

of her emotion was betrayed by two round hectic spots on her soft smooth cheeks.

Never, so she thought, had music moved her so profoundly, never certainly had she heard such music. A simple melody, some scarcely perceptible refrain, could always awake in her a feeling of inexpressible delight. A single note could touch a vein of joy in her nature that would well out and flood her whole being with happiness. The music to which she listened this evening brought her to a state of sheer ecstasy. The faces conjured up by it in her memory seemed etherealised.

Maud's life had been as quiet and uneventful as her appearance suggested. It had been marked by no outstanding incidents, and it resembled that of thousands of other girls and women. She was born in Brooklyn, where her father had a printing business, and she had been brought up on a little estate among the Berkshire Hills by her devoted mother, a German. She had had the benefit of a good school education, had spent two summers at the Chautauquan Summer school, and had amassed quite a large store of wisdom and knowledge in her small head, only to be speedily forgotten.

Although she had shown no unusual gifts for music she had acquired some proficiency as a pianist and had had "finishing lessons" from teachers in Munich and Paris. She had travelled with her mother (her father had died long ago), and had taken part in sports and games, and had done a little flirtation like most young girls. She had had an early love-affair to which she no longer gave a thought: she had refused Hobby, the architect, who had lost his heart to her, feeling that she could never care for him except as a friend; and she had married Allan because he had taken her fancy. Before their wedding her mother had died. In the second year of their marriage, a little girl was born to them whom she idolised. That was all. She was twenty-three years old and happy.

As she sat there bewitched, drinking in the music, a world of memories seemed to come and go before her eyes, defined with wonderful clearness and fraught with deep emotion. Her life seemed to take on a new and deeper, richer significance. She saw again the face of her little mother, all sweetness and spirituality, then the Berkshire Hills, through which