

grain. The night before he joined the coast-guardsmen, he was down at the Book-in-Hand, and 'twas little like that I'd let the good chance pass—I might never have another; for Gover'ment folk will not easy work a quarrel on their own account. I mind him sittin' there on the settle, his shins against the fire, a long pipe going, and Casey of the *Lazy Beetle*, and Jobbin the mate of the *Dodger*, and Little Faddo, who had the fat Dutch wife down by the Ship Inn, and Whiggle the preaching blacksmith. And you were standin' with your back to the shinin' pewters, and the great jug of ale with the white napkin behind you; the light o' the fire wavin' on your face, and your look lost in the deep hollow o' the chimney. I think of you most as you were that minute, Cousin Fanny, when I come in. I tell you straight and fair, that was the prettiest picture I ever saw; and I've seen some rare fine things in my travels. 'Twas as if the thing had been set by some one, just to show you off to your best. Here you were, a slip of a lass, straight as a bulrush, and your head hangin' proud on your shoulders; yet modest too, as you can see off here in the North the top of the golden-rod flower swing on its stem. You were slim as slim, and yet there wasn't a corner on you; so soft and full and firm you were, like the breast of a quail; and I mind me how the shine of your cheeks was like the glimmer of an apple after you've rubbed it with a bit of cloth. Well, there you stood in some sort of smooth, plain, clingin' gown, a little bit loose and tumblin' at the throat, and your pretty foot with a brown slipper pushed out, just savin' you from bein' prim. That's why the men liked you—you didn't carry a sermon in your waist-ribbon, and the Lord's Day in the lift o' your chin; but you had a smile to give when 'twas the right time for it, and men never