

"What do you think of her, Buzzby?" inquired Captain Ellice, handing his glass to the seaman.

Buzzby gazed in silence and with compressed lips for some time; then he returned the glass, at the same time muttering the word, "Pirate."

"I thought so," said the captain in a deep, unsteady voice. "There is but one course for us, Buzzby," he continued, glancing towards his wife, who, all unconscious of their danger, sat near the taffrail employed with her needle; "these fellows show no mercy, because they expect none either from God or man. We must fight to the last. Go, prepare the men and get out the arms. I'll tell my wife."

Buzzby went forward; but the captain's heart failed him, and he took two or three rapid, hesitating turns on the quarter-deck ere he could make up his mind to speak.

"Alice," he said at length abruptly, "yonder vessel is a pirate."

Mrs. Ellice looked up in surprise, and her face grew pale as her eye met the troubled gaze of her husband.

"Are you quite sure, Frederick?"

"Yes, quite. Would God that I were left alone to—but—nay, do not be alarmed; perhaps I am wrong, it may be a—a clipper-built trading-vessel. If not, Alice, we must make some show of fighting, and try to frighten them. Meanwhile you must go below."

The captain spoke encouragingly as he led his wife to the cabin; but his candid countenance spoke too truthfully, and she felt that his look of anxious concern bade her fear the worst