

1926

1/29-4/3 Victorian Bedikion (Lunt B12 F22) \*

UNFORGETTABLE OCCURENCES

in Haifa-

Jan. 29 to Apr. 3rd.

1926

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ONE DAY Rouha came over to me. It was morning 11.30 o'clock. I was lying on my bed weeping, longing to see the Holy Sisters. "Why are you unhappy, Auntie?" she said, "you must be very, very happy, you are doing a great work for Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l Baha, and you are a great help to Shoghi Effendi. You must be happy. The Greatest Holy Leaf sends her love to you. She says she is always thinking of you, she never forgets you, but prays for your success in all your activities, all your work. You must be be very, very happy."

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One day, I had promised to give Shoghi Effendi's little curly-haired brother a ball, a big ball, colored, with which all the children of the Holy Household might play. We had played with a small ball, but it was hard to catch. So that day I went down town and purchased one, which I knew they all liked. Having promised the ball they waited beyond the Pilgrim House wall and when I brought it out I saw Zia, the mother of our Guardian, and Monever beckoning me to come. They were taking a walk and wanted me to go with them. So we walked out to the Zionist City at the edge of Mount Carmel and the Sea. Passing the Catholic monastery we saw a band of monks moving toward the other monastery on the top of Mount Carmel, and I quoted the words of Amos in the Bible; "and the top of Carmel shall wither." Then Zia said that the main duty of the Baha'is was to teach. And I told her I could not go around and teach, that I could not hear the people. But Zia said that to speak I need not hear, that people should listen to me, that I should speak to them as I write letters. That I should unite the hearts. "You are able to teach, for your vision is good, and your heart is pure and belongs to Baha'u'llah. In the Zionist Colony we looked for a suitable design for a bungalow to be built in a property for the Holy Family. On our way home we sat down to rest but a Jewish officer sent us away. The Queens of Heaven were not recognized in this Zionist Colony, but still they came here to meet the Holy Ones of God! Jesus too had been unknown and despised, that comforted me, so I took the arms of my Holy Sisters and pressed them to myself. Zia asked me about Mardiros. She said I should be hopeful, that even in Persia, men, who had for years not believed became good Baha'is and good husbands to their wives. She asked me if I prayed for my husband in the Holy Shrines, and I told her I had come here to pray for the salvation of the world, and not for individual happiness. And she said SHE would pray for him. We were very tired coming home, for we had walked f

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One day, when new Pilgrims had come we started up to visit the Holy Shrines. It was three o'clock. I had been ill, and for some days had been unable to go up, but I tried and walking a short distance was obliged to turn back. Passing the Holy Gate Tooba saw me and beckoned me to go in with her. The Greatest Holy Leaf was sitting over a charcoal fire and asked me to share it. She took my hand in utmost love, and the look in her big blue eyes cured all my pain. I longed to stay with her forever. Rouha and Tooba then asked me to go riding with them. 'Abdu'l Baha's carriage was waiting outside and I sat down with Esphandiar, while the Holy Mother took the middle seat with Tooba and Monever, Rouha and the sister of the Holy Mother and Ridwanieh in the last seat. We climbed Mount Carmel this, out into another section to the left I had never seen. The Zionists were very prosperous and in great earnest here. Magnificent houses, parks and streets are coming into being, pleasant stores and eating houses were everywhere. Some laughed at the sight of these Persians, dressed so black, so veiled and mysterious. I too had thrown my silk prayer shawl over me head, one indeed with this party of love, my heart bounding in ecstasy because I was permitted to be with them. I was made very happy and shall never forget.

this joy of nearness, crossing the Carmel of God with His Divine Women. The Holy Mother, at one time thinking me cold, took the wrap from her own knees and threw it over my shoulders, but I could not stand that and laid it once more on her Holy Knees. She said that I must be careful of my heart that great work was awaiting me and I must have strength for it. I could only turn around and gaze silently in her wonderful face, tears sobbing for love at my heart-strings. Monever, Ridwanieh and Rouha often inquired: "Auntie, are you alright?" "Are you Happy?" "You must be very happy."

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Another ride we took that same evening in 'Abdu'l Baha's carriage. Only the Holy Mother's sister left us and we drove down the main street of Haifa and Zia and Tooba looked in at a German carpenter shop in the German colony. We passed the House of Baha'u'llah and all the Blessed Ones gazed at it long. What emotions and remembrances this house must bring to them, in which the Father of all the world lived just two years. Monever called to me: "Auntie, in that house Baha'u'llah lived." And I told her I knew. For the Pilgrims had pointed it out to me, and daily I passed it looking at it with longing eyes and yearning heart. It is now part of an hotel, well-kept and prosperous looking. Some day the Baha'is will have it, there is no doubt about that.

On our way we ran down a girl on a bicycle, but the girl escaped injury miraculously. The wheel dashed before the frightened horses but Esphandiar managed well and during all this incident not a sound came from the Holy Women. It was a lesson for me to learn. Afterwards, when I turned around and petted the knees of the Holy Mother, all smiled and asked: "Are you alright, Auntie?" Looking at me with those eyes that thrilled me so.

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We rode to the Haifa Baseball track. It is a fine field, more beautiful than those I have seen in America. Isphandiar held his horses and we watched the hundreds of people pass. All races had enjoyed the sport and all looked eager, happy and full of contentment. Zia said to me: "See, Auntie, these are all new people, they come on every boat, filling up Palestine day by day." And I remembered the prophecies, and nodded to Divine Zia, the angel of our Guardian, Shoghi Effendi. I knew what she wished to convey.

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One Day Monever, Effie Baker and I went up Mount Carmel. It was moon-light and we had come down from the Monastery of the top of Mount Carmel. Effie was picking flowers and Monever and I, having walked in silence for a long time motioned me to sit down beside her. I would do anything she said at all times. So we sat there upon a stone of Carmel holding hands. Suddenly Monever took off her shoes and shook the sand out of them. She asked me to do the same. And I did. Then we sat in silence again I was thinking of my love for her and where it would lead me to. And Monever exclaimed: "Do you love me, Auntie?" I looked at her, not able to speak did I love her? "O God, Monever, don't ask that, and I arose and walked on, she following and taking my arm. "Monever, I want to be with you forever, when we are in the other world, will you come down where I am and take me with you?" Monever said: But Auntie, if I can find you! You have done such great service to the Cause, Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l Baha are so satisfied with you, and I may not be able to reach you, Auntie dear." I knew that she said this only to comfort me, for I was weeping for love of her. I told her I would never leave her, that I loved her too much. And the youngest Daughter of 'Abdu'l Baha held me closer and our friendship deepened much that moonlight night. Effie came and we walked home together.

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It was on the 2nd of March that I gave to my Angel-mother, the Greatest Holy Leaf, my Baha'i Village Plan. I sent it over to her thro Fugeta after I had explained it to her during a mutual talk with Monever as interpreter, in her own sacred room in the front of the Holy House. She had called me to come to her, for she must have felt my yearning to see Her, embrace Her, the greatest Queen the world has ever known. I lay upon Her Mother Breast and she fondled my head, my arms and hands a long long time, and I felt new life flow in me and I could answer all her questions she asked about my work, and then I told her how closely all activities were interwoven in this Baha'i fellowship of hearts the world over. She told me over and over again that I shall succeed, and I leaned on her breast and asked her if I could always lean on her, who was such a life to my soul. And Bahiyih said that I could lean on her, that she had helped Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l Baha during all their years of sorrow and trials and that I, too, could lean on her, that she would ever pray for my success in my work and happiness. Then I went home, and that same day sent to my Guardian letters about the Temple, summoning the Baha'is of the world to the "Unified Action to Spread the Baha'i Cause Plan" but my Guardian went away that day to fast all alone and I did not see him until the day before I went away from Haifa.

But Bahiyih kept my plan nine days. I was writing innumerable letters north south east and west, summoning all to build our Temple and follow the plan for unified action to spread the Baha'i Cause. All else was forgotten and I felt powerful prayers by my side and support and comfort every hour. On that ninth day something happened, inexplicably spiritual, I had learned to write with a new hand, and a letter to the Baha'i Fellowship Committee and to the Teaching Committee in America were the result. Something had taken place and I felt free, new-born! I wrote as I have never written before and I knew it was the prayers of the Greatest Holy Leaf guiding all. I had just finished one of the letters in intense ecstasy of spirit and ended with the words: "in His Greatest Name", when Fugeta entered and brought me the plan and a beautiful ringstone wrapped in a rose scented piece of cotton- from the Greatest Holy Leaf, and I knew that the ringstone contained the Greatest Name, and that her prayers had been answered that all shackles had fallen from my life. But to do the will of God, unconditionally that loomed before me to do. That I could do now through the power of those prayers. Berthaline Osgood gave me an old silver ring of hers in which to fit my stone. She is good to me.

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One day we went to Elijah's Cave. It is at the base of Mount Carmel near the Zionist Colony, owned by the Moslems. Zia, the mother of our Guardian, Monever, 'Abdu'l Baha's Daughter, Ruhanquiz, the sister of our Guardian, Effie Baker of the Pilgrim House, and I. It was cold and Ruhanquiz returned home, while we wended our way past Brother Esslement's grave, up to the Cave of Elijah. A great big mighty cave it is, hewn from solid rock. Zia took my hand and explained to me. I saw the long tallow, lit to burn long days. It was kept alive by a moslem whom we did not see. The walls were in places green and dripping, and I imagined the old prophet here dreaming of these hallowed days, when the nearest kin of the greatest Manifestation should come to his cave and speak of him. Time had leaped ahead, ho, 'twas indeed the culmination of all times, all prophecies, all fulfillment, and I was sharing it so closely, so heartfelly! By the sides of the Daughters of this Majesty of Fulfillment I could wander and share with Them His Day! Then I was taken out and shown a wing of the structure adjoining the great cave. "Here," said Zia "the Master lived for several months, writing tablets and supplicating to God. It was after He had been in Tiberias that He came here, just thirty years ago, and this is the first time I have been here since then, now with you." I looked at the latticed windows she pointed out to me to have been the Master's. The door was locked

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above the little woden staircase and we could not go in. When I gazed at Zia her vision seemed far away and I could read thoughts of remembrance and suffering upon her glorious features. Tears filled my eyes for these Holy Women, who had suffered so much for the Cause. I laid my hand on Zia's arm and said: do not be sad, my Zia, you are so wonderful, I love you, Zia, and she took my hand and helped me down the steep road without a word but with a glance that I shall never forget. One needed not to talk when one was with Them, spiritual conversation was oftimes paramount. My heart, for love of them trembled constantly when I was with them but always did I fear separation from them. We walked very far that night. Too far, and it was cold and windy. Arriving at the German Templers' Colony we rested on a stone wall within the street of Carmel, near the House of Baha'u'llah. Monever was too tired and she lay down head to the wall and placed her head in my lap. "will you let me rest on you, Auntie dear", she said, "I am very tired and my feet hurt so." What happiness! to hold 'Abdu'l Baha's child in my arms, what a reward from Him to this poor sinner! So I said: "I want you always to be near me, I may go to Germany, will you go with me?" And Monever said: "Yes, Auntie, I will go with you if you go, I should like to go to Germany or anywhere with you. We shall always be sisters, Auntie, we love each other very much."

The next day Monever was sick, she had caught cold, so I was asked to pray for her at the Holy Shrines. God, how I prayed. She soon got well, having gone with us up to the Shrines the following Sunday.

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I shall never forget that Sunday. It is hallowed, it is sacred for we were along, all alone, just Tooba, Zia, Monever, Ruhanquiz and Rouha and I. We prayed there early, before the other sisters had come to the room where we always meet. It is the caretaker's place, closely adjoining the Holy Shrines a few steps up the mountain. Above the main story is a sort of tower, one room, which had belonged to the Master, where He sometimes lived when He needed quiet meditation and prayer, for the climb up Mount Carmel is strenuous for some of us. Had it not been for my great love of the Tombs I should never have been able to climb up daily and sometimes twice, daily, but the urge for prayer there was greater than the hardship to get there. This day we went up with the Holy Family, those I mentioned and we did not wait, for Tooba felt weak and we entered the Holy 'Graves' in silence. Monever was ill, and Ruhanquiz looked frail and Zia was tired and sad. There we knelt and stood in prayer, and these Sisters of Heaven forgot for a while all but their father, their earthly father, who was now dead, who had fondled them, cared for them, instructed them. They looked long and weeping at His picture and at last all bowed down in submission to the great parting. Rouha told me that the only comfort over the parting was to serve His Cause and never rest, but day by day to do some act to bring the wishes of 'Abdu'l Baha nearer to fulfillment. But that solemn hour I felt with them the grief of the child for the father, and my heart wept with them, I prayer God to comfort them- how could I pray thus for these angels of light, but my love let me pray for them. We walked home over the road 'Abdu'l Baha walked so often, a longer road past the men's pilgrim house, and Rouha and Monever showed me the fig-tree under which they said the Master had so often rested while going to and from prayer in the Bab's Shrine.

Thus ended our Sunday, and I went back to the pilgrim house and had supper with the pilgrims and with Ruhi and Sohiel, the sons of Tooba, the daughter of 'Abdu'l Baha. Sohiel and Ruhi Afnan always eat with us, and our Guardian has noon day dinner with us most of the time. Sometimes He is away, or ill from overwork. I was always so eager to see him, and was rejoiced each time He sent me letters and articles from the German, into English. I shall study German well, when I hope to do more to help my Guardian. I would like to learn Esperanto too. Monever said that these two languages for me would help Shoghi Effendi

At the first luncheon I had in Haifa, Shoghi Effendi was present. I came in the room later and Keith said a few words I thought were Aziz' ullah Bahadur. Nellie Loyd had asked me to especially greet Aziz from her. "Are you Aziz' ullah Baha'dur?" I asked turning to the brother opposite me. Poor Keith looked horrified and cried: "Why no, this is Shoghi Effendi!" And my Guardian smiled happily when I told Him how glad I was at last to see Him.. how far I had travelled just to see Him and the Greatest Holy Leaf. "You shall see the Greatest Holy Leaf to-morrow, she will be glad to see you." Whom did you write to on the Steamer?" He asked. (I had written to my husband many letters) and I told Him I had written my dairy of the trip.

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on the ship/

I love macaronis. Every day the table stuart gave me a side dish with macaronis. Keith said:"I think I must learn to eat macaronis because you love them so. And stange to say, the first dish, during the first meal in the pilgrim house with Shoghi Effendi was a dish of macaroni. My Guardian handed me the dish and smilingly looking at me asked: "Do you like this dish?" "Well, how do these get here!" I exclaimed, and we all laughed. In just little things, and then greater and greater things, my Guardian was being revealed to me, until now He is my every hope and prayer, and thought. I want to please Shoghi Effendi, I want to serve Him!

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Keith, a thoroughly educated woman, precise and a first grade psychologist, did not often agree with me. When she laid down her set principles on psycological terms I always become confused. We get nowhere, while I am on the defencive, she thinks she is too, and we get nowhere really after our discussions, and embracing in Baha'i love after each talk we decide not to try to get to the "psycological bottom of things." So it was one day about a letter I had written to Mr. Lunt, chairman of my new Fellowship Committee in N.Y. It was one of thousands of letter I had written, and one of hundreds I had written to Mr Lunt. But it was the first one Keith had seen. She came in my room and I happened to show it to her and she said emphatically:"But you do not intend to send that letter?" I said:"Why yes, Keith, it is the way I write." "Then I must write too," said Keith," that letter needs an explanation." Confused and unhappy, I ran over to the Holy Home and asked the letter to be given to my Guardian to read, and He came to luncheon with it in His pocket. During the meal He drew it out upon comment from Keith and said there were just one or two changes I might make. And I, terrible unhappy began to weep and was obliged to leave the table. I had lost trust in my letters and in myself. My Guardian wanted me to come out but I could not face Him that day, and He put that fatal letter back in His pocket and kept it there for days. I feared I could write ne more letters on earth and my head swam with tears and anguish. I wandered up Mount Carmel and got lost. I did not care. All was over: a big storm was travelling over the Mediterranean right towards me. I was on the top of Mount Carmel at that time. Hours had past. And the rain began to pour and pour, I was wet and did not feel it. Toward dusk I started back for the Tombs. O; only to tell my Darling 'Abdu'l Baha about this, to ask Him to guide me, comfort and not leave me now! I realized my nothingness, my terrible faults, and I came to His Holy Shrine and sank before His Threshold. In the twilight I lay upon His Tomb, crying as if my heart would break. At last all grew still within me. The Temple was there before me and it seemed as if many voices were singing and peoples were crowding around that Edifice, happy and triumphant. Angels came to comfort me and the burden seemed to slip away. I thought of my Guardian and of His marvelous goodness and longed to see Him again. So I got up and walked down past the men's pilgrim house towards 'Abdu'l Baha'a fig tree, and towards me came my Guardian. I tried to evade Him, He should not see me like this, now, bedraggled, wet, red of eye and broken in spirit, but He would not let me climb themountain but came to me and pulled me down and took my hand

and holding it in His strong clasp, said: "Are you feeling better now? You must not be sad, you must be very, very happy. Do you hear? You must be very, very, happy. I wanted to fall in the mud before Him, or weep, or cry out, but He held me, and I could but smile through my hot, trembling lips and murmur: "Yes, I am happy, my Guardian...." And He said: "Go home now and rest, and be very happy.. " And it was a benediction. For days I did not write, but it was a turning point of my spirit until one day He came to luncheon again and drew from His pocket a little booklet and handed it to me. "Have you seen this?" asked my Guardian. I said "No." "Then you must read it, and study it, and give it back to me when you are through with it, for I wish to have it translated into Persian., you must support it and encourage it. So for days I read and reread the booklet: "Plan for Unified Action to Spread the Baha'i Cause." I loved every word the National Spiritual Assembly had written in it. This was my ideal and they had expressed it. Could I help it? And my Guardian, pointing to it saying: "Read it, study it, and then write. And so it happened that through His Guidance the way to the Mashriq'u'l Adhkar had been opened to me, the great teaching scheme with ~~at~~ ~~of~~ all the Baha'is in the world. To unite them through the building of the Temple, thro building and teaching, this was what I loved to do. And He had found the key to happiness in service for me, and had received me into His administration, using me as I so <sup>much</sup> desired to be used. He knew, and cared all along what a Fast and a visit on Carmel meant for such as I. And closer and closer the circle grew, until all else faded and only the Temple stood aloft, looming over every activity, beckoning to all mankind to come and enter the portals of the Mashriq'u'l Adhkar in Wilmette! Wilmette, the Beautiful!! The Temple! The great Center for absolute Unity of nations!

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One day Monever asked me to go to the hospital with her. It was raining and the streets were full of mud. But that did not keep this Holy One from her round of love and comfort. First we went into the private garden where oranges of delicious fragrance hung in rich clusters We picked them dripping with rain-drops and laid them beside some flowers Effi had picked the day before. Then we walked under one umbrella, Monever and I, so happy to be together once more. The hospital, Italien, is a good one and the little mother who was ill had been treated and operated on. I had met her frequently in the Holy Shrines for prayer, and we loved each other. The last time we all had met there the daughter was weeping, afraid that the operation may turn out fatal, but I went over to her and assured her that all would be successful and she would come out alright. I prayed for her mother as I had promised and after the successful operation I was called to visit her mother in the hospital. Monever and I were with her quite awhile. I was silent and praying, and happy just to be near Monever. If in a dungeon with her I should be happy. So much I love her. This love is madness I know, a heavenly love taken form on fallible earth. When they had spoken awhile in Persian together Monever turned to me and said: "Speak Auntie, speak." Often she said this when I was silent. And I answered: "I am speaking, Monever, my spirit is speaking." And she smiled so sweetly and handed me the flowers to arrange in the vase by the invalid's bed-side. The I arranged the oranges on the table so that the little mother might just reach them. We then sat there a long time, and all of us knew the others we praying. We were so happy together. Monever turned to me and said: "Sister \* is happy that you have come. She loved you all along and now you have praye for her. When you pray your prayers are always answered, because you are so spiritual and so near to Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l Baha. You must always pray for us, for you help us." We walked past the beds of the sick on our way out. All doors were open and all the sick could be seen, men and women. Silently we walked home through the mud, speechless, but in our hearts we knew that someday we would work together, Monever and I. That this was only the beginning.

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Turning the corner of Main Street up the Carmel Slope toward the old Pilgrim House, and sighting the new one beside it, I asked Monever what we would do with the old one. She said we did not own it. I was much upset, because I had imagined this some day to be an art center, an industrial and educational spot so near the main thoroughfare to attract the youth and genius of the city. I expressed this, going on in vision to see fountains gushing and rose gardens blooming between the old and the new pilgrim houses. Monever looked at me, thoughtfully, for quite a length and her little hand on my arm pressed it tenderly. But she said nothing. Then we had moved a few weeks later into the Pilgrim House, Effie Baker told me that Rouha had mentioned to her that the old pilgrim house had been purchased by the Holy Family and that it would belong to the Baha'is. My heart stood still with delight, and I remembered Monever's look and the pressure of her little warm hand on my arm.

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When Monever and I walked together we went arm in arm. Monever is very short and I am very tall. She is dark and I am light. She was dressed in Persian fashion and I in Western mode. One day Ruhi Afnan looked at us and laughed and said: "You both look so amusing together Auntie, you and my Aunt. She is so short and you are so tall." "Don't laugh at us, Ruhi we love each other, we are one, even one flesh, for we both belong to 'Abdu'l Baha. He has united us, and no earthly looks shall separate us. And Ruhi thoughtfully looked away. He laughed no more, and Monever said: "You are right, Auntie, we are one forever." I have decided when I come back next time, I shall wear Persian dress.

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When I was in Bahje I could not eat. "The Spirit of Baha'ullah" was upon me, and I forgot earthly food because of the Spiritual Food that filled me. At table I was placed between Rouha and Monever, and they fed me, laying bits of fine morsels on my plate. This always warmed my heart for such love I had never known before. Beside the great love I bore them, the great tenderness and motherliness overwhelmed me. Each morsel was a remedy, a cure, a benediction. I was like a babe in Bahje, helpless and always in tears. They understood. I knew!!

Toward the end of my stay I did not appear at table. A terror possessed me because on the east and west. I was but a pilgrim, they rested behind closed doors, slept in Eastern fashion, while I was but a pilgrim, going back home, a visitor treated with utmost kindness and consideration. My heart was breaking. I yearned for the intimacy of these sisters, I knew happiness only beside them, hearing their voices although not understanding half they said on account of my poor ears. Like a faithful dog I wanted to lie at their feet always, tag them every moment and look up into their faces. Why this love? Why had God created it for me? Just to take it away from me again as all things I loved have been taken from me? Must I conquer this love or may it in years to come be cultivated, broadened, multiplied so as to bear great fruits and responsibilities? Time will tell I only know + love them so...

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How did it happen that I was to come again next year, God Willig? We had just prayed in the Holy Shrines of the Bab and 'Abdu'l Baha. The Spirit of Abha had surrounded us. It was towards the end of the blessed Fast. Leaving the Tombs we all climbed to the big room of the caretaker's house. There tea was served, and oranges, sandwiches and cakes. We were all entranced by the Beauty of Baha, and I wept for happiness to sit there with these Holy Women. Zia had the center armchair, I sat between Rouha and Toob and Monever sat beside Zia. Rizwanieh had chanted again, her sweetvoice like that of an angels. The Zia turned to me after a silence and said: "How are you Auntie? You are everybody's Auntie. You have so many children in Persia and they all love you. Your work is very good." I replied: O Mother Zia, my brain is the Temple, my head is its dome. It seems all things mat-



material are drawing up and inward as if a magnet were drawing them in, upward and out upon a plan of the spirit, just like the New Jerusalem betwixt the heavens, and the earth." Zia looked at me thoughtfully. "And I do not think I can part with you." The Rouha said: "Auntie, I promise you that you are invited to come again to pray within the Holy Tombs during the next Fast." And all 'Abdu'l Baha's Daughters nodded, they meant it, they said. And I threw myself before Zia, asking her to be my mother, asking her to lay her hands on my head, and she did so, and I felt her blessing in my soul. I could return, be back, pray again with them, probably enter the Holy Home to be their servant, clean their shoes, brush their clothes, scrub their floors! Anything, but separation from them!

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"You shall be our own dear sister when you come again" said Monever one day. "We shall live together, travel together to Persia, etc, and shall part no more." Was I happy now? God! Happy! There is no word for it. I can wait for that. I can work for that! Baha'u'llah be praised!

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#### Mardiros' Dress:-

This is an incident of a black silk dress. Just before I left America, on my journey to the Holy Land Mardiros sent in a Jewish merchant with a box of dresses for me to choose from. I had longed for this happening for weeks, and at last disappointed, gave up hope, thinking Mardiros did not intend to buy me clothes. So I fixed up what I could, bought myself a cheap dress or two, and said no more. But just the day before I left this surprise came. Naturally, as a good bargain-hunter, Mardiros had old-fashioned and ill-fitting specimens of apparel, but I was glad to have these and laid out about four which I thought I might use. There was one, black silk, the goods very fine, but much too small for me. Mardiros liked this dress and asked me to take it. I said it was too small. And then to my surprise he said: "Keep it, and give it to the GREATEST HOLY LEAF!" Of all people, to Her, I thought, and I looked at my husband dumbfounded. Never in His life had he so much as mentioned one of these Holy Women, and here was a dress I should give from him to the Greatest of Angel-mothers, the Greatest Holy Leaf, the daughter of our Father Baha'u'llah. Suddenly the significance of it came home to me and I exclaimed: "Mardiros, what you have said just now will save your soul! These words you have spoken will save your soul! And he said nothing, but walked away and there the America incident ended.

But in the Holy Land it had not even begun. I had, when I got to Haifa, many gifts for children. One by one they were given to the little ones of the garden of God. How they loved these American toys, handkerchiefs and nicknacks. The children of the Holy Household were supplied over and over. There is the little boy of Tooba, Rouha's little boy, the brother of our guardian, and Baghdadi's sister's two boys. There were the children of the cooks, and servants of the Holy Household, and some of their playmates who lived up the narrow walk towards Carmel, and some who lived near the Baha'i maiden Maranquiz, near the Holy Tomb on Carmel. All had presents: but there was one gift I had not the heart to give, the black silk dress for Baha'uyyih from my husband, Mardiros. I kept it and kept it, until the very last moment just before I went away. I was saying good-bye to the pilgrims and had told May Stebbins to take it over and give it to the Greatest Holy Leaf. She did, and that, while I was over there saying farewell. Zia had kissed me, without a word, but her kisses spoke volumes to my heart. On both cheeks she kissed me, long. I could not bear it and passing the greatest Holy Leaf I tried to flee out of that Holy Home. But Monever drew me into another room near the Holy Mother's room and trembling I wrote my address for her, for which she asked. She gave me again the address of the little baby she had given to me, for I had sent her five dolla

to use for this baby and our other ones in Acca. At the verge of parting we gazed speechless into each other's faces, she holding my hand tightly between her two soft and loving ones. I had noticed that the Greatest Holy Leaf had joined us and was leaning upon an old chest just beside us. I dared not look at her. I felt my will to remain brave, crumbling. So I suddenly arose and fled out of the House of God, down the steps of marble, over the shell-covered walk towards the Holy Gate and out. But Monever and Rizwanieh followed and Ruhi called me from the auto in which I had taken refuge without hat nor coat. "You must go back, Auntie, the Greatest Holy Leaf wants you!" he said. And I returned and met Monever who handed me two large handkerchiefs, one grey and the other white, perfumed and precious by hand-weave and care: "Auntie, these are from the Greatest Holy Leaf for your husband. She says she will pray for him, and she thanks him for the silk dress very, very much. These cloths lay upon the Holy Tomb and were blessed by 'Abdu'l Baha. Give them to your husband with all our loves." Thus spoke the Holy Daughter of 'Abdu'l Baha at the Gate of Holiness, and these were the last words from those sacred, loving lips. "O! Yes! O I than you..." these were all the words I could utter and I hastened into the auto which whizzed me away God knows where.... back to the man the Greatest Holy Leaf is praying for. May my life be a sacrifice to these Holy Women.

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Thus closed the incidents of the black silk dress, but its consequences will be for-reaching and everlasting, for the Greatest Holy Leaf, the Daughter of our Father Baha'u'llah, is praying, praying. . praying!

\* \* \* \* \*

Why, after but two months' sojourn in Haifa did I happen to return home? O, it is a mystery to me, but must have been guidance and the will of God.

My love again is the cause of my departure. It was on the ninth of February that the seed of my departure was sown. We had gone to Bahje for a day and night. No one knew it was my birthday.(?) I had told no one. But my birthday was celebrated in Bahje, the most precious place for it. Even 'Abdu'l Baha's donkey kicked and scampered in joy, colored beads placed around her neck by Sohiel and the Master's saddle on her back. We climbed the donkey and even Elisabeth Greenleaf got on it and had Effie take her picture. We roved the red anemonie fields far into the hills of Bahje, and Monever and I walked ahead talking of all kinds of glorious things. We rested and had tea under the Pines and I laid my head on Zia's lap and she petted my head with her tender hands. Her voice was like my mother's and I was happy to be permitted to lay my head on the lap which had held her son, our Guardian of the Cause. What an honor to be so close to this mother-heart, fondled by the holy fingers so lovingly. I wished eternities would pass just like that.... She spoke so many things to me, I cannot relate them now... All were there but our Guardian who was always busy. The burden of the Cause ever pressing Him to work and labor for us. But I never forgot Him, nor did I forget to pray for Him, ever. I know that help will come to the world thro Him alone, therefore is He so busy... very busy.. Rizwanieh, Ruhanquiz, Zia, Tooba, Rouha, Monever, Sohiel, Ruhi, Mother Greenleaf, Keith and I. This was the party on my birthday. All day we were together, and the time came for departure. I wished we could stay here forever, but we had to go back to Haifa. I sat beside Zia and Monever. Zia held my hand a long time at intervals. I did not move for fear she would draw her hand away- this was heaven for me, to hold the warm hand of the mother of my Guardian. I received strength and happiness thus, and thoughts unspeakable crowded my spirit, and lifted me to the heavens of joy...

Arrived at the Holy Gate in Haifa, the Holy Family passed thro and the "pilgrims" entered the opposite pilgrim house. All went after their various occupations. Keith wrote, Effie set the table etc, but I? what did Victoria do? Why, Victoria's heart was pumping against her brea

10/ like a wild thing, her brain was whirling madly, for she could not bear the separation from those Holy Women!! Tears flowed from her eyes and her body trembled for longing. What was to become of her? Could she endure this much longer? It seemed so hopeless. Here she was, only a pilgrim. Over there was the Holy Home, and a high, cold, stone wall was between her and those she loved so dearly. It could not be endured and Victoria knew this. Victoria could not go to them, for Effie and Keith said it was not proper, that it was even rude to attempt to go over unless one was invited. I would start sometime, and Effie followed and asked where I was going. I remembered the nights I had gone out into the night and leaned against the pillars of the gate only to be near, to probably get a glimpse of the white cloth of the head of the Greatest Holy Leaf or of the Holy Mother, or even of one of 'Abdu'l Baha's Daughters. Could this be borne much longer?

So I went in to Keith and I wept and told her I could not bear my unhappiness, that I would like to go home with her and how it might be done. She said she had no money to loan me but that she would write to my husband to send me return money. I nodded and said, alright. And Keith wrote. And as the days and weeks passed, I realized I must go home soon, as a consequence of this ninth of February. I dreaded it and was sorry of my weakness, because now I realized that only to see the Holy ones now and then was better than to be far away with oceans rolling between us. And a cable was received from Mardiros enquiring when 'Keithkehlner' was leaving. Keith cabled return "6th of April, Lapland" and one day in March another cable came from Mardiros to Shoghi Effendi that "Victoria come home, ~~send~~ with Keithkehlner, sending 400 dollars." And a short time afterwards the sum of money came, and my fate was sealed to return.

The way the news of the telegram reached me I shall never forget. It was sent to Shoghi Effendi. I was told the Holy Family wished to see me. I went over and the Greatest Holy Leaf and the Holy Mother seated me between them. Each took one of my hands. "Good news has come for you," said the Holy Mother. "You must be happy, for your husband wishes you to return to him," kindly said the Greatest Holy Leaf, and she took my arm and held it to her heart, ~~holding~~ holding my wedding ring and rubbing my hand softly, looking in my eyes wither great and loving ones. For sometime these Holy ones spoke to me, trying to break the news they knew would effect me so, for I had told them I wanted to stay with them always. At last I could bear their great love no longer. Speechless I arose. I laid down on the table the cable the Daughter of Baha'u'llah had given to me. They invited me to stay longer, but I said I must go now, that I would come back. I wanted to go somewhere, alone and cry, call out, forget! Over the rocks of Carmel I hastened, not caring where. Up and down and up, until I came to places I had never seen. I landed near the shores of the Mediterranean where many little children were at play. They were sliding down a wall sitting on pieces of tin. Bare-foot and half dressed I learned from them the lesson of happiness. They knew their mothers were near. Their home was there, all they loved, their little beds, their food.

And homeless I sat and watched them. I wished for a moment I BELONGED somewhere in one of those dingy passages, in one of those squally rooms, loved and "belonging"- But instead, I was a wanderer, must go on and on, unwanted, waiting only on my Lord, whom I loved. Maybe, in the realm of the golden shores I shall find a haven, a place where I am needed. Wanted permanently. That would be very well indeed. May God grant me a PLACE...

Stumbling back to Carmel I picked flowers which covered my pathway in profusion, red, purple, white pink and yellow. Wild flowers! Keith said I was a wild-flower, that I needed grafting. Maybe, I was now in the process of being tamed, that was maybe what was the matter. I had gone my own way so long. I was being fastened to the trunk of the Will of God. That would be good, and I would gladly bear the pain. I stumbled on up toward the Holy Shrines. They beckoned like heaven and my home. The thought came to me that I would like to lie down beside 'Abdu'l Baha forever, just rest there, forget all but rest...

So I went there to pray, to be alone. A long time I was there until dusk began to fall. Then I started down Mount Carmel, past the glorious gardens of flowers of all hues and varieties. I wanted to lay my beating and burning head into the passy beds, and cool my aching eyes in the lovely sparkling fountain. Some of our Carmel garden children met me then and one of them gave me more flowers. "I picked them for you, Auntie, to give to the American Gardens" she said. And a cure came over me, a tender tugging of hope at my heart. They cared, these children, they were so dependent on love, just as I was, and they came to comfort me. They were not surprised to see my weeping, for they had often seen me thus. This is my period for weeping, the load of the world's sorrow reflects back upon my heart, and it must be wiped out somehow, thro the power of Baha'u'llan and the strength of 'Abdu'laha. I knew that a battle must be won, that the enemy must be conquered before peace can dawn. Well the battle was on, and victory was not far, but the enemy was there, the flesh, still firm and stubborn, he must be vanquished!

Passing the Holy Gate, I felt I could not face the Holy Ones again that day. So I hastened to pass. But Ruhi was watching for me. They had missed me. They had been anxious for me. And he said, his "Aunts" were awaiting me. Tooba met me at the marble stairs and Monever in the marble alcove inside. Both led me into the room of the Greatest Holy Leaf where she sat enthroned like the Queen of Heaven she was, upon her couch. The Holy Mother and Zia, the Mother of our Guardian were seated on another couch and they drew me down beside them and took my hands and told me to be happy, that I was coming back soon and that they would be waiting for me. That the Holy Cause needed me in America and that I must now go out and help our Guardian to teach and assist the friends. A long time Zia held me in her arms and I could hear her mother-heart beating and her eyes were like the mystery of the stars of heaven. One cannot explain Zia's eyes. I have never seen such depths to eyes before. It must be the spirit of 'Abdu'laha that is within them, they make me quiver for love of her. Zia! Mother Zia'. I need you now!

Before I left, when all others went out, the Greatest Holy Leaf beckoned me to come over to her couch. I kneeled before her. She wanted me to sit beside her pointing to a place near her right side, but I knew my unworthiness and remained at her feet. She put her thin aged hands on my head and whispered Persian words, I felt happier then and resigned, left her presence.

The wild flowers I had picked, laid before the Holy Shrine, which were touched by Zia and the Greatest Holy Leaf, these I pressed and sent to the Gardens of the world as "Prayer Flowers" to make happy and inspire those who love such things with sweet memories. While in Haifa, from the 29th of January to April 3rd, I have written more than three hundred letters, all for God, His Unity and His Love. May my life become a sacrifice to Baha'u'llah and my Guardian.

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#### The Nacazeen Donkey:-

Mohammed Ali, the Nacazeen, lives in Bahje, in the Palace of Baha'u'llah. When he had taken possession of it after Baha'u'llah's Ascension the Baha'is let him remain there. It is our hope that he will return it, and we are awaiting a favorable decision, soon. If we get it by next year, Monever says we will live there awhile. That we may take some of our children there. I had always seen children there, in my vision. I do not know why I should have, but it so happens.

One moonshine night I left the others in the house adjoining the Palace and walked toward the Pines. We had been there only a couple of nights. The black prayer shawl was cast over my head and I stood there looking toward the Holy Tomb I had just left and up to the moon. I thought of the symbol of the moon, the Mohammedan meaning and its meaning in the Bible. Two men came towards me, one in oriental dress and the other in European suit and fez. At once I knew

ropean dress with a red fez. At once I knew it was Mohammed Ali and his associate. They stopped and I looked at them. We were silent for some time one engrossed in thought over the other. We felt a chasm between us and a secret fear. Then Mohammed Ali spoke up: "Who are you, what do you want!" Pointing to the lights near the palace I said: "I live in there- and I am looking at the moon." Mohammed Ali stood like petrified not being able to look from my face. The black shawl had fallen from my head and the moon bathed my face in its beams. While looking at him I prayed for him, prayed to Baha'u'llah for this troublesome Naccazin. Slowly, speechlessly they stepped back into the road and disappeared in the darkness. The spell was broken. But my heart knew no hate, only pity.

Now we needed another donkey. It was the next morning we disgusted it at breakfast table, just before leaving for the Druse Village. One more donkey must be supplied and Monever said: "We must get a donkey from the Naccazins." All the pilgrims exclaimed they would not ride a nacazin donkey, they would rather not go. Then I spoke up. "I'll ride it Monever, I'll make a good Baha'i out of it. A donkey at any rate has more sense than being a Nacazin, even if it is obliged to serve them." Ho! 'Auntie would ride the Nacazin donkey! And all was well, we could start. Strange to say, I never rode that donkey. Everybody wanted it. In the end Berthaline ~~Aboda~~ Osgood took it. Poor little mule, so patient, so weary looking, so gentle. How aloof animals are from the sins of their owners! I rode a horse. It was the first time I had alighted one since my girlhood in the wild west of the Rockies in America. I managed well and we got along famously. It was a wild horse, no longer young, but managable. The fight it had later on with the other one was beyond its control. They hated each other and I had been warned. I got off before the fight by God's Command and thro Baha'u'llah's power. During the whole terror of the situation the Holy sisters, Rouha and Monever were silent, and when the danger was over they bade us all sit down and enjoy some fresh lettuce. But I read in their faces their feelings, their constant trust and prayer. I spread my coat on the grass for them to sit down on. They did. And we smiled up into each other's faces, theirs infathomably tender and loving. "Auntie, is near to Baha'u'llah, she needs fear nothing, ever, for He, Himself is guiding her. He hears her prayers and helps her." Said Monever. "You must always pray for me and my children, Auntie," said Rouha, "you are very near to God. He hears you, indeed."

I leaned against her breast and she patted in love my hair. I was happy. Next to 'Abdu'l Baha's donkey, the finest trotter was the Nacazeen... \* \* \* \* \*

These Holy Ones, let Mohammed Ali live in Baha'u'llah's Palace. There is a constant light in the room where Baha'u'llah ascended to the Supreme Concourse. Will they not soon have learned their lesson of obstinacy, that it is of no account? These Sisters ride their donkey and let them live in their houses, under their shelter and free from harm. Will they not awaken soon to the truth of Baha'u'llah? This day <sup>1</sup> was even at peace with these Nacazeens and cried: "God forgive them, for they know not what they do." And the Holy Ones treat them accordingly. Someday, thro this treatment all evil and darkness shall flee. <sup>1</sup>raise God and His Abha Love. \* \* \* \* \*

"You are everybody's Auntie. We are all your neices. You are the children's Auntie and the Auntie of all of us. Shoghi Effendi's Auntie, too, for He has just said to me: "Did you go over to see Auntie already?" These words spoke to me, Monever that night she came over to me for the last time. "Shoghi Effendi has never spoken to anyone as He has spoken to you, today, Auntie. He said among other things that you are His "Special helper." This should make you very, very happy. You are helping Shoghi Effendi. He has placed you in the Temple and He wishes to guide you step by step. Do as He says, and you will always be happy. Very happy. You will come back

to us next year, God willing, and you will help us and Shoghi Effendi. You will be one of our own family, and very dear to all of us. Shoghi Effendi wants you to take care of your health, for He will need you a long time- you are His special helper, did you not hear Him say so? Therefore you must be happy.. happy.. happy, do you hear? You must be happy Auntie.. And thus continued Monever, kissing, petting and loving me. "You know how we love you, need you, do you now feel our love? You must! Promise me not to weep anymore..." And like a babe the Holy One of God covered me up just as a mother would, tucked me under until I felt peaceful and quiet. She was but an angel then, no longer human there in the dusk the white cloth on her head seemed like light, her dark hair a hallow and her big black eyes flashing like the stars into my consciousness. Never have I seen her so. She was transformed. And the love of 'Abdu'l Baha came over me as of yore only upon her head it rested: "O Monever, how I have loved 'Abdu'l Baha, and now He has given me His Child!" I whispered. And she kissed me again and again, laying her cheek against mine a long time: "You are mine, you are ours. You do not belong to your husband, nor to any body but to us, you must be happy now and sleep..." Lifting her face she gazed at the window "Which window shall I open? You have too many covers, you will be too warm." Tenderly she drew one coverlet back then went to the window. Not did she open the one towards the Tombs, but opened the one facing the flower garden, where Fugeta's beautiful flowers were wafting fragrances to us. Then I watched this angel pass my bed and heard her softly close the door... and I went to sleep, not awakening until the early dawn, the Easter Dawn of Easter Morn.. the day of parting. I went to the Holy Shrine once more, then to Jerusalem per auto, with Keith. But the benediction of 'Abdu'l Baha's Daughter remains with me, it shall be eternal, everlasting, as if spoken to me by the Master Himself. It is now with me as I write these lines, on the Lapland, the steamer which bears me back to Montclair in America, further and further away from my Home-land Carmel..

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Shoghi Effendi said that last day: " I read those letters you sent to me, those Temple letters about the Plan. They are very good, did you mail them?" I told my Guardian that I had written about three hundred similar letters while he had been gone. And he praised the work and said it was confirmed by the Master. When I told Him I was nothing, "he said I was an instrument in the Masters Hand, doing His will because I have come near to Him." But you cannot do all this work. It is too much for one person to do. You must take care of your health. I will guide you from now on. One thing at a time will be accomplished. I will always let you know what to do next. Now work for the Temple. Especially urge the East to help America build the temple. See I am giving 95 dollars every month, so earnestly do I desire to see the temple built. Others are following my example, and I am placing you in the Temple, your work shall come out of it." "But what shall I do if other disconnected activities come and separate the people?" I asked my Guardian. "Just write to them urging them to turn to the Temple, to help it and the Plan for unified Action.. This will unite you then, for all activities shall gather around this Edifice In the end there shall be no divisions. Let all the activities you have started go on, encourage them, but give all your time to Temple work, this will establish you there and all your troubles will disappear. I will instruct you from time to time what to do next. I will let you know, you will be helping me. O, if you do THAT, it will be very good. I shall write about your work to the National Spiritual Assemblies. They should send you the addresses of all the local Spiritual Assemblies in each countries. That will make you happy? Yes?" And I clapped my hands and said that I shall be happy to work for the Temple, that it was art, beauty, and benevolence. "Just urge in your letters, do never demand. Your power is in your humility and faith. Invite all assemblies to unite make the Temple a great center for all activities. Get together all the Master said about it and place between your paragraphs Picture and photos you can print with reviewing.

Thus spoke my Guardian. "You wish to go to the Holy Shrines now?" I had been just thinking that I would like to and nodded. "Then I will not keep you longer. Be happy, you must be very happy." He said. "My Guardian, may I come again for the next fast. May I be here with you and help you?" "Yes, you can come, be happy, God willing" He clasped my hand, and I saw my Guardian no more.

Monever and Rouha urged me not to go to the Shrines this night. That it was too late and I must rest. I sat at their feet, and Monever brought me orange juice..." Go home and lie down, I will come later, said Monever. \* \* \* \* \*

Fugeta has a parrot. He laughs and called and shrieks. He eats oranges and candy and bread. Fugeta tells me that he is 'Abdu'l Baha's parrot, that he had been with Him in Acca. That interested me, and since that time I like this screeching polly; it is green, partly red. Once it was a prisoner in Acca. Now it is free to appearances, but still a prisoner in its cage. There are freedoms and double freedoms. Sometimes we think we are free but we are still prisoners. We are used to the bars of our cages and imagine they are not. Unless a door is opened to us we cannot discover it. So it is good, even if imagining ourselves free we can look for double and threefold freedom and find it. If we do not look for it we cannot discover freedom. 'Abdu'l Baha says that the earth is a prison for heavenly souls. We must believe Him and in faith look for heaven. There must be a spiritual freedom that breaks all shackles, material and spiritual. When this is found there will be complete freedom from earthly things, love for them will have faded away, possessions will become mediums for service and all actions will become selfless and pure.. The nearer we come to God, the freer we become, the nearer the spiritual world. From one freedom to the other we must express His praise, just as His parrot does. Effie gave me some feathers of 'Abdu'l Baha's parrot. I will keep them always. Born in a cage it thinks itself free. We are like the parrot. \* \* \* \* \*

The first day of our arrival in Haifa Fugeta met us at our tender. He sent me on ahead in 'Abdu'l Baha's carriage while he and Keith went back to the boat to help the custom officers look through our trunks. Arrived at the pilgrim house I was assigned my room overlooking the Holy Shrines and Mount Carmel and the Home of my Lord. I stood at that window overlooking these much-longed for scenes and wept and wept. Why Haifa right from the beginning got all these tears is beyond my comprehension. I seldom if ever wept at home. I was a comfort to others there, I was resolute and brave. But here I was a babe, like a helpless child, needing comfort. Keith said that I sobbed so loudly at the Shrines that all heard me, so I tried to hide my sobs, and after some practice I learned to sob without a sound. Then when the tears kept on rolling over my cheeks Keith said that I was keeping away the good that might be mine if I were happy. So I tried not to let her or others see my tears anymore. I went to Carmel and to the Tombs alone then when I had to weep, and plead and pray for humanity and the world. It was this thought that made me long so for prayer, to help make the world one. Thro prayer, I knew, that all shall be come new, and I tried to help but I had to sob, meantime. No one understood my tears but the Holy Ones. Keith thought that my contact was not so fortunate as my letters. But Monever said that all I do was good. Another one who always wept was Rizwanieh., therefore did we understand each other. I told her to weep on, that all her tears were pearls in her spiritual crown. This made her happy. Rizwanieh is the daughter of the sister of the Holy Mother, 'Abdu'l Baha's Wife. She chants like an angel. And is one. I love her. \* \* \* \* \*

On this day, after some time, Monever came over.

Monever was the first one of that Holy Band, I met. Then Rouha, both Daughters of the beloved Master. I cannot express my feelings when I laid eyes on them, how I felt. The flow of their spirits filled my expectant soul and entered my heart. I threw myself at their feet and wept. They knew how to comfort. They were the daughters of my Lord and His spirit was within their bosoms. I had come to the right place for comfort and I knew it. They drew these tears out of my eyes, these tears which had been stemmed for years and years waiting to be released. Like a dam, its waters held, suddenly let loose, rushing in torrents over the chasms of reserve and over the dry lands.

"We have waited a long time for you," said Monever, "months and months we have expected you and thought you would never come." "We are glad you are here now, it is a great blessing to come here."

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After all these weeks of happiness I realize most fully the "blessing" Monever mentioned. This "blessing" cannot be expressed in words, nor analyzed, but it is a conscious reality, hovering over my spirit every moment. It is my protection from all harm. The guide in all my wanderings. I am satisfied.

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I was the only one that fasted in the pilgrim house. Effie was not strong. Fugeta had to work too hard. Keith was too far advanced in years. So I told them I would fast for all of them. Sohiel and Ruhi could not fast, but our Guardian fasted to the end. No one saw Him during fasting time. Sometimes He would not eat for days, said Ruhi. Ruha and Monever fasted in the end. It is not easy to fast, but I have always kept the fast after Agnes Alexander had told me of it in Montclair that first year I became a Baha'i. In that first year, 1919 it was hard for me to fast from sunrise to sunset, for such a thing had never been experienced in our family, but my love for 'Abdu'l Baha made me overcome all this. I was foolish to fast, said my people. That these ideas were of the past. But still I fasted because it was the Baha'i command. And kept at it till now. In Haifa it was easy to fast. The first days I fasted twenty-four hours but the Greatest Holy Leaf asked me not to wait that long. So I ate before sunrise and after sunset. Sometimes the Greatest Holy Leaf sent me a piece of bread, and cheese with which to break the fast. Sometimes she and the Holy Mother sent cookies with a white or red rose, a bunch of violets, some pansies, from their sacred hands. I would gladly have fasted forever with these signs of appreciation. All the Holy Family asked me to pray for them, for their children. Tooba asked that I pray for her and Sohiel and Ruhi. Rouha asked me to pray for her husband and her four children. That her children become pure servants of Baha'u'llah and a blessing to the Cause. Zia asked me to pray for her and my Guardian. Rizwanieh asked prayer for her mother, her two children and herself. Here I was, a sinner, to pray for the holiest of Families and although unworthy, out of sheer love I could bend my knee and pray to the Grandfather and to the Father of these saints of God to keep them, give them their hearts' desires, just because of love, only love. They believed that my prayers were heard. So I prayed. May God forgive me.. may my life be a sacrifice to them..

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Never had the Holy Mother appeared so immaculate and glorified as that last time I saw her. She stood along in the great foyer of the hall in the Holy Home. I had just come out of 'Abdu'l Baha's room, where I had fallen before His bed where He had slept and died. A white turban was on His pillow, and while I lay there I thought of Monereh, this Holy wife of His who had given Him and us these glorious Daughters, shining Torches in this dark world. Her significance came home to me, and when I left the sacred room I beheld Monereh, and I could but fall to her feet and grasp them with my arms around them. I looked up into her face which shown as never before- and she understood. took me in her arms and kissed me.



This was the last time I saw the Holy Mother-  
may I behold her like that next year, God willing!

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Ruhanquiz is the daughter of Zia, and the sister of Shoghi Effendi, our Guardian. Ruhanquiz is 26 years old, a wonderful woman, beautiful, glorious, and a right hand to our Guardian. It was she who wrote me the last letter to America inviting me to come. R. Rabbani is her signature, and I had thought it was Ruhi who had written until he had told me he had not written and Ruhanquiz had had told me she had and disguised it. This she worked hidden, but a torch to the Holy Cause, lighting our Guardian's burden every day. Ruhanquiz is frail and I did not see her often. Sometimes she walked with me up Mount Carmel, sometimes we came home together from the Holy Shrines. She is gloriously interested in everything that pertains to the Holy Cause and she asked many questions about the American friends. In Bahje one day she asked me about my work. I drew the outline for her in the sand where we sat under the fig trees. She was much interested and asked many questions. She was sure our Guardian would help me in this work, the work of uniting the hearts.

The following Sunday we went to Prayer together in the Tombs. I had told her about our young people in Chicago, and about the list of thirty two of them who had sent in their names. I asked her to pick some violets from the wonderful patch in front of the tombs and she did so, and I told her I would send each one a violet from her. She was happy over this. Then we went in to pray. Two times Ruhanquiz gave me violets.

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When I left Haifa Ruhanquiz was not there. She had been with Shoghi Effendi during the Fast, and now she was spending her time in the little plot the Holy Family had bought on Mount Carmel. I pray Ruhanquiz becomes strong again. She is so pure, so helpful to Shoghi Eff. I miss Ruhanquiz. I love her. \* \* \* \* \*

Now and then we had a woman's meeting in the Holy Home. The pilgrims also were invited to come. The Persian Baha'is would chant and converse, and when the pilgrims spoke one of the Holy Daughters would interpret. Often the Holy Mother and the Greatest Holy Leaf told us stories about the lives of Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l-Baha, of their hardships, suffering and imprisonment. Their sweet voices were like balm to my soul although I could not understand much because I could not hear. But I was happy and all the women understood, for the pilgrims had the words interpreted by Rouha or Monever. Toward six o'clock tea was served in little glasses which looked like amber. It was good tea and everyone partook of it. Dainty cookies, baked by members of the Holy Household were served sometimes. Farewells came in the end, always and they were hard for me, although I looked forward to the kisses of the Holy Mother and of the Daughter of Baha'u'llah Bahiyih, and the embraces of the Daughters of 'Abdu'l-Baha.

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Little things the Holy Ones gave me I have still. I have saved them all. I shall always save them. One is the rind of an orange. We were sitting in the Ridwan garden in Acre. It was very comfortable on the clean soft mattresses under the great pines there. We were jolly and happy. We had just finished some lettuce and Monever took an orange and divided it among us. I took my share as I have always taken everything out of Monever's hand, with utmost humility and gratitude. Monever was laughing heartily I knew not why. But when I put the slice of orange in my mouth and bit upon it I knew. It was terribly bitter and cast it from me. "O Monever, this is the first bitterness you have given to me. You have fed me like a mother with sweets and good things and this is so bitter!" And Monever said:

18/ "Auntie, you must like the bitter things I give you too, and you must know that all I give you is through my love. I shall make a juice of these oranges for our lettuce, it is very good." She prepared two bowls one with sugar and one with salt. One juice was bitter and the other sweet. When they were mixed by passing around we would make faces over the sudden change and Monever laughed so heartily. Monever was so happy that day, I shall never forget!

That same day we had dinner on the long table near the river where Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l Baha dwelled so often. Everything appeared as if by magic. I wanted to help and said that I wished to serve. "Auntie, you must not, you must rest now, you are our guest, when you go home you can serve again." If Monever has pressed a knife in my heart she could not have hurt me more: It was a first warning that I must return home soon. I think I wept several days over these words and Keith noticed it and I told her, and she exclaimed: Victoria, you must learn that no one is favored here. The longest time we should stay here is nine or nineteen days. All of us are treated alike, no exceptions are made. They are kind to us and do their utmost to please us, because they wish us to go out into the world and give the Message. No one has lived in the Holy Household, and you must not be expected to be favored. What they say to you they say to me, only you do not hear." These words almost made my heart stop. The business of this as Keith took it, was not for me. I wanted to be loved, only loved by these Holy Ones, wanted not to be a pilgrim but a member of their care, their tenderness and pity. I could not go and come like the others, my heart would not stand this. I wondered how Keith could look at it this way, but she had gotten to the psychological meaning of our visit. To me the stone walls which encircled the Holy Home were prison bars, they were awful fortresses, I thought of "Paradise Lost" when Peri stood outside lamenting. Forbidden ground, the portals of heaven closed. If there was a heavenly place awaiting me in the land of God, why not now, just now, could heaven be opened to me? Why did I yearn like that. Was I not only a pilgrim, come to receive orders, pertaining to the progress of the Cause? Why then did I fall in love with the Holy Women? Was it not for LOVE of them that drew me to their shores? Would that love be stilled by high impenetrable walls; conventional explanation, and exclusiveness? Others may be satisfied, but my love is different, it is boundless, endless, obstacle-removing! Shall it be conquered or shall it increase? My Lord alone can answer me. I know nothing. I wish I could feel like the pilgrims do. But if my great love is reciprocated, the Flames of our Mutual Love will bridge the chasms, remove the walls and usefulness and happiness will come through it manifold.

I told Monever that my love was like an hurricane. She said: "Yes, Auntie, your love is very great. It will bring you back to us. I will not forget you for a minute."

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17/ One sunrise, in the Holy Shrine of 'Abdu'l Baha, the spirit of God descended upon me and the picture of the Mashriqu'l Adhkar grew until it covered the walls with many-colored beauty. Crowds hastened toward the nine portals and I watched from a high mountain. Children of all nations sang around this edifice of glory, and its meaning grew and awakened in my consciousness its inexplicable rejoicing. My tears were dried and my heart sang with the tunes of the Lord of Host, adoring and praising the power of Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l Baha, I fell upon my face, and the voice of God called and the spirit of my Lord spake unto me; saying:

"Maid-servant of Baha, Victoria, let all things suffice thee. Behold thou the Temple that thou shalt build! Go thou forth into the New World and summon the nations to turn their faces in that direction, for the union and affiliation of the nations shall be spread by your hand. Invite thou them to the Banquet of Thy King, the King of Names, within the nine Gates which are around My Temple. Declare Thou unto them My Will and speak unto them My Command through thy love and thy pen. Make thou known unto them what hath been revealed unto thee on this Day by the Spirit of Baha; in the Most Holy Shrines of Carmel and Bahje. Fear not, for I am with thee. Behold, I shall never forget thee. I am Thy Lord and Helper!"

April 3rd, 1926.

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And again the Lord spake unto me, saying: "O thou maid-servant of God! Soon shall all the peoples turn towards the Holy Spot of Wilmette which is My sacred and Holy Ground. I have ~~set~~ set My Feet upon it and My Heart is in My Temple. I shall not forsake nor forget it, and I shall glorify it among the nations of the earth. I have appointed thee an instrument in My Hands to go forth and summon the faithful servants unto the ends of the earth to arise and assist thee in the erection of My Temple, and thou shalt not be alone, nor shall thy heart despair, for I am Thy God, and I shall sustain and uphold thee. I have placed thy feet on the base of My Temple, thy head under the round dome of My Temple, and thy heart and hand upon the cornerstone of My Temple. Fear not, I will sustain thee!"

Bahje, April 1st, 1926.

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And the Lord said unto me in the twilight of the Tomb on Mount Carmel: "O thou beloved maid-servant! Thou art My Hand and with thy pen shall I write. Thou art My Voice, and through thee shall I be heard. Thou art my instrument and I shall use thee, and enlighten thee, and help thee. Hasten thou from My Holy Shrine and call thou out into the regions of the earth My Will. Summon thou the servants of Baha unto the Table of the Lord in the Holy Place of Wilmette, for there shall <sup>thou</sup> I abide until the end of the days and thou shalt not go out from it, nor shalt thou be forsaken. For I am the Lord, thy God, I am thy Helper and thy Guide!"

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O, those Voices of the Tomb, where Life was evident and death was not! O those fragrances borne to my nostrils from the Flowers of the Divine Paradise! Wide became the walls of the Holy Shrines in the sunrise and the twilight! All things seemed to draw together in the mist of His Divine Presence! All material things moved toward my heart. Downwardly from the ends of the earth they moved to my feet, up to my loins, upward to my heart, over my brain, into the breezes of His Will between the earth and the heavens. And there they spread out, far, far, and a new city appeared through the mist and the New Jerusalem took form and all material civilization became divine through this drawing upward into the air! Into the air, as prophecized, into the AIR! There hovered the Paradise of Abha on earth, there lay the City four-square, and through the hollow reed came the Voice of God saying! "I have built unto myself a City, a Temple! I have adorned it with the Blood of the Saints and of the Lamb!! I have gathered together my own into the nine entrances of my Temple. They come from North, south east and west through the Nine Portals and worship My Name! I am the Lord, their God!"