

The old man nodded.

"Aye, I understand, I know the darkness and the voices in the dark," said he suddenly and impulsively, and rose agitated and made some needless arrangements in his small demesne and sat again perturbed. Here, on this subject, it would appear, he could not get far from himself. Then he came back to the boy.

"And yet the things she would be saying were not fearsome in themselves?"

"Oh, no, not fearsome at all, for she does not hold by telling fearsome tales. We had an old woman who used to come round and sometimes tell us tales of pirates that came to Lundy in the night and killed the fathers and mothers of all the children; and she would tell tales of the plague being in Bideford and how the children that had been playing round the quay, where the Spanish wool lay, took ill suddenly and all died; and how the people were all afraid; and how the mayor ran away in a rare fantod. But mother would have none of that. She never held by making children afraid. 'There's plenty to shake one in the world, she says, 'without telling fearsome tales for the joy of seeing the child's flesh creep.' But us were always afraid. There seemed always something hanging over we—aye, still."

"Yes," said Uncle, remembering the day on which the child had cried out: "Oh, Uncle, we're left—have you got a musket and a cutlass?" And the old man thinking over the matter decided it was not from the mother the child had learnt