

attempt to block her path. But she answered, as carelessly as he:

"Probably not." Then some imp constrained her to add: "But one never knows. Searching for one thing I may find another."

She let her eyes meet his frankly, as if she wished to warn him that his desire to thwart her had quickened a desire as potent, on her part, to oppose him.

"True," he replied harshly. "But before now, simple people hunting for a needle in a bundle of hay have laid hands upon a viper."

"How am I to take that, Michael?"

"As you please. I will make my meaning plainer, if you like. Your mother, whom you can scarcely remember, is of the past. If you are wise, Téphany, you will leave the past alone, particularly," his voice was threatening, "particularly the past of others."

CHAPTER VI.

PÈRE HYACINTHE

Si je rejoins Jean-Pierre
 Au dernier rendez-vous,
 En me mettant en bière
 N'enfoncez pas de clous;
 Car ma pauvre âme en peine
 Reviendra parmi vous.

TÉPHANY left the studio convinced that Michael loved her no longer. But when she tried to analyse her own feelings, she confronted vague, impalpable subtleties which defied intelligence. She knew, now, that she had remained faithful to the Michael of her youth. Even after her letters were unanswered, during that miserable season when she told herself that he had abandoned her, she still cherished the hope that he would come back, that he would write to explain, that, in the end, it would