

"Here," said Temorah, taking a pitcher from under her cloak. Tom snatched it from her, and turned to descend once more.

Temorah busied herself with Toby's wife, and presently succeeded in reviving her.

When the rescued were brought out into the open air at last, they could hardly be recognized for Will and Toby, and gave but very faint signs of life; slowly, slowly their blood began to circulate again, and while the usual means of reanimation were being applied to them, Tom was seen gesticulating among the groups, telling how he had worked day and night, how he had sometimes fallen asleep between two strokes, how the fragments of fallen rock which obstructed the narrow gallery had given way, and the two senseless bodies had fallen into his arms amid a shower of loose earth and stones. He had thought them dead at first, and would have been borne to the ground by their weight, if his companions had not rushed to his assistance. Vaughan stood near him unobserved and listened in silence; but old Owen, who had at first been wholly occupied with the sufferers, could not bear to hear him talking in this strain; he laid his hand on the young man's shoulder and asked him whether he would not go to wash and dress.

"Oh, yes, certainly," laughed Tom. "I look like a chimney-sweeper, and I'm hungry and thirsty, especially thirsty; I always gave the men my share of the refreshments to keep them in good spirits."

"And how did you keep yourself alive? And where are your clothes?" asked the old man.

"I covered those two with my clothes. They were so cold. I'm quite warm, and I shall run home as soon as I know the poor fellows are really alive. It would be a pity if they were to die after all, in spite of all our trouble."

He stepped to the side of the stretchers on which Toby and Will were being carried away. Toby's wife fell on her knees before him and covered his hands with kisses. Seeing this, Will's child knelt down beside her on the dirty ground. He took the little girl in his arms and kissed her. "You shall not lose your father," he said loudly and emphatically.

"Three cheers for our Tom!" cried one of the miners, and a thousand voices took up the cry; the hurrahs rose tumultuously into the air, and then there was a whisper among the workmen, and before Tom could guess their intention, he was raised on their shoulders and bore along in triumph. A great multitude moved through the fog towards Vaughan's house; children ran on in front, and a chorus was quickly formed, bursting into noisy song. The men took it by turns to carry Tom, lifting him high from time to time, that the people might see him better. He sat with his arms crossed on his breast, as though his dirty shirt were a royal robe. The Vicar's sons came out to meet him, waving their caps. The fog seemed to dissolve before the advancing crowd, so that Edleen could see them from her window. Her mother's heart beat high with exultant pride, especially when Tom made a speech to them, which was continually interrupted by joyful acclamations. Regardless of his deprecations, she folded her son in her trembling arms, and whispered words to him such as only a glad and anxious mother can utter. Her prodigal son was the hero of the day, honored and loved by all, a friend and benefactor of his fellow-men.

Kathleen and the little girls immediately drove over to the cottages of the sufferers with warm clothes, food and wine, and were also cheered by the home-bound workmen. In the evening a fiery serpent was seen winding through the hilly woodland. It was an immense torch-light procession in honor of Tom, and Vaughan's cellar was made to contribute largely to

the general elation. Numberless speeches were made. Tom enjoyed his heroism to the utmost, talking incessantly; and every time he repeated his adventures, the days and nights of suspense grew longer, the air in the gallery more stifling, the recovered bodies more dead and only restored to life by his art and energy; but tell what he might, people believed him implicitly that evening; his version even became the popular one, and the very eye-witnesses declared Tom's reports to be accurate. It was a night of rejoicing, singing, intoxication and merriment.

Edleen looked like a bride, so rosy and radiant as though all care and pain were forgotten and her darling must become a new man from that hour—a good man, whom people would always admire, whom they would extol and raise in their arms on many another occasion, the son of whom she had dreamt when she hushed him on her breast in his baby-days, when she prayed the Almighty to spare his life, and thought she must die if he were snatched from her. "Tom!" she said several times, and Vaughan felt that she had neither look nor feeling for him that evening. She was nothing but Tom's happy mother, and would drain her cup of joy to the very dregs. The fog had cleared away completely; the moonlight glittered on the sea, and made the torches look murky, with their lurid glare and their heavy smoke rolling low in the moist air. Even when the last were thrown on a heap to make a bonfire, around which the revellers danced, the moon maintained her superiority, and shone in calm magnificence. And the sea murmured dreamily, drowning the hoarse voices and Tom's incoherent speeches, which continued to influence the general enthusiasm as much as did the wine, beer and brandy.

Tom was extremely attentive to his mother the whole evening, that he gained the sympathy of all unsophisticated minds. He did not take the slightest notice of Vaughan and Kathleen, and called out imperiously to old Owen, why the beer was so scarce over there, among the elder workmen? Then he summoned a servant and gave him a purse full of money for Toby and Will, thereby evoking a new volley of applause. Kathleen looked after the purse, and thought: "How shall we pay that?" Edleen was too happy for even this consideration to occur to her.

In a small dark room, Temorah sat by Toby's bed and fancied more than once that night, that he would not live to see another day. His wife lay faint and helpless beside him; the terror of the past days had exhausted her strength. Toby repeatedly lifted his bloodless hand to stroke her cheek, and once or twice he whispered words of gratitude to Temorah. Towards morning he sunk into such a deep sleep, that he did not hear a first weak cry quiver through the room, and then lapse into silence for ever. By-and-bye, a tiny coffin was borne from the house, and during several days there seemed little hope of saving the poor mother's life.

While the rescuer was heaped with applause, the rescued fought a terrible fight; it was just as if death would not surrender his prey.

Will was extremely weak; he felt life ebbing from him, and himself sinking down into something unbounded, into unfathomable depths. Then he heard his child's despairing cry, reaching him as from a vast distance: "Father, father! Father dear! Come back, father!" and with an immense effort of will he returned all that long way, opened his eyes and recognized his child. And so he was saved.

Temorah sat at the bed-side, envying Toby's wife for her baby's death, and wondering what would become of herself.