

child was grown quiet again, being unable to cry any more, and now beginning to watch my doings as much as I could wish, or more.

She never seemed tired of watching me, having slept out all her sleep for the moment; and as I piled up fish on fish, and they came sliding, slippery, she came shyly, eyeing them with a desire to see each one, pushing her mites of fingers out, and then drawing them back in a hurry as their bellies shone in the moonlight. Some of the congers could wriggle still, and they made her scream when they did it; but the lobsters were her chief delight, being all alive and kicking. She came and touched them reverently, and ready to run if they took it amiss; and then she stroked their whiskers, crying, "Pitty, pitty! jolly, jolly!" till one great fellow, who knew no better, would have nipped her wrist asunder if I had not ricked his claw.

"Now, deary," said I, as I drew her away, "you have brought poor old Davy a beautiful boat, and the least that he can do for you is to get you a good supper." For since her tumble the little soul had seemed neither hungry nor thirsty.

"Pease, old Davy," she answered, "I 'ants to go to mama and papa, and ickle bother and Susan."

"The devil you do!" thought I, in a whistle, not seeing my way to a fib as yet.

"Does 'ee know mama and papa, and ickle bother, old Davy?"

"To be sure I do, my deary—better than I know you, almost."

"'Et me go to them, 'et me go to them. Hot ma say about my poor leggy peggy?"

This was more than I could tell; believing her mother to be, no doubt, some thirty fathoms under water, and her father and little brother in about the same predicament.

"Come along, my little dear, and I'll take you to your mother." This was what I said, not being ready, as yet, with a corker.

"I'se yeady, old Davy," she answered; "I'se kite yeady. Hen'll 'e be yeady? Peshy voo."

"Ready and steady: word of command! march!" said I, looking up at the moon, to try to help me out of it. But the only thing that I could find to help

me in this trouble, was to push about and stir, and keep her looking at me. She was never tired of looking at things with life or motion in them; and this I found the special business of her nature afterwards.

Now, being sure of my boat, I began to think what to do with Bardie. And many foolish ideas came, but I saw no way to a wise one, or at least I thought so then, and unhappily looked to prudence more than to gracious Providence, for which I have often grieved bitterly, ever since it turned out who Bardie was.

For the present, however (though strongly smitten with her manner, appearance, and state of shipwreck, as well as impressed with a general sense of her being meant for good-luck to me), I could not see my way to take her to my home and support her. Many and many times over I said to myself, in my doubt and uneasiness, and perhaps more times than need have been if my conscience had joined me, that it was no good to be a fool, to give way (as a woman might do) to the sudden affair of the moment, and a hot-hearted mode of regarding it. And the harder I worked at the stowing of fish, the clearer my duty appeared to me.

So by the time that all was ready for starting with this boat of mine, the sea being all the while as pretty as a pond by candle-light, it was settled in my mind what to do with Bardie. She must go to the old Sker-house. And having taken a special liking (through the goodness of my nature and the late distress upon me) to this little helpless thing, most sincerely I prayed to God that all might be ordered for the best; as indeed, it always is, if we leave it to Him.

Nevertheless I ought never to have left it to Him, as every one now acknowledges. But how could I tell?

By this time she began to be overcome with circumstances, as might happen naturally to a child but two years old, after long exposure without any food or management. Scared, and strange, and tired out, she fell down anyhow in the boat, and lay like a log, and frightened me. Many men would have cared no more, but, taking the baby for dead, have dropped her into the grave of the waters. I, however, have always been of a very dif-