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THE GARDEN OF IREM.

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"The old order changeth, giving place to new."--TENNYSON.

CHAPTER III.

Hhareth, standing at the door of Zohair's dwelling, watched the little party disappear around the hill, and then turned to confront the larger party which came dashing up from the opposite direction. The leader of this troop, seeing Hhareth, rode up to him, and demanded peremptorily whether he had seen an old man and a maiden, with a single attendant pass that way. Hhareth, with a vacant and idiotic stare, responded that he had not; he was quite sure no strangers had been in the village since the merchants passed through on their way to Mesa two days before. The young man looked perplexed, studied a moment, turned and examined the troop, and thus, seeing the horses tired and foam-covered and the men drooping in their saddles, he ordered his followers to dismount, care for their animals and seek rest in the serai. Then again, he turned to Hhareth, and questioned him as to the roads in the neighborhood; but Hhareth, who saw in the stranger an enemy only, returned such incoherent or such manifestly false replies, that his questioner soon gave up the inquisition and sought repose within the serai.

But he had hardly turned away ere one of his his followers stepped up to the hunch-back, saying: "Of a truth thou art Hhareth, the son of Hhareth, the camel herd of Tayef."

Hhareth, suspicious of all men, and anxious to keep the armed men from following his master protested that his name was Yarab, that he was a native of Yathreb and had never heard of the camel-keeper of Tayef. But, discovering an old play fellow in his new questioner, Hhareth's hospitality got the better of his prudence, and he invited the soldier into his masters house. The new guest, wearied with his toilsome journey, asked but a place for rest, and in a few minutes he was asleep. Brief repose satisfied the active sons of the desert, and the sun had scarce risen upon the earth ere the humble host and his guest were seated at their morning meal, which Hhareth had made as sumptuous as Zohair