

"THE STRESS OF THE STORM"

whisper; "but as I stood outside, I heard him speak, and thought he called 'Isaac.' I just ventured to open the door a crack and ask if I should send you, but she answered in that quiet voice that gives you a cold shudder down your back, that I was never to mind, for he was just a bit wandering in his head, and that she was going to give him the medicine to soothe him. She was standing with a glass in her hand by the bed. I had nothing to do but come away."

There was a silence between them, only broken by the eldritch shriek of the still rising gale.

They had seated themselves in shabby wooden rocking-chairs, one on each side of the stove, seeming to find a needed moral support in each other's neighbourhood. The man was a rather superior specimen of the long-shore sailor, of about fifty; the woman, a shrewd-faced, kindly-looking country-woman of something the same age. It was she who first broke the silence, saying, with a solemn shake of her head:

"He'll go to-night for sure! Such a storm as this hasn't come for nothing. You know how my old man, who had been on the Spanish Main, used to say that a pirate's soul could only get away in a gale, when there were *them* abroad in the storm that would not be gainsaid. Go he must before morning," and she looked around her with a shuddering joy in her own flight of imagination.

But the wrath of Isaac Neisner was aroused.

"And who taught you to call the Honourable Jonathan Bauer, member of the Queen's own Council for this country, a pirate, if you please? Keep a civil tongue in your head for your betters."