

by the table in the middle of the room, frowning slightly, and Rudolf leaned against the mantelpiece and laughed. Then she turned to him. 'It is very kind of you to offer to entertain me. If I can sit here and read through my work I shall be quite happy, thank you' she said. On no account must she allow Rudolf to guess that her heart was beating violently, that she had to hold her hands under her long cloak so that he could not see how they were trembling. She drew up a chair and sat down. 'Dieu, Dieu, how hot it is' called Rudolf. 'That coat is impossible Mademoiselle. Here, let me take it. Stand up – voilà . . . and your hat. Is it not heavy? Il faut souffrir – no, that cannot apply to you.' Juliet stood up and allowed him to take her coat and hat. She could not trust herself to speak to him. He is a fiend, she thought – a perfect fiend. How can he look at me like that? She did not know exactly what to do, and then suddenly thought – how idiotic I am. Really I am rude. Perhaps he is trying to be kind – and fancy being afraid of anyone. Fear – I thought that could not enter my head.¹⁰ Perhaps if I really can talk to him alone for 30 minutes we shall understand each other in the future. Perhaps – yes – I am sure that is why David has arranged this. She looked up and smiled suddenly. 'Après tout, I shall talk' she said. 'Do you think I am rude?' 'Not at all. Perhaps you, if I might venture to say it, do not disguise your feelings very well Mademoiselle.' Rudolf sat down opposite her . . . and leaning his elbows on the table, watched her face. 'Tenez' he said, 'let us revive recollections. It is a charming thing that I love to do. My favourite word in the whole language is "Souvenir" Mademoiselle.' 'The first time I saw you' Juliet answered severely, 'I heard you whisper to David "But she is a curiosity". And I never forgave you. It sounded as though I edited the Family Herald.' 'No, no – you misunderstood me. I was interested. You were so different from anyone else, and you had known the tea coffee and cocoa creatures that we have seen, and also you did not like me – I saw it in your eyes.' 'Did you expect me to? Didn't the tea coffee and cocoa creatures "cast down their golden crowns" straightway?' 'Ah you do not know the life of the musician' said Rudolf, sighing deeply and casting his eyes heavenwards. Juliet laughed and said 'Don't be affected. I don't like you, to tell you the truth – you're forward, at least you appear so, and I feel that you despise me – I hate that! I like you professionally, not personally.' She suddenly jumped up and looked at herself in the little glass that hung over the mantelpiece. 'How my hair looks' she said, giving it a little pat all over. 'Is it alright now?' she appealed to him. 'Adorable' said Rudolf, 'and the little white dress and the two pink roses and the little black shoes and the ribbon.' 'Please stop' said Juliet. She was afraid again. Why would he not understand when she was joking and when she was serious? It is his voice that is so abominable, she thought. His voice and his eyes. Rudolf tossed back his