

put thee away, I dismiss and divorce thee; from this time thou art in thine own power; thou mayest be married to any other man whom thou pleasest; let no man hinder thee in any name from this day forward and for ever, and Lo! thou art free to any man."

'No—I will not seek a bill of divorce.'

'I am grieved on your account, Emanuel. All your life you will be bound to a woman who will refuse to live with you and to take care of you. Yet you want a wife more than most men, because you are helpless in many things. Take pity on yourself and release yourself.'

'No, you are my wife; I am your husband. I will not surrender my wife, even though she repudiate her husband all her life. I will not cast upon her name the shadow and odium of a divorce.'

The wife sighed. 'I have done my best, Emanuel. It is for your sake that I ask it. For my own, as I go my own way henceforth, I am indifferent.'

'Is there more to say?'

'No—and yet—we are going to part again. Perhaps we shall never meet again. You will hear of me, probably, as doing things you do not approve. There are certain things that I would say before you go—things that—that—well, I would that you should think of me as kindly as you can. Believe me, Emanuel, if there was any man whom I could own as lord and master it is you. Believe me, no other man will win love from me—'

'I believe it. You are Isabel.'

She sat down, taking a chair beside her near the frontier. He took another. There was still the space of three feet between them: the chairs faced opposite ways, and they sat one looking east and the other west. The wife turned her head and rested it upon her hand; but the husband sat without looking round. Perhaps, in spite of his fixed purpose he feared to look too long upon her face.

'Woman, in your eyes,' she began, 'is an inferior creature.'

'She fills her place in the Divine Order; she can fill no other place; if she tries there follow discords, rebellions, evils of all kinds.'

'Oh! Divine Order—Divine Order!' she repeated impatiently. 'But what else could I expect? It is the old, old