

"Simon, do you mean what you say—do you mean it? After all you have done for me to-night can you indeed forget your claims?"

He started as if stung: she alluded, no doubt, to those debts of hers which he had defrayed. Once before, in bitterness of spirit, she had taunted him with having bought her; and now, in this new-found meekness, told herself that he was entitled to the bargain for which he had paid such a heavy price.

There was a long silence, and then he spoke with an effort.

"Let us understand each other. You are my wife, indeed, and after to-night I think that I must ask you to bear my name, and own our marriage; but since you do not love me, Rachel, it may be best for us to live apart. Nay, do not sob so, my dear; we must make the best of our broken lives, and, after all, you are going back to your mother. There, lie back and try to rest."

"But I—but Simon—oh, I see how wicked you think me. Indeed, indeed, I am not so wicked as you suppose. Oh, Simon, I have been reckless and perverse, but I—I swear to you ——"

"Hush, hush," said Simon quickly; "you need say nothing more. I never doubted you, Rachel."

His tone was so stern, so final, that she was instantly silenced, and retreated farther than ever into her corner, while he sat upright, gazing out into the night. By-and-bye the grey shadowy light, which she had seen before on one memorable morning, crept gradually over the world, giving shape and distinctness to the landscape through which they whirled. The dusky silhouette of Simon's face stood out in relief against the pane, growing ever more distinct, until at last its very expression was clear to the wife's eyes. How rigid and fixed were those features, how firmly set the lips; the brows, slightly