

served him, and overheard his exclamation; "are you mad? See him below," continued he, addressing another seaman; "the fellow appears deranged."

"I am not mad, your honor," returned Peter, though his look and his late manner almost belied his words; and, briefly telling his story he begged permission to go on shore. The fugate, however, was considered as his prison and his place of punishment: when sent on board, he had been described as "a dangerous character;" his recent bitter prayer or imprecation went far in confirmation of that description: and his earnest request was refused.

Darkness silently stretched its dull curtain over earth and sea—still the wind slept as a cradled child, and the evening star, like a gem on the bosom of night, threw its pale light upon the land. Peter had again crept upon the deck; and while the tears yet glistened in his eyes, he gazed eagerly towards the shore, and on the star of hope and of love. It seemed like a lamp from heaven suspended over his father's house: the home of his heart, and of his childhood. He felt as though it at once invited him to the scene of his young affections, and lighted the way. For the first time, the gathering tears rolled down his cheeks. He bent his knees—he clasped his hand in silent prayer—one desperate resolution had taken possession of his soul; and the next moment he descended gently into the silent sea. He dived by the side of the vessel; and ascending at the distance of about twenty yards, strained every nerve for the shore.

It was about day-dawn, when Robin Paterson and his wife were aroused by the loud barking of their farm-dog; but the sound suddenly ceased, as if the watch-dog were familiar with the intruder; and a gentle tapping was heard at the window of the room where they slept.

"What's there?" inquired Betty.

"A friend, an old friend," was replied in a low and seemingly disguised voice.

But there was no disguising the voice of a lost son to a mother's ear.

"Robin! Robin!" she exclaimed, "it is *him*! Oh, it is *him*! Peter! my bairn!"

In an instant, the door flew open, and Peter Paterson stood on his parents' hearth, with their arms around his neck, while their tears were mingled together.

After a brief space wasted in hurried exclamations, inquiries, and tears of joy and

surprise, "Come hinnie," said the anxious mother, "let me get ye changed, for ye're wet through and through. Oh, come, my man, and we'll hear a' thing by and by, or ye'll get yer death o' cauld, for ye're droukit into the very skin. But, preserve us, bairn! ye hae neither a hat to yer head, nor a coat to yer back! O Peter, lunny, what is't; what's the matter? tell me what's the meaning o't."

"O mother, do not ask me! I have but a few minutes to stop. Faither, ye can understand me, I maun go back to the ship again; if I stay, they will be after me."

"O Peter! Peter, man!" exclaimed Robin, weeping as he spoke, and pressing his son's hand between his, "what's this o't! yes, yes, yer faither understands ye! But is it no possible to hide?"

"No, no, faither!" replied he: "dinna think o't."

"O bairn!" cried Betty, "what is't ye mean? Wad ye leave yer mother again? Oh! if ye kened what I've suffered for your sake, ye wadna speak o't."

"O mother!" exclaimed Peter, dashing his hand before his face, "this is worse than death! But I must! I must go back, or they would tear me from you. Yet before I do go I would see my poor Ann."

"Ye shall see her; see her presently," cried Betty, "and baith her and yer mother will gang down on oor knees to ye, Peter, if ye'll promise no to leave us."

"Haste ye, then, Betty," said Robin anxiously: "rin awa owre to Mr. Graham's as quick as ye can: for though ye no understand it, I see there's nae chance for poor Peter but to tak horse for it before the sun's up."

And hastily the weeping mother flew towards Mr. Graham's. Robin, in spite of the remonstrances of his son, went out to saddle a horse on which he might fly. The sun had not yet risen when Peter beheld his mother, his betrothed bride, and her father, hurrying towards Foxlaw: he rushed out to meet them—to press her he loved to his heart.

A loud huzza burst from a rising ground between them and the beach. The old skipper started round. He beheld a boat's crew of the frigate, with their pistols levelled towards himself, his unhappy daughter, and her hapless bridegroom!

"O Ann, woman!" exclaimed Peter, wildly, "this is terrible! it is mair than flesh and blood can stand!"

[Concluded in our next.]