

terminated to put the Atlantic between him and herself, and how he hopelessly collapsed when the news reached him that death had been speedier than he and that she, who had left him in anger, had found rest for herself and child upon the sands of the sea.

His head sank deeply upon his breast. The fire was dying, the coals had burned to a heap of ashes. He shivered. He stroked the hair away from his damp forehead and glanced fearfully about the cold and cheerless chamber. 'Twas cold, dark and desolate, and just such had his life been for years. Ah, what knew he of love?

He rallied himself and arose. The room was unendurable, so, taking his hat and cane, he stepped outside. While he was turning the key in the lock something arrested him. What was that? It sounded like a shrill cry of anguish. He held his breath. All was silent. Was it a dream? But, no! The door upstairs was violently thrown open, he heard loud wailing, and then someone came wildly leaping down the stairs. He felt himself violently pushed aside and heard opening and closing of doors below; heard loud but fruitless calls for help, and then the rapid return. He stepped forward. It was Rosa, her hair flung wildly back and her face full of terror. She saw Stöger and then rushed towards him.

"She is dying, she is dying!" she gasped. "O, help! The landlady! I can't find her. I must run for the doctor! Go up!" She seized the motionless Stöger and shook him. "Go help her, help her! I'm going for the doctor!" And without another word she ran out into the cold and darkness.

Stöger stood for a moment as though dumb, and then rushed up the stairs. The little corridor was dark but the loud cries of the children directed his steps. Opening the door he looked with confusion upon the scene before him. In the middle of the room, upon the floor, lay a young woman. The dark tresses of her head were loose and hung about the deathly pale countenance; the lips were compressed as with pain and the closed eyes were surrounded by dark circles. Upon the table stood some porcelain vases and bowls, colors and brushes; she had apparently fallen over while at work. Close beside the inanimate figure of the woman were the three children, who were stroking and caressing with their warm little hands the cold cheeks of their mother, vainly trying to raise her, and crying as though their little hearts were broken.