

MR. WHITE (*going towards the door*). That's him. That's the Sergeant-Major. (*He unlocks the door, back.*)

HERBERT (*removes the chess-board*). Wonder what yarn he's got for us to-night. (*He places the chess-board on the piano.*)

MRS. WHITE (*goes up R. and busies herself putting the other armchair nearer the fire, etc.*). Don't let the door slam, John!

(MR. WHITE *opens the door a little, struggling with it. Wind.* SERGEANT-MAJOR MORRIS, *a veteran with a distinct military appearance—left arm gone—dressed as a commissionaire, is seen to enter.* MR. WHITE *helps him off with his coat, which he hangs up in the outer hall.*)

MR. WHITE (*at the door*). Slip in quick! It's as much as I can do to hold it against the wind.

SERGEANT. Awful! Awful! (*Busy taking off his cloak, etc.*) And a mile up the road—by the cemetery—it's worse. Enough to blow the hair off your head.

MR. WHITE. Give me your stick.

SERGEANT. If 'twasn't I knew what a welcome I'd get—

MR. WHITE (*preceding him into the room*). Sergeant-Major Morris!

MRS. WHITE. Tut! tut! So cold you must be! Come to the fire; do'ee, now.

SERGEANT. How are you, marm? (*To HERBERT.*) How's yourself, laddie? Not on duty yet, eh? Day-week, eh?

HERBERT (c.). No, sir. Night-week. But there's half an hour yet.

(MR. WHITE *mixes grog for MORRIS.*)

SERGEANT (*sitting in the armchair above the fire, which MRS. WHITE is motic ing him towards*). Thank'ee kindly, marm. That's good—hah! That's a sight better than the trenches at Chitral. That's