

Dream of a Sari by LJ Brandt

Before she even opened her eyes, Hadassah stretched luxuriously under the covers. What day was this, she wondered with soft excitement. Was this the day Uncle was taking her to the Market? She smiled in anticipation.

At the last full moon, she had dreamed a stunning sari of red and purple fabric with gold trim had floated down from the azure blue sky and wrapped itself around her. She wondered what it meant. She knew from her lessons with Uncle that red stood for power, and purple was always royalty. She wondered if she'd find fabric like that at the market.

Suddenly she took a sharp breath. The events of yesterday crowded through her mind like a scene from a play.

She had been gardening in the courtyard of her Uncle's home, planting Persian cyclamen with their servant Rena, who was more like a mother to her than anything else. The soft warm earth accepted the young shoots from her hands, and enveloped the green and brown roots in safety.

Uncle believed in education. Although she was not a boy, he had educated her as he had been educated, literature, history, the Torah, art, music and the ancient teachings which excited Hadassah's active imagination. The fauna and foliage of their region was his specialty topic for her this week.

She had looked up to see her uncle striding down the smooth stone pathway towards them, his blue silk robe flapping in the breeze.

"Someone is here for you," he declared firmly with a loving and pained expression on his bearded face. "Men have come from the Palace. They are taking the most beautiful and accomplished young ladies for King A to meet. Hadassah, I cannot say no to the soldiers, you must go. I will send Rena with you to look after you."

Hadassah washed her slender hands quickly in the cold garden pool and used the linen towel to dry. She had no time to run to her room to snatch her leather pouch with her treasures in it. The painted rocks and her mother's jewelry would have to wait.

Approaching the entrance to their home, she heard her uncle say with regret, "Oh I see. She will be given maids to attend her there?"

He kissed her on both cheeks several times, hugged her tightly with tears in his eyes, and said, "Be brave, you are a blessing. I love you, and will see you soon."

Then he whispered in her ear. "Do not share your heritage with anyone. May God be with you. Shalom!"

He watched, gripping his staff, as the soldiers helped her into the royal carriage and two other dark-haired young ladies looked out at him, wide-eyed.

But that was yesterday.

Hadassah opened her eyes to confirm.

She sat up in wonderment. The room was humming with excited whispers from young ladies of lovely proportions and refined manners arising from golden couches. Hadassah noticed platters of fruit and sweet bread on a large table along the tapestry laden wall.

She had met some of the young ladies at the evening meal last night. Careful to avoid the pork selections, Hadassah had nibbled on fruit, too unsettled to finish the portion.

Now Hadassah was eager to visit with the others, and find out what she could about their future meeting with the king.

She prayed silently the morning prayer shared by all her people.

"Modah ani lefanekha melekh hai vekayam shehehezarta bi nishmati b'hemlah, rabah emunatekha."

1.) As one of the servant girls asked if she had pleasant dreams, and Hadassah smiled at her in answer, the other held up several choices of saris.

One was a silky red and purple fabric, exquisite with gold brocade trim. She recognized it from her dream.

Her heart skipped. Joy and the song of Deborah rose up in her spirit. Elohim had predetermined that she be here at this time. It was His plan.

1.) "I give thanks before you, King living and eternal, for You have returned within me my soul with compassion; abundant is Your faithfulness!"