

from the talk going on that they would be in directly. The others crowded round me, telling me how glad they were to see me, and warily congratulating me on my lucky escape. *Lucky!*

I let them talk for a few minutes, thanking them as best I could, and then I said I had something I wanted to say to them, and as I wasn't up to much yet, perhaps I had better begin at once and then go home to bed. A chorus of voices assured me they were always glad to hear what I had to say. I was shoved to the front at once. I made no attempt at a clever speech this time. I simply told them what I have told you.

'I came to speak to-night,' I concluded, 'because, before I make a fresh start, I think I ought to tell you that I am sorry for all the wrong things I have said in this place. I shall try and keep away from all such talk for the future, and I only wish I could undo the harm I have done.'

'If only you had been standing face to face with death, as I was standing that awful time, you would know the terrible feeling of having nothing to cling to—of finding out at the last, when it may be too late, that one has let go of the only Hand that can hold one up. I can never be thankful enough that it was not too late. God has spared me, and I mean to try to serve Him with all my heart for the future. And that's all I've got to say, men!'

It had been a great effort to me, yet I had not said half what I meant to say. But they had listened quietly; the sneers I had dreaded had not come; and to my surprise when I had finished there was a hush, almost like church-time. Before it was broken, Smith and his friend came in.

He was a clever, amusing fellow, and could say very sharp things if he chose. I had always been a little afraid of his sneers; but I was not afraid of them now; I was only

afraid of the mischief he could do. I put up a bit of a prayer that moment, that these poor chaps might not be hurt by him that night, and then, being quite worn out, made for the door.

Before I had taken many steps, a young fellow, who had always backed me in the old days, whatever course I took, sprang after me and slipped his arm through mine.

'You don't look fit for much, Harry,' he said. 'I'm coming along your way. Who's coming to see Morris safe home?' he shouted in a cheery voice over his shoulder.

Would you believe it, we stopped for a moment outside the door, and then—I could hardly believe my senses—man after man came out of the place. Some passed with only a nod, some gave me a friendly 'Good night,' one or two shook hands with me without a word, some came out as if a little ashamed of taking the right side; but of the room full of young men who had been there when Smith came in, not more than a handful remained to hear him. Nothing of an audience. Smith wouldn't waste his grand speeches on that lot.

Well, it was not *my* doing, it was God's Hand.

I have said much more than I meant, and I have nearly done now. I made a fresh start next day and went to church, and some of my friends did too; and it knocked a nail into my determination to serve my God, when Mr. Elliot gave out that 'Harry Morris desired to return humble and hearty thanks to God for a special mercy vouchsafed to him.'

It was a special mercy indeed—nothing less than being saved out of the very jaws of death, body and soul. I was a downright bad one, but I was in distress, and I took God just to mean what He said. I cried to Him, and He heard me.

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'It is written in the Koran, 'When a man dies they who survive him ask what riches he has left behind, whereas the angel who bends over the dying man inquires what good deeds he has sent before.'