

"There will be a heavy gale to-night," the girl said, looking at the sky; for a mass of dark cloud resembling a ragged mountain had appeared up the coast and begun to roll rapidly toward the harbour. It is only those who live near the lakes, that know how suddenly sometimes a terrible hurricane will come out of a sky which was the most peaceful of azure only a few moments before. The tempest first moved along the level shore, casting an awful shadow upon the landscape for miles before it; then it smote the sea in its full fury.

To describe the tumult of sound as the gale drove onward would be impossible. A sad cry would swell out like the voice of a mother wailing for her child; then, pitched in a low, loud key, would come a noise like the howling of a soul condemned; while above the confusing din could be heard shrill whistles and cross pipings as if a host of mad spirits were signalling one another through the storm.

Nancy hurried to the shore where lay her little boat, and several fishermen were gathered about the dock.

"Girl," said one, a hardy sailor who had been on the lakes in the roughest weather, "no boat would live now to reach the reef. Better wait till your father returns."

"But if some ship, unable to clear the land with this ingale, should be obliged to run for the harbour, she could never enter without the light."

"I was on the look-out a few moments ago, and there was nothing in sight. But, even if there was, it would be madness to launch a boat now. Look at these seas!"