



## *Shadows of Conquest*

**Madelynne E. Parish**

University of Waterloo

### **Excerpt**

Daylight spilled through the open folds of Alexander's tent, casting a warm glow on the finely woven rugs that softened the ground beneath their boots. The air was thick with the scent of figs and sun-warmed leather, mingling with the faint aroma of oil from the gilded armour resting on a polished wooden stand near the back. Embroidered tapestries hung along the walls, bearing the symbols of Macedon and Persia—the sun and the lion intertwined—a visual declaration of Alexander's expanding empire. A bronze basin glimmered in the corner, reflecting the light, while untouched goblets sat abandoned among a scattering of scrolls and maps on the low table.

Hephaestion stood dutifully at Alexander's right, as he often did, hands clasped behind his back. His eyes rested on the king, who leaned forward over the table, a finger tracing the eastern edge of the map with a wistful precision. There was a fire in Alexander's gaze—a gleam Hephaestion knew well. It was the spark that could rally armies or raze cities, a force that inspired both awe and fear.

### **About the Author**

Maddy is a fourth-year student in the Physics and Astronomy Co-op program at the University of Waterloo, with a strong passion for both Classical Studies and creative writing. Ancient civilizations have fascinated her for as long as she can remember. Working on Epic Threads has provided a unique opportunity to bring together her curiosity and love for the classical world.

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