

near the shore that I saw the flash of moonlight run along the barrel as he brought it to his eye. I wondered what he could be aiming at—a sea bird belike.

“*Clip! Splash!*” went something past my head and through the bow of the boat. Then on the back of the crack of the gun came a great towrow of laughter from the cliff edge.

“A miss! a palpable miss!” cried some one behind. “Haud her nose doon, ye gowk!”

“Noo, Gil, ye are next. See you an’ mak’ a better o’t.”

I was somewhat dazed with the suddenness of the cowardly assault, but I seized my oars of instinct and rowed shorewards. I was in the black of the shadows in three strokes, and not a moment over soon, for another ball came singing after me. It knocked the blade of my left oar into flinders, just as the water dripped silver off it in the moonlight for the last time before I was submerged in the shadow. Again the laughter rang loud and clear, but heartless and hard.

“Guid e’en to ye, fisherman,” cried the man who had first spoken. “The luck’s wi’ ye the nicht; it’s a fine nicht for flounders.”

I could have broken his head, for I was black angry at the senseless and causeless cruelty of the shooting. My first thought was to make for home; my second to draw to shore, and find out who they might be that could speed the deadly bullet with so little provocation at a harmless lad in his boat on the bay. So without pausing to consider of wisdom and folly (which indeed I have but seldom done in