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## CHAPTER I.

### THE BLIND SINGER.

"**B**OUNTEOUS Nile! Father of all living! Garlanded with lotus blooms, rosy as Horus!"

As these words rang out over the rocky hillside in a clear sweet voice, two men who were climbing the steep declivity paused a moment and looked at each other.

"That is the voice," said one of them in a tone of deep satisfaction. "A voice of gold truly, if only breathed forth into royal ears."

"There are two of them," said his companion, wiping his hot face. "The other is a boy, a water-carrier."

"Good! He also will bring a fair price. Valuable property both, and going to waste like water spilled in the desert. Why buy slaves for gold, when they grow wild in the desert?" And the speaker laughed under his breath.