

ing its hoarse ominous cry; and a lean, hungry looking, black cat, drew up its ugly back, and swore at the intruders in a very inhospitable manner.

Mildred rapped once or twice at the door, without receiving any answer: at length she gently lifted the latch, and entered with her mother, the old woman's miserable domicile.

After the first rapid survey of the apartment, she concluded that its usual occupant was absent, until a slight rustling among a heap of straw in a corner, covered with part of an old sail, painfully convinced her that the old woman was within.

With eyes fixed and rayless, her long bony fingers clasped under her head, and her thin lips moving in voiceless gesticulations, lay Rachel Lagon, upon that bed from which she was destined never more to rise. She neither saw nor heard her kinswomen's approach, as Mildred leant over the rude couch, and gazed long and sadly, and silently upon her.

"Mother, she is dying; we have come too late."

"Poor creature," said Mrs. Rosier. "I wish I had known of her distressing situation before."

"Peter!" muttered the witch. "Peter, tell your father not to put off the boat to-night. There's a swell upon the sea, and a sough in the wind, I don't like. But the man is wilful—the man is wilful. He will have it his own way, and the storm will come and overwhelm you in an hour when you think not of it."

"She is speaking of her sons," said Mildred. "Rachel Lagon!"

"Who calls," said the dying woman, in hollow tones. "I am coming, Henry! there's room enough in the wide seas for us both. I will lie down by your side, and the boys shall make their bed at our feet: and we shall sleep soundly with the world of billows for a winding sheet. Ugh! ugh! the waters are cold; they freeze my heart. Cover me with your fishing coat, or the shark will bite me in two. Its green eyes glow like a tiger's in the dark; they light up the slimy caverns of the ocean, and show me where the white skulls lie embedded in the salt sea weeds. Rise up, my boys! and let us return to the green fields of earth. I cannot sleep in this fearful gloom."

"Rachel!" said Mildred, sitting down on the clay floor beside her, and gently taking her hand. "You are dreaming. My mother is here. We are come to take you home, that you may spend the last hours of your life in peace."

"Home!" said the dying creature. "Home! where is my home? Where will it be? I have spent a long life in sin, and now that I am called upon to give an account, I feel like a vessel drift-

ing towards the ocean of Eternity, without rudder or mast, no friendly hand to steer my shattered bark through this unknown sea. All before is dark and unknown, while the fearful past is as clear as the noonday. Yes, it is terrible to look back upon a misspent life, when the hour for repentance is gone for ever; and you want both the strength and the will, to ask God to have mercy upon your soul."

"It is never too late to repent," said Mrs. Rosier, "if you are sincere, and your heart is humbled under the sense of your guilt. Remember, Christ died that sinners like you might repent and live."

"I have rebelled against the Lord, and his hand is heavy upon me," muttered Rachel. "I am too proud to pray. I cannot humble myself. I cannot pray. My husband was a kind man to me, but he never had God in his thoughts. My boys were fine lads, but we never taught them to look beyond this miserable world. They were taken suddenly out of it. Death came upon them like a thief in the night; and found them unprepared. Yes, they died in their sins, and so they went to judgment, and there this night, must I meet them at the awful bar, from which there is no appeal. Shall I seek to be better than they? Let me share their sentence, for heaven would be no heaven to me, if they were cast out. Death! death! I have often spoke lightly of death, but I never knew until this moment, what a terrible thing it was to die."

"Rachel," said Mrs. Rosier, deeply affected by the poor creature's distress. "Trust in God, and cleave to his promises in Christ, and he will in no wise cast you out."

"Blessed words, and kindly spoken," replied Rachel. "Who are you that come as a messenger of mercy, to speak peace to my soul?"

"The widow of Edward Rosier—your nephew."

"I knew him—a beautiful lad he was; but far too proud to acknowledge the wife of Lagon, the poor fisherman, as his own blood relation. There was but one of that name who had a kind heart. But she has forsaken me in my extremity. She, the fair young girl, whom I saw and loved, who was not ashamed to weep over the sad history of the miserable, despised witch, the outcast of earth, and the rejected of heaven—Mildred Rosier."

"She is here," sobbed Mildred, "here to ask forgiveness for her fault, and to promise never to offend in the like manner again."

"God bless you, Mildred Rosier! Turn to me your face, poor child, I would look upon you once more." She stretched out her long bony hand, and slowly turned the beautiful face of the young-