

Hitherto she had not once spoken with any assurance of their future together. She had treated the subject vaguely, as if her thoughts were all with the past and with the tragedy of her father's death.

"Would you face the homeward voyage in one of the little boats?" he asked, softly.

"Ay, with you at the tiller," she replied.

"Dear girl," he said, "I think that a stout ship called the *Heart of the West* will be setting sail from Bristol, for this wilderness, before many days."

"Would the fellow dare return?" she asked; for she had heard the story of Trowley's treachery.

"He will think himself safe enough," replied Kingswell. "No doubt he owns the ship now — has bought it from my mother for the price of a skiff, after telling her how recklessly he battled with the savages to save her son's life."

He laughed softly. "The old rogue will be surprised when I step aboard," he added.

Before she could answer him a booming report shook the sunlit air. It was followed, in a second, by a long-drawn tumult — a grinding and crashing and roaring — as if the firmament had fallen and overthrown the everlasting hills. The sagging ice below them reared, domed upward, and split with clapping thunders. It broke its plunging masses,