

Life of Apollonius of Tyana

By Philostratus

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BOOK III

CHAPTER I

It is now time to notice the river Hyphasis, and to ask what is its size as it traverses India, and, what remarkable features it possesses. The springs of this river well forth out of the plain, and close to its source its streams are navigable, but as they advance they soon become impossible for boats, because spits of rock alternating with one another, rise up just below the surface; round these the current winds of necessity, so rendering the river unnavigable. And in breadth it approaches to the river Ister, and this is allowed to be the greatest of all the rivers which flow through Europe. Now the woods along the bank closely resemble those of the river in question, and a balm also is distilled from the trees, out of which the Indians make a nuptial ointment; and unless the people attending the wedding have besprinkled the young couple with this balm, the union is not considered complete nor compatible with Aphrodite bestowing her grace upon it. Now they say that the grove in the neighborhood of the river is dedicated to this goddess, as also the fishes called peacock fish which are bred in this river alone, and which have been given the same name as the bird, because their fins

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are blue, and their scales spotty, and their tails golden, and because they can fold and spread the latter at will. There is also a creature in this river which resembles a white worm. By melting down they make an oil, and from this oil, it appears, there is given off a flame such that nothing but glass can contain it. And this creature may be caught by the king alone, who utilizes it for the capture of cities; for as soon as the fat in question touches the battlements, a fire is kindled which defies all the ordinary means devised by men against combustibles.

CHAPTER II

AND they say that wild asses are also to be captured in these marshes, and these creatures have a horn upon the forehead, with which they butt like a bull and make a noble fight of it; the Indians make this horn into a cup, for they declare that no one can ever fall sick on the day on which he has drunk out of it, nor will any one who has done

so be the worse for being wounded, and he will be able to pass through fire unscathed, and he is even immune from poisonous draughts which others would drink to their harm. Accordingly, this goblet is reserved for kings, and the king alone may indulge in the chase of this creature. And Apollonius says that he saw this animal, and admired its natural features; but when Damis asked him if he believed the story about the goblet, he answered: "I will believe it, if I find the king of the Indians hereabout to be immortal; for surely a man who can offer me or anyone else a

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draught potent against disease and so wholesome, will he not be much more likely to imbibe it himself, and take a drink out of this horn every day even at the risk of intoxication? For no one, I conceive, would blame him for exceeding in such cups."

CHAPTER III

AT this place they say that they also fell in with a woman who was black from her head to her bosom, but was altogether white from her bosom down to her feet; and the rest of the party fled from her believing her to be a monster, but Apollonius clasped the woman by the hand and understood what she was; for in fact such a woman in India is consecrated to Aphrodite, and a woman is born piebald in honor of this goddess, just as is Apis among the Egyptians.

CHAPTER IV

THEY say that from this point they crossed the part of the Caucasus which stretches down to the Red Sea; and this range is thickly overgrown with aromatic shrubs. The spurs then of the mountain bear the cinnamon tree, which resembles the young tendrils of the vine, and the goat gives sure indication of this aromatic shrub; for if you hold out a bit of cinnamon to a goat, she will whine and whimper after your hand like a dog, and will follow you when you go away, pressing her nose against it; and if the goat herd drags her away, she will moan as if she were being torn away from the lotus. But on the steeps of

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this mountain there grow very lofty frankincense trees, as well as many other species, for example the pepper trees which are cultivated by the apes. Nor did they neglect to record the look and appearance of this tree, and I will repeat exactly their account of it. The pepper tree resembles in general the willow of the Greeks, and particularly in regard to the berry of the fruit; and it grows in steep ravines where it cannot be got at by men, and where a community of apes is said to live in the recesses of the mountain and in any of its glens; and these apes are held in great esteem by the Indians, because they harvest the pepper for them, and they drive the lions off them with dogs and weapons. For the lion, when he is sick, attacks the ape in order to get a remedy, for the flesh of the ape stays the course of his disease; and he attacks it when he is grown old to get a meal, for the lions when they are past hunting stags and wild boars gobble up the apes, and husband for their pursuit whatever strength they have left. The inhabitants of the country, however, are not

disposed to allow this, because they regard these animals as their benefactors, and so make war against the lions in behalf of them. For this is the way they go to work in collecting the pepper; the Indians go up to the lower trees and pluck off the fruit, and they make little round shallow pits around the trees, into which they collect the pepper, carelessly tossing it in, as if it had no value and was of no serious use to mankind. Then the monkeys mark their actions from above out of their fastnesses, and when the night comes on they imitate the action of the Indians, and twisting off the twigs of the trees, they bring and throw them into the pits in question; then the

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[paragraph continues] Indians at daybreak carry away the heaps of the spice which they have thus got without any trouble, and indeed during the repose of slumber.

CHAPTER V

AFTER crossing the top of the mountain, they say they saw a smooth plain seamed with cuts and ditches full of water, some of which were carried crosswise, whilst others were straight; these are derived from the river Ganges, and serve both for boundaries and also are distributed over the plain, when the soil is dry. But they say that this soil is the best in India, and constitutes the greatest of the territorial divisions of that country, extending in length towards the Ganges a journey of fifteen days and of eighteen from the sea to the mountain of the apes along which it skirts. The whole soil of the plain is a dead level, black and fertile of everything; for you can see on it standing grain as high as reeds and you can also see beans three times as large as the Egyptian kind, as well as sesame and millet of enormous size. And they say that nuts also grow there, of which many are treasured up in our temples here as objects of curiosity. But the vines which grow there are small, like those of the Lydians and Maeones; their vintage however is not only drinkable, but has a fine bouquet from the first. They also say that they came upon a tree there resembling the laurel, upon which there grew a cup or husk resembling a very large pomegranate; and inside the cup there was a kernel as blue as the cups of the hyacinth, but sweeter to the taste than any of the fruits the seasons bring.

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CHAPTER VI

NOW as they descended the mountain, they say they came in for a dragon hunt, which I must needs describe. For it is utterly absurd for those who are amateurs of hare-hunting to spin yarns about the hare as to how it is caught or ought to be caught, and yet that we should omit to describe a chase as bold as it is wonderful, and in which the sage, of whom I have written this account, was careful to set on record: The whole of India is girt with dragons of enormous size; for not only the marshes are full of them, but the mountains as well, and there is not a single ridge without one. Now the marsh kind are sluggish in their habits and are thirty cubits long, and they have no crest standing up on their heads, but in this respect resemble the she-dragons. Their backs however are very black, with fewer scales on them than the other kinds; and Homer has described them

with deeper insight than have most poets, for he says that the dragon that lived hard by the spring in Aulis had a tawny back [Iliad II. 308](#); but other poets declare that the congener of this one in the grove of Nemea also had a crest, a feature which we could not verify in regard to the marsh dragons.

CHAPTER VII

AND the dragons along the foothills and the mountain crests make their way into the plains after their quarry, and get the better all round of those in the marshes; for indeed they reach a greater length, and move faster than the swiftest rivers, so

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that nothing escapes them. These actually have a crest, of moderate extent and height when they are young; but as they reach their full size, it grows with them and extends to a considerable height, at which time also they turn red and get serrated backs. This kind also have beards, and lift their necks on high, while their scales glitter like silver; and the pupils of their eyes consist of a fiery stone, and they say that this has an uncanny power for many secret purposes. The plain specimen falls the prize of the hunters whenever it draws into its folds an elephant; for the destruction of both creatures is the result, and those who capture the dragons are rewarded by getting the eyes and skin and teeth. In most respects the tusks resemble the largest swine's, but they are slighter in build and twisted, and have a point as unabraded as sharks' teeth.

CHAPTER VIII

Now the dragons of the mountains have scales of a golden color, and in length excel those of the plain, and they have bushy beards, which also are of a golden hue; and their eyebrows are more prominent than those of the plain, and their eye is sunk deep under the eyebrow, and emits a terrible and ruthless glance. And they give off a noise like the clashing of brass whenever they are burrowing under the earth, and from their crests, which are all fiery red, there flashes a fire brighter than a torch. They also can catch the elephants, though they are themselves caught by the Indians in the following

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manner. They embroider golden runes on a scarlet cloak, which they lay in front of the animal's burrow after charming them the runes to cause sleep; for this is the only way to overcome the eyes of the dragon, which are otherwise inflexible, and much mysterious lore is sung by them to overcome him. These runes induce the dragon to stretch his neck out of his burrow and fall asleep over them: then the Indians fall upon him as he lies there, and dispatch him with blows of their axes, and having cut off the head they despoil it of its gems. And they say that in the heads of the mountain dragons there are stored away stones of flowery color, which flash out all kinds of hues, and possess a mystical power as resided in the ring, which they say belonged to Gyges. But often the Indian, in spite of his axe and his cunning, is caught by the dragon, who carries him off into his burrow, and almost shakes the mountains as he disappears. These are also said to inhabit

the mountains in the neighborhood of the Red Sea, and they say that they heard them hissing terribly and that they saw them go down to the shore and swim far out into the sea. It was impossible however to ascertain the number of years that this creature lives, nor would my statements be believed. This is all I know about dragons.

CHAPTER IX

THEY tell us that the city under the mountain is of great size and is called Paraca, and that in the center of it are enshrined a great many heads of dragons, for the Indians who inhabit it are trained from their boyhood in this form of sport. And they

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are also said to acquire an understanding of the language and ideas of animals by feeding either on the heart or the liver of the dragon. And as they advanced they thought they heard the pipe of some shepherd marshaling his flock, but it turned out to be a man looking after a herd of white hinds, for the Indians use these for milking, and find their milk very nutritious.

CHAPTER X

FROM this point their road led for four days across a rich and well cultivated country, till they approached the castle of the sages, when their guide bade his camel crouch down, and leapt off it in such an agony of fear that he was bathed in perspiration. Apollonius however quite understood where he was come to, and smiling at the panic of the Indian, said: "It seems to me that this fellow, were he a mariner who had reached harbor after a long sea voyage, would worry at being on land and tremble at being in dock." And as he said this he ordered his camel to kneel down, for indeed he was by now well accustomed to do so. And it seems that what scared the guide so much was that he was now close to the sages; for the Indians fear these people more than they do their own king, because the very king to whom the land is subject consults them about everything that he has to say or do, just as people who send to an oracle of a god; and the sages indicate to him what it is expedient for him to do, and what is inexpedient, and dissuade and warn him off with signs from what is inexpedient.

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CHAPTER XI

AND they were about to halt in the neighboring village, which is hardly distant a single stade from the eminence occupied by the sages, when they saw a youth run up to them, the blackest Indian they ever saw; and between his eyebrows was a crescent shaped spot which shone brightly. But I learn that at a later time the same feature was remarked in the case of Menon the pupil of Herod the Sophist, who was an Ethiop; it showed while he was a youth, but as he grew up to man's estate its splendor waned and finally disappeared with his youth. But the Indian also wore, they say, a golden anchor, which is affected by Indians as a herald's badge, because it holds all things fast.

CHAPTER XII

THEN he ran up to Apollonius and addressed him in the Greek tongue; and so far this did not seem so remarkable, because all the inhabitants of the village spoke the Greek tongue. But when he addressed him by name and said " Hail so and so," the rest of the party were filled with astonishment, though our sage only felt the more confidence in his mission: for he looked to Damis and said: "We have reached men who are unfeignedly wise, for they seem to have the gift of foreknowledge." And he at once asked the Indian what he must do, because he was already eager for an interview: and the Indian replied:

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[paragraph continues] "Your party must halt here, but you must come on just as you are, for the Masters themselves issue this command."

CHAPTER XIII

THE word *Masters* at once had a Pythagorean ring for the ears of Apollonius and he gladly followed the messenger.

Now the hill the summit of which is inhabited by the sages is, according to the account of our travelers, of about the same height as the Acropolis of Athens; and it rises straight up from the plain, though its natural position equally secures it from attack, for the rock surrounds it on all sides. On many parts of this rock you see traces of cloven feet and outlines of beards and of faces, and here and there impressions of backs as of persons who had slipped and rolled down. For they say that Dionysus, when he was trying to storm the place together with Heracles, ordered the Pans to attack it, thinking that they would be strong enough to stand the shock; but they were thunderstruck by the sages and fell one, one way, and another, another; and the rocks as it were took the print of the various postures in which they fell and failed. And they say that they saw a cloud floating round the eminence on which the Indians live and render themselves visible or invisible at will. Whether there were any other gates to the eminence they say they did not know; for the cloud around it did not anywhere allow them to be seen, whether there was an opening in the rampart, or whether on the other hand it was a close-shut fortress.

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CHAPTER XIV

APOLLONIUS says that he himself ascended mostly on the south side of the ridge, following the Indian, and that the first thing he saw was a well four fathoms deep, above the mouth of which there rose a sheen of deep blue light; and at midday when the sun was stationary about it, the sheen of light was always drawn up on high by the rays, and in its ascent assumed the look of a glowing rainbow. But he learnt afterwards that the soil underneath the well was composed of realgar, but that they regarded the water as holy and mysterious, and no one either drank it or drew it up, but it was regarded by the whole land of India all around as binding in oaths. And near this there was a crater, he says, of

fire, which sent up a lead-colored flame, though it emitted no smoke or any smell, nor did this crater ever overflow, but emitted just matter enough not to bubble over the edges of the pit. It is here that the Indians purify themselves of involuntary sins, wherefore the sages call the well, the well of testing, and the fire, the fire of pardon. And they say that they saw there two jars of black stone, of the rains and of the winds respectively. The jar of the rains, they say, is opened in case the land of India is suffering from drought, and sends up clouds to moisten the whole country; but if the rains should be in excess they are stopped by the jar being shut up. But the jar of the winds plays, I imagine, the same role as the bag of Aeolus: for when they open this jar ever so little, they let out one of the winds, which creates a seasonable breeze by which the

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country is refreshed. And they say that they came upon statues of Gods, and they were not nearly so much astonished at finding Indian or Egyptian Gods as they were by finding the most ancient of the Greek Gods, a statue of Athena Polias and of Apollo of Delos and of Dionysus of Limnae and another of him of Amyclae, and others of similar age. These were set up by these Indians and worshipped with Greek rites. And they say that they are inhabiting the heart of India, as they regard the mound as the navel of this hill, and on it they worship fire with mysterious rites, deriving the fire, according to their own account, from the rays of the sun; and to the Sun they sing a hymn every day at midday.

CHAPTER XV

APOLLONIUS himself describes the character of these sages and of their settlement upon the hill; for in one of his addresses to the Egyptians he says, "I saw Indian Brahmans living upon the earth and yet not on it, and fortified without fortifications, and possessing nothing, yet having the riches of all men." He may indeed be thought to have here written with too much subtlety; but we have anyhow the account of Damis to effect that they made a practice of sleeping the ground, and that they strewed the ground with such grass as they might themselves prefer; and, what is more, he says that he saw them levitating themselves two cubits high from the ground, not for the sake of miraculous display, for they disdain any such ambition; but they

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regard any rites they perform, in thus quitting earth and walking with the Sun, as acts of homage acceptable to the God. Moreover, they neither burn upon an altar nor keep in stoves the fire which they extract from the sun's rays, although it is a material fire; but like the rays of sunlight when they are refracted in water, so this fire is seen raised aloft in the air and dancing in the ether. And further they pray to the Sun who governs the seasons by his might, that the latter may succeed duly in the land, so that India may prosper; but of a night they intreat the ray of light not to take the night amiss, but, to stay with them just as they have brought it down. Such then was the meaning of the phrase of Apollonius, that "the Brahmans are upon earth and yet not upon earth." And his phrase "fortified without fortifications or walls," refers to the air or vapor under which they bivouac, for though they seem to live in the open air, yet they raise up a shadow and veil

themselves in it, so that they are not made wet when it rains and they enjoy the sunlight whenever they choose. And the phrase "without possessing anything they had the riches of all men," is thus explained by Damis: All the springs which the Bacchanals see leaping up from the ground under their feet, whenever Dionysus stirs them and earth in a common convulsion, spring up in plenty for these Indians also when they are entertaining or being entertained. Apollonius therefore was right in saying that people provided as they are with all they want offhand and without having prepared anything, possess what they do not possess. And on principle they grow their hair long, as the

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[paragraph continues] Lacedaemonians did of old and the people of Thurium and Tarentum, as well as the Melians and all who set store by the fashions of Sparta; and they bind a white turban on their heads, and their feet are naked for walking and they cut their garments to resemble the *exomis* ¹. But the material of which they make their raiment is a wool that springs wild from the ground, white like that of the Pamphylians, though it is of softer growth, and a grease like olive oil distills from off it. This is what they make their sacred vesture of, and if anyone else except these Indians tries to pluck it up, the earth refuses to surrender its wool. And they all carry both a ring and a staff of which the peculiar virtues can effect all things, and the one and the other, so we learn, are prized as secrets.

CHAPTER XVI

WHEN Apollonius approached, the rest of the sages welcomed him and shook hands; but Iarchas sat down on a high stool—and this was of black copper and chased with golden figures, while the seats of the others were of copper, but plain and not so high, for they sat lower down than Iarchas—and when he saw Apollonius, Iarchas greeted him in the Greek tongue and asked for the Indian's letter. And as Apollonius showed astonishment at his gift of prescience, he took pains to add that a single letter was missing in the epistle, namely a *delta*, which had escaped the writer; and this was found

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to be the case. Then having read the epistle, he said "What do you think of us, O Apollonius?" "Why," replied the latter, "how can you ask, when it is sufficiently shown by the fact that I have taken a Jamey to see you which was never till now accomplished by any of the inhabitants of my country." "And what do you think we know more than yourself?" "I," replied the other, "consider that your lore is profounder and much more divine than our own; and if I add nothing to my present stock of knowledge while I am with you, I shall at least have learned that I have nothing more to learn." Thereupon the Indian replied and said: "Other people ask those who arrive among them, who they are that come, and why, but the first display we make of our wisdom consists in showing that we are not ignorant who it is that comes. And you may test this point to begin with." And to suit his word he forthwith recounted the whole story of Apollonius' family both on his father's and his mother's side, and he related all his life in Aegae, and how Damis had joined him, and any conversations that they had had on the road, and anything they had found out through the conversation of others with them. All this, just as if he had shared

their voyage with them, the Indian recounted straight off, quite clearly and without pausing for breath. And when Apollonius was astounded and asked him how he came to know it all, he replied: "And you too are come to share in this wisdom, but you are not yet an adept." "Will you teach me, then," said the other, "all this wisdom?" "Aye, and gladly, for that is a wiser course than grudging and hiding matters of interest; and moreover, O Apollonius, I

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perceive that you are well endowed with memory, a goddess whom we love more than any other of the divine beings." "Well," said the other, "you have certainly discerned by your penetration my exact disposition." "We," said the other, "O Apollonius, can see all spiritual traits, for we trace and detect them by a thousand signs. But as it is nearly midday, and we must get ready our offerings for the Gods, let us now employ ourselves with that, and afterwards let us converse as much as you like; but you must take part in all our religious rites." "By Zeus," said Apollonius, "I should be wronging the Caucasus and the Indus, both of which I have crossed in order to reach you, if I did not feast myself on your rites to the full." "Do so," said the other, "and let us depart."

CHAPTER XVII

ACCORDINGLY they betook themselves to a spring of water, which Damis, who saw it subsequently, says resembles that of Dirce in Boeotia; and first they stripped, and then they anointed their heads with an amber-like drug, which imparted such a warmth to these Indians, that their bodies steamed and the sweat ran off them as profusely as if they were washing themselves with fire; next they threw themselves into the water and, having so taken their bath, they betook themselves to the temple with wreaths upon their heads and full of sacred song. And they stood round in the form of a chorus, and having chosen Iarchas as conductor they struck the earth, uplifting their rods, and the earth arched itself

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like a billow of the sea and raised them up two cubits high into the air. But they sang a song resembling the paeon of Sophocles which they sing at Athens in honor of Asclepius. But when they had alighted upon the ground, Iarchas called the stripling who carried the anchor and said: "Do you look after the companions of Apollonius." And he went off swifter than the quickest of the birds, and coming back again said: "I have looked after them." Having fulfilled then the most of their religious rites, they sat down to rest upon their seats, but Iarchas said to the stripling: "Bring out the throne of Phraotes for the wise Apollonius that he may sit upon it to converse with us."

CHAPTER XVIII

And when he had taken his seat, he said: "Ask whatever you like, for you find yourself among people who know everything." Apollonius then asked him whether they knew themselves also, thinking that he, like the Greeks, would regard self-knowledge as a difficult matter. But the other, contrary to Apollonius' expectations, corrected him and

said: "We know everything, just because we begin by knowing ourselves; for no one of us would be admitted to this philosophy unless he first knew himself." And Apollonius remembered what he had heard Phraotes say, and how he who would become a philosopher must examine himself before he undertakes the task; and he therefore acquiesced in this answer, for he was convinced of its truth in his own case also. He accordingly asked a fresh question,

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namely, who they considered themselves to be; and the other answered "We consider ourselves to be Gods." Apollonius asked afresh: "Why?" "Because," said the other, "we are good men." This reply struck Apollonius as so instinct with trained good sense that he subsequently mentioned it to Domitian in his defense of himself.

CHAPTER XIX

HE therefore resumed his questions and said: "And what view do you take of the soul?" "That," replied the other, "which Pythagoras imparted to you, and which we imparted to the Egyptians." "Would you then say," said Apollonius, "that as Pythagoras declared himself to be Euphorbus, so you yourself, before you entered your present body, were one of the Trojans or Achaeans or someone else?" And the Indian replied: "Those Achaean sailors were the ruin of Troy, and your talking so much about it is the ruin of you Greeks. For you imagine that the campaigners against Troy were the only heroes that ever were, and you forget other heroes both more numerous and more divine, whom your own country and that of the Egyptians and that of the Indians have produced. Since then you have asked me about my earlier incarnation, tell me, whom you regard as the most remarkable of the assailants or defenders of Troy." "I," replied Apollonius, "regard Achilles, the son of Peleus and Thetis, as such, for he and no other is celebrated by Homer as excelling all the Achaeans in personal

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beauty and size, and he knows of mighty deeds of his. And he also rates very highly such men as Ajax and Nireus, who were only second to him in beauty and courage, and are celebrated as such in his poems." "With him," said the other, "O Apollonius, I would have you compare my own ancestor, or rather my ancestral body, for that was the light in which Pythagoras regarded Euphorbus.

CHAPTER XX

"THERE was then," he said, "a time when the Ethiopians, an Indian race, dwelt in this country, and when Ethiopia as yet was not; but Egypt stretched its borders beyond Meroe and the cataracts, and on the one side included in itself the fountains of the Nile, and on the other was only bounded by the mouths of the river. Well, at that time of which I speak, the Ethiopians lived here, and were subject to King Ganges, and the land was sufficient for their sustenance, and the gods watched over them; but when they slew this king, neither did the rest of the Indians regard them as pure, nor did the land permit them

to remain upon it; for it spoiled the seed which they sowed in it before it came into ear, and it inflicted miscarriages on their women, and it gave a miserable feed to their flocks; and wherever they tried to found a city, it would give way sink down under their feet. Nay more, the ghost of Ganges drove them forward on their path, a haunting terror to their multitude, and it did not quit them until they atoned to earth by sacrificing

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the murderers who had shed the king's blood with their hands. Now this Ganges it seems, was ten cubits high, and in personal beauty excelled any man the world had yet seen, and he was the son of the river Ganges; and when his own father inundated India, he himself turned the flood into the Red Sea, and effected a reconciliation between his father and the land, with the result that the latter brought forth fruits in abundance for him when living, and also avenged him after death. And since Homer brings Achilles to Troy in Helen's behalf, and relates how he took twelve cities by sea and eleven on land, and how he was carried away by wrath because he had been robbed of a woman by the king, on which occasion, in my opinion, he showed himself merciless and cruel, let us contrast the Indian in similar circumstances. He on the contrary set himself to found sixty cities, which are the most considerable of those hereabouts—and I would like to know who would regard the destruction of cities as a better title to fame than the rebuilding of them—and he also repulsed the Scythians who once invaded this land across the Caucasus. Surely it is better to prove yourself a good man by liberating your country than to bring slavery upon a city, and that too on behalf of a woman who probably was never really carried off against her will. And he had formed an alliance with the king of the country, over which Phraotes now rules, although that other had violated every law and principle of morality by carrying off his wife, he yet did not break his oath, and so stable, he said, was his pledged word, that, in spite of the injury he had suffered, he would not do anything to harm that other.

Footnotes

[1:261:1](#) An overmantle leaving one arm and shoulder bare. Buddhist monks still wear a similar garment. The so-called wool was asbestos.

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CHAPTER XXI

"AND I could enumerate many more merits of this great man, if I did not shrink from pronouncing a panegyric upon myself; for I may tell you I am the person in question, as I clearly proved when I was four years old. For this Ganges on one occasion fixed seven swords made of adamant in the earth, to prevent any monster approaching our country; now the gods ordered us to sacrifice if we came where he had implanted these weapons, though without indicating the spot where he had fixed them. I was a mere child, and yet I

led the interpreters of their will to a trench, and told them to dig there, for it was there I said that they had been laid.

CHAPTER XXII

"AND you must not be surprised at my transformation from one Indian to another; for here is one," and he pointed to a stripling of about twenty years of age, "who in natural aptitude for philosophy excels everyone, and he enjoys good health as you see, and is furnished with an excellent constitution; moreover he can endure fire and all sorts of cutting and wounding, yet in spite of all these advantages he detests philosophy." "What then," said Apollonius, "O Iarchas, is the matter with the youth? For it is a terrible thing you tell me, if one so well adapted by nature to the pursuit refuses to embrace philosophy, and has no love for learning, and that although he lives with you." "He does not live

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with us," replied the other, "but he has been caught like a lion against his will, and confined here, but he looks askance, at us when we try to domesticate him and caress him. The truth is this stripling was once Palamedes of Troy, and he found his bitterest enemies in Odysseus and Homer; for the one laid an ambush against him of people by whom he was stoned to death, while the other denied him any place in his Epic; and because neither the wisdom with which he was endowed was of any use to him, nor did he meet with any praise from Homer, to whom nevertheless many people of no great importance owe their renown, and because he was outwitted by Odysseus in spite of his innocence, he has conceived an aversion to philosophy, and deplores his ill-luck. And he is Palamedes, for indeed he can write without having learned his letters."

CHAPTER XXIII

WHILE they were thus conversing, a messenger approached Iarchas and said: "The King will come early in the afternoon to consult you about his own business." And Iarchas replied: "Let him come, for he too will go away all the better for making acquaintance of a man from Hellas." And after this, he went on with his former discourse. He accordingly asked Apollonius the question: "Will you tell us," he said, "about your earlier incarnation, and who you were before the present life?" And he replied: "Since it was an ignoble episode, I do not remember much of it." Iarchas therefore took him up and said: "Then you

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think it ignoble to have been the pilot of an Egyptian vessel, for I perceive that this is what you were?" "What you say," said Apollonius, "is true, Iarchas; for that is really what I was; but I consider this profession not only inglorious but also detestable, and though of as much value to humanity as that of a prince or the leader of an army, nevertheless it bears an evil repute by the reason of those who follow the sea; at any rate the most noble of the deeds which I performed no one at the time saw fit to praise." "Well, and what would you claim for yourself in the way of noble achievement? Is it your having doubled

the capes of Malea and Sunium, by checking your ship when it was drifting out of its course, and your having discerned so accurately the quarters from which the winds would blow both fore and aft, or you getting your boat past the reefs in the Hollows of Euboea, where any number of ships' ornamental signs show sticking up?"

CHAPTER XXIV

BUT Apollonius replied: "Since you tempt me to talk about pilotage, I would have you hear what I consider to have been my soundest exploit at that time. Pirates at one time infested the Phoenician Sea, and were hanging about the cities to pick up information about the cargoes which different people had. The agents of the pirates spied out accordingly a rich cargo which I had on board my ship, and having taken me aside in conversation, asked me what was my share in the freight; and I told them that it was a thousand drachmas, for there were four people in

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command of the ship. 'And,' said they, 'have you a house?' 'A wretched hut,' I replied, 'on the Island of Pharos, where once upon a time Proteus used to live.' 'Would you like then,' they went on, 'to acquire a landed estate instead of the sea, and a decent house instead of your hut, and ten times as much for the cargo as you are going to get now? And to get rid of a thousand misfortunes which beset pilots owing to the roughness of the sea?' I replied that I would gladly do so, but that I did not aspire to become a pirate just at a time when I had made myself more expert than I ever had been, and had won crowns for my skill in my profession. However they persevered and promised to give me a purse of ten thousand drachmas, if I would be their man and do what they wanted. Accordingly I egged them on to talk by promising not to fail them, but to assist them in every way. Then they admitted that they were agents of the pirates, and besought me not to deprive them of a chance of capturing the ship, and instead of sailing away to the city whenever I weighed anchor thence, they arranged that I should cast anchor under the promontory, under the lee of which the pirate ships were riding; and they were willing to swear that they would not only not kill myself, but spare the life of any for whom I interceded. I for my part did not consider it safe to reprehend them, for I was afraid that if they were driven to despair, they would attack my ship on the high seas and then we would all be lost somewhere at sea; accordingly I promised to assist their enterprise, but I insisted upon their taking oath to keep their promise truly. They accordingly made oath, for our interview took place in a temple, and then I

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said: 'You betake yourselves to the ships of the pirates at once, for we will sail away by night.' And they found me all the more plausible from the way I bargained about the money, for I stipulated that it must all be paid me in current cash, though not before they had captured the ship. They therefore went off, but I put straight out to sea after doubling the promontory." "This then," said Iarchas, "O Apollonius, you consider the behavior of a just man?" "Why yes," said Apollonius, "and of a humane one too! for I consider it was a

rare combination of virtues for one who was a mere sailor to refuse to sacrifice men's lives, or to betray the interests of merchants, so rising superior to all bribes of money."

CHAPTER XXV

THEREUPON the Indian smiled and said: "You seem to think that mere abstention from injustice constitutes justice, and I am of opinion that all Greeks do the same. For as I once learned from the Egyptians that come hither, governors from Rome are in the habit of visiting your country, brandishing their axes naked over your heads, before they know they have bad men to rule or not; but you acknowledge them to be just if they merely do not sell justice. And I have heard that the slave merchants yonder do exactly the same; for when they come to you with convoys of Carian slaves and are anxious to recommend their characters to you, they make it a great merit of the slaves that they do not steal. In the same way do you recommend on

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such grounds the rulers whose sway you acknowledge, and after decorating them with such praises as you lavish upon slaves, you send them away, objects, as you imagine, of universal admiration. Nay more, your cleverest poets will not give you leave to be just and good, even if you want to. For here was Minos, a man who exceeded all men in cruelty, and who enslaved with his navies the inhabitants of continent and islands alike, and yet they honor him by placing in his hand a scepter of justice and give him a throne in Hades to be umpire of spirits; while at the same time they deny food and drink to Tantalus, merely because he was a good man and inclined to share with his friends the immortality bestowed upon them by the Gods. And some of them hang stones over him, and rain insults of a terrible kind upon this divine and good man; and I would much rather that they had represented him as swimming in a lake of nectar, for he regaled men with that drink humanely and ungrudgingly." And as he spoke he pointed out a statue which stood upon his left hand, on which was inscribed the name "Tantalus". Now this statue was four cubits high, and represented a man of fifty years who was clad in the fashion of Argolis, though he differed in his cloak, that being like a Thessalian's, and he held a cup sufficient at least for one thirsty man and drank your health therefrom, and in the goblet was a liquor, an unmixed draught which frothed and foamed, though without bubbling over the edge of the cup. Now I will presently explain what they consider this cup to be, and for what reason they drink from it. In any case, however, we must suppose that Tantalus was assailed by the poets for not giving rein to his tongue, but because he

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shared the nectar with mankind; but we must not suppose that he was really the victim of the gods' dislike, for, had he been hateful to them, he would never have been judged by the Indians to be a good man, for they are most religious people and never transgress any divine command.

CHAPTER XXVI

While they were still discussing this topic, a hubbub down below in the village struck their ears, for it seems the king had arrived equipped in the height of Median fashion and full of pomp. Iarchas then, not too well pleased, remarked: "If it were Phraotes who was halting here, you would find a dead silence prevailing everywhere as if you were attending a mystery." From this remark Apollonius realized that the king in question was not only inferior to Phraotes in a few details, but in the whole of philosophy; and as he saw that the sages did not bestir themselves to make any preparations or provide for the king's wants, though he was come at midday, he said: "Where is the king going to stay?" "Here," they replied, "for we shall discuss by night the objects for which he is come, since that is the best time for taking counsel." "And will a table be laid for him when he comes," said Apollonius. "Why, of course," they answered, "a rich table too, furnished with everything which this place provides". "Then," said he, "you live richly?" "We," they answered, "live in a slender manner, for although we might eat as much as we like, we are contented with little; but the king requires a great

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deal, for that is his pleasure. But he will not eat any living creature, for it is wrong to do here, but only dried fruits and roots and the seasonable produce of the Indian land at this time of year, and whatever else the new year's seasons will provide."

CHAPTER XXVII

"BUT see," said he, "here he is." And just then the king advanced together with his brother and his son, ablaze with gold and jewels. And Apollonius was about to rise and retire, when Iarchas checked him from leaving his throne, and explained to him that it was not their custom for him to do so. Damis himself says that he was not present on this occasion, because on that day he was staying in the village, but he heard from Apollonius what happened and wrote it in his book. He says then that when they had sat down, the king extended his hand as if in prayer to the sages and they nodded their assent as if they were conceding his request; and he was transported with joy at the promise, just as if he had come to the oracle of a God. But the brother of the king and his son, who was a very pretty boy, were not more considered than if they had been the slaves of the others, that were mere retainers. After that the Indian rose from his place, and in a formal speech bade the king take food, and he accepted the invitation and that most cordially. Thereupon four tripods stepped forth like those of the Pythian Temple, but of their own accord, like those which advanced in Homer's poem *Iliad* 18. 375, and upon them were cup-bearers of black brass resembling the figures of

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[paragraph continues] Ganymede and of Pelops among the Greeks. And the earth strewed beneath them grass softer than any mattress. And dried fruits and bread and vegetables and the dessert of the season all came in, served in order, and set before them more agreeably than if cooks and waiters had provided it; now two of the tripods flowed with wine, but the other two supplied, the one of them a jet of warm water and the other of cold. Now the precious stones imported from India are employed in Greece for necklaces and rings

because they are so small, but among the Indians they are turned into decanters and wine coolers, because they are so large, and into goblets of such size that from a single one of them four persons can slake their thirst at midsummer. But the cup-bearers of bronze drew a mixture, he says, of wine and water made in due proportions; and they pushed cups round, just as they do in drinking bouts. The sages, however, reclined as we do in a common banquet, not that any special honor was paid to the king, although great importance would be attached to him among Greeks and Romans, but each took the first place that he chanced to reach.

CHAPTER XXVIII

AND when the wine had circulated, Iarchas said: "I pledge you to drink the health, O king, of a Hellene," and he pointed to Apollonius, who was reclining just below him, and he made a gesture with his hand to indicate that he was a noble man and divine. But the king said: "I have heard that

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he and the persons who are halting in the village belong to Phraotes."

"Quite, right," he answered, "and true is what you heard: for it is Phraotes who entertains him here also." "What," asked the king, "is his mode of life and pursuit?" "Why, what else," replied Iarchas, "except that of that king himself?" "It is no great compliment you have paid him," answered the king, "by saying that he has embraced a mode of life which has denied even to Phraotes the chance of being a noble man." Thereupon Iarchas remarked: "You must judge more reasonably, O king, both about philosophy and about Phraotes: for as long as you were a stripling, your youth excused in you such extravagances. But now that you have already reached man's estate, let us avoid foolish and facile utterances." But Apollonius, who found an interpreter in Iarchas said: "And what have you gained, O king, by refusing to be a philosopher?" "What have I gained? Why, the whole of virtue and the identification of myself with the Sun." Then the other, by way of checking his pride and muzzling him, said: "If you were a philosopher, you would not entertain such fancies." "And you," replied the king, "since you are a philosopher, what is your fancy about yourself, my fine fellow?" "That I may pass," replied Apollonius, "for being a good man, if only I can be a philosopher." Thereupon the king stretched out his hand to heaven and exclaimed: "By the Sun, you come here full of Phraotes." But the other hailed this remark as a godsend, and catching him up said: "I have not taken this long journey in vain, if I am become full of Phraotes. But if you should meet him presently,

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you will certainly say that he is full of me; and he wished to write to you in my behalf, but since he declared that you were a good man, I begged him not to take the trouble of writing, seeing that in his case no one sent a letter commending me."

CHAPTER XXIX

THIS put a stop to the incipient folly of the king for having heard that he himself was praised by Phraotes, he not only dropped his suspicions, but lowering his tone he said: "Welcome, goodly stranger." But Apollonius answered: "And my welcome to you also, O king, for you appear to have only just arrived." "And who," asked the other, "attracted you to us?" "These gentlemen here, who are both Gods and wise men." "And about myself, O stranger"; said the king, "what is said among Hellenes?" "Why, as much," said Apollonius, "as is said about the Hellenes here." "As for myself, I find nothing in the Hellenes," said the other, "that is worth speaking of." "I will tell them that," said Apollonius, "and they will crown you at Olympia."

CHAPTER XXX

AND stooping towards Iarchas he said: "Let him go on like a drunkard, but do you tell me why do you not invite to the same table as yourself, nor hold worthy of other recognition those who accompany this man, though they are his brother and son, as you tell me?" "Because," said Iarchas, "they reckon to be kings

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one day themselves, and by being made themselves to suffer disdain they must be taught not to disdain others." And remarking that the sages were eighteen in number, he again asked Iarchas, what was the meaning of their being just so many and no more. "For," he said, "the number eighteen is not a square number, nor is it one of the numbers held in esteem and honor, as are the numbers ten and twelve and sixteen and so forth." Thereupon the Indian took him up and said: "Neither are we beholden to number nor number to us, but we owe our superior honor to wisdom and virtue; and sometimes we are more in number than we now are, and sometimes fewer. And indeed I have heard that when my grandfather was enrolled among these wise men, the youngest of them all, they were seventy in number but when he reached his 130th year, he was left here all alone, because not one of them survived him at that time, nor was there to be found anywhere in India a nature that was either philosophic or noble. The Egyptians accordingly wrote and congratulated him warmly on being left alone for four years in his tenure of this throne, but he begged them to cease reproaching the Indians for the paucity of their sages. Now we, O Apollonius, have heard from the Egyptians of the custom of the Eleans, and that the Hellanodicæ, who preside over the Olympic games, are ten in number; but we do not approve of the rule imposed in the case of these men; for they leave the choice of them to the lot, and the lot has no discernment, for a worse man might be as easily chosen by lot as a better one. On the other hand would they not make a mistake; if they had made merit the qualification

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and chosen them by vote? Yes, a parallel one, for if you are on no account to exceed the number ten, there may more than ten just men, and you will deprive some of the rank which their merits entitle them to, while if on the other hand there are not so many as ten, then none will be thought to be really qualified. Wherefore the Eleans would be much

wiser-minded if they allowed the number to fluctuate, merely preserving the same standard of justice."

CHAPTER XXXI

WHILE they were thus conversing, the king kept trying to interrupt them, constantly breaking off their every sentence by his silly and ignorant remarks. He accordingly again asked them what they were conversing about, and Apollonius replied: "We are discussing matters important and held in great repute among the Hellenes; though you would think of them but slightly, for you say that you detest everything Hellenic." "I do certainly detest them," he said, "but nevertheless I want to hear; for I imagine you are talking about those Athenians the slaves of Xerxes." But Apollonius replied: "Nay we are discussing other things; but since you have alluded to the Athenians in a manner both absurd and false, answer me this question: Have you, O King, any slaves?" "Twenty thousand," said the other, "and not a single one of them did I buy myself, but they were all born in my household." Thereupon Apollonius, using Iarchas as his interpreter, asked him afresh whether he was in the habit of running away from his slaves or his slaves from

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him. And the king by way of insult answered him: "Your very question is worthy of a slave, nevertheless I will answer it: a man who runs away is not only a slave but a bad one to boot, and his master would never run away from him, when he can if he likes both torture and card him." "In that case," said Apollonius, "O king, Xerxes has been proved out of your mouth to have been a slave of the Athenians, and like a bad slave to have run away from them; for when he was defeated by them in the naval action in the Straits, he was so anxious about his bridge of boats over the Hellespont that he fled in a single ship." "Yes, but he anyhow burned Athens with his own hands," said the king. And Apollonius answered: "And for that act of audacity, O king, he was punished as never yet was any other man. For he had to run away from those whom he imagined he had destroyed; and when I contemplate the ambitions with which Xerxes set out on his campaign I can conceive that some were justified in exalting him and saying that he was Zeus; but when I contemplate his flight, I arrive at the conviction that he was the most ill-starred of men. For if he had fallen at the hands of the Hellenes, no one would have earned a brighter fame than he. For to whom would the Hellenes have raised and dedicated a loftier tomb? What jousts of armed men, what contests of musicians would not have been instituted in honor of him? For, if men like Melicertes and Palaemon and Pelops the Lydian immigrant, the former of whom died in childhood at the breast, while Pelops enslaved Arcadia and Argolis and the land within the Isthmus,—if these were commemorated by the Greeks as Gods, what would not

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have been done for Xerxes by men who are by nature more enthusiastic admirers of the virtues, and who consider that they praise themselves in praising those whom they have defeated?"

CHAPTER XXXII

THESE words of Apollonius caused the king to burst into tears, and he said: "Dearest friend, in what an heroic light do you represent these Hellenes to me." "Why then, O king, were you so hard upon them?" "The visitors who come hither from Egypt, O guest," replied the king, "malign the race of Hellenes, and while declaring that they themselves are holy men and wise, and the true law-givers who fixed all the sacrifices and rites of initiation which are in vogue among the Greeks, they deny to the latter any and every sort of good quality, declaring them to be ruffians, and a mixed herd addicted to every sort of anarchy, and lovers of legend and miracle mongers, and though indeed poor, yet making their poverty not a title of dignity, but a mere excuse for stealing. But now that I have heard this from you and understand how fond of honor and how worthy the Hellenes are, I am reconciled for the future to them and I engage both that they shall have my praise and that I will pray all I can for them, and will never set trust in another Egyptian." But Iarchas remarked: "I too, O king, was aware that your mind had been poisoned by these Egyptians; but I would not take the part of the Hellenes until you met some such counselor as this. But since you have been put right by a wise man, let us

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now proceed to quaff the good cheer provided by Tantalus, and let us sleep over the serious issues which we have to discuss tonight. But at another time I will fill you full with Hellenic arguments, and no other race is so rich in them; and you will delight in them whenever you come hither." And forthwith he set an example to this fellow guests, by stooping the first of them all to the goblet which indeed furnished an ample draught for all; for the stream refilled itself plenteously, as if with spring waters welling up from the ground; and Apollonius also drank, for this cup is instituted by the Indians as a cup of friendship; and they feign that Tantalus is the wine-bearer who supplies it, because he is considered to have been the most friendly of men.

CHAPTER XXXIII

AND when they had drunk, the earth received them on the couches which she had spread for them; but when it was midnight they rose up and first they sang a hymn to the ray of light, suspended aloft in the air as they had been at midday; and then they attended the king, as much as he desired. Damis, however, says that Apollonius was not present at the king's conversation with them, because he thought that the interview had to do with secrets of state. Having then at daybreak offered his sacrifice, the king approached Apollonius and offered him the hospitality of his palace, declaring that he would send him back to Greece an object of envy to all. But he commended him for his kindness, nevertheless he excused himself from

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inflicting himself upon one with whom he was on no sort of equality; moreover, he said that he had been longer abroad than he liked, and that he scrupled to give his friends at home cause to think they were being neglected. The king thereupon said that he entreated

him, and assumed such an undignified attitude in urging his request, that Apollonius said: "A king who insists upon his request in such terms at the expense of his dignity, is laying a trap." Thereupon Iarchas intervened and said: "You wrong, O king, this sacred abode by trying to drag away from it a man against his will; and moreover, being one of those who can read the future, he is aware that his staying with you would not conduce to his own good, and would probably not be in any way profitable to yourself."

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE king accordingly went down into the village, for the law of the sages did not allow a king to be with them more than one day; but Iarchas said to the messenger: "We admit Damis also hither to our mysteries; so let him come, but do you look after the rest of them in the village." And when Damis arrived, they sat down together, as they were wont to do, and they allowed Apollonius to ask questions; and he asked them of what they thought the cosmos was composed; but they replied: "Of elements." "Are there then four?" he asked. "Not four," said Iarchas, "but five." "And how can there be a fifth," said Apollonius, "alongside of water and air

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and earth and fire?" "There is the ether," replied the other, "which we must regard as the stuff of which gods are made; for just as all mortal creatures inhale the air, so do immortal and divine natures inhale the ether." Apollonius again asked which of the elements came first into being, and Iarchas answered: "All are simultaneous, for a living creature is not born bit by bit." "Am I," said Apollonius, "to regard the universe as a living creature?" "Yes," said the other, "if you have a sound knowledge of it, for it engenders all living things." "Shall I then," said Apollonius, "call the universe female, or of both the male and the opposite gender?" "Of both genders," said the other, "for by commerce with itself it fulfills the role both of mother and father in bringing forth living creatures; and it is possessed by a love for itself more intense than any separate being has for its fellow, a passion which knits it together into harmony. And it is not illogical to suppose that it cleaves unto itself; for as the movement of an animal dictates the function of its hands and feet, in co-operation with a soul in it by which it is set in motion, so we must regard the parts of the universe also as adapting themselves through its inherent soul to all creatures which are brought forth or conceived. For example, the sufferings so often caused by drought are visited on us in accordance with the soul of the universe, whenever justice has fallen into disrepute and is disowned by men; and this animal shepherds itself not with a single hand only, but with many mysterious ones, which it has at its disposal; and though from its immense size it is controlled by no other, yet it moves obediently to the rein and is easily guided.

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CHAPTER 35

"AND the subject is so vast and so far transcends our mental powers, that I do not know any example adequate to illustrate it; but we will take that of a ship, such as the Egyptians

construct for our seas and launch for the exchange of Egyptian goods against Indian wares. For there is an ancient law in regard to the Red Sea, which the king Erythras laid down, when he held sway over that sea, to the effect that the Egyptians should not enter it with a vessel of war, and indeed should employ only a single merchant ship. This regulation obliged the Egyptians to contrive a ship equivalent to several at once of those which other races have; and they ribbed the sides of this ship with bolts such as hold a ship together, and they raised its bulwarks and its mast to a great height, and they constructed several compartments, such as are built upon the timber balks which run athwart a ship, and they set several pilots in this boat and subordinated them to the oldest and wisest of their number, to conduct the voyage; and there were several officers on the prow and excellent and handy sailors to man the sails; and in the crew of this ship there was a detachment of armed men, for it is necessary to equip the ship and protect it against the savages of the Gulf that live on the right hand as you enter it, in case they should ever attack and plunder it on the high seas. Let us apply this imagery to the universe, and regard it in the light of a naval construction; for then you must apportion the first and supreme position to God the begetter of this animal, and subordinate posts to the gods

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who govern its parts; and we may well assent to the statements of the poets, when they say that there are many gods in heaven and many in the sea, and many in the fountains and streams, and many round about the earth, and that there are some even under the earth. But we shall do well to separate from the universe the region under the earth, if there is one, because the poets represent it as an abode of terror and corruption."

CHAPTER XXXVI

AS the Indian concluded this discourse, Damis says that he was transported with admiration and applauded loudly; for he could never have thought that a native of India could show such mastery of the Greek tongue, nor even that, supposing he understood that language, he could have used it with so much ease and elegance. And he praises the look and smile of Iarchas, and the inspired air with which he expressed his ideas, admitting that Apollonius, although he had a delivery as graceful as it was free from bombast, nevertheless gained a great deal by contact with this Indian, and he says that whenever he sat down to discuss a theme, as he very often did, he resembled Iarchas.

CHAPTER XXXVII

AS the rest of the company praised, no less, the contents of Iarchas' speech than the tone in which he spoke, Apollonius resumed by asking him which they considered the bigger, the sea or the land; and

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[paragraph continues] Iarchas replied: "If the land be compared with the sea it will be found to be bigger, for it includes the sea in itself; but if it be considered in relation to the entire mass of water, we can show that the earth is the lesser of the two, for it is upheld by the water."

CHAPTER XXXVIII

THIS discussion was interrupted by the appearance among the sages of the messenger bringing in certain Indians who were in want of succor. And he brought forward a poor woman who interceded in behalf of her child, who was, she said, a boy of sixteen years of age, but had been for two years possessed by a devil. Now the character of the devil was that of a mocker and a liar. Here one of the sages asked, why she said this, and she replied: "This child of mine is extremely good-looking, and therefore the devil is amorous of him and will not allow him to retain his reason, nor will he permit him to go to school, or to learn archery, nor even to remain at home, but drives him out into desert places. And the boy does not even retain his own voice, but speaks in a deep hollow tone, as men do; and he looks at you with other eyes rather than with his own. As for myself I weep over all this and I tear my cheeks, and I rebuke my son so far as I well may; but he does not know me. And I made my mind to repair hither, indeed I planned to do so a year ago; only the demon discovered himself using my child as a mask, and what he told me was this, that he was the ghost of man, who fell long ago in battle, but that at death he was passionately

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attached to his wife. Now he had been dead for only three days when his wife insulted their union by marrying another man, and the consequence was that he had come to detest the love of women, and had transferred himself wholly into this boy. But he promised, if I would only not denounce him to yourselves, to endow the child with many noble blessings. As for myself, I was influenced by these promises; but he has put me off and off for such a long time now, that he has got sole control of my household, yet has no honest or true intentions." Here the sage asked afresh, if the boy was at hand; and she said not, for, although she had done all she could to get him to come with her, the demon had threatened her with steep places and precipices and declared that he would kill her son, "in case," she added, "I haled him hither for trial." "Take courage," said the sage, "for he will not slay him when he has read this." And so saying he drew a letter out of his bosom and gave it to the woman; and the letter, it appears, was addressed to the ghost and contained threats of an alarming kind.

CHAPTER XXXIX

THERE also arrived a man who was lame. He already thirty years old and was a keen hunter of lions; but a lion had sprung upon him and dislocated his hip so that he limped with one leg. However when they massaged with their hands his hip, the youth immediately recovered his upright gait. And another man had had his eyes put out, and he went away having recovered the sight of both of them.

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[paragraph continues] Yet another man had his hand paralyzed; but left their presence in full possession of the limb. And a certain woman had suffered in labor already seven times, but was healed in the following way through the intercession of her husband. He bade the

man, whenever his wife should be about to bring forth her next child, to enter her chamber carrying in his bosom a live hare; then he was to walk once round her and at the same moment to release the hare; for that the womb would be extruded together with the fetus, unless the hare was at once driven out.

CHAPTER XL

AND again a certain man who was a father said that he had had several sons, but that they had died the moment they began to drink wine. Iarchas took him up and said: "Yes, and it is just as well they did die; for they would inevitably have gone mad, having inherited, as it appears, from their parents too warm a temperament. Your children," he added, "must therefore abstain from wine, but in order that they may be never led even to desire wine, supposing you should have another boy, and I perceive you had one only six days ago, you must carefully watch the hen owl and find where it builds its nest; then you must snatch its eggs and give them to the child to chew after boiling them properly; for if it is fed upon these, before it tastes wine, a distaste for wine will be bred in it, and it will keep sober by your excluding from its temperament any but natural warmth."

With such lore as this then they surfeited

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themselves, and they were astonished at the many-sided wisdom of the company, and day after day they asked all sorts of questions, and were themselves asked many in turn.

CHAPTER XLI

BOTH Apollonius and Damis then took part in the interviews devoted to abstract discussions; not so with the conversations devoted to occult themes, in which they pondered the nature of astronomy or divination, and considered the problem of foreknowledge, and handled the problems of sacrifice and of the invocations in which the gods take pleasure. In these Damis says that Apollonius alone partook of the philosophic discussion together with Iarchas, and that Apollonius embodied the results in four books concerning the divination by the stars, a work which Moeragenes has mentioned. And Damis says that he composed a work on the way to offer sacrifice to the several gods in a manner pleasing to them. Not only then do I regard the work on the science of the stars and the whole subject of such divination as transcending human nature, but I do not even know if anyone has these gifts; but I found the treatise on sacrifices in several cities, and in the houses of several learned men; moreover, if anyone should translate it, he would find it to be a grave and dignified composition, and one that rings of the author's personality. And Damis says that

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[paragraph continues] Iarchas gave seven rings to Apollonius named after the seven stars, and that Apollonius wore each of these in turn on the day of the week which bore its name.

CHAPTER XLII

AS to the subject of foreknowledge, they presently had a talk about it, for Apollonius was devoted to this kind of lore, and turned most of their conversations on to it. For this Iarchas praised him and said: "My good friend Apollonius, those who take pleasure in divination, are rendered divine thereby and contribute to the salvation of mankind. For here we have discoveries which we must go to a divine oracle in order to make; yet these, my good friend, we foresee of our unaided selves and foretell to others things which they know not yet. This I regard as the gift of one thoroughly blessed and endowed with the same mysterious power as the Delphic Apollo. Now the ritual insists that those who visit a shrine with a view to obtaining a response, must purify themselves first, otherwise they will be told to "depart from the temple." Consequently I consider that one who would foresee events must be healthy in himself, and must not have his soul stained with any sort of defilement nor his character scarred with the wounds of any sins; so he will pronounce his predictions with purity, because he will understand himself and the sacred tripod in his breast, and with ever louder and clearer tone and truer import will he utter his oracles. Therefore you need not be surprised, if you comprehend the science, seeing that you carry in your soul so much ether."

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CHAPTER XLIII

AND with these words he turned to Damis and said playfully: "And you, O Assyrian, have you no foreknowledge of anything, especially as you associate with such a man as this?" "Yes, by Zeus," answered Damis, "at any rate of the things that are necessary for myself; for when I first met with Apollonius here, he at once struck me as full of wisdom and cleverness and sobriety and of true endurance; but when I saw that he also had a good memory, and that he was very learned and entirely devoted to the love of learning, he became to me something superhuman; and I came to the conclusion that if I stuck to him I should be held a wise man instead of an ignoramus and a dullard, and an educated man instead of a savage; and I saw that, if I followed him and shared his pursuits, I should visit the Indians and visit you, and that I should be turned into a Hellene by him and be able to mix with the Hellenes. Now of course you set your oracles, as they concern important issues, on a level with those of Delphi and Dodona and of any other shrine you like; as for my own premonitions, since Damis is the person who has them, and since his foreknowledge concerns himself alone, we will suppose that they resemble the guesses of an old beggar wife foretelling what will happen to sheep and such like."

CHAPTER XLIV

ALL the sages laughed of course at this sally, and when their laughter had subsided, Iarchas led back the

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argument to the subject of divination, and among the many blessings which that art had conferred upon mankind, he declared the gift of healing to be the most important. "For," said he, "the wise sons of Asclepius would have never attained to this branch of science, if Asclepius had not been the son of Apollo; and as such had not in accordance with the latter's responses and oracles concocted and adapted different drugs to different diseases; these he not only handed on to his own sons, but he taught his companions what herbs must be applied to running wounds, and what to parched and dry wounds, and in what doses to administer liquid drugs for drinking, by means of which dropsical patients are drained and bleeding is checked, and diseases of decay and the cavities due to their ravages are put an end to. And who," he said, "can deprive the art of divination of the credit of discovering simples which heal the bites of venomous creatures, and in particular of using the virus itself as a cure for many diseases? For I do not think that men without the forecasts of a prophetic wisdom would ever have ventured to mingle with medicines that save life these most deadly of poisons."

CHAPTER XLV

And inasmuch as the following conversation also has been recorded by Damis as having been held upon this occasion with regard to the mythological animals and fountains and men met with in India, I must not leave it out, for there is much to be gained by neither believing nor yet disbelieving everything. Accordingly Apollonius asked the question, whether

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there was there an animal called the man-eater (*martichoras*); and Iarchas replied: "And what have you heard about the make of this animal? For it is probable that there is some account given of its shape."

"There are," replied Apollonius, "tall stories current which I cannot believe; for they say that the creature has four feet, and that his head resembles that of a man, but that in size it is comparable to a lion; while the tail of this animal puts out hairs a cubit long and sharp as thorns, which it shoots like arrows at those who hunt it."

And he further asked about the golden water which they say bubbles up from a spring, and about the stone which behaves like a magnet, and about the men who live underground and the pigmies also and the shadow-footed men; and Iarchas answered his questions thus: "What have I to tell you about animals or plants or fountains which you have seen yourself on coming here? For by this time you are as competent to describe these to other people as I am; but I never yet heard in this country of an animal that shoots arrows or of springs of golden water."

CHAPTER XLVI

However about the stone which attracts and binds to itself other stones you must not be skeptical; for you can see the stone yourself if you like, and admire its properties. For the

greatest specimen is exactly of the size of this finger nail," and here he pointed to his own thumb, "and it is conceived in a hollow in the earth at a depth of four fathoms; but it is so highly endowed with spirit, that the earth swells

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and breaks open in many places when the stone is conceived in it. But no one can get hold of it, for it runs away, unless it is scientifically attracted; but we alone can secure, partly by performance of certain rites and partly by certain forms of words, this *pantarbe*, for such is the name given to it.

Now in the night-time it glows like the day just as fire might, for it is red and gives out rays; and if you look at it in the daytime it smites your eyes with a thousand glints and gleams. And the light within it is a spirit of mysterious power, for it absorbs to itself everything in its neighborhood. And why do I say in its neighborhood? Why you can sink anywhere in river or in sea as many stones as you like, and these not even near to one another, but here there; and everywhere; and then if you let down this stone among them by a string it gathers them all together by the diffusion of its spirit, and the stones yield to its influence and cling to it in bunch, like a swarm of bees."

CHAPTER XLVII

And having said this he showed the stone itself and all that it was capable of effecting.

And as to the pigmies, he said that they lived underground, and that they lay on the other side of the Ganges and lived in the manner which is related by all. As to men that are shadow-footed or have long heads, and as to the other poetical fancies which the treatise of Scylax recounts about them, he said that they didn't live anywhere on the earth, and least of all in India.

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CHAPTER XLVIII

As to the gold which the griffins dig up, there are rocks which are spotted with drops of gold as with sparks, which this creature can quarry because of the strength of its beak. "For these animals do exist in India," he said, "and are held in veneration as being sacred to the Sun; and the Indian artists, when they represent the Sun, yoke four of them abreast to draw the imaged car; and in size and strength they resemble lions but having this advantage over them that they have wings, they will attack them, and they get the better of elephants and of dragons. But they have no great power of flying, not more than have birds of short flight; for they are not winged as is proper with birds, but the palms of their feet are webbed with red membranes, such that they are able to revolve them, and make a flight and fight in the air; and the tiger alone is beyond their powers of attack, because in swiftness it rivals the winds."

CHAPTER XLIX

"And the phoenix," he said, "is the bird which visits Egypt every five hundred years, but the rest of that time it flies about in India; and it is unique in that it gives out rays of sunlight and shines with gold, in size and appearance like an eagle; and it sits upon the nest; which is made by it at the springs of the Nile out of spices. The story of the Egyptians about it, that it comes to Egypt, is testified to by the Indians

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also, but the latter add this touch to the story, that the phoenix which is being consumed in its nest sings funeral strains for itself. And this is also done by the swans according to the account of those who have the wit to hear them."

CHAPTER L

In such conversations with the sages Apollonius spent the four months which he passed there, and he acquired all sorts of lore both profane and mysterious. But when he was minded to go on his way they persuaded him to send back to Phraotes with a letter his guide and the camels; and they themselves gave him another guide and camels, and sent him forth on his way, congratulating both themselves and him. And having embraced Apollonius and declared that he would be esteemed a god by the many, not merely after his death, but while he was still alive, they turned back to their place of meditation, though ever and anon they turned towards him, and showed by their action that they parted from him against their will. And Apollonius keeping the Ganges on his right hand, but the Hyphasis on his left, went down towards the sea a journey of ten days from the sacred ridge. And as they went down they saw a great many ostriches, and many wild bulls, and many asses and lions and pards and tigers, and another kind of apes than those which inhabit the pepper trees, for these were black and bushy-haired and were dog-like in features and as big as small men. And in the usual discussion of what they saw they reached the sea, where small factories had been built, and passenger

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ships rode in them resembling those of the Tyrrhenes. And they say that the sea called Erythra or "red" is of a deep blue color, but that it was so named from a king Erythras, who gave his own name to the sea in question.

Footnotes

[1:321:1](#) In Bk. IV. ch. 19, we are told that this book was written in the Cappadocian tongue. Hence the need of translation.

CHAPTER LI

Having reached this point, Apollonius sent back the camels to Iarchas together with the following letter:

“Apollonius to Iarchas and the other sages greeting.

“I came to you on foot, and yet you presented me with the sea; but by sharing with me the wisdom which is yours, you have made it mine even to travel through the heavens. All this I shall mention to the Hellenes; and I shall communicate my words to you as if you were present, unless I have in vain drunk the draught of Tantalus. Farewell, ye goodly philosophers.”

CHAPTER LII

He then embarked upon the ship and was borne away by a smooth and favorable breeze, and he was struck at the formidable manner in which the Hyphasis discharges itself into the sea at its mouth; for in its later course, as I said before, it falls into rocky and narrow places and over precipices, and breaking its way through these to the sea by a single mouth, presents a formidable danger to those who hug the land too closely.

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CHAPTER LIII

They say, moreover, that they saw the mouth of the Indus, and that there was situated on it the city of Patala, round which the Indus flows. It was to this city that the fleet of Alexander came, under the command of Nearchus, a highly trained naval captain. But as for the stories of Orthagoras about the sea called Erythra, to the effect that the constellation of the bear is not to be seen in it, and that the mariners cast no reckoning at midday, and that the visible stars there vary from their usual positions, this account is endorsed by Damis; and we must consider it to be sound and based on local observations of the heavens. They also mention a small island, of the name of Biblus, in which there is the large cockle, and where there are mussels and oysters and such like organisms, clinging to the rocks and ten times as big as those which we find in Greece. And there is also taken in this region a stone, the pearl in a white shell, wherein it occupies the place of the heart of the oyster.

CHAPTER LIV

And they say they also touched at Pegadae in the country of the Oreitae. As for these people, they have rocks of bronze and sand of bronze, and the dust which the rivers bring down is of bronze. But they regard their land as full of gold because the bronze is of such high quality.

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CHAPTER LV

And they say that they came across the people called the Fish-Eaters, whose city is Stobera; and they clothe themselves in the skins of very large fishes, and the cattle there look like fish and eat extraordinary things; for the shepherds feed them upon fish, just as

in Caria the flocks are fed on figs. But the Indians of Carman are a gentle race, who live on the edge of a sea so well stocked with fish, that they neither lay them in by stores, nor salt them as is done in Pontus, but they just sell a few of them and throw back most they catch panting into the sea.

CHAPTER LVI

They say that they also touched at Balara, which is an emporium full of myrtles and date palms; and they also saw laurels, and the place was well watered by springs. And there were kitchen gardens there, as well as flower gardens, all growing luxuriantly, and the harbors therein were entirely calm. But off there lies a sacred island, which was called Selera, and the passage to it from the mainland was a hundred stades long. Now in this island there lived a Nereid, a dreadful female demon, which would snatch away many mariners and would not even allow ships to fasten a cable to the island.

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CHAPTER LVII

It is just as well not to omit the story of the other kind of pearl: since even Apollonius did not regard it as puerile, and it is anyhow a pretty invention, and there is nothing in the annals of sea fishing so remarkable. For on the side of the island which is turned towards the open sea, the bottom is of great depth, and produces an oyster in a white sheath full of fat, for it does not produce any jewel. The inhabitants watch for a calm day, or they themselves render the sea smooth, and this they do by flooding it with oil; and then a man plunges in in order to hunt the oyster in question, and he is in other aspects equipped like those who cut off the sponges from the rocks, but he carries in addition an oblong iron block and an alabaster case of myrrh. The Indian then halts alongside of the oyster and holds out the myrrh before him as a bait; whereupon the oyster opens and drinks itself drunk upon the myrrh. Then its pierced with a long pin and discharges a peculiar liquid called ichor, which the man catches in the iron block which is hollowed out in regular holes. The liquid so obtained petrifies in regular shapes, just like the natural pearl, and it is a white blood furnished by the Red Sea. And they say that the Arabs also who live on the opposite coast devote themselves to catching these creatures. From this point on they found the entire sea full of sharks, and whales gathered there in schools; and the ships, they say, in order to keep off these animals, carry bells at the bow and at the stern, the sound of which frightens away these creatures and prevents them from approaching the ships.

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CHAPTER LVIII

And when they sailed as far as the mouth of the Euphrates, they say they sailed up by it to Babylon to see Vardanes, whom they found just as they had found him before. They then came afresh to Nineveh, and as the people of Antioch displayed their customary insolence and took no interest in any affairs of the Hellenes, they went down to the sea at

Seleucia, and finding a ship, they sailed to Cyprus and landed at Paphos, where there is the statue of Aphrodite. Apollonius marveled at the symbolic construction of the same, and gave the priests instruction with regard to the ritual of the temple. He then sailed to Ionia, where he excited much admiration and no little esteem among all lovers of wisdom.