

That the beautiful face was but a transparent mask of a deformed, dwarfed, contemptible little soul was speedily made evident. The cream and a silly flirtation with her empty-headed attendant—a pallid youth who parted his hair like a girl and had no other parts worth naming—absorbed her wholly, and the exquisite symphony was no more to her than an annoying din which made it difficult to hear her companion's compliments that were as sweet, heavy, and stale as Mailard's chocolates, left a year on the shelves. Their mutual giggle and chatter at last became so obtrusive that an old and music-loving German turned his broad face towards them, and hissed out the word "Hist!" with such vindictive force as to suggest that all the winds had suddenly broken loose from the cave of Æolus.

Ik Stanton, who had been watching Van Berg's perturbed, lowering face, and the weak comedy at the adjacent table, was obviously much amused, although he took pains to appear blind to it all and kept his back, as far as possible, towards the young lady.

The German's "hist" had been so fierce as to be almost like a rap from a policeman's club, and there was an enforced and temporary suspension of the inane chatter. The attendant youth tried to assume the incensed and threatening look with which an ancient gallant would have laid his hand on the hilt of his sword. But some animals and men only become absurd when they try to appear formidable. It was ludicrous to see him weakly frowning at the sturdy Teuton who had already forgotten his ex-