

With a kind of shudder she lifted the black-covered box, and carried it to the edge of the grave-like trench; and, after a moment's pause, after something between a gasp and a sigh had passed her pale lips, she lowered it down into the hole, and began hastily to cover it up, pausing not until the sand above it was level with the rest.

She knelt down and with her hands flattened it; the gleaming lights darting athwart the sky, one second showing her figure plainly, and the next vanishing away. Then the fight above grew fiercer; the storm-clouds warring in their wrath, and the lightning leaping out in its wild play. A moment later and the world seemed ablaze. In an instant the girl, kneeling on the sand, with her face now turned towards the sea, saw as in a vast panorama the whole scene around her; the brown shaggy rocks towering aloft; the patches of verdure between their crests; the rents and rifts on the huge rocks.

The next all was darkness, and a crash so loud, so terrible, that the earth seemed to shake, fell on the listener's appalled ears, who uttered a cry of terror and covered her face. Then she sprang to her feet, and overwhelmed with fear, fled homewards.

Just as she reached the top of the cliff another blinding flash of lightning showed plainly everything around. It showed this girl, rain-drenched, white-faced, with rigid features and wide open terrified eyes, to a man wrapped in a military cloak, who was walking leisurely, considering the weather, along the path at the head of the cliffs.

"Ruth Forth! it cannot be!"

Then he began hastily to follow the flying figure of the girl before him. She had seen, but not recognised him, but she saw *someone*, and this fact made her hasten on even faster than before.

At last she stopped, where he had expected—feared—that she would stop; before a little house in a garden, built back from the roadway. She opened the latch of the wooden gate, and he watched her go cautiously in, and disappear amid the wet evergreens. She did not go to the front door of the house, but evidently intended to enter at the back, and the man watching her saw all this with a feeling of intense anger and astonishment in his heart.

"If it had been the other one," he was thinking as he leaned a moment or two on the gate, "I should not have