

ECHOES

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Echoes by Elizabeth H. Rand

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ELIZABETH H. RAND

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BY

ELIZABETH H. RAND

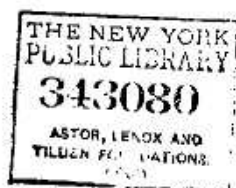


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TO
MY MOTHER AND FATHER
WITH MY LOVE

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THE LEGEND OF DAVID OF BETHLEHEM

A strange story, say those who hear it, and verily they speak the truth: for the verity of the tale I cannot vouch, because, as with most legends, one finds it difficult to tell where fact and fancy blend, where the actual occurrence and the romance which time and distance have woven about it become one.

Listen then to the story which is told concerning this lad, David of Bethlehem, and whether or no you believe the tale to be true, remember, that the One Whose birth he declared taught that it is to the poor and simple of the earth, that God reveals His deepest mysteries.

I

It was the month, Chisleu, and the cool night winds blew down the valley and across the fields which lay but a short distance from the little town of Bethlehem: the wind brought with it the cold breath of snow from the mountains, and a company of shepherds who, with their flocks, were passing the night in this valley-like field, drew closer to the pleasant warmth of their camp-fire, as the shadows settled lower and the last light which had been reflected from the mountains of Moab, faded and was lost in the darkness of the night. It was very still in the valley: once the hush was broken by shouts from the road, leading to Bethlehem: the shepherds had eaten their simple evening meal, and now sat talking, while their faithful dogs lay at their feet and, nearby in the cot or fold, the white sheep slept secure.