

you it was wrong and dishonoring to live with Andreas; your own heart shrank from his loveless embraces; your own heart showed you it was right to leave him, and fly away to the man you loved, the man that loved you. Will you believe that God's law is worse than your own heart? Will you think there's something divine in an institution of men which compels you to degrade and dishonor your own body, to sin so cruelly against your own pure instincts? Nothing can be wickeder, I say, than for a woman to sell herself or to yield herself in any way to a man she loathes. No Church and no law can make right of that wrong: it's degrading and debasing to her moral nature. The moment a woman feels she gives herself up against her own free will and the instincts of her own heart she is living in sin—and you know it, Linnet—though all the priests and all the Popes on earth should stretch robed arms and hands to bless and absolve her."

He spoke with fierce conviction. Linnet nestled against his breast: his words overcame her. "I know it, Will, I know it," she exclaimed, half-hysterically. "My heart told me so always—but I couldn't believe it. I can't believe it now,—though I know you're right when I hear you speak so. Perhaps, some day, when I've lived with you long enough, I shall come to think and feel as you do. . . . But for the present, my darling, I'm so glad, oh, so glad,—don't laugh at me for saying it—that you've got a dispensation."

THE END