

says he, with the flat of his hand, 'though it grieves me sore t' hurt you.' But whatever an' all, us loaded the *Word o' the Lord*—an' stowed the gear away, an' fell down t' sleep in our tracks, an' by an' by lied in wait for a fair wind t' the Newf'un'land out-ports. An' there comes a night—a fine, clear, starry night like this—with good prospects o' haulin' out at break o' day. An' I could sleep no longer, an' I went on deck alone, t' look up at the sky, an' t' dream dreams, maybe, accordin' t' my youth an' hope an' the good years I'd lived at Rickity Tickle.

"A lovely night: still an' starlit—with a flash o' northern lights abroad, an' the ol' *Word o' the Lord* lyin' snug asleep in a slow, black sea.

"Skipper Davy come up. 'Tumm,' says he, 'is you on deck?'

"'Ay, sir.'

"'Where is you, b'y?'

"'Lyin' here, sir,' says I, 'cuddled down on a cod-net.'

"'Now that the labor is over,' says he, 'I'm all tired out an' downcast.' He sot down beside me. 'You doesn't bear no malice for all them kicks an' cuffs, does you?' says he. 'You sees, lad, I—I— isn't used t' bein' fond o' nobody—an' I 'low I don't know how very well—though I done my best.'

"'Sure,' says I, 'I've no malice?'

"'What you doin' here?' says he.

"'Lookin' up at the stars.'

"'Is you?' says he. 'What for?'