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It was a fine day to begin a journey. It was just at the beginning of Autumn, leaves were starting to fall but no rain as yet, still the air was fresh. They were enthusiastic to travel to lands they did not know and learn the people and their crafts. In her suitcase, alongside the cloths and all her personal belongings, she packed her camera, abundant rolls of film, notebooks, pencils and a box of watercolours. He took several packages of clear plastic envelopes, and a wooden box to keep whatever they would find worth collecting.

Since they were modern travellers, they went by air. At the airport they were oblivious to the many tourist shops. They did not have to buy anything for anyone. They were going to explore the world. It was a different feeling; as if they were joining all those travelers to the Orient or to the Far-east. However they were not by any means, so-called romantics who needed to re-create a 19th century voyage by boat, train and camels. Therefore, neither were they interested in the touristic benefits of the flight. For them it was just the fastest way to get there. Their minds were tuned differently from a tourist's. Their feeling of time was different. The voyage was not meant to be time-out from their daily life, rather it would probably be the measure of time for them over the coming months.

A few hours later they landed, made their way through the usual queues, without having their enthusiasm in the least bit dulled. Soon they were outside the airport, facing a warm and sunny day. The taxi took them to the hotel near the ethnological museum where tomorrow they would meet the curator who had invited them to do research in the region. This was the seed from which their larger plan would grow, to expand their work further and deeper into the hills and desert. The curator had also assisted them in finding a reliable guide for their journey.

The drive through the dusty city went quickly. The hotel

lobby was unexpectedly luxurious with fine carpets, heavy wooden furniture and large windows covered with delicate white curtains which softened the light that flooded the hall. They were shown up to the well-appointed room they had booked. A large clay jug and two colourful glasses waited for them on the small table facing the window. They tipped the bell-boy who had just put their suitcases on the benches so designated for receiving them.

He poured water into the glasses, and was surprised at how cool it was. She sat on the wooden sofa, similar to the furniture in the lobby. She noticed the fine fabric and enjoyed its colours: the floral design in pale red, light yellow and dark green upon a light blue background. The edges were delicately finished with turquoise and gold.

She took the glass and sat back, enjoying the view outside the window: the city and the hills beyond it, the delicate blue-green of the sea on her left and desert areas tinged with yellow-gray beyond the hills on her right. She wondered whom they would meet there in that desert. She gazed at the view, not knowing for how long, enjoying this new sense of time. Meanwhile, he unpacked a few things from his suitcase for the night and asked her whether she wanted anything from hers. It roused her from her day-dreaming. She asked for her notebook and colours and said she was going out into the garden. There she found a bench facing the open view in the direction of the setting sun. She made several drawings and wrote her impressions. She stayed sitting there until it was dark and she found herself alone in the garden.

When the electric lamps came on she imagined the voyage she was about to make, basking in mixed feelings of excitement and fear for the impending adventure into unfamiliar places.

Adapted for performance by Barbara Campbell from a story by Rivka D. Mayer.