



THE WOMAN WHO DID

The Woman Who Did
by Grant Allen (1848-1899)

Most times, especially in the time when this book was written (1895), it is just as nature and society would wish: a man and woman “fall in love” and get married. But it is not so for Herminia Barton and Alan Merrick. They do indeed fall in love, but Herminia has a deeply held belief in freedom for women, and she holds immutable views against what she perceives as the slavery of marriage. Alan unwillingly agrees to her strong wish to remain unmarried and to live together as “close and dear friends”. When the birth of their child is imminent, they go to his beloved Italy to avoid the condemnation of English society.

From this point on, many questions are raised: is marriage indeed so important? Is strong will always good? Is it right to go against society? And if it is, when should we stop and consider the effects on other people? What should a child do when she is raised to be what her mother dreams and develops her own dreams in the process? And, finally, how much should parents sacrifice for their children?

Total running time: 6:01:14
Read by Ruth Golding

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Painting by William Merritt Chase,
My Daughter Dieudonné, (1902)

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