“Sam and I are just going down to the beach for a bit Mum,” said Joe, popping his head round the door. His mother looked up from her computer and frowned.

“The tide will be turning soon. You will need to keep an eye on the time. Stay on the beach and keep away from the rocks.”

“Of course Mum. Don’t worry,” shouted Sam over his shoulder and he and Joe dashed out of the door.

As soon as they reached the beach the boys headed straight for the rock-pools at the base of the cliff. They picked their way carefully over the mounds of slimy seaweed which were stuck firmly on the sea-worn rocks. Crouching down, they peered into the clear salt-water. A hermit crab, alerted to their presence, scuttled back into the safety of its shell. Sea anemones waved their tendrils looking like exotic flowers. Gently, Sam touched the centre of one of them and laughed when it folded around his finger. In the distance they could hear thee waves breaking, the seagulls calling and the distant throb of a fishing boat’s engine.

Time passed. Suddenly the noise of the waves seemed much louder… Alarmed, Joe leapt to his feet. The tide! They had forgotten the tide! The incoming waves had already covered the sandy beach and were beginning to crash and foam around the rocks. Frantically they looked for a way to escape. The cliff was too steep to climb and they were cut off from the beach. What were they to do?

At that moment they heard a voice. “Boys. Boys. Quickly, over here!” The fishing boat they had heard earlier, had pulled round the headland and was bobbing like a cork on the water a few metres away. The boys scrambled towards it, struggling to keep their feet on the treacherous surface. Strong arms caught them and swept them into the safety of the boat.

When they got home, their mother (predictably) was very angry. “You could have drowned,” she shouted. Silently the boys nodded. They had learned their lesson. They knew they had had a very lucky escape.