

pointment. For I had let some anger vex me at the rudeness of black Evan, and the godliness of his sons, which forced me thus to come forward, when full of wet and weariness. In spite of this, I was grieved and frightened, and angry with no one but myself, when I chanced upon boy Watkin, fallen into a tuft of rushes, with his blue eyes running torrents. There he lay, like a heap of trouble, as young folks do ere they learn the world; and I put him on his legs three times, but he managed to go down again. At last he got his knees to stick; but even so he turned away, and put his head between his hands, and could not say a word to me. And by the way his shoulders went, I knew that he was sobbing. I asked him what the matter was, and what he was taking so much to heart; and, not to be too long over a trifle, at last I got this out of him:—

"Oh, good Mr. Llewellyn, dear, I shall never see nothing more of my great brothers five, so long as ever I do live. And when they kicked me out of bed every Sunday morning, and spread the basins over me, it was not that they meant to harm—I do feel it; I do feel it; and perhaps my knees ran into them. Under the sands, the sands, they are; and never to kick me again no more! Of sorrow it is more than ever I can tell."

"Watty," said I, "Why talk you so? Your brothers know every crick and corner of this warren, miles and miles; and could carry a sand-hill among them. They are snug enough somewhere with their game, and perhaps gone to sleep, like the little ones."

Of the babies' adventures he knew nothing, and only stared at me; so I asked him what had scared him so.

"Under the sands, the sands, they are, so sure as ever I do live. Or the rabbit-bag would not be here, and Dutch, who never, never leaves them, howling at the rabbit-bag!"

Looking further through the tussocks, I saw that it was even so. Dutch, the mongrel collie, crouched beside a bag of something, with her tail curled out of sight, and her ears laid flat and listless, and her jowl along the ground. And every now and then she gave a low but very grievous howl.

"Now, boy, don't be a fool," I said, with the desire to encourage him; "soon we shall find your brothers five, with another sack of rabbits. They left the bitch yonder to watch the sack, while they went on for more, you see."

"It is the sack; the sack it is! And no other sack along of them. Oh, Mr. Llewellyn, dear, here is the bag, and there is Dutch, and never no sign at all of them!"

At this I began to fear indeed that the matter was past helping—that an accident and a grief had happened worse than the drowning of all the negroes which it has ever pleased Providence (in a darkness of mood) to create for us. But my main desire was to get poor Watty away at once, lest he should encounter things too dreadful for a boy like him.

"Go home," I said, "with the bag of rabbits, and give poor Dutch her supper. Your father is down on the shore of the sea, and no doubt the boys are with him. They are gone to meet a great shipwreck, worth all the rabbits all the way from Dunraven to Giant's Grave."

"But little Dutch, it is little Dutch! They never would leave her, if wreck there was. She can fetch out of the water so good almost as any dog."

I left him to his own devices, being now tired of arguing. For by this time it was growing dark; and a heavy sea was roaring; and the wreck was sure to be breaking up, unless she had been swallowed up. And the common-sense of our village, and parish, would go very hard against me, for not being on the spot to keep the adjacent parish from stealing. For Kenfig and Newton are full of each other, with a fine old ancient hatred. So we climbed over the crest of high sand, where the rushes lay weltering after the wind; and then with a plunge of long strides down hill, and plucking our feet out hastily, on the watered marge we stood, to which the sea was striving.

Among the rocks black Evan leaped, with white foam rushing under him, and sallies of the stormy tide volleying to engulf him. Strong liquor was still in his brain, and made him scorn his danger, and thereby saved him from it. One timid step, and the churning waters would have made a curd of him. The fury of