

Essay on Disaster at The Harbour

Aydin looked lazily out to sea. Being a dock worker at the harbour was not exactly an interesting job. He had the task of overseeing the loading and unloading of goods from the various ships that called at the harbour. It was a tedious job and one that could be dangerous if insufficient care was taken. Anyway, he was glad he was working at the cargo terminal. The neighbouring terminal that dealt with liquids and gases was far more dangerous.

He could see a large ship alongside the neighbouring terminal. A long flexible pipe snaked from the ship into a large tank on the terminal. Mydin sighed. How he wished that the workers there would take more care in handling the liquids especially the flammable ones. Over the past months, there had been near-accidents there and he was feeling a bit edgy about being so close to the terminal. Still, he had his work to do and did not have time to worry about what went on nearby.

Just as he was supervising the unloading of some cargo from a ship, he heard a scream of terror that was followed by an ominous hissing sound. He glanced at the direction of the sounds and was horrified to see liquid spurting out of the pipe that was connected to the ship and tank. Good God, if that liquid is flammable..., Mydin thought

There was a movement of metal against metal as some workers tried to plug the leaking liquid. Mydin did not see any spark, but the next moment a fireball suddenly erupted where the men were completely engulfing them. In less than a second, the whole pipe was on fire. He heard men screaming and he could see four or five men in the middle of the blaze. Poor souls, they had no chance. Theirs was a quick death.

Alarm bells sounded all over the place. Mydin ordered his fellow

workers to get out of the terminal for the fire could spread very quickly. He himself sprinted out of the area away from the fire. He could see many other men running away too.

Behind him, he could feel the heat of the fire. Then suddenly a mighty explosion rocked the area and Mydin was sent sprawling onto the ground. He was only winded a bit. So he picked himself up and looked back at the scene of the fire. He could not believe what he saw. The ship and the whole terminal was now ablaze with a sickening red fire and the heat even at where he stood was almost unbearable. He knew he had to get away even further. So he ran and ran until he reached a group of men who were watching the fire from a distance.

There was nothing they could do but to watch the fire consume the ship and just about destroy the terminal and tank on it.

Soon the sound of sirens from fire engines could be heard.

The firemen began the unpleasant and dangerous task of containing and extinguishing the fire. It took them close to five hours before the fire was brought under control. Mydin wondered how many people were killed and how much damage was done. What a disaster it was. He wondered if it could have been avoided if the workers had taken more care. Anyhow it was too late. They had to bear the consequences of their actions.