

***FREDERICK  
MARRYAT***



***POOR  
JACK***

**Frederick Marryat**

# **Poor Jack**

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# VOLUME TEN.

Poor Jack (Frontispiece)

Fisher's Alley

I summoned all my strength, and called out  
long before we floated past her

Anderson reading the Bible to Jack

Anderson reading the news of the Battle of  
the Nile

Jack's Father landing after the Battle of the  
Nile

Jack in Nanny's Room

Jack and Bramble aboard the Indiaman

The Fore-peak Yarn

"How's her head, Tom?"

Bramble saving Bessie

Jack heaving the lead

Nanny relating her story

Jack and his Father under the Colonnade

A Surprise

Bramble and Jack carried into a French Port

The Leith Smack and the Privateer

The Arrival of the Privateer at Lanion

The Prison

Jack a Prisoner

The Escape

Wreck of the Galley

We found both Bramble and Bessy clinging to  
the rope

Bramble had knelt by the bedside, and was  
evidently in prayer

I went down to the beach, ... and I was soon  
on board

"Mr. Saunders, ... may I ask where you  
procured this spyglass?"

Sir J. O'Connor and Mrs. St. Felix

I met face to face a Frenchman

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## **POOR JACK**

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# CHAPTER ONE

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In which, like most People who tell their own Stories, I begin with the Histories of other People.

I have every reason to believe that I was born in the year of our Lord 1786, for more than once I put the question to my father, and he invariably made the same reply: "Why, Jack, you were launched a few months before the Druids were turned over to the Melpomene." I have since ascertained that this remarkable event occurred in January 1787. But my father always reckoned in this way: if you asked him when such an event took place, he would reply, so many years or months after such a naval engagement or remarkable occurrence; as, for instance, when I one day inquired how many years he had served the King, he responded, "I came into the sarvice a little afore the battle of Bunker's Hill, in which we licked the Americans clean out of Boston<sup>[1]</sup>." As for Anno Domini, he had no notion of it whatever.

<sup>[1]</sup> I have since heard a different version of the result of this battle.

Who my grandfather was, I cannot inform the reader, nor is it, perhaps, of much consequence. My father was a man who invariably looked forward, and hated anything like retrospection: he never mentioned either his father or his mother; perhaps he was not personally acquainted with them. All I could collect from him at intervals was, that he served in a collier from South Shields, and that a few months after his apprenticeship was out, he found himself



one fine morning on board of a man-of-war, having been picked up in a state of unconsciousness, and hoisted up the side without his knowledge or consent. Some people may infer from this that he was at the time tipsy; he never told me so; all he said was, "Why, Jack, the fact is when they picked me up I was quite altogether *non pompus*." I also collected at various times the following facts—that he was put into the mizzen-top, and served three years in the West Indies; that he was transferred to the maintop, and served five years in the Mediterranean; that he was made captain of the foretop, and sailed six years in the East Indies; and, at last, was rated captain's coxswain in the "Druid" frigate, attached to the Channel fleet cruising during the peace. Having thus condensed the genealogical and chronological part of this history, I now come to a portion of it in which it will be necessary that I should enter more into detail.

The frigate in which my father eventually served as captain's coxswain was commanded by a Sir Hercules Hawkingtreflyan, Baronet. He was very poor and very proud, for baronets were not so common in those days. He was a very large man, standing six feet high, and with what is termed a considerable *bow-window* in front; but at the same time portly in his carriage. He wore his hair well powdered, exacted the utmost degree of ceremony and respect, and considered that even speaking to one of his officers was paying them a very high compliment: as for being asked to his table, there were but few who could boast of having had that honor, and even those few perhaps not more than once in the year. But he was, as I have said, very poor; and moreover he was a married man, which



reminds me that I must introduce his lady, who, as the ship was on Channel service, had lodgings at the port near to which the frigate was stationed, and occasionally came on board to take a passage when the frigate changed her station to the eastward or to the westward. Lady Hercules, as we were directed to call her by Sir Hercules, was as large in dimensions, and ten times more proud than her husband. She was an excessive fine lady in every respect; and whenever she made her appearance on board, the ship's company looked upon her with the greatest awe. She had a great dislike to ships and sailors; officers she seldom condescended to notice; and pitch and tar were her abomination. Sir Hercules himself submitted to her dictation; and, had she lived on board, she would have commanded the ship: fortunately for the service, she was always very seasick when she was taking a passage, and therefore did no mischief. "I recollect," said my father to me, "once when we were running down to Portsmouth, where we had been ordered for provisions, that my Lady Hercules, who was no fool of a weight, being one night seasick in her cot, the lanyard of the cot gave way, and she came down with a run by the head. The steward was called by the sentry, and there was a terrible shindy. I, of course, was sent for, as I had the hanging up of the cot. There was Sir Hercules with his shirt flapping in the wind, and a blanket over his shoulders, strutting about in a towering passion; there was the officer of the watch, who had been sent for by mistake, and who was ordered to quit the cabin immediately; and there was I, expecting to be put in irons, and have seven dozen for my breakfast. As for Sir Hercules,

he didn't know what to do; he did nothing but storm at everybody, for my lady, with her head under the clothes, was serving him out at no small rate. She wouldn't, she declared, allow any man to come into the cabin to hoist her up again. So indecent, so indelicate, so shocking—she was ashamed of Sir Hercules—to send for the men; if they didn't leave the cabin immediately, she'd scream and she'd faint—that she would—there was no saying what she wouldn't do! Well, there we waited just outside until at last Sir Hercules and my lady came to a parley. She was too sick to get out of bed, and he was not able to hoist her up without assistance; so being, as I suppose, pretty well tired of lying with her head three feet lower than her heels, she consented, provided that she was properly kivered up, to allow us to come in and put all to rights. Well, first she made Sir Hercules throw over her his two boat cloaks, but that wouldn't do; so he threw the green cloth from off the table, but that warn't enough for her delicate sensibility, and she hollowed from under the clothes for more kivering; so Sir Hercules sent for two of the ship's ensigns, and coiled away the bunting on her till it was as high as a haycock, and then we were permitted to come in and hoist her ladyship up again to the battens. Fortunately it was not a slippery hitch that had let her down by the run, but the lanyard had given way from my lady's own weight, so my back was not scratched after all. Women ain't no good on board, Jack, that's sartain."

But I must now introduce a more important personage than even Lady Hercules, which is my mother. They say "like master, like man," and I may add, "like lady, like maid."

Lady Hercules was fine, but her maid was still finer. Most people when they write their biography, if their parents were poor, inform you that they left them a good name and nothing else. Some parents cannot even do that; but all parents can at all events leave their children a *pretty* name, by taking a little trouble at their baptism. My mother's name was Araminta, which, as my father truly observed, was "a touch above the common." She had originally gone into service as a nursery maid, living in her first situation one year and nine months; in her second she remained two years and four months; then she left to *better* herself, and obtained the situation of nurse in a family where she remained two years and one month; after which Lady Hercules then having a child of a year old, she was received into her service. At three years old the child died, and my mother was promoted to the situation of lady's maid. This advancement quite spoiled her; she was prouder than her mistress, and gave herself ten times more airs, and when, at first, my father (who as coxswain was constantly up at the house) offered to speak to her, she turned away from him in most ineffable disdain. Now my father was at that time about thirty years of age, and thought no small beer of himself, as the saying goes. He was a tall, handsome man, indeed, so good-looking that they used to call him "Handsome Jack" on board of the "Druid," and he had, moreover, a pigtail of most extraordinary size and length, of which he was not a little proud, as it hung down far below the waistband of his trousers. His hair was black and glossy, and his lovelocks, as the sailors term the curls which they wear on their temples, were of the most insinuating

description. Now, as my father told me, when he first saw my mother with her sky-scraping cap at the back of her head, so different from the craft in general, he was very much inclined to board her; but when she boomed him off in that style, my father, who was quite the rage and fancy man among the ladies of Sally Port and Castle Rag, hauled his wind in no time, hitching up his white trousers and turning short round on his heel so as to present his back to her whenever they happened to meet. For a long time he gave her a wide berth. Now this fact of my father returning her disdain had the usual effect. At first she was very savage, and when she spoke of him to Lady Hercules, she designated him as "that proud coxswain, who seemed to think himself a greater man than Sir Hercules himself—with his filthy pigtail, indeed!" My father also, when he spoke of her to the boat's crew, termed her "that proud — of a lady's maid," the word not mentionable being both canine and feminine. Thus matters went on for some time, until my mother, by a constant survey of my father's handsome proportions, every day thought him to be a more proper man, and a few advances on her part at last brought them to a mutual understanding.



# CHAPTER TWO

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My Father does what most Sailors do—he makes a foolish Marriage, one of the Consequences of which is brought to Light at the End of the Chapter.

I have observed at the finale of my first chapter, that at last my mother and father came to a good understanding; but at the same time Madam Araminta (for so my mother insisted upon being called) took good care to let my father understand that she considered that she was lowering herself by surrendering up her charms to a captain's coxswain. She informed him that her father might be said to have been royally connected, being a king's messenger (and so, indeed, he might be considered, having been a twopenny postman), and that her mother had long scores against the first nobles in the land (she was a milk-woman), and that she had dry-nursed a young baronet, and was now not merely a ladies' maid, but a *lady's laides'* maid. All this important and novel communication sunk deep in my father's mind, and when he heard it he could hardly believe his good fortune in having achieved such a conquest; but, as the sequel will prove, his marriage did not turn out very happily. He used to say to me, "Jack, take my advice, and never marry above your condition as I did; nothing would please me but a *lady's ladies'* maid; I had no right to look up to even a *ladies'* maid, and had your mother only been a simple maid, all might have been right." But these were after-reflections when it was too late. I do not wonder at my

poor father's senses being dazzled, for, as he said to me, "You see, Jack, after being used to see nothing but Point women, all so slack in stays and their rigging out of order, to fall aboard of a craft like your mother, so trim and neat, ropes all taut, stays well set up, white hammock-cloths spread every day in the week, and when under way, with a shawl streaming out like a silk ensign, and such a rakish gaff topsail bonnet, with pink pennants; why, it was for all the world as if I was keeping company with a tight little frigate after rolling down channel with a fleet of colliers; but, howsomever, fine feathers don't make fine birds, and handsome is as handsome does."

My father's marriage was, however, precipitated by circumstances. One afternoon, after he had been accepted, he had taken his quid out of his cheek, wiped his mouth with the back of his hand, and was in the act of giving and receiving a chaste salute, when Lady Hercules happened to come down into the kitchen—a most rare occurrence, and wholly unexpected from a lady of her refined and delicate ideas. She caught my father and mother in the very act; and (as my father expressed it) with an exclamation of horror, "She 'bout ship, and sculled upstairs like winkin'." A loud peal of the bell summoned up my mother, leaving my father in a state of no pleasant suspense, for he was calculating how far Sir Hercules could bring in "kissing a lady's ladies' maid" under the article of war as "contempt of superiors," and, if so, how many dozen kisses his back might receive from the cat in return. While he was absorbed in this pleasing speculation, Lady Hercules was pouring out anathemas against my mother's want of delicacy and

decency, informing her that it was impossible she could submit the decoration of her person to one who has so contaminated herself with a tobacco-chewing seaman—who was all pigtail within and without; for, as the Scripture says, "Who can touch pitch without being defiled?"

Although my mother had made up her mind that if it was to be a question between a place and a husband, she should decide upon retaining the latter, still she thought it advisable, if it were possible, to conciliate my lady. She therefore pulled out a cambric handkerchief, and while her ladyship scolded, she covered up her face and wept. Lady Hercules continued to scold until she was out of breath, and thereby compelled to stop. My mother then replied, with deep humility and many tears, "that indeed she had been so persuaded (sob) that she at last promised to (sob) marry; but only on one condition—yes, indeed—(sob) that her ladyship gave her consent—positively on no other (sob)—no, indeed, upon her honor! Mr. Saunders was—(sob)—excellent young man—(sob), so attached to Sir Hercules (sob), and had such a great respect for her ladyship, that—(sob—sob—sob)—he had won her heart."

By this time her ladyship had regained her breath, and she interrupted my mother by pointing out to her, that allowing all she said to be correct, yet still that was no reason why she should allow such indecent liberties; that Sir Hercules had never obtained such favors from her until after the ring had been put on her finger. Then, indeed, such things might be—that is, occasionally; but the kitchen of all places!—And, besides, how did she know how many wives the coxswain had already? She shouldn't be surprised, if,



with that long pigtail of his, he had five at least—nay, perhaps, six or seven. Here my mother replied that "it was out of gratitude to her (sob) for having consented to permit him to (sob) speak to Sir Hercules (sob), who would plead with her ladyship (sob), which had occasioned Mr. Saunders (sob) to take—such—a—liberty (sob—sob—sob)—which he had never—done before—(sob)—No!—never—upon her honor—never!—" And here my mother's sobs choked her utterance.

This explanation somewhat pacified, and a little subsequent humility and flattery gained the mistress, who consented to settle the matter with Sir Hercules, alleging, as one principal reason for so doing, that after the familiarity which had taken place between them, the sooner they were married the better. The wishes of her ladyship were tantamount to commands. Sir Hercules pronounced my father to be a fool, and they were married.

My mother was a good-looking person, perhaps two or three years older than my father; she was of a very bad temper, very vindictive and revengeful, and in every way she had a pleasure in annoying other people, and when she succeeded she invariably concluded her remarks with, "There—now you're vexed!" Whenever out of humor herself from the observations of others, she attempted to conceal her vexation by singing; and having been so many years of her life in the nursery, her songs were usually those little ditties used to pacify or amuse children in arms. "Saunders," she would cry out, "if you aren't the biggest fool that ever walked on two legs—to look at that long tail of yours you're so proud of, one would think I'd married a monkey—a

*hourang-howtang*, instead of a man. There—now you're vexed! One can't open one's mouth." My mother knew where to strike; and this attack upon his pigtail was certain to provoke my father, who would retort in no measured language, till she, in her turn, lost her temper, and then out she would sing, in a sort of scream—

"Hey diddle, diddle, the cat and the fiddle,  
The cow jumped over the moon," etc.

And thus she continued to sing (or squeal) until her wrath cooled down.

The consequences of forming a matrimonial alliance with a captain's coxswain soon became visible. Six months after they had been married, Lady Hercules pronounced my mother's appearance to be quiet indecent, and declared her no longer fit for the office of lady's maid to a lady of her exquisite delicacy; and my mother, who became less active every day, received notice to quit, which she did, when her month was up, in great wrath, packing up her boxes, and slamming the door as she left the house, singing at the very highest pitch of her voice,

"Dickory, dickory, dock; the mouse ran up the clock," etc.

My father wished her to come and live with him on board the frigate; but to that my mother would not consent, saying that she had, it was true, degraded herself and her family by marrying a coxswain, but she was not going to further contaminate herself by mixing with the vulgar creatures on board. In this resolve I think my mother was right; but her dismissal and disgrace was followed up by my father being disgraced and turned into the maintop, for no other reason in

the world than such being the will and pleasure of Lady Hercules.

Her ladyship considered that she had lost a good servant through my father's intervention; and having therefore taken a dislike to him, did not choose that he should, as coxswain, come up to the house as usual; and, as he no longer did the duty of coxswain, she asserted that he was not entitled to the rating. Thus, seven months had hardly passed away before my father's marriage became a source of vexation and annoyance; his pay was decreased, and he was no longer a petty officer. My mother's pride was hurt; and if she was resolute in not going on board to remain with him when he was captain's coxswain, she was still more so now that he was reduced to a common seaman. As for my father, he was the picture of misery—he had no consolation except turning his quid and tying his pigtail.

But everything changes in this world, and among other changes was that of the station of the frigate, which was ordered foreign. Sir Hercules took leave of his lady, who retired to Tunbridge Wells. My father took leave of my mother, who retired to Woolwich. She had saved some money in service, and my father handed over to her all the pay which he received, when the ship's company were paid previous to the sailing of the ship. It is but justice to observe that the moment he was out of soundings and away from the influence of her ladyship, Sir Hercules reinstated my father, and gave him back his rating as coxswain. My father was indeed the smartest and best seaman in the ship; he could do his work from stem to stern—mouse a stay, pudding an anchor, and pass a gammoning, as well as he

could work a Turk's head, cover a manrope, or point a lashing for the cabin table. Besides which, he had seen service, having fought under Rodney, and served at the siege of Gibraltar.

But I must return to my mother, who, when she first went to Woolwich, which she did in a transport that was ordered round, took lodgings in the outskirts of the town; and not wishing to acknowledge that she had married a common sailor, as she supposed my father still to be, asserted that she was the wife of a captain of a merchant vessel, which had been taken up as a transport to convey troops to the West Indies. On this supposition, being received into a society above her real station, she was compelled to spend more money than she could afford, and her finances rapidly wasted away. In the meantime I was born—a fine baby, but with nothing to look up to but a penniless mother, an absent (if existing) father, the workhouse, and the sky.



# CHAPTER THREE

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In which my Mother proves herself a tender Wife, and at the same time shows her Patriotism and Devotion to her Country.

I had almost unconsciously arrived at the age of two years before there were any tidings of my father. All the information that my mother could obtain was, that the ship's company of the "Druid" had been turned over to another frigate called the "Melpomene," the former having been declared not seaworthy, and in consequence condemned and broken up at Port Royal.

But no letter had been received from my father, who indeed was not much of a scholar; he could read, but he could not write. By this time my mother's savings were expended, and she was in great tribulation lest the deceit she had practiced should be exposed. Indeed, there were already many surmises as to the truth of her story, it being so long that her husband had been absent. At last, when she had changed her only remaining guinea, a letter arrived from my father, dated from Portsmouth, stating that the ship was to be paid off in a few days, and then "he would clap on all sail and be on board of his old woman in no time."

My mother, although not a little disgusted at being called an old woman—an affront which she determined to revenge upon a more fitting occasion—was in raptures with the contents of the letter. She therefore returned a kind answer,

informing my father what a promising child he was blessed with, and giving him a direction to meet her at Greenwich, as she had resolved upon not receiving him at Woolwich, where her false assertions would have been exposed. Going round to all her acquaintances, she bade them farewell, telling them that her husband had returned well, and *well to-do*, and had ordered her to meet him at Greenwich. Having thus satisfactorily, as she imagined, got out of this little difficulty, she packed up and hastened to Greenwich, where she sunk her assumed rank and waited very impatiently for her husband. He came at last, seated with many others on the outside of a stage coach—his hat bedecked with ribbons, a pipe in one hand and flourishing a pewter pot in the other. It hardly need be added that he was more than half tipsy. Nevertheless, even in this state, he was well received; and after he had smothered her with kisses, dandled me on his knee, thrown into her lap all the pay he had left, and drank three more pots of porter, they went very peaceably and lovingly to repose.

I regret to say that this amity did not last long. My father's manners, which perhaps had been softened down by the awe which he had of Lady Hercules when he first made my mother's acquaintance, were now more coarse, and so was his language; and the neatness and cleanliness of person which he was obliged to maintain while performing the duties of a coxswain to a married captain were not so observable. Besides which, being no longer under discipline, he was almost every night intoxicated; and, being so, was more self-willed and regardless of his wife's injunctions. The consequences were that having

received from my father fifty pounds, my mother first locked that up, and then "unlocked her jaw." Disputes were now hourly occurring; and it was "now you're vexed," and "hey diddle diddle," from morning till night.

My father would repair to the grog-shops to have a dance and carouse with his messmates, and my mother would not accompany him to such a vulgar place; consequently he went alone, was out very late, coming home very drunk, if indeed he came home at all. Moreover, the wives and companions of the other seamen would insult her when she walked out, for pretending to be better than they were.

One day when she was walking out arm-in-arm with my father, unluckily she was met by one of her Woolwich acquaintances. This was the severest stroke of all, as she had intended to return to Woolwich; but now she was discovered, and avoided by one party, as well as insulted by the other. I cannot defend my mother's conduct; nor indeed was she deserving of pity, as her treatment had been brought about by her own folly and pride. The effect of all this was, however, that of souring her temper still more; and the constant vituperation poured out upon my father so roused his indignation that one evening, when more than usually intoxicated, the "lady's ladies' maid" received such a severe box on the ear that the one candle turned to a general illumination. This blow was never forgotten nor forgiven, although my father was very sorry for it, and begged her pardon the next day, with promises of amendment.

Just at this time the French Revolution commenced, and there was expectation of a war with France; the press-gangs



were ordered out, and the seamen, aware of it, remained concealed until they should leave the town. But my mother had made up her mind. She found out an officer who commanded one of the press-gangs, gave her address, and, having supplied my father with spirits until he was stupefied, she let in the gang, and before morning my father was safe on board of the tender lying off the Tower. This treachery on her part my father did not discover until some time afterward; and it was the occasion of a scene between them, as I shall hereafter show. The next day my mother went on board of the tender to visit my father, put her cambric handkerchief to her eyes, pressed his hand between the iron bars, and lamented *his* hard fate, and *her* hard fate; but when requested by him to smuggle a little liquor in a bladder to comfort him with, she tossed up her head, and declared "that nothing could induce her to do anything so ungenteel." Whereupon my father turned away, lamenting the day that ever he had married a lady's ladies' maid.

A day or two afterward my mother brought my father his kit of clothes, and two pounds of his own money. As a war was expected, my mother would have persuaded my father to give her his "will and power" to receive his prize money; but my father, grown comparatively wiser, positively refused. He turned away on his heel, and they parted.

I shall, for the present, leave my father to his fortunes, and follow those of my mother. Convinced by his refusal to sign the deed, which she had brought ready prepared with her, that she had little in future to expect from my father, and aware probably of the risk incurred by a seaman from

"battle, fire, and wreck," she determined this time to husband her resources, and try if she could not do something for herself. At first she thought of going again into service and putting me out to nurse; but she discovered that my father's return was not without its consequences, and that she was again to be a mother. She therefore hired rooms in Fisher's Alley, a small street still existing in Greenwich, and indeed still a general thoroughfare. Here, in due time, she was brought to bed of a daughter, whom she christened by the name of Virginia; not so much out of respect to her last mistress, who bore that name, as because she considered it peculiarly ladylike and genteel.



# CHAPTER FOUR

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In which I tell the Reader all I can recollect about myself, and moreover prove the Truth of the old Adage, "That it is a wise Child who knows its own Father".

My readers must not expect me to tell them much of what passed during the first four years of my existence. I have a recollection of a deal board put at the door of our house, which opened into Fisher's Alley, to prevent me, and afterward my sister, from crawling out. Fisher's Alley is a very narrow street, and what was said in a room on one side of it can be heard on the other, and I used to hang over the board and listen. There were drunken men and drunken women, and occasionally scolding and fighting. My mother, having made up her mind to be saving, had taken a lease of the house and furnished it; and every day I heard her saying at the door, "Walk in, gentlemen; I've a nice clean room and boiling hot water"—for the seamen used to come in to take tea, drink, and smoke; and so did the old pensioners occasionally, for my mother had made acquaintance with several of them. I was always very ragged and dirty, for my mother neglected and ill-treated me. As soon as my sister was born she turned all her affections over to Virginia, who was always very much petted, well dressed, and a very beautiful child.

All this I recollect, but little more, except that my mother gave me several beatings for calling my sister "Jenny," which I had learned to do from others who knew her; but

when my mother heard them, she was always very angry, and told them that her child had not such a vulgar name; at which many would laugh, and make a point of calling out "Jenny" to Virginia whenever they passed and saw her at the door. When I was a little more than four years old I would climb over the board, for I had no pleasure at home. As I grew older I used to hasten down to the landing-steps on the beach, where the new inn called the Trafalgar now stands, and watch the tide as it receded, and pick up anything I could find, such as bits of wood and oakum; and I would wonder at the ships which lay in the stream, and the vessels sailing up and down. I would sometimes remain out late to look at the moon and the lights on board of the vessels passing; and then I would turn my eyes to the stars, and repeat the lines which I had heard my mother teach little Virginia to lisp:

"Pretty little twinkling star,  
How I wonder what you are;  
All above the earth so high,  
Like a diamond in the sky;"

and when I did stay out late I was sure of having no supper, and very often a good beating; and then Virginia would wake and cry, because my mother beat me, for we were fond of each other. And my mother used to take Virginia on her knee, and make her say her prayers every night; but she never did so to me; and I used to hear what Virginia said, and then go into a corner and repeat it to myself. I could not imagine why Virginia should be taught to pray and that I should not.



**FISHER'S ALLEY.**  
—Marryat, Vol. X. p. 27.

As I said before, my mother let lodgings, and kept the ground-floor front room for people to drink tea and smoke in; and I used to take my little stool and sit at the knees of the pensioners who came in, and hear all their stories, and try to make out what they meant, for half was to me incomprehensible; and I brought them fire for their pipes, and ran messages. Old Ben the Whaler, as they called him, was the one who took most notice of me, and said that I should be a man one of these days, which I was very glad to hear then. And I made a little boat for my sister, which cost me a great deal of trouble and labor; and Ben helped me to paint it, and I gave it to Virginia, and she and I were both so pleased; but when my mother saw it, she threw it into the fire, saying it was "so ungenteel," and we both cried; and old Ben was very angry, and said something to my mother, which made her sing "High diddle diddle" for the whole day afterward.

Such are the slight reminiscences, which must content the reader, of my early existence.

When I was eight years old (about six years after his last visit), my father made his appearance; and then, for the first time, I knew that my father was alive, for I was but two years old when he left, and I remembered nothing about him, and I had never heard my mother mention his name as if he still existed.

My father came in one day very unexpectedly, for he had given no notice of his return; and it so happened that as he came in, my mother was beating me with the frying-pan, for having dipped my finger in the grease in which she had been frying some slices of bacon. She was very angry, and as she banged me with it, Virginia was pulling at her skirts, crying and begging her to desist, "You little wretch," cried my mother, "you'll be just such a sea-monster as your father was—little vulgar animal, you must put your finger into the frying-pan, must you? There, now you've got it." So saying, she put down the frying-pan, and commenced singing as loud as she could, "Hush-a-by, baby, Pussy's a lady." "Ay, now you're vexed, I dare say," continued she, as she walked into the back kitchen.

All this time my father had been at the door looking on, which she had not perceived. My father then came in. "What's your name, my lad?" said he.

"Tommy Saunders," replied I, rubbing myself; for the frying-pan was very hot, and my trousers very much out of repair.

"And who is that little girl?" said he.

"That's my sister Virginia—but," continued I, "who are you? Do you want my mother?"

"Not very particularly just now," said my father, taking up my sister and kissing her, and then patting me on the head.

"Do you want any beer or 'baccy?" said I. "I'll run and get you some, if you give me the money, and bring back your change all right."

"Well, so you shall, Jack, my boy," replied he; and he gave me a shilling. I soon returned with the pipes, tobacco, and beer, and offered him the change, which he told me to keep, to buy apples with. Virginia was on the knee of my father, who was coaxing and caressing her, and my mother had not yet returned from the back kitchen. I felt naturally quite friendly toward a man who had given me more money than I ever possessed in my life; and I took my stool and sat beside him; while, with my sister on his knee, and his porter before him, my father smoked his pipe.

"Does your mother often beat you, Jack?" said my father, taking the pipe out of his mouth.

"Yes, when I does wrong," replied I.

"Oh! only when you do wrong—eh?"

"Well, she says I do wrong; so I suppose I do."

"You're a good boy," replied my father. "Does she ever beat you, dear?" said he to Virginia.

"Oh, no!" interrupted I; "she never beats sister, she loves her too much; but she don't love me."

My father puffed away, and said no more.

I must inform the reader that my father's person was very much altered from what I have described it to have been at the commencement of this narrative. He was now a boatswain's mate, and wore a silver whistle hung round his neck by a lanyard, and with which little Virginia was then



playing. He had grown more burly in appearance, spreading, as sailors usually do, when they arrive to about the age of forty; and, moreover, he had a dreadful scar from a cutlass wound, received in boarding, which had divided the whole left side of his face, from the eyebrow to the chin. This gave him a very fierce expression; still he was a fine-looking man, and his pigtail had grown to a surprising length and size. His ship, as I afterward found out, had not been paid off, but he had obtained a fortnight's leave of absence, while she was refitting. We were all very sociable together, without there being the least idea, on the part of my sister and myself, with whom we were in company, when in rolled old Ben the Whaler.

"Sarvice to you," said Ben, nodding to my father. "Tommy, get me a pipe of 'baccy."

"Here's pipe and 'baccy too, messmate," replied my father. "Sit down, and make yourself comfortable, old chap."

"Won't refuse a good offer," replied Ben, "been too long in the sarvice for that—and you've seen sarvice, too, I think," continued Ben, looking my father full in the face.

"Chop from a French officer," replied my father; after a pause, he added, "but he didn't live to tell of it."

Ben took one of the offered pipes, filled, and was soon very busy puffing away, alongside of my father.

