

*Didn't Want  
to be Saved*

been lost. Therefore I answered in as low a tone as possible and trying to be non-committal, "Mebbe".

Then one of the boys snickered. That was enough for me: I knew right away that I didn't want to be saved, that no power on earth could save me, that I was forever and eternally damned.

"Please, Miss Pringle," I said, "if you don't mind I'd rather not be saved."

And before Miss Pringle had time to reply everyone close at hand was distracted by Henry Perkins. For Henry had stopped beside the agnostic.

"Are you at peace, Charlie?" he asked.

"I am," said Charlie.

"But you haven't been converted."

"No."

"Would you like us to pray for you?"

"I would not."

"Don't you think it's dangerous," Henry asked, "to keep putting it off? You never know," he argued, "what a day nor an hour may bring forth. It's well to be prepared. I may come up to the village to-morrow and find you dead. Too late!"

"Oh, I'll be alive all right, never fear," said Charlie.

"But you never know," said Henry. "You might be dead."

"You come up," said Charlie, "I'll be alive all right. And I'll be asking you some questions about the Bible and religion and maybe, if I see you can follow me, about theology. I'll be asking you who was Cain's wife. And I'll be asking you about Jonah and the whale. And I'll be asking you about others of the miracles. And I'll want you to tell me about Mary and Joseph, about the resurrection and John on Patmos."

Henry looked at Charlie with a puzzled expression, and then he gave again the warning, "You never know what a day nor an hour may bring forth".

"You come up in the morning," Charlie replied. "I'll take a chance on being here. And bring your Bible with you."

"Hallelujah!" shouted the revivalist. "We'll close with the singing of 'Shall we Gather at the River?'"

*Again the  
Warning*