

had said: as you will; i will do whatever you like. then orpheus, too, had urged her to oblige gorgo, and himself, and all of them; and it had seemed almost impossible to refuse the first request that the modest youth to whom she would willingly have granted anything and everything had ever made. still, she had held back; and in her anxious bewilderment, not daring to think or act, she had tried every form of excuse and postponement. she would probably have been awkward enough about this, but gorgo was content to press her no further, and when, after leaving the house, she had summoned up courage to refuse to enter the temple of isis, karnis had only said: be thankful that this gifted lady, the favorite of the muses, should think you worthy to sing with her. we will see about the rest by and bye. now, in the watches of the sleepless night, she saw clearly the abyss above which she was standing. she, like judas, was on the point of betraying her saviour; not indeed for money, but in obedience to the transient sound of an earthly voice, for the pleasure of exercising her art, to indulge a hastily formed liking; nay, perhaps because it satisfied her childish vanity to find herself put on an equality with a lady of rank and wealth, and matched with a singer who had roused karnis and orpheus to such ardent admiration. she was an enigma to herself; while passages out of the bible crowded on her memory to reproach her conscience. there lay dadas embroidered dress. worn for the first time this day, in a month it would be unpresentably shabby and then, ere long, flung aside as past wearing. like this just like this was every earthly pleasure, every joy of this brief existence. alas, she a few words. all the better, said kaschta. paaker or some of his people are in there; the door is there still, and shut. if we give four hard and three gentle knocks, it will be opened. can you understand what they are saying some one is begging to be set free, replied pentaur, and speaks of some traitor. the other has a rough voice, and says he must follow his masters orders. now the one who spoke before is crying; do you hear he is entreating him by the soul of his father to take his fetters off. how despairing his voice is knock, kaschta it strikes me we are come at the right moment knock, i say. the soldier knocked first four times, then three times. a shriek rang through the cave, and they could hear a heavy, rusty bolt drawn back, the roughly hewn door was opened, and a hoarse voice asked: is that paaker no, answered the soldier, i am kaschta. do not you know me again, nubi the man thus addressed, who was paakers ethiopian slave, drew back in surprise. are you still alive he exclaimed. what brings you here my lord here will tell you, answered kaschta as he made way for pentaur to enter the cave. the poet went up to the black man, and the light of the fire which burned in the cave fell full on his face. the old slave stared at him, and drew back in astonishment and terror. he threw himself on the earth, howled like a dog that fawns at the feet of his angry master, and cried out: he ordered it spirit of my master he ordered it. pentaur stood still, astounded and incapable of speech, till he perceived a young man, who crept up to him on his hands and feet, which were bound with thongs, and who cried to him in a tone, in which terror was mingled with a tenderness which touched pentaur's very kinsman whom we meet for the first time face to face, and said: the gods have given thee great gifts, for thy glance reaches farther and pierces deeper than that of other men; and thou canst say in words what we can only feel i follow thee willingly pentaur blushed like a boy, and said, while paaker and nefert came nearer to them: till to day life lay before me as if in twilight; but this moment shows it me in another light. i have seen its deepest shadows; and, he added in a low tone how glorious its light can be. chapter vii. an hour later, bent anat and her train of followers stood before the gate of the house of seti. swift as a ball thrown from a mans hand, a runner had sprung forward and hurried on to announce the approach of the princess to the chief priest. she stood alone in her chariot, in advance of all her companions, for pentaur had found a place with paaker. at the gate of the temple they were met by the head of the haruspices. the great doors of the pylon were wide open, and afforded a view into the forecourt of the sanctuary, paved with polished squares of stone, and surrounded on three sides with colonnades. the walls and architraves, the pillars and the fluted cornice, which slightly curved in over the court, were gorgeous with many colored figures and painted decorations. in the middle stood a