

tary life. Mo hated the coat, and the difficulties he met with when getting it on and off.

He was as good as his word about not stopping long at The Sun. Although he found his friend awaiting him, he did not remain in his company above half an hour, including his seven-minutes' walk back to the Court, to which Jerry accompanied him, saying farewell at the archway. He didn't go on to No. 7 at once, remembering that M'riar had said she wouldn't be sorry to go to bed.

Seeing lights and hearing voices in at Ragstroar's, he turned in for a chat, more particularly for a repetition of Micky's tale of his Hammersmith visit. Finding the boy there, he accepted his mother's suggestion that he should sit down and be comfortable. He did the former, having first pulled off the obnoxious coat to favour the latter.

He may have spent twenty minutes there, chiefly cross-examining Micky on particulars, before he got up to go. He forgot the odious coat, for Susan Burr called him back, and tried to persuade him to put it on. He resisted all entreaties. Such a little distance!—was it worth the trouble? He threw it over his arm, and again departed. The two women saw him from the door, and then, as they were exchanging a final word in the passage, were startled by a loud screaming, and, running out, saw Mo fling away the coat on his arm, and make such speed as he might towards a struggling group not over visible in the shadow of the lamp immediately above their heads.

This was within an hour of Mo's good-night, or good-hye, to M'riar at his own doorway.

Aunt M'riar had wavered yet a little before the fire, and had then given way to the thought of Dolly asleep. Dolly would be so unconscious of all things that it would now be no pain to know that she knew nothing of Death. Dolly asleep was always a solace to Aunt M'riar, even when she kicked or made sudden incoherent dream-remarks in the dark.

So, after placing Mo's candlestick conspicuously, that Susan Burr, who was pretty sure to come first, should see that he was still out, and not put up the chain nor shoot to the bolt, M'riar made her way upstairs to bed, very quietly, so as not to wake the children.

She was less than halfway to bed when she heard, as she thought, Susan Burr's return. It could not be Mo, so soon. Besides, he would have struck a match at once. He always did.