

from the window, I examined the face of the rock. So broken and irregular was this that in many places the walls rested on arches flung across rifts and chasms. The masonry seemed like a chamois leaping from crag to crag, and the whole place for a moment or two was like one of those dreams which end with the sleeper falling from some frightful and unimaginable height. I felt that it must all give way and send me descending into space with it.

By-and-by Mrs. St. John said meditatively, 'What a work it must have been to build this! It is supposed that the stones were brought up on the backs of camels, and the workmen must most of them have been slaves.' As she said this a host of thoughts and images, which had been long latent in my mind, now made their shapes visible. I bethought me of the little I knew of the castle's history—that it was founded in the twilight of early Byzantine times; that it was an ancient stronghold in the days of Isaac Comnenus; that at his orders it surrendered to Richard Cœur de Lion; that since then, as its architecture plainly showed, it had been enlarged and embellished by the kings of the House of Lusignan; and that finally the Venetians had, for strategical reasons, destroyed its strength by shattering its towers with gunpowder. Then came thoughts of what a life, during the days of its glory, had been lived in it, what a strange, hybrid civilisation had blossomed here in mid-air. I seemed to see on the turrets the banners of Western chivalry, with the lions