Dear Mother.

I expect you will be wondering very much what got me up at 3.45 in the morning -

You will remember my description of the great religeous ${ }^{\text {sic }}$ gathering we went to last year. it was held in the cemeta/<er>y where there are several very holy sheiks' tombs just before the pilgrims start on their journey to Mecca. They spend the night in chanting the Kor-an \& various fanatical relegious ${ }^{\text {sic }}$ performances. then at dawn they $\mathrm{e} /<\mathrm{i}>$ ndulge in other excitements in the way of camel racing, donkey racing \& displays of horsemanship, as we had seen the night affair last year, we decided to go in the early morning this time.

At half past three our camels arrived, I woke to hear them bubbling \& gurgling outside my window. we had breakfast at four o'clock by lamp light, \& then set off in the ghostly light that comes before dawn. we had 8 miles to go $\mathrm{ar} /<\mathrm{c}>$ ross the desert, \& we did it in
an hour de quanta. Which consedurny wo fad a lang coact on fort was patty good.
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an hour \& a quarter. which considering we had a large escort on foot was pretty good.

As we drew near Beni Hamael we were joined by many others, on camels, donkeys \& afoot all making for the same destination, some were splendidly attired sheiks mounted on splendid trotting camels, some bundles of rags trudging along. or crowded five together on the baggage camel of a fortunate friend \& the in between trotting along on their donkeys. it was a motley crew.

When we arrived at Beni Hamael the whole cemetz $/<\mathrm{e}>$ ry \& adjoining desert were one cloud of dust. \& such a pandemonium. there were camels galloping madly, urged by <the> wild cries \& antics of their riders, who in several cases were standing on their backs. a camel in full gallop has the most terriffic ${ }^{\text {sic }}$ action of any animal I have ever seen, it is a marvel how any man can remain on even seated, let alone standing. they do not seem to have any
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$\operatorname{orgt} /<a>$ nised races. they do not start together, but just rush about. each man when \& how he pleases. We joined the onlookers, \& were soon wedged in a long line of camels \& their riders lining the course. the people were very courteous \& everywhere made way so thad $/\langle\downarrow\rangle$ we could have a good view.

We watched the various displays of camel riding for some time \& then went to see the horses.

The first group we saw were charging madly at the brick wall of one of the tombs. they would rush towards it full gallop. bringing the horse to a sudden stop a couple of yards away, it was marvelous ${ }^{\text {sic }}$ horsemanship. The horses were of course pure Arabs. they had gorgeous saddles, many covered with plates of pure gold. \& they had their own music, wild shrill pipes, like the squalling ${ }^{\text {sic }}$ of stallions played to the rythmic ${ }^{\text {sic }}$ beating of drums. this special music is never played except for the horses. \& they love it. they prance \& toss their manes \& are never still a moment while it is
bring played. But when it stops they stand as quick as any thing. It is the most conlegwas nythen on can imaginic, ween the camels goff affected by it. Amicir cancel was a lady + curdenthy very musical, she swayed the hied from side to side - Mouth first a sip to the night then a sip to the left in perfect time to the music. it was funny $s=$ little disconculins for Amice as the camel nut ben was dins the same thin p oucaswincl they bumped - Loroon nothing world slop fin while the music played.

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being played. but when it stops they stand as quiet as anything. it is the most contagious rythm ${ }^{\text {sic }}$ one can imagine, even the camels got affected by it. Amice's camel was a lady \& evidently very musical, she swayed her head from side to side \& took first a step to the right \& then a step to the left in perfect time to the music - it was funny \& a little disconcerting for Amice as the camel next her was doing the same thing \& occasionally they bumped - however nothing would stop her while the music played.

It was pretty to watch the horses dancing, their movements guided by the long lances their riders carried, they circled \& pranced \& reared \& knelt, \& all the time the men playing the pipes \& the drums danced in \& out with them - you cant ${ }^{\text {sic }}$ imagine anything more wild $\&$ barbaric

We stayed watching for about two hours \& then having seen all the sights we started on our return. we were back at work in the temple by 10 o'clock, but left off work early

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Myth:
in the afternoon as we were so tired with our early rising \& long ride. I was too weary to even write my usual letter so just sent a hasty note.

Our expedition was a wonderful experience but it had a slightly unpleasant aftermath as we have each got nasty throats, probably the result of the dust. with a crowd like that there were probably lots of germs. if you'd only seen some of the garments worn by the very holy men, it was only the dirt that kept the threads together.
hoover ${ }^{\text {sic }}$ we are gargling \& cinammoning \& taking every sort of cure so hope the trouble will depart as quickly as it came.

Lots of love from us both Your affectionate daughter Myrtle.

