

he knew he would have to face it again, and at the highest point of the beach, he suddenly turned toward it like one cornered. It spread out before him, misted with moonlight. Into this sea his companion had gone forever. The gold watch ticked like a human heart in his hand.

He crouched down in the sand. He felt naked against some immensity. He cowered under the eye of the moon like some small, furred thing under the bright eye of a hawk. He felt with a vague, horrible oppression his humiliating mortality before the water, the planets—before these hard, enduring, eternal things that had seen so many of his kind come and go. He felt as if he were being pressed out of life by its inherent horror. He lowered his head heavily. It seemed as if the whole

weight of the sea and the sky laid themselves on his neck and would prevent him from ever raising it again. Bending down thus, he was almost suffocated in his own agony.

Then slowly, another force, co-equal with this that oppressed him, was engendered within him. He raised his head. He stared unwaveringly into the sea where his companion had gone.

"*La vida es así*," he said in his native tongue.

He looked for a moment longer at the lovely tropic sky and sea—in his human heart an acceptance as cold, as colossal as their own. He glanced at the watch in his hand and slipped it into his pocket.

"*La vida es así*. Life is thus," he repeated, and turned and went on like one who has taken a blow upon a shield.

## Moths in the Dusk

BY DAVID MORTON

WHERE is it that these frail adventurers go,  
That veer so lightly, with so brave a will,  
So delicate and strange, that tremble so;  
For all the dusk is windless now, and still?  
Where is there left, in crashing worlds whose wake  
Is strewn with shards of kingdoms shocked and tossed,  
A place for things so frail as well might break  
Their wings against a twilight, and be lost?

What kings of earth, no longer now renowned,  
Have gazed at dusk, beyond such shapes as these,  
To shadowy empires whence their arms were bound,  
Blind to white moths gone straying through the trees,  
Nor thought how all the kingdoms they might cull  
Were brief as these . . . and not so beautiful!

# Edelweiss on Chafa Shalit

BY ROSE WILDER LANE

**I**T was not I who found the rare flower. The old gods who rule the Albanian mountains are capricious still, as they were in the days when Zee—whom the Greeks called Zeus—first launched his thunderbolts. “For whom is intended, and who will get, are two persons,” the mountain men say. The Chafa Shalit, in rain and sun, had answered my questions with a granite voice that spoke of war and pride and honor. The small flower that blooms there is known to me only from the tale I heard in the Café Frasheri.

The Café Frasheri looks out through white arcades at the sun-drenched street and painted mosque of Tirana. Dusk and coolness are in the low room, where tables stand on sunken flagstones, and the solitary waiter sits smoking a cigarette in a long holder of amber and silver filagree. Time, in his leisurely progress through the dreaming town, stops in the Café Frasheri. Eternity reigns there, with immortal murmur of water in the gutters beyond the arcades and ever-renewed murmur of leaves in the plane trees. There is a mirror on the whitewashed wall, and across its surface pass such shadows as the Lady of Shalott wove into tapestry—shadows of tall men in black-braided white woolen garments and scarlet sashes, moving without sound in moccasins of goat’s-skin; shadows of tiny donkeys laden with brooms of lavender flowers and pine; shadows of women spinning wool on the twirling spindle; all bright in the hot white street beneath the green plane trees, but cool in the pool of the mirror.

Two of us sat in the Café Frasheri, incongruous figures in peat-scented tweed with blouses and hats from the

rue de la Paix, and the coffee grew cold in its miniature cups while Annette Marquis told of her days in the Scutari mountains.

The mountaineers said there had never been such a spring since a hundred hundred years before the Romans came. The waterfalls were frozen, and the rapids of the Lumi Shala boiled black through a crust of ice. There had always been snow on the mountain peaks, but now the world was buried in it. In the village of Thethis men tunneled through snow from house to house, and the children were crying with hunger.

There were five of us, and we were guests; the last sheep was killed for us, and the chiefs smiled, with hands on their hearts, when they passed us the dishes. But there was not enough bread for the village, and our silver kronen were not food. I said we must go. They tried to keep us, but when I insisted, they said that we might get over the frozen snow in the Chafa Shalit and down to the Scutari plain. Four chiefs went with us; you know it is their custom to escort guests to the edge of the tribal lands.

We went in the dark of the morning, with torches to light the way. At ten o’clock the sun came over the eastern mountains, and the white mountains shone and sparkled.

I could hardly go on, for wanting to look at the colors and sparkle. And for weariness, too, for there was no part of me that was not an ache. But the chiefs would not let me stop. So we climbed, till all my muscles screamed with pain, but when I protested, still they urged me upward. Their faces were grim under