

'It is a beautiful letter; but it has made my heart ache. Uncle Archie, may I talk to you just as I do to father? He *will* write as if I were getting well. He says to-day he is working for the fame and future he promised me, and that they do not seem so very far away. I have written to him to-day, and told him that he must not work less nobly because I shall never share what he may win.'

'My poor boy!'

'But, Uncle Archie, it is better—far better. He will not forget me; but some day he will bring a dear wife here, and they will remember their poor cousin, and talk of her with kindly regret. It is better that we should be only cousins. I have told him so, but he will not listen.'

'The lad loves you. He will never seek another, I believe,' said Sir Archie quickly.

A beautiful smile hovered about Annie's sweet mouth. Perhaps the assurance was very precious, for her heart had long been given, with all its weight of womanly love, into her cousin's keeping, and could never be recalled.

'Is there anything else, Annie? Are you going to leave anything to your aunts, or to those in the Haven?'

'Nothing, nothing to any of these, Uncle Archie, but such little things of mine as they may wish to keep, and my love. Oh, I can leave that to them all, and they know it.'

'Nothing to the skipper, Annie?'

Annie shook her head.

'What could repay him? We have talked about it sometimes, and I know his heart. But, yes, there is one other thing—a new lifeboat for the people in the Haven. It is to be my last gift to them. Father and I have talked of that, and it is to be called the *Annie Erskine*.'

Sir Archie stooped down and kissed his niece on the lips, and walked away out of the room. As he shut the door, a sob broke from his lips, and Annie heard it, and knew something of what was passing in his heart.