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TOM HARKNESS' HOUR.

The mill stood in a little hollow—a low, black, one-story wooden structure with no external sign to indicate its unusual character. It had entered the building, as a visitor upon express permission, being subjected at the door to the customary precautions; my clothes were changed, loose slippers of soft felt were put on my feet, and as for the very word was with implication forbidden. An awful hush seemed to fall over my two guides and myself as we crossed the threshold. I had seen the three materials undergoing processes by themselves, and finally we entered a lonely room, in the centre of which were two circular troughs of iron, about two feet wide and a foot deep, and in each of them a pair of stones, about four feet in diameter and attached to one shaft, were revolving. The troughs were half full of a black substance which the stones were crushing, and before each stone a wooden scraper moved along through the mass, stirring it up. There was but little light struggling through the windows. Overhead, grimy beams; the walls, grimy too; the floor, grimy and smooth, somewhat as if the whole room had been rubbed again and again with what we call "black lead" and used for pencils. Not a fly, not a spider, not a cobweb, not a vestige of any animal life. The whole place seemed pervaded by a mute terror.

"So that as all light and there was the happiest part. But the other wasn't long coming, you can see for the Old On a hundred sent a man there that called himself Left Runney. I suppose that was only the hundredth name he had for he was a real 'fall-bird'; but I guess that name fitted him best, for he was a sort of 'left-over' chap, as if the Lord had made him by mistake like, or out of scraps that had been left after he had made up a batch of decent men. He was a short, round-shouldered fellow, as if a very bad cold had withered him, and he stopped his growing, and as far as his face looked as if he had been scowling at somebody in a furious rage, and then it had just died of itself.

Presently the stones gave a tremble—and Tom, Runney, and I, who were shaking, they stopped. The wheel for opening the gate turned faster and faster, the shaft cracked, stopped, started, cracked, and the stone next him came forward a little and stopped again. Then Tom commanded his soul to God, for the wheel below suddenly got free, and the stone went past his head with a rush, sending the cold blast of wind against his cheek, and he was moist with sweat and bitter tears.

By and by he saw in one spot that the ring of powder in the trough wasn't hardening. The powder got thinner and thinner there. The hidden scraper was doing Left Runney's work. Tom could see every turn, as it passed a little more of the powder away. The room swam before his starting eyes. Even the penciled face before him shook, and looked sad and hateful, hateful and sad again at him, by turns. One or two turns of the stones more.

He could see the bare iron of the next time the stone came it would roll on it. He gave a mighty wrench, and fell forward on his elbow on the floor by the side of the trough. He struggled up, stretched one word, "fright" and looked down into the trough. The stone was coming—tossing to the uncovered spot—very close to the left hand in very desperation—and the big stone went over, and round and round again, but it didn't touch the iron.

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NEWS ITEMS
The venerable Rev. Dr. Charles H. ...
About a hundred and thirty citizens ...
Robert ...
A young man of eighteen or twenty ...
A little break in the cross-bar ...
Donald ...