

THE WORN PATH

417

But most of all, and that which brings the strange suffusing joy to eyes that have looked on the world for over seventy years, is to sit with the window open upon the fell, watching the little path which his feet wore—the way Laurence used to come home to me for forty years.

Then, while I sit long and con over the Book, which he taught me to read in our long years together, till I am a-weary, lo! the gloaming comes up the glen, and there goes a thrilling through me that is not of this earth. The age evanishes from my limbs. The sight returns to my dim eyes. The clear heaven opens above, and I come out upon a place where there is no night.

But even then the path his feet trod remains on the hillside yonder. I can see it sitting here—yes, sitting and waiting—an old woman, but with a young heart in my breast.

Also I know, and rejoice that the time is not far off when I shall see him come down that path, my Laurence, whom I loved.

Then, from the old worn chair where I have watched and waited for him so long, I shall rise to my feet and say, "*Beloved!*" And behold, after that, the chair, the house, and the world shall know me no more for ever!

Because he and I shall have gone up that worn path together, hand in hand, silent—but not afraid.

THE END