

at all sure that it would have been safe to attend to the midnight voice from amid the rocks, even had they the means of communication with the shore. We waited on and on, however, now shouting by turns, and now shouting together; but there was no second reply; and at length, losing hope, we groped our way back to our comfortless bed, just as the tide had again turned on the beach, and the waves began to roll upwards higher and higher at every dash.

As the moon rose and brightened, the dead seaman became less troublesome; and I had succeeded in dropping as soundly asleep as my companion, when we were both aroused by a loud shout. We started up, and again crept downwards among the crags to the shore; and as we reached the sea, the shout was repeated. It was that of at least a dozen harsh voices united. There was a brief pause, followed by another shout; and then two boats, strongly manned, shot round the western promontory, and the men, resting on their oars, turned towards the rock, and shouted yet again. The whole town had been alarmed by the intelligence that two little boys had straggled away in the morning to the rocks of the southern Sutor, and had not found their way back. The precipices had been a scene of frightful accidents from time immemorial, and it was at once inferred that one other sad accident had been added to the number. True, there were cases remembered of people having been tide-bound in the Doocot Caves, and not much the worse in consequence; but as the caves were inaccessible during neaps, we could not, it was said, possibly be in them; and the sole remaining ground of hope was, that, as had happened once before, only one of the two had been killed, and that the survivor was lingering among the rocks, afraid to come home. And in this belief, when the moon rose and the surf fell, the two boats had been fitted out. It was late in the morning ere we reached Cromarty, but a crowd on the beach awaited our arrival; and there were anxious-looking lights glancing in the windows, thick and manifold; nay, such was the interest elicited, that some enormously bad verse, in which the writer described the incident a few days after, became popular