

Let Not Man Put Asunder

"That sounds rather interesting."

"Yes, he's interesting, if it is interesting to be like no one else. I should say his friendship might be rather dangerous—I mean in the sense in which it is dangerous to travel in an unknown land of which there are no maps and no guide-books, where there are plenty of spouting volcanoes and fathomless lakes, and nothing to lead anywhere. Dick is a compound of magnificent weakness and futile strength. When I knew him I never could be quite sure whether he was an apostate saint or a Tannhäuser seeking for redemption."

"Harry says he married badly."

"Yes—that Madame Felicia de Prony who made such a fiasco at the opera in New York last winter. She's a beautiful woman, and Dick was mad about her. At the time he married her, three or four years ago, people thought she was going to be another Patti. But I believe she is very delicate, and hasn't done much, after all. I heard her last season in London—you were at Orpington Park at the time. I thought her voice had gone off terribly, though she was still exquisitely pretty. She has one of those pure faces which would deceive the very elect. When I saw her it was just after her escapade with the Duc de Ruynes, for which Dick got his divorce. Poor fellow! I wonder if his experiences have changed him?"

"You will have a chance of judging this afternoon."

Petrina rose as she spoke and went out on the veranda.

She was very tall, and carried herself with an air of gentle command. Her long step gave to her movements something of almost feline gracefulness, emphasized by her soft, trailing robe.

Mrs. Faneuil, still seated at the table, took up again