

listened to an old negress (the story-teller of the harem), who squatting before us, related marvellous stories in Eastern style. More sweetmeats and confectionery were passed with coffee, and our visit ended. A European woman could not support such a life—at home perfect inactivity, eating, smoking, gossiping, an occasional visit to or from a friend, a trip to the bazaar, and a drive if they possess a carriage or a row in a caique to the Sweet Waters on Sunday. This is the life of a Turkish woman of rank.

A note from Madame B—— one morning informed me that the mother and wives of a rich Turkish merchant were coming to visit her, and invited me to be present. I reached her house about eleven, but the Turkish ladies were before me. The appearance of a servant in the hall with her arms full of yashmaks and ferrajas and several pairs of patens apprised me that I was too late to see their street-dresses. In the reception room were Madame B——, a lady who acted as interpreter, and the three Turkish ladies. They were uncontaminated by European customs or Paris finery. The mother was exceedingly ugly, as are most Turkish women over forty. A pair of high red morocco boots encased her feet, which were guiltless of stockings. White full trousers were gathered close at the knee and fell over nearly to her ankles. Her dress was a short purple velvet skirt embroidered round the bottom and up the front with gilt braid in a showy vine pattern; the same embroidery on her black silk jacket, which was open in front, but without any lace; and round her neck was a magnificent string of pearls. Her hair (what there was of it) was drawn back from her face, braided, and the end of the little "pig tail" fastened to her head with a diamond pin composed of four fine diamonds in a clumsy gold setting. Long, pale amber earrings completed her adornments, and she flourished—yes, she really did—a large red and yellow bandana! The younger of the two wives was quite pretty. She had brilliant black eyes, good features, and was very attractive in her gay dress. She wore pink slippers, a heavy sky-blue silk skirt with trousers to match, and a yellow velvet sacque open in front, displaying a lace chemisette and a handsome turquoise necklace. Large gold hoops pulled her pretty ears quite out of shape, and her long black hair was braided in broad plaits and tied with a gilt ribbon, which was also wound about her head several times. Altogether, she was quite gorgeous, and rather threw the other wife into the shade. Wife No. 2 was arrayed in a dark-green velvet skirt and a pink silk jacket trimmed with silver braid. She had a garnet necklace and pretty earrings of small pearls and diamonds. Not to be outdone by her mother-in-law on the *mouchoir* question, she displayed a white muslin handkerchief thickly embroidered with gold thread—more ornamental than useful.

They were all curled up on divans sipping coffee and smoking cigar-