

Dragons in the Waters
Madeleine L'Engle
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by
Madeleine L'Engle

The M.S. *Orion* was tied up at Savannah, Georgia.

Simon Renier, hands in the pockets of his old-fashioned grey shorts, looked at the small white ship with mounting excitement. He would be spending the next week on the *Orion* en route to Venezuela and already, standing on the pier in Savannah, he was farther away from home than he had ever been in his thirteen years.

It was chill this February day, with a thin rain and a biting wind. In a more sheltered part of the dock stood his cousin, Forsyth Phair, with whom he would be traveling, and his great-aunt Leonis Phair, with whom he lived, and who had come with them on the train from Charleston to see them off. Simon looked at the two of them standing under the shelter of the shed and their umbrellas and thought that if he were traveling with Aunt Leonis instead of Cousin Forsyth he would be perfectly happy.

Aunt Leonis was comfort and all-rightness in a precarious world; cousin Forsyth he had known for barely a month, and while the distinguished-looking middle-aged man was courteous and pleasant he was not outgoing and to Simon he was still a stranger.

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