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§ CHAPTER XXIV §

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throttle, put on the air and opened the sand-valves. The sound of that whistle, blown back over the train, fell upon the ears of Patsy and the two dead-heads, and filled them with fear. A second later they felt the clamp of brake-shoes applied with full force; felt the grinding of sand beneath the wheels, and knew that something was wrong. The old engineer tore the curtains back from "lower six," and spread out his arms, placing one foot against the foot of the berth, and threw himself on top of the two sleepers. Patsy and the Philosopher braced themselves against the seat in front of them, and waited the shock. Bennie heard the whistle, too, and went out into the night, not knowing where or how he would light. Young Guerin had no time to jump. He had work to do. His left hand fell from the whistle-rope to the air-brake, and it was applied even while his right hand shoved the throttle home, and opened the sand-valves—and then the crash came. Being higher built,