

CHAPTER III

THE SURGES OF SOLWAY

THE tangles of dulse waved sullenly in the salt wind from off the sea. Paul was the taller, and the thin, cool edges tickled his hot cheek. Zipporah paid no attention, save to the piloting of Glenkens. The little horse was exceedingly nervous, striking the damp sides of the cavern with his shod hoofs, tossing up his head and whisking his tail. But Zipporah went before him, stepping backwards with his nose close against her breast, and whispering into his pricked ears. Glenkens was clearly uncertain. Nevertheless he followed, often pawing tentatively with a forefoot before he placed his weight upon the spot.

"He will never cross the well at the end of the passage," Paul thought to himself. They were now in a complete darkness and behind him the minister's nephew could hear the roaring suck of the surges in the mouth of the Dulse Cave.

He did not in the least see how they were to get Glenkens into a place of safety, nor indeed how they were to save their own lives. He put his hand up and still the seaweedy tangles, green and clammy (purple dulse no more), were dripping with the salt water from the last tide that had filled the cave from floor to roof.

But they went carefully, and Paul could hear Glenkens shaking his head with nervous impatience, when suddenly a match spurted blue and was held up like a lamp, in the hollow of a hand, so as to throw the light forward and yet shelter the eyes. The hand was small and rosy where the fingers came together, and through the sunburnt gipsy skin, the blood showed red and warm within.