

# Mine lives Matter



Stories of Geevor Mine by those who were there and, by God's eternal Grace, lived to tell the tale.



# Ruan Gwyn

by Dylan Hawthorn

I wonder what my Dad meant by 'Be Wise.' Maybe he knew what was about to happen.

No.

That would be impossible unless we were all psychic.

I put my hands over my pick and concentrated hard and then harder and harder until I passed out. The next thing I knew I was in the mine's hospital. Yes, I'd been there before and I remember what happened.

'How long have I been here, doctor?,' I asked.

'Two weeks,' he said.

'Two weeks?,' I got out of bed and ran all the way home. My mum must have wondered where I was. As soon as i got to the doorway I tripped on my laces, fell and banged my head on the uneven stone floor.

Unconscious again !

As I woke up to another dingy Cornish morning. My bed seemed as if it was made of stone and wood. I turned, but then a horrible thought came to me.

'Mum !,' I shouted. 'Dad's dead !'

My mum came running. She asked me again what had happened two weeks ago.

On my next day of work I met a girl before I went down the mine shaft. We kissed and kissed and kissed - and I still didn't know her name ! We I asked her at last she told me her name was Sammirah.

'So are we boyfriend and girlfriend now ?,' I said cheekily.

'Well I guess so,' she said, 'after what just happened.'

I blushed.

'Anyway,' I said. 'I'm Ruan Guyn. You might have seen me in the hospital a couple of times.'



'Maybe,' she said. 'Anyway, do you work here? You don't look old enough.'

Sam and I were at my house one day playing pin the knife on the boss's bum, when she asked me where the game came from.

'I made it,' I said. 'Anyway, do you want to hear how I ended up unconscious or not?'

'Alright,' Sam said.

Five minute later I had finished my story. 'So that's how my dad died,' I said. I started to cry.

It's eleven years later now and Sam and I are officially married. Everyone we knew had been there at the wedding - everyone except one. But I had just been able to make out a tall figure in the distance.....

'Dad !,' I'd shouted.

As the figure had come closer, I'd realised it was him. But at the figure had got nearer, I'd realised that there was something ghostly about him...

Sam poked my arm. 'Ruan,' she said, 'you know there are no such things as ghosts.'

'Look outside, Sam,' I said. 'It's my dad's ghost. See?'

She looked and so did I. There were dozens of them, standing silent, ghost-like. They were the spirits of all the miners who'd died down the mines. I waved to my dad. He raised a pale ghostly arm and waved back. Then they were gone, lost amongst the headstones in the graveyard.

# Katel Corneys

by Finna Howorth

I woke up to the sound of my mother shouting at me, 'Get up! Now!' My back was aching like a thousand needles were pressing into it. I opened my eyes to find myself on a hard floor in what felt like a dusty street, surrounded by rats the size of babies. It was still dark. I dragged myself into my old rags and put my boots on with a sigh. My boots were worn out. I plodded slowly to Geevor Mine. I was starving. 'Bye, Katel,' mother called with a worried smile.

Finally, having walked the five miles, I made my way down, down, down into the mine. I lit the candle on my hard hat.

Suddenly the ground started falling beneath me. BANG ! I ran and ran and luckily I got away. I made my way to the surface.

SNAP ! went the flashbulb of the plate camera.

After a while we all went back down again. The noise - Bang ! Bang ! Bang ! - started up again, while on the surface, the Bow-maidens went on with their work.

Today I woke up to the same atmosphere around me and walked the same route to the mine along the same dusty roads. This time I ran into my brother Kytto. 'Hello,' he said with a smirk, 'what do you want?'

'Nothin',' I said, frowning. I walked off with a huff. My brother was annoying. I stopped, walked back and spat on his muddy old boots. 'We're going to be late,' I said



crossly. I turned and ran as fast as a cheetah. At last I got to the mine. Again I went down and down and the air got hotter and hotter and hotter. The walls around got thinner and thinner.....

Then, 'Katel !'

Oh no, I thought, and I followed the voice down and down, until-

The voice was my dad's.

But my dad was dead. My mum had told me.

'I've been suffering down here for three years,' he announced. He was as pale as a sheet. I was speechless. He had light blue eyes, just like my brather and me. His shirt was torn, his trousers too. My candle lit up my father's grubby beard, I got closer, and as I did he took out his tatty old pocket watch. 'Right then,' he said, sighing. 'Shall we?'

'Alright,' I said, and we began the great climb up.

But then-

'Owww!'

I hit my head on a massive stone. I touched my head. My head was bleeding.

Somehow that day I made it home. I got into bed and I was soon asleep.

Today I feel strange, light-headed. I pull myself up and look down into a vast, muddy puddle. I look as white as a sheet and even slightly transparent.

I look up to find a crowd of boys and girls looking at me. They're carrying weird boxes and suitcases. A brave little girl wanders over to me. 'Hello,' she says. Her voice was gruff, lower than I had expected.

'Hello to you too,' I answered.

'What's your name?,' she asked politely.

I told her.

'My name's Mary Vinterschnapps and my sister is called Germoe.'

I couldn't stop myself giggling.

'Hey, stop making fun of my name,' she said as she lightly stamped on my foot. Briallen wandered over with a smirk. Mary and I rolled our eyes.

'What do you want?,' we said as one.

'Well,' he said grinning. 'I just wanted to annoy you.'

We looked at him with a frown. He screamed like a girl and ran off. We'd been laughing for a while when Mary turned away. I asked her where she was going.

'To the countryside,' she said, her voice growing quieter and sadder. I followed her. In a while, as we arrived at the train station, she



pointed at a lovely-looking lady and said, 'That's my mummy.' The lady had short brown wavy hair and blue eyes. She was wearing a long skirt and matching navy blouse and cardigan. She was mouthing that Mary should get on the train.

'I think I have to go now,' she said. She was smiling but worried too. She started moving away.

'No !,' I called out. 'Wait !'

'Don't you know what year it is ?,,' she said. 'It's 1915 and we're in Cornwall.'

'Cornwall ?,,' I said. It all seemed suddenly like a dream.

The train blew its whistle.

Maybe, I thought, I'm a ghost.

The train pulled away.



But whatever I was, I knew my mining days were over. I knew there had to be something more.



# Brialen Teague

by Bethany Gibson

I woke up and smelled the rusty tin and stone. I work in the mine. That day, when I started to gather up all the rocks in the hand barrow I felt cold and tired because I had had to wake up early.

Today, I asked one of my friends to help me carry the barrow to the maidens. We gathered stones for the barrow; I found one that was really heavy. I wondered why. Anyway, we went backward and forwards to the maidens. When the big pile of stones was gone, I went to one of the maidens to see what was inside the really heavy one. She bashed it hard; there was a big bit of tin inside. Later, I took the tin to my dad and he was very pleased. He said he would take it to the mine manager. Then I had my tea and went to bed.

I woke up wondering what I was going to do today. The mine manager told me I had to go underground. It was hard and scary going down all the steps. Down there you can hear all the sea above you and the crashing waves. Once, I'd thought it would be fun down there - but it wasn't. My hands were freezing and I was struggling to move them. I decided I wanted to stick with my original job. When at last I got back up to the surface I went to see the maidens. I thought maybe I could do their job instead.

I have two jobs that I can do. I decided not to go down all those ladders again, what with the sea crashing overhead and how it scared the life out of me. Anyway, I like the hand barrow job. My friends Elys Marrak and Rosen Gwavas helped me. Me and Elys pushed the barrow while Rosen loaded it up. Often I wanted to have a rest but Rosen told me not to because if we were found out we would get into real trouble. Although time



went really slowly, in the end we got to the end of our shift. I went slowly home, had something to eat, and went to bed.

The sun is coming up. Another day down the mine. When I woke I had a pain in my chest that I hoped would go. Elys Marrack was waiting for me underground but he'd forgotten his safety helmet. I went back up to fetch him another one. As I was going up, I slipped off the ladder and screamed. But I was alright and I felt ashamed. I'm fourteen, I thought, not a baby.

When I got home that day I found my mother crying in the kitchen. She said that my father had died and that the funeral was tomorrow.

The next day I woke up and at once remembered it was the day of my father's funeral. Elys Marrack came to the house; he had been my father's best friend. When the ceremony was over it was dark and I stumbled at our front door, hit something very hard and cracked my head open. Although I didn't know it, my mum took me to

the doctor's where they told my mum I had to stay there for two weeks. When I woke up, the doctor said that though I was still a bit sick I well enough to go home. That night I fell asleep with my head on my mum's shoulder.

Today I'm going to the doctor's to have my head stitched. I think it's going to be painful.

We got there at the same time as Elys Marrack. He had really hurt his arm. When the doctor was stitching my head, Elys went 'Booo !' and the needle went straight into my head. I went to bed at 11 o'clock not knowing what was going to happen.

When I was in bed, I kept on thinking about my dad. I kept on thinking I was going to die.

This morning the needle in my head is killing me. At last I drifted off into sleep and the pain went away.

When I woke the needle was gone. There was no trace of it. In that moment I knew it must all have been a dream. In that moment, nothing

seemed certain or true. Everything seemed like  
a dream.





# Tegen and Me

by Eleanor Brown

This is the story of my hero brother who gave his life to save others.

It was a warm summer's day. Tegen and I were getting ready for work at the mine. 'Can you hurry up a bit, Tegen ?,' I said. 'We'll be late for work.'

'Sorry Lowenna, if the master hits me what can I do ?,' he said.

After a long time getting dressed, we went outside where our mother was waiting to give us a pasty - all we would eat for the day. 'Tegen,' she said. 'Your father's waiting at the mine for you. Make sure he and your brother come home tonight, do you hear ?'

I said yes. I tried to smile but I was dreading the day. Every day the master made

the girls break rocks and the boys go down the deep and perilous mines.

'Tegen ! Lowenna ! Where have you been ?' It was the master. He was angry. He was always angry. I knew he couldn't hit me, but he could give me bigger rocks to break. He could hit Tegen, though - and he did. As Tegen went off down the mine I felt a terrible sense of fear and I started to cry. But I knew I shouldn't cry. So I wiped my eyes and told myself that both my father and my brother would be fine.

Tegen was working away with his pick-axe. He was tired of working day and night. His arms and neck were aching. All of a sudden, children much younger than him were running out of the mine. Tegen grabbed one of them by the collar. 'What's happening ?,' he said. The boy's face was tear-streaked. He said there'd been an explosion on the other side.

'Was there anyone left alive ?'

'I don't know, mister,' said the boy. He wriggled out of Tegen's grip and ran.

Meanwhile, up on the surface, I met my friend Demelza. 'What's up?,' she said. 'Why are you bright red?'

I told her that everything was itching.

'Get on with your work!,' shouted the master.

'But-'

'No buts. Now!'

Down the mine, Tegen was having a look around. 'Hello?,' he called out. 'This is Tegen. Is anyone there?'

Suddenly a high voice shrieked out.

'Hello?,' said Tegen. 'Who's there? Do you need help?'

'Help!'

Tegen ran as fast as he could towards the sound. At last he arrived at a door. He stepped towards it. He reached out his hand-

'Lowenna - wake up!'

It was Demelza.



'What happened ?,' I said.

She was leaning over me. She said there was a rockfall. She mentioned Mexico Wheal.

'But that's where Tegen and my dad work !'

When he opened the door, Tegen found someone trapped by the rockfall. It was Germoe Vinterschnapps who was Tegen's Swedish friend from years ago. He quickly untied him. 'C'mon,' he said. 'I know a way out.'

As the dark descended, covering the brilliant cornflour blue sky with its blanket of black and white dots, I raced home as fast as I could. 'Mother !,' I called out. 'Where are you ?' I search the house, only stopping when I found her motionless on the backroom floor.

I tried to shake her awake. Nothing. I searched the cupboard for a cloth or a flannel. When at last I found one, I took it to the well and made it wet. When I went back inside, she was gone. All I could see was a piece of paper



stuck to the door with a knife. On it was written a riddle:

Your mother's body was on the floor. You found this piece of paper stuck to the door. All you need to do now is find the cow which is outside your house. She'll ride you to the red grouse who'll tell you about the shrine inside the mine and that's where your mother will be so come and see.

I ran out of the house as fast as a cheetah, slamming the door behind me.

Tegen woke up. He looked around, unsure where he was. His hand felt like it had been whipped several times. 'Where am I?,' he said.

As he spoke, I was getting cold in the water. There was nothing I can do. In the middle of the pitch black I could see a bright light. I tried to swim towards it, but every time the water just got higher. After a while I got so tired that I found myself sinking. I went down and down

and soon I passed out and only came to when I hit my head on a rock.

'Hello ?'

I looked up. There was a small, dishevelled creature at my feet. 'Who are you ?,' I said.

'A Mine Fairy,' said the creature. 'Would you like a wish ?'

'Not three ?'

'No, just one.'

'Alright. I want to be where my family is now,' I said loud and clear. Dust started rising around me and it felt like a five year old pasty. I closed my eyes. After a while I heard a voice crying, 'Help !'

'Tegen !,' I shouted. I ran towards the sound. Soon he was there before me. 'I thought you were gone for good !'

Together we ran to the lift which was really just a box on a wire. At last we were on our way out of there. At last it was over.

Probably.

# *The Rich Boy*

## *by Lucy Season*

*'Come on !'*

*Rosen shot up like a bullet. It was his mother disrupting his sleep. Not fully awake, Rosen grunted, 'What ?'*

*'Mines !,' yelled his mother. His mind clicked into gear and he remembered everything that had happened a week ago. Rosen Gwarvas had been a rich*



boy destined to be successful like his father. That was until last Saturday.

It had all really happened in a flash. He went to bed as usual, seeing his father having his usual smoke. Then, the next thing he knew, his father had been whisked off to jail and he and his mother and the dog were being sent off away from the cosy mansion in London to a little cottage in Cornwall.

The journey was long and tiring, but however tired Rosen had become there had been no way he could sleep. Not knowing what to think, he looked around him. The hay bails on the cart were making



him itch. The sky was grey and the only sound was that of the cart wheels bumping on the stones. Not even the dog was making a noise. Shivering all over, he turned to his mother. As he'd guessed, her eyes were bloodshot with grey bags underneath. Sorrowful, she stared into space. 'Your father,' she began, her voice trembling. She paused. 'Your father has been arrested for stealing money.' Barely believing his ears, Rosen stuttered, 'But father would never steal.'

*'He didn't,' his mother replied. 'But until they discover the truth, we'll have to live with Aunt Elizabeth and we have no money, so...'*

*'So what ? ' Rosen had concern in his voice.*

*'So you'll have to work down...the...mine.'*

*Taken aback, Rosen fell back down onto the hay bail. He'd heard about the dark dangers of the mine. Surely this was some kind of awful nightmare ?*

*Reluctantly, Rosen got out of bed. Trying to be strong he put on his filthy rags. He missed his daily suit and the care of the maids. It tore him up inside just thinking about it. He looked at the rusted*

mirror showing what used to be Lord Gwavas' handsome heir. Now he was no better than a servant. He must have stared at himself for ten minutes, telling himself to be strong.

His stomach was empty. He walked slowly down the windy icy road. Trudging in the mud, he saw through the mist the silos of Geevor Mine.

'Oy you !'

Rosen turned around to see a short cheery peasant. 'New, are e ? '

'Good day. Who are you ? '

*'Name's Pawl Vingoe. Eleven next birthday.*

*An you ? '*

*'Rosen Gwavas. Ten years old.'*

*'Ur a Londoner, no ? '*

*'Yes,' said Rosen. 'Is that bad ? '*

*'You crack me up.'*

*'What do you mean ? '*

*But suddenly the little man was gone, scuttling away.*

*A few minutes later, Rosen arrived at the mine.*



*'Excuse me,' he said to a man standing at the gate. 'I'm new here. Where do I sign in ?' The man was smiling - so were others around him.*

*'Over there,' one boy said, pointing to an old rusty hut.*

*Rosen said thank you and walked over the hut.*

*'Who are you ?,' said the man at the desk.*

*Rosen said his name.*

*'Here's your papers,' said the officers. 'Tegen here'll be looking after you.'*

*A boy stepped out from the corner of the room. He was a short and slender figure, maybe twelve or*

so years old. They walked down the hall in silence. Rosen somehow recognised him.

‘Hello Rosen,’ said the boy.

School, thought Rosen. Tegen had been the year above him, but had left early to go down the mine. They’d been friends.

‘Here’s your gear,’ said Tegen. Rosen picked up the explosives, put on his hat and then, after nearly being sick from nerves, set off down the ladder, closely followed by Tegen. Rosen found himself panting. His chest was tight.

*After half an hour they arrived at the shaft. Rosen stepped off the ladder and collapsed in a pile of painful limbs. At last he stood up. He felt terrible.*

*'Alright?', said Tegen, peering through the low candle light. Rosen started coughing on the vile choking gasses of the mines. He brought up all that he'd eaten for breakfast.*

*'Don't worry,' said Tegen, sighing. 'I was exactly like you on my first day. Don't forget that we've each got a penny.'*

Rosen groaned and threw his filthy hat at the wall of the cave. Just in that moment there was a huge rumble coming from above.

'Run !,' Tegen screamed as he ran to the ladder. Rosen couldn't move. All he could do was stand and watch the rocks coming down from above. Terrified, he curled up in a ball, praying to be allowed to live. After what seemed like ages, the rumbling stopped. Hearing the silence, Rosen eased himself up. He looked around him. He was surrounded by rocks. They had fallen in a way that left enough room for him to get through. Through the dust and smoke he



crawled and at last he found the ladder. With a huge effort that nearly killed him he hauled himself up, rung after rung. When at last he got to the top, he found Tegen talking to the rescue people.

Tegen was amazed. 'But you're alive !,' he shouted. 'How ? '

'I can hardly believe it myself,' said Rosen. 'Somehow the rocks let me through.'

'Piskies,' said Tegen.

'What ? '

'Piskies. They're there to help.'

Rosen shook his head. He didn't believe such stories.

The back home was long and hard. When he got there his mother hugged him long and hard. She had tears running down her face. 'Oh,' she said, nearly crying, 'I've been so worried. I love you so much. You'll never be harmed while I'm here to protect you.'

Rosen opened his mouth to speak, but no words came. Instead he went up to bed. When his head hit the pillow he fell into a deep sleep.

Next morning when he woke, he sighed as memories of the previous day flooded in.

He dragged himself out of bed and got ready for work. When he got there he headed straight to the Dry to change. He fumbled in his pocket and pulled out a single orange.

The orange was there for an emergency. He peeled it and shoved the whole thing into his mouth. He'd only recently learned that you only recognise how good food can be when you're starving. The orange was the tastiest thing he'd ever eaten.

Tegen arrived. 'Where's the dynamite ?, ' he asked.

'What do you mean ? '

Tegen explained that it wasn't free - that each miner had to pay for his own. 'You can share mine,' he said. They walked on.

'What's this ?, ' said Rosen.

'It's the cage. We only use the ladders if this isn't working.'

They stepped in. Rosen felt his old fear returning. A bell rang and the cage descended. In a moment, the cage landed with a thump.



*'Don't worry,' Tegen said. 'Everyone always gets a shock first time.'*

*They worked in silence for four hours - silence but for the sound of pick-axe on rock.*

*When at last they heard the cage returning, Rosen heard something more. To start with he couldn't place it.*

*Then he could.*

*'Briallen !,' he shouted.*

*'What ?,' said Tegen, his mouth full of pasty.*

*'He went missing last week. He's-'*

Just then Briallen came running up to the two boys.

‘Your dog !,’ said Tegen.

Briallen was jumping up and down for joy. Just in time, Rosen blew out the candle. The candle was right beside the explosives.

But it wasn’t just in time.

‘Run !,’ cried Rosen as he picked up Briallen and ran as fast as he could to the ladder. He could hear Tegen’s footsteps behind him. Then the sound of the footsteps faded. Rosen paused at the ladder and

*turned. The rocks were falling. No Tegen. It was a sight he knew he'd see for the rest of his life.*





# Battlefield

by Merkhi Philpin

Today started bad and just got worse.

Hi, my name is Clemmo Trenowden and this is my story. Today was my first day in the mine and I was not looking forward to it. If my writing is a bit wobbly it's because I'm going down the mine.

Klang ! Klang !

That's all I can hear down here. Sometimes I think I'm going to be doing this for the rest of my life.

Klang ! Klang ! Klang ! Klang !

Oh, I've had enough !

But hang on-

That's not just the pick-axe - it's tin ! I'm reaching for it and reaching for it-

When I open my eyes I discover I've been hit by a small rock slide. I can feel the pain in my

head. There's a rock on my leg and I can't move. It turns out I was knocked out for so long that I didn't notice that someone removed the rock and it was time to go home.

'Wake up !'

I hope today will be a better day.

'Wake up !'

I won't fall back asleep this time.

When I open my eyes I find I'm in hospital and it looks like I've been out for two days. My body looks okay although I have been injured.

Oh no !

My left hand is gone !

But then - no - this is all a dream.

'Hey ! Get back to work !'

I'm still in the mine. And there's gold in my hand.

**GOLD !**

But the mine, now, is a battlefield, and I need to get out of here, I need to get some sleep...

'Surrender !'

That's first thing I hear when I open my eyes. I scream in horror as they shoot all of my friends. I leap to safety as the bombs start to fall - but too late and I'm thrown into the air with a load of other things. I start running, and just when I think I can get out I'm hit by a rock and I pass out. When i come to, I see my mum lying badly injured beside me. 'Are you okay ?,' I say sadly. 'Clemmo,' she says . 'Be a good boy, won't you ?' She drifts away and I cry. Then a guy with a big moustache and a gun walks towards me and he's ready to shoot me. I turn and run and I'm dodging all his bullets, but then nother bomb explodes and I fall to the ground. 'No !,' cries the man. 'I am your father !' 'Noo !,' I shout and my shouting wakes me.

'Congratulations,' says the mine manager. Then he says I'm a hero and he gives me some money as a reward.

I close my eyes. Sometimes I can't tell what is real and what is not.





# Pawl Vingoe

by Sennen Craig

It was a cold and frosty morning. Pawl Vingoe had to go to work at Geevor Mine. It was his first day. He could smell the breakfast his mum was making; he could hear a magpie tweeting a song; he could see a juicy red apple; he could feel the cold strong wind blowing against his forehead; he could taste the breakfast his mum had made.

After breakfast he had to walk the seven miles to the mine. By the time he got there he felt scared and anxious. He was afraid because he knew he had to go down the mine. He was sweating hard. It was dark, scary and unsafe down the mine, but he had to do it for his family. If he didn't, they would all starve.

It was so hot down the mine that he had to take his shirt off. 'Why do I have to do this?,' he cried.

The next morning, Pawl heard his mum shout, 'Wake up !'

'Okay,' he said.

He walked as slow as a turtle down the stairs. He told his mum that he didn't want to go down the mine - how it was hot, damp, dark and scary.

'You have to,' said his mum.

'But-'

'No buts. You have to do it.'

'Okay, mum,' Pawl said quietly.

That day, down the mine, Pawl met a kid called Bubba. Bubba was a newcomer and his favourite thing was fish. He never talked about anything else. His favourite fish was Seabass. He would spend hours, when he wasn't at the mine, sitting on the beach looking out at the sea, hoping to see a Seabass.

Suddenly, deep in the mine, there was a loud, spine-tingling bang. What could it be? Was it a

boulder ? Pawl just didn't know. Then he saw it - it was a boulder - coming straight for him. What should he do ? Hurrying, Pawl started climbing to the top.

'I hope Bubba is okay,' he said when he got to the top.

'Help !'

He heard the cry and ran back down the mine. The mine seemed to be crumbling beneath him.

'Help !'

The voice this time was softer.

'Help-'

At last Pawl came to the place where the voice was coming from. As quickly as a bullet, Pawl started rummaging through the rubble.

It was Bubba !

He worked and worked, pulling away the stones. At last, Bubba was saved. Pawl sat back. He was exhausted.

'Thank you,' said Bubba.

Pawl nodded. He thought he might sleep for a week.





# Elys Marrack

by Keira Woodard

Monday 7th October.

I woke up and rushed out of bed. Worrying I would die that day, I put my wed and muddy clothes on again and went to the mine. I slipped my name into the pallet to say I was there and went to my locker to fetch my hard hat. From there I went back down into the mine. I was frightened; I didn't know what was going to happen that day.

I grabbed my pick-axe and, with a sigh, started.

Three hours later, I got a goose feather, snapped the top off and put some gunpowder in it. Then I lit the top and ran and ran as fast as I could.....then suddenly a big explosion rocked the mine. I leaped, then found myself on the muddy, wet floor.

When at last I went back up, it was eleven o'clock at night.

I was exhausted - so exhausted that I collapsed. I must have slept, for suddenly I was woken and a voice in my ear was shouting, 'Get back to work !' So down I went again and started work again. I finished at one o'clock in the morning. I took a shower at the mine then went back home to bed.

Tuesday 8th October.

I woke up, pulled on my wet clothes. I didn't have time to brush my teeth. When I got to the mine I did the same thing I did every day and felt the same things that I felt every day. There was nothing I could do about it. I couldn't escape. As I did every day, I slotted my name in the pallet and went to the lockers to get my hat. Down in the mine again I took up my pick-axe and started mining. I heard a murmuring voice saying, 'It feels like I've been mining forever.'

The voice, I discovered, was mine. I wanted to stop but I couldn't stop until the morning, so I kept on working and working until it was ten o'clock at night when I took a goose feather, broke it and filled it with gunpowder. Again, as I did every day, I lit it and then ran and ran and ran. This time I just made it out in time.

Wednesday 9th October.

For the third time this week I woke, pulled on my dirty clothes and made my way to the mine. From my locker, I took my hard hard and went down into the mine. I took my pick-axe. I started work. I was so tired I could have cried. In fact, the tears on my cheek told me I WAS crying as I waited for the usual explosion. This time I'd forgotten to run and the blast knocked me onto the floor. I passed out.

When I woke I was covered in little stones. I pulled myself up and made my way up to the surface. I looked at my father's pocket watch. It



was two AM. I took off my clothes, had a shower with fifty other people. Once I got home, I fell into my bed and was soon fast asleep.

Thursday 10th October

This morning I had no time to wash or even brush my hair. I just put on my disgusting clothes and ran to the mine. When I got there the head of the mine told me I would be using the Hand Barrow with another young miner called Brillen. For the next nine hours, we pushed it to and from the miners who were crushing stones. After that I had to go to the top of the mine where there was other work to do. I looked at my pocket watch. It was 6 o'clock in the morning. I dragged myself home. I was exhausted.

Friday 11th October



This morning I woke up after a dream I was going to die.

When I got to the mine, I was told I was doing the hand barrow with Morgana Penberty. I knew it was going to take ages for the day to be over. So I tried to think of nothing and just kept on working. I knew the only thing that would stop me having to work was if there was a huge explosion on the sixth mining level. I knew that only if I died would I never have to go back down the mine.



# Kytto Corneys

by Reuben Rule

'Wake up, son, wake up ! Kytto wake up !'

Kytto's mum yanked the sheets off his bed.

'What time is it ?, ' he said.

'Time to have breakfast and get to the mine.'

'But I don't want to go. Yesterday I nearly got killed.'

'I know - but you have to go, for the family.'

Kytto's mum ran down the stairs to turn the kettle off, The noise of the kettle had pierced Kytto's ears. He followed her down, had his breakfast, and then set off to the mine.

When he got there the mine manager said, 'If you whinge then you will be punished - so get down that mine now !'

Kytto's group was first down the mine, followed by a second group that had his Dad in it. Suddenly, the rope attached to the second

group snapped and sent them to their deaths on the sharp rocks. Kytto ran with his friend to find help. He was shocked and didn't know what else to do. Then the floor started giving way and Kytto's friend ran faster, and as he did so he fell over. 'Kytto help me !,' he cried - and then he fell through the floor and was crushed by the rockfall.

When all at last was quiet, Kytto climbed his way out of the mine and slowly made his way home. The house was empty. He didn't know what to do.

In his dreams that night, Kytto's mum and dad were caught in an earthquake and then a terrible tsunami that wiped everything out. Then he found himself on the surface of the moon, where he found a girl who turned out to be his long lost sister. Her name in the dream was Katel.

In his dream there were no deaths and no mine. In his dream there were moons and stars and everyone was happy.

But that wasn't the end. In the end the stars fell in love and collided and created a new



universe where Kytto had the time of his life. It was a place where there were no deaths and no mine, just happiness and love.

That's the end.

At least until he wakes.



# Talak Teague

by Joe Gordon

It was a dull morning like every morning, and I was cold - really cold. I pulled myself out of my uncomfortable wooden bed, thinking and hoping that maybe it was the last time I was going to do it. I put my damp, muddy, cold clothes on and left the house. I thought to myself, Why am I here ? I didn't have any friends and there was nobody to care if I lived or died.

But that day everything changed. That day, somebody I didn't know came over to me and said did I want to work with him. That was the best thing that has ever happened to me. Anyway, ten minutes later we were working side by side. He didn't speak to me or help me; he just worked next to me. After a while I asked him if he

wanted any help. He said yes he did and then he started telling me about his boring life. It sounded just like mine - dull, exhausting and worthless. He was a nice guy and we kept on talking, not knowing what time it was - until the alarm sounded and it was time to go home.

Later that day there was a knock on the door. It was Jeff, my new friend. He asked if he could stay as he had nowhere else to live. I said yes, even though there was no more food. That night Jeff and I had to sleep on the dusty floor as my bed was broken. In the morning I felt colder than I'd ever felt before. I put my soaking, dirty clothes back on and started walking the few miles with Jeff to the mine. When we got there the manager told us we were working underground. We were confused and scared, as this is the most dangerous place to be. I whispered to Jeff that if we argued then we would lose our jobs. He said that most people die down there and I said I didn't know if that was true. Anyway, we put on our coats, thinking it would be cold down there, but when we arrived



it was boiling hot ! After a while I was sweating so hard that I couldn't work. I was sweating from my head to my feet. As we went further down to the bottom of the mine there was a huge hole. I slipped in the darkness and nearly fell in.

It was such a boring day. I felt like it went on forever. Finally the alarm went off. While we were going up the ladders in the dark with just our torches on our hard helmets, I turned to look for Jeff. As I turned, he slipped and fell. I rushed down to where he lay. He wasn't breathing. I shouted at him loudly three times: Tanner ! Tanner ! Tanner !, but he wouldn't wake up. In the end I had to leave him to get help. When at last I got to the top everyone else had gone. So I ran home to get help. When I stepped into the kitchen there was a stranger standing there. It was Jeff Tanner's father. I was going to tell him about the accident when he said Jeff had written a letter. This is it:

Dear Mum and Dad,

I am writing this to tell you that I've found a friend and he is letting me stay. So I would appreciate it if you could come and visit me.

I didn't want to but I told Jeff's father about the accident and that I didn't think his son was still alive. It was a job that we had never done before. I said he was down at the bottom of the mine. The man left and I could smell his clothes as they swished in the air. That's it, I thought, and I thought that sooner or later I'd go back to my own lonely life.

But then, later that day, there was another knock on the door. It was Tanner's parents asking if they could stay with me. They wanted to stay where their son had been happy. I was going to say no but then I thought that if I said yes I'd never be lonely.

After I'd gone to bed that night, I heard Tanner's parents let themselves in. I went downstairs. They were carrying bags of food and drink. I was amazed. I asked them where they

got all the money from. They said they'd been saving it for years.

The next morning, I rushed out of bed, pulled on my clothes and started running. But I didn't run towards the mine. Instead I ran into the woods and I told myself that I would never be coming back. But I knew that wasn't true. I had people now who cared about me. For the moment though I just ran and ran. It felt good to be free.





# An Apple for a Hero

by Dillon Beare

A long long time ago there was a child called Jago. She got up one freezing morning, got dressed and made his way to the mine. She picked up her hat, clay candle and miner's clothes and went down the dar, dark mine. Every step she went down she was reminded of all the people who had died from drowning or boulders - all those people who had done the wrong thing or had made mistakes. They were mining all day; they were very tired and all they heard was banging and banging. The air was very dusty and the people were very dirty and they blew up and smashed the rocks to get the tin and the gold. The clay and the candle was very useful because the clay meant thry didn't have to hold the candle while they worked.

Anyway, Jago and her dad went mining every day, but one day her dad had a boulder fall on him and it crushed him and because it was too heavy to move he died. Jago had nothing left to do but go home.

The next day Jago tried to find out what had happened. She asked the Mine Manager and he told her that some new man had not done what he was told and had just taken his pick-axe and hit random rocks which had fallen and trapped Jago's dad. Then the sea had come in at the same time as the explosion had rocked the mine and that's how Jago's dad had died. The only good thing that had come of it all was the gold that had been blasted free. Jago was shocked at what she could see. She held her breath and went under the water, found the gold and went back up to the surface without drowning.

Later that day, Jago had to tell her mum that dad had died. They cried and cried because they knew that now he would never return.

In a while though she had to go back to the mine. When she got there she found it was



flooded. She didn't know what to do. She was just about to turn around and leave when she saw someone lying on the ground under a pile of rocks. 'Are you alright, sir?', Jago cried. The man tried to shake his head. 'Don't worry,' said Jago, and he said he would go and get help. The man whispered, 'Hurry,' and Jago set off.

Ten minutes later, Jago was back with the help she'd promised. The man was very strong and he lifted off the rocks and together he and Jago got the fallen man back up to the surface. Someone called for Jago's mum and when she came she put bandages on the man and looked after him. Everyone said Jago had done the right thing and had been very brave. When she went home she went straight to her room and fell asleep.

The following day when Jago got to work she found that all the water in the mine was gone. The boss had taken action, he said, because too many people had been dying. It made Jago sad to think of all those people and she didn't want to work there anymore. It was too tiring and cold and the air was always dusty.

The next morning, Jago woke late. Because her dad had died, her mum had to stay at home instead of going out and getting money. Jago felt ill and her mum agreed that if she felt better by twelve o'clock she could go to her uncle's house.

By midday, Jago was feeling better. She walked with her mum to her uncle's house and knocked on the door. Hearing nothing, they let themselves in. 'Hello ?,' said Jago. 'Uncle ? Where are you ?'

'In the kitchen,' a voice called out.

Saying goodbye to her mum, Jago walked into the kitchen. Her uncle was at the sink. Jago couldn't believe her eyes.

'What is it ?,' said her uncle, turning towards her.

'It's an apple,' said Jago. She'd not seen one in years. It was green and sweet-looking.

'Would you like it ?,' said her uncle.

'Really ?,' said Jago.

'Of course,' said her uncle. 'After all,' he said smiling, 'you are a hero, aren't you ?'



# The Rich Boy

by Lucy Season

*'Come on !'*

*Rosen shot up like a bullet. It was his mother disrupting his sleep. Not fully awake, Rosen grunted, 'What ? '*

*'Mines !,' yelled his mother. His mind clicked into gear and he remembered everything that had happened a week ago. Rosen Gwarvas had been a ricj*

boy destined to be successful like his father. That was until last Saturday.

It had all really happened in a flash. He went to bed as usual, seeing his father having his usual smoke. Then, the next thing he knew, his father had been whisked off to jail and he and his mother and the dog were being sent off away from the cosy mansion in London to a little cottage in Cornwall.

The journey was long and tiring, but however tired Rosen had become there had been no way he could sleep. Not knowing what to think, he looked around him. The hay bails on the cart were making

him itch. The sky was grey and the only sound was that of the cart wheels bumping on the stones. Not even the dog was making a noise. Shivering all over, he turned to his mother. As he'd guessed, her eyes were bloodshot with grey bags underneath. Sorrowful, she stared into space. 'Your father,' she began, her voice trembling. She paused. 'Your father has been arrested for stealing money.' Barely believing his ears, Rosen stuttered, 'But father would never steal.'

*'He didn't,' his mother replied. 'But until they discover the truth, we'll have to live with Aunt Elizabeth and we have no money, so...'*

*'So what ? ' Rosen had concern in his voice.*

*'So you'll have to work down...the...mine.'*

*Taken aback, Rosen fell back down onto the hay bail. He'd heard about the dark dangers of the mine. Surely this was some kind of awful nightmare ?*

*Reluctantly, Rosen got out of bed. Trying to be strong he put on his filthy rags. He missed his daily suit and the care of the maids. It tore him up inside just thinking about it. He looked at the rusted*



mirror showing what used to be Lord Gwavas' handsome heir. Now he was no better than a servant. He must have stared at himself for ten minutes, telling himself to be strong.

His stomach was empty. He walked slowly down the windy icy road. Trudging in the mud, he saw through the mist the silos of Geevor Mine.

'Oy you !'

Rosen turned around to see a short cheery peasant. 'New, are e ? '

'Good day. Who are you ? '

*'Name's Pawl Vingoe. Eleven next birthday.*

*An you ? '*

*'Rosen Gwavas. Ten years old.'*

*'Ur a Londoner, no ? '*

*'Yes,' said Rosen. 'Is that bad ? '*

*'You crack me up.'*

*'What do you mean ? '*

*But suddenly the little man was gone, scuttling away.*

*A few minutes later, Rosen arrived at the mine.*

'Excuse me,' he said to a man standing at the gate. 'I'm new here. Where do I sign in ?' The man was smiling - so were others around him.

'Over there,' one boy said, pointing to an old rusty hut.

Rosen said thank you and walked over the hut.

'Who are you ?,' said the man at the desk.

Rosen said his name.

'Here's your papers,' said the officers. 'Tegen here'll be looking after you.'

A boy stepped out from the corner of the room. He was a short and slender figure, maybe twelve or

so years old. They walked down the hall in silence. Rosen somehow recognised him.

‘Hello Rosen,’ said the boy.

School, thought Rosen. Tegen had been the year above him, but had left early to go down the mine. They’d been friends.

‘Here’s your gear,’ said Tegen. Rosen picked up the explosives, put on his hat and then, after nearly being sick from nerves, set off down the ladder, closely followed by Tegen. Rosen found himself panting. His chest was tight.



After half an hour they arrived at the shaft. Rosen stepped off the ladder and collapsed in a pile of painful limbs. At last he stood up. He felt terrible.

'Alright?', said Tegen, peering through the low candle light. Rosen started coughing on the vile choking gasses of the mines. He brought up all that he'd eaten for breakfast.

'Don't worry,' said Tegen, sighing. 'I was exactly like you on my first day. Don't forget that we've each got a penny.'

Rosen groaned and threw his filthy hat at the wall of the cave. Just in that moment there was a huge rumble coming from above.

‘Run !,’ Tegen screamed as he ran to the ladder. Rosen couldn’t move. All he could do was stand and watch the rocks coming down from above. Terrified, he curled up in a ball, praying to be allowed to live. After what seemed like ages, the rumbling stopped. Hearing the silence, Rosen eased himself up. He looked around him. He was surrounded by rocks. They had fallen in a way that left enough room for him to get through. Through the dust and smoke he

crawled and at last he found the ladder. With a huge effort that nearly killed him he hauled himself up, rung after rung. When at last he got to the top, he found Tegen talking to the rescue people.

Tegen was amazed. 'But you're alive !,' he shouted. 'How ? '

'I can hardly believe it myself,' said Rosen. 'Somehow the rocks let me through.'

'Piskies,' said Tegen.

'What ? '

'Piskies. They're there to help.'

Rosen shook his head. He didn't believe such stories.

The back home was long and hard. When he got there his mother hugged him long and hard. She had tears running down her face. 'Oh,' she said, nearly crying, 'I've been so worried. I love you so much. You'll never be harmed while I'm here to protect you.'

Rosen opened his mouth to speak, but no words came. Instead he went up to bed. When his head hit the pillow he fell into a deep sleep.



Next morning when he woke, he sighed as memories of the previous day flooded in.

He dragged himself out of bed and got ready for work. When he got there he headed straight to the Dry to change. He fumbled in his pocket and pulled out a single orange.

The orange was there for an emergency. He peeled it and shoved the whole thing into his mouth. He'd only recently learned that you only recognise how good food can be when you're starving. The orange was the tastiest thing he'd ever eaten.

Tegen arrived. 'Where's the dynamite ?,' he asked.

'What do you mean ?'

Tegen explained that it wasn't free - that each miner had to pay for his own. 'You can share mine,' he said. They walked on.

'What's this ?,' said Rosen.

'It's the cage. We only use the ladders if this isn't working.'

They stepped in. Rosen felt his old fear returning. A bell rang and the cage descended. In a moment, the cage landed with a thump.

*'Don't worry,' Tegen said. 'Everyone always gets a shock first time.'*

*They worked in silence for four hours - silence but for the sound of pick-axe on rock.*

*When at last they heard the cage returning, Rosen heard something more. To start with he couldn't place it.*

*Then he could.*

*'Briallen !,' he shouted.*

*'What ?,' said Tegen, his mouth full of pasty.*

*'He went missing last week. He's-'*

Just then Briallen came running up to the two boys.

‘Your dog !,’ said Tegen.

Briallen was jumping up and down for joy. Just in time, Rosen blew out the candle. The candle was right beside the explosives.

But it wasn’t just in time.

‘Run !,’ cried Rosen as he picked up Briallen and ran as fast as he could to the ladder. He could hear Tegen’s footsteps behind him. Then the sound of the footsteps faded. Rosen paused at the ladder and



*turned. The rocks were falling. No Tegen. It was a sight he knew he'd see for the rest of his life.*





