

his visage showed that somebody had wronged him, after whom he rushed with vengeance, and his great gun swinging.

"Sons of dogs!" he cried in Welsh, alighting on the pebbles; "may the devil feed their fathers with a melting bowl!"

"What's the rumpus now?" I asked; "what have your sons been doing?"

For he always swore at his sons as freely as at anybody's, and at himself for begetting them.

"My sons!" he cried, with a stamp of rage; "if my sons had been here, what man would have dared to do on the top of my head this thing? Where are they? I sent you for them."

"I have sought for them high and low," I answered; "here is the only one I could find."

"Watkin! What use of Watkin? A boy like a girl or a baby! I want my five tall bully-boys to help their poor father's livelihood. There's little 'Pom' tailor gone over the sand-hills with a keg of something; and Teddy shoemaker with a spar; and I only shot between them! Cursed fool! what shall I come to, not to be able to shoot a man?"

He had fired his gun, and was vexed, no doubt, at wasting a charge so randomly; then spying his other gun on my shoulder, with the flint and the priming set, he laid his heavy hand on it. I scarce knew what to do, but feared any accident in the struggle; and after all, he was not so drunk that the law would deny him his own gun.

"Ha, ha!" with a pat of the breech, he cried; "for this I owe thee a good turn, Dyo. Thou art loaded with rocks, my darling, as the other was with cow-ries. Twenty to the pound of lead for any long-shore robbers. I see a lot more sneaking down. Dyo, now for sport, my boy."

I saw some people, dark in the distance, under the brow of a sand-hill; and before I could speak or think, black Evan was off to run at them. I too set my feet for speed, but the strings of my legs hung backward; and Watty, who could run like a hare, seemed to lag behind me. And behind him there was little Dutch, crawling with her belly down, and her eyes turned up at us, as if we were dragging her to be hanged.

Until we heard a shout of people, through the roar of wind and sea, in front of where black Evan strode; and making towards it we beheld, in glimmering dusk of shore and sky, something we knew nothing of.

A heavy sand-hill hung above them, with its brow come over; and long roots of rushes naked in the shrillness of the wind. Under this were men at work, as we work for lives of men; and their Sunday shirt-sleeves flashed, white like ghosts, and gone again. Up to them strode Evan black, over the marge of the wild March tides; and grounded his gun and looked at them. They for a breath gazed up at him, and seemed to think and wonder; and then, as though they had not seen him, fell again a-digging.

"What means this?" he roared at them, with his great eyes flashing fire, and his long gun levelled. But they neither left their work nor lifted head to answer him. The yellow sand came sliding down, in wedge-shaped runnels, over them, and their feet sank out of sight; but they still kept on working.

"Come away, then, Evan great; come away and seek for wreck," I shouted, while he seemed to stand in heaviness of wonder. "This is not a place for you. Come away, my man, my boy."

Thus I spoke, in Welsh, of course, and threw my whole weight on his arm, to make him come away with me. But he set his feet in sand, and spread his legs, and looked at me; and the strongest man that was ever born could not have torn him from his hold, with those eyes upon him.

"Dyo, I am out of dreaming. Dyo, I must see this wreck; only take the gun from me."

This I would have done right gladly, but he changed his mind about it, falling back to a savage mood.

"You down there, who gave you leave to come and dig my sand-hills? Answer, or have skins of lead."

Two or three of the men looked up, and wanted to say something. But the head man from the mines, who understood the whole of them, nodded, and they held their tongues. Either they were brave men (which never is without discipline), or else the sense of human