

The Long Tunnel

John Milne

Chapters

5 - 6

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The Robbery

The train from London was in the long tunnel.

'The signal is red,' said the driver to his mate. 'That's unusual.'

The train slowed down. It stopped on a long bend in the tunnel.

The driver's mate looked back. The end of the train was out of sight.

'What about the money in the guard's van?' the mate asked the driver.

'Don't worry,' replied the driver. 'Pete's a good guard.'

The driver watched the signal. It was red. The train waited in the long tunnel.

Frank and his men were in the tunnel. They were waiting at the bottom of the shaft. The train slowed down and stopped. The guard's van was in front of them.

→ Frank quickly climbed up. He opened the lock on the door of the guard's van. He looked inside.

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At the top of the shaft, Sheila and Paul were working fast in the darkness. There was a heavy iron cover at the entrance to the shaft. They pulled the cover over the entrance and put some heavy stones on top of it.

The first of Frank's men reached the top of the shaft. His head hit the iron cover. He reached up with one hand and pushed. The cover did not move.

'There's something wrong,' he shouted. 'I can't get out.'

Below him in the shaft, the other men waited. They were trapped.



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'It's all right,' he said to the others. 'The guard has drunk the coffee. He's sleeping.'

Frank threw down the bags of money.

'Throw up the bags of paper,' he told his men. 'And move quickly. We haven't much time.'

A few minutes later, Frank and his men were at the bottom of the shaft. They were carrying the bags of money.



'Get up to the cottage,' Frank said. 'I'll follow you in a moment.'

The signal changed from red to green. The train moved towards Llanvay Station.

'Good,' thought Frank. 'The plan has worked.'

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The End

The police moved quickly. A police car came to the telephone box. Charles jumped in and they drove fast towards the cottage.

The police arrested two men at the top of the shaft.

An hour later, Sheila, Paul and Charles were in the police station at Barconney.



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'Thanks to you, we've got the men and the money,' said the police sergeant. 'We arrested the other two men at Llanvay Station.'

'But there were five men,' said Paul. 'Have you arrested the leader? He's called Frank.'

Sheila, Charles and Paul spent the night in the home of the police sergeant. The next morning the sergeant left early.

'I must go to the police station,' he told them. 'I'll phone you later in the morning.'

At breakfast, Sheila turned on the radio.

'Here is a police message. The police are looking for Frank Steel . . . aged forty . . . this man was last seen on the railway line to Llanvay Station in the early hours of this morning. He is a dangerous. . .'

Sheila turned off the radio.

'It's a strange beginning to a holiday,' she said.

Later, the phone rang. Paul answered it. It was the sergeant.

'Good news,' said the sergeant. 'A police car has picked up Frank Steel.'

Paul put down the phone.

'The police have arrested Frank Steel,' he said to the other two.

'That's great,' said Sheila. 'Now we can go back to the cottage and begin our holiday.'

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Read chapters 5 and 6 and answer the questions.

1. Why did the train stop in the tunnel?

2. What happened to the guard?

3. What did they do with the bags of paper?

4. What was the shaft for?

5. What did Sheila and Paul do at the top of the shaft? _____

6. Why could the Police arrest the robbers?

7. How did they know that Frank had escaped?

8. Did Frank escape in the end?

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