

and laid it on the centre table. The tawny mass fell loose at once about her shoulders and made her look even more desolate than before. But there was an invincible need of gaiety in her heart. She said funnily, looking at the arrow sparkling in the gas light :

" Ah ! That poor philistinish ornament ! "

An echo of our early days, not more innocent but so much more youthful, was in her tone ; and we both, as if touched with poignant regret, looked at each other with enlightened eyes.

" Yes," I said, " how far away all this is. And you wouldn't leave even that object behind when you came last in here. Perhaps it is for that reason it haunted me—mostly at night. I dreamed of you sometimes as a huntress nymph gleaming white through the foliage and throwing this arrow like a dart straight at my heart. But it never reached it. It always fell at my feet as I woke up. The huntress never meant to strike down that particular quarry."

" The huntress was wild but she was not evil. And she was no nymph, but only a goatherd girl. Dream of her no more, my dear."

I had the strength of mind to make a sign of assent and busied myself arranging a couple of pillows at one end of the sofa. " Upon my soul, goatherd, you are not responsible," I said. " You are not ! Lay down that uneasy head," I continued, forcing a half-playful note into my immense sadness, " that has even dreamed of a crown—but not for itself."

She lay down quietly. I covered her up, looked once into her eyes and felt the restlessness of fatigue overpower me so that I wanted to stagger out, walk straight before me, stagger on and on till I dropped. In the end I lost myself in thought. I woke with a start to her voice saying positively :