

## *The Late Tenant*

obscure. Undoubtedly he had been helped in his early career, that of a musician, by a Mrs. Strauss, widow of a California merchant. She educated him, and, yielding to a foolish passion, offered to make him her heir if he married her and assumed the name of Strauss, she having already attained some notoriety in Continental circles under that designation. She was a *malade imaginaire*, in the sense that she would seldom reside more than a few weeks in any one place, while she positively detested both England and America.

He was kind to her, and she was devoted to him; but unlimited wealth cloyed when it involved constant obedience to her whims. Yet, rather than lose him altogether, she agreed to his occasional visits to England during the season, and when hunting was toward. Eager to shake off the thralldom of the Strauss régime, he then invariably passed under his real name of Van Hupfeldt.

Hence, when he fell in love with Gwendoline, and resolved to make her his in defiance of all social law, he was obliged to tell her that he was also Johann Strauss, and under an obligation to the Mrs. Strauss who had adopted him. Gwendoline's diary, which, with the certificates, was found in a bureau, became clear enough when annotated with these facts. Van Hupfeldt himself left the fewest possible papers, the letter accompanying the will merely setting forth his wishes, and announcing that he desired to marry Violet as an act of reparation to the memory of her