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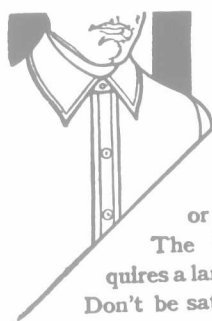
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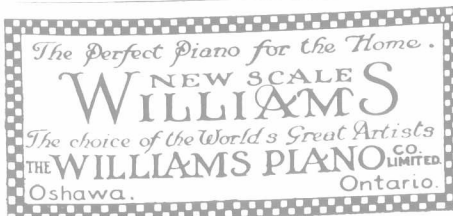
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being expressed—and only the good lives and prospers. That is love's way—a constant replenishing of body and mind and soul—no relaxation, no taking for granted the easy nature of the other—never, never making a common everyday matter of your life-gift to each other."

And now I told her what had come to me in this room the first morning:

"You know how an idea sometimes comes—quietly but with a strength that seems to have an army behind it. . . . My heart ached from holding you that first morning—you were so great to me. I did not seem strong enough in manhood. I felt that I must go away for a time, for a year. I had seen you, now must realize you—all that you mean and are—I must prepare a place for you in my life."

Mary Romany bent forward, the pallor of the moonlit south upon her face, shining in her eyes. "I could cry out from happiness, Ryerson Boy. To think that I did not have to tell you—that is the very thing. . . . The year is for me—quite as much as for you. I have seen you. I must realize you. But I did not think it could be so hard. It is almost as if there were no need of your going away—since you have realized it—with no words from me. I'm afraid, you'll have to be strong for me. . . . And I have carried this thing in mind for years. You said you would be strong for me—with all your might—"

All about me was the warmth and beauty of her emotions, with such grace and power had she woven her spirit about my heart.

"We must have the Year, Beloved," I whispered. "All these fluent conceptions you have given me, must harden into truth and character. The dream to me is of what I shall bring back to you. Thinking of you and the great good that has come to me, thinking of you and these hours, in my nights and days, must bring to my eyes that look which you were not sure of in Hong Kong. It will be there, when I come back. You will not feel lost nor lonely."

She broke the silence. "I wonder if my mother could ask for you to go away—if she knew how dear you were?"

"This good is not mine yet. It is your sustaining. You are wings, since I have been here. I must win your high place alone. I must be—of myself—what you have inspired me to be here. That is the meaning of the Year. She was very wise, your mother."

"You do not know how I have expanded in this happiness. The power has come to us, and we must make it a home in our hearts. . . . But it seems so terrible to send you away—you so good—you that have suffered so much for me. Even my mother would be afraid, I think. . . . We are so close, so real, to-night. Truth is so near and blessed to-night. . . . Oh, dear heart, I am letting you be strong for me. . . . And yet it is so sweet—to feel your strength—"

The moon was much higher. Its pallor had spread over the Sound, and hung like a mist before the northern stars.

"To think of the little ones," she was whispering, "the little boys and girls, with their things to say; every sentence, art's own true voice; and their great business to do every day. Isn't it ecstasy—the little heads and their marvelous unfoldings—and to think that in every thought—even through our Year—we have done our utmost best, our utmost united inspiration—in dreaming, loving, praying, toiling, bearing—our utmost best for them—all our lives—until we are as children beside them!"

The night was a pilgrimage to Holy Land for me. I had no words, but walked exalted in her white passion.

"Think—if they were about us here now—the little heads—how they would teach us to play and sing. We would listen to the forest and the ocean—and hear the spirits of the good in all the great harmony—and learn the corn and the bees together, and flowers and stars. . . . And oh, how proud, when they were older (you do not know this of a woman, I am sure), how proud to show them how I am loved by their father. That is a woman's supremacy. . . . And putting them to bed—hearing the sleepy words from little lips that have come so far to taste what the world is like; and to hear their dreams, and to be waked by them—when



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