

there for months. I paced the floor of the lift, in my restlessness, the greater half of the night, feeling much like the caged lions and bears in the Zoological Gardens must do, when they find themselves, at two strides, at the end of their promenade, and forced to turn back again.

"O, what misery! I thought, when Sunday morning dawned (I could tell the march of the hours by means of my repeater watch); I much fear midnight will not find me alive, and I see no chance of release from this den before then. I had been in that dismal hole since four the preceding day, just fourteen hours then. Once fatigue had overcome me, and I dozed away a little time in my uncomfortable posture, but it was no peaceful sleep; disagreeable dreams haunted me, and I could not forget, even in my slumbers, where I was.

"Shall I survive!—shall I not starve?—were the questions uppermost in my mind.

"Fortunately I had cigars in my pocket, and smoking soothed in some measure the pangs of hunger. I began to feel charitable to the poor who had often appealed to me in the streets with the words, 'I am starving.' I determined never again to pass one of these destitute beings without giving him a dole; even if there are impostors among them some may speak the truth, and now I know what it is to be hungry. The thirst, too! Oh the thirst was almost worse than the hunger!

"I tried to recollect how long a man could exist without food, and remembered to have read somewhere that he can live a week thus before death releases him from his agonies—if that can be called living, for I had been there not quite twenty-four hours, and felt more dead than alive, and every fibre in my body ached painfully. I wonder if the *Cura per mediam*, which some doctors love to recommend, and of which I have heard my medical friends talk, is anything in its sensations like what I endured; if so, I sincerely pity all poor patients who try to better their ailments by it. Cure, indeed! I should think it would cure them, effectually and for ever, too, by removing them from this world. But to proceed.

"By evening my stock of cigars was smoked out, my throat hot and dry, my lips and tongue parched, my inner man craving for food. All my mental anxieties sank in the background then. I touched my repeater for the hundredth time; I counted the beats; one—two—three—four—five—six—seven—eight—nine—only three hours more. I tried to be merry, but was far too weak and exhausted to do so, and I crouched down again in despair, as another idea rushed through my brain.

"First, it would be some time before there was enough steam power to move the lift; secondly, should I be able to work it in my feeble state, and, if not, how could I make myself heard, the lift being in a part of the building far from the furnace? and, thirdly, the man came, probably, only to light the fire and then left again; so, if even I escaped from this hole, I could not get out of the factory till morning.

"Should I cut the ropes? suddenly flashed across me. Should I take my chance of what must necessarily be a fearful fall? If I reached the bottom with unbroken limbs, I could then leave when the man came to light the fire. Should I do it! Should I place my life thus at stake?—risk that if— My knife was already out of my pocket, the strongest blade chosen. I began to cut gently, then desisted. Could all the cords be severed at once, I thought, the lift would, at least fall straight down; but dividing first one, and then another, it might be thrown on one side, and the consequence incalculable. No I had better not. I closed my knife and replaced it in my pocket. The fancy was mad—the emanation of a brain weakened by hunger and anxiety. Better now wait patiently a few hours more. I had waited so long, I would not, at least of my own accord, place my life in the hands of chance.

"Then I grew too enfeebled to think more, and fell into a dreamy state of half-unconsciousness; even in this stupified condition I was aware that the more I pondered over my position the worse it became.

"What length of time may thus have elapsed I can scarcely say. but after a space which seemed interminable I was aroused by a whirling sound. It was