

tion and left, begging her to allow me to see her again, but she answered nothing, and when I returned to her house yesterday I was not received.

My dear friend, thou knowest me well. I am neither an enthusiast nor of an excitable disposition. Well, this woman has fascinated me, and (this may seem strange to you) without trying to do so; it even seemed to me that she hid the brilliancy of her eyes in order to appear like an ordinary woman. Thou wilt doubtless think that this was the height of cleverness, but I believe more in her sincerity and in her honesty than in the virtue of our vestals. She is the most beautiful Jewess I have met in the Orient. She is dark, with a lovely figure — straight and supple; her form is worthy of Venus. Her deep black eyes veil a sombre fire. They resemble the eyes of the mariners, who by virtue of contemplating the sea and the sky, have borrowed gleams from the depths and lightning from the storm. I would wager that her abundant hair, when she loosens it, falls to her feet.

Who is she? What is her history? Why does she live alone with her servants? As yet I do not know, but I will learn what it all means, and for the moment, I affirm that she is beautiful, distinguished, alluring and that she does not seem to know it nor care to have it told her. Good-bye.

*December 12th, 780, Magdala.*