

she was enabled to assume a calmness which she did not feel. Midnight came; all in the house, except Melicent, were wrapt in profound repose—she still sat in her parlour, alternately cherishing sweet expectations, and then again yielding to despondency. A tap was heard at the window—her heart beat quick—the tap was repeated, and emotion fixed her to her seat. She heard her name called gently: the voice was his,—the very voice that had been treasured in memory since last she heard its sound. Her spirits revived—her strength returned—she opened the door, and was clasped in her husband's arms. Oh, who can paint the ecstasy of that delightful moment?

They sat together in that little parlour, and fondly did the parent caress his growing offspring. Jewels, rare and costly, were spread before his devoted wife, who, however, felt that her pearl of best price was the affection of her husband. Heaps of gold were released from various parts of his person, and he threw over her shoulders a beautiful mantilla from India, bordered with flowers, that seemed to have all the freshness of life. But Melicent, though gratified by such proofs of remembrance, still preferred the white scarf which Ezekiel had ever retained, and, on all especial occasions, had worn about his neck. Two days,—two short but happy days,—they passed together, and the following morning he was again to take his departure. The hour arrived—they were standing in the little garden fronting the cottage. Melicent had decorated herself in some of the ornaments she had received from Ezekiel's hand. The mantilla was brooched upon her bosom with a costly diamond, and even the neck of the infant displayed a precious gift. They said but little. Ezekiel plucked a full-blown rose, and placed it in her hair, and whilst lingering still to lengthen the adieu, he saw the little cutter of his former exploits anchor in the bay. A crowd of recollections rushed upon his mind; he pressed her to his heart, and was bidding her farewell, when a party of armed seamen entered the garden, and, before he could conceal himself or escape, he was a prisoner. Without allowing him a moment's delay, he was hurried to the beach, where a small boat lay in readiness. His hands were heavily ironed, and he was thrown in without one spark of commiseration being excited at his unhappy condition.

Melicent's heart was nearly broken; she retired to her apartment, where the first thing she saw was the white scarf, and as she looked from the window, she placed it in sight, that her husband might know her eyes were still upon him. The rose fell from her hair in the recess where it remained, and taking her sleeping boy in her arms, she sat herself down to weep. Oh, scalding, scalding, were those tears, and bitter, bitter, was her agony. She saw the boat pull to the little cutter—this was inexplicable. She saw the cutter stand out to sea—animation seemed almost suspended, when several of the neighbours arrived to comfort the afflicted. But the circumstances which had occurred, drew down upon her head the vengeance of the authorities. Her person was seized, and, with her child, she was consigned to the interior of a jail, whence she was conveyed to Boston, and kept in strict duration; not a friend, male or female, being allowed to visit her. Thus dragged on the dreary months of her existence, till, wasted with confinement, and worn by anxiety, she seemed but a shadow of her former self. Of her husband she heard nothing, for the subject was prohibited, and her only solace in affliction was his semblance in her darling boy.

When Ezekiel was lifted on board his own vessel, the cutter, the first person that presented himself was his former opponent, the lieutenant, (now elevated to the rank of commander,) who had, on hearing of the visitor on the coast, rightly judged that Ezekiel would seek an opportunity to snatch a few hasty hours with his wife. He communicated his thoughts to the commander-in-chief, and seizing the cutter, he manned her with some of his seamen, and, sailing from Boston, brought his plans to the fruition that has been shown.

"Well met again, young man!" said he, as with ill-repressed delight he contemplated the success of his stratagem; "we are once more upon the same deck—you stopped my promotion once. I fear I shall not be able to do the same for you."

Ezekiel's heart was too full to say much. He gave the captain a look of utter contempt. "The hemp's not spun that is to do that office for me," returned he; "nor is it mainly to taunt the vanquished—I had hoped better things from you."

"Come, come, don't be testy, young man," said Captain D—; "you cannot suppose that I have forgotten or forgiven the destruction of my schooner; in truth, it was a villainous affair; and now, with one thousand five hundred pounds reward!—Hopkins, the temptation was too great. I have you safe now, where no 'Avenger' can deliver you."

Ezekiel was thrust into the hold, where, galled by his manacles, he lay in utter darkness, and almost suffocated with the heat. Hours passed on in miserable anticipation, and keen reflection, till, by the motion of the vessel, he became sensible that the breeze had stiffly freshened, and the noise on deck convinced him that they were shortening sail. Sea after sea broke over the lively little craft, and the water came pouring down upon the unhappy prisoner. The gale increased from the north-west, and, as they opened out clear of the land, the sea ran fearfully high, and the cutter was just going about to stand in shore again; but, in accomplishing this, she pitched so heavily forward that her bowsprit broke short off, at the stem, and they were compelled to lay her to under the try-sail. Nothing could behave better than the light buoyant vessel, as she rolled over the billows, like a gull topping the comb of a wave:—wet she was, it is true, but she safely swam where many a larger vessel must have perished. Hopkins was, at length, released from his unpleasant confinement, and suffered to remain on deck. All night the gale continued, but lulled towards the morning; the sea gradually went down, and, at day-light, the wind had greatly abated, and the water was, comparatively, smooth; but close to them, emerging from the haze of early dawn, appeared a large ship, evidently a vessel of war.

"It is the Rose," said Captain D—; "she's looking for a Yankee pirate that has lately been seen upon the coast," and he sternly fixed his eyes on Hopkins; "she sees us, and is bearing down."

Ezekiel gazed stealthily, but with intense anxiety, at the stranger—he drew a convulsive respiration—his lip quivered with emotion, and a livid paleness over-spread his face; it was, however, but momentary, and passed unnoticed; his blood rallied, and rushed violently to his head,—he made a desperate effort, and was calm.

The ship rapidly approached, nearly end on; they had no glass on board the cutter, but one of the seamen respectfully approached his commander, and uncovering a venerable head, exclaimed, "Mayhap your honour will excuse my troubling on you in regard o' the sloop; but I thought it a bit of my duty, your honour, just to tell you that that 'ere ship arn't his majesty's sloop Rose, whatever other name she may be entered by in the Navy List."

"Not the Rose?" returned the captain, starting up in haste; "pooh—pooh, old man—it must be either the Rose or the Lively,—what other king's ship should we fall in with here?"

"It may be the Lively, your honour, thof I misdoubts it," ejaculated the seaman, stroking his silken locks over his forehead; "but every man will be as wise as his neighbour presently, I'm thinking."

"What do you mean, Jackson?" inquired the commander, quickly, as a vague answer to his own question crossed his thoughts. "What ship do you think it is?"

"Why then, since your honour axes me," answered the man, "and Bill never was the boy to shove his oar in another man's rullock—since your honour axes me, I'm bound to speak my mind, and I'm blessed if I don't believe she's that pirate as they've overhauled so much palaver about lately,"

"Impossible, Jackson!" exclaimed Captain D—, again fixing his eyes on Hopkins, who stood the severe scrutiny undisturbed; then, addressing him, he said, "Are you acquainted with you ship, young man?"

"You put a difficult question, sir," replied Ezekiel, with assumed indifference. "Even you yourself are unable to distinguish friend from foe without a glass; but less than half-an-hour will decide it, according to the rating rate the vessel travels."

The men, (most of them employed in running out a jury-bowsprit,) looked with "lack-lustre" eyes as the gallant bark drew nigher; and they murmured amongst themselves as indecisive how to act. "Bear a-hand, lads,—get sail upon the cutter," shouted the captain; "we can yet hold our own."

But the order was too late—the stranger neared them too fast to encourage any hope of their getting away, if such was the captain's intent; the men, however, went cheerily to work—the jib and gaff-topsail were set, and the pretty little craft danced along as if in joyous pride that she had braved the gale. On came the ship, ploughing the foaming element, that roared beneath her forefoot, and—"What do you make of her now, Jackson?" asked the captain.

"She's telling your honour herself," replied Jackson, as the smoke from her bow gun curled up before the foresail, and a large red-striped ensign floated from the gaff end.

"By Heaven, it is the infernal pirate!" uttered the captain, as the shot dashed up the spray upon the cutter's deck. "Hopkins, you know her now!"

"I do sir," returned Hopkins, stiffly; and, holding up his fettered hands, added, "These irons will tell but a sorry tale, Mr. D—; I would recommend their speedy removal—for the 'Avengers' are but men—some of them lawless, and difficult to command; it is for you I speak, and not for myself."

The captain was touched with the nobleness of the proposition, but his consent would, he feared, have something of a look of cowardice, and therefore he remained silent. Not so, Jackson—an old stager; he quickly released the prisoner's hands, so that when the ship ran alongside, and hove-to he was free. Scarcely an individual was to be seen on the Avenger's deck. A young man, in a light undress uniform, stood at the gangway, with a trumpet in his hand, which he was about to use, when Hopkins's voice arrested his intention. "Jasper," exclaimed he, from the cutter's quarter, "send me the boat." The young man waved his cap with an "Ay, ay, sir;" and first a few heads were raised above the bulwarks—a whisper ran along—"It is the captain—it is the captain!" and simultaneously upsprang the whole crew, with a loud and hearty cheer to welcome Ezekiel's return.

The boat with Hopkins and Captain D— was soon at the Avenger's gangway, and they ascended to the deck. The seamen expressed their warm congratulations—the officers gathered round them, and though surprised at seeing a British naval commander, they respectfully saluted him, and extended their hands to Hopkins. Discipline was, for the moment, forgotten, and, as Captain D— was well known to several of the seamen, he observed many scowling looks bent upon him. Ezekiel addressed a few words to Jasper, and then went below. Jasper communicated with his subordinates, who also disappeared, and he himself followed the example, leaving the gunner in charge of the deck. The boat had again boarded the cutter, and one or two of the seamen, with whom Captain D— was no favourite, mentioned the treatment which Hopkins had received. This on their return, was diffused amongst the Avenger's people, and it became evident, by their menacing attitudes and looks, that they meditated a terrible retaliation. Numbers of them, under pretence of examining the guns, got clustering on the quarter-deck, and Captain D— became aware that they gazed upon him with an evil eye. Nevertheless he paced to-and-fro, with firm steps, and unchanged mien, as if daring them to do their worst.