

The Last Days of Pompeii.
by
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Outline.

I. Situation.

II. The Romance:-

Characters -

Glaucus, the hero, - a Greek.
 Diomed
 Claudius } Friends of Glaucus.
 Gallus
 Arbaces, - an Egyptian.
 Calenus, - a Christian.
 Ofacides, Jane's Brother.
 Julia, - daughter of Diomed.
 Jane, - a Neapolitan lady.
 Mydia, a flower-girl.

III. Fate:-

- (a) Of the characters.
- (b) Of the city.

The Last Days of Pompeii.

Pompeii, now the "city of the dead," was an ancient city of Campania, situated on the Bay of Naples, in that region noted for its beauty and picturesqueness, and lying in a little valley at the foot of Vesuvius. At the date of the story, about nineteen centuries ago, when Rome was in the height of its power, in its luxury and power, Pompeii was a populous and flourishing place, a half-Grecian colony of Hercules, mingling the manners and costumes of Hellas with those of Italy. The worship of Isis, the favorite god of the Egyptians had been transported into Italy and was now the rage. The licentiousness of the priest-hood and the false oracles were not yet unveiled, and the early struggles of Christianity with

leather superstition was just beginning. Beside the ordinary habits of life, there were the games, the gardens, the baths, and the amphitheater, all common places of classic luxury.

Glauces, an Athenian living in Pompeii, had been singularly favored by Fortune, possessing health, beauty, fortune, - genius - and society, and thus he had used as a young man of fashion, living in one of the finest houses in Pompeii, adorned with rich paintings and Grecian sculpture. This house was the scene of much merry-making and dissipation. There his friends, Chaerine, Gallus and Dionus, often met and gambled the hours away. One day at one of these gatherings, the chief subject of conversation was Lene, a beautiful Neapolitan lady, lately come to Pompeii. Her beauty was dazzling, her riches untold, and her voice superb. She had all Pompeii

at her feet. Her parents being dead, she and her brother Epacides were under the guardianship of an Egyptian named Arbaces, a priest of Isis.

Arbaces was a bad man, cunning and deceitful, but he loved the beautiful Ione, and though he dared not say so now, he used every possible means to win favour in her sight, showing her the frivolities and the false side of the young men of fashion in order to appeal better to her pure nature. Notwithstanding this, Ione fell in love with Glaucus, the handsome Greek, and they were often together.

Mydia, a poor blind flower girl of Pompeii, who sold flowers on the streets and with an experienced hand tended the flowers in the Greek garden, now often carried messages back and forth for him and Ione and was sent to Ione as maid.

Through the influence of

Arbaces, Epheides was persuaded to take up the Priest-hood and become a young priest of Isis. The rules were very strict, but he was seldom allowed to see even his sister, whom he dearly loved, and so Arbaces had less to fear from him. Day by day he became more and more discontented with his lot, discovering each day some new blasphemy and profanity in the-altars, before deemed sacred by him. To the gradually-departed from the belief in Isis and through the-arguments of another young Priest whose eyes had been opened, he secretly became a Christian, a sect then just rising into prominence and looked upon with great suspicion and contempt as blasphemers and atheists.

One evening as Mydia was wandering about in the garden, musing at her fate, for she could not see the flowers she loved so well, - a young lady, tall

and beautiful, spoke kindly to her,
 and finally she waited out Glaucus
 and Gaea, plainly showed her emotion,
 telling her she was Julia, the daughter
 of the wealthy Diomed and
 was considered the most beautiful
 in Pompeii until the Neapolitan
 came, and had also been much admired
 by Glaucus, but now he
 cast not even a glance at her. She
 then asked the flower girl for a
 love charm for she was from Thess-
 aly where charms are common.
 Nydia, knowing more, directed her
 to the Egyptian, Hibax, who
 was also a magician, but he
 in turn sent her to a witch who
 dwelt at the foot of Vesuvius. But
 with all his cunning, he discover-
 ed for whom the charm was intend-
 ed and, hastening to the witch, he
 commanded her to give philtre
 in place of the love charm. The
 right arrived and Julia and
 Nydia visited the old hag and
 obtained the supposed charm, and

in the night the flower-girl took the bottle of Philtre replacing it with one of water.

This poor blind girl, beautiful with her dark olive complexion, her tender though sightless eyes, and her shining mass of dark hair, fairly worshipped the Greek, who had been so kind to her, and, when he asked for water, - gave him the contents of the bottle, expecting the charm would turn his love to her. The effect came very soon, but was far different. She seemed as one in a trance, and, acting very strangely, he left the house and wandered through back streets to a small wood near the Protestant church, in an isolated place. Here Arbaces was arguing with Epacides, who had left the temple of Isis and threatened to unveil the false oracles to the people. The Egyptian, becoming enraged, drew a dagger and killed him. Just then, Plancus,

Coming along - acting strangely, stumbled over the dead body. Ribaces, in an instant, thrust the dagger into his hand and called, "murder!" Calenus, - a priest of Isis, was first to appear and he looked so oddly at the Egyptian that he said to himself "could he have seen?" but he soon dismissed the thought. Glaucus was taken and convicted of the murder of the brother of Dione, for who thought of disbelieving a priest of Isis? and had not Calenus seen the dagger in his hand?

It was very near the time for the opening of the amusements at the amphitheatre, and as there were few criminals, the people were glad of another, and Glaucus was sentenced to fight the lion with that small dagger used for that awful deed by the Egyptian.

Dione in spite of all the evidence which was produced

-against Glaucus, - and the arguments used by Arbaces to convince her, yet believed her born-guilty. Tallus, his chief companion, and Mydia, who betrayed her share in his fate, - also believed in his innocence; but nothing could be done, - and the time of his doom was fast approaching.

The day before the opening of the festivities at the Amphitheatre, Arbaces, thinking Mydia would cause trouble, locked her in a room in his house, leaving a servant on guard. Mydia played a trick on the slave and escaped. Going along the hall, she heard low moans coming from another room. She stopped and listened and asked who was there. It was Calenus, shut in a dark, close room with nothing to eat or drink. She told him story through the key hole - how he had been an eye-witness of the

crime - and that Arbaces was the murderer. He had demanded money of the Egyptian, and had been thrust into a dark, empty room to starve and die.

Mydia found her way out into the garden, but it was walled and the gate locked. She must wait until morning. Here, hidden behind bushes, a slave found her and took her back. What would become of Glaucus now? The day had come! But Mydia, ever faithful, did not despair, but telling the slave she wished to send a word of adieu to Glaucus, she gave him her gold chain to carry a note to Fallust, in which she informed him that they were prisoners and held proof of the Greek's innocence.

Fallust went immediately with officers and found Mydia and Calenus, the latter a mere shadow, scarcely recognizable.

The sports had already begun and any moment might be the last day the life of Glauco. They hastened to the amphitheater but when they arrived the gladiatorial combats were over, and Glauco and the lion were in the ring. But the lion, instead of springing upon his victim, snuffed the air and uttering pitious moans went round and round the arena trying to find some way of escape.

Just now Gallus appeared with a loud cry, and all eyes were turned from the arena to him. "Behold the Athenian, haste, he is innocent! Arrest Arbaces, the Egyptian, he is the murderer of Glaucides," he cried. In the breathless silence which followed, Calpurnius told his story and then fainted.

Glauco was taken from the ring, and the cry went up from thousands; "Arbaces to the

lion"! At that moment Arbaces
 arose - and stretching his hand
 toward Vesuvius shouted "Behold
 how the gods protect the guiltless!"
 Every eye was turned toward the
 fatal mountain. For several days
 a dark cloud had been hovering
 over its summit - and now Vesuvius,
 which had been inactive during
 the whole historic period and
 was only suspected to be of igne-
 ous origin, had suddenly burst
 forth in a volcanic eruption.
 But the storm was not so sudden
 as to preclude flight. Smoke
 and lava came pouring forth, there
 was an earthquake, the walls
 of the amphitheater fell, the
 Don escaped, and all was con-
 fusion and fear!

The people thought
 no longer of justice to Arbaces,
 but sought safety in flight in
 all directions. My-lia directed
 Glauens to Rome, but as they
 were leaving the city they encountered

the Egyptian who would have killed the Greek, but there was a sudden burst of fire from Vesuvius - and a mighty earthquake, shaking the foundation of the Imperial Statue, which in falling killed the Egyptian.

Mydia, - at this awful moment, found her blindness a blessing for, in the utter darkness which accompanied the eruption, - aside from its flashes of fire, she led Dione and Glaucus to a vessel - and they started towards Athens. In the morning Mydia was not to be found. The Mission, she thought, had been fulfilled. She had saved two lives, and the one she loved was happy. With this thought she had thrown herself into the sea and perished.

Calanus, still with a desire for gold, which had all but caused his death, went to the temple to rob it of its treasures.

-and there perished. Primitus, - a Christian, escaped - and later met Glaucus - and Dione in Athens, where he found them happily married - and converted them to the Christian faith.

Thus in the year 79 A.D., the violent forces which had been slumbering for unknown ages, burst forth in the violent eruption, which it carried with it - devastation all around the beautiful gulf, - also buried the cities, Herculaneum, Stabia, and Pompeii under dense beds of cinders and ashes, fathoms deep. So completely was the unfortunate city of Pompeii buried, in the midst of its prosperity, that its very site was forgotten for hundreds of years.