

a disposition that responded to joy, to brightness, to gaiety, to sunlight, with a swiftness, almost a fierceness, that were entirely un-English.

Her father had been the dancing Faun. She had not, could never have his gift of thoughtlessness. For she had intellect, derived from Hermione, and an odd truthfulness that was certainly not Sicilian. Often there were what Artois called "Northern Lights" in her sincerity. The strains in her, united, made, he thought, a fascinating blend. But as yet she was undeveloped—an interesting, a charming child, but only a child. In many ways, she was young for her age. Highly intelligent, she was anything rather than "knowing." Her innocence was like clear water in a spring. The graciousness of youth was hers to the full.

As Artois thought of it he was conscious, as of a new thing, of the wonderful beauty of such innocent youth.

It was horrible to connect it with suffering. And yet that link in the chain did exist. Vere had not something that surely she ought to have, and, without consciously missing it, she must sometimes subtly, perhaps vaguely, be aware that there was a lack in her life. Her mother gave her great love. But she was not to her mother what a son would have been. And the love that is mingled with regret has surely something shadowy in it.

Maurice Delarey had been as the embodiment of joy. It was strange that from the fount of joy sorrow was thrown up. But so it was. From him sorrow had come. From him sorrow might still come, even for Vere.

In the white and silent day Artois again felt the stirring of intuition, as he had felt it long ago. But now he roused himself, and resolutely, almost angrily, detached his mind from its excursions towards the future.

"Do you often think of to-morrow?" he suddenly said to the boatman, breaking from his silence.

"Signore?"

"Do you often wonder what is going to happen to-morrow, what you will do, whether you will be happy or sad?"

The man threw up his head.

"No, Signore. Whatever comes is destiny. If I have food to-day it is enough for me. Why should I bother about to-morrow's maccheroni?"

Artois smiled. The boat was close in now to the platform of stone that projected beneath the wall of the Marina.

As he stepped out he gave the boatman a generous *buonamano*.

"You are quite right, comrade," he said. "It is the greatest mistake in the world to bother about to-morrow's maccheroni."