

heart, life would be empty and bitter if I were not in my place dealing justly as I have light to see. Surely you who know what duty means so well, you who love honor better than happiness, you will understand and help me now?"

She stood up, loosening his hands wholly, her face glornied. "I understand so well that I should not deserve to be your wife if I attempted, by so much as a look, to hold you back. But still less should I deserve to share your name if I permitted you to do this thing alone. It is my right and my privilege as—as your wife—no, let me speak!—to stand at your side, to serve as you will serve. To-night, to-morrow, whenever you will the *curé* shall marry us—what matters where it is or how soon, so that he gives me the right to go with you wherever you go, to stand with you wherever you elect to stand. Is this not what marriage means?"

"But dear heart! How can I? The danger!" he murmured brokenly.

She turned, still with that transfigured look upon her face. "What would safety—what would life mean without you? Do you think I know any fear save just that: life without you to give it a meaning? Ah, do not deny me this! Brouillon can harm us never again and the strong arms in Marsillac will hold back all others. You are not afraid to trust your life to your people: will they be less loyal to—to the wife their lord—loves?"

Instantly his arms had caught her close, as if the last whispered words, halting and broken, were too supremely rare to be borne alone.

"You will marry me here—now? That is what you mean? You will turn back with England almost under