

over him tugging with might and main to break the cords which held their victim.

The boys had discovered that the express which they had expected to whiz by had for some reason taken the side track and was bearing down upon them.

Frantic with fear they tore madly at the stubborn cords, but they resisted all their efforts. Bob was now working furiously. The thought of his pocket-knife flashed across his mind. He drew it out and made a slash at the rope, but in his excitement he struck with the back of it and the blade closed, cutting his fingers to the bone; but, without heeding the intense pain, he opened it again and bent over the prostrate boy. His hand shook so that he could scarcely find the cords. Slowly he cut them away. But too slowly, for the engine was upon them. The glare of the headlight dazzled their sight. With one mighty wrench they broke the last cord and dragged the limp body from the track just as the engine, with a groan and shriek, reached the spot where he had lain.

Fearful of detection, the boys bore Stanford swiftly away, and when they dared stop they found him in a deep swoon.

"Thank heaven we aren't murderers!" gasped Bob as soon as he could get his breath.

"He isn't dead, is he?" asked Brickey, in a frightened whisper.

"No, it isn't that bad; he's just fainted. But what on earth are we to do? We can't leave him alone," answered Bob.

"We'd better be sure that he is alive," ventured another. "Stand back and give him air."

The rest moved aside while Bob and two others worked over him to restore him to consciousness. In a few moments he slowly opened his eyes, stared blankly around, and then sank again into a stupor. The boys then realized in what a weak condition their victim really was.

"Something has got to be done quick," asserted Bob in a trembling voice. "What can we do, fellows? Say, can't we take him to your room, Jim? It's the nearest. He can stay there to-night, and no doubt he'll be all right in the morning."

"Yes, but suppose he isn't; how the deuce am I to get out of this?"

"Oh, if he should be worse I'll see to having him moved early in the morning," answered Bob.