

own, if it hadn't been so woful thin and pale. But, bless yer heart to see the way that little chap held his head up, and looked about him, you'd ha' thought the whole ship belonged to him. The mate was a great hulkin' black-bearded feller, with a look that 'ud ha' frightened a horse, and a voice fit to make one jump through a key-hole; but the young un wasn't a bit afeard—he stood straight up, and looked him full in the face with them bright, clear eyes o' hisn, for all the world as if he was Prince Halfred himself. You might ha' heard a pin drop, as the mate spoke.

“‘Well, you young whelp,’ says he in his grimest voice, ‘what’s brought *you* here?’

“‘It was my step-father as done it,’ says the boy in a weak little voice, but as steady as could be. ‘Father’s dead and mother’s married again, and my new father says as how he won’t have no brats about eatin’ up his wages; and he stowed me away when nobody warn’t lookin’, and guv me some grub to keep me going for a day or two till I got to sea. He says I’m to go to Aunt Jane at Halifax; and here’s her address.’

“And with that he slips his hand into the breast of his shirt, and out with a scrap of paper, awful dirty and crumpled up, but with the address on it, right enough.

“*We* all believed every word on’t, even without the paper; for his look, and his voice, and the way he spoke, was enough to shew that there warn’t a ha’porth o’ lyin’ in his whole skin. But the mate didn’t seem to swaller the yarn at all; he only shrugged his