THE SLATE-PICKER;

OR, THE

SLAVE OF THE COAL-SHIFT.

BY DANIEL DOYLE

CHAPTER I

A STAY IN CIVILIZATION ANDбур

THE OUTSIDE APPEARANCE OF THIS TOWN WAS DECEIVING. THE SLATE-MINES APPEARED TO BE IN A BAD CONDITION.

"We don't need no damn doctors," said the old man, as he adjusted his cap and poked out the tobacco-pipe. "We're not all sissies here. We just do what we have to do."

"But why not go to the doctor?" asked the young boy, looking at the man with a mixture of curiosity and concern.

"We don't got no time for that," replied the old man. "We got work to do."

"But what if something happens to you?"

"We'll make do," said the old man, with a nod of his head.

"And what about the boy?"

"He'll learn.

"But isn't it dangerous?"

"It's a hard life," said the old man, "but it's our life."

"I don't understand..."

"You'll understand," said the old man, "when you're old enough to have children of your own."

The boy looked down at the ground and said nothing more. The old man turned and walked away, leaving the boy standing alone on the edge of the mine.

The sun had set, and the sky was painted with streaks of orange and purple. The boy stood there, staring at the mine, wishing he could do something to help.

"Hey, boy!" called a voice from the mine. "What are you doing here?"

The boy turned and saw a man standing at the entrance to the mine, watching him.

"I'm just... just looking," said the boy, his voice shaking.

"Look here," said the man, "you're not supposed to be here."

"But... but I..."

"I know," said the man. "You're just a boy, aren't you?"

The boy nodded, his eyes filled with tears.

"You shouldn't be here. You should be at home, with your family."

The boy looked up at the man, his face shining with the warmth of the tears.

"I know," said the man, "but you can't do anything about it."

"I can try," said the boy, his voice firming.

"Yes," said the man, "you can try."

The boy looked up at the sky, and then down at the ground, his mind racing with thoughts of what he could do.

"What can I do?"

"You can help," said the man, "by telling others what you've seen."

The boy looked up at the man, his face shining with determination.

"I will," he said, "I will help."

"Good," said the man, "then do it."

The boy nodded, and turned to walk away, his mind made up to do whatever it took to help.
A FREE PASS.
BY RICHARD GRUSELL.

A free pass! Was ever man so fortunate as to receive one of these passes, which are the most valuable possessions of a railroad? Yes, a free pass is a possession of great value, and it is enjoyed by some individuals in the best walks of life.

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TONY,
THE TRAMP

By HORATIO ALGER, Jr.


CHAPTER VII.

A TYPICAL SCENE.

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