

"Nobody the worse, Mr. Luke, sir?" cried the woman. "What a shame to talk like that! You arn't no wife, nor no child, but there's Miss Louise."

"Louisa, woman, Louisa," said the fisher sharply.

"Well, Louisa, sir. I only want to be right; but it was only yes'day as old Miss Vine, as stood by when I was selling her some hake, shook her finger at me and said I was to say Miss Louise."

"Humph! Never mind what my sister says. Christened Louisa.—That ought to fetch 'em."

"Yes, sir; that ought to fetch 'em," said the woman in a sing-song way, as the elderly man gave the glistening bait at the end of his running line a deft swing and sent it far out into the bright sea. "I've seen the water boiling sometimes out there with the bass leaping and playing. What, haven't you caught none, sir?"

"No, Polly, not one; so just be off about your business, and don't worry me with your chatter."

"Oh, I'm agoing, sir," said the woman good-humouredly; "only I see you a-fishing, and said to myself, 'maybe Mr. Luke Vine's ketched more than he wants, and he'd like to sell me some of 'em for my customers.'"

"And I haven't seen a bass this morning, so be off."

"To be sure, Mr. Luke Vine, sir; and when are you going to let me come up and give your place a good clean? I says to my 'Liza up at your brother's, sir, only yes'day——"

"Look here, Polly Perrow," cried the fisher viciously, "will you go, or must I?"

"Don't be criss-cross, sir, I'm going," said the woman, giving her basket a hitch. "Here's Miss Louise—isa—coming down the rocks with Miss Madlin."

"Hang her confounded chatter!" snarled the fisher, as he drew out his bait, unwound some more line, and made another throw, "bad as those wretched stamps."

He cast an angry glance up at the mining works high on the cliff-side, whose chimney shaft ran along the sloping ground till it reared itself in air on the very top of the hill, where in constant repetition the iron-shod piles rose and fell, crushing the broken ore to powder. "A man might have thought he'd be free here from a woman's tongue."

He gave another glance behind him, along the rocky point which jutted out several hundred yards and formed