

A SINGER FROM THE SEA.

A CORNISH STORY.

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CHAPTER XV.—ONLY FRIENDS.

"Stay at home, my heart, and rest,
 Home-keeping hearts are happiest ;
 For those that wander they know not where
 Are full of trouble and full of care—
 To stay at home is best."

WHEN Denas had deposited her money in the Clydesdale Bank and made the few purchases she thought proper and prudent, she felt that one room of the house of life was barred for ever against her return to it.

Leaving London, such thoughts of something final, at least as far as this probation was concerned, greatly depressed Denas. "Every pleasure I had was tithed by sorrow. Roland loved me, but I brought him only disappointment. I loved Roland, and yet all my efforts to make him happy were failures. Roland has been taken from me. Our child has been taken away from me. Elizabeth I have put away—death could not sever us more effectually. I am going back to my own people and my own life, and I pray God to give me a contented heart in it."

These were the colour of her reflections as the train bore her swiftly to the fortune of her future years. She told herself that there would be a certain amount of gossip about her return, and that it could not be avoided by either a public or private arrival.

A few people were on the platform, but none of them were thinking of Mrs. Tresham, and the woman so simply dressed and veiled in black made no impression on anyone. She left her trunk in the baggage-room and went by the familiar road down the cliff-breast. At the last reach she stood still a moment and looked at the clustered cottages and the boats swaying softly on the incoming tide. A great peace was over the place. The very houses seemed to be resting. There was fire or candle light in every glimmering square of their windows; but not a man, or a woman, or a child in sight. As she drew near to her father's cottage, she saw that it was very brightly lighted; and then she remembered that it was Friday night, and that very likely the weekly religious meeting was being held there. That would account for the diffused quiet of the whole village.

The thought made her pause. She had no desire to turn her home-coming into a scene. So she walked softly to the back of the little house and entered the curing shed. There was only a slight door—a door very seldom tightly closed—between this shed and the cottage room. She knew all its arrangements. It was