

fulfilled, but which was approaching fulfilment.

And further, he felt that the artist soul was the stronger—and that it must rule. From that day he avoided the woman, and as best he could tried not to think of her. But it was not child's play, for when, after the concert was over, he flung himself wearily to rest, the soul he had denied walked abroad in dream-land. Then it met the soul of the woman, and they two held sweet communion, and when the artist wakened his lips smiled, and he sighed that he could not always sleep. The strife thus went on—and it wore the man's strength away; day by day, he grew more haggard; people remarked that Herr Von Brock played better and looked worse at every concert.

One day, the woman, hearing and seeing this, felt her heart fail her, and she wrote to him, a sweet, pure, gentle appeal, speaking of his failing strength, of her interest in him, trembling on the brink of a passionate confession, and asking if she had lost his friendship, that he so evidently avoided her.

That night, Herr Von Brock played fitfully, strange, weird, miserable minors, bursts of angry sound, full of tempestuous passion, ending in a climax so sweet, so holy, so majestic, that the girl's eyes swam in tears, and a cold hand seemed to grip her heart as she listened, knowing her appeal had been in vain.

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It was growing dusk in the studio. The artist sat before the piano, his hands folded on his knees, his burning eyes looking into the shadows. All about him were flowers, sent by those who acknowledged him worthy of their tribute; on a table lay a salver full of notes, invitations, cards bearing names of those high up in the world's favor. Some strange spell was upon the silent man, he felt that he was filled with some new and terrible power—something that swayed him, as the wind sways the slender grasses. Suddenly he stretched his hands over the keys—out of the shadows came the face of the dead boy—with soft, appealing eyes, and drooping lips—mutely beseeching. The man be-

gan to play, his burning eyes rivetted on the face, pale and mournful in the gathering darkness.

Soon great chords came welling into the air like sobs, and dying away in infinite pathos and distress. They rose and climbed and climbed, strong and sweet; then, just as they seemed to reach the climax, they broke in a rush of shattered cadences, which fell on the ear like a rain of tears. Furrows deepened on the player's brows, on his cheeks; damp drops started from every pore, his lips drew apart over his gleaming teeth, his heart beat slowly in great spasmodic thumps, and once again the great chords arose, and filled the room, striving as in mortal anguish.

The artist's soul would not be baffled, though it wrecked him in its victory.

While the strife was at its fiercest, two women hurried lightly along the corridor, one, in cap and apron, a white-haired serving woman, the second a girl, with resolute, pale face and strained eyes, who pressed on ahead, and softly opened the door of the studio.

The room was filled with the mad fury of the chords, the man swayed as he played, his breath came in quick sobs, the girl crept across to him, with her fingers pressed over her ears, and waited. Suddenly the clamor ceased, the musician sat with upraised hands, leaning slightly forward, listening, and seeing the white face, beaming from the shadows, full of inspiration full of rapture!

Then, his hands crashed down upon the keys. Higher, higher, climbed the chords, the waves of harmony stole even behind the girl's fingers, and filled her ears, the musician's eyes flashed with courage and power.

An exquisitely peaceful smile stole over the beautiful face in the shadows, the heavy lids with their fringing lashes dropped over the velvety black eyes, the shadows closed about it; the musician played softly, caressingly, the liquid notes seemed a wordless benediction.

It was the supreme moment. Suddenly the player breathed deeply, and gathered under his hands one full, deep chord. Then silence! His arms dropped at his sides, his body grew limp, and his