God forbid!" said Derek in a shocked voice. "God forbid that here on Terra we should have to face the experience of war as we knew it on our beloved planet Mars!"

"God forbid indeed," said Zenobia, "and yet, as you know, God has given these Earth-creatures freewill, and should they work themselves into the madness and hysteria of war, it will come . . . and indeed, I fear it! Do you think it is by accident that Undaar, whom Xaxis indulges almost as much as he indulges Undred, has gathered together so many strong young men, and is daily drilling and coaching them in the practice of arms? They crowd the archery fields now—march and counter-march and carry out all manner of set exercises, all together—do you think that this is all for the sake of mere physical exercise?"

There was a shocked pause, and then she resumed.

"Now Undred and Undaar speak of Muran, and I do not like the meaning smiles they exchange, nor do I like the atmosphere of the room in which they sit! They are no longer living in the suite of rooms that Xaxis, in his infatuation, gave to Muran and his wife in his palace when they first came. If you remember, Undred soon desired a separate establishment where she could reign alone—mainly, she said, because she had much heavy furniture with her for which there was no room in the Palace suite; though why she should bring furniture with her when she was merely on a visit, I do not know. But Xaxis made no demur, and as usual yielded to her wishes, and gave Muran the great house upon which Undred had set her heart—that fine house set on the hillside beyond the palace. Now I hear Undaar congratulate his sister upon her wisdom in choosing such a place, for it is over what he calls 'the heart of Atlantis'." She paused and frowned. "I do not know what he can mean, but I will find out. This room is magnificently furnished, but garish and harsh in colouring, and in a niche in the painted walls there seems to be set a sort of small shrine, all gold and jewelled and in it—oh horror!—is set one of those horrible statues that we have seen in Lemuria! It is small, but the same! A long-eared, long-nosed

face with thin cruel lips and slotted eyes, and on its head a sort of round hat of red! The shape of the creature is carved from ivory and the round hat is cut from a lump of ruby—and before it is set a flower. An orchid—the flower of evil!”*

There came another pause, and Derek scribbled madly to catch up with Zenobia’s tale—and after a moment she went on.

“They bow before this horrible image and touch the flower, and now Undred touches a panel in the wall. The room is panelled with coloured marbles and mosaic work, and one would never dream that one of these could move; but so it does, and disclosed behind it is a dark entry, the top of a series of steep steps that seem to wind down into darkness. Now Undaar takes a pocket-torch from the pouch that hangs from his belt, and holds out his hand to his sister. They enter the dark entry, the marble panels slide behind them, and the room is silent.”

Again there was a long pause and then the voice resumed its tale. “Now I seem to be accompanying them down winding stone steps, far and far below the ground. The rocky walls are wet here and there with trickling water, and by the light of the torch that Undaar carries I can see that this way was evidently made in very ancient times, and in a very primitive way. Maybe it was made by some of the Earthlings who lived on Atlantis in the very early days, and dug this way underground, perhaps for shelter from storms or from wild beasts—and then suddenly we were walking on level ground and entering a vast cave!

This cave was lighted by flaring torches set here and there against the rocky walls, and I saw that at one end there was a life-size statue, again of the type familiar to us in Lemuria! It was covered with gold or made of gold, I know not which, and it was hung with chains of jewels and garlands of orchids, and great jewelled ear-rings had been put into its hideous long

*The orchid, in the esoteric view, is supposed to represent Evil, as the lily represents Good.

ears—and I knew at once what Undred had meant by bringing “heavy furniture” with her!

She had brought this vile idol with her—an idol plainly long worshipped by her and her brother, for as they entered they fell on their knees and Undred recited aloud some prayer or other in a tongue I did not understand. Then they rose and went towards the statue, and I saw that before it stood a low altar of purple-tinted marble, and on it burned a pool of flame, some strange liquid set in a bowl of gold that blazed and yet was not consumed! From each side of the statue now there silently appeared two servitors—slant-eyed men in yellow robes, and I recognized them as coming from Lemuria, brought hither in the guise of servants by the evil two who stood together bowing before the image. These servitors stood immobile as Undred drew out from beneath her robe a small thing—let me see more clearly—something that looks like a tiny figure shape, though what it is made of I do not know.”

Once more she paused, and after awhile spoke again.

“Now Undred takes up a small implement that lies on the altar beside the flaming bowl. It is a gold rod with a shallow curved bowl at the end, much like the perforated spoon used by housewives to fish pieces of meat from the stewpot when they are preparing supper. Now she puts the little figure into this bowl and holds it over the flame, and as she holds it both she and Undaar watch intently and the two silent servitors too—and suddenly the flame leaps high, as high as Undred’s head, and dies down! The figure has melted and disappeared, and the deed is done!”

“What has been done, sister, can you tell us?” cried Derek.

“I cannot tell, for I could not see clearly what Undred held to the flame,” replied Zenobia, “but I know that it is destruction of some sort—destruction cruel and ruthless! Now something else appears, a dark Shape that seems to rise up before the statue and behind the flaming bowl, in which the pool of fire has sunk to a glowing ember. All four fall on their knees and bow their heads as the shape grows stronger, more solid—ah, it is black and terrible with eyes of flame! I know the

shape that is forming now! I know from whence it comes, and as it stretches out its dreadful hands in greeting and blessing to Undred and to Undaar I know *why* it has come, and God help me, I know what they and their servitors are! Aie, aie. . . ."

Her voice failed and died on a long wail of horror and fear combined—and suddenly we heard in the room the unmistakable voice of the Man with the Wreath.

"Have no fear for her, my brothers—I am bringing her back safely from this perilous journey that she has undertaken, at great risk to herself, for she did not know what she was likely to encounter. Let her rest, and all will be well."

The voice died away, and we sat watching Zenobia, our hearts in our eyes, and after a moment she opened her eyes and smiled faintly at us.

White and exhausted she looked, but that "uncanny" look had gone so that we knew that her second self, the self she had projected, was once more united with her! With a huge sigh of relief I rose and went to pour out some wine for her and for ourselves—for our nerves had been wrought almost to fever-pitch with excitement and anxiety for her as her tale progressed. Within a few moments she was sitting up, propped against a pile of cushions, and there was a little colour in her face. Both Derek and I were longing to shower questions on her, yet hesitated, wishing her to be completely recovered first—but as though knowing our anxiety, Zenobia was the first to speak.

"I have some shocking news for you," she said soberly. "But it must be told! First, I believe that the rite upon which those unholy two were engaged was that of murder—and I believe, the murder of Muran. And second, those two *are not Earthlings!*"

Derek and I exchanged startled glances.

"Not Earthlings—then what are they?" I stammered.

Zenobia dropped her voice as she replied, almost as though she feared to voice the truth.

"The Shape that blossomed forth before the statue was one

of the Lords of the Black Face, and as he greeted Undred and Undaar as brother and sister and blessed them for the vile rite they had just performed, I knew of a sudden that they too were of the same genre. Children of the Dark Planet, black souls somehow introduced into the bodies of two of these unhappy Earthlings, using and operating those bodies so cunningly that until now nobody had any suspicion of the truth!"

"My God help us!" groaned Derek. "That two of the Black Lords have gained footing upon Terra!"

"I fear more than two," said Zenobia levelly, "for it is in my mind that at least the two servers that attend on the hideous idol that they have brought with them from Lemuria, are of the same breed!"

"And Muran?" I murmured in dread. For despite his mistakes and his hopeless subservience to the evil woman he had married, still Muran had been my friend, and he was one of Us....

"Wait," said Zenobia, setting down her goblet of wine. "Someone comes to speak to us, I think. Sit still, my brothers, and wait."

Still as statues ourselves, we sat all three staring into the rosy dusk of the room, and lo, there came a pale cloud of luminous vapour like a column rising from the floor and slowly within this cloud the form of Muran took shape! He was death-pale, and so limp that he was only upheld by the shape of the Man with the Wreath, who stood behind him, his arms about him so that he stood, weakly upright, on his legs and facing us, spoke with a faint voice.

"My brothers and my sister, I come to warn you! The woman Undred upon whom I was so besotted has murdered me! It happened but a few moments since, and but for the strong support of this our great brother from On High, I could not speak. Undred has captured Xaxis as once she captured me, and in order to clear the way to marriage with him she had dealt death to me, though how I do not know."

"I know, for I saw it," said Zenobia steadily. "She killed

you by a rite of Black Magic—by the burning of a shape made like you in wax or clay! And I know, too, from whence Undred and Undaar both come—from the Black Planet!”

Muran nodded.

“I know that now, though indeed I did not when I was in life—bemused as I was with her, believe me, my brothers and my sister, I would never have remained with her had I dreamt of that! But alas, it is my weakness and folly that has helped to let in these two and maybe others as well, into physical life on Terra, and I have earned a heavy karma by this . . . alas, alas. . . .” His voice failed and faded, and the two shapes faded with it until nothing stood before us any more, and drawing a long breath we looked at each other.

Slipping to her knees beside the couch, Zenobia stretched out a hand to each of us.

“Kneel with me, dear ones,” she said. “Kneel and pray for Muran, who must pay so dearly for yielding to the lusts of Earth! Kneel and pray for him, for those thousands untimely dead on lost Lemuria, and for those who, I fear me, must yet die before the grip of the Black Lords is loosed from Earth. . . .”

17

The Seven Talk Together

THE sudden death of Muran, the most famous of the visitors—now, alas, the refugees—who had come from Lemuria, created a sensation in the City of the Golden Gates; and the great house he had shared with his wife and brother-in-law was besieged, the following day, when the news of his death broke, by friends, followers and even ordinary citizens bringing flowers, making inquiries and offering help. But according to the story assiduously spread by Undred and her brother, Muran's death, though sudden and tragic, was not entirely unexpected. For some time past (they declared) Muran had suffered from occasional heart attacks, and had, indeed, been under the care of Undred's personal doctor; this was one Larma, a slant-eyed Lemurian who had accompanied Muran and his suite to Atlantis.

This Larma who was, I was convinced, yet another of the evil group who had assembled round their two leaders, the twin brother and sister, interviewed Xaxis, the Council of Seven and various representatives of the City such as the Chief of the Street Wardens—today you would call them a sort of police force—the High Justice, who sat with his court to judge those who had offended against the city laws. Also the President of the News Services (yes, indeed, we had books and papers, though our papers did not come out every day but only once a week) and other officials whose surprise and

curiosity had to be assuaged. Larma having, it seemed, been in attendance upon Muran ever since he had met Undred, which was very soon after he had taken up his appointment as Chief of the Lemurian Council of Seven, must, it was felt, know more about Muran's health than anybody else; and since he was glib-tongued and persuasive, the story that Muran had died from a sudden heart-attack was well put over, and he was buried in great state. Undred was draped from head to foot in white (for then we did not mourn our dead in black, regarding the release of death from the life in this world rather as a thing to rejoice over rather than grieve) and with her brother at her side, walked behind Xaxis who, also wearing the white of mourning, headed the funeral procession. Zenobia and I were also there, as was the entire Council of Seven, indeed, as was fitting for this, the funeral of our brother who had been Chief of the Lemurian Council, now alas broken up; we sat sadly through the elaborate ceremony and watched, when the carved cedarwood case containing the body of Muran was lowered into the deep vault reserved for those of high birth and standing in the beautiful necropolis that we had created on the far side of the green plain that stretched before the city.

Walking soberly back after the ceremony, I talked with Zenobia about poor Muran's death, and she told me that though Larma had mentioned several previous attacks of the heart that Muran had suffered, she did not believe that these attacks were truly anything to do with the heart! They had been induced, she was sure, by previous rites performed by Undred and her evil brother—rites intended to cause illness, but nothing more; and this was done in order that his followers and the world at large should be impressed with the idea that his heart was weak, so that when they had decided to make an end of him, this would cause no surprise, only distress and regret.

I said that I wondered what had happened to make the two decide to murder Muran now rather than earlier in Lemuria when they were alone with him, and the matter would have

been easily arranged—and Zenobia nodded her wise head.

"I think," she said, "that without dreaming of it, our poor Xaxis brought things to a head. We all know that he is as hopelessly infatuated as was Muran with this vile woman. It is in my mind that although, being at heart a good man, he fought for long against yielding to it, knowing that she was Muran's wife, yet at last Xaxis gave way before her seductions and broke down and swore that but for Muran he would marry her and make her Queen! And having brought him helpless to her feet at last, Undred decided to get rid of Muran so that the way would be free for her to become Queen of Atlantis."

"But with nine other kings in the way," I began, but Zenobia interrupted me.

"Believe me, Teraon," she said earnestly. "This woman has no scruples, and already her spies and helpers, emissaries of the Dark Forces all of them, are spreading discontent and rebellion throughout Atlantis! Murmurs of resentment against the high position of Xaxis—murmurs of envy and jealousy—desire by one King to nibble away a portion of another's province that is maybe more fertile or well-placed than his own—all these evils are abroad in the land and being actively encouraged by the Lords of the Dark Face! Aie, that they should ever have managed to establish a footing on this dear planet Terra, especially on Atlantis the second home that we have grown to love. . . ."

She drew a long and heavy sigh.

"I must now tell our brothers on the Council of what happened on the night when Muran died—and I dread it! Though it will be no news to Derek, who is on the same wavelength as our two selves, and picked up the evil vibrations of these cursed twins when we did. I think that the others are still innocent of any real suspicion, though none of them *like* Undred and Undaar and their attendants—and of course, the situation between Xaxis and Undred is causing us all great anxiety. This curse of sex that is attached to these Earth-bodies that perforce we must use is indeed a curse—and we seem to

be helpless against it!" She sighed again, and I nodded, for indeed there was nothing to be done now but to reveal what we had discovered to our brothers and sisters on the Council.

We met, all seven of us, that night in a private room in the Temple—Zenobia had felt it wiser, now that we knew the spies of the Dark Planet were abroad, not to hold any secret meetings in our own homes lest those vibrations be "tapped". As we knew something of the diabolical cunning of the Dark Order, it was plainly better to meet somewhere that was so thoroughly protected by our own Higher Forces that all we discussed would be safe. So the Temple it had to be.

There were several private chambers built in the Temple, outside the great inner Shrine, the main sanctuary; and these rooms were used for various mundane purposes. For storing the robes, incense and implements of various sorts like censers and crosses—our cross then was the Tau cross, a cross shaped like the capital letter T, with the crossbar resting on top of the upright, not with the crossbar placed across the upright, as in your Christian cross—spare furniture, chalices, braziers and vases and so on, together with the cloths, lotions and pastes, etc., for cleaning them. Another room was used for meditation by the Council before entering the Temple, and two more chambers were reserved for the servers of the Temple, where they could change from their outdoor garments to their Temple robes. It was in the chamber reserved for meditation that we met and sat listening earnestly as Derek read out the record of the interview from his tablets.

Our fellows listened intently to Zenobia's description of what she had seen in the underground temple, then to the appearance of Muran in the arms of the Man with the Wreath—and as at last Derek's mellow voice ceased there was a silence, and Jeroam, the oldest of us, spoke sadly.

"Alas my brothers and sisters! This is ill news, and yet I think it scarcely comes as a surprise to any of us! Your psychic antennae, Derek and those of Teraon and our blessed Zenobia, are more sensitive than ours, so that you picked up

earlier and more clearly the true values of these evil ones who have come to our shores; and yet, without finding out the details as you have done, I swear that there is not one among us who has not feared and distrusted Undred and Undaar from the moment they set foot on these shores!"

A murmur of eager agreement ran round the group and he went on.

"And alas, I can confirm that there is restlessness and dissatisfaction abroad in our land of Atlantis—not yet ripe to break into real trouble, but stirring and murmuring below the surface as a poison stirs, fevering the blood before it breaks out on the surface into an abscess!" He looked round the group of absorbed faces.

"Of recent years the ten kings have not been regular in their attendances at our seasonal meetings here in our chief city. Sometimes, yes, they have come, but less regularly than of yore, and now and then one has made excuses, declared he was ill or there was trouble in his nome, and he could not leave until it was settled . . . and yet, how better to settle any trouble than to discuss it with us, the Council of Seven, whose chief duty is to listen to difficulties and suggest solutions?"

"I know," said Derek, "that Undaar has, since his arrival, been actively encouraging large groups of our young men to join him in all manner of semi-military exercises—which he says are for the improvement and strengthening of the physical body. And yet, seeing how fine already are the physical bodies of these our Earthlings, what need is there for that?"

"Is Xaxis deliberately working to become King of all Atlantis?" asked Lynthia, who was Zenobia's closest friend—and indeed, faithful and loyal she had been ever since they had left Mars together. Jeroam shook his head.

"I do not think so—as yet, at least. But—he has the seeds of ambition in him, and never forget that this woman, whose ambition is inordinate, is ever and always at his elbow, whispering evil into his ears! And it is not possible to over-

rate the strength of a woman, or the power of her influence over the man in love with her!"

"There is a thing that is troubling me," said Huran, and we turned to him. For this beloved brother of ours was a silent creature who listened rather than spoke; yet when he spoke it was always worth hearing, as he never wasted time or words on trivialities.

"I have recently spent, as you all know," he said, "some weeks on a visit to the nome of Kyren, whose ruler, Bhil, is a distant relative of this body that I wear at this time." He indicated himself with a downward gesture of the hand that was at the same moment contemptuous and pitying. "I went not merely to satisfy the curiosity and interest shown by him and several of his family, who knew, of course, that their young relative had voluntarily given up his body to me so that I might continue my work with the Seven while he went onwards and upwards to his just reward. I went for other reasons also."

We glanced at each other, and nodded understandingly. Huran was the last of Us who had had, in order to continue living and working, to make use of a new body when his old one was too worn and tired to continue functioning. It was, indeed, only a matter of a few months since the Change had taken place, and he had returned to us, rejuvenated and ready to continue his life in this borrowed body. For many hundreds, nay, thousands of years now we had used this method of maintaining our lives on Terra; and yet each and every one of us still disliked it, and would have given worlds to have been able to return to our old method. But this was impossible.

"Go on, brother Huran," said Jeroam encouragingly, "what did you find in the nome of Kyren to make you anxious?—for anxious you plainly are, and we are all more than eager to hear."

"It is this," said Huran. "This new move on the part of Undaar—this endeavour, on one excuse and another, to gather groups of strong young men together and train them in ways that are perilously near military—this move of his, I

had heard, has aroused both interest and jealousy on some of the other nomes. So I made various cautious inquiries and found that, hearing what Undaar was doing, Bhil, the ruler of Kyren with whom I was staying, had sent secret emissaries to watch him and bring back reports. And with the reports the emissaries had, it seemed, also brought back to Kyren two men who were reputed friends of Undaar and as experienced as he was in the ways of physical training—and under these men a form of physical training had been started in Kyren that had already attracted very many young men. Now, looking back, I mind me that I disliked the faces of both these men, though they were obsequious enough—and I believe now that they were yet another pair of devilborn Earthlings who came to Atlantis as refugees from Lemuria, or else as servants in the entourage of Undred and Undaar! So if I am right, my brothers and sisters, the Dark Forces have managed to establish a footing, not merely here in the City of the Golden Gates, but in other places in this our land of Atlantis!”

“But how?” asked Forse, “how can it be that the devil souls can have managed to be born into the tribe of *homo sapiens* whom we have taught and trained and loved for so long?”

“Because,” said Derek heavily, “we must not forget that as the Guides have warned us, though man has now within him a spiritual side born of us, he still inhabits a body of Earth with all its coarseness, its greed, its lust, its cruelties, its insensate ambitions! And when cunningly played upon by the Dark Ones, who have, as we all know, for so many centuries past, tried hard to gain control and crush the spiritual side underfoot, all too often the animal side of man can, and alas, does, rise triumphant over the spiritual and goes blindly forward towards whatever end his untrammelled passion seeks!”

“Alas, alas!” Lynthia had her head in her hands, bowed down with bitter sorrow, and Zenobia placed her hand on her hair as she spoke.

“Do not weep, sister, for it is useless. Let us only pray that this invasion of the land and of the Earth-folk whom we love, is only local, and not strong as yet. But when Man, by yield-

ing to his basest elements, has given the Dark Lords power over him, then we can do nothing but stand and watch and be prepared to hold out a helping hand if—or when—man desires it. But while the following of his lower instincts brings him what he desires, as lust did with Muran, and ambition, coupled with that same lust, may well do with poor Xaxis—why then, there is little or nothing that we can do but, as I say, to stand by, to watch and—to pray.”

18

Things grow Worse on Atlantis

FOLLOWING on the serious talk that we of the Seven had had concerning the worrying situation in our country, Atlantis, it was decided to send Zenobia, not bodily but projected in her inner astral body, to Kyren, to check on the impressions made there on Huran and to bring back her report.

It may be asked why she should be specially chosen for this onerous and in many ways dangerous work; but the truth was that by this time Zenobia was the only person in our group who could still successfully project herself out of her body and function, invisible to others, to gather news, knowledge or information. I have already told you of the sad dwindling, in all of us, of many psychic powers that in the old happy days were in the possession of all Martians—levitation, the renewal of the body and others; and amongst them was the gradual but definite narrowing down of our power of projection of the astral. All this, of course, was due to the unhappy fact that now we were obliged to use the coarse physical bodies of Earth to function in, it became more and more difficult, if not impossible, to use those psychic powers through them.

To a limited degree Derek and myself could still project ourselves, but weakly and uncertainly; and unless one was fully strong and confident, to project oneself into an atmosphere tense with danger (which would obviously be the case

in Kyren now that emissaries from the Dark Planet had managed to gain entry there) would be to invite discovery and dire danger. Danger not only to the body we had left behind us, but to the wandering astral itself. Therefore no risks could be taken. But we would all send our spiritual strength to protect our sister.

So on the night after our talk, the Council gathered together in the private room in the Temple and took seats in a ring about the prostrate body of Zenobia, lying in trance on a couch in the midst of us. Then we linked our hands and closed our eyes and prayed aloud to our Great Ones to speed our sister's journey, give her the information we needed and bring her safely back again. And this, to our great thankfulness, was duly done.

When, after a long wait of perhaps an hour, Zenobia awakened and opened her eyes, and after swallowing thirstily a drink of some wine—for indeed, she was weary and unhappy both—gave us the news she had visited Kyren to gain, our hearts sank; for sad and gloomy news indeed it was!

While she was absent from her body Zenobia had not only visited Kyren and made mental contact with its ruler Bhil, but had visited three other nomes also; and the news she brought back from all three was black indeed! For it seemed that discontent, rivalry and jealousy of Xaxis were rife in several nomes—a thing of which we had never dreamt, as jealousy of others in higher places was unknown on Mars! And we pure Martians—if we could still call ourselves “pure” since, alas, we had been forced to function in the physical bodies we disliked so much—still did not understand nor share in this feeling.

But since the nome in which was housed the City of the Golden Gates, the Great Temple and the largest harbour on Atlantis, was naturally the most prominent and powerful nome in the country and Xaxis its King and so the chief amongst the “kings” of the nine other nomes—since jealousy, envy and greed are unhappily characteristics common among *homo sapiens*. I suppose it was natural, in a sense, that the

kings of the lesser nomes should grow jealous and envious. But as I say, these reactions being purely those of the Earth-body, whose impulses, we had hoped, would be overcome by the spiritual side that we had injected into our Earthlings, they were not suspected by us Martians, until alas, they had gained a dangerously strong hold upon the people as a whole!

In her travels Zenobia had found traces of more than one plot to attack and overthrow Xaxis. The main reason for this being given that he was allowing a foreign woman and her brother to rule him to such an extent that he no longer deserved his title as king, but should resign and be exiled to one of our far colonies, while another and worthier should take his place! This successor should be decided, some said, by lots cast among the nine kings—yet others were not content with mere banishment but said that he, Xaxis, should be murdered, and his two accomplices with him! Besides this, Zenobia found that on several nomes the fever for military training had taken strong root, and countless young men were practising archery and the throwing of spears, and even how to steal up behind a man and slay him without sound, as was taught in your late wars to those soldiers called commandos! And worst of all, in two places neighbouring nomes had seized part of the land belonging to Xaxis' nome, and he had sent angry messages to the kings of these nomes demanding that they "remove their troops"—yes, even that phrase was used!—from his territory. Or else. . . .

Indeed and indeed, the Black Lords had been hard at work and, it seemed, successfully; and now we of the Seven had to think hard how to defeat them—if, indeed, we *could* defeat them.

It would be unthinkable that victory should be with the Lords of the Black Face—those of the Lefthand Path, those who had, countless aeons ago, turned their backs on God and the White Light, and so lost their hold on Heaven and sunk to the uttermost depths! To have those who were our dread and hate ruling this world of Terra as they had come to rule our planet Mars—this was, as I say, unthinkable. And yet,

if Man, the Man we had helped to make, invited them in and gave themselves utterly into their hands, what could we do? Yet do something we must—and in secret Jeroam sent word to the Master of Shipping to come and see us.

Now by this time, as you may guess, we had long had vast shipyards where many thousands of skilled engineers, ship-builders, sailor-men and others linked with the sea and sea-life, worked daily, building bigger and yet bigger ships; for very many years now there had been a regular traffic between ourselves, the mother-country, Atlantis, and our various colonies. These sent us tropical nuts, animal skins and tusks, strange scented woods for carving and coloured stone or marble, strange jewellery and coloured cloths for wearing or for hanging in our houses—for in each of our distant colonies the weavers had developed their own especial technique, their own embroidery and colouring, and the competition amongst the wealthy families on Atlantis to see and purchase these handsome foreign materials was strong. In return we sent out much gold and the precious stones that were still easily found on Atlantis—mainly in the rivers and on the beaches, though there were now some being mined, and this was an industry increasing in value and importance. And since these mines, of turquoise and sapphire and diamond mostly, were as yet only found in the nome ruled by Xaxis, this again was a fresh reason for anger and jealousy against him.

Certain of us, after hearing Zenobia's report, interviewed Xaxis and told him frankly that we feared the discontent and unrest that was plainly spreading throughout Atlantis. We said that news of this had been brought to us, but said no word of Zenobia, for it was plain that the less known about her power of projection, the better. We urged Xaxis to do his best to soothe and placate his fellow-rulers who were, it seemed, no longer as friendly as of old; but, alas, we felt that we gained little by this. Forever beside Xaxis was his evil genius, the woman Undred; more beautiful than ever before, one had to admit, in her triumphant place at Xaxis' side, with the date of her marriage to him now publicly announced, and,

as she felt, her position as Queen of Atlantis only needing time and patience to attain. In vain we urged Xaxis to wait awhile, pointing out that to rush into marriage with the widow of his friend and fellow-counsellor Muran, before even six months' mourning had elapsed, was unwise and likely to cause adverse comment. But it was useless.

Not daring to lose his temper with us, as he was now increasingly given to doing with anyone who thwarted his wishes, Xaxis snapped out that he knew what he was doing, and that he cared not a jot for the opinion of the world about him! He had no wife and had never wanted one until he met Undred, and now that she was free to marry him, he did not mean to wait. Indeed, he would not have waited even the few months that must now pass before their wedding day, but that Undred had pleaded for time in which to recover from the shock of her husband's death. And on this her plea for time he had consented to wait.

Now we all knew that all Undred wanted time for was to have more and more gorgeous robes and jewels made for her wedding—but there was nothing to be said. If Xaxis was so stubborn as to insist upon rushing upon his doom, we could not prevent him—all we could do was to try to prevent his madness from condemning countless others to doom along with him. So it was then that Jeroam sent a messenger to the Master of Shipping bidding him to come to see him, and to bring with him his three sons, brawny men of fine height and strength. By name the three were Nohan the father, Shenn, the eldest of the three brothers, Ham the second, and Yafez the youngest. And the names of these are immortalized in your Good Book as Noah, Shem, Ham and Japheth.

Now Nohan was a fine soul who on an earlier planet had ruled a maritime nation, and loved and understood the sea and the ships that sailed upon it. So when offered the opportunity of coming into incarnation upon Terra, he had petitioned to be allowed to take on such an incarnation as would allow him to continue his work with the sea and ships, the ships that were his passion; and his three sons, who had worked with him

before in that earlier life, asked for the same privilege, which was gladly granted.

Now when Nohan came to see Jeroam, he was an elderly man with a fine white beard and curling white hair down to his shoulders; but he was still hale and strong, and with his three tall sons listened intently to Jeroam's instructions; which were to this effect.

Although by now the tragedy of Lemuria was many moons past, and the seas around where she had once been were calm and normal once more, our ships were still out searching the islands and atolls and the scattered reefs that stood up here and there from the water, to see if maybe there might be a few survivors still to be saved; and strange as it may seem, indeed here and there they found a few who had miraculously managed to survive by catching fish with their hands, or grubbing up shell-fish and eating them raw—even eating seaweed at times, and finding some sort of weeds, though tough and salty, actually eatable. And others, as I have said, who had survived by the terrible and primitive method of eating the weaker of their companions—and dreadful as this was, it was difficult to blame these poor ones, half-demented as they were with terror and hunger combined.

But now the report was that every inch of land now remaining above the waters had been searched and searched again, and no more survivors were left; and Jeroam told Nohan that as the searching ships returned they were not to be laid up as usual, but to be re-fitted and prepared with food and clothing, bedding and everything else needed, as though for a long voyage. And in each ship, Jeroam said, there was to be a large part set aside where animals could be safely housed and fed—and as Nohan and his three sons stared in wonder, Jeroam went on to explain.

He swore the four men to secrecy before he continued, for there was no sense in arousing undue fear or wonder in the breasts of ordinary people. It might be (he said) that this necessity would never arise, and indeed, he devoutly hoped so. But seeing that the Dark Forces whom we dreaded had

managed to gain a footing on Atlantis, and alas, more than a footing now, the possibility must be faced that the time might well come when the Great Ones who were still our Guides would bid us desert our lovely city and our fruitful lands, and take refuge in one of our distant colonies! Perhaps in that fine settlement called Tiahuanoco, perhaps in Khem, now a large and prosperous colony, or in some other place. And regarding the animals, the idea of which plainly puzzled them, Jeroam told them that since here in Atlantis we had been fortunate enough to breed many useful animals, so that they grew great and strong, thrice the size they had been, and so of great value to humanity both for work and transport and to provide food, milk, hide and hair, it would be essential to take with each ship a few carefully chosen pairs of such animals as might be needed in our new home, wherever it was! Horses, cattle, hens, pigs and goats, and the dogs, who were now of great use, both in hunting and as guards. When Nohan, puzzled, reminded Jeroam that animals were widespread and to be found in all lands, Jeroam reminded him that while this was true, most of these were still wild, and were we forced to settle elsewhere, it would take much time to catch, tame and train them; whereas the creatures they would take with them from Atlantis were already accustomed to man and his ways. Even when tamed and domesticated, as had been done in certain colonies such as Khem, the local beasts had probably not grown as large and strong as those bred on Atlantis: so the new and lusty breeds that the ships could carry would be more than welcome, along with the passengers, in our new home, wherever that might be. So Nohan and his sons received their orders, and were bidden get on with the work of making ready all the tallest and strongest ships in their fleet. They were told what to say in answer to inquiries that might be made by those who wondered why the returning ships, instead of being laid up for a leisurely cleaning while their crews took holiday, were to be prepared for fresh travels. Above all, the preparation of quarters for the animals would arouse curiosity, for this could not be hidden. The answers

they were to make were to say that special visits were to be made, by order of the Council of Seven, to various outlying colonies, and the beasts were to be settled out there to help the colonists. The answers contented any inquirers; so that the preparation of the ships went on apace while the rest of Atlantis, it seemed, flung itself into the preparations for the wedding of Xaxis and Undred.

19

The Wedding of Xaxis

DURING the months that had to elapse before the wedding date of Xaxis and Undred could in decency be fixed, it was plain that Undaar and his helpers, who were more numerous by far than we had at first dreamed, worked their hardest to train their bands of young Earthlings into military ways. It was not difficult, alas, to do this. You yourselves will know, in your later day, the hypnotic effect of music, of rhythmic marching, colourful uniforms, flag-waving, and constant speeches, if not actually glorifying war, certainly glorifying these preparations for it.

Naturally Undaar and his fellows were not so foolish as to dream of preaching war—as yet. Their theory, persistently voiced, was that these exercises not only tended to improve the physique of our young men, but taught them discipline, self-control, the team spirit and so on; all of which sounded very convincing to Xaxis and others. But not to us!

The fever of these military or pseudo-military operations spread, and before long our spies reported to us that in virtually every nome the same thing was happening—but in none was it carried so far or on so vast a scale as in our own nome, that in which stood the City of the Golden Gates.

Did Xaxis really plan to make a move to try and conquer his fellow-rulers and set himself up as a King of all Atlantis—as we were certain Undred was urging him to do? If so, he

would now be backed by thousands of trained men led by Undaar, and there was little doubt that he could succeed in making himself King, although endless suffering and bloodshed would ensure before he did—for again, it was certain that the rulers of the other nomes would fight him, and that right bitterly. It made us heartsick even to think of this. But there was nothing we could do except to preach tolerance, kindness, understanding, and to try and discourage the young men from flocking to the offices where they would be recruited into Undaar's "Physical Training Schools" as he mendaciously called them. The young men were hypnotized by the false glamour of it all, and the girls, alas, echoed and upheld them in their mistaken enthusiasm. All we could do—and did—was to pray and hold our peace.

During this time of waiting our ships had been refitted and repaired, filled with all necessary supplies and proper quarters built into them for the animals that would travel with them and for those whose business it would be to look after these; and besides this, each ship carried an extra and secret cargo consisting of very many treasures taken from the secret store-places where for countless years we had hidden such things.

Naturally the removing of these treasures had to be done secretly and by night, since if the story got about amongst the ordinary public there might well have been an outcry; and even amongst us Seven and the small group of faithful followers on whom we could rely there was dismay and wonder at first at this order. But Jeroam recounted to us a dream that he had had in which our Great Ones had come to him and bidden him do just that! They had bidden him take as many treasures as he could and have them safely packed and taken aboard our ships; the boxes, chests and crates in which they would be packed were to be delivered into the hands of the persons who would meet the captains when the ships arrived at the ports for which they were destined. These persons, said the Great Ones, would be empowered to take, hide and guard the treasures in such secret places as they would have pre-

pared for them; so that if disaster befell Atlantis, as they feared it might, yet up and down the world there might still be left traces of it and its history and that of those who had helped to make it.

So when we knew that this was the Will of Those who had guided and helped us for so many years, we made no more demur, but obeyed the order; and in time each ship set out on its voyage carrying with it not only its ordinary cargo and passengers, but a second and secret cargo consisting of all manner of precious things, works of art, jewellery, carvings, writings, and endless other beautiful things that had been made by our Earth children during the endless years since we had trained them into manhood. And there they still are, hidden in many places up and down the world—for by this time we had colonies in many parts of Terra; and although, alas, some of the secret places in which these treasures, the proofs of our existence and of our adventures, were hidden, have since been swamped by the flood water or by the displacement of land, and thus irretrievably lost, yet many still remain intact in caves and secret places and will be found later on in your day. And indeed, when they are, men will stand and stare in wonder and amazement at the beauty and ingenuity of those things made by their forebears of so many centuries ago.

So the months passed away, and many of our ships had long left the shores of Atlantis and sought the far-flung portions of our Empire—for Empire indeed it was by then, though we did not use the expression. They stayed away for much longer than usual, as Jeroam had been bidden to tell our captains not to hasten their return, but to bide where they landed for a time, lending their aid and advice wherever it might be needed; helping to establish the imported animals in their new owner's hands, aiding in the building of new shipyards, experimenting with new ideas for ship-building, and for the lighting of the *pharos*, the lights that were now so necessary to warn travelling ships of shoals and other hidden dangers. Once again, later on we learnt why these instructions had been given. It

was so that when disaster fell upon us, as They foresaw, and as indeed it did, not all our people, our ships and their precious contents might be lost. . . .

So, as I say, the months passed on and at last dawned the wedding day of Xaxis and Undred. Disliking the idea of climbing the steep stairway to the Temple heights, Undred had tried her best to persuade Xaxis to insist on the wedding ceremony being performed in the Palace. And indeed, Xaxis tried hard, and even in the end tried to insist that as he was King, after all, he had the right; but Jeroam was firm in his refusal.

It had been, he said—and we could not but admire him for his honesty and courage—without his approval that the King was marrying this woman. But since he, the King, insisted upon the marriage, in his turn he, Jeroam, Head of the Council of Seven, must warn him that did he desire the blessing of the Council and thus the blessing of the Guides who spoke through them alone, he *must* obey the law of custom and come to the Temple, the hallowed centre of the city's worship! There he must come, and his bride with him, to kneel below the Godlight and pray that their marriage might be blessed. Cowed, Xaxis said no more—and so the matter was arranged. Though one could tell, by the evil light in Undred's slanted eyes when she looked at Jeroam, that she bore him desperate ill-will for crossing her, and would do him a mischief if she safely could! The day dawned sunny and warm, though there was a heavy blue-grey banking of storm clouds out to the west—and more than once during the past weeks there had been ominous tremors of the Earth beneath us, though nothing of sufficient seriousness to cause fear and anxiety.

We were no strangers to such occasional tremors, for at that time, when the Earth was comparatively newly born, such minor 'quakes were to be taken in our stride—later on, of course, we realized that actually, these were warnings, slight but sinister, of worse to come. But as I said, the populace had known them before and did not fear them, and the preparations for the wedding went on apace.

The wide green plain that spread before the pool at the

foot of the city was crowded with people long before the dawn of day, as countless families had travelled up by cart, on horseback, in litters or on foot, from far-out nomes, to see the wondrous sight—and wondrous indeed it was. Flags and banners fluttered from every pinnacle and hung from every window, garlands of flowers wreathed every post and pillar, and onlookers clad in their gayest garments crowded the streets, occupied every roof and treetop, and perched on every available ledge or crag on the steeply-rising mountain-sides behind the city; and the winding stairway to the height where the Temple stood was carpeted with purple carpeting as befitted Xaxis' status of King. Guards had been stationed at each end of the stairway, the lower and the upper end, to keep the steps free for the wedding party to ascend; and as Undred stepped from the litter that had carried her from her house to the Palace, a great sigh of envy and admiration arose from the gaping multitude.

Xaxis came out and stood beside her on the steps of the Palace and a fresh sigh arose, for indeed they were a wonderful pair to see.

He was clad in purple samite embroidered with gold and precious stones, and his girdle and sandals were encrusted with gems, and the tall heavily-jewelled crown on his head glittered fiercely in the sun, and she was in white—though that, again, was against our rules, as white was only for maiden brides, and she was a widow. Her white gown shone and dazzled with its embroideries of crystal and silver, pearls and diamonds, and a tiara of diamonds as nearly resembling a crown as she dared wear, rested upon her shining auburn head. Yes, indeed, she was a beautiful woman, and her twin brother who, ill as it is to have to say it, was also her lover, was equally handsome—truly a tragedy that the inner spirit of these two was as foul and ugly as their outward appearance was beautiful.

Now, side by side, the pair to be wedded walked from the Palace to the stairway, upon the purple carpet laid there on the cobbled stones, through the streets lined with cheering people. They were led by a group of thirty musicians, gaily

clad and with coloured ribbons and flowers hanging from their instruments, and followed by their entourage. Undred walked beside Xaxis and Undaar with the chief bridesmaid at his side, and behind them came a line of twenty other maidens, all in glittering white with wreaths of flowers on their heads and bouquets in their hands—and it came as no surprise to us Seven to see that most of these flowers were white orchids. Undred had done her best to insist that orchids be used in the flower decoration of the Temple, but at this Jeroam had set his foot down and refused. Lilies only, he told her, would be used. There was a plenitude of white lilies growing round the Temple, and tradition had it that only lilies should be used inside the Holy House—and though scowling and plainly angry, she had had to give way.

Inside the Temple we Seven waited, each in our usual seat at the foot of a pillar, and the notable folk of the court waited with us, ranged in rows on the seats behind and beyond the pillars that made an island, so to speak, in the centre of the Temple under the peak of its apex where, as always, the God Light hung like a pale beacon suspended in the air. The golden brazier at our feet gave out the pungent fragrance of the sacred incense that burnt within it, and in golden vases and bowls set all about there shone white lilies and other white flowers whose delicious scent all but outweighed the odour of the incense; and while we waited, the wedding procession wound its slow way up the steep stairway to the heights, watched by multitudes from the city and the plain below, until at last the music of pipes and tabors, cymbals and flutes told us that the happy pair were approaching.

Jeroam rose to his feet as they entered through the tall pointed porch of the Temple, and came slowly up the aisle. His fine face was set and grim, and I pitied him, for I knew perhaps better than most the anguish it was to him to be forced into marrying one of our beloved Earth children—for indeed Xaxis was, in his usual self, a good man and loveable—to this spawn of the Pit, sent from the Dark Planet to plant the seeds of evil in this land of Terra! Yet Xaxis had chosen to go

his way, refusing to believe a word against the woman who had so infatuated him—for indeed, I knew that without making any accusation (for what proof of this had he) Jeroam had spent many hours arguing with Xaxis, trying to make him see how wrong and useless it was to wed a stranger woman from so far away, of whom he knew so little. . . .

So at last Jeroam had been forced to shrug his shoulders and give up trying to persuade his pupil—in his youth Xaxis had been a pupil in the Temple school—and realized for good or ill—and alas, ill it would surely be!—he must let the wilful man go his own way and take the consequences. “Take what you will,” says God, “*and pay for it!*” And pay for it, indeed, we knew poor foolish Xaxis would, and we could only hope and pray that many thousands of others would not also have to suffer in payment for his bitter folly. . . .

And so the ritual of marriage was performed, and so pre-occupied with themselves were the participants that I am sure they never noticed, as we Seven did, that the God Light overhead, instead of blazing out into a bright white globe, as it would do when a marriage of true souls took place beneath it, seemed to have dimmed until its luminous glow was barely visible!

Then the final words were said, the hands of Xaxis and Undred were joined and the twin rings passed between them, one to be worn by the bride and the other the bridegroom—and suddenly there came the sound like the growl of a distant thunderstorm!

Once, twice, and again it came, and with it came a strange and horrible feeling that I remembered knowing once or twice before—the lifting and shuddering of the Earth, the overture, as it were, of an earthquake! I have told you that we had had two or three minor shocks of this kind during the past weeks, and paid little heed to them; and I do not know why, this time, I caught hold of my Zenobia’s hand and held it tightly. Her eyes met mine, and in them I saw a strange look, half fear, half relief, and on her lips lay a queer little smile. . . . It was as though long she had been waiting for something,

dreading it, expecting it, and now that it had come she was thankful!

As the ground shook and steadied, Jeroam's mellow voice paused for a moment in his final peroration, but then went steadily on, and under the hypnotic influence of his voice the congregation, who had started and moved nervously as the shock came, stilled for a moment—but only for a moment. There came the sound of a truly appalling crash and roar, as though a mountain had collapsed, and another shock, but this time a far worse one than any that had gone before!

The floor of the whole Temple seemed to lift and shudder, the hanging lamps swung madly to and fro and several of the golden vases holding flowers fell off their stands and hit the marble floor with a resounding crash that was echoed by a chorus of shrieks of terror from the assembled people. Another crash and roar came, and with it the sound, distant and horrifying, of thousands of voices shrieking in agony . . . and in a trice the Temple was a chaotic mass of people fighting and jostling to reach the entrance!

I caught Zenobia to me and held her closely, and she wound her veil tight round her head lest it be caught in the *melée*; Derek caught Lynthia and held her close-protected too, and Huran, Forse, and we Seven drew together in a tight cluster round the tall form of Jeroam, as the frenzied people surged about us.

Xaxis, Undred and Undaar had been swept along with the crowd and I had lost sight of them, but we held fast to each other as the terrified people fought their way out of the Temple, accompanied as they did so by shock after shock beneath us as the erupting Earth belched forth its fury. As the last frantic group left the Temple Jeroam spoke. His face was as white as his robes, but he was calm and self possessed, as always.

"No use in trying to go to the Temple steps," he said, "they will be packed with these poor demented souls. Come with me, friends, and we will go out by the small entrance, of which few outside the Temple service know. There at least we shall be

together and alone, to see what I fear is the death of our fair city—even, it may be, the death of Atlantis!”

Clinging to each other, we followed him down the Temple, past the group of pillars above which the God Light still gleamed, though I saw in passing that two of the pillars were cracked halfway down their height. We passed the storage rooms, the meditation chamber, the changing rooms and others, and emerged at last into the open air via a small door cut in the far side of the Temple. This was the service door at which the supplies needed in the Temple were delivered. Since few knew of it outside those who served in the Temple, nobody followed us—but dear God, what a sight met our eyes!

The small door led out upon the side of the plateau on which the Temple was built, close to the edge of the cliff and there was but a narrow pathway running along between the great building and the brink of the cliff, that here dropped sheer down many thousands of feet to the City below. And lo, the great green plain that had spread before the City, that had until a few moments before been crowded with people, all clad in festal garments, ready for the great feast and entertainment that was to have followed the wedding ceremony—the plain had vanished, and in its place was a seething, roaring mass of tumultuous waters! A raging sea in which untold thousands of people tossed and shrieked, and with them horses, cattle and the battered fragments of what had once been tents and booths, carriages, houses and other matters! The sky, which had been lowering before, had turned a heavy purple-grey and behold, of the three mountain peaks that normally, we knew, stood between us and our fine harbour at the far, the seaward, end of the river, only one now stood aloft!

Normally, two of these mountains stood together and the third stood alone, a little way to the left, and between this and its two brothers there was a deep ravine in the rocks through which the river ran to the harbour and the sea beyond; but now the twin peaks had vanished, and through the gap there rioted tidal wave after tidal wave, flooding the

plain, the river banks and washing away, helpless and hopeless, the unhappy folk who had lived there—and the cause? There was no question as to this, for beyond the solitary peak remaining there loomed a vast mushroom-shaped cloud, dark and sinister, that rose to the heavens! The appalling crash and roar that we had heard had been that of a gigantic volcanic explosion in the sea beyond the harbour. . . .

On our left, where the narrow path curved round to the front of the Temple and the widest part of the plateau on which the Temple had been built, we could hear the keening and screaming of many voices as those who had come to celebrate the wedding of their King milled madly about! A few attempted to descend the stairway but were dragged back by their fellows, for what could they hope to do if they had managed to go down? Moreover, the stairway was already packed more than halfway up with unhappy people trying to escape from the raging waters that were besieging the doomed city, and they were fighting for the best places, clinging madly to each other and to the handrail of the steps, and even as we watched, a long section of the hand-rail gave way and with it a shrieking crowd were precipitated into the floods below. . . .

From the height on which we Seven stood, cold and shaking with distress, we could see that part of the city, the lower part where had stood the fishmarket, the stalls and the quays projecting into the great pool, was already flooded, and the seething waters rising higher every moment. . . .

As we stared there came yet another violent shock, and behind us we felt the Temple vibrate as it shook, as Jeroam spoke again.

"It is the end, my sisters and brothers—as I have feared for long! The end of Atlantis, as it was the end of Lemuria. . . ."

"But what has caused it?" breathed Lynthia. "It is now many months since the tragedy of Lemuria, and why should a similar tragedy fall now upon the mother-country, Atlantis?"

"I do not know," said Jeroam. "It may be that the subterranean fires that brought about the collapse of Lemuria have

never been extinguished, and have crept slowly along the vast underground network of gas chambers that our scientists say exist below the surface of the Earth—and in some way these have become ignited and brought about the volcanic explosions, the earthquakes and tidal waves, and the breaking and collapse of the shell of earth above them.”

“Or,” said Derek, “may it not be that the Great Ones, seeing the unspeakable danger that threatens this fair land now that the Black Powers have managed to infiltrate within it, have reached out their hands and brought about ruin and death rather than allow Undred and Undaar and their evil fellows to gain control and rule?”

“I do not know,” said Jeroam heavily. “It may be—I do not know. But. . . .”

His voice was interrupted by another colossal crash and roar, and even as I clutched Zenobia more closely and she wound her arms round my neck and clung to me, the ground beneath our feet shook so violently that away on the left, where was the main plateau, a giant cleft opened longways in the sheer mountain-side, and down it, in a screeching, demented multitude, fell most of the poor ones who had stood on the plateau watching with horror their friends and relatives drowning in the seething waters below! As they fell, I caught a glimpse of white and purple, and knew that Xaxis had gone to his death with them, still clasping Undred to his breast. . . .

“Our work here is done.” It was Jeroam’s voice, shouting to be heard above the appalling din around us. “We shall meet again, friends—until then, farewell!”

Stepping forward, he cast himself into the yawning space before him and vanished in the depths below. So perished a great soul who had deserved well of all those with whom he had lived and worked, and I am glad indeed to tell you that on the Other Side to which all men must go when their physical bodies perish, I have met Jeroam again, and know that he has received his just reward for his faithfulness.

But whether any other of the Seven followed his example I do not know, for even as he disappeared there came yet

another horrifying crash and boom, and the ground below us heaved and shuddered, so that we knew that the Temple was tottering to its doom. Then suddenly I felt a heavy blow on my head and seemed momentarily to lose consciousness; but when I came to myself I realized to my amazement that I was rising, with Zenobia still held fast in my arms, until together we hovered above the stricken city. Poised in the air, hovering, we were as once in the days, so long past, on Mars, we had been able to do without difficulty, for as long as we liked. I remember that I felt a faint sense of surprise that our ancient gift of levitation should have returned to us at this crucial moment—but close to my ear I heard my love's voice, soft as the whisper of spring breezes.

"It is not that, Teraon, my most faithful love! We are released at last from these Earth-bodies that we have been obliged to wear for so long! The blow you felt upon your head I felt also. It was from a falling stone from the collapsing Temple, and the Great Ones have granted us death, physical death, together! And so we are released, my dear one, and can go onwards together. . . ."

EPILOGUE

Spoken by Teraon

So there, my friends, you have the story of how Man, *homo sapiens*, emerged from the beast. Compounded of earth and spirit was he, and so he is still, and still within his breast there war the higher powers and instincts that came from us, and the vile and ugly passions and desires that came from the brute! These, alas, are still strong within you, as we can see when we look down on your Earth and mark how quickly you still turn to war, to bloodshed and murder as a solution of your ills.

Nevertheless, the Powers of Good are still fighting to win, and we pray and believe, will win in the long run; for since in a very close sense you are our children, our own Earthlings whom we helped to bring into being, we love you. And from where we are now—and where that is I may not tell you, except that it is no longer in any physical world—we Martians add our strength to that of the White Brothers, to help in the fight against evil that unhappily Undred and Undaar and their minions brought into your world. That evil that despite all that happened, still remains, and is desperately strong!

You will know that many stories of Atlantis are still abroad on Terra and believed by some; though others still think it only a legend, yet it is true, and the very face of the Earth was changed by the appalling catastrophe that fell upon us in Atlantis! Not only did our lovely city and miles of the country around vanish beneath the waters, but the whole continent was shaken and broken into two parts, two islands that

were subsequently named Ruta and Antillia. Many years later these also sank beneath the waves, and all that remains of them today are a few scattered islands known in your day as the Antilles.

The terrific force and displacement of water caused by the collapse of Atlantis burst open the narrow mouth of the valley running below what is now Europe, and created the Mediterranean Sea of your day; and not only that, the raging sea overran the thousands of miles of waste land that stretched before the Pyramid, and for long the sea ruled where now is only a dreary space of sand.*

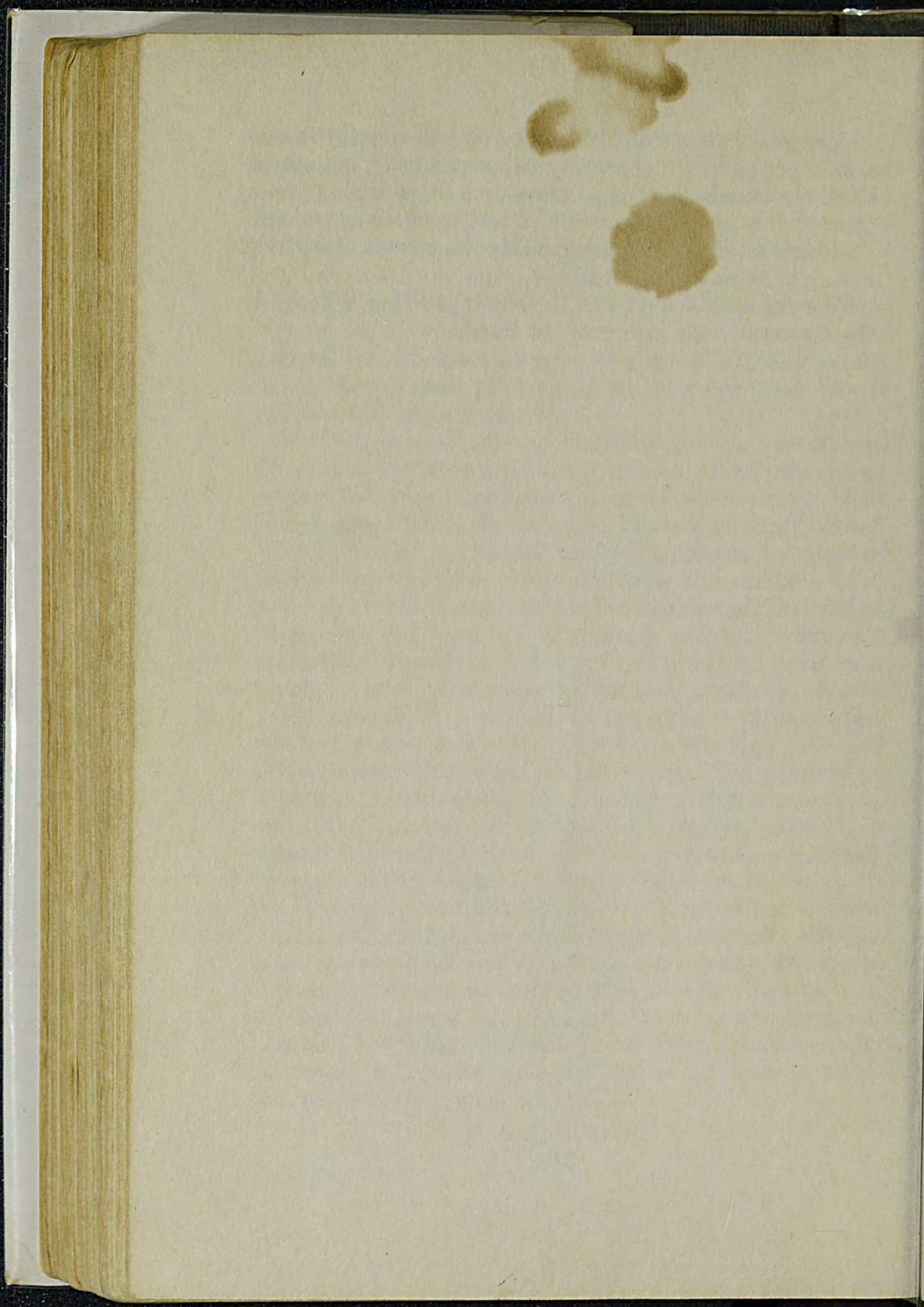
Many of those Earthlings who lived in Khem saved themselves from the onrushing tides by climbing the Pyramid; and others, who were busy fighting another colony over in what is now called Greece, escaped, since by the time the floods had filled the valley and formed the Mediterranean Sea, most of its force was spent. So after awhile, those who had been saved by being, at the moment of the flooding, outside the land of Khem, returned there, and in gratitude to the Gods who had saved them, carved the Sphinx out of a crag of living rock that stood there. And there she still stands, looking out over the trackless desert as once she looked over a rippling sea; and still in her care, many many feet below the sand that now covers so much that we made in those early days, are some of the treasures that we hid there. Treasures that one day you men of Earth may discover, as you may find many of the other wonders hidden about the world by our emissaries, Nohan and his sons and their captains, that wise Jeroam sent forth before the Flood came upon us. Nohan and his sons lived to beget families in the colonies to which they had been sent, and this is told in your Good Book where, under the name of Noah, the Captain of Shipping was told to build an Ark. There was not one Ark, but many, and thanks to these many were saved from the Flood—the Flood that the world has never forgotten, but recalls in countless tales and legends that exist in every race, no matter how primitive. . . .

*See Appendix V.

And so my story ends. Many of you will smile at it, and say, "a good tale, but of course pure imagination"; but others, those of you who have somewhere deep down within you a trace of ancient memory, will read and wonder and feel sad. As indeed I still do, and my Zenobia too, who is at my side now, I thank God, and ever will be.

Peace be upon you all, and the blessing of Him Who holds the Universe in the hollow of His Hand.

Teraon



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APPENDIX ONE

(for chapter 3 and 4)

It is not generally realized that the two satellites of Mars were known for years before they were officially recorded. In "A Journey to Laputa," published in 1726, Jonathan Swift described their sizes, distance from Mars and periods of rotation almost exactly as finally observed and recorded by Asaph Hall at the United States Observatory 175 years later—reputedly for the first time!

In connection with Teraon's description of the building of Phobos and Deimos, it is interesting to note that in 1959 it was published that the two moons circling Mars were, in the view of an eminent Russian scientist, Dr. L. Shklovsky, artificial satellites put into orbit by a Martian Civilization many aeons ago. Dr. Shklovsky, writing in the Russian paper *Komsomoliskaya Pravda*, declared that the origin of the moons could not be explained by any method known to science. One, he estimated to measure ten miles round and the other five, which corresponds with Teraon's statement. The larger, Phobos, is only 5,800 miles from the planet Mars and takes seven hours thirty-nine minutes to go round it. The smaller, Deimos, is 14,600 miles away in an orbit lasting one day, six hours and eighteen minutes. They differ from the satellites of other planets, according to Dr. Shklovsky, by their insignificant size and their extreme closeness to their planet. Phobos, moreover, has shown another striking dissimilarity from all other natural satellites in the solar system. In the last few decades it has deviated from its calculated orbit by two and a half degrees and speeded up its movement. This means that it has come closer to the surface of Mars. Several other eminent

Russian scientists have also expressed their belief that the satellites of Mars are man made.

APPENDIX TWO

(for Chapter 6)

It would seem that the Martians came to Earth somewhere towards the close of the Jurassic or Triassic Age, the age of the giant monsters—200 million years ago. There were already developing the mammals that succeeded the reptiles, though these were small then, and only developed in size when the reptiles had vanished from the Earth. *Homo sapiens*, or rather the ape-like being that preceded True Man, seems to have developed later still, in the age known as the Pleistocene Age—100 million years ago. Readers who are interested in the fascinating study of the development of one age after another are advised to read *The African Genesis* by Robert Ardrey, which is a mine of deeply interesting matter.

APPENDIX THREE

(to Chapter 11)

Body swapping. An interesting historical instance of this rarely-known phenomenon is described in page 34 of "The Secret Places of the Lion" by George Hunt Williamson. Following is a slightly condensed description from this book, which is full of strange and fascinating records of all manner of mysteries.

"When David was an old man and on his death-bed, the Pharaoh Ahmose (then a young man) was at the point of death from a sudden seizure. David died, but the Pharaoh recovered.

Yet the king of Egypt was different after his illness! He became a "new" man; the "old" man was changed.

What happened was something that takes place only when an individual must immediately re-incarnate after death and must not start all over again as a child, but must take over an older body so as not to lose the years that would be taken up with childhood developments. In other words, the individual has a job to do, and must be an adult at once in order to do it.

David passed in transition (died) and when Ahmose was dying, David's soul entered the body of Ahmose just as the ego that was Ahmose left that body. In that way David immediately re-incarnated, but in an adult body."

The comment may be made, "was it fair of David to force Ahmose out of life in order that he might use his body?" The answer is that no force was used. An agreement was made somewhere and sometime in the spiritual world between the two souls, that the one would enter life at a certain time only to nourish and keep a body in good health so that the other might later continue in that same body, and complete his work on earth.

APPENDIX FOUR

(for Chapter 13)

The ten kings. The importance of the number ten dates back to long before history. In the number given by the Bible for the Antediluvian patriarchs we have the first instance of a striking agreement with the traditions of various nations. Ten are mentioned in the "Book of Genesis." Other nations, to whatever epoch they carry back their ancestors, whether the mythical or historical character prevail, they are constant to this sacred number ten. In Chaldea, Berosus enumerates ten Antediluvian kings whose fabulous reigns extended to thousands of years. The legends of the Iranian race commence

with the reign of ten Peisdadien (Posedion?) kings...and in India we meet with the nine Brahmadias who, with Brahma, their founder, make ten, and who are called the Ten Petris or Fathers. The Chinese count ten emperors, "partakers of the divine nature," before the dawn of historical times. The Germans believed in the ten ancestors of Odin, and the Arabs in the ten mythical kings of the Adites!

(Above taken from *Ancient History of the East*, Vol. 1, p. 13, by Lebormant and Chevalier.)

APPENDIX FIVE

(for Epilogue)

Teraon's statement that at one time the Sahara Desert was covered by the sea seems to have been accepted by some scientists.

As far back as 1814, one Ali Bey El Abassi, a traveller and scientist of the period, published a book on "The Ancient Island of Atlantis and the possibility of an Interior Sea in the Centre of Africa," in Paris, 1814.

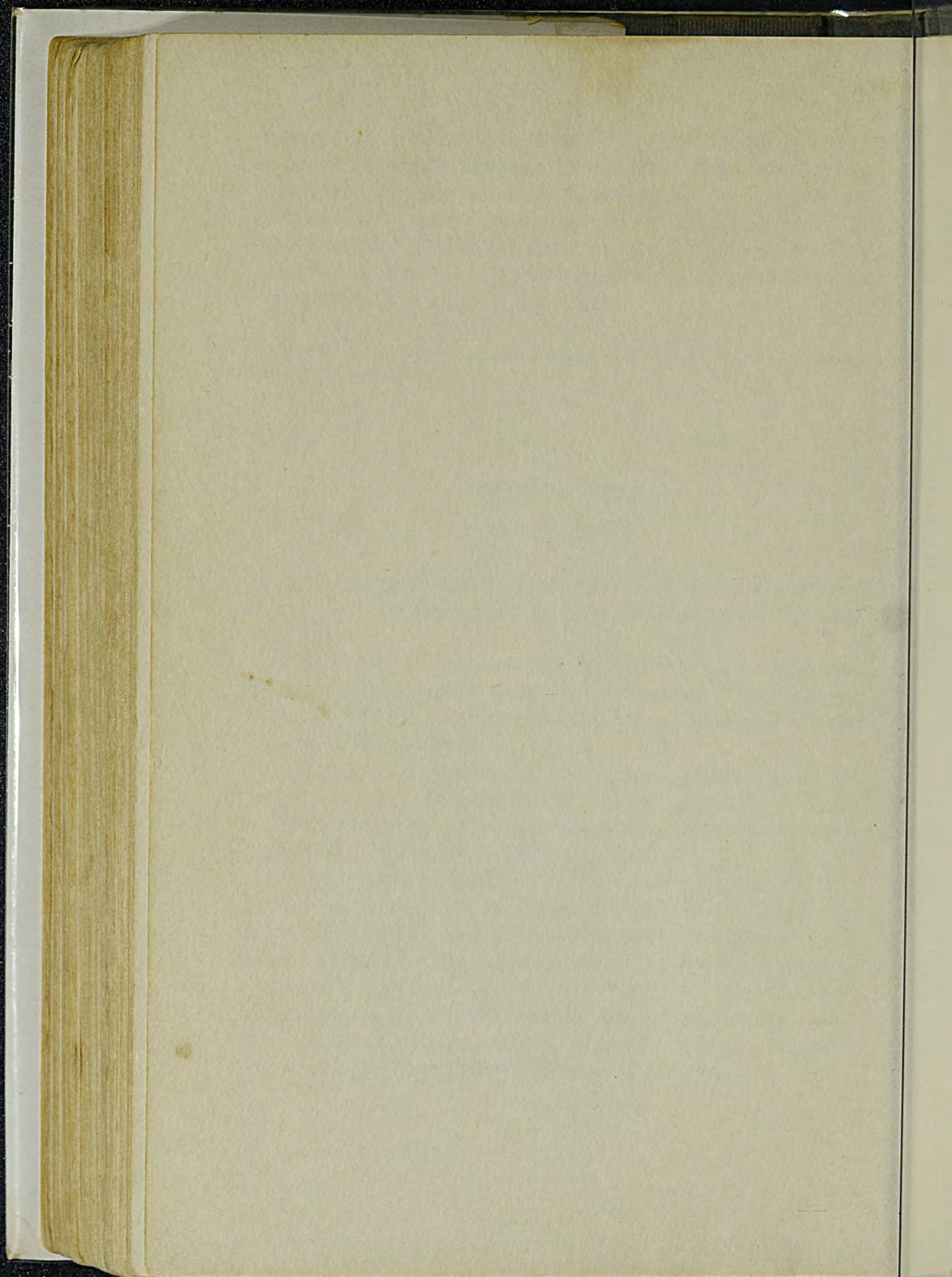
Further, another scientist, Dr. Rouire, published several papers on the "Former Inland Sea of Africa," in Paris, between 1884 and 1886, complementing those on the same subject by E. Roudaire, published in 1877.

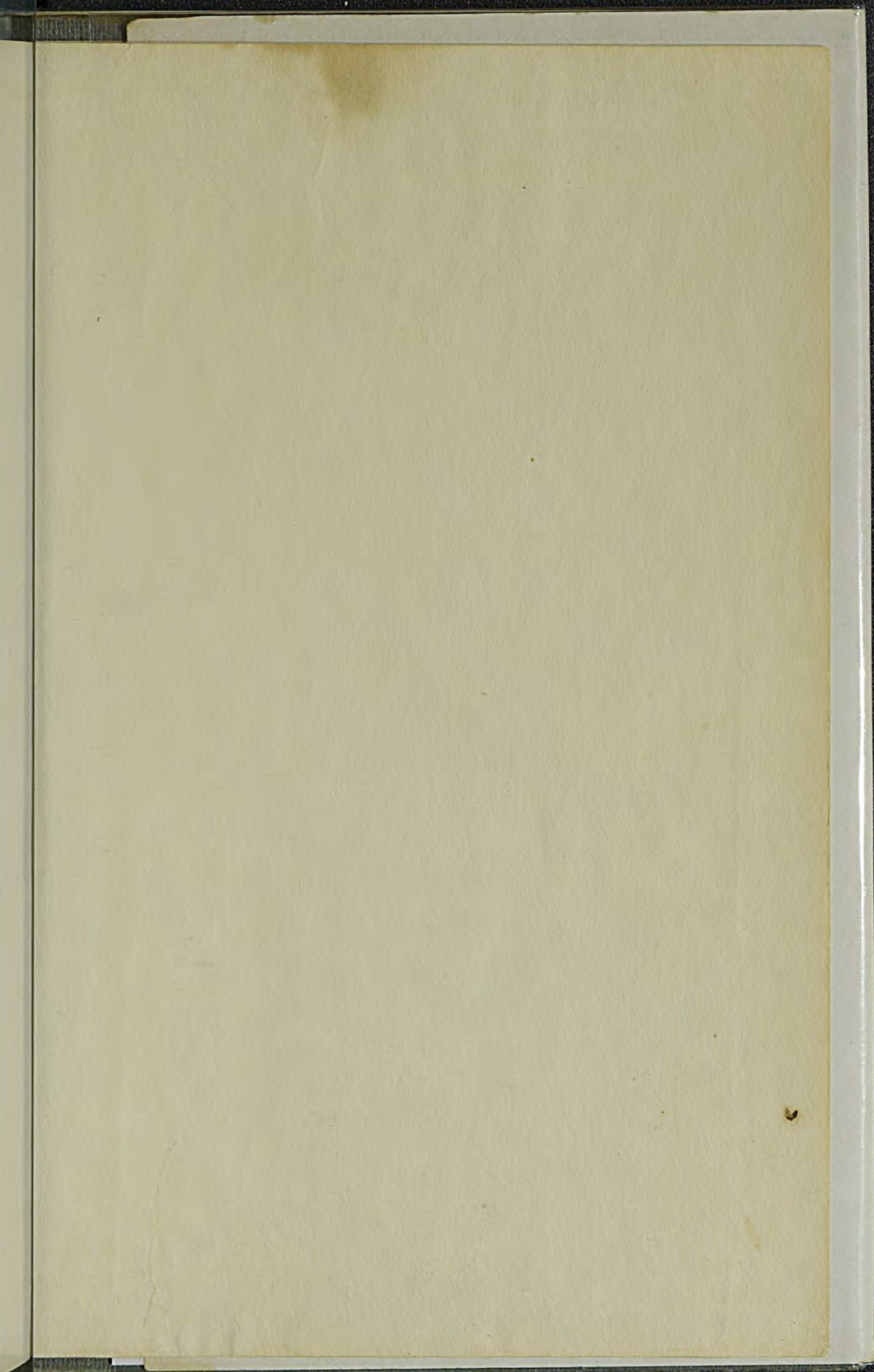
A well known explorer who is a friend of mine but who does not wish his name published, has spent much time in the Sahara; and he has told me that thanks to the stones, shells and fossils that he has discovered there, he is quite convinced that at one time the Desert was covered by the sea. Probably, in his opinion, so shallowly that in time the water evaporated, as it has done in many places on Earth once covered with water, and left the expanse of sand as it is now.

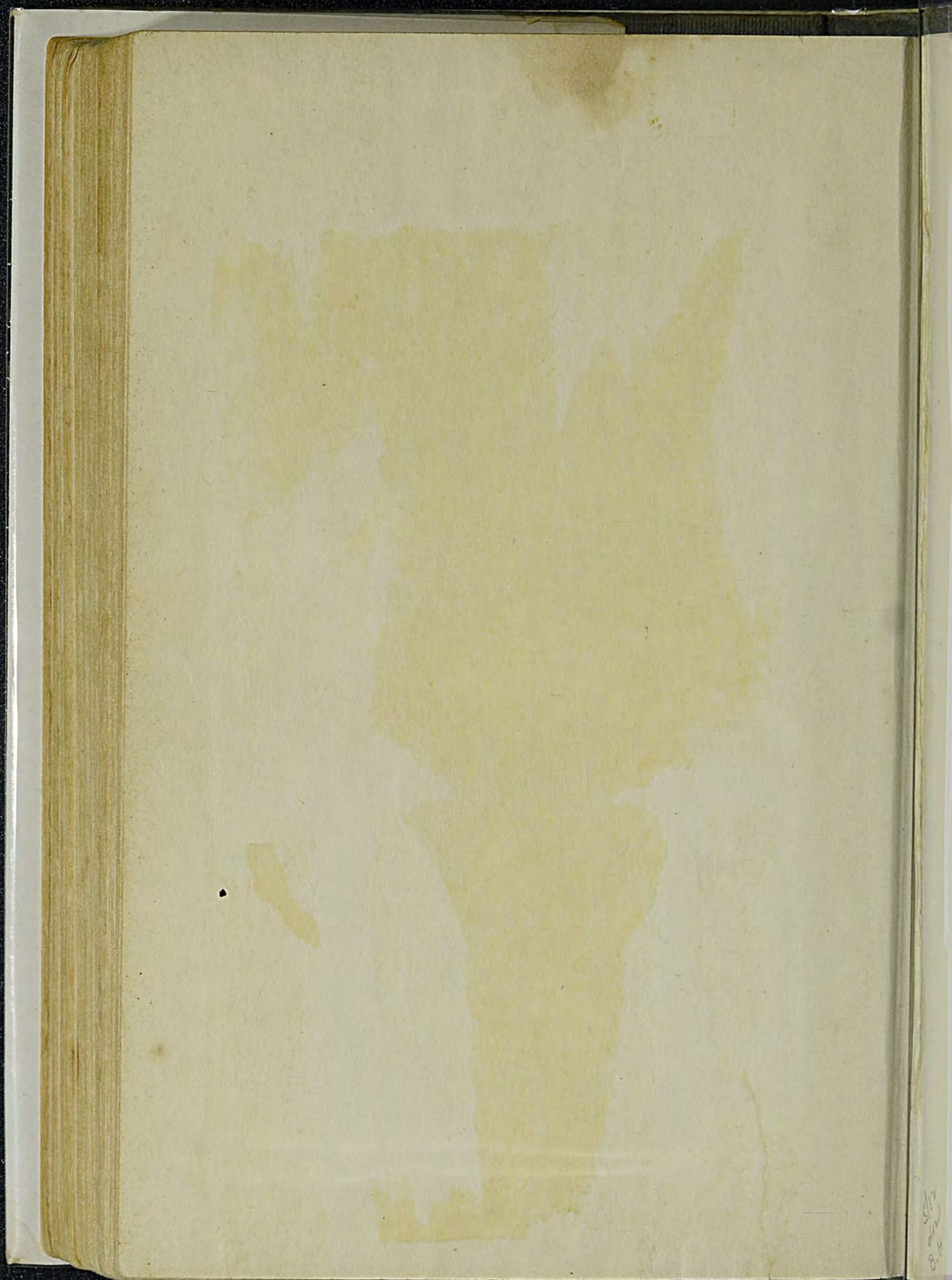
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About the Author

Margery Lawrence needs no introduction to her wide circle of readers. Born of a well-known legal family, she had the arts at her fingertips from early childhood, and though at first drawn towards painting as a career, turned at last towards writing stories as vivid and colourful as her painting.

She married Arthur Towle, younger of the two Towle brothers famous in the world of international hotels, and so has seen and known many countries which have provided her with much material for her books. During the war she remained in London with her husband, defying the fates in a top-floor flat; and after his death in 1948 spent much time abroad, especially in Spain, which she used as the setting for a successful novel, *Spanish Interlude*.

Miss Lawrence's work is varied in the extreme, ranging from stories of purely modern life to tales set in ancient times, as in *Daughter of the Nile*, *The Rent in the Veil* and in *The Gate of Yesterday*, in which the background is Greece in the time of Pericles.

She is a woman of varied gifts and catholic tastes. A keen musician—she has a good and well-trained contralto voice and sings much to her own accompaniment on the piano; mostly negro spirituals, old traditional Scottish and English songs and the like. She is an avid collector of books, curios and interesting friends; an embroidress of unusual gifts, a judge of good talk, good food and drink, an inveterate traveller and omnivorous reader. She loves the theatre, books and films, but has no taste for games or sport of any kind, with the exception of sailing, which she adores, being a fool-proof sailor in any weather. She is also a strong believer in flying saucers and in the possibility of interplanetary communication, as in psychic science, which plays a part in many of her stories; and *Master of Shadows* is a sequel to her successful collection of uncanny stories published some time ago and entitled *Number Seven, Queer Street*.

Her recent books include a brilliant study of a "problem" child, entitled *Dead End*.

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