

**FORFAR
WILLIAM
BENTINCK**

THE WIZARD OF WEST
PENWITH: A TALE OF THE
LAND'S-END

William Forfar

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A Tale of the Land's-End**

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William Bentinck Forfar

The Wizard of West Penwith:

A Tale of the Land's-End

PREFACE

In writing my Cornish Tales I have always endeavoured to pourtray the Cornish character in all its native wit and humour, for which the genuine west-country miners are so proverbial. And I have generally taken for the foundation of my Stories incidents which have really happened in the localities wherein the actions of my little dramas have been laid.

The scene of my present story is laid in the neighbourhood of the Land's-End, and most of the characters were well-known there in days gone by; – the names only being fictitious.

The fall of the horse over the cliff is still in the remembrance of some old people in the neighbourhood; and the circumstance is related by the Guides who shew the beauties of the Land's-End scenery to strangers. The marks of the horse's hoofs in the grass at the edge of the cliff are preserved to this day.

The Wizard (or Conjuror as he was called) was a notorious character at St. Just, some fifty years ago; – and the horrid murder related in these pages; and the mistaken identity of the guilty parties are also veritable facts.

Mr. and Mrs. Brown were well-known characters, and are drawn from real life.

This brief sketch of some of the scenes and characters to be found in this little volume may perhaps add an interest to it, and induce a large number of the lovers of Cornish lore to honour it with a perusal.

Plymouth,

March, 1871.

CHAPTER I. MR. FREEMAN

Very near the most westerly point of Great Britain, and not very far from the promontory called Cape Cornwall, you may see, as you glide along the coast in your pleasure-boat of a calm summer's evening, a pretty little fishing-cove, in shape like a horse-shoe, – the two extreme points being formed by the projecting rocks on either side of the entrance, – the interior, or curved part, immediately under the main land, having a beautiful beach of white sand, on which boats can land with safety, when piloted by those who know the coast outside; for the little cove is guarded by hidden rocks, and is as safe in rough weather against invasion by the uninitiated, as if it had been fortified by a range of well-appointed batteries. Above this beach the cliffs rise gradually, and various zigzag footpaths are formed by the constant tread of the sailors and others who frequent the cove in going to and coming from the main land.

About a mile inland is a village of some importance, inhabited by sailors of various kinds, and miners and small farmers who occupy a few acres of land, and fill up their spare time by working at the neighbouring mines, either as mine labourers, or as carriers with their horses and carts.

This part of the coast of Cornwall is almost studded with mines, whose lodes, for the most part, run out under the sea; and although they are, consequently, very expensive to work, yet many of them have given large and continuous dividends to the adventurers.

As many of these rich mines were discovered by accident, it may easily be imagined that the smallest indication of a metallic lode in the neighbourhood causes great excitement, and often leads to the expenditure of large sums of money in forming companies and searching for the riches, which in very many instances are never found.

The village of St. Just was not, at the period when our story commences, the important place that it is at present; – it could even then, however, boast of a tolerably comfortable inn in the square, and an inferior public-house in the outskirts of the village.

On a dark, tempestuous, winter's night, there sat in the kitchen or public room of the inn, a goodly company, who had assembled to see the old year out and the new year in – and more than this; for they would also on this night witness the termination of one century, and the commencement of another. A huge fire was burning on the hearth, and two or three of the older men had ensconced themselves in the chimney-corner. In those days the fire was made on the flat stones in the chimney in these old houses, with wood and sticks, or peat; and there was room round it, for those who did not mind the smoke, to sit and enjoy a close proximity to the fire, while the others sat round outside the fireplace, having a small table before them, on which was placed the foaming eggy-hot, and the hot beer and sugar, made more potent by the addition of an unlimited quantity of brandy. The wind was howling dismally in the open chimney, and rattling the doors and windows, as if angry at being shut out. As the night advanced the storm seemed to increase; but the comforts of the bright fire and warm room, and the good cheer before them, made the party feel the more happy and exhilarated, from the reflection that they were sheltered from the storm without. The song and jest went round, and many a thrilling story was told by the elders in the chimney-corner, which made some of the younger men draw closer to the fire and take an extra glass of the warm liquor with which the table was supplied; for superstitious fear was indulged in by all, more or less, in those days, and both old and young, rich and poor, loved to hear a tale of horror, although it invariably made them afraid of their own shadows, until daylight appeared again to dispel the vapours of the night, and the toils of the day left no room for idle thoughts or fancies.

In the innermost recess of the chimney-corner, almost hidden by the smoke, sat a sedate looking man, who appeared so absorbed in his own thoughts, that he did not seem to take much interest in

the tales that amused and interested his companions so much, except that, when a tale of more than usual horror was told, a slight smile would steal over his countenance, and he would change his pipe from one side of his mouth to the other. In years he might have been about fifty, but in appearance he was ten years older at least; not from any natural defect or want of the usual stamina and vigour generally displayed by men of his age, but from an eccentric habit he had contracted of affecting the old man, – for what reason was best known to himself. His habits and mode of life were very different from those of Cornishmen generally; – he had come into the neighbourhood some years before in a mysterious manner, but how he came, or where he came from, no one seemed to know. He had acquired somehow a good deal of useful knowledge, and therefore he had the power frequently of working upon the superstitious fears of his neighbours; and, although he did not pursue any particular trade or calling, he did not seem to want for money, for he lived comfortably and paid liberally for his supplies; and, although he was reserved and unsociable as a general rule, yet he liked meeting his neighbours in the public room at the inn, where he could sit in the chimney-corner and smoke his pipe, and listen to their conversation, which he seldom joined in; and when he had gathered from them all the information they could impart, he would occasionally gratify them by telling some thrilling story.

It was generally believed that he had something on his mind which troubled him at times, but what it was no one could tell. There he sat, as usual, on this tempestuous night, smoking his pipe and listening to the conversation of his companions.

At length one of the party, addressing him, said, —

"Come, Maister Freeman, we've all had our turn; now you tell us one of your stories, – they be claim off, they be."

"Well," said he, taking his pipe out of his mouth, and knocking out the ashes on his hand, "I'll tell you a tale; but remember, mine are true stories. The one I am about to relate happened in your own neighbourhood. Your superstitious fears will, perhaps, make you afraid to visit the spot again, if I tell it on such a terrible night as this, after the stories you have already heard."

"No! no!" exclaimed his audience, "out weth et, whatever 'tes, Maister."

"Well, then," he began, "you all know the ruins of the old chapel above Cape Cornwall, called Chapel Carn Brea, and the little hillocks that surround it like graves in the churchyard."

A shudder passed round the room at the mention of this well-known spot, for it was believed by most people that those ruins of the old chapel were haunted by evil spirits; so the little circle drew their seats nearer to the chimney, and instinctively looked round, as if they expected to see some sprite or pixey enter through the keyhole at the bare mention of so uncanny a spot at this hour of the night.

"Those little mounds or hillocks," continued Mr. Freeman, "are said to be the graves of the Druid priests and ancient kings of Cornwall, and it is also said that all their riches were buried with them; but it was never known whether this was so or not, for no one had had the courage to disturb the remains of these holy men. I had no such scruples, – so one moonlight night, soon after I came here to reside, I took my pickaxe and shovel, went up to the old ruins, and selected the largest mound and began my work with a hopeful mind, for I believed that I should be rewarded in the end by a rich booty. The earth on the top was soft and easy to work, but as I got down it became harder. I worked with a will for several hours, and got down several feet before the day began to dawn. It was a lonely spot, in the dead of the night, to be working in: – I could hear the waves as they dashed against the high cliffs under Cape Cornwall, and I sometimes fancied I heard voices calling to me out of the waves. I must confess, my courage nearly failed me, more than once; but I took several pulls at my brandy-bottle, and thought of the treasure underneath, and worked on.

"When the day began to dawn I left my work, intending to come the next night and finish it. I knew that no one would venture there if they could avoid it, even in the daytime, but I did not wish to be seen working there; – the sight of an open grave in that spot would, I well knew, scare people away, even if anyone was bold enough to approach it during the day. A few hours' work more, I thought, would bring me to the bottom, and then I should reap my reward. So the next night I took

my tools again and repaired to the spot, when, to my utter astonishment, I found the grave filled in, and all my labour lost.

"In vain I looked about for some clue to the mystery; I could see no one; so I set to work again, and soon threw up the loose earth, and came down to the hard ground. I worked harder than any man ever worked for his daily bread, and at last my pick touched something hard, which I fancied at first was a rock. I carefully cleared the earth round it, and found that it was a large stone slab, and, from the sound, I was convinced it was hollow beneath. The moon was shining brightly, and threw its light right into the grave, so that I could see the stone distinctly, and could discern figures cut on it. Here, then, was the coffin, no doubt; and it doubtless contained the coveted treasures. I tried to raise the cover, but it baffled all my skill and strength; – I found that the pit would have to be made much larger, and even then it might require the united strength of two or three men to get the cover up. I was then in the grave, which was deep enough to hide me entirely from the view of anyone on the surface. While I was thus deliberating what I should do, I heard a loud shriek just above my head. I got up, with some difficulty, expecting to see some unfortunate traveller transfixed superstitiously to the side of the grave, with his hair standing on end, and his knees knocking together with fear and terror; but there was no one to be seen. Again I was obliged to abandon my work for the time, and again I returned the next night and found the grave filled in as before. They say 'the third time is lucky,' said I to myself, – so, nothing daunted, I went to work again, for I had now proof positive that there was a hollow stone coffin underneath, which no doubt contained the coveted treasure.

"Who the intruder was I neither knew nor cared, except that I did not like the trouble of going over my work so many times, but now I was determined to complete it.

"I got down to the stone slab again, and this time I had lengthened the grave considerably at each end, and I thought I might be able to raise the lid. I drove the point of my pick under the stone, and was about to raise it, when I heard the same shriek I had heard on the previous night, – and I felt at the same time a shower of earth falling all round me.

"'Self-preservation is the first law of nature,' and so, to escape being buried alive, I scrambled out of the grave as fast as I could; and on looking over the heap of earth, thrown up round the sides of the grave, I saw a figure moving swiftly away, – but whether it was a man or a woman, or an imp of darkness, I could not tell, for my toe slipped out of the notch I had made for a footstep, and I fell headlong into the grave again; but, fearing another shower of earth, I scrambled out the best way I could, and went home, determined to give up my search after riches; for I felt sure that, as I had failed the third time, it was useless to attempt again."

"Zackly like that," said the landlord, who had been busily supplying his guests with more liquor at intervals, during the recital of the tale; – "who wor she, I wonder?"

"Who should she be but one of the pixies?" replied a tall, stout, well-built young man, who had been listening with breathless attention to the story.

"Hould thy tongue, 'Siah Trenow," said an elderly man, rising from his seat in the chimney-corner, and taking a long pull at the jug of hot beer and sugar which the landlord had placed on the table; – "thee'st never know nothen. I'll tell 'ee, na, tes like as this here. How could a pixie handle a showl for to showley in the stuff again, I should like to know; and where could a pixie get a showl from?"

"What wor aw like, so fur as you could see, Maister Freeman?" continued he, turning round to where that gentleman had been sitting a minute ago, – when, to his astonishment, he saw that the seat was vacant.

"Why he's gone like the snoff of a candle, soas!"

"That's zackly like he, na," said the landlord; "he'll tell a story till he do bring 'ee up to a point, and then lev 'ee to gees the rest; esn't et so, Peggy?"

"I'll tell 'ee, soas," said the young man who had been addressed as 'Siah Trenow,' but whose proper Christian name was 'Josiah,' "he do know bra' things. Why, he ha' got a gashly g'eat room up there that nobody can go in but he, where he do count the stars, so they do say."

"Iss fie," said the landlord, whose name was Brown; "many people can tell about the conjuring and things, up there."

"Hush, Brown," exclaimed his wife; "you do know that when we lost so many pigs you wor glad enough for to go to Maister Freeman for to know something about them; and he tould 'ee, so you said, and you b'lieved every word he tould 'ee, – so don't you bark nor growl. His dafter, Miss Reeney, tould me last week that she shud think that Old Nick wor up there sometimes weth her fe-a-thar, they do keep such a caparous, – and I've got my thofts, too, soas!"

"Come! come! Mrs. Brown," exclaimed 'Siah Trenow, rising up in an excited manner; "don't you bring Miss Reeney's name in weth her fe-a-thar's doings, or else I'll –"

"Arreah! thon," replied Mrs. Brown; "that's the way the maggot do jump, es et? Iss sure! Miss Reeney es a bra' tidy maid; an' f'rall she do prink herself up so fine sometimes, and b'en to boarding-school, and all that, and do know bra' things, she ha' got nothin' to do weth her fe-a-thar's conjuring-room upstairs, I do believe in my conscience, soas; and ef 'Siah ha' got a mind to her, there's wus than she a bra' deal; – but he do hold his nose brave an' high, soas, don't aw?"

"Miss Reeney esn't the only woman that do live in that house, you know," said the old man who had spoken first, with a knowing wink.

"No, sure, there's Miss Freeman herself," said Mrs. Brown, pursing up her lips; "she's a good catch, they do say."

"That's very well," said Mr. Brown, laughing at his wife's wit.

"Brown," said that good lady, "mind your own business; – what have you got to say about Miss Freeman, I shud like to know?"

This remark shut up poor Mr. Brown entirely; and whether this discussion of the merits and demerits of Miss Freeman and her niece Alrina (familiarly called Reeney) would have proceeded much further, it is difficult to say; for just at that moment a man, who had evidently been out for a considerable time in the storm, burst into the room, and said there was a vessel wrecked off Pendeen Point.

CHAPTER II.

THE WRECK NEAR THE LAND'S-END

The sound of a wreck was sufficient, at any time, to rouse the most lethargic; and old and young rose at once, and left the comfortable fire and warm mixtures, and crowded round the new comer to hear the particulars. All he could tell them, however, was that there was a vessel in distress off the Point; he and several others had heard the gun. She was not a wreck yet, the man said, but it could not be long before she must strike, – for the weather was terrific, and the wind was blowing right in; so he ran up to the village to give the alarm. There was not a moment's hesitation among the listeners, – everyone prepared to go down to the Point at once.

Some took ropes, and some took baskets, or bags, or whatever came to hand; and each man got his lantern, and away they started to the scene of distress. The wind was blowing a fearful hurricane, and the rain was falling heavily, beating into the faces of the foremost, and almost taking away the breath of the older and weaker of the party. As they proceeded, others came out of their houses and joined them, – women as well as men. On they went through the storm, with their hats and bonnets tied down with handkerchiefs or pieces of string, to keep them from being blown away. Noble creatures! thus to brave the storm on such a night as this, for the sake of saving the lives and relieving the sufferings of their fellow-creatures in distress.

To save life, however, was not the only object these poor people had in view; nor was it, I fear, the principal one with a great many. When a vessel was wrecked on the Cornish coast, in those days, it was believed by most of the lower orders, that all that was washed ashore, became the undoubted property of anyone who was fortunate enough to pick it up; and so a wreck was looked upon as a God-send, and everyone took care of himself, and sometimes returned with a rich booty.

At length they arrived at the Point, or as near it as it was prudent to approach in this dreadful storm. The night was too dark for them to distinguish the vessel; but as the gun was fired at intervals, the flash enabled them to see that she was not far from the rocks, on which she might strike at any moment, and all must perish; for no boat could go out to their rescue, nor could a boat from the vessel live a single moment in such a sea.

Although the watchers remained some hundreds of yards from the Point, the sea dashed up every now and then against the high cliff, and drenched them with its spray; but still they continued to watch – their lanterns giving out a dim line of light as they stood closely packed together, sheltering one another from the wind and rain. Another gun was fired, and the watchers saw that the vessel was close upon the breakers. A dreadful shriek was now borne towards them by the wind, which was blowing towards the shore, and now they knew that all was over and that the vessel had struck, and was most likely dashed in pieces.

Nothing more could be done till daylight appeared; so many of the watchers sought the shelter of the rocks to wait for it, in order to begin their work; for with that wind, and the tide beating in, the contents of the vessel must wash on shore very quickly. The crew must all have perished, – of that there was no doubt. The dreadful shriek they had heard was that of the drowning crew. The only anxiety now was concerning the valuables which might come in with the tide.

As the day dawned, the storm abated a little, and, towards morning, many of the villagers were seen approaching the Point; – among them, Mr. Freeman was conspicuous. He came along feebly, keeping the even tenor of his way, – now speaking to one, and then to another, as he was overtaken and passed on the road by the more energetic and youthful of the wreckers, who were all too intent upon the gains in prospect to pay much attention to an infirm man, although they knew not in their haste and thoughtlessness that their actions were watched and noted down in the memory of one who did not often forget a slight.

Long before it could properly be said to be daylight, the approaches to the little cove were covered with people, watching for the prizes which they expected every wave would wash in. The beautiful white sand was covered with foam, and frequently a huge wave would come dashing in and break beneath the very feet of the most daring and reckless of the watchers, who had approached to the verge of the rocks which bounded the innermost circle of the cove.

No one, as yet, could venture on the sand with safety, and it was yet too dark for the watchers to see far before them, for the daylight on that tempestuous morning was a long time making its appearance. A long and eventful year had just terminated, and the new year seemed very unwilling to take up what the old year had left it to do; but the laws of nature must be obeyed, and so the new year's morning came at last, and, with it, the prizes so much coveted by the wreckers.

Timber, casks, and boxes (some empty and some full) came washed in to the very feet of those who were standing on the lowest rocks; but, before they could reach them, they were carried out again by the receding tide. There were some adventurous enough, however, to make a grasp at the prizes as they came rolling in; but they would have met with a watery grave, had they not been held back by the more prudent. As the tide ebbed, it left the little cove comparatively free from danger, and then many prizes were seized and carried away by the eager finders.

Mr. Freeman having no wish or intention, apparently, to appropriate any of the unfortunate sailors' property to himself, wandered about from one place to the other, watching for the bodies that he knew must be washed on shore soon, in order to ascertain, if possible, by the appearance of the sailors, or from any papers they might have about them, the name of the ship, and her cargo and destination. In the course of the day several bodies were washed ashore; but, even in this short time, they were so disfigured by the sharp-pointed rocks against which they had been dashed by the angry sea, that there were no traces left in any of them of the "human face divine," and even their clothes had been torn off by the merciless rocks and waves.

In the course of his wandering along the coast, Mr. Freeman surprised several parties dividing and disputing about the property which had been washed on shore in different parts. Here would be seen, perhaps, half-a-dozen men quarrelling about the possession of a cask of wine or brandy, and, in the *melée*, the top would be knocked in, whilst, in their eagerness to get at its contents, the cask would be overturned, and the whole contents spilt on the sand. In another place might be seen half-a-score women squabbling about the possession of a cask of fruit or provisions. At length, in turning a sharp point of rock, he came suddenly on a man and two women who were kneeling on the sand between two rocks, intently examining the contents of a large sea-chest which they had broken open. Mr. Freeman stood behind a rock for a few minutes, concealed from their view, and watched their proceedings, as, one by one, they took the things out of the chest, with the evident intention of dividing the spoil. He had not before interfered with any of the wreckers in their unlawful plunder, but he now stepped forward and commanded them to replace all the things in the chest and put on the cover. The two women started to their feet at once (for there was a superstitious dread among the people generally at being "ill-wished" by "The Maister" if they thwarted him); while the man remained kneeling over the chest, holding in his hands the last article which he had taken from it, in seeming doubt as to whether he had better put it back or bid defiance to the apparently feeble form before him, when Josiah Trenow jumped over a rock into the little cranny, and asked what was the matter.

"That chest," said Mr. Freeman, "must be taken care of; I have reasons which I shall not make known at present. If you will get it taken to some safe place, Josiah, I shall feel much obliged to you. In my own house it will be safest, I think."

"By all mains, sar," replied Josiah; "the best place I do know es your awn house, Maister. So come, boy," continued he, addressing the man, who was still kneeling by the side of the chest, and looking with longing eyes at its contents, which seemed very valuable, "you and I'll carr'n up."

However reluctant the man was to relinquish the prize, he had not the foolhardiness to oppose two such powerful antagonists. In stature and physical strength and courage, Josiah Trenow was the

acknowledged champion of the parish, and very few men liked to be pitted against him, either in the ring or in more serious combat; whilst Mr. Freeman's well-known ability in foretelling the future and relieving those who were possessed of evil spirits, and even ill-wishing people himself (as they believed), rendered him an object of dread to the superstitious and weak-minded, of which there were not a few in those days. Josiah had not much difficulty, therefore, in procuring sufficient assistance to carry the chest to Mr. Freeman's house.

CHAPTER III.

ALRINA

Mr. Freeman's house seemed, in many respects, as unsociable as its master; for it was one of those oldfashioned farm-houses one meets with occasionally in remote, out-of-the-way places, without having a farm attached to it, – the farm formerly held with the house having been added to an adjoining farm belonging to the same proprietor, on which there happened to be a larger and better house. It was, even then, an oldfashioned house, with an entrance-hall, if such it might be called, into which you entered from the front door. On the right was the parlour or best sitting-room, and on the left the common sitting-room where the family generally sat. Opposite the front door were the stairs, and on each side of the stairs there was a door, – the one leading into the kitchen, and the other into the little back garden. Over the best parlour was Mr. Freeman's private room, into which no one was permitted to enter except those whose superstition led them to consult "The Maister," as he was generally designated, and to seek his aid in extricating them from some dire misfortune, and then great preparations were made before the visitors were admitted into this mysterious room.

Mr. Freeman was a widower – so it was said – and his sister kept his house, and exercised strict dominion over his only daughter, a young girl of eighteen.

Miss Freeman, the sister, it was generally believed, knew more of her brother's secrets than she liked to tell; and many a severe reprimand did Alrina receive from her aunt for her curiosity, in trying to pry into secrets which the elder lady thought she had no right to concern herself about. Alice Ann, the servant of all work, was one of that neighbourhood, and therefore spoke the broad Cornish dialect; but Alrina, who had received a tolerably good education, as times went, had not been infected by the dialect, which is so very contagious when almost everyone speaks it around you. She had just attained her eighteenth year; but, from her rotundity of figure, and womanly manners, she might have been taken for a girl of that age two years before, at least. She had been kept at a boarding-school in one of our large towns almost from her infancy, and had seen very little either of her father or aunt until recently, and therefore she knew little more of them, or their habits and pursuits, than a stranger, until she left school about twelve months before. In stature she was about the middle height, – very fair, with bright auburn hair, which some were malicious enough to call red, but "golden" would have been the more correct term. Red hair is not generally admired, but there was such a golden hue cast over Alrina's hair, that made her soft blue eyes look softer in the contrast. Hogarth's line of beauty was displayed in the contour of her figure; and such a pretty little foot and ankle might be seen as the rude wind waved the drapery aside, when, like a fairy, she glided over the rocks – so bold and varied on those high cliffs – that, taken *tout ensemble*, she was just the very girl a man would fall in love with at first sight. There were so many beauties visible at once, and such a happy combination of them all; and then the pretty dimples in her cheeks, when she smiled, betokened a temper mild and amiable, and yet with spirit enough to resent a wrong, and assert her own rights against all the world. And thus, although she was obliged to put up with many indignities from her aunt, she managed, by her tact in yielding in minor points, to have her own way in greater, and, to her, more important, ones.

Alrina was in the kitchen assisting Alice Ann on the morning after the wreck, her aunt having gone into the village on some domestic errand, and for a quiet gossip with some of her numerous friends.

"Did my father say he would return to dinner, Alice Ann?" said Alrina, as she prinked the paste round the edge of the pie she had just made.

"No, he dedn't," replied Alice Ann. "When do he say what time he'll be home, or where he's going to?"

"I am tired of all this mystery," said Alrina; – "I wish I knew the meaning of it all. That room upstairs puzzles me very much. I should like to peep into it one day, and see where all the noise comes from, when those 'goostrumnoodles' come here to know who has ill-wished them, and wait in the best parlour while my father goes upstairs to prepare the room for their reception."

"So shud I too, Miss Reeney," replied Alice Ann; "but 'tes no good to try, I b'lieve; for I tried to peep in through the keyhole one day, and a blast of gunpowder came out and nearly blinded me."

"Hush! here he comes," said Alrina, who heard her father's footstep in the passage.

"Alrina," said he, opening the kitchen-door, "give these men some beer for bringing this chest up from the cove. Take it to the top of the stairs, men, and I shall be able to put it under lock and key myself till the proper owner comes to claim it."

While the other men were taking the chest upstairs, and drinking their beer, Josiah went into the kitchen to speak to Alice Ann, for whom he had a sneaking kindness, as the gossips said, although Mrs. Brown tried to insinuate that it was for the sake of the fair Alrina herself that Josiah so strenuously defended the sayings and doings of the family.

"You've had a bra' night of it, I s'pose," said Alice Ann, – "fust weth your drink up to Maister Brown's, to watch in the new year, and then weth your walk to Pendeen to watch in the wreck. What have 'ee picked up, thon, 'Siah?"

"Why nothin' at all, Alice Ann," replied he, "'cept the g'eat chest that's carr'd up in the Maister's room."

"What is that chest brought up here for?" said Alrina, returning from giving the men their beer; "I think we've got lumber enough here already."

"So shud I, Miss Reeney," replied Josiah; "but I'd see the inside of a good many things ef I wor you."

"Come, Josiah," exclaimed Mr. Freeman, "we'll go down to the cove again; there may be more valuables washed in, and more dead bodies perhaps, – living ones I don't expect to see."

Even the bright eyes of Alice Ann were not sufficiently attractive to keep Josiah from trying his luck once more in search of the stray treasures which the sea might yet wash in.

While the men went down into the cove, and over the rocks, in search of treasure, Mr. Freeman took the higher road which led to the Point, and there he stood watching the waves as they dashed against the bold cliffs and fell back again into the white foam beneath, enveloping all the surrounding objects in a hazy mist.

About a quarter of a mile from the promontory on which Mr. Freeman stood, rose a large cluster of high rocks, over which the sea rolled at intervals. As the mist cleared occasionally, Mr. Freeman fancied he could see something move in a crevice of one of the topmost of those rocks; but, after looking again and again, he began at last to think it was nothing but imagination, for it seemed as if it was impossible for any living creature to remain on those rocks so long in safety. He could not rest satisfied, however, so he sought Josiah and brought him to look at the object also.

"'Tes a man or a woman, I do b'lieve!" exclaimed Josiah, after looking on the object for some time through a glass which he had borrowed from one of the wreckers; "but how he got there, or how long he'll stay there, I don't know."

It was impossible for any boat to go out, and it seemed almost certain that he must perish, whoever or whatever it was. They made signals by holding up their handkerchiefs tied to a stick, that the poor creature might have the consolation of knowing he was seen, and cared for; and that was all they could do.

Night came on once more, and all hands returned to their homes to rest after the fatigues of the past day and night, and examine the treasures they had picked up.

Josiah had been so much engaged in attending on Mr. Freeman, that he had not succeeded in picking up anything worth carrying home. He thought, therefore, he would remain at the Cove a little longer; so he stole round the Point, and stooped down between two low rocks to conceal himself until

the others were gone; and as he stooped, he saw something partially buried in the sand a few yards from him. At first he thought it was a rock; but the waves, as they rolled over it, seemed to move it. He watched for an opportunity when the waves receded, and at last he ran out, at the risk of his life, and seized his prize. It was as much as he could do to pull it up out of the sand, in which it was embedded; – he succeeded, however, and got back to his hiding-place in safety, but not without a good wetting, for a wave washed completely over him while he was getting up the object of his cupidity, and he barely saved himself from being carried out to sea, and that was all. It was a small box, very strongly made, and very heavy. There was something valuable inside it, he had no doubt; so he took off his coat, which was very wet, wrapped it round the box, and made the best of his way home with his treasure.

The next morning Mr. Freeman was early at the Point, but could see nothing of the object which had before attracted his attention, and he supposed it must have perished; – but he did not like to give it up; and towards the middle of the day, the sea having calmed down a good deal, he induced some stout sailors to go out to those rocks, and see if there was anything there or not.

It was a perilous undertaking; but the boat was got ready and manned, and four brave fellows started amid the shouts of their comrades on the beach. After a severe struggle with the waves, they succeeded in getting near the rocks, but it was impossible yet to land, – so they returned for more help, and to wait till the tide was lower. They saw something lying between two of the rocks, they said, but what it was they couldn't tell.

When the tide was at its lowest, the sea having subsided yet a little more, two boats were manned, and ropes and grappling-irons, and all that was deemed necessary, were put on board; and this time two of the boats' crew succeeded in landing on the rock, where they found a man, apparently lifeless, grasping a sharp rock so firmly, that it was with difficulty they were enabled to extricate him; – it seemed like a death grasp; but, on examination, they found that he still breathed. They brought him on shore and rubbed him, and poured a little brandy down his throat, which revived him; and he was carried at once to the inn, where every attention was paid to him. It was at first thought he would sink from exhaustion and the want of food for so many hours, but, after a night's sleep, he rallied so as to be able to thank his deliverers, and to give them some information respecting himself, as well as of the vessel which had met with such a melancholy fate.

The ship was an East Indiaman, he said, returning to England with a valuable cargo. The captain died on the voyage, and the mate was too fond of the brandy-bottle, and flirting with the lady-passengers, to attend to his duty, so he missed his reckoning and got on the rocks before he expected, notwithstanding the warnings that were given him by the sailors. The storm arose so suddenly that even the most wary were caught.

The lanterns on the cliffs deceived them too, he said; for they seemed to be close to the edge of the cliff, whereas they were some distance inland. The boats were launched, and filled, but he believed everyone perished. He got hold of some spars that were floating round the wreck when she broke up, and held on as long as he could, but was eventually lifted on to the rocks, where he was so providentially found; – he got jammed between two sharp rocks, and there he held on with all his might; but he could scarcely keep his position, for when the storm was at its height the sea washed over him continually. There were several passengers on board, – some bringing home gold, and others indigo and other kinds of wealth, but all had perished. He was one of the crew, he said, and therefore had not lost much. The ship belonged to the East India Company, and so he supposed they could afford to lose a little; but he believed they had taken care of themselves by insurances.

The poor man was well treated, and when sufficiently recovered a subscription was made for him, and he was sent on to his friends.

CHAPTER IV. THE UNEXPECTED MEETING

Although Mr. Freeman was not at all inclined to be sociable or familiar with his neighbours himself, yet he did not object to his sister and daughter being on friendly terms with them; – indeed he rather wished it, and was never more pleased than when they were visiting at the farm-houses in the neighbourhood, or giving entertainments at home – at which he was seldom seen except in some mysterious manner. Strange noises would sometimes be heard in "The Maister's" private room, in the dusk of the evening, before the candles were brought in; and, in the midst of the terror of the visitors, and almost before the noises had subsided, Mr. Freeman would walk quietly into the room, and relate some thrilling story, and disappear again in the same mysterious manner. These scenes would be talked over the next day by the gossips, and after going the round for a few days, the most extraordinary additions would be made and circulated. And so he became a man of great importance, and was looked upon as a superior being, and people feared him and believed that his powers were much greater than they really were.

He was greatly assisted in obtaining information respecting his neighbours, by his sister, who was a shrewd woman, and who by her tact and cunning could lead on her friends imperceptibly to talk of their own and their neighbours' private affairs. She would impart those secrets to "The Maister," who stored them in his memory till opportunities arose for using his information with advantage. And when those ignorant people applied to him to be informed by whom they were ill-wished, or to recover their property, perhaps, which had been stolen, he could guess pretty nearly who the culprits were likely to be, having possession of these little secrets (long since forgotten by them); and he would so work upon their fears, that the property would be restored in some mysterious way, and he then would have the credit for getting it back by some supernatural agency.

Alrina had a good deal of her father's fondness for the mysterious, but in her it took a more romantic turn. She would spend whole days, sometimes, in wandering over the cliffs and examining with curiosity the ruins of chapels and ancient fortifications, of which there were several in that locality; and the tumuli in the neighbourhood of the chapels, supposed to contain the ashes of the Druids and other holy men, afforded great scope to her imagination. Her father, as we have seen, was not very regular in his habits – indeed it would not have suited his purpose to be so – and her aunt was sometimes so intent on sifting out any little secret gossip, and relating it to "The Maister," that Alrina was often left for days without the supervision of either her father or aunt, and so she wandered about alone.

She was sitting, one fine morning after the shipwreck, under the shelter of some high rocks at the Land's-End, watching the vessels as they passed round the point – some inside and some outside the Longships, when she heard herself addressed by some one overhead, and, on looking up, she saw a handsome young man looking down on her from the rocks which overhung her resting-place. It was some stranger, evidently, for he merely said, "You seem fond of seclusion, fair lady;" – but when she looked up, he exclaimed, "Alrina! can it be possible?" and in a moment he was at her side.

A crimson flush overspread her face, extending almost to the roots of her hair, as she jumped up, and extended her hand towards the intruder, who clasped her in his arms, while she exclaimed, without attempting to extricate herself, "Are my dreams and hopes so soon realized? Where have you been? How did you get here?"

"I have surprised you, Alrina," replied he, pressing his lips to her cheek; "and I assure you when I left England, two years ago, so unexpectedly, I thought it would have been a longer separation; but it was cruel of you, Alrina, not to keep your appointment that night, knowing it was the last opportunity I had of seeing you before I quitted England!"

"Indeed, Frederick," replied Alrina, "it was not my fault. You know that one of the servants at the school discovered our secret meetings in the garden, and told Mrs. Horton, who had the window nailed up through which I used to get out, and –"

"Yes!" said the gentleman, hastily; "but I bribed the other girl, who was not so scrupulous, to manage one more meeting, as it was the last night before my departure, and she faithfully promised to do so."

"Circumstances seemed to thwart us in every way," replied Alrina. "The young lady who slept in my room was suddenly taken ill, just after we went to bed, and the servant who betrayed us before was desired to remain with her all night, so that I was a prisoner."

"I see it all," said he; "and this explanation has relieved my mind from anxious thoughts. But why did you not write me?"

"That was impossible," replied Alrina; "for I was taken from school almost immediately, and didn't know where to address a letter to you. I wrote to your sister, who had been a day-pupil at the same school, and through whom we first became acquainted, but, not having her exact address, I suppose the letter never reached her."

"Never mind, Alrina," said he, as he took a seat by her side in the little sheltered nook she had before occupied; "we have met at last; – and now I will tell you something more about myself and my position than I thought it necessary to tell, or you to ask, in any of our clandestine meetings, – we had other things to think of and talk about then. I have since been knocked about in the world, and the romantic passion of my boyhood has lost, perhaps, much of its romance, but the love I then felt for you still remains in all its purity and devotion."

"I never doubted that," replied Alrina, looking fondly at him, as she used to do; – for her romance had not been rubbed off by contact with the world, but, on the contrary, had increased; – her life had been one of romance and mystery from her childhood, and everything around her seemed veiled in mystery.

"I have never ceased to think of you, and to wonder where you had gone, and whether I should ever see you again," she continued. "These rocks have been my refuge from the monotony and mystery of home; and here I have oftentimes given vent to my feelings, when I thought and knew I was unobserved. But tell me," she continued, looking up into his fine manly face with love and admiration, "where you have been, and what you have been doing, since we last met."

"I had just obtained my commission in the 63rd Regiment of Light Infantry," he resumed; "and my fondest hopes, as I thought, were realized when I met you walking in solemn procession with the other young ladies of Mrs. Horton's seminary. I was struck with your appearance, and I asked my sister, who was, as you have said, a day-pupil at the same school, who you were. All she could tell me was that your name was Alrina Freeman; and, I suppose, that was all I wanted to know just then. She took a note to you from me, and the next time I met the school procession, there was a mutual recognition; several notes passed between us; and at last you consented to a clandestine meeting in the garden. Our meetings were discovered. My regiment was ordered abroad suddenly, and, owing to the circumstances already related, we did not meet again before my departure. I returned with my regiment about a month since, and made all the inquiry in my power, but without avail. I went to the school. The mistress was dead, and the school given up. I had a month's furlough; and, hearing that an old schoolfellow had an appointment at a signal-station near the Land's-End, I packed up my traps in a carpet-bag, and arrived at my friend's station, at Tol-pedn-Penwith about a week since. My friend is a bachelor; – he is several years my senior, but a right jolly fellow. His name is Fowler. He introduced me to the squire's family at Pendrea-house. The squire has been a queer old chap in his time, I believe; but his wife seems a good old soul, and the two daughters are charming; – but the name of Freeman was always in my thoughts. In the course of conversation after dinner at the squire's the other day, some one said that there was a celebrated conjuror residing near the Land's-End, whose name was Freeman. I felt a thrill run through me at the name, and I determined on paying

him a visit; for I thought that if he was so clever as he was reported to be, he might be able to assist me with some information respecting her I so anxiously sought, especially as he bore the same name. You have heard of him, I dare say. I came out to-day alone, determined to see the conjuror, and get all the information I could before I returned; and seeing a young lady go down over the rocks, I was seized with a little romantic curiosity, and followed, when, as I looked over the rocks above your head, I caught sight of your face, as you turned your head to watch the course of a vessel which was passing. I was not quite sure even then, not expecting to see you here, – so I spoke to you, as to a stranger, and when you looked up at me I saw I was not mistaken; and now," continued he, pressing her hand and laughing, "I need not go to the conjuror."

"I do not know that," said Alrina, in a thoughtful tone; "I think it is most likely you will have to go to 'the conjuror,' after all, if you wish to know anything more of my family, for the person you call 'the conjuror' is my father."

"Your father!" exclaimed Frederick, in great surprise. "No! no! you are joking."

"I am not, indeed," replied Alrina; "there is some mystery hanging over my relatives, that I have never been able to unravel, especially as to my father; – my mother I don't remember; she died when I was very young, I believe. Where we resided before we came here I don't know. My father is very clever, – there is no doubt about that, – and he manages to awe the people here into the belief that he knows more than he really does; and he has a mysterious room which is only entered by himself and those whose fears and superstition he wishes to work upon. My aunt knows something of these mysteries – how much I don't know; – but I know nothing of them; I am kept entirely in ignorance; they don't seem to like to trust me. Oh! how wretched it makes me feel; for I sometimes fancy it may be too dreadful to be told, and then I come out alone, and wander over the rocks, and think of those few happy moments of my life, never to be forgotten. It is very, very hard to feel that no one has confidence in me;" and she burst into tears.

"Don't distress yourself about these things now, dearest Alrina," said her companion, taking her hand. "I will protect you with my life; and I will see the conjuror and his secret chamber before I leave this neighbourhood, and bring him to his bearings, or my name is not Frederick Morley!"

"Oh! but if there should be some dreadful secret," replied Alrina, sobbing, as her lover pressed her to his heart, "we could never be to one another as we have hoped; and now that you know who my father is, I fear you will look cold upon me too, like the rest of the world, and that would kill me. Oh! Frederick, after all my dreams of happiness, if I should lose your love when I feel I want it most, and when the fondest hope of my life seems almost realized by your return so unexpectedly, – "

"My dearest Alrina," said Morley, "you will find no change in my affections or feelings. I will sift this secret out to the end, cost what it may, and nothing shall separate us now."

Thus did the two youthful lovers talk on, until it was time for them to separate; and so earnest were they in their conversation, and on the renewal of their former loves, that they did not perceive the head that was projecting from the overhanging rocks, nor the eager eyes and ears which had seen and heard all that had passed between them.

"Ho! ho!" exclaimed the individual to whom the head belonged, as it walked quietly away, when the interview between the two lovers was drawing to a close; "secrets worth knowing!"

CHAPTER V.

JOHN BROWN AND HIS FAVOURITE MARE "JESSIE."

Mr. and Mrs. Brown, who now kept the "Commercial" inn at St. Just, had formerly lived, for many years, in the service of one of the ancient aristocratic Cornish families in that neighbourhood, – the one as coachman, the other as cook. Mr. Brown was rather effeminate and methodical in his manners and habits, and particularly neat in his dress. His hair, which he always kept short, was as smooth and sleek as one of his master's coach-horses. He invariably wore a brown coat, always nicely brushed, with light waistcoat and breeches; a white neckerchief enveloped his neck, in which was enclosed a thick pad, and tied in a neat little bow in front. His hat, which he wore continually indoors and out, always looked as if it had just come out of the hatter's shop; and as to his shoes! – if Mr. Brown was more particular in one part of his dress than another, it was in the polish of his shoes, which did credit to "Warren's Jet Blacking" and their master's energy and skill, – for he invariably gave them an extra polish himself before he put them on of a morning, after Bill, the stable-boy, had done his best. If he was not quite the first groom of the chamber indoors, where his wife held rule, he could certainly boast of being first groom of the stall, when he got into the stables, where it was natural to suppose he was in his element, from having been so many years coachman in a gentleman's family.

He was a good judge of horseflesh, and had the sweetest little mare in the stable that you would wish to set your eyes upon – a perfect picture of a horse – a bright bay, with black tail and mane. And, although it was January month, when most horses have their winter coats, yet, what with grooming and clothing, and regular feeding and exercise, Mr. Brown's mare Jessie was as sleek and smooth as if it had been the height of summer, so well was she taken care of and petted by her master. This was his hobby, and in this he spent most of his time, and a good deal of his spare cash.

If Mr. Brown was too effeminate for a man, Mrs. Brown was certainly too masculine for a woman, – at least so Mr. Brown thought sometimes, although he had neither the courage nor the ill manners to say so. She was neat, in her dress also, but not quite so particular as her husband. A chintz gown, looped up through the pocket-holes, – a large coloured silk handkerchief thrown over her shoulders, and pinned down in front and confined at the ends by the wide string of her cheque apron, formed the general character of Mrs. Brown's dress; and, like her husband, she invariably wore her bonnet indoors and out.

The general business at "The Commercial" was not very extensive, but as Mr. and Mrs. Brown had no children, and had saved a little money, they kept on the house – which was their own property – more for amusement than profit. They kept one servant indoors (a sort of maid-of-all-work), whose name was Polly, and a boy in the stables to attend to Jessie the mare, and do other little jobs to help the women. Mr. Brown made himself useful in the house if required, when customers came in, by drawing beer and attending to their wants, but he never did a single thing without calling some one to help him; sometimes it was Polly, and sometimes Billy, and sometimes even Peggy his wife; but he generally, poor man, had to do the work alone, whatever it was, although fortunately it was never very laborious.

On the afternoon of the day on which the two lovers met at the Land's-End point, Mr. and Mrs. Brown were sitting in the kitchen alone, – the latter having sent Polly upstairs, to brush up a bit, while she went on with some work she had in hand for her husband. She was knitting him a pair of white lamb's-wool stockings, for general wear, if the truth must be told.

"I wish the boy was come to take the mare out a bit, I think," said Mr. Brown, "this beautiful afternoon. I shall go out a mile or two myself if he don't come soon."

"I tell 'ee what et es, Brown," said his wife; "there's more fuss made about that mare than ef she'd b'en a cheeld. I'd have a glass case made for har ef I wor you!"

"Don't 'ee be vexed, Peggy, 'cause I do take care of the poor thing. There's the boy coming, I do believe," said he, rising from his seat, and going towards the door. "Your sarvant, sar," he continued, as he met a tall handsome young man in the passage; and without waiting for a reply from the stranger, he returned to the kitchen, rubbing his hands, followed by the stranger, and exclaiming, "Bless my life, Peggy! bless my life! – es the best bedroom ready upstairs? here's a gentleman, my dear!"

"Gentleman sure 'nuff!" said his wife, looking unutterable things at her husband, and curtsying at the same time to the stranger; – "gentle or semple is all the same to you, I believe, John Brown."

"Now, don't put yourselves out of the way for me, my good friends," said the stranger; "all I want is something to eat at once, and a 'shake-down' here for a night or two."

"We've got nothing in the house to eat, I do believe," said Mr. Brown; "have us, Peggy? And as to a 'shake-down!' – why we don't have many visitors here to sleep!"

"Brown!" said his better half, in an authoritative tone, "go and look to the mare!" – and she pointed significantly to the door, through which Mr. Brown made his escape, calling Billy, by way of covering his retreat, without being further exposed to the stranger; for he saw he had gone a little too far, in taking it upon himself to answer for what could or could not be had in the house.

The stranger, in the meantime, had thrown himself carelessly into Mrs. Brown's seat, and extended his legs before him, as if he was quite at home, and was accustomed to make himself comfortable wherever he happened to be.

"Now then, Mrs. Brown," said he, "a glass of your best ale to begin with, and then something to eat, for I'm devilish hungry."

"I can give 'ee some eggs and a rasher at once, sar," replied Mrs. Brown; "but ef you can wait 'bout half-an-hour or so, you shall have a roast fowl and taties."

"I'll have the eggs and bacon by all means," said he; "I couldn't wait half-an-hour for all the fowls in your yard; – and while you are dressing the eggs and bacon, I will try if I can get some one to fetch my carpet-bag." So he sauntered into the stable, where he found Mr. Brown admiring his mare Jessie.

"Isn't she a beauty, sir?" said the landlord, combing his horse's tail with a comb he kept in his pocket for the purpose.

"She is a handsome creature, certainly," said the stranger, looking at the mare with the eye of a connoisseur; "but what can you possibly want with a horse of that kind in this rough country?"

"That's to me, sir – asking your pardon," replied Mr. Brown, touching his hat.

"Oh! of course, of course," said the stranger; "I meant no offence. I came out to know if you could get anyone to go to Tol-pedn-Penwith signal-station, where I have been staying, for my bag."

"Tol-pedn-Penwith signal-station, sir!" replied Mr. Brown; "why that's Lieutenant Foster's 'cabin,' as he calls it, near Lamorna Cove?"

"That's the place," said the stranger; – "could you send anyone?"

"Yes, sir, certainly; when my boy Bill do come in, he shall take the mare and ride down there, – it'll be very good exercise for her this fine a'ternoon. Drat the boy, I wish he was come!"

Bill soon made his appearance, and was despatched on the mare with a note to Lieutenant Fowler, written on a leaf torn from the gentleman's pocket-book, while Mr. Brown walked round the mare twice, and used his comb on her tail and mane.

"Isn't she a beauty, sir?" said he, as the boy cantered off. "Easy! easy, now!" exclaimed Mr. Brown, calling after the boy; "ride her gently. Wo! ho! Jessie! gently, lass, gently!"

These remarks might as well have been addressed to the wind as to the boy or the mare, who seemed both intent on a gallop, and away they went at full speed.

"Drat the boy," said Mr. Brown; "he'll wind her – that's a sure thing – one of these days; and then where'll the money come from to buy another? But no money could do it! Why, I wouldn't take a hundred guineas for that mare, sir, if it was offered to me to-morrow morning! she's worth her weight in gold, sir, that mare is!"

"Don't fidget about the mare, Mr. Brown," said the gentleman; "she'll be all right; a little gallop will do her good. And now I shall try Mrs. Brown's cookery, – it smells very good;" and he returned into the house to appease his appetite, while the landlord went into the stable to lament once more over the wilfulness of that scamp of a boy, as he called him, and to see that all things were ready for his pet when she came back. And, having done all this, he returned to the kitchen, where he found the stranger smoking a pipe in the chimney-corner after his frugal repast, and chatting with Mrs. Brown as if they had been old acquaintances.

"Come, Mr. Brown," said he, "I'm going to have a glass of brandy and water, and you must take one too; so mix them, if you please, and come and tell me all the news."

"Polly! come and get the hot water and sugar for the gentleman," said the landlord, calling to the maid, who was upstairs, as he went towards the bar to get the two brandies. "Come, Poll! Poll! Polly!" But as Polly did not come, he was obliged to bustle about himself; for he received no help from his wife, although he called to her several times from the bar. At length all things were placed on the little table, and the stranger began to ask about "The Conjuror."

"The what!" exclaimed Mrs. Brown, dropping her needles, and looking up in surprise and alarm, – while poor Mr. Brown stopped short in the act of putting his glass to his lips.

"Hallo!" exclaimed the stranger; "you look as if you had heard some fellow talking treason against His Most Gracious Majesty the King – God bless him!" – and the stranger lifted his hat, which he had kept on out of compliment to his host and hostess. "I mean Mr. Freeman, then," he said, correcting himself; "I have heard such wonderful accounts of him, that I should like to know what he can really do."

"He would shaw you what he could do, very soon, ef he heard you speak that word, I reckon," replied Mrs. Brown, getting up from her seat and going to the door of the kitchen, and looking into the passage and closing the front door.

"He doesn't like being called a 'conjuror,' then," said the stranger.

"Like it?" said Mrs. Brown, drawing her chair nearer to the chimney-corner; "iss, – just as much as you would like to be called '*no conjuror!*'"

"That's very well," said Mr. Brown, venturing on a laugh, now that his courage was being wound up by the brandy and water.

At this moment there came a clatter down the road, as of a horse at full gallop.

"Drat the boy!" exclaimed Mr. Brown, rising in great excitement; "he can't be come a'ready, can aw? To ride the mare like that es too bad! too bad! I'll kill 'n ef 'tes he. Iss fie! tes; for she's stopped at the stable-door. Dear lor'! Polly! Polly!"

When Mr. Brown went out, followed by the stranger and Mrs. Brown, there was the mare sure enough, standing at the stable-door without a rider, trembling from head to foot, and covered with foam and mud, with scarcely a dry hair on her body.

"Drat the boy!" exclaimed Mr. Brown; "he's killed – that's a sure thing – and the mare is ruined. Wo! ho! my darling; wo! ho!" And he took the mare's nose into his arms, and caressed it as if it had been a favourite daughter, while the stranger examined her all over, but could find no wound or injury whatever. She had evidently been frightened, for she was trembling still. They led her into the stable, and then began to think of the boy.

"I'd go and search for him," said the stranger, "but I don't know which way he went."

"No, nor yet I," said Mrs. Brown; "there's no knowing where that boy do go, when he's out; he's mighty fond of taking the narrow roads and bye lanes instead of the high road. There's two or three ways of going to Tol-pedn-Penwith from here; and like enough he went the way that nobody else would go ('cept 'The Maister')." This latter sentence she spoke almost in a whisper.

"While we are talking here, the boy may die," said the stranger, "if he's thrown and seriously hurt."

"The mare is all right," said Mr. Brown, coming out of the stable; "and now, if missus will get Polly to make a 'warm mash,' and give it to her at once, you and I'll go, sir, and see what can be done for the poor boy."

CHAPTER VI. THE FAMILY PARTY

The two young officers had been invited to dine at Pendrea-house on that day, at two o'clock – the squire's usual dinner-hour. Lieut. Fowler had some writing work to do – rather an unusual occupation for him. However, as it was a report to be sent to head-quarters, which he had put off from day to day, he said to his friend in the morning, during breakfast, "The writing be blown! but 'needs must when the devil drives!' so you go out, old fellow, and take a stroll, and leave me here to kick my heels under the table for a few hours. Two o'clock sharp, mind, and then we'll put our legs under the squire's mahogany, and tuck into his old port like trumps. That's an amusement which suits me a devilish deal better than quill-driving, if I must tell the honest truth for once in my life."

Two o'clock arrived, but Morley did not make his appearance. "The deuce take the fellow," soliloquised the lieutenant; "he'll lose his dinner and get out of the squire's good books. By Jove! though, perhaps he went in to have a lark with the girls in the morning, and so he did not think it worth while to come back. I'll just wash the ink off my paws, and toddle down as quick as I can; the squire won't like being kept waiting. 'Tis devilish lucky the old chap doesn't require a fellow to dress for dinner every time he tucks his legs under his mahogany; – I don't like getting into harness very often, unless duty calls – and then we must obey."

While the jovial officer is washing his hands, we will just look round his little "cabin," as he called it.

The little dwelling in which the commander of the signal-station resided, was certainly fitted up more to resemble a cabin on board ship, than the habitation of a landsman. On the ground floor there was a small room, or lobby, into which you entered at once from the front door. Opposite this door there was a door leading into the sitting-room, and beyond that another door led from the sitting-room into the kitchen. On the right, as you entered the lobby, were the stairs, leading to the two bedrooms, which led one into the other, like the rooms below. And in the ceilings were fixed iron rings, to which the hammocks were slung at night, and unshipped by day, the same as on board ship, so that these rooms might also be used as sitting-rooms, if required, in the daytime.

There were three men kept at each of these stations, besides the officer, and they had a separate cabin appropriated to them, adjoining the principal one. Their duty was to attend upon the officer; hoist signals of flags and balls, to give notice of the approach of an enemy's ship; or to signal to English ships orders from head-quarters. And these signals could be communicated to and from London in a very short time, – although not so quickly, nor so accurately, as by the telegraph of the present day.

It was not long after two when Lieut. Fowler got down to Pendrea-house, where he found the squire with his watch in his hand.

"Half-an-hour is soon lost, my boy," said the old gentleman, as the lieutenant entered the drawing-room; "but where is your friend?"

"Hasn't Morley been here, sir?" asked Fowler, in some surprise.

"No," replied the squire, "I haven't seen him, – have you, girls?"

This last question was addressed to two young ladies, whom Lieut. Fowler now approached, and greeted as old acquaintances. They had seen nothing of Mr. Morley, they said, since the day before, when they had all walked to Lamorna Cove together.

"That's queer," said the squire; "but he's a stranger, and may have missed his way, – so we'll give him a quarter-of-an-hour's grace."

And during this quarter-of-an-hour – the most awkward one in the whole twenty-four hours – we will introduce the reader more formally than we have hitherto done, to Squire Pendray and his family, the present owner and occupiers of Pendrea-house.

The squire was a purse-proud man, who had made a good deal of money, no one knew how, and purchased Pendrea estate many years before. He wished to rank among the ancient aristocracy of the county, – and his wealth enabled him to mix with them, and to be on a seeming equality; but in those days ancestral pride was very strong, and those who could boast of an ancient aristocratic pedigree, however limited their means might be, looked down with contempt on the man of a day, who had nothing but his riches to recommend him. The rich man was tolerated and patronized for the sake of his wealth, but he was still looked down upon as an inferior. Squire Pendray was one of these. But he was as proud of his riches as they were of their pedigree, and so he did not see nor care for their patronizing airs; – besides, he, in his turn, patronized those whom he considered inferior to him in wealth, and he was satisfied. Some said he was connected with the smugglers, and that they brought goods up to some of his subterranean vaults, through a secret passage which led from a cavern at Lamorna Cove up to Pendrea-house. Where the entrance from the house to these subterranean vaults was, no one could tell but the squire himself.

Mrs. Pendray was a homely, good sort of woman, – kind and hospitable, and very much beloved by the poor of the parish, to whom she distributed her bounties with a liberal hand.

Her two daughters will require a more elaborate description; for they were considered the "belles" of the west, and were toasted by all the young men of the neighbourhood at their after-dinner orgies – a custom very prevalent at that period.

The elder of the two sisters, Matilda – or Maud, as she was generally called – was a brunette, with dark hair and eyes, and a profile so regular and perfect, that, when the countenance was still and in repose, as it were, you might, without a great stretch of imagination, have fancied it a piece of tinted sculpture, – but the slightest thing would rouse it into animation, and then the dark eyes would flash like a piece of polished steel when struck by the electric fluid. She wore her hair in bands, which contrasted well with her high intellectual forehead, and added dignity of expression to her handsome features. Her stature was lofty, and her form elegant and symmetrical; and when she walked across the room there was majesty in her step, as if her foot disdained the ground it trod upon. She delighted to wander out alone over the highest headlands, when the wind was raging with its wildest fury, and to stand and watch the foaming waves, as they surged and dashed against the perpendicular cliffs, until she was saturated with the spray and in danger of being blown over into the abyss beneath.

Blanche was as unlike her elder sister as it was possible for her to be. She was fair, and her beautiful auburn hair hung in graceful ringlets over her soft young cheeks, as if to hide her blushes, which the merest trifle would call forth. She was just seventeen. Her sister was four years older; but, in person and manners, you would think there was a greater difference of age between them. While Maud walked out to witness the storm in all its majesty, from those bold cliffs, Blanche would take some quiet book of poetry, and sit alone, and read, in the little room upstairs, which their mother, years ago, had set apart for her two daughters. And when the early spring brought soft and balmy sunshine, Blanche would take her book and wander out alone – not to the towering cliffs, and bold headlands, but along the sheltered paths which led down to Lamorna Cove, gathering wild flowers by the way. And there she would watch the rippling waves, as they came dancing in over the beautiful white sand, sparkling in the sunshine; and when her eyes were weary with watching the calm unruffled sea, she would sit beneath some sheltered rock, and read, and weep over some sad tale until her eyes grew dim, and then would rise again and search for some rare shell, or tiny piece of seaweed, she had read or heard of, as being found at Lamorna Cove.

Lieut. Fowler, whose occupation caused him to wander everywhere along the coast, in search of smugglers, or enemies' ships, would often come suddenly on one or other of the sisters, and would then escort them home and dine with the old squire, who liked him, and was fond of having him there to while away an afternoon in social chat; for the lieutenant, although not more than thirty years of age, had seen a little service, and could tell tales that even Maud would sit and listen to. But, for the gentle Blanche, those tales of hardship and suffering, and deeds of daring, and hairbreadth escapes,

had a deeper charm than she dared to confess even to herself. He was not a handsome man by any means, but he had a fine noble bearing, and courage and daring were marked in his broad forehead. He was sometimes the only person they saw for weeks, and, therefore, the two sisters enjoyed his society, and were always glad when their papa asked him to dine. He admired them both, and not being in a hurry to marry, or having been knocked about too much in the world to have time to think of it, he did not see the danger he was daily and hourly incurring by being on such intimate terms of friendship with these two fascinating girls.

The old squire was very fond of his children, indulging them in most of their caprices, and he did not see any danger or impropriety in allowing them to be on intimate terms of friendship with a man whom he himself liked so well, and who was, in fact, so necessary in assisting him to pass away his time, with pleasure and comfort, in that dull out-of-the-way place. It had also been a great pleasure to the squire's family to receive the lieutenant's friend, Frederick Morley, at their house; for he, too, was a very gentlemanly man, had seen a good deal of the world, and could tell them of foreign scenes and manners, which very much delighted them all. He was more romantic and impressible than his friend. It was therefore evident that Miss Pendray preferred his society to that of the more matter-of-fact Lieut. Fowler, and would take him to her favourite wild cliffs, and point out the beauties she saw in them, to which he listened with marked attention, entering into her feelings, and admiring her pursuits, more than any other man she had been accustomed to meet; but still there was something sad in his manner, sometimes, which she could not account for. It seemed to her as if he had met with some heavy affliction in days gone by. This thought was impressed on her more than ever to-day; for he had not arrived in time for dinner, – so they sat down without him. As the day passed slowly on, and he did not appear, it made the whole family think the more of him. After dinner, Miss Pendray asked Mr. Fowler if there was anything pressing on his friend's mind, as, she said, she had often observed him sad and thoughtful, when all had been merry and cheerful around him. Now that the subject was mentioned, everyone seemed to have observed the same; and they urged the lieutenant to tell them – if he knew, and it was not a secret which he felt bound to keep – what it was that made the young soldier look so sad at times when others were gay.

"My friend, Frederick Morley, has been a romantic dreamer all his life," said the lieutenant. "He was the same at school, – sometimes as gay and reckless as the worst of us, and at other times sad and low-spirited, even when his companions were in their gayest mood. About two years ago, before he went abroad with his regiment, poor Fred had a romantic love-affair at the town in which his regiment was quartered. His sister was living in the same place, with her aunt; and Fred fell desperately in love with a boarding-school miss, and as his sister was a day-pupil at the same school, she was the messenger between them. Since his return he has searched everywhere for the girl, but cannot succeed in finding her. This much he has told me, but he will not divulge her name. So you see, ladies, my poor friend has enough on his mind to make him sad."

"Yes," replied Miss Pendray; "but this affair is of recent date, and you say he was the same at school; – it was not a love-affair then, I presume."

"Oh! no," said the lieutenant, in a grave tone; "there was another cause for his melancholy then, but that is all blown over, and therefore, perhaps, it is as well to leave it rest in oblivion. He never speaks of it now, and so, I suppose, he wishes it to be forgotten."

"Oh! do tell us, Lieut. Fowler," said Blanche. "Poor young man! it must have been some dreadful tale, I'm sure, to prey on his mind thus, for so many years;" and she looked at him so beseechingly, that he could not refuse, – indeed, why should he decline to make his friends acquainted with the history of a young man whom he had introduced to their house? The story threw no disgrace on his young friend; and if he scrupled to tell them the true story, they might suspect it was some crime or indiscretion which his friend had himself been guilty of. So, looking at the sweet girl who sat opposite him, with her fair curls thrown back from her face, the more easily to catch every word that was spoken by him whose tales she loved to hear, he said he would relate the story as well as

he could. But it was a sad tale; and as it is likely to be a long one, and probably an interesting one, we will give it a chapter to itself.

CHAPTER VII. "MURDER MOST FOUL."

"My friend's father," he began, "was an East-Indian merchant. He married a native, by whom he had three children – two sons and a daughter. The eldest son was several years older than the other two children, and he received the best education that could be got in India, and was taken into his father's factory to assist him, when he was very young. Their mother died soon after the birth of her daughter; and, when they were old enough, it was thought advisable to send the two younger children to England, under the care of their aunt (Mr. Morley's only sister), to be educated; and, as Mr. Morley was anxious to visit England once more, and thought he could make more of his merchandize, by coming himself and seeing how the markets stood, than his agents seemed to be making for him, he determined to bring the children over himself. So he freighted a vessel with a valuable cargo, and arrived in England safely with his two children, having left his eldest son behind, to manage the business in India. His sister resided at Ashley Hall, a country-seat about five or six miles from Bristol. The children enjoyed the country air exceedingly, and the scenery – so different from India – and the old gentleman enjoyed it as much as they did. He visited Bristol almost every day, and watched the markets, sometimes doing business and sometimes not. He very often walked there and back, by way of exercise, when the weather was fine. One day, about the middle of January, the weather, although cold and sharp, being dry, he determined he would walk, as he had so often done before, for he thought he should be able to keep himself warmer in walking than driving. He did a good bit of business that day, and had a considerable sum of money about him.

"It was a risk to walk home alone, but Mr. Morley had so often done it before, without meeting with any accident, that he thought he would start early, and in two hours he should be at the end of his journey. So he buttoned up his great coat, and took his big stick in his hand, and started. The stick was a very peculiar one, which he had brought with him from India. It was very heavy for its size, and had large sharp knots towards the big end, – not very handsome, but still it was peculiar, and so it had many admirers. 'A good blow from this would settle a stouter fellow than I am likely to meet with to-night, I fancy,' said Mr. Morley, as he looked with pride on the formidable weapon he held in his hand; and he strode down the street, with the cold wind blowing in his face.

"Before he got a mile out of the town, it began to snow heavily; but still he trudged on against the wind, which was blowing strong, and beating the snow into his face, which made him hold his head down, so that he did not remark a turn in the road, about three miles out, – indeed, by this time, the road and hedges were covered with snow, and anyone who knew the road even better than he did might have taken the wrong turn. On, on he walked for several miles, when he began to think he had missed his way, – for he now observed that he passed no houses on the road, as he was accustomed to do when he walked home before. At length, after walking some distance further, he saw a light, and, thinking it might be a roadside-inn, he made towards it. On approaching cautiously, however, he found it was not an inn, but a solitary cottage, partly surrounded by a garden – the entrance to which was through a small gate at the side; and nearly opposite this gate there was a window. The light that he had seen, came from a window in front of the house, facing the road. It was getting dark, but the white snow threw a shadow of light all round, and he opened the little gate, went round to the front, and looked in at the window, which was but partially covered by a thin blind, and there he saw a woman sitting by the fire alone. The room seemed comfortably furnished, and the table was evidently laid for supper.

"It was now getting late, and Mr. Morley was cold and tired and hungry, for he had been walking several hours; so he knocked at the door, which was quickly opened by the woman he had seen sitting by the fire. She was apparently about forty years of age, but not very prepossessing in appearance,

nor very courteous at first, but any shelter was better than being out in the snow on such a night as this. He explained to her that he had missed his way in going to his sister's house from Bristol; and he begged her to let him partake of her meal, and rest a little, and warm himself – for which he said he would willingly pay handsomely; and he moreover said, incautiously, that he had more money about him than he thought it was prudent for him to travel any further with alone that night. This communication seemed to warm the woman's heart. She placed a chair by the fire, and proceeded to get him some refreshment at once.

"It is a dreadful night!" she said; 'and it has come on so suddenly too. Who'd have thought it this morning?'

"No indeed," said Mr. Morley. 'This seems a lonely place for a habitation. You have a husband, of course. He is out on business, I suppose.'

"No, sir, I have no husband. My father and brother live here with me; – they are engaged in the seafaring line. My mother has been dead some years.'

"You are not far from the sea, then?" enquired Mr. Morley.

"No," she replied; 'a very short distance. I expect my brother home soon, and was preparing supper for him. My father I don't expect home for the night, so you shall occupy his room, if you please. It is on the ground-floor, and looks into the garden. His business often keeps him out late. We are gone to bed frequently when he comes in, and then he can go into his room on the ground-floor without disturbing us. I believe that was his fancy for having his bedroom there.'"

"Why, Fowler!" exclaimed the squire, "you are making quite an interesting story of it. What it will end in, I haven't the slightest idea; but go on."

"I'm afraid I am tiring you," replied the lieutenant; "but I have heard the story repeated so often, that it is quite familiar to me."

"Oh! do go on," said Blanche, looking at him earnestly; "it is quite like a tale one reads in the old romances."

"Old romances!" said her mamma, in alarm; "why where on earth have you met with any old romances, I should like to know, child?"

"Well, if you would like to hear the end of my tale," said the lieutenant, "I will proceed; but I haven't much more to tell. Let me see. Where was I? Oh! the bedroom."

"Mr. Morley, having warmed himself and taken some refreshment, said he was feeling very tired and sleepy, and should like to lie down for a few hours, if perfectly convenient. The brother had not come in, so he followed his hostess into the little bedroom, leaving his hat and stick in the sitting-room. It was a comfortable little room enough. The bed was small, and very near the door, – so near, that immediately you opened it you faced the side of the bed, and you had to close the door again before you could pass down by the side of the bed into the room. On the other side of the bed, nearly opposite the door, stood the wash-stand, and dressing-table, and one chair. The window faced the foot of the bed.

"Mr. Morley looked out at the night. It was very dark, and still snowing a little. When he began to reflect on the acknowledged irregularity of the men in the house, he did not feel very comfortable; for their calling was evidently not a very reputable one. The woman seemed superior in her manner and address to her present situation; but there was a cunning, restless expression in her eye, which he did not at all like. They might be a gang of desperadoes connected with the smugglers that infested the coast. He did not like his position at all; – he was unarmed, and in their power, and he had left his stick in the sitting-room. If he went back for it, it would cause suspicion. He determined, therefore, to lie down on the bed without taking off his clothes, and be off in the morning as soon as he could see. There was no lock to the door, nor bolt to the window, as far as he could find. He tried the door cautiously, and found it was barred outside, and so was the window; – so far, then, he was a prisoner. He threw himself on the bed to rest, but not to sleep; and after some time he heard a man come in

at the front door. Then there was a savoury smell, and a good deal of talk in whispers, – and then the brandy was asked for, and all was quiet.

"After a time he saw a man approach the window outside. He had the appearance of being intoxicated. He opened the window after a little trouble, and prepared to come in.

"This is the father, no doubt,' thought Mr. Morley, 'come home unexpectedly, and evidently very much intoxicated.'

"The man seemed too drunk to listen to reason, even if Mr. Morley had got up and spoken to him; and a quarrel with him, in that state, would be very unpleasant, and bring the other members of the household also upon him. Besides, no doubt these men carried arms with them, wherever they went; and if this man found a stranger in his bedroom, he would not hesitate to shoot him, especially in his present state.

"What should he do? There was not a moment to be lost. The old man had by this time tumbled into the room through the window. He would be on the bed in a minute, for he was getting up from the floor. Mr. Morley therefore slid down the side opposite the door, and got under the bed, intending, as soon as the man was asleep, to get away from that house at all risks.

"The old man threw himself on the bed, and was soon fast asleep.

"The door was now gently opened, and he heard a few heavy blows struck with a heavy bludgeon on the poor old man's head, as he lay sound asleep on the bed. There was a deep moan, and then the door was closed again.

"Murder!" he said, as he crept from under the bed. He felt the body in his fright; it was too dark to see it. There was no motion. Blood was flowing from the wounds, – he could feel it, warm and clammy, although he could not see it. He knew not what to do. The blows were no doubt intended for himself, and if he raised an alarm he would still be victimized. He was in an agony of fright and terror. His only thought was to save his own life; for if the murderer discovered that he had not killed his intended victim, he would be back again, no doubt, to finish his work. He snatched up the hat that the old man had dropped on the floor, thinking in his frenzy that it was his own, and got out of the window, which had not been fastened again, and fled through the snow, he knew not where."

"Oh! Mr. Fowler," exclaimed Blanche, shuddering; "this is too horrible. Oh! don't go on! I can't bear it;" – and she placed her hands before her eyes, that had before been so intently gazing on the speaker.

"Nonsense!" exclaimed the squire; "we've heard the beginning; now let's hear the end. Go on, Fowler. Those who don't wish to hear any more can leave the room."

No one left the room; so Mr. Fowler continued: —

"The brother and sister were horror-struck, on entering the room the next morning, to find that *their father* had been murdered instead of the stranger, and that the stranger had escaped, and was probably then giving information to the authorities. Their first thought was self-preservation. Circumstances favoured the guilty pair. The stranger had evidently touched the murdered man, and had blood about his hands – for there were stains on the window-frame – and he had worn away the murdered man's hat, and left his own behind; and it was with *his stick* that the murder had been committed. Here was circumstantial evidence enough; so the guilty pair lost no time in rousing the nearest neighbours and constables; and information was given to the magistrates by the brother and sister, accusing the stranger of the murder, which appeared on the face of it very plausible; for the accused man's stick and hat were found in the bedroom, and the name 'Morley' was written inside the hat. The stick was covered with blood, and the sharp knots corresponded with the marks in the murdered man's head. The stick was easily identified. The murdered man's hat was missing too. But what motive could such a man as Mr. Morley have had for committing such a crime?" The woman said he might have been tipsy, and lost his way in the snow, and finding the window so near the gate, and so easy to enter, he had perhaps gone in, and a struggle might have taken place between him and her father, who slept in that room. There was money in that room too, she said; but it was not

believed that Mr. Morley would murder anyone for the sake of money. No one wished to believe him guilty; but what could they do in the face of this circumstantial evidence? There were his hat and stick, which he admitted at once were his – his name was in the hat – and the stick was covered with blood. He was easily traced in the snow, and when overtaken he was walking like a maniac. His hands were bloody and so were his clothes; and he had the murdered man's hat on his head.

"The sister told the tale before the magistrates very plausibly. It might have been done in self-defence, she said. He might have got in at the window, perhaps, for shelter; but why not have come round to the door, and why did he not alarm the house, instead of going off in that unaccountable way.

"He told his own tale, and concluded by saying that he had a considerable sum of money about him, which he had lost or was robbed of. No money was found, however.

"His tale did not appear plausible. The woman founded her belief that he was tipsy, she said, on the fact of his having come so much out of his way, if he was really only going from Bristol to Ashley Hall. He was a comparative stranger in England, and very few knew him except in the way of business.

"The circumstantial evidence was so strong that the magistrates could do no other than commit him to the county gaol to await his trial for murder at the next assizes.

"The assizes came, but there was no evidence against Mr. Morley, and he was acquitted.

"The brother and sister had found the bag of money, no doubt, which he had dropped in his agitation, and had absconded no one knew where. They were afraid of the close cross-examination to which they would be exposed, and under which their evidence must have broken down.

"Mr. Morley returned to India immediately, leaving his two children in their aunt's care. It was a severe shock, from which he never recovered. He felt that although he was innocent, yet the stigma of his having been committed to prison on a charge of murder would still hang over his family, until it could be properly cleared up by the conviction or confession of the real murderer. He died soon after his return to India; and on his death-bed he enjoined his children to make every search in their power after those wicked people, who had so cruelly murdered their own father and thrown the guilt upon him."

"Can you wonder, now, ladies, that my friend should feel low-spirited sometimes?"

"It is indeed a dreadful tale," said Miss Pendray. "I wonder what became of the guilty parties?"

"It is that which is preying on Morley's spirits," replied Mr. Fowler; "he has searched and enquired everywhere – at home and abroad – but as yet to no purpose. They have, no doubt, taken feigned names; but they will be found out one day, I have not the slightest doubt."

"Now let us change the subject, and speak of the living," said the squire. "What has become of young Morley, I wonder?"

"I shall have a search for him to-morrow morning," said the lieutenant. "I fancy he is gone to St. Just, for he is anxious about his brother, who was expected from India about this time, having amassed a large fortune, besides what his father left, which he was about to divide between the three children, according to his father's will. The wreck of the Indiaman, the other day, has upset him rather; for he has an idea that his brother might have been one of the passengers."

"Poor young man!" said Mrs. Pendray; "how many troubles he has had to bear, for one so young!"

CHAPTER VIII. THE LAND'S-END CONJUROR

Mr. Brown and his companion returned, after a three-hours' search, without having found the boy or learnt any tidings of him. The mare had eaten her warm mash, and Mrs. Brown had procured the assistance of Josiah Trenow to give her a good rub-down and make her comfortable, and he was having a glass of beer after his exertions, when Mr. Brown and his companion came in.

"Thank 'ee, 'Siah," said Mr. Brown; "I do b'lieve the mare ha'n't had such a rub-down for a month. Look here's a great strong arm, sir," he continued, taking Josiah by the arm, while he called the gentleman's attention to it.

"I shouldn't like to engage in single combat with him," replied Mr. Morley, smiling, "if he is as strong as he looks."

"No fie! no fie!" said Mr. Brown. "Peggy! Peggy! Polly! Polly! Why the women are all run away after the boy, I s'pose. Peggy, my dear!"

"Well, landlord," said Josiah; "what news have 'ee got about the boy?"

"Why no news," replied Mr. Brown, sitting down thoughtfully in his wife's chair, a liberty he seldom took, unless he was "up in the clouds," as she called it. "Sit down, sir, if you please. Why, a good many people seed the boy and the mare go up, an' a fine passle seed the mare come down again all of a rattle, without the boy, but nobody seed the boy thrawd, an' nobody have seen the boy since, so far as we can hear. Whisht, esn't et, 'Siah, boy?"

"Whisht! iss fie, 'tes whisht enough," said Mrs. Brown, coming downstairs to hear the news too.

"That boy es so sure ill-wished as ever anybody wor in this world," said Josiah; "he's in a queer por, an' ha' be'n so for a bra' bit."

"Why what are 'ee tellen', 'Siah," said Mr. Brown; "how shud 'ee think so, boy?"

"Why for many things," replied Josiah; "the boy Bill wor took out of the workhouse, worn't aw? and he ha'n't growd since – not an inch, I do b'lieve. He can hardly reach to the mare's shoulder, and yet he do keep that mare in good condition, with her summer's coat up all the year round, like the squire's hunter, and better too, I b'lieve. He's mighty fond of going out by night, too. I've seed that boy, when I've been coming home from bal, two or three o'clock in the morning, going up by Chapel-Carnbrea by hisself, whistling."

"What! our boy Billy whistling that time o' night?" said Mrs. Brown; "dear lor'! I should think he'd be afeard of the pixies. And up there, too!"

The conversation was evidently getting too dismal for Mr. Morley, and he changed the subject by ordering a glass of brandy and water for himself, and one each for Mr. Brown and Josiah.

"Come, Polly," said Mr. Brown, as he went to get the brandies. "Polly! Polly! pretty Polly!"

He got no assistance, however; for Polly was gone out on some errand for her mistress; and it really seemed as if he called the people about him more from habit than anything else, for, like him who called spirits from the vasty deep, poor Mr. Brown was not very much distressed or astonished if they didn't come. While they were drinking their brandy and water, the conversation turned again on the marvellous; and Mr. Brown said, "I wondar ef 'twould be any good to ask 'The Maister' about it."

"About what?" asked Mrs. Brown.

"Why about the mare, to be sure," replied her husband; "she's ill-wished as much as ever the boy es. Something frightened her more than human, I'm sure; – what do you think, 'Siah?"

"Well," said Josiah, "I never seed a beast tremble like that afore. I worked my arms off, purty nigh, afore she begun for to dry, an' then she dried up all of a rattle, an' snorted brave."

"I'll go up now and ask 'The Maister,'" said Mr. Brown; "the mare es ill-wished, I do b'lieve;" – so he drank up his brandy and water, and started at once.

It was not, even then, very late, and Mr. Freeman's house was but just outside the village.

"The Maister" was at home, the maid said. What did Mr. Brown please to want.

"I do want to speak to him 'pon private business," replied Mr. Brown.

So Alice Ann shewed him into the best parlour, and left him there in the dark, as she had orders to do to all visitors who came to "The Maister" on private business.

Very soon he heard a rumbling noise in the room above, and then a clanking of chains; and then he heard a voice, as if coming from the floor of the room he was sitting in, telling him to beware of what he was doing, – to keep all things secret, – and to tell "The Maister" all; and then all would be well. All these mysterious sounds – coming sometimes from above, and sometimes from one part of the room he was in, and sometimes from another, when everything was shrouded in darkness – were calculated to strike terror into a stronger mind than poor Mr. Brown possessed; so that when Alice Ann came to the door and asked him to follow her upstairs, he was confirmed in his belief that "The Maister" was connected with "The Prince of Darkness," and was prepared to see hobgoblins and spirits dancing about as he entered the awful room.

Alice Ann knocked at the door three times, and at the third knock the door flew open, and Mr. Brown was pulled in by some invisible hand, and the door was closed again. He remained standing just inside, having a screen of thick black cloth hanging before him, to prevent his seeing what was in the room. He thought his last hour was come, and trembled until his knees knocked together, and his teeth chattered in his head. At last, a voice from the furthest corner of the room said: —

"John Brown, your business is known, without your telling it – as most things are. Are you prepared to go through the ordeal necessary to free the mare from evil hands, and the boy from witchcraft?"

"Oh! ye-es, Maister," said the poor man, in a tremulous voice: "I'll do anything. I do know that your power is great, and your knowledge is greater."

"Then down on thy knees, trembler, and do my bidding to the letter, or woe be unto thee! And listen to what is now to be spoken." And down flopped poor Mr. Brown on his knees, and awaited the ordeal, which he interrupted occasionally, by sundry interjections and parenthetical remarks of his own.

(The Conjuror) "You have a gentleman staying in your house?"

(Mr. Brown) "Oh! yes; and a very nice gentleman he is."

(The Conjuror) "He admires your mare?"

(Mr. Brown) "He do so."

(The Conjuror) "He must ride her!"

(Mr. Brown) "He shall, Maister. (Oh lor'! a wild harum-scarum like he to ride the mare. Oh lor'! Peggy! Peggy! Oh lor'!)"

(The Conjuror) "Now listen. That gentleman must, within three days from this time, ride the mare to the Land's-End point, and look over the point, and the spell will be taken off which now hangs over the mare, and the boy will be restored. If not, beware of what may befall you and your household. The rider must have no friend or assistant within fifty yards of the point."

(Mr. Brown) "Oh lor'! Peggy! Peggy! What shall I do? No mortal man would do that. Oh lor'!"

A bell was now struck in the further end of the room, and the black curtain was drawn up suddenly, when the room appeared to be all on fire. There was a brilliant red light shed all around, and a thin vapour filled the room, through which he saw the conjuror standing, dressed in a black gown, and white wig, surrounded by ornaments composed of what seemed to be silver, and small mirrors, which reflected the furniture of the room, and multiplied them twentyfold. The conjuror then said, in a solemn voice, "Do my bidding, or beware! your doom is fixed!"

The black curtain was then suddenly dropped again, and, after a few minutes, the door was opened as before, and Mr. Brown was pushed out by some invisible hand, and the door was locked on the inside.

Thus did this pretended necromancer work on the superstitious fears of the ignorant and weakminded, and make them believe that he knew more of their affairs than he really did; and thus did he gain a power over them which no reasoning or persuasion could shake.

This is no exaggerated picture; for, at that period, there were numbers, with less pretensions than Mr. Freeman, both men and women, who practised these arts and received handsome incomes – not only from the illiterate and ignorant, but from people in the higher walks of life, so rife was the feeling of superstition which prevailed at that period, not only in the county of Cornwall, but throughout the whole kingdom of England. Well-to-do farmers, it was well known, paid one of these emperics annual salaries to keep the *evil eye* from their cattle. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that poor Mr. Brown should place implicit reliance on what such a notable man as "The Maister" should tell him, and determine to have "The Maister's" commands carried out to the very letter, if it were possible that it could be done. If he had been commanded to ride the mare to the brink of the Land's-End point himself, or over it, he would have done it, without hesitation; but how was he to get a stranger to do so for his benefit? It required consideration; and, as two heads are better than one, he determined to consult his wife at once, and they could put their heads together, he thought, and the thing would be managed somehow, – for he had great faith in his wife's wisdom; so he went home to sleep upon it.

CHAPTER IX. LOVE AND MYSTERY

The next morning, Alrina met her lover again by appointment, on the rocks below Cape Cornwall; and here they renewed their former protestations of love and constancy, and the hours passed pleasantly away. But sunshine will not last for ever, and the brighter the sunshine the darker will the cloud seem that obscures it for a time. In the midst of their happiness a cloud passed over the countenance of Morley, and he became thoughtful.

"Tell me," said Alrina, "what has caused this sudden gloom?"

"It is nothing, dearest," said he, putting his arm round her waist; "I was just thinking how much more need we have of mutual sympathy than either of us imagined. You have your secrets which you wish to discover, – I mean as to your mother's and your father's early history, and your own, and that secret which you seem to think your father has hidden in his breast."

"Indeed, Frederick," replied Alrina, "I scarcely wish now to discover those secrets, – for I fear the knowledge of them, whenever they are discovered, may deprive me of that which I prize more than anything else on earth – your love!"

"No, never!" replied her lover; "whatever your father may have done, or whatever those secrets may be, as to the early history of your family, will not alter my love for you, dear Alrina! I have a secret too," continued he; "and mine is a terrible one – one that would terrify you, were I to tell you – and therefore it is better, perhaps, kept where it is; I can bear it better alone. But we are only dreaming – don't cry, Alrina; – all will be well in the end."

"But you have a terrible secret too, you say, Frederick?" she replied through her tears. "I have told you all I know of myself; is your's a secret to be kept from me? are you afraid to trust me, too?" – and the poor girl burst into tears, and would not be comforted. She felt herself an object of distrust to all, and her heart could not bear up against such cold suspicion.

"Be calm, dear Alrina," said Frederick, in a soothing tone; "I have nothing to conceal that you may not know. It will do you no good to know it, and it may prey on your sensitive mind too much, and therefore do more harm than good; but if you wish to know all, and you think you can bear to hear it, I will tell you the whole, – but you must be calm."

"Oh! yes," replied Alrina, drying her tears; "I would rather know all. I will be firm. I can bear anything with you, or for you." She placed her hand in his, and looked up into his face with earnest love, as he related to her the tale of his father's adventure in the snow, and his accusation and acquittal for want of evidence. He told her also of his brother, and that he was expected home from India about this time, and how he feared he might have been in that Indiaman that was wrecked on the coast but a few days before.

"Oh! Frederick, don't distress yourself about imaginary evils," said Alrina; "bad news flies fast enough. A thought struck me while you were relating that dreadful tale, – my father!"

"Your father!" exclaimed Frederick, hastily.

"Yes," she said; "why not ask him to help you in unravelling this terrible secret. He is very clever, and knows many things that other people scarcely dream of. People come here to consult him from all parts of the country, and they generally go away satisfied; so I suppose he tells them what they require to know. He is gone to some distant part to-day, I believe, to cure some poor wretch who thinks he is ill-wished. Remember, I have no confidence in that part of his scientific pretension; but I know he has a clear head to sift out a mystery, and has resources which few else have, from keeping all these 'goostrumnoodles' under his thumb, and some of the sharpest of them in his pay."

"I will think of this," said Morley, smiling; "and if I become a convert I will still consult the conjuror."

He then began to talk of his sister, Alrina's former schoolfellow. She had left school, he said, and was living with their aunt, Mrs. Courland, who had returned to her old house again near Bristol, where they were staying when that sad affair happened to their father. Alrina must go and see them.

The time passed swiftly on in such sweet converse, and they lingered on and on – rising frequently to separate, and sitting down again; and in the intensity of their love they neither of them saw that curious head, nor those curious eyes and ears, which were watching them again, and noting all their words and actions.

"Ho! ho!" said the individual, as it bore that curious head away on its shoulders; "*more secrets worth knowing!*"

CHAPTER X. ALRINA'S TROUBLES INCREASE

Josiah Trenow resided with his father and mother in a small but neat cottage, about a hundred yards from Mr. Freeman's house; consequently, it was easy for Alrina or Alice Ann, when their elders were out of the way, to run in and have a quiet gossip with Mrs. Trenow. Her husband was underground-captain at Botallack mine, so that he was not much at home during the day.

Alrina could not settle down to anything when she returned to her father's house after her interview with Frederick Morley, related in the last chapter. She tried to work, but she could not get on. She then took a book, but could not fix her attention on the pages; and after sitting half-an-hour with the book in her hand, she found that she was holding it upside down.

Her father had returned, and had been closeted with her aunt ever since, and it was as likely as not that Alrina would not see either of them again for the night. They did not trust her with any of their secrets, of which they seemed to have a good many; and her lover had imparted a secret to her to-day, which made her feel very unhappy on his account; but he had trusted her, and confided in her, so that was some consolation; but then, if there should be any dreadful secret connected with her past history, or her mother's, of whom she knew nothing, and she were to lose his love in consequence, what should she do? She would have no one then on whom she could lean for support and consolation in her trials. All these thoughts, crowding one upon the other, made her feel very sad, and she burst into tears, as she sat down in the little parlour. Poor girl! how sad to be in the midst of relatives and friends, and yet to feel that no one cares for you! Better to be a recluse at once – far better.

Alice Ann knew that her young mistress had something on her mind that distressed her, but she did not feel herself competent to advise or console her. She peeped in at the door, however, and said, —

"What's the matter, Miss Reeney? I shud think you'd lost your sweetheart a'most!"

"No, no, Alice Ann," she replied, wiping away her tears; "if I had one, like you, and everything was going on smoothly, like your affairs, perhaps it might raise my spirits a little."

"'Tesn't all so smooth as you may think," said Alice Ann; "I ha'n't se'n sight nor sign of 'Siah (ef that's what you do main) sence the day after the wreck, when he an' 'The Maister' had such a tussle up in the 'private room.' I looked in through the keyhole, but I couldn't see much. When 'Siah came out aw looked all flushed, but I don't think aw wor frightened, like some of them are when they do come out. Hes fe-a-thar an' mother ha'n't seed much of 'n neither since then, I b'lieve. I wish you could stay for to run down there, an' ax about 'n a bit, Miss Reeney."

That was a happy suggestion. A good long chat with Mrs. Trenow, and, probably, another secret, would relieve her mind a little from the heavy weight she felt pressing upon it – almost more than she could bear.

She found Mrs. Trenow alone, with a basketful of coarse worsted stockings before her, belonging to the men, which she was "mending a croom," she said.

"How are 'ee, Miss Reeney, my dear," said she, as Alrina entered; "the sight of you es good for sore eyes! Why, I ha'n't seed 'ee for ever so long."

"No," replied Alrina; "I have been pretty much engaged, and my aunt has been out more than usual lately, and so I have been housekeeper, you know."

"Iss sure," said Mrs. Trenow, looking at her visitor over her spectacles. "You ha' seed an' heerd bra' things lately, I s'pose. They do say 'The Maister' es worken' the oracle purty fitty sence the wreck."

"What do you mean?" exclaimed Alrina, in surprise.

"What do I main?" asked Mrs. Trenow, taking off her spectacles, and closing the door; – "why, this here es what I do main. The best of the things that wor picked up from that wreck es up in 'The

Maister's' private room, and more wud ha' b'en there, ef et worn't for one thing more than another. There ha' b'en more people ill-wished, and more cattle an' things dead, sence that night, than wor ever know'd to be afore in so short a time; an' where shud they go to ef et worn't to 'The Maister?' – and what wud he do for them ef they dedn't cross his hand?"

"I don't at all understand you!" said Alrina, more surprised than ever.

"No, I s'pose you don't, my dear," replied Mrs. Trenow; "you must go abroad for to hear news about home, so they do say. An' poor Maister Brown, too, ha' b'en up there, an' came home frightened out of his life. Our 'Siah wor up to 'the public' when aw came in. He wudn't spaik a word then, so 'Siah said; but to-day Mrs. Brown told 'Siah all about et. But 'tes a secret, my dear; – hush!"

"What is it, Mrs. Trenow? don't keep me in this suspense," said Alrina, in an excited manner; "do tell me what has happened."

"Happened!" replied Mrs. Trenow; "why, nothen' ha'n't happened yet, that I do know of; but how he'll git 'n to do it I don't know. I wudn't ef I wor he."

"What! is Josiah to do something for Mr. Brown?" asked Alrina.

"No, my dear, not 'Siah," replied Mrs. Trenow. "There's a young gentleman up there stopping, so 'Siah said, and he must ride Maister Brown's mare to the edge of the cliff 'pon the Land's-End point, an' look over, to save the man and the boy from witchcraft. Now, mind you don't tell nobody, for 'tes a secret, my dear, down sous."

"I'd see them both at the bottom of the sea first," said Alrina; "why should a stranger be mixed up with Mr. Brown's misfortunes?"

"Why! sure nuff!" replied Mrs. Trenow; "you may say Y or X, whichever you mind to, but ef 'The Maister' do give the orders to the likes of Mr. Brown, 'tes likely to be done, ef et can be any way in the world."

"What did my father know of the stranger, to give such an order as that?" said Alrina.

"That I do no more know than a child," replied Mrs. Trenow; "but here's fe-a-thar; mayhap he can tell."

"Your sarvant, Miss Reeney," said Captain Trenow, as he entered the room; "you're a stranger, ma'am."

"Not much of a stranger, Captain Trenow," said Alrina; "but you are so seldom at home when I can run down for a gossip with your good wife."

"Zackly like that," said the captain; "she's a bra' good hand for a gossip, I do b'lieve. I'll back har agen the parish for tongue, Miss Reeney. She don't do much else, I b'lieve in my conscience."

"Areah! then," said his wife, indignantly; "I shud like to know how you'd get your victuals cooked, and your clothes mended, ef I was so fond of gossiping as some people I do know?"

"Are 'ee going for to see the gentleman ride over the cliff to-morrow, Miss Reeney?" said Captain Trenow, by way of changing the subject. "I do hear that he's determined upon et, 'cause somebody said he cudn't. More fool he, I do say."

"Oh! Captain Trenow," said Alrina, in the greatest terror; "don't let him do it – pray, don't."

"Me! Miss Reeney," said the captain; – "why, I don't know the gentlemen. Nobody here have ever seed 'n, 'ceps 'Siah an' the landlord's people."

"But won't Josiah prevent him?" said Alrina.

"That I can no more tell than you can, ma'am," replied Trenow. "'Siah es gone up there now."

"Why, Miss Reeney!" exclaimed Mrs. Trenow, who had been looking intently on Alrina for the last few minutes; "I shud think that strange gentleman wor your sweetheart, ef I ded'nt know that you never clapp'd your eyes upon om in your life. 'Siah do say, f'rall, that he's a likely young chap enough."

This last expression of Mrs. Trenow's put Alrina on her guard. She did not, at present, wish the gossips of St. Just to know that Frederick Morley was either her friend or her lover; nor would he, under existing circumstances, have wished it either. There were secrets on both sides to be discovered and explained, before it would be prudent for them openly to declare their attachment to each other.

Frederick had not yet even seen Alrina's father, and she was as yet entirely under her father's control. She went home, therefore, with a sad heart; and nothing that Alice Ann could say or do, could induce her to tell her what she had heard, nor why she was so sad. She hoped that it might not be true, – that was her only consolation. But it was true, nevertheless.

CHAPTER XI.

FREDERICK MORLEY OBSTINATELY DETERMINES ON RIDING THE MARE

When Frederick Morley returned to the inn, after his meeting with Alrina, he found his friend, Lieut. Fowler, there in deep conversation with Mr. and Mrs. Brown.

"Hallo! old fellow," he exclaimed, as his friend entered; "a pretty fellow you are, to keep the squire's dinner waiting, and two pair of bright eyes languishing for something more sprightly than a poor lieutenant R.N. to rest their weary lids upon. Why, where the deuce have you been? You are not *ill-wished*, too, are you?"

"It seems very like it," replied Morley; "for I seem to bring trouble wherever I go. Only last night, when I simply wanted a note taken over to you, and my bag brought back, the boy was taken off by the pixies, and the landlord's mare caught St. Vitus's dance, or something worse, – so the sooner I return to the place from whence I came, the better."

"I don't know that," replied Fowler; "for you have work cut out for you here, it seems."

"What do you mean?" replied his friend, smiling. "The French haven't landed, have they? and you want me to take the command of the volunteers?"

"No, no," said Fowler; "but our friend, Mr. Brown, has been to the conjuror about his misfortunes; and what do you think he told him?"

"I'm sure I don't know," replied Morley; "some humbug, I suppose."

"Nothing of the kind, I assure you," replied Fowler. "He merely said that it would depend on the courage and skill of the person who was the innocent cause of the misfortunes, to extricate him out of them."

"If you mean me," replied Morley, "you know I don't want for pluck; as to the skill, that's another thing, – that will depend on what there is to do."

"Well, then, Mr. Brown has confided to me the history of his visit to the conjuror," said the lieutenant, "and he told him that the gentleman (meaning you) must ride the mare to the edge of the cliff at the Land's-End, and look over, – having no friend or assistant within fifty yards of him."

"Ha! ha! ha! that's easy enough," said Morley; "I was considered the best horseman in my regiment, and I am passionately fond of riding. Why, I have jumped on the back of a colt that had never been haltered before, and broken it in, so that a child could ride it, before I got off its back again. I know the secret, and can tame a horse by whispering in his ear. So you may consider your misfortunes at an end, if that will do it, my good friend Brown?"

"No, sir," said Mrs. Brown, very decidedly; "there shall be no such risk as that run for anything belonging to me. Lev the mare alone, – she'll get round again; an' ef she don't, 'twas no fault of yours, sir."

"But, ef the gentleman esn't afeard," chimed in poor Mr. Brown, "why not –"

"Brown!" said his wife, in a voice which made him start; "I wish to gracious 'The Maister' had told you to ride the mare yourself. I b'lieve you wud have b'en fool enough to have done et, and then I shud ha' got rid of two troubles together. Drat the mare!" And, in her anger, she took up a large bunch of furze, and threw it on the fire, which was burning on the hearth, and sent it blazing up the large chimney, while her husband shuffled away towards the door, intending to go into the stable, his usual place of refuge from the two fires, which generally blazed together within; for when his wife was in one of her tantrums, and exercised her tongue more than usual, she generally put a good blast into the chimney, and they blazed away together. Before poor Mr. Brown reached the door, however, he was brought up "*with a round turn*," as Lieut. Fowler expressed it, by the sweet voice of his wife, who said, sharply, —

"Brown! did you hear Lieut. Fowler ask for a glass of ale for self and friend?"

"No, Peggy, dear, I dedn't," said he; "but I'll draw the glasses, of course I will. Polly! Polly! Why, wherever es that maid?"

So the glasses of ale were drawn, although the order was entirely in Mrs. Brown's own imagination; for neither of the gentlemen had given one; – but it was the very thing they both wished, and, no doubt, would have ordered very soon, had not their wishes been anticipated by the landlady, who always had an eye to business.

The two gentlemen then took a stroll together, and Lieut. Fowler tried to dissuade his friend from this rash and foolish undertaking, but to no purpose. He was determined to do it, he said, – it was just the thing he liked; for English sports were so tame, after those he had been accustomed to for the last two years. Hunting tigers and Lions, – that was the sport for him.

"If you are really determined," said Fowler, "I shall bring the girls up from Pendrea-house to have a look at you; but I think you will alter your mind before the morning."

Mrs. Brown had prepared a very nice dinner, and so the friends enjoyed two or three hours' social chat. Morley had heard no tidings of his brother, he said, nor had anyone found anything that was likely to have been his, as far as he could learn; and so he supposed he was not in that ship. But he should remain a day or two longer, he said, to make further search.

When his friend rose to leave, Morley said he would go out a little way with him, and he would ride the mare to try her temper and her paces.

Mrs. Brown was obliged to yield when she found that the gentleman was determined on the feat, and she trusted that the well-known good temper and tractability of the mare would carry them both through with safety, – although the fright into which the mare had been thrown two days before, without any apparent cause, as it seemed, tended to weaken Mrs. Brown's confidence in the perfect steadiness of her husband's pet.

CHAPTER XII. THE AWFUL RIDE

The eventful morning arrived. But it had been kept a profound secret, fearing that, if a rumour of this dangerous feat being about to take place got generally known, there would be a concourse of people on the ground, – and the mare, however steady she was, might get frightened.

Mr. Brown walked up early to the point, and sat behind a rock, from whence he could have a good view without being seen. Lieut. Fowler and the young ladies from Pendrea were early on the ground also; and they took their stations also behind some rocks, but in a more conspicuous place than Mr. Brown. There were a few other spectators, but very few, scattered about among the rocks. They waited some time in anxious expectation, but no rider appeared.

"Morley has altered his mind, no doubt," said Lieut. Fowler to the ladies; "and I am glad of it; for it is a dangerous feat to perform, on a strange horse."

"Oh! I wish it may be so," said Blanche; "for, although I came to oblige Maud, I shall shut my eyes when he goes down to the point."

"Nonsense," said the majestic Maud; "I don't think I should be afraid to perform the feat myself, if I were a man; – I should like it. But here he comes. I thought he wouldn't shew the white feather."

At that moment the object of their solicitude came towards them, mounted on the famous mare, Jessie. She had been well fed, and carefully groomed, and her master's comb had evidently gone through her tail and mane more than once that morning.

Morley took off his hat to the ladies, and chatted with them a few minutes, laughing at the idea of there being any danger in his riding quietly to the point and back. The ladies admired and patted the beautiful creature he was riding; and even Blanche thought there could be no danger on such a beautiful quiet animal as that.

Lieut. Fowler, however, even then, tried to dissuade his friend from the attempt.

"Don't be such a faint-hearted old codger," said Morley, laughing. And, taking off his hat again to the ladies, he cantered easily down towards the point.

The promontory, clothed with short grass, slopes gently down towards the extreme point of the Land's-End for about fifty yards, and then breaks off suddenly, and the cliffs go down perpendicularly some two or three hundred feet, except that, here and there, in the side of the cliff, at various distances, may be seen, by a person whose head is steady enough to look down, projecting rocks just sufficient to break the fall, but not large enough for a body to rest upon for a single moment.

At the bottom, the sea washes the base of the cliffs, coming booming in with every wave, and surging and dashing against the rocks and cliffs beneath, sending its spray sometimes in rough weather completely over those towering cliffs, – a fearful sight for a man with a steady head to look down upon, but for a horse!

On comes the bold rider, – steadily, – carefully. The mare doesn't like it at first, and turns round when she is within a few yards of the edge of the precipice. The turf is soft, and she capers a little. The rider pats her neck, and turns her head again, gently, towards the cliffs. She goes on gently! gently! he patting her neck, and sitting steadily on her back. At last they are standing on the very edge of the precipice, and are both looking over. Hurrah!! The deed is done!! All eyes are bent on the bold rider, and are holding their breath. A single false step, even now, would precipitate them into the abyss below, and both must be dashed in pieces. Awful thought! The deed is done, however, and Mr. Brown's misfortunes are at an end. The rider turns his horse to ride back to his friends in triumph. He has just turned her head round towards the green turf again, when something attracts the mare's attention. She trembles! Her back is towards the precipice, – her hind feet close to the edge of the cliff! Neither horse nor rider sees the extent of the danger, for their backs are towards

it. The mare refuses to proceed; the rider urges her; she rears! Another moment and they must be dashed in pieces, – nothing can save them. All is breathless anxiety among the spectators. No one has the presence of mind to speak. A voice at this moment is heard distinctly, stentorian in its anxiety, – "*Throw yourself off the horse, and hold on!!!*" The young officer obeys the voice instantly, as if it had been a command from his superior officer. He flings himself off, and holds on by the turf, *like grim death*, digging his fingers into the soft ground to hold on the firmer; for he now hears the horse go down over the precipice, – down! down! bumping on the projecting rocks in the fall, and *screeching*, as horses and all animals will do in extreme danger and suffering. The rider had fallen on the turf, it is true; but he had barely saved himself, for *his legs dangled over the edge of the precipice!*

He could not stir. He felt as if he was holding himself up by his fingers, which he had dug into that soft turf, and this seemed giving way every instant; but it was not so in reality. His body was safely lodged on the ground, although his feet were hanging over, and as long as he could hold on he was safe; but he couldn't hold on so very long. And then – oh! horror! – his terror and fright caused him to fancy a thousand horrid deaths in an instant of time. Before he had been lying on the turf two minutes, however, a tall, strong-built, powerful-looking man, came bounding down towards him from one of the rocks just above, and, seizing him round the waist, lifted him up in his strong arms, and carried him to a safer resting-place. By this time he had fainted, and was unconscious of the attentions which were being paid him.

His providential deliverer was no other than Josiah Trenow, who had come there to see the feat, and was standing behind a rock, at no great distance from the point. And he it was who had the presence of mind to shout to the rider to throw himself off, when he saw the horse rear; and it was his strong arm that lifted the poor terror-stricken man from his perilous position.

Had it not been for the presence of mind of this bold strong man, the young officer might still have gone over; for he had not the power to move a limb, and, when he fainted, and let go his hold in the grass, he must have followed the horse, – down! down! Oh! terrible fate!!!

CHAPTER XIII. ITS CONSEQUENCES

No one thought of the fate of Mr. Brown's favourite mare. All the spectators clustered round the prostrate man. Maud Pendray looked on him as a hero; she seemed to worship him with her eyes. Blanche wept tears of joy that he was saved from what everyone thought inevitable destruction. Poor Mr. Brown didn't know what to say or do. He called upon Peggy, and said several times, as if talking to his pet, "Wo! ho! Jessie! gently, mare! steady, now!" And then the poor man sat down on a rock, apart from the rest, and burst into tears.

Those of the party who alone were equal to the occasion, were Lieut. Fowler and Josiah Trenow. They collected the few men together who happened to be present, and, between them, they carried the terror-stricken man to "The First and Last Inn," at Sennen – that being the nearest public-house to the scene of the accident.

A man on horseback was despatched to Penzance for a surgeon, and the patient was put to bed at once.

A fortnight passed away, and the patient was fast recovering, but he could not shake off the gloomy and depressing thoughts, which were continually recurring, whenever he heard the sea, or saw the cliffs.

One day, the surgeon announced that there was to be a grand ball at Penzance, in about a fortnight, – the precise day was not fixed; and he advised his patient to go. Change of scene, and the excitement of the music and the dancing, and the company, he thought, would draw his mind away from those ever-present and depressing thoughts. His friend Fowler had promised to go with the Pendray party, and they were all delighted to learn that Morley had consented to join them also.

Poor Alrina! it was an anxious day for her. She knew that her lover was gone out on the mare to attempt that daring feat; and she knew, also, the extent of the risk he was incurring, – for she had often, in her solitary rambles, walked down to the edge of the Land's-End cliffs, and looked over, out of curiosity, and it made her shudder when she thought of him. Even should he be able to get the mare down to the brink, – sitting there at the mercy of the horse, one false step, or a moment's giddiness, must be fatal to both. In the midst of her meditations, news was brought that the horse and its rider had both fallen over the cliff, and were dashed in pieces. She threw herself on her bed, and tried to believe that the report was false; but no, – she feared it must be true, for she had before worked her mind up to the belief that the feat could not be accomplished in safety.

She was overwhelmed with grief; and when Alice Ann came up, a few hours afterwards, and told her that Josiah was downstairs, and had brought a message for her from Mr. Morley, the sudden and blessed news that he was alive, affected her almost as much as the dreadful news of his death had done. She was quite overcome by her feelings. Sometimes she would laugh heartily, and then burst into a torrent of tears, until it ended in a violent fit of hysterics.

It was a long time before Alice Ann could pacify her, and she dared not call in the assistance of Miss Freeman, for she knew that her aunt did not sympathize with "young ladies' vagaries," as she called them. Besides, she was again closeted with her brother, who had been from home nearly all the day, and had but just returned.

When she was sufficiently recovered, Alrina saw Josiah, and received the kind message which her lover had sent her; and from Josiah she heard the true but sad tale. He told her all, from the beginning. Mr. Morley was as weak as a young baby, he said, and for hours after the accident he trembled all over, as he lay in bed, so that the bed shook under him. The doctor had desired that he should be kept perfectly quiet, and that a watch should be kept with him, night and day; for he feared delirium. He had left Mr. Fowler with him now, he said; but Mr. Morley had requested Josiah

to return as soon as possible, and stay with him also; for he had a strange nervous feeling that he was *still falling*, and nothing relieved him but feeling Josiah's strong arm round his waist; – he felt safe then, and so Josiah had sat for hours on the poor terror-stricken young man's bed, holding him in his arms; and the sufferer would cry out like a little frightened child, if his supporter did but move, and beg him not to let him fall over, – for he could not divest himself of the idea that he was still on the brink of the precipice.

Alrina listened with profound attention to Josiah's description of the scene, and of her lover's present prostrate condition. She longed to go to him, and to be his nurse; but there were many reasons, both on his account, and her own, why she should not do so.

She wrote a short note, which Josiah promised to deliver into his hands; but he said he could not promise to bring an answer in writing, for Mr. Morley's hand trembled so that he could not hold a pen, nor even the glass in which he took his medicine.

Although her mind was set at rest in a measure, yet Alrina had enough to occupy her thoughts till bedtime, and so she retired to her room again, and desired Alice Ann to tell her aunt, if she enquired after her, that she had a headache, and was gone to lie down a little.

Before she had been in her room long, however, Alice Ann came to the door, and said "The Maister" wanted Miss Reeney at once.

"My father!" exclaimed Alrina; "what can he possibly want!"

"I do no more know than you," replied Alice Ann; "but he told me to fetch you down, f'rall I told'n you wor gone to bed poorly."

"Well, I suppose I must obey," said Alrina, heaving a heavy sigh. "I wonder what he wants me for? it is so unusual for him to send for me. I wish I knew why he was so cruel as to order Frederick to perform that perilous feat to-day, – some hidden motive, no doubt. I'll try and find it out. I've a great mind to ask him, point blank; but then – "

"Come, Miss Reeney," said Alice Ann, coming to the door again; "'The Maister' es axing when you're comin', so I told'n you wor dressin'."

When Alrina came out into the front passage from her bedroom, which was in the back of the house looking into the little garden, she found her father waiting for her near the door of his "private room." He opened the door and desired her to follow him.

Her curiosity was to be gratified, then, at last, but not in the way she very much liked, for she fancied that this interview would not be a very pleasant one, – why, she didn't know. Perhaps her father was now about to reveal some of those mysteries which hung over them. At another time she might not have felt these painful forebodings, but her nerves had been unstrung by the events of the day; and she felt now as if an unkind word, or an unexpected disclosure, would upset her again. So much more terrible are imaginary misfortunes and troubles oftentimes when seen at a distance, than they are in reality, when they actually take place.

Mr. Freeman took his seat at the top of the room, near a large table, and pointed to a chair, which Alrina felt was intended as an invitation for her to be seated also. This gave her courage to look round the room. There were some large boxes about, and several cupboards and a few more chairs; but, in general appearance, the room was pretty much like other sitting-rooms, except that it required to be dusted, she thought. And, when she had finished her survey of the room, she had time to look at her father again, before he spoke. He was evidently trying to overawe her, and when she found out that, it gave her fresh courage.

Mr. Freeman, as he sat in that large, curiously-fashioned chair, seemed a fine-looking man, – much younger in appearance than he generally looked; because, as we have before stated, he affected the old man, and seemed to wish to be thought much older than he really was.

"Alrina," he said, at length, "how did you become acquainted with that young man?"

"What young man?" said she, as innocently as she could.

"Alrina!" he said again, looking at her sternly; "you know whom I mean, and therefore let's have no prevarication."

"His sister was one of my schoolfellows," she replied, "and she introduced me to her brother."

"Oh!" replied her father, smiling; "and you each became affected with that incurable malady which silly people call 'love;' and you have met him again? And where is your old schoolfellow now, pray?" asked Mr. Freeman.

"She is residing with Mrs. Courland, I believe," replied Alrina, "at Ashley Hall."

"Thank you, Alrina. That was all I wanted to know. Now, you can go to your room again, if you don't feel well, and let the servant bring you up some tea. Good night."

So, then, this terrible ordeal in the "private room," which Alrina had dreaded so much but a few minutes before, and racked her brain to imagine what her father could possibly want of her, had ended in his asking a plain simple question or two, and her giving him answers to match. And although she had intended to ask him why he had been so cruel as to order that dangerous feat to be performed by that young stranger, and many other important questions, she had been dismissed so abruptly, that she had actually said nothing.

The whole scene seemed so absurd that she burst into a hearty laugh when she reached her own little bedroom once more.

CHAPTER XIV. MRS. BROWN TELLS THE CONJUROR A BIT OF HER MIND

Poor Mr. Brown! he remained on the rocks long after the other spectators had left, and would have remained there much longer, had he not been roused from his reverie by a gentle tap on his shoulder.

"Billy," said he, looking up; "let's go into the stable and have a look at Jessie, boy. She must have a good rub-down and a warm mash to-night."

"Come along," said the boy. And, taking Mr. Brown by the arm, he led him home to his amiable but eccentric wife.

"What! Billy!" she exclaimed, as the pair entered the kitchen; "where, in the name of goodness ded you spring from?"

"Why, I ha'n't b'en away, have I?" replied the sly boy.

"Now, that's enough – a plenty," said Mrs. Brown, looking at the boy with her keen grey eyes. "I can see through a millstone so well as most people. I ha'n't b'en away, says aw!"

"No, have I?" said he, looking innocently at his mistress.

"Areah, thon! Now, I'll tell 'ee, Billy. He that ha' b'en your maister the last three days, may take 'ee for the next three days, for what I do care; for in my house you sha'n't stop, – there, na. My eyes ha' b'en opening wider and wider evar sence last night. A croom of chat with one, and a croom of chat with another, have opened them so wide, that I can see round a corner a'most."

"I don't knaw what you do main," said the boy.

"Iss you do," replied Mrs. Brown, shaking her head; "so you march, – and dont you come anist my door agen for a bra' spur."

The boy saw that his quondam mistress was in earnest; so he took the hint and made himself scarce.

"And now, Mr. Brown," said she, turning to her husband, who had seated himself in the chimney-corner, "what do you think of yourself, I shud like to knaw? Your Jessie mare es come to a purty pass, esn't she? Ef the young gentleman had gone over cliff too, I shud nevar ha' b'en good no more. To go for to slock the young gentleman into et like that wor a shame, an' so et wor. You an' 'The Maister' too oft to be spefflicated, – iss you ded."

"'The Maister' wor right, Peggy," said Mr. Brown; – "the boy es come back. Wo! ho! Jessie! gently, mare! steady, now! Wo! ho!"

"John Brown," said his wife, "I ha' thoft for a bra' bit that there was but one biggar fool than you in the world, an' that's me, for marryin' such a g'eat lazy, knaw-nothen' pattick. John Brown, go to bed!" And this command was given in such an authoritative tone, that Mr. Brown took it literally, and, lighting a bed-light, although it was broad daylight, he took off his shoes at the bottom of the stairs, as was his wont, and went to bed in right earnest; and in ten minutes he was fast asleep.

"Well, that's a comfort," said Mrs. Brown.

"What's a comfort?" said Mrs. Trenow, who had come in to have a croom of chat with the landlady; "you've had your drop of gin an' peppermint, I s'pose?"

"No, sure, I ha'n't," replied Mrs. Brown; "but we will now, for I do feel that there's something wantin', cheeld vean."

So the two gossips were very soon seated comfortably over their little drop of cordial, seasoned with a pinch of snuff; and they wound up their moderate carousal with a cup of tea.

"You said something wor a comfort when I came in," said Mrs. Trenow.

"Iss fie! hark!" replied Mrs. Brown, turning up her ear in a listening attitude.

"You've got a pig bad, I s'pose?" said Mrs. Trenow; "but what comfort there es in that, I caen't tell. Ill-wished again, I s'pose? Semmen to me 'The Maister' ha' got bra' work now."

"No, my dear, tesn't the pig. Hark again!" said Mrs. Brown.

"Why, 'tes up in the chamber, to be sure," replied Mrs. Trenow, listening.

"Iss fie, 'tes up in the chamber, sure nuff," said Mrs. Brown; "and there he'd sleep and snore till to-morrow dennar-time ef I dedn't rouse'n out."

"Dear lor'! like that, es aw? Whisht too 'pon om, now that the mare es killed, I s'pose," said Mrs. Trenow. "Do 'ee think that 'The Maister' had any grudge agen that young gentleman, do 'ee?"

"What shud he know 'bout the young gentleman?" returned Mrs. Brown. "I'll tell 'ee, Mrs. Trenow, 'The Maister' wean't lev you nor me know what he do think; for thinken' es one thing and spaiken' es another, weth he, I'll assure 'ee."

"But the boy came back to the very minute, I do hear," said Mrs. Trenow, who could not be persuaded out of her belief in "The Maister's" wisdom.

"I tell 'ee, Mrs. Trenow," said Mrs. Brown, in a confidential whisper; "'tes my belief that ef they two wor to take off their shoes you wud see two cloven hoofs, – iss I do."

"Oh! lor'!" shrieked both the women, as they looked up, after their little confidential whisper; for behind them stood Mr. Freeman himself.

"A glass of mild ale, if you please, Mrs. Brown," said he, in his blandest tone, as he took his usual seat in the chimney-corner.

"Yes, sir," said the landlady. And while she was drawing the ale, Mrs. Trenow took the opportunity of slipping out. Mrs. Brown was as shrewd and cunning in her way as Mr. Freeman was in his, and, while she was drawing the glass of ale, she began to reflect on the probable purport of this early visit; for "The Maister" seldom came there until much later in the evening, when he knew he should find some of those peculiarly constituted individuals there, whom Alrina generally designated "goostrumnoodles," and whom he seldom found much difficulty in frightening to his heart's content. On these occasions, Mrs. Brown never interfered; for she had an eye to business, and she knew that the more terror there was produced in the brains of these poor numskulls, the more stimulants they would consume. But, now, there was no occasion for any dissimulation; and so she determined she would tell "The Maister" a bit of her mind, – for she believed that he had some hidden and wicked motive for prompting her husband to induce that young gentleman to undertake so dangerous a feat as the one he had attempted that day.

"Your husband has met with a serious loss to-day," said Mr. Freeman.

"Iss; and I s'pose you are come down for to make et good," replied Mrs. Brown, rather tartly.

"Me!" said Mr. Freeman; "what have I to do with Mr. Brown's losses, more than having a feeling of sympathy for the misfortunes of an old friend?"

"You dedn't tell Brown that the young gentleman must ride the mare up there, I s'pose?" said Mrs. Brown, taking a cunning side glance at her visitor.

"What motive could I have had for such a suggestion as that?" asked Mr. Freeman, looking innocently at Mrs. Brown; "and who could possibly have said that I had anything to do with the matter?"

"I tell 'ee, Maister Freeman," said Mrs. Brown; "there's more of your doin's knawn than you do think. What you got out of that wreck es knawn to a bra' many, f'rall they're afear'd for to spaik et out, down sous."

This made Mr. Freeman wince a little; for he had such confidence in his own cunning and ability in frightening and deceiving his neighbours, that he never for a moment supposed that they would presume to speculate on, or try to pry into, his private gains, or discuss his actions or motives.

His eyes were now opened, and Mrs. Brown perceived that he felt very uncomfortable – a most unusual and impolitic feeling for him to exhibit in the presence of so shrewd a woman as Mrs. Brown, who drew her own conclusions therefrom; and after her visitor had drank his ale, and left her alone

once more, she sat down, and, putting "this against that," saw the "ins and outs of things," as she expressed it, more clearly than she had ever done before.

CHAPTER XV. THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER AT THE PENZANCE BALL

Frederick Morley was getting strong again, and had met Alrina several times, and pressed her to go to the ball at Penzance; but this she could not think of doing, she said. Neither her father nor her aunt would sanction that, she was quite sure; for, although her education had been such as so fit her for ball-room society, and her beauty eminently qualified her for a ball-room belle, yet the equivocal position of her father, and the mystery which appeared to hang over them all, precluded her from enjoying at present the society of him she loved so much, in that sphere to which he of right belonged. He was unwilling to go without her, and had almost made up his mind not to go; but she knew it would do him good to mix in the society to which he had been accustomed, and she knew, also, that if he declined accompanying the Pendray party to the ball, his motives would be canvassed, and their secret love, which it was best for the present should be concealed, might become known; and so Alrina persuaded him to go.

Carriages were sent out from Penzance to take the Pendray family and the two officers to the ball, which was expected to be a very aristocratic affair. When they arrived at the hotel, they found that the best sitting-room and bedroom – which Squire Pendray wished to have secured for his party – had been engaged that morning by a strange gentleman, who came in from Hayle in a carriage-and-four, the waiter said. He was dressed like a foreigner, and had a large trunk with him, but no servant. He seemed rich, and gave orders as if he had been accustomed to be waited upon by a good many servants, and would not be satisfied with any but the best rooms. He took two tickets for the ball, the waiter said, and therefore, he supposed, he expected a friend, but no one had yet arrived.

The ball was a very brilliant one, for a country ball in those days, and everyone seemed in anxious expectation for the entrance of the stranger – especially the young ladies. Miss Pendray looked splendid. She had impressed Frederick Morley into her service, as her favoured beau; for she had taken a great interest in him since his accident, and had paid him marked attention, – indeed, she now looked upon him as a hero, whom she could almost worship. Such deeds of daring had a charm for her which few else could understand. But still, he did not come up to her standard of manly perfection. There was scarcely enough of that romantic devotion towards herself displayed, which she so much required, and demanded from those she took an interest in. This placed Morley in a very awkward position, for he could not help seeing that he had attracted Miss Pendray's attention, and that she seemed more pleased with his society than that of any other gentleman of her acquaintance. But he could not return it as she evidently would have wished him to do; for he had a secret treasure concealed within his breast, far dearer to him than all the charms of person and mind and fortune which Miss Pendray possessed. He would not exchange his Alrina's love for the fairest and brightest jewel that the world could bestow; for, without her, all the world to him would be an empty and worthless blank.

He enjoyed the ball as much as he could do in the absence of her who was uppermost in his thoughts. The excitement of the music, the company, and the dancing, brought back reminiscences of similar scenes abroad. His wonted spirits returned, and he entered thoroughly into the pleasures of the moment, and forgot for a time the scene on the cliffs, the horse's screech of terror, and the sound of his falling from rock to rock, as he went down over that awful precipice, while he himself was dangling on the very edge. He danced with all alike, – one lady was the same, to him, as another, there, – and he did not notice that Miss Pendray had withdrawn from the dancing, and was sitting alone at one end of the room, when the stranger entered. All eyes were directed towards the door,

as the waiter showed him in; but his eyes were evidently attracted by the magnificent form of Miss Pendray, as she sat alone on a seat nearly opposite the door.

One of the stewards immediately went up to him, introducing himself as "steward," and offering to present him to a partner.

The stranger bowed, and expressed a wish to be presented to the lady who was sitting opposite.

He gave his name to the steward who introduced him to Miss Pendray as "Mr. Smith." The stranger was the topic of conversation throughout the room. He certainly looked like a foreigner. His dress was that of an Indian gentleman of rank of those days. His coat was of the finest purple satin, trimmed and ornamented with gold; a white satin waistcoat, tastefully embroidered with silver; and white kerseymere breeches of the finest texture, fastened below the knee with a silver band; the white silk stocking displaying to advantage a finely-turned leg, – his shoes being fastened with small gold buckles. He was a tall, fine-looking man, apparently between forty and fifty years of age – nearer the former, perhaps, than the latter. He seemed to be making himself very agreeable to Miss Pendray; for she became full of animation, and her handsome countenance lit up radiant with beauty.

The stranger would not dance, but was introduced, by turn, to almost all the ladies of note in the room. Miss Pendray, however, was the principal attraction, and he returned to her side again and again.

Frederick Morley looked at the stranger several times with earnest attention, and, after a time, became absorbed in thought. He was not jealous of the attention bestowed on him by the lady whom he had led into the room. No, it could not have been that. He did not care enough for Miss Pendray to feel jealous of her attentions being bestowed elsewhere. No, it was not that. He watched the stranger narrowly, and he came to the conclusion that he was not the person he assumed to be. "Smith" was a feigned name, evidently. His dress and ornaments betokened him to have been a resident in India. India was a country familiar to Morley by name, and dear to him, as having been the residence of his father for so many years, and the birthplace of his mother, his brother and sister, and himself. He had not seen his brother since he and his sister were brought over by their father, when they were children, and when that never-to-be-forgotten calamity befel his father, which shortened his life. That false accusation was still hanging over the family. He had been reminded of it, in almost every letter he had received from his brother since their father's death; and, in his last letter, he said he had wound up their father's affairs, and his own, in India, and he intended to return to England by the next ship, to arrange the property according to their father's will, and to make a strict search after the wretches who had murdered their own father, on that terrible night, and caused the suspicion and accusation to rest on an innocent man. He would travel all over England, he said, and spend the whole of his fortune, to clear his father from that foul suspicion.

Frederick had but a very faint recollection of his brother; but a strange, unaccountable idea, took possession of him during supper. He thought he observed the stranger start once or twice, when the name of "Morley" happened to be spoken by anyone at the table – as was frequently the case; for Frederick was a stranger too, and, therefore, received great attention from the stewards, and, indeed, from the ladies, whose goodness of heart frequently prompts them to show greater attention to strange gentlemen than to those whom they are in the habit of meeting every day.

Ever since he had heard of the wreck of that East-Indiaman at Pendeen, he had been persuading himself that his brother might have been one of the passengers on board that ill-fated vessel; and, as very few bodies had been washed on shore, it was probable that one of the boats might have withstood the storm, and, when the sea was more tranquil, they might have landed somewhere on the north coast. It was possible. There was just sufficient possibility in it to keep alive hope.

What if this stranger should turn out to be his brother? It was scarcely probable; but yet the idea had seized hold of him, and he could not get rid of it.

The discovery and exposure of those wretches, who had been the means of hastening their father's death, and embittering his last moments, was the constant theme in all his brother's letters,

and seemed uppermost in his thoughts. Year after year he longed to be able to give up his business in India, and return to England seemingly for that one purpose. He had witnessed the effect the stain of this false accusation had produced on his father's mind and bodily health, and had seen him pine away under it; and he had received his father's dying injunction to sift the affair to the bottom as soon as he could return to England.

He had refrained from marrying in India, that he might have no ties to keep him there after his business affairs were wound up. He would, of course, change his name in searching after the fugitives, and he might have commenced at once, Frederick thought, however remote the chance of his finding them on the narrow strip of land which terminates the kingdom of England.

In spite of its improbability, Morley could not divest himself of the idea which had taken such a deep hold of him, and he determined on speaking to the stranger after supper, and asking him if he had ever met with a merchant of the name of Morley in India. He was disappointed, however; for, almost immediately after supper, Frederick was seized with one of his nervous attacks, and it was as much as his friend Fowler could do to support him to his room; and when he came down to a late breakfast, he found that the stranger had gone out for his morning's walk.

CHAPTER XVI. JOSIAH'S ASTONISHMENT AT THE EFFECT PRODUCED BY THE DISPLAY OF HIS TREASURE-TROVE

Josiah Trenow had been in constant attendance on Frederick Morley, ever since the accident. It may appear strange that a young man so strong and brave as Morley, and who had seen so much service abroad, and been engaged in the most dangerous sports that can possibly be pursued, should have been so entirely prostrated by this accident; but so it was.

It was Josiah's strong arm that had lifted him up from his perilous position on the cliffs; and, for many days, he did not feel safe unless that strong arm was near, to be thrown round him when the terrible thought of his perilous situation seized him; and Josiah was beginning to like his young master – for such he seemed now to have become, without any formal agreement having been entered into between them.

While his young master was at Penzance attending the ball, Josiah went to the mine where he had been working, to put things straight, and to see the captain, and get another man put in his place; for Morley had asked him to remain with him until he was obliged to join his regiment again – which would not be for some time, as he had obtained an extension of leave, in consequence of the accident, and the strong certificate sent to head-quarters from the surgeon who attended him. He had remained at "The First and Last Inn," at Sennen, ever since, – partly to be near his friend Fowler, and partly because he fancied the removal to another place might cause a return of those dreadful feelings of nervous terror which he had now in a measure overcome.

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