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NEW YORK

G. SCHIRMER

CONCERNING THE GENESIS OF "ELEGIE" BY H. W. ERNST.

IT was in the year 1831. In the richly furnished parlor of a Viennese mansion, two children were sitting together on the sofa—at least, anyone would have called them children who saw their youthful faces, in which no impure thought could yet have been reflected, and which intimated no premonition of the cares of this world. From his physical development, the young man might have seen seventeen years; his finely formed head was poised on a pair of well-turned shoulders, and his eye was sparkling with the emotion evidently evoked by the conversation. The maiden, of surely not more than fifteen summers, a bud just beginning to unfold, had rested, while gazing up at him, both arms on his knees, and followed his words with such absorbed interest that her countenance seemed to mirror every changing shade of meaning.

The door opened noiselessly, and a tall man entered the room. The enthusiastic children did not hear him, and not until he had approached them and laid his hand on the youth's shoulder, did the latter turn towards him, then rising quickly with a deep blush.

"Leave us alone together for a moment, child," said the intruder to the abashed maiden, who had also risen hastily; and when, after casting a half-anxious glance at the two remaining behind, she had withdrawn, he beckoned the young man to resume his place on the sofa.

"How old are you, William?" he began, taking a seat beside him.

"Seventeen," was the slightly hesitating reply.

"And are you fully aware of what you still have to learn before attaining that artistic rank which alone can render a man, who devotes his life to a musical career, a person of consequence in our circle? You are a young man of great talent, William; I have permitted your frequent visits to my family with pleasure, and have observed without interference the growing mutual inclination between my daughter and yourself; for I consider the aristocracy of genius as the peer of that of birth, and I know your uncontaminated soul. But where can this lead to now? Your natural endowments are doubtless such as to justify the expectation that you may *become* a man to whom I should rejoice to surrender my daughter; but as yet, William, you *are* nothing. Go, work and study, devote your best energies to your years of apprenticeship, become the artist who, ennobled by his genius, may rank with the best; make yourself a name—and then come back: if your youthful inclination be not dissipated, my door shall again be open to you—and I, in the meantime, will not persuade my daughter to any other alliance; do you agree to this, William?"

The youth raised his head: in his eyes there beamed a marvelous light. With a deep breath he laid his hand in that extended toward him. "I do—and I thank you!" he responded with a voice which, despite the strong resolution apparent in its tone, had a tremulous sound.

"Good! But, in that case, you should leave the city to-morrow. I am inclined to think, in any event, that you have been quite long enough in our Conservatory for your own good."

"To-morrow morning I shall leave for Paris—I have long intended to go there; but may I not—"

"Come to see us this evening, when your preparations for the journey are finished, and take leave of us then."

* * *

Seven years had passed. Not only Paris, but the whole of cultivated Europe, was familiar with the name of the young violin virtuoso, whom even Paganini had deemed worthy of peculiar attention. Seven years—the allotted time in which he was to prove himself worthy of his youthful love, the time which should show whether his inclination were steadfast. Not even a letter had he been permitted to exchange with her whom he proposed to celebrate in his first great composition, and for whom no thought had yet appeared grand or beautiful enough to him. Only indirectly had he received greetings from or tidings of her; and the messages which he himself sent were nothing further than newspaper notes concerning his work and progress. And he had made himself worthy, and his love had only grown stronger and deeper with the years, and was inseparably entwined with his every thought, his entire being.

Two days before the end of the seventh year he was ready to journey homeward, so that he might not reach Vienna an hour later than the time set by her father. Day and night he traveled with extra post, and at nightfall on the second day he arrived at Vienna. Hardly taking time to doff his traveling garb, he strode with eager haste to the house whose walls held all of happiness for him.

The street door stood open, but within all was dark and hushed. A feeling of dread, like a sudden foreboding of a great misfortune, seized upon him. He ascended the well-known stair, opened the door of the parlor—and stood as if turned to stone; a pang, as of the death-blow to his heart, pierced his breast, his vision grew dim, and he swooned away.

In the middle of the room stood an open coffin, surrounded with candles; and in the flower-decked coffin there lay, herself a broken blossom, the maiden for whom he had striven, labored, and patiently hoped. One glance had showed him that every hope, every fresh flower of his young life, was withered for ever.

She was buried—but he knew nothing of it; prostrated by brain-fever, he himself lay at death's door, and it almost seemed as if the dead bride would not have to await the bridegroom long. But his unenfeebled natural strength won the victory. Two months later, he reappeared for the first time among men—but as a man utterly changed; his eye seemed to glance aside from outward things, as if turned introspectively upon his own melancholy moods.

His violin became his sole familiar friend; in the silence of the night, tones of immeasurable grief sounded from its strings;—he wrote a dirge for his dead love—this very Elegie, which moves every heart with so potent a spell, and which is known throughout the length and breadth of the musical world;—for the man whose story we have told was the violinist Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst.

OTTO RUPPIUS.

3
Elégie.

H.W.ERNST. Op. 10.

Adagio melancolico ed appassionato.

Violin.



Adagio melancolico ed appassionato.

Piano.



IV

First system of musical notation. It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic, followed by a forte (*f*) section. It features a four-measure rest marked with a '4' and a fermata. The piano accompaniment includes a piano (*p*) section. The key signature has two flats and the time signature is 3/4.

Second system of musical notation. The vocal line includes a *dolce.* marking and a four-measure rest marked with a '4'. It also features a two-measure rest marked with a 'II' and a three-measure rest marked with a 'III'. The piano accompaniment continues with a piano (*p*) dynamic.

Third system of musical notation. The vocal line includes a piano (*p*) dynamic and a *dolce e semplice.* marking. It features a two-measure rest marked with a 'II'. The piano accompaniment continues with a piano (*p*) dynamic.

Fourth system of musical notation. The vocal line includes a three-measure rest marked with a 'III' and a four-measure rest marked with a 'IV'. It features a *con somma espressione.* marking and a piano (*p*) dynamic. The piano accompaniment includes a *colla parte.* marking and a fortissimo (*fp*) dynamic. The system concludes with a first ending bracket.

First system of musical notation. The upper staff features a melodic line with a 'V' marking above the first measure and dynamic markings of *f* and *f*. The lower staff consists of piano accompaniment with a *fp* marking and a *cresc.* marking.

Second system of musical notation. The upper staff includes dynamic markings of *cresc.*, *f*, and *dim.*. The lower staff features piano accompaniment with *fp* and *f* markings.

Third system of musical notation. The upper staff includes dynamic markings of *cresc.*, *f*, *dim.*, and *cresc.*. The lower staff features piano accompaniment with *p*, *cresc.*, *fp*, and *cresc.* markings.

Fourth system of musical notation. The upper staff includes a *II* marking, a *4* marking, and the instruction "with the whole bow." followed by dynamic markings of *f*, *cresc.*, and *fuocoso.*. The lower staff features piano accompaniment with *f* and *cresc.* markings.

ff molto appassionato. p

ff dim. p

This system contains the first two staves of music. The upper staff is a single melodic line with various ornaments and fingerings (1, 2, 1, 2, 4, 2). The lower staff is a piano accompaniment with a dense texture of chords and moving lines. Dynamics include *ff*, *dim.*, and *p*. A second ending bracket labeled 'II' spans the final measures.

This system contains the next two staves of music. The upper staff continues the melodic line with more ornaments and fingerings (4, 2, 4, 4, 2). The piano accompaniment remains dense and rhythmic. Dynamics include *f* and *dolcissimo*.

This system contains the next two staves of music. The upper staff features a more complex melodic line with ornaments and fingerings (4, 3, 4, 3). The piano accompaniment continues with its characteristic texture. Dynamics include *f* and *dolcissimo*.

This system contains the final two staves of music on the page. The upper staff concludes with a melodic phrase and ornaments, including fingerings (3, 1, 1, 4, 0) and a *riten.* marking. The piano accompaniment also concludes. Dynamics include *cresc.* and *riten.*

ff

ff

1 3 2 1 3

ff

ff

ff

ff

ff

Ossia.

ff

ff

ff

p

p

IV

*

ritard

a tempo parlando

III

fp

pp

II

colla parte.

tremolo.

perdendosi.

pp

ff

*

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