

She tossed a shilling on to the pavement, and before the astonished girls could intercept her, turned on her heel and marched away.

A mocking laugh or two floated after her on the night air, then the black-eyed girl picked up the shilling, said Bet was a "good 'un, though she wor that contrairy," and the whole party set off singing and shouting up the narrow street of this particular Liverpool slum.

Bet, when she left her companions, walked quickly in the direction of the docks; the pallor still continued on her brown cheeks, and a dazed expression filled her heavy eyes.

"They clinched it when they said I wor a mammy's girl," she muttered. "There ain't no funk in me, but there was a look about mother this morning that I couldn't a-bear. No, I ain't a mammy's girl, not I. There was never nought so good about me, and I have give away my last shilling,—flung it into the gutter. Well, never mind. I ain't tied to nobody's apron-strings—no, not I. Wish I wor, wish I wor."

She walked on, not too fast, holding herself very stiff and erect now. She was a tall girl, made on a large and generous scale, her head was well set on a pair of shapely shoulders, and her coils of red-brown hair were twisted tightly round her massive head.

"Bet," said a young lad, as he rushed up the street—"ha-ha, handsome Bet, give us a kiss, will ye?"

Bet rewarded him with a smart cuff across his face, and marched on, more defiant than ever.

As she paused at a certain door a sweet-looking girl