

## **CHAPTER III**

### **Isabel Archer's Independence**

Coming to the analysis, the writer will divide her analysis into three parts. First, the thesis will analyze the independence in Isabel's life before her marriage and second, the factors that influences the process of Isabel's marriage. Third, the analysis of independence in Isabel's life after her marriage.

#### **III.1. Isabel's Independence Before Her Marriage**

In this part the writer is going to discuss the kind of independence that Isabel Archer has before her marriage. She was born as an American

girl and she is very proud of being that figure. The story happened between the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries and in America at that time became the most important history that happened and unforgettable as ever. That almost all of the people in America struggled for their freedom and independence. Human rights were discussed and talked everywhere, it was the most interesting topic and it still continues until now.

It is natural that Isabel adopts the freedom of action possessed by the Americans as Arnold W. Green said that "Human behavior occurs within conditions imposed by man's biology and heredity and by his physical environment" (Green, p. 17). Since the physical environment around Isabel loves freedom of action and being part of this environment, Isabel is easily influenced by the way of behaving that exists in her country. She also tends to have a free way of behaving, in the case that she hates to be ordered by other people; as a result she becomes a free – spirited lady. The people in America feel that their strong spirit finally causes them to be able to think optimistically. There is an optimistic statement, which pictures the American way of thinking that more or less influences Isabel's character traits. "The present is better than the past and the future will be better than the present" (Wattenberg, p. 193). Individual freedom marks the American way of life and the American people have both freedom of

thought and action (The World Book of Encyclopedia vol. 20 USA 1973, p.42). From the explanation it is known that American people being independent are permitted to express their thoughts and perform the thoughts into reality as far as it does not violate the law. This freedom more or less shapes some of Isabel character traits that she is self – confident, spontaneous and optimistic.

American women are noted for their independence. They participate equally with men in many activities outside home (The World Book of Encyclopedia, vol. 20 USA 1973, and p.52). In America the independence of woman is irrecoverably lost in the bonds of matrimony but this statement is not valid anymore. There is no difference anymore between the rights of men and women, women begin to considered themselves equal to men.

Isabel Archer as a young American woman is very independent. Another factor that makes her an independent woman is because Isabel is an orphan so that she must take all decisions by herself. Her sister Lily, is already married and she does not care much about Isabel. Being alone and always taking all of her decisions by herself makes her an independent woman. It can be seen from the conversation between Ralph and his mother :

“It’s her independence, -- her son explained, more favourably.” Whatever that of those young ladies may be, her own is a match for it. She likes to do everything for herself, and has no belief in any one’s power to help her. She thinks me of no more use than a postage stamp without gum, and she she would never forgive me if I should presume to go to Liverpool to meet her.”(p. 14)

She is very independent and proud of herself, she does not want to depend on others. She thinks that she can do everything by herself. Besides, Isabel is also characterized as a spontaneous woman who is very outspoken. Isabel’s attitude can be seen from the conversation between her and Mrs. Touchett :

“Ah,” said Isabel, slowly, “you must be our crazy Aunt Lydia!” “Is that what your father told you to call me? I am your Aunt Lydia, but I am not crazy. And which of the daughters are you?” “I am the youngest of the three, and my name is Isabel.” (p.25)

She is very outspoken and tells everything very spontaneously even with her own aunt, a woman whom she should respect but Isabel does not. She is not afraid to say -- you must be our crazy aunt Lydia “.

Her conversation with Caspar Goodwood who has fallen in love with her, shows that she appreciates of being free :

“You are very generous; that is nothing new to me. The best way to help me will be to put as many hundred miles of sea between us as possible.”

“One would think you were going to commit a crime!” said Caspar Goodwood.

“Perhaps I **am**. I wish to be free even to do that, if the fancy takes me.” (p. 150)

If she does not trust someone, she tells the truth about it although it will hurt her best friend. The conversation with her best friend, Henrietta Stackpole, shows her being free in speech :

“Has he been here, dear?” Miss Stackpole inquired, softly.

Isabel turned away, and for some moments answered nothing.

“You acted very wrongly,” she said at last.

“I acted for the best, dear. I only hope you acted as well.”

“You are not the judge. I can’t trust you,” said Isabel. (p. 153)

This attitude of Isabel is good because it shows that she is not a hypocrite, she is free expressing what she thinks, she does not like to say only just to please others.

When she first comes to England, she feels that the people there are not good enough for her. According to Isabel the people in Europe have too many customs to follow, for example the custom of having afternoon tea which is too formal for her.

She is happy of being free and treasures her independence, therefore she does not want to be bound by marriage. Another factor that makes Isabel think twice of being married is because of her aunt's marriage. Isabel sees the fact that her aunt's marriage is not a harmonious one. Mrs. Touchett and her husband do not desire the same things in their life so Mrs. Touchett sets up a house in Florence and visits her husband once a year. Therefore Isabel gets the idea that marriage does not guarantee a happy life. Consequently, Isabel does not have any intention to marry but desires other things in her life.

She is quite anxious to go to Europe but she is also anxious to retain her own freedom. Although she has only limited amount of money, she has a great deal of imagination and is very confident with herself. Her aunt also wants Isabel to learn more about the world. Isabel Archer is also characterized as a woman who has a strong character if she says one thing, she must follow it. This character trait can be seen from her conversation with Lord Warburton who proposes her many times but she always rejects him.

“There is no way to do that, Miss Archer. I won’t say that, if you refuse me, you will kill me; I shall not die of it. But I shall do worse; I shall live to no purpose.”

“You will live to marry a better woman than I.”

“Don’t say that, please, -- said Lord Warburton, very gravely, That is fair to neither of us.”

“To marry a worse one, then.”

-- If there are better women than you, then I prefer the bad ones, that’s all I can say,” he went on, with the same gravity.

(p.101)

She always tells her aunt that she takes much liberty in deciding what she wants to do. When Lord Warburton proposes, she rejects him because she wants to see the world and be independent. She explains to Lord Warburton that she does not want to marry and that she certainly cannot accept his proposal now.

Although she likes Lord Warburton but her reason that she does not wish to marry him is because she treasures her liberty too much and thinks that by marrying Lord Warburton she cannot maintain her liberty. She has seen that her aunt’s marriage is not a happy marriage but cannot do anything since she is still bound to her husband. When her

uncle asks her why she has rejected Lord Warburton's proposal she says that she wants to be free.

Isabel Archer is also described as a young woman who has a dream in her life to be happy and independent. One time, Isabel asks Ralph about the ghost in the house and Ralph explains to her that one must suffer greatly before one can see a ghost. Isabel admits that she is afraid of suffering. She tells him that she comes to Europe to be happy and has every intention of devoting herself to that end. She says that she will never see a ghost because she thinks that her life will be as happy as she dreams of. She is very optimistic about this, the reality shows that life is not as she thinks. At the end of the novel she realizes that her life is a misery. When she feels about the coming of the ghost, it was when Ralph dies. Later, she realizes and believes Ralph's opinion about a ghost.

.. " But I like you all the same, " his cousin went on. " The way to clinch the matter will be to show me the ghost. "

Ralph shook his head sadly. " I might show it to you, but you would never see it. The privilege isn't given to every one; it's not enviable. It has never been seen by a young, happy, innocent person like you. You must suffered first, have suffered greatly, have gained some miserable knowledge. In



that way your eyes are opened to it. I saw it long ago, " said Ralph, smiling.

" I told you just now I was very fond of knowledge, " the girl answered.

" Yes, of happy knowledge – of pleasant knowledge. But you haven't suffered, and you are not made to suffer. I hope you will never see the ghost ! " (p.43).

The quotation above shows that Ralph really cares for Isabel that he does not want to see Isabel lives in misery.

Isabel also cares very much for knowledge and determines to see the world as a place to gain knowledge. Sometimes she goes too far as she wishes that she finds herself in difficult position. She likes the problems in life and she hopes that others will see her as a woman who has the ability to face and overcome the problems of life.

Isabel is a woman who likes to take chances and face dangers of life because she loves the unexpected in life which shows her strong character as a woman. She wants to have more experience before involving herself into marriage. She wants people to describe her as a powerful woman when she is successful in solving problems in her life.

" You will marry some one else, " said Caspar Goodwood.

" Do you think that is a generous charge ? "

-- Why not ? plenty men will ask you."

-- I told you just now that I don't wish to marry, and that I shall probably never do so."

-- I know you did; but I don't believe it."

-- Thank you very much. You appear to think I am attempting to deceive you; you say very delicate things."

-- Why should I not say that ? You have given me no promise that you will not marry."

-- No, that is all that would be wanting !" cried Isabel, with a bitter laugh.

-- You think you won't, but you will," her visitor went on, as if he were preparing himself for the worst.

-- Very well, I will then. Have it as you please." (p. 146)

It also happened when she refuses Caspar Goodwood and it is based upon her desire for liberty. This conversation shows how much Isabel really appreciates liberty in her life.

-- If you were in the same place as I. I should feel as if you were watching me, and I don't like that. I like my liberty too much. If there is a thing in the world that I am fond of, -- Isabel went on, with a slight recurrence of the grandeur that

had shown itself a moment before, -- it is my personal independence.” (p. 149)

Isabel Archer is also characterized as being strong and optimistic since she always take all of her decisions by herself. Her conversation with Caspar Goodwood shows about her pride of being an independent woman :

“An unmarried woman – a girl of your age – is not independent. There are all sorts things she can’t do. She is hampered at every step.”

“That’s as she looks at the question,” Isabel answered, with much spirit. -- I am not in my first youth – I can do what I choose – I belong to the independent class. I have neither father nor mother; I am poor; I am of a serious disposition, and not pretty. (p. 150)

Besides, I try to judge things for myself; to judge wrong, I think, is more honorable than not to judge at all. (p. 150)

This nature of stubbornness in Isabel’s becomes one of the reason which brings her into a tragedy. She never listen to other’s opinion and thinks that her opinion is the best for her. She thinks that people who takes a judgment, whether it is right or wrong is more honorable than not to judge anything. Her stubbornness and pride also can be seen at this statement :

“But it seemed to her that she had done something; she had tasted of the delight, if not of battle, at least of victory; she had done what she preferred.” (p. 152)

So it can be concluded that the independence of Isabel before her marriage is an independence of a young spirited woman based on the idea of most American women who is influenced by environment. She can do anything that she likes without taking any consideration and everything that she had done is her own responsibility. She is free in taking any decision and using her wealth. She is free in the way of her thinking without taking any consideration and she never takes things seriously.

### **III.2. Factors That Influences the Process of Isabel’s Marriage**

In the process of Isabel’s marriage, there are certain factors that influence and reinforce her in making decision..The characters that support Isabel in her decision to marry are Madame Merle and Gilbert Osmond. In dealing with these supporting characters, Isabel also experiences a lot of things that teaches her about the reality in the society.

Madame Merle is one of the supporting characters that influences Isabel to marry used by the thesis writer for her analysis. Later, Isabel’s experience in dealing with Madame Merle brings her to her problems. According to Ralph’s opinion, Madame Merle is a woman who can

make such proposals with perfect confidence; she is so welcome wherever she goes (164). She is welcome by everyone because she has a good performance and people do not think negatively about her.

Also from Mrs. Touchett's opinion about Madame Merle shows that Madame Merle is a brilliant woman and Mrs. Touchett does not like if Madame Merle stays close with her niece, Isabel. Her reason is that Isabel is too innocent compared to Madame Merle.

“She never does anything wrong. I have brought you out here, and I wish to do the best for you. Your sister Lily told me that she hoped I would give you plenty of opportunities. I give **you** one in securing Madame Merle. She is one of the most brilliant women in Europe.”

“I like her better than I like your description of her,” Isabel persisted in saying. (p. 180)

Madame Merle is also characterized as a charming, intelligent, experienced and ambitious woman. Isabel really feels interested in her.

At last she said : “I am very ambitious!”

“And your ambitions have not been satisfied? They must have been great.”

“They were great. I should make myself ridiculous by talking of them.” (p. 185)

One of the reasons that makes Isabel really interested and close to Madame Merle is because of her ambition. Isabel thinks that she has the same opinion with Madame Merle and it will be suitable for her to have her as her friend.

Another conversation between Isabel and Madame Merle also shows that Isabel is really interested in Madame Merle because Isabel thinks that Madame Merle is very successful in her life :

“I don’t know what your idea of success may be, but you seem to me to have been successful. To me, indeed, you are an image of success.”

Madame Merle tossed away the music with a smile.

“What is your idea of success ?”

“You evidently think it must be very tame,” said Isabel.

“It is to see some dream of one’s youth come true.” (p.186)

On the other hand, Madame Merle is interested in Isabel. Madame Merle, a materialistic woman, a woman who loves money very much. She likes to be Isabel’s friend since she is interested in Isabel’s fortune.

“A fortune!” Madame Merle repeated, softly.

“Isabel steps into something like seventy pounds.”

Madame Merle’s hands were clasped in her lap; at this she

raised them, still clasped, and held them a moment against her bosom, while her eyes, a little dilated, fixed themselves on those of her friend. “Ah,” she cried, “the clever creature!” (p.193).

Madame Merle is also characterized as a woman who is never satisfied with anything that she has got. For example in her conversation :

“Why not – What have I got? Neither husband, nor child, nor fortune, nor position, nor the traces of a beauty which I never had.”

“You have friends, dear lady.”

“I am not sure!” cried Madame Merle.

“Ah. you are wrong. You have memories, talents –”

Madame Merle interrupted her. “What have my talents brought me? Nothing but the need of using them still, to get through the hours, the years, to cheat myself with some pretence of action. (p.185)

Madame Merle is also characterized as a smart woman, she knows exactly that one of Isabel’s hobbies is about art so she tries to show Isabel that Gilbert Osmond is the right man for her. This intention can be seen from Madame Merle’s conversation with Isabel :

“Oh yes, he paints, if you – paints in watercolours, like me, only better than I.” (p. 183)

Madame Merle also tries to attract Isabel’s sympathy on her by telling Isabel about her tragic life :

“Why not – what have I got? Neither husband, nor child, nor fortune, nor the traces of a beauty which I never had.” (p.185)

By becoming close friends with Isabel, Madame Merle has a hidden intention towards Isabel, she wants Osmond to marry Isabel just because Isabel is a wealthy heiress and she wants to entrust Pansy to Isabel.

Gilbert Osmond is another supporting factor that influences Isabel’s decision in marriage. Since he is a man with an exquisite collection of art objects makes Isabel think that he is a superior person because Isabel loves art and paintings therefore she adores Osmond. Osmond has influenced Isabel and convinces her that he is superior. No other person has ever made her think so. no one has ever made her perception so refined.

In reality Gilbert Osmond is a man who has no future but according to Isabel, he is a good and independent man, these factors makes Isabel feels interested in Osmond. She is too young, too inexperienced, too unknowing, too innocent and too American. That is why she is easily trapped and deceived by these two European characters, Madame Merle



and Gilbert Osmond. She never thinks that the two Europeans will bring her into a misery.

### **III.3. Isabel Lost of Her Independence after Her Marriage**

In this part the writer is going to analyze Isabel to show the kind of independence that she has after her marriage. At first she has been successful of being independent and free in choosing her way of life but she loses the independence after her marriage that she said, " I married him before all the world; I was perfectly free; it was impossible to do anything more deliberate. One can't change, that way, " Isabel repeated. ( p. 450 )

After her marriage, almost all of her life is full of misery. Her qualities of being strong is not enough to save her from misery. It seems that her marriage is worse than her aunt.

" You dress very well, " interposed Madame Merle, skillfully.

" Possibly, but I don't care to be judged by that. My clothes may express the dress - maker, but they don't express me. To begin with, it's riot my own choice that I wear them; they are imposed upon me by society. " (p.187)

She describes that her life is not as good as the dress which she wears.

She dresses beautifully but it does not express her happiness. It does not mean that if she wears a beautiful gown, her life is also beautiful and full of happiness, what happens is just the opposite.

Isabel is also curbed by her dreams of being an independent woman but after her marriage she realizes she is not free anymore. Independence means that people is not being burdened to get or do something. Isabel realizes that she is not free anymore at all because she is burdened by her marriage vow and her responsibility as wife and mother for Pansy. She is too proud to say that she has failed in choosing the right decision for her own life.

.. I can't change, that way, .. Isabel said.

.. Why not, I should like to know? You won't confess that you have made a mistake. You are too proud. ..

.. I don't know whether I am too proud. But I can't publish my mistake. I don't think that's decent. I would much rather die."

.. You won't think so always, .. said Henrietta.

.. I don't know what great unhappiness might bring me to; but it seems to me I shall always be ashamed. One must accept one's deeds. I married him before all the world; I was perfectly

free; it was impossible to do anything more deliberate. One can't change, that way, -- Isabel repeated.

-- You have changed, in spite of the impossibility. I hope you don't mean to say that you like him."

Isabel hesitated a moment. -- No, I don't like him. I can tell you, because I am weary of my secret. But that's enough; I can't tell all the world."

Henrietta gave a rich laugh. -- Don't you think you are rather too considerate? --

-- It's not of him that I am considerate -- ~~it's of myself!~~"

Isabel answered **(p.450)**.

The quotation above also shows that Isabel's pride is too high. She does not want other people to know about her wrong choice in marriage.

She remembers Ralph's words to her. At that time, he hopes that Isabel never have to suffer and she admits that she is afraid of suffering. She tells him that she comes to Europe to be as happy as possible and has every intention of devoting herself to that end and to be independent. The fact is that after her marriage, Isabel lives in misery. Her life has become a tragedy, when she knows that Osmond does not love her at all, that he marries her for her money.

“Yes, I am miserable,” she said, very gently. She hated to hear herself say it as judicially as possible.

“What does he do to you?” Henrietta asked, frowning as if she were inquiring into the operations of a quack doctor.

“He does nothing. But he doesn’t like me.” (p.450)

She has given up her freedom and dreams, because she wants to be with the man she loves. To be bound to him but it seems that she does not get happiness but only misery since Osmond does not love her but only for her money.

Her life principle of being free is very important for her and this is clearly seen in her statements :

“I try to care more about the world than about myself – but I always come back to myself. It’s because I am afraid.” She stopped; her voice had trembled a little. “Yes, I **am** afraid; I can’t tell you. A large fortune means freedom, and **I am** afraid of that. It’s such a fine thing, and one should make such a good use of it. If one shouldn’t, one would be ashamed. And one must always be thinking – it’s a constant effort. I am not sure that it’s not a greater happiness to be powerless.” (p.207)

The fortune that she gets to give her freedom and happiness has given her the opposite result, Osmond who marries her because of her

wealth has taken away her independence. She is no longer free in making a decision, all of her decision must be considered thoroughly. For example, when she thinks that she is going to leave Osmond, she also thinks about the another result to Pansy. She does not want to leave Pansy and she wants to be a good mother for Pansy although she is not her true mother.

The thesis writer concludes that Isabel Archer who loves being independent has rejected Lord Warburton's and Caspar's Goodwood's marriage proposal only because she wants to be free. But through the influence of Madame Merle and Osmond, she has taken the decision to marry Osmond since she finds in him the kind of husband she likes. But unfortunately after their marriage she realizes that Osmond love her money. Due to her marriage she is not independent as she was before, her dream to be, independent has not come true.