

keep from straying on her broad white brow. Hers was a sweet face indeed ; all lines and marks of care had wholly gone from it now, because her heart was most utterly at rest ; she knew that she was perfectly happy at this moment, and that she wished it might last for ever. But she did not admit to herself that it was because Denis Holgate stood near, his earnest tones making sweetest melody in ear and heart.

‘ Winifred,’ he said presently, bringing his eyes from the moonlit pathway on the sea to her sweet dear face, ‘ do you feel happy and at home here with me ? ’

‘ Yes.’

Winifred Barham could not have uttered another word, and she began to tremble, she knew not why.

‘ I have tried to make myself a worthier, better man, Winifred ; my desire first being to make myself worthy of your precious friendship. It is still precious, but it is not enough. Do you understand ? ’

She bent her head and clasped her hands, and the sweet colour rose silently in her cheek. But no word fell from her happy, trembling lips. Only her heart filled with that unspeakable tenderness and rest a woman feels when the crown of her life comes to her, offered in a true, earnest, unselfish love.

‘ I am still very unworthy. The best of us, I think, however we may strive and labour, fall far short of the height upon which such women as you