

song. Through the half-drawn curtains Jacques could see the singer playing her own accompaniment upon the piano, and in that moment he lost his heart.

But he must lose no time now. Every moment was precious. And with a sigh he turned from the window to his self-imposed task. Some hours later he paused in his writing, took up the heap of manuscript, and slowly read it over. As he finished, a smile broke the usual impassiveness of his pinched face. How strangely he had woven his own life into the fabric of his story. How, at every turn, it was his spirit which befriended and shielded her. He had done it unconsciously, unknowingly. Nevertheless, he found it a pleasure to be associated with her who was constantly in his mind, even in the fertile imaginings of his brain. Perhaps, foolishly enough, he thought that it might all end as he in his fancy had pictured it.

Wednesday came and went, but Jacques wrote on, heedless, almost, of the lapse of time. Thursday passed in the same manner. Friday dawned with Jacques at his desk, and during the day the pile of manuscript grew higher. The story was almost finished now. There was but the last chapter to add, and then—the publisher, and fame, and, what meant more to Jacques, wealth and life.

It was late in the afternoon, and he was tired and weary. The excitement of the week was beginning to tell upon him. He could not write, his head ached so painfully. Taking down his threadbare jacket from its peg, and donning his hat, he wandered out into the cool evening air. As he came out he noticed that the mansion across the street was in a turmoil of excitement, servants running to and fro shouting orders, and he wondered vaguely whether there was to be a ball there that night. His steps, strangely enough, led him down to the river. The great stream ran deep and dark, and as he looked at it he wondered how he ever could have harbored a desire to drown himself in its forbidding waters. How changed the world seemed during the last few days. What a transformation had been wrought by the simple touch of ambition. And with a shudder of repugnance he turned his back upon the murmuring stream and retraced his steps.

As he approached his home he noticed that the windows of the great house opposite were all ablaze with light, and that the door stood wide open. Wondering and curious, he paused to see and