

Achilles Tattius *Leucippe and Clitophon*.

BOOK V : 1 - 2

1. After ;i voyage lasting for three days, we arrived at Alexandria. I entered it by the Sun Gate, as it is called, and was instantly struck by the splendid beauty of the city, which filled my eyes with delight. From the Sun Gate to the Moon Gate—these are the guardian divinities of the entrances—led a straight double row of columns, about the middle of which lies the open part of the town, and in it so many streets that walking in them you would fancy yourself abroad while still at home. Going a few hundred yards further, I came to the quarter called after Alexander, where I saw a second town ; the splendour of this was cut into squares, for there was a row of columns intersected by another as long at right angles. I tried to cast my eyes down every street, but my gaze was still unsatisfied, and I could not grasp all the beauty of the spot at once ; some parts I saw, some I was on the point of seeing, some I earnestly desired to see, some I could not pass by ; that which I actually saw kept my gaze fixed, while that which I expected to see would drag it on to the next. I explored therefore every street, and at last, my vision unsatisfied, exclaimed in weariness,

"Ah, my eyes, we are beaten." Two things struck me as especially strange and extraordinary—it was impossible to decide which was the greatest, the size of the place or its beauty, the city itself or its inhabitants; for the former was larger than a continent, the latter outnumbered a whole nation. Looking at the city, I doubted whether any race of men could ever fill it ; looking at the inhabitants, I wondered whether any city could ever be found large enough to hold them all. The balance seemed exactly even.

2. It so fortun'd that it was at that time the sacred festival of the great god whom the Greeks call Zeus, the Egyptians Serapis, and there was a procession of torches. It was the greatest spectacle I ever beheld, for it was late evening and the sun had gone down ; but there was no sign of night—it was as though another sun had arisen, but distributed into small parts in every direction ; I thought that

on that occasion the city vied with the sky for beauty. I also visited the Gracious Zeus and his temple in his aspect as god of Heaven ; and then praying to the great god and humbly imploring him that our troubles might be at last at an end, we came back to the lodgings which Menelaus had hired for us. But the god, it seems, was not prepared to assent to our prayers, but still another of the trials and exercises of Fate was in store for us.