Then, turning to me, my father asked what he could make for me.

It came into my mind without thinking. “A trunk,” I said.

“But you have a trunk already. You have your mother’s trunk,” he said to me.

“Yes, but I want my own trunk,” I said back.

“Very well. A trunk is your request, a trunk you will have,” he said.

Out of the corner of one eye, I could see my mother. Out of the corner of the other eye, I could see her shadow on the wall, cast there by the lamplight. It was a big and solid shadow, and it looked so much like my mother that I became frightened. For I could not be sure whether for the rest of my life I would be able to tell when it was really my mother and when it was really her shadow standing between me and the rest of the world.