

"Not a very long way, my child—you will soon see your uncle!"

"I can't see, sir," she said, softly.

Mr. L. started, and looked down into those bright dark, intelligent eyes. Alas! it was too true! they were darkened windows, through which the soul could never look!

"Mittie! hey, Mittie!" called a bluff voice, as the captain's varnished hat appeared from behind the mast. "Eh, birdie, what new nest have you found!"

With a start and a bound Mittie jumped into his rough arms, and laid her cheek upon the shoulder of his shaggy coat sleeve.

"So-ho, shipmate," continued the captain, addressing Mr. L., "you are aloft at last. Nothing like a stiff nor'wester for taking the starch out of you landsfolk;" and he laughed.

"But this little girl, Captain I——, how happens she to be alone on the wide world of waters?"

"Can't say," returned the captain, with a dubious shake of his shining hat. "She's a stray waif that I picked up on the Liverpool docks. Don't know her belongings; she was labelled for New York, it seems. Her name—what's the balance of it, sea-bird?" he asked.

"Mittie Wythe Hamilton," lisped the child, who had already found her way back to her bit of rope and sat against the ship's railing, tossing up her hands at every new dash of spray. "I was named for Uncle Wythe, and he told mamma to send me." Her face clouded for an instant, then brightened again in the sunshine.

"Poor blind pet! so far as I can make out her story from one thing and another, she is the child of missionaries in India. Poor creatures, they could not bring her over themselves, and I dare say she was getting no good in that heathenish land; so it seems they put her in charge of an English lady, name I've forgotten, who set out to join her husband somewhere in Canada. But she sickened and died before the barque *Sally* reached England, and the poor thing was left friendless and helpless. What the captain and mate of the *Sally* were thinking of, I don't know; but they put the child on dry land, with the balance of the passengers, and set sail without so much as looking up a New York packet. Alone in Liverpool—and it's no place for a blind child, sir, to say nothing of one that's got eyes—I found her amusing herself pretty much as you see her now, with bits of chips, at the corner of a ship yard! How the creature had lived, I can't say. I'll believe after this, shipmate, there's a God in the sky, who, as she says, keeps watch over children; if He don't over us grown up sinners? It seems she had never wanted for a birth nor a mess. 'I want to go to New York,' she would say to every stranger who spoke to her. I couldn't have left the little thing—but I don't know where I'm taking her. If I can't anchor her safely, I'll keep her for first mate of the *Down*; hey, sea-bird?"

"What could you do with her in that terrible storm off Cape Clear? I shudder to recollect that night!"

"Well, sir, while you were lying flat on your back and the rest of us were raining, hauling and pulling hither and thither, working for dear life against the winds and waves, the pretty creature was rolling about the cabin floor, clapping her hands as though she were in an apple-tree swing, and found it capital fun! When I tumbled down to my locker for five minutes' rest, I found her on her knees in her little night-wrap, saying 'Our Father,' and I felt sure no storm would sink the ship with her on it!"

Poor mother of Mittie! how her heart was wrung at sending her blind, trusting child from her arms! But her brother in America had written, telling her