

## AND THE WILD WOMAN

brown woods of beech and oak, then through pine and broom, and then across red stony ledges where only a pinched growth of lentisk and briar spread over the bald rock. By this time he thought to have reached his goal, but for two more days he fared on through the same scene, the sky close over him and the green earth receding far below. Sometimes for hours he saw only the red glistening slopes tufted with thin bushes, and the hard blue heaven so close that it seemed his hand could touch it; then at a turn of the path the rocks rolled apart, the eye plunged down a long pine-clad defile, and beyond it the forest flowed away to a plain shining with cities and another mountain-range many days' journey away. To some eyes this would have been a terrible spectacle, reminding the wayfarer of his remoteness from his kind, and of the perils which lurk in waste places and the weakness of man against them; but the Hermit was so mated to solitude, and felt such love for all created things, that to him the bare rocks sang of their Maker and the vast distance bore witness to His greatness. So His servant journeyed on unafraid.

But one morning, after a long climb over steep and difficult slopes, the wayfarer halted at a bend of the way; for below him was no plain shining with cities, but a bare expanse of shaken silver that reached to the rim of the world; and the Hermit knew it was the sea. Fear seized him then, for it was terrible to see that great plain move