

Let Not Man Put Asunder

"Divorce? No—none. But I've seen her. If I had any lurking hope of taking up the past again it received its death-blow then. And yet I have a longing for—I don't know what."

"Did you seek her out? Or did you meet by accident?"

"It was last June, in London. I didn't know she was there. I have latterly avoided the great capitals where she has been singing, through fear of being bowled over by some weakness. I had come back from the East, and was only passing through London on my way to take the boat at Liverpool. I had but one night to spend, and I saw her announced for Aida. I couldn't help it; I went."

"And then?"

"I found a box on the grand tier near the stage. I wanted to be conspicuous, to have her notice me. At first I thought she didn't. She came before the curtain, but gave me no glance of recognition. It was not until the act by the Nile, outside the temple, that I knew she had seen me. She was singing her air '*O Patria mia.*' Then suddenly, at the words '*Non ti rivedro mai più—mai più,*' she turned and looked at me. I knew what she meant. She sang with intention, and I understood. In spite of the pathos of the air and situation I knew her heart was hardened against me. '*Non ti rivedro mai più.*' That signified that she never meant to see me again. She seemed to say to me, 'If you have come here hoping either to frighten me or to win me back, you are wrong. You are nothing to me but a memory. I have outlived your time. I am happy now with some one else!' I waited, however, till the end of the act. I saw her come before the curtain with Rhadames and Amneris, but she looked no more my way. She smiled in response to the applause.