

"Great heavens! you heard that? Is it possible?"

Téphany stopped singing. With a tiny shrug of her shoulder and a droop of her lips which signified disappointment and a sense that she had befooled herself, she said contritely, "Michael, you must forgive me. I played a trick on you. I did hear that song in my dream, and most vividly, but I heard it first from you."

"From me?" He stared at her stupidly.

"Yes. After you left me that first night, you whistled the air, which struck me as something totally unlike anything I had heard before."

"I see. It's a folk-song from the Morbihan country. The Vannetais women sing it."

He spoke quickly and with assumed carelessness, as if he were trying to obliterate what had gone before. Téphany swooped upon the truth which had leaked from his too eager lips. So then, some girl, some woman, who had played a stupendous part in the drama of Michael's life, had come from Le Morbihan, possibly from Vannes. Yet the cast came from Paris. Her eyes sparkled.

"The Vannetais women? You know, Michael, that my mother came from Vannes. And I have planned an expedition there, to find out, if I can, more about her."

She saw that he was eyeing her furtively, with a distrust which hurt. In an instant she fathomed his thought. He knew that he had betrayed a part of his secret. And the proposed visit to Vannes, which, indeed, Mary Machin and she had determined to pay, troubled him, nay more, alarmed him. Then the expression, so curiously compounded of annoyance and apprehension, faded, as he said lightly: "Vannes is a dear old place, but very, very unfragrant. And, after all these years, do you think it likely that you will find out more than you know already?"

Téphany realised that he had set his strong will against the proposed visit. Instantly, she defied his power, rising in arms against his lack of confidence in her, against this deliberate