

**"TRUE TO TRUST."**

**STORY FOR OLD AND YOUNG.**

**CHAPTER III.**

The Little Nell, which had had a prosperous voyage outward, had already met with one stiff gale coming home, and been severely strained. She had caused her brave captain more than one sleepless night, but up to the present, with extra work at the pump, she had come to no material grief. Could she be got safely into port, the profits of the voyage would pay well for repairs, and leave plenty for the wedding besides.

The weather had favored the Little Nell for several days after the gale in which she had been so roughly handled; but now there was every appearance of another tremendous tussle with the elements; and the captain looked anxiously above and around, and though he never quailed, still his heart was not light, and there were furrowed lines of anxiety upon his brow.

And, in truth, Andrew Randall had cause enough for care. He was now drawing near land, but he could not hope to reach it until far on into the night. Could he make the port or anchorage beneath his own cottage, or should he try, as less dangerous, to keep the open sea! The wind would enable him to do the latter if he thought it best, but with a sigh he had to dismiss the idea from his mind: the Little Nell was making too much water to run the chance. The anchorage at Shorecliffe could be made if only he were sure of the light. But suppose that were to fail him! The supposition was a terrible one; for then there probably remained nothing before him but being devoured by the jaws of the "Black-dogs."

It was a terrible risk: but then, as a set-off, could he not depend on his daughter—his own flesh and blood—and her intended husband, Dick Cables, who was almost the same.

"I cannot keep the sea to-night," said Andrew Randall, and he gave directions to have the little vessel's course shaped straight for Shorecliffe anchorage. Andrew knew his peril, but he was putting his trust in his

child. Could he have seen where that child then was, and known all that was going on on shore, his heart would have sunk with him; and he would rather have tried to keep the sea that fearful night than venture near the Black-dogs, without the Shorecliffe light.

It is well for us often, good reader, that we cannot see into the morrow or see too many miles away; we should often have much misery that we now escape.

To Bothwick went Sally Randall with Mr. Alfred Blanchard; the foolish girl, proud of being able to show her young cousins such an elegant admirer. The only one she ought to have been proud of was Dick Cables; but Sally's foolish head was turned with all Mr. Blanchard's compliments, and, like most turned heads, it prevented its owner from thinking of what she was really doing.

The cousins at Bothwick were as silly as Sally herself, and were quite prepared to enter into her triumph in having two admirers, a town and country one—Mr. Blanchard, and Dick Cables. This was especially the case, seeing that the town admirer had plenty of money, and was quite prepared to spend it with a liberal hand. The remainder of the day accordingly was spent in junketing about in a light van, and in games of one kind and another. Moreover, Mr. Alfred Blanchard ordered in some wine, and other good things, under the influence of which poor Sally completely forgot all about Dick Cables and his warning words about the light.

And so the day was spent, and when night came on, and it was time for Sally to think of returning, if she ever meant to do so, Mr. Alfred Blanchard offered to see her home. For this purpose he ordered a conveyance from the inn, and at ten o'clock the two started, as he said, for Shorecliffe. Mr. Blanchard took care to keep his companion in continual conversation, and, by way of keeping out the cold, made her drink from his own private flask, which contained something stronger than wine.

The excitement, the continual talk, the liquor, all combined to prevent the poor girl seeing, or, indeed, finally from caring much where she was going. She had tempted her