

pointing to the portrait of Beethoven. "My efforts have passed into the works of others; my soul has been only uttered by others' lips. I shall die unknown, and be buried obscurely; but I would rather wield this in a garret"—touching his bow—"than have it changed into the sceptre of a prince. Yet I am not mad."

"I have shared your feeling too much to doubt you," said the signora. "My youth was one long passion of longing to create the beautiful. Life broke my tools and laughed at my folly; and yet there is something dwelling with me for all that which binds up the sorest wounds of a broken spirit. Art has allowed me to live in her house, though her dearest tasks have been given elsewhere. I have tried to remember that 'they also serve who only stand and wait.' The long patience, the readiness to do if called, the meekness forced upon one at being always passed over—these must shelter one from the charge of waste. The joy at seeing others do, takes the place of feverish desires for self. One grows content to glean where others bear the sheaves; if only the harvest be somehow gathered in."

"My own thought," said Herr Harfenspieler, "expressed in womanly words. Let us put it into music!"

Again he touched the violin, and wonderful strains poured from it: feverish, hurried, impassioned, then yearning and wistful, and at last dying away in notes whispering of peace.

"Now," he said, when he had finished, "we are going to do something, you and I, something that shall be proved worth the doing. This girl who stands between us is rich material to work upon. There is a quality in the voice which I have never known equalled. In it is contained something that once heard never can be forgotten. She will give expression and form to the noblest conceptions of the great masters. Not only are her notes ravishing, but she has a broad intelligence, a rich imagination, and fortunately also the pure, vigorous physique which will make her perfect mistress of her artistic powers."

"You sum up her qualities exactly as I have done myself," said the signora.

"I know. To you be the honor of the first discovery. More yet can you do, more than educating and cherishing her, and helping to make her the queen of song who is one day to conquer the world. I would beg you to keep her noble and simple as she is. Let no petty conceit creep into her feminine brain: amuse her with no trashy novels and romances: let her know nothing but of the higher, purer literature: cultivate her heart to thrill only to the real, the most genuine, and unaffected sorrows of life, to the purest and holiest affections. People call me an enthusiast, but I know to whom I am talking at this moment."

At this point Fan came in, fresh and glowing, out of the evening dew of the garden, bringing a nosegay for her master's button-hole, and a rose for the signora's bosom.

"This is the prelude to our song," said the Harfenspieler with one of his rarified smiles, as the little fingers fixed the bit of bloom close to his shirt-frills: and, with a glow still in his dark, deep-set eyes, he touched the first note of "With Verdure Clad."

Later, when the signora and her charge had retired for the night, Lord Wilderspin, with a peculiar look, half comic and half dismayed, and with several glances all round from under his white brows, as if he feared eyes in the curtains, or ears in the pictures on the walls, drew a folded newspaper from his pocket and tapped it with his finger.

"I have something to show you here," he said. "Read this advertisement. Well, is that intended for us?"

It was Kevin's advertisement, which had been so carefully worded by Mr. Honeywood. Herr Harfenspieler read it, and a flame shot out of his eyes.

"Mein Gott!" he murmured. "Shall we be forced to give up this fair enterprise?"

"Hush!" said his lordship, with a grimace. "Don't let us talk about it here, or the words will float up through all the ceilings to that pair of little

hare's ears, and we shall have her performing *La Son-nambula* before her time. She would be down upon us in her bare feet in a trice, imploring to be packed up in this newspaper on the spot, and sent off by post to advertiser. The night is fine; let us take a turn outside."

"We are like a pair of wicked old conspirators plotting away somebody's life," said Lord Wilderspin, striding along between the high hedges, and pulling his hat over his eyes.

"Seriously," said Herr Harfenspieler, "do you mean to give up the child or not?"

"I do not," said his lordship, stopping short. "There, the sky has not fallen upon me!"

"And yet—it seems cruel to take no notice of such an advertisement."

"Now listen to me, mein Herr. You are a musician, and all you musicians, poets, artists, and your kin, are bound to be sentimentalists according to both Nature and Art: but I am none of your race. I may be a gentleman, and therein lies the bond between us, but I am by nature a marauder, a revolutionist, a turner-upside-down of things in general, a whim-indulger, a fancy-monger; and as arbitrary as a three-tailed bashaw. All this you know as well as I. Now I am not doing a bad act in bringing up this little peasant-born genius to her true vocation, but hang me if I am going to have a troop of Irish bog-trotters running after us all the time the thing is going on. If these low connections of hers were blood relations—were her own family—I don't know how I should get out of the matter. If this Kevin were her brother, or father, or if she were old enough to have a lover and he were that worthy, I suppose I should feel bound to 'interview' the fellow; but as she is nothing to him or his I shall beg leave to remain in my modest obscurity. Let him dig his potatoes, and cut his turf, and leave the child to the good fortune that has dropped upon her."

"You do not mean to ignore this altogether?" persisted Herr Harfenspieler.

"Confound it, no; I suppose I must do something."

"Write, and tell them as much as you please; and make terms for keeping her unmolested."

"My friend, you do not know these Irish! They have hearts as big as copper kettles, and value money no more than sand where their affections are concerned. You know the creature that sang for us an hour ago and is now curled up in her pillows with her blue eyes shut as fast as yonder convolvuli. Could you have looked in Fan's eyes before she went to bed and offered her a bright sovereign to forget her night-prayer for Kevin? You could not do it. And they are all 'tarred with the same stick,' to use a vulgar proverb which your musical ears have probably never heard before. Children every one of them in faith and love—all honor to them for it!—and the lord lifted his hat from his bald head—but still I am not going to have them spoiling my plans with their *cushla machrees* and their *ululus*!"

Herr Harfenspieler had nothing more to say. He felt it best to let the whimsical nobleman work out his own idea, and put it into words without help from him.

"You do not ask me what I am going to do?"

"I am waiting to hear."

"I think of answering the advertisement with another in which I shall give enough information to allay anxiety on the girl's account. I shall also hold out a hope of future meeting, but give the people to understand that there is to be no communication with her at present. That is the best plan I can hit upon."

"And how will you satisfy the child herself as time goes on?"

"By impressing upon her that in following my plans obediently she will benefit her friends in the end. She is fully convinced that I am constantly making inquiries about them, and she will go on expecting every day to see them walking in, till gradually the vivid desire for them fades away. I have no doubt