

very long way, too. At last the fish, or dragon, or ogress, or mermaid, or whatever she was, brought me up again and cast me out of her slimy grip upon the steps of the little house. I did not wait a moment, not I, to see what she was like or what became of her after that, but I scrambled up the steps as fast as ever I could, and got fast hold of nurse's knees, thankful enough to be safe out of the water. It was running in little streams from my eyes and mouth and ears and nose, and pouring from my hair, which was just like so many stalks of slippery brown seaweed ; and oh ! I was so horribly wet and cold, and frightened and uncomfortable.

As soon as I had recovered breath enough to be able to talk, I told nurse what a terrible thing had happened to me ; how a fish, or a mermaid, or something with great blue flapping fins, had got hold of me and carried me ever so far down under the waves, and how I had screamed and kicked and struggled, but it was no use, she only wrapped her nasty fins closer round me, and went farther and farther down amongst the sea-weeds and fishes, until at last, when I was very nearly drowned, and quite full of salt water, she brought me up again and left me on