

# ARIADNE:

## THE STORY OF A DREAM.

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### CHAPTER I.

"It is an Ariadne; of course it is an Ariadne. A Bacchus?—pooh!" I said over and over again to myself, sitting before it in the drowsy noon, all by myself in the warm summer weather; for the porter in the hall yonder was a friend of mine, and often let me in when the place was closed to the public, knowing that I was more likely to worship the marbles than to harm them.

It was intensely still.

Outside the sun was broad and bright upon the old moss-grown terraces and steps, and not a bough was stirring in the soft gloom of drooping cedar and of spreading pine. There was one of the lattice casements open. I could see the long lush grass full of flowers, the heavy ilex shadows crossing one another, and the white shapes of the cattle asleep in that fragrance and darkness of green leaves. The birds had ceased to sing, and even the lizards were quiet in these deep mossy Faunus-haunted ways of beautiful Borghese, where Raffiello used to wander at sunrise, coming out from his little bed-chamber that he had painted so prettily with his playing gleeful Loves, and flower-hidden gods, and nymphs with their vases of roses, and the medallions of his Fornarina.

"It is an Ariadne," I said, sitting in the Cæsars' Gallery,—that long, light, most lovely chamber, with its wide grated casements open to the woodland greenness, and the gleam of the brown lily-laden waters, and the leaf-tempered glory of the golden sunlight.

Do you know the bust I mean?—the one in bronze on a