

ginning to think her one of the smallest of frocked female essences.

"I lost my piano through it," she went on. "I could not practise. I was the most miserable creature in all the world till I fell in love with my harp. My father would not play to get money. He sat in his chair, and only spoke to ask about meal-time, and we had no money for food, except by selling everything we had. Then my piano went. So then I said to my mother, I will advertize to give lessons, as other people do, and make money for us all, myself. So we paid money for a brass-plate, and our landlady's kind son put it up on the door for nothing, and we waited for pupils to come. I used to pray to the Virgin that she would blessedly send me pupils, for my poor mother's complaints were so shrill and out of tune it's impossible to tell you what I suffered. But by-and-by my father saw the brass-plate. He fell into one of his dreadful passions. We had to buy him another wig. His passions were so expensive: my mother used to say, 'There goes our poor dinner out of the window!' But, well! he went to get employment now. He can, always, when he pleases; for such a touch on the violin as my father has, you never heard. You feel yourself from top to toe, when my father plays. I feel as if I breathed music like air. One day came news from Italy, all in the newspaper, of my father's friends and old companions shot and murdered by the Austrians. He read it in the evening, after we had a quiet day. I thought he did not mind it much, for he read it out to us quite quietly; and then he made me sit on his knee and read it out. I cried with rage, and he called to me, 'Sandra! Peace!' and began walking up and down the room, while my mother got the bread and cheese and spread it on the table, for we were beginning to be richer. I saw my father take out his violin. He put it on the cloth and looked at it. Then he took it up, and laid his chin on it like a man full of love, and drew the bow across just once. He whirled away the bow, and knocked down our candle, and in the darkness I heard something snap and break with a hollow sound. When I could see, he had broken it, the neck from the body — the dear old violin! I could cry still. I — I was too late to save it. I saw it broken, and the empty belly, and the loose strings!