

serving pints to Yanto rather than any other scamp, would cry bitterly, hiding her face in her apron.

Then Yanto noticed in the roadway, between the tram-rails, something which flashed under his light. He stared down at it.

"Water," said he, reflectively. "Now where is she coming from?"

From under the rumbling tram the water trickled. It travelled a little faster than the horse, and Warrior's hoofs began to splash in it, while Yanto's light flashed on it.

"Oh," quietly said Yanto, in the tone of a man accepting a miracle as quite an ordinary matter.

He could not know that this little stream represented the bulk of water which had escaped through the door at the top when Prince had tried to go that way.

"Come up," said he to Warrior. He could think of nothing more apt at the moment.

Warrior, annoyed by the splashing, willingly hastened. The increased speed bespattered Yanto with mud; and the mud deepened his perplexity. Down ran horse and tram with Yanto on the iron. They reached the beginning of a short turn which joined the heading to the main road, and Yanto saw something ahead which gleamed in his light like a wall of flame.

"Woa!" he shouted, and leapt cleverly off into the side.

Owing to the speed, Warrior could not stop, and horse and tram rushed into the water that filled the bottom road from floor to roof. It had gone around Prince's road, and come back through every opening in the main road, from which the heading branched.

Yanto found himself in it up to the waist.

"Arglwyd!" said he, spluttering and gasping. Half swimming and half wading, he worked his way back up the heading to dry ground. In the dark, the water put out his light before he could guard it—he heard Warrior floundering, struggling against drowning, and squealing with terror. Then the struggling ceased.

"Poor old Warrior!" said Yanto. He's drowned—an' I'm in a nice pickle, ain't I?"

"I wonder if I can get out through Prince's road," he questioned himself.

He knew he must be swift, for the water would soon rise and fill the headings.

But he did not get flustered. He went calmly up the incline. The darkness did not hinder his movements. He knew the road—knew every yard of the workings.

His out-stretched hand touched the door. He pushed against it, trying to open it. It did not move. He heard hissing noises; the escaping of water through little cracks in the door.

"Oh," said Yanto. "Tons of water against her. I'm blocked by there, then."

He thought a minute. "Come you," said he. The phrase means: "I accept the situation just exactly as it is."

"If I don't get out of here quick," he added, "the water from top and bottom will meet, and I'll have too much to drink. A drunkard's death is awful, mind you."

Yanto laughed. He seemed to take a sardonic pleasure in the situation.

He turned back, feeling the side of the passage with his hand. He had struck an old disused stall-road, which led in toward the coal.

"I thought it was hereabouts," he said. "I'd rather it led out, but I can't have everything my own way, I s'pose," he added.

Stones, fallen timber, and rubbish obstructed the way. Stumbling, and swearing every time he stumbled, Yanto covered the ground with remarkable speed for a man travelling in utter darkness.

His foot kicked against something yielding. The touch sent a thrill over Yanto.

"Who is it, I wonder," said he. He bent down and touched a human body.

He passed his hands over it. "It's a boy."

He shook him vigorously, and a sound came from the boy. So Yanto repeated the shaking until consciousness came back, and the lad sat up in the roadway.

"Ain't you Prince's boy?" asked Yanto.

"Where's your father?"

Young Prince whimpered.

"I don't—know."

"Where's your lamp?"

"I ran away without it when the water came."

Yanto knew the rest. The boy had got lost in the dark and had frightened himself into a faint.

"Well, come with me, wassy [lad]," he said. "The water'll soon be in this way."

The boy began to cry.

"How can us get out?" "Out" always means "home" in the pits.

"Never mind that for a minute. Let's get away from the water. Let's get into Jimmy's heading. We might do something worth there."

He took the boy's hand. They went a little way on until Yanto's out-thrust arm once more poked itself into nothingness.

"Here it is, wassy."

"There's a light," shouted the boy.

Yanto turned to look up the roadway.

"Five of um," said he. "They're in the same trap as us. Hoy-y!" he shouted.

"Hoy-y!"

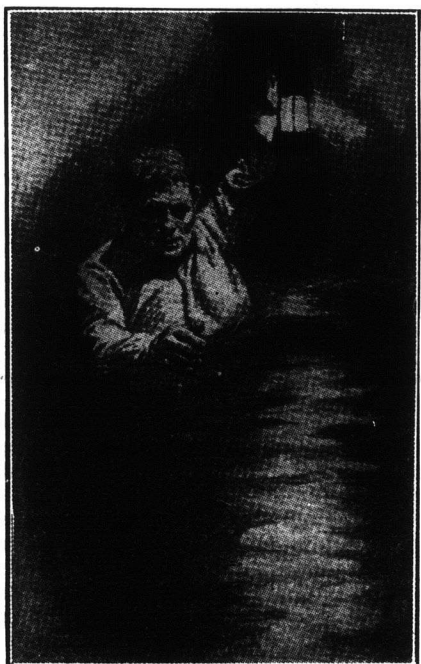
The five lights shook wildly, because those who carried them came rushing down the hill.

"They're runnin' well," remarked Yanto, laughing. "But they'd better not go far at that rate—or they'll run into the pool at the bottom and drown like poor old Warrior."

"What—is poor old Warrior drowned?" demanded young Prince, suddenly.

"Ahy."

"Oh, poor old Warrior," said the boy, with overwhelming tenderness, and he



"The water swirled around him."

began to cry; for horses and boys in the pits cherish a real friendship for one another.

Presently five men came abreast with Yanto and the boy.

"Hoy!" said Yanto.

"Hoy!" they replied without stopping.

"Hold on," said Yanto, catching the first one.

"Come on, come on!" they all cried. "Don't stop. The water's come through Prince's place."

"Ahy, ahy," returned Yanto, easily.

"An' it's waiting for you at the bottom of Jimmy's place. It drowned my horse at the bottom of the next heading."

"Is it there already?" they asked, horrified. "Then we're shut in forever."

"Let's try another road," said Yanto.

"Give me your light, Lewis—I'll lead you." He reached for the lamp in the hand of the man he held.

"No!" shouted Lewis, drawing back.

"What does a waster of a haulier like you know? I'll try my luck in the main road!" And he broke away and ran down the heading.

The other four seemed inclined to try their luck in the same way. They tried to push by.

"Don't be fools," said Yanto, calmly.

"You'll never see Lewis again."

The sarcasm in his tone made for conviction. The men stopped. "What are you goin' to do?" they asked, with their lights up to his face.

"Who'll give me a light?"

"Here."

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