

hair and opened the piano. He began playing the overture to Tannhäuser, heavily and magnificently. 'Ah Mademoiselle' he said, raising his voice. 'You do not understand me . . . We can never be friends, I fear. There are too many obstacles - you are too conventional . . . 'I am - ' interrupted Juliet. 'Yes you are more conventional than a child from a convent school. Also you never allow your feelings to run away with you - you have no core of sensation.' 'I haven't?' cried Juliet. 'No you haven't. Also you are a bad actress and I am a wonderful reader of character.' He had come to the end of the Pilgrim's Song and began playing it again. His tone was almost brutal. 'It is the heritage from your parents' he said. 'You have fought against it, but voilà there it is, always conquering you. You are afraid of everything, and you suspect everybody. Dieu! how afraid you are!' 'I am *not*' said Juliet, shaking her head, but the colour rushed into her cheeks.

He started the Venus Motif. 'Here am I' he said, 'reckless, a lover of all that you have desired to love, because my mother was a danseuse and my father an artist. Also there was no marriage.' He ceased speaking, but the music filled the room. He repeated the wonderful Venus call. 'Ah, it is divine', he said. 'That is what you should be, Juliet. What - how am I for Tannhäuser?' The music was flooding Juliet's soul now. The room faded, she heard her hot heavy impassioned voice above the storm of emotion . . . 'Stop. Stop.' she said, feeling as though some spell was being cast over her. She shook from head to foot with anger and horror. 'Listen again' said Rudolf. It was a Chopin nocturne this time. 'Live this life, Juliet. Did Chopin fear to satisfy the cravings of his nature, his natural desires? No, that is how he is so great. Why do you push away just that which you need - because of convention? Why do you dwarf your nature, spoil your life? If you were a man you would be a teetotaller, and then a Revivalist. You are the most beautiful girl I have ever seen - no, don't interrupt, I shall never speak like this again, I shall go away tonight - but you are, Juliet. It is not regular beauty, it is fascination - some fearful attraction when you choose to appear fascinating. Yet you are a little *timide*, and you know nothing - absolutely nothing. You are blind, and far worse, you are deaf to all that is worth living for.'

Juliet sprang to her feet. 'I shall not listen to you' she said, the tears starting to her eyes. 'I shall go home now, this instant. How dare you speak like this, Rudolf, how dare you. I am *suffocated*. Where did you put my coat and hat!' Her eyes were blazing. Rudolf suddenly sprang up from the music stool and caught her by the arm. 'It is not for nothing that I have such a tone' he said, speaking hoarsely. His face was mad with passion, white with desire. 'Leave me alone' said Juliet. She raised her eyes to his face, and his expression caused her to suddenly cease struggling and look up at him dumbly, her lips parted, terror in her