

man at the helm could not see half way to the mast head—'Ben, my little fellow, can you cipher?' 'Yes, Sir,' says I. 'The deuce you can!' says he, 'then you're just the lad for me; and do you understand logarithms?' No, sir,' says I, 'what sort of wood be they?' 'Wood be hanged! you blockhead!' said he, raising his foot in a passion, but a smile on the corners of his mouth shoved it to the deck again, before it reached me. 'But come, Ben, you can cipher, you say; well, I know all about the radius and tangents, and them sort of things, and stating the question; but blow me if I have a multiplication table on board; my fingers are of no use at a long number, and I am always getting out of it counting chalks—so come below Ben, and look over the question, and let us find where we are. I know I have made a mistake someway—and mark ye, Ben, if ye don't find it out—ye that can cipher—there's a rope's end to your supper, and that's all.' Hows'ever, Sir, I did find it out, and I was regarded as a prodigy in the ship ever after. The year before I was out of apprenticeship, our vessel, was laid up for four months, and the skipper sent me to school during the time, at his own expense, saying—'Get navigation, Ben, my boy, and you will one day be a commodore—by Jupiter, you'll be an honour to the navy.' I got as far as '*Dead Reckoning*,' and there I reckon I made a dead stand, or rather, I ceased to do any thing but study '*Lunar Observations*.' Our owner had a daughter, my own age to a day.

I can't describe her, sir—I haven't enough of what I suppose you would call poetry about me for that, but upon the word of a sailor, her hair was like night rendered transparent black, jet black; her neck white as the spray on the bosom of a billow; her face was lovelier than a rainbow; and her figure handsome as a frigate in full sail. But she had twenty thousand pounds; she was no bargain for orphan Ben! However, I saw her, and that was enough—learning and I shook hands—her father had a small yacht—he proposed taking a pleasure party to the Coquet isle.—Jess, for that was her name, was one of the passengers, and the management of the yacht was entrusted to me. In spite of myself, I gazed upon her by the hour; I was intoxicated with passion; my heart swelled as if it would burst from my bosom. I saw a titled puppy touch her fingers; I heard him prattle love in her ears. My first impulse was to dash him overboard. I wished the sea which

I loved might rise and swallow us. I thought it would be happiness to die in her company, perhaps to sink with her arm clinging round my neck for protection. The wish of my madness was verified. We were returning. We were five miles from the shore. A squall, then a hurricane, came on; every sail was reefed; the mast was snapped as I would snap that pipe between my fingers; (here the old squire, suiting the action to the word broke the end of his pipe;) the sea rose; the hurricane increased, the yacht capsized, and leather twirls in the wind. Every soul that had been on board was now struggling for life, buffeting the billows. At that moment I had but one thought, and that was of Jess; but one wish, and that was to die with her. I saw my fellow creatures in their death agonies, but I looked only for her. At the moment we were upset, she was clinging to the arm of the titled puppy for protection, and now I saw her within five yards of me still clinging to the skirts of his coat, calling on him and on her father to save her; and I saw him! yes, sir, I saw the monster, while struggling with one hand, raise the other to strike her on the face, that he might extricate himself from her grasp. 'Brute! monster!' I exclaimed, and the next moment I had fixed my clenched hands in the hair of his head. Then with one hand I grasped the arm of her I loved, and with the other, uttering a fiendish yell, I endeavoured to hurl the coward to the bottom of the sea. The yacht still lay bottom up, but was now a hundred yards from us; however, getting my arm round the waist of my adored Jess, I laughed at the sea, I defied the hurricane; we reached the yacht. Her keel was not three feet out of the water, and with my right hand I managed to get a hold of it. I saw two of the crew and six of the passengers perish; but her father, and the coward who had struck her from him, still struggled with the waves; they were borne far from us: within half an hour I saw a vessel pick them up: it tried to reach us, but could not. Two hours more had passed, and the night was coming on: my strength gave way; my hold loosened: I made one more desperate effort, I fixed my teeth in the keel; but the burden under my left arm was still sacred: I felt her breath upon my cheek: it inspired me with a lion's strength, and for another hour I clung to the keel. Then the fury of the storm slackened: a boat from the vessel that picked up her father reached us; we were taken on board.