

"Oh, Fay, for God's sake make him hear!" said Wentworth, with a cry.

The bishop and Magdalen standing apart looked at each other.

"He has forgiven her though he does not know it," he said below his breath.

Fay stooped down. She raised Michael in her arms, and laid his head on her breast, turning his fading face to his brother.

"Michael," she whispered into his ear, with a passion which would have cloven death itself.

"Come back, come back, and say one word to Wentworth."

Very near the sea now. Very near the great peace and light. This was the real life at last. All the rest had been a vain shadow, a prison where he had dwelt a little while, not seeing that this great all-surrounding water, which had seemed to hem him in, was but a highway of light.

Who were these two with him in the boat? Who but the two he loved best! Who but Fay and Wentworth! They were all floating on together in exceeding joy. They were very near him. He felt them one on each side, but the light was so great that he could not see them. His head was on Fay's breast. His hand was in Wentworth's hand. It was all as in dim dreams he had longed for it to be.

Fay's voice reached him, pressed close to his ear, like the sound of the sea, held in its tiniest shell.

He opened his eyes, and his brother's white face came to him for a moment, like sea foam, blown in from the sea of love to which he was going, part of the sea.