

“You will run some little risk,” he said, “as the companion of a man who has now been thrice outlawed for firing on his Majesty’s flag; but I know your proud heart will prefer the danger of bad company, at its worst, to the alternative of begging your way home.” He judged rightly. Before daybreak we had lost sight of land, and in four days more we could discern the precipitous shores of Carrick, stretching in a dark line along the horizon, and the hills of the interior rising thin and blue behind, like a volume of clouds. A considerable part of our cargo, which consisted mostly of tea and spirits, was consigned to an Ayr trader, who had several agents in the remote parish of Kirkoswald, which at this period afforded more facilities for carrying on the contraband trade than any other on the western coast of Scotland, and in a rocky bay of the parish we proposed unloading on the following night. It was necessary, however, that the several agents, who were yet ignorant of our arrival, should be prepared to meet with us; and, on volunteering my service for the purpose, I was landed near the ruins of the ancient castle of Turnberry, once the seat of Robert the Bruce.

I had accomplished my object. It was evening, and a party of countrymen were sauntering among the cliffs, waiting for nightfall and the appearance of the lugger. There are splendid caverns on the coast of Kirkoswald; and, to while away the time, I had descended to the shore by a broken and precipitous path, with a view of exploring what are termed the Caves of Colzean, by far the finest in this part of Scotland. The evening was of great beauty: the sea spread out from the cliffs to the far horizon like the sea of gold and crystal described by the prophet, and its warm orange hues so harmonized with those of the sky that, passing over the dimly-defined line