

looked up in search of his father, his heart sank within him at the appalling sight. The scaffold was almost down, the men at the bottom were removing the beams and poles. Tom's father stood alone on the top.

He then looked around to see that everything was right, and then, waving his hat in the air, the men below answered him with a long, loud cheer, little Tom shouting as loud as any of them. As their voices died away, however, they heard a different sound, a cry of horror and alarm from above. The men looked around, and coiled upon the ground lay the rope, which before the scaffolding was removed should have been fastened to the chimney for Tom's father to come down by! The scaffolding had been taken down without remembering to take the rope up. There was a dead silence. They all knew it was impossible to throw the rope up high enough to reach the top of the chimney, or even, if possible, it would hardly be safe. They stood in silent dismay, unable to give any help, or think of any means of safety.

And Tom's father! He walked round and round the little circle, the dizzy height seeming more and more fearful, and the solid earth further and further from him. In the sudden panic he lost his presence of mind, his senses failed him. He shut his eyes; he felt as if the next moment he must be dashed to pieces on the ground below.

The day passed as industrious as usual with Tom's mother at home. She was always busily employed for her husband and children in some way or other, and to-day she had been

harder at work than usual, getting ready for the holiday to-morrow. She had just finished her arrangements, and her thoughts were silently thanking God for the happy home, and for all these blessings, when Tom ran in.

His face was white as ashes, as he could hardly get his words out:

"Mother! mother! he cannot get down!"

"Who, lad—thy father?" asked the mother.

"They have forgotten to leave him the rope," answered Tom, still scarcely able to speak. The mother started up, horror struck, and stood for a moment as if paralyzed, then pressing her hand over her face, as if to shut out the terrible picture, and breathing a prayer to God for help, she rushed out of the house.

When she reached the place where her husband was at work, a crowd had gathered round the foot of the chimney, and stood quite helpless, gazing up with faces full of sorrow.

"He says he'll throw himself down!"

"The munna do that lad," cried the wife, with a clear, hopeful voice: "thee munna do that—wait a bit. Take off thy stocking, lad, and unravel it; let down the thread with a bit of mortar. Dost thou hear me, Jem?"

The man made a sign of assent; for it seemed as if he could not speak, and taking off his stocking, unravelled the worsted yarn, row after row. The people stood round in breathless silence and suspense, wondering what Tom's mother could be thinking of, and why she sent him in such haste for the carpenter's ball of twine.