

She looked at him in silence for some moments, and the strange violet haze of her eyes seemed to deepen, as she turned his words over in the hidden places of her mind.

"It is the same thing," she said at length.

"Not quite," he answered, in even tones.

"You mean," she said, "that what I require is the particular form of religion called Christianity."

"No," he replied. "You do not need religion, you do not need Christianity. You need simply—Christ."

She rose, and pointed with her cane towards her donkey, which stood under the palms at the foot of the mound where they had been sitting.

"It is time for me to go," she said. "I am afraid we do not speak the same language."

"Yet the same voice speaks to us both," he whispered.

She turned to him with a gesture of appeal. "I can't hear the voice," she sighed. "What does it say to me?"

"It says," he answered, "'What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?'"

Very slowly they walked back to the palm grove through the gathering dusk. There was silence between them, not of estrangement but of understanding. In the soft Egyptian twilight an essence of dream enshrouded them, and made it difficult for Father Gregory to accept the reality of their meeting or take the significance of her story. As he looked down at her in the half light, she seemed to him to be so very small, so very fragile; and the pallor of her face accentuated the delicacy of her finely cut features. Yet as she mounted her high-spirited donkey, and firmly grasped the reins, he was conscious of a kind of purposefulness in her attitude, and there was a determination, which was almost haughty, in the graceful lines of her figure.