

girlish escapades, the originality of a spirited character are of the past. She is said to shun the society of men, to have become a recluse, to have joined the Roman Church. Then I begin to think that I know—even as you know at this moment.”

He threw the end of his cigarette away and took another. Sir Malcolm had been too interested to interrupt him, and almost resented the intrusion.

“Of course I read your letter to the prosecution,” he remarked quietly, “it was your wish, I understood.”

“Assuredly, it was my wish. There are secrets which all the town shares and yet they are secrets. At a hazard there are just about a dozen people in England who know that Anna Maclain was the wife of Tahir Pasha. There may be five hundred in a month; but the thing will be told in whispers and none will believe it. So we shall have saved her honour, as I meant to save it when I sent Michel Ghika to Ely and took good care that Tahir Pasha was there to receive him. To-day the last line on my page has been written—Sabine Ghika is arrested at Vienna. My influence in that quarter of the world will be responsible for her future. Tahir Pasha goes back to Egypt—he takes his child with him, and for the child’s sake will hold his tongue. He is reinstated and has a career before him—I do not think he will speak. We are left, then, with his sister Zaida—ah, my dear Sir Malcolm, I must introduce you to that young lady some day, for I assure you that she is a very charming creature.”

He laughed at the pleasant nature of his thoughts, and began to pace the room as was his habit. Sir Malcolm, however, sat as one in a reverie. The narrative had fascinated but left him without enlightenment. He had twenty questions to ask, and knew not which he should begin with.

“It is a pretty story,” he observed, with some natural hesitation, “and yet we are but upon the threshold of it. You knew that Tahir Pasha had eloped from Cairo; you guessed at a marriage—but it was all surmise, mere deduction—all the same you had nothing at that time to confirm the inference?”

“My dear Sir Malcolm,” said the prince earnestly, “I had everything. Was there not in Reading Jail a man accused of