

master, in his easy, humorous way, which I always like well enough except in bad weather, and then I see his humor is served out like his extra grog, to keep up hearts that have cause enough to get low,—‘Nay, man,’ he said, ‘we can’t afford to let your grandmother board us to-night. If you will ensure *me* against the shifting coal, I’ll be your guarantee against the dead-light. Why, it’s as much a natural appearance man, as a flash of lightning. Away to your berth, and keep up a good heart; we can’t be far from Covesea now, where, when once past the Skerries, the swell will take off; and then, in two short hours, we may be snug within the Sutors.’ I had scarcely reached my berth a-head, mistress, when a heavy sea struck us on the starboard quarter, almost throwing us on our beam-ends. I could hear the rushing of the coals below, as they settled on the larboard side; and though the master set us full before the wind, and gave instant orders to lighten every stitch of sail,—and it was but little sail we had at the time to lighten,—still the vessel did not rise, but lay unmanageable as a log, with her gunwale in the water. On we drifted, however, along the south coast, with little expectation save that every other sea would send us to the bottom; until, in the first gray of the morning, we found ourselves among the breakers of the terrible bar of Findhorn. And shortly after, the poor *Friendship* took the ground right on the edge of the quicksands, for she would neither stay nor wear; and as she beat hard against the bottom, the surf came rolling over half-mast high.

“Just as we struck,” continued Jack, “the master made a desperate effort to get into the cabin. The vessel couldn’t miss, we saw, to break up and fill; and though there was little hope of any of us ever setting foot ashore, he wished to give the poor woman below a chance with the rest. All of us but himself, mistress, had got up into the shrouds, and so could see round us a bit; and he had just laid his hand on the companion hasp to undo the door, when I saw a tremendous sea coming rolling towards us like a moving wall, and shouted on him to hold fast. He sprang to the weather back-stay,