

The Portrait of a Lady

Henry James

What does Isabel mean when she says marrying Lord Warburton would be 'giving up' even though she would gain so much?

TOTAL TIME

PASSAGE

30 minutes	Marriage as 'giving up other chances'
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FIND THE ANCHOR TEXT

Use the Anchor Text Table of Contents in the Enhanced Reader to open the START anchor. Then use the dropdown to select the END anchor.

SECTION / LOCATION	Volume I · Lord Warburton proposal
START	“I should try to escape it if I were to marry you.”
END	“In marrying you I shall be trying to.”
PASSAGE ID	sec-pol-01

THE MOVE

Define freedom by what a character refuses to preselect

WHY THIS PASSAGE

Lord Warburton offers Isabel wealth, status, affection, and security, but she experiences accepting a ready-made future as losing unchosen possibilities. Freedom is defined less by what she wants now than by refusing to close too many doors too early.

MARK

Underline what Isabel would gain by marrying Warburton. Circle her language about escape, chances, or giving up. Star the sentence where opportunity itself becomes more valuable than a particular advantage.

NOTICE

- What obvious benefits does the marriage offer?
- What does Isabel fear losing even though she cannot name a better alternative yet?
- How can freedom depend on preserving possibilities rather than choosing the most attractive present option?

THINK

Answer provisionally: What does Isabel mean when she says marrying Lord Warburton would be 'giving up' even though she would gain so much? Choose the strongest interpretation you can defend from this passage alone.

WRITE

Write a short evidence-based response to: What does Isabel mean when she says marrying Lord Warburton would be 'giving up' even though she would gain so much? Use at least two details from the assigned passage and explain how they support your interpretation.

CLOSE

Name the single detail that most changed or sharpened your interpretation, and explain why.

STRONG ANSWER	Isabel means marriage would preselect too much of her future. Warburton offers obvious gains, but accepting them would close possibilities she values even before she knows what alternatives she wants.
EVIDENCE	Use the benefits of the match and Isabel's language of chances, escape, freedom, or 'giving up.'
WATCH FOR	Do not assume she rejects Warburton because he lacks merit. The conflict is between a good option and the value of keeping the future open.
SOLO	Read the exact passage independently.
SUPPORTED	Use narration and sentence highlighting while reading the same passage.
LISTENING	Listen to the exact passage; visual following is optional. Same question and evidence demand.

STUDENT PAGE · SAME PASSAGE, SAME THINKING

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What does Isabel mean when she says marrying Lord Warburton would be 'giving up' even though she would gain so much?

START ANCHOR	"I should try to escape it if I were to marry you."
END ANCHOR	"In marrying you I shall be trying to."

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OPEN THE MARKED PASSAGE IN TUMBLELIT

SOLO: read independently. SUPPORTED: use narration + highlighting. LISTENING: listen to the exact passage. The question and evidence task stay the same.

1. **MARK** - Underline what Isabel would gain by marrying Warburton. Circle her language about escape, chances, or giving up. Star the sentence where opportunity itself becomes more valuable than a particular advantage.
2. **NOTICE** - What obvious benefits does the marriage offer? What does Isabel fear losing even though she cannot name a better alternative yet? How can freedom depend on preserving possibilities rather than choosing the most attractive present option?
3. **THINK** - Answer provisionally: What does Isabel mean when she says marrying Lord Warburton would be 'giving up' even though she would gain so much?
4. **WRITE** - Write a short response using at least two pieces of evidence from this passage.

Use evidence from the assigned passage. Show what you noticed and how the text supports your interpretation.