Pirate King
Samuel
Frederic

~~ALL~~

~~Poor lad—poor lad!~~

~~*(All weep.)*~~

PIRATE KING

Well, Frederic, if you conscientiously feel that it is your duty to destroy us, we cannot blame you for acting on that conviction. Always act in accordance with the dictates of your conscience, my boy, and chance the consequences.

SAMUEL

Besides, we can offer you but little temptation to remain with us. We don't seem to make piracy pay. I'm sure I don't know why, but we don't.

FREDERIC

I know why, but, alas! I mustn't tell you; it wouldn't be right.

PIRATE KING

Why not, my boy? It's only half-past eleven, and you are one of us until the clock strikes twelve.

SAMUEL

True, and until then you are bound to protect our interests.

ALL

Hear, hear!

FREDERIC

Well, then, it is my duty, as a pirate, to tell you that you are too tender-hearted. For instance, you make a point of never attacking a weaker party than yourselves, and when you attack a stronger party you invariably get thrashed.

PIRATE KING

There is some truth in that.

FREDERIC

Then, again, you make a point of never attacking an orphan!

SAMUEL

Of course: we are orphans ourselves, and know what it is.

FREDERIC

Yes, but it has got about, and what is the consequence? Everyone we capture says he's an orphan.

(FREDERIC)
The last three ships we took proved to be manned entirely by orphans, and so we had to let them go.

RUTH
And Ruth, your own Ruth, what is to become of her?

PIRATE KING
Oh, he will take you with him.

FREDERIC
Well, Ruth, I feel some difficulty about you. It is true that I admire you very much, but I have been constantly at sea since I was eight years old, and yours is the only woman's face I have seen during that time. I think it is a sweet face.

RUTH
It is – oh, it is!

FREDERIC
I say I think it is; that is my impression. But as I have never had an opportunity of comparing you with other women, it is just possible I may be mistaken.

PIRATE KING
True.

FREDERIC
What a terrible thing it would be if I were to marry this innocent person and then find out that she is, on the whole, plain!

PIRATE KING
Oh, Ruth is very well, very well indeed.

SAMUEL
Yes, there are the remains of a fine woman about Ruth.

FREDERIC
Do you really think so?

SAMUEL
I do.

FREDERIC
Then I will not be so selfish as to take her from you. In justice to her, and in consideration for you, I will leave her behind.

(FREDERIC hands RUTH to the PIRATE KING.)