

THE GARDEN OF FATE

wavy blond hair, which caught stray beams of light from above. She took three or four half-running steps to an open section between two pilasters, and leaned, laughing, over the rail. The consul's eyes lost their frown, and his air of impatience became visibly less.

"What I want to know," he said, "is whether you and Margaret are ever goin' to be ready for breakfast. It don't help fried eggs none to let 'em stand for half a day!"

"Coming now, sir," another voice broke in, with an English intonation; and their guest, Miss Margaret Clarke, of London, appeared beside the American girl, waving a good-morning salute with her hand. The girls disappeared, and the Honorable Bob sauntered across the court, and made his way to one of the alcove-like rooms opening beneath an arch, where a table was laid, its whiteness accentuated by the dark stuccoed walls behind. It was quite evident that the westerner had not reformed his American habit of having a hearty breakfast, instead of the light rolls and coffee of the East, and it was evident also that he was a constant object of curiosity to the Nubian housemaid, who bowed deeply as he passed between the gaily painted pilasters. His air of gruffness was dissipated as his daughter entered and gave him a kiss of salutation, but he assumed a reproachful attitude the while he took his seat and addressed himself to Margaret Clarke, whose dark eyes met his with quizzical expectancy.

"I'd hoped, Margaret," he said, "that you'd be able to make Charlie a little more punctual; but there don't seem to be nothin' on earth that can make her