

as he was giving up so much for her. "We will be married at once, and live in a tiny home. I have got it already, at Carbis Bay, looking over St. Ives at the sea, a lovely place where the sun shines. We will have our own boat and go fishing——"

"And drown ourselves sometimes," added happy Boodles.

"Not till we quarrel, and that will be never."

"Look, Aubrey!" she cried, lifting herself, pointing between the bars of the gate into the wood. "There is our walk in a blue mist."

The atmosphere of the wood was the colour of blue-bells, which stretched in a magic carpet as far as they could see.

"Let us go in," he said.

"Not yet. Not unless I—— Oh, Aubrey, if we go in it will be all over. Do I deserve it? Those winter evenings, the loneliness, the winds," she murmured.

"It is all over," he said firmly, with a man's seriousness. "We have to start life now, for I have nobody but you—my little sweetheart, my wife of the radiant head, and the golden skin——"

"And the freckles," she said, looking down, without a smile.

"They have faded. You are so thin, sweet. You have been indoors too much, out of the sun."

"There wasn't any sun; not until to-day," she whispered.

"You see, darling, we are alone together."

"It is what we wanted always, to be alone. Oh, my boy, I must—I must spoil your life, because I have got you in my heart and you won't go out. You never would leave me alone," she said, looking up with the childlike expression which had come back to her.

Aubrey swung the gate open and she went to him. They kissed as they went through, and the gate slammed behind with a pleasant sound. They were inside, surrounded by the blue mist. It seemed to them very warm in there. They went on hand in hand, not speaking just then, not laughing as in the old days; for their eyes were opened, and they understood that life is not a fairy-tale, but a winding path between rocks and cruel furze; and