

it on the carpet, and placed my foot on it.—The blood rushed to her pale cheek—her eyes flashed with their former fire, as she sprung to her feet, and bade me restore it to her.

"O, icicle," I replied, "are you melted at last? Give it to you! No, indeed: I will teach you more respect for your husband than you have lately shown. See," I continued, as I picked it up and tore it to fragments, "see! there is the frippery which you think more worthy of your attention than your husband."

"Any thing is more worthy of it than my husband at this moment," she replied.

"Say you so; say you so, madam," I exclaimed, grasping her by the arm, and hissing the words through my teeth; "then, what say you to a separation?" You need not refuse, I will have one; I will live no longer with such a wife. Do you consent? answer me?" I continued, shaking her by the arm.

"As you please," she replied; "nothing can be worse than this."

"You consent at last then, do you?—Well, this very day I will commence arrangements."

"When you please," she replied, and she left the room.

I stood aghast at what I had done; I had proposed a separation, and she had consented. I had said that on that very day I would commence arrangements for the purpose, and could I break my word? Could I go to her and beg her not to leave me, and that, when I, myself, had proposed such a step? My pride again forbade me, and I obeyed its dictates; but there still remained a secret hope within me, that on cool reflection she, herself, would refuse. I determined to consult a lawyer in whose secrecy I could confide, and make such arrangements as were absolutely necessary. I did so, and patiently awaited the result. My wife did not appear again during that day—the next morning I found a note on my plate at the breakfast table: Emily was not there. I opened it, and found that it contained a proposal to the effect that she should be permitted to join some friends who were about to visit Europe, ostensibly on account of her health; that she should remain absent one year, and if, at the expiration of that time she still lived, that a permanent separation

might be arranged; but at present such a thing should not be made public. The note was written in a calm, clear manner, yet I thought the desire to avoid publicity in the affair betrayed some token of relenting. I replied to it at once, saying that I should make no objection to such an arrangement, or to any other that might suit her convenience. With the note I sent a large amount of money for her preparations.

The next day we received an invitation to a party, which, contrary to her late habits, Mrs. Mansfield accepted. She sent it to me in a note, stating the fact, and saying that she thought it would afford an excellent opportunity to make known to society her intention of visiting Europe. I signified my assent. During the time which intervened I saw my wife only at table, where she appeared as calm as ever, though, perhaps, a trifle paler than usual. Hour on hour I had looked for her pride to fail her. Deeply injured as she had been, I could not bring myself to believe that, loving me as she once had loved me, and I fondly hoped still did, she would really leave me; but after having once made public her intention I feared lest she might not shrink. Would she do so? O, how anxiously I awaited that eventful night, and when, at last, it came, I was dressed and in attendance at an unusually early hour. As I paced the floor anxiously, I hoped—I prayed that her heart would conquer—that love would subdue pride; but how could I—how dare I—hope it? What indignities had she not borne from me!—Ought I not to humble myself and ask her to forgive me!

Had she come in at that moment I would have done so, but she came not. I wondered how she would dress. Perhaps some carelessness in her apparel would betray that her mind was too much pre-occupied to think of it. I glanced at the clock; it was time that she should be there. Just then she entered, and as pale and calm as usual. I looked at her dress; it was of dark velvet, trimmed with rich lace—she had worn just such a dress in happier days because I admired it, and thought that it became her style of beauty. But now what was her object? Did she desire to please me still, or was it habit? I glanced at her arms—on her neck;—she wore a set of diamonds, which I gave her shortly after our marriage.