

# THE GARDEN OF FATE

## CHAPTER ONE

**T**HE Honorable Bob Marshall, United States consul to Morocco, walked restlessly up and down the length of the inner court of the consulate in Fez, his boot-heels clicking impatiently on the blue tiles. He stopped before a fountain in the wall, where a marble griffin's head sprayed a basin beneath, and, frowning at the wooden tracteries of the galleries above, let out a loud roar.

"I want to know if you girls are ever comin' down to breakfast?" he bellowed. Then, receiving no response, he called in a louder tone: "Charlie! Oh, Charlie!"

A Nubian housemaid, waiting beside a pillar, grinned broadly. The Arab porter, squatted at the door, swaddled in a white burnous and looking like a bronze image, lifted his eyes slowly, and again became absorbed in the blue tilings at his feet.

"Hey, up there!"

"Yes, father."

The consul looked up to where, half-revealed through the delicate open-work of the first balcony, his daughter was giving a finishing twist to the heavy coils of her