

XXXIII

SUNSET AND DAWN

A WEEK had passed since the epoch-making night when the great hakim had called her his wife before all the people, but there was a disagreeable, small fly in the ointment of Uyuni's love. She could not drive away the vision of a fair creature on whose lips was perched gossamer laughter as light as a butterfly's wing. How could she hope to keep the love of the hakim when one so beautiful waited for him across the seas? With a little fluttering spasm of jealousy she watched each day for a sign that would tell that he had received some word from her of the photo. One morning she came upon him reading a letter at his breakfast, and an ill divining soul told her whence it had come. Her jealousy flamed on the instant.

"It is from she who waits for thee. She bids thee come. I will not keep thee," she said. "Go to her."

The hakim looked up and laughed dryly as he rose and stretched out his arms.

"She waits no more, Uyuni."

"Alas she is dead. Forgive thy erring servant, effendi," said the girl contritely.