

At first I could not see who He was, but once during the beating, He opened His eyes and looked at me. Then I knew Him—I knew Him now. It was my Friend of the courtroom. “The penalty shall be paid,” He had said to the Judge. They were killing Him instead of me.

“Stop! stop!” I cried. But they did not hear me, nor pay any attention to me at all. It was as if I was not even there.

Then I heard the sound of a hammer. I looked up again and saw the soldiers on a hill. They had made a huge frame of two logs of wood. A Man was lying on the frame, and they were hammering. *They were hammering nails through His hands!* What had the Man done to deserve this?

Soon the frame was standing upright against the sky. The Man’s body was hanging away from it, held only by His hands and feet. I could not clearly see Him in the darkness, but when He said, “Father, forgive him, forgive him . . .” I again knew who this was. I knew why He was there.

Then through the darkness came a loud crash of thunder, and the earth shook beneath us. I thought that the end had surely come this time.

But once again I felt that kind hand on my arm. My friend was pulling me to my feet. To my surprise I found that I was still in the courtroom.

“Father, forgive him,” my shining Friend said. “The penalty has already been paid.”

“It is well, My beloved Son,” said the Judge. “This is as We planned it before the foundation of the world.”

“And the verdict?” cried my Friend.

“PARDONED!” came that great Voice. “A new law has been made which is the law of faith. It does not make the old law void, but rather establishes it. The accused is now under the law of faith, being justified freely by grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”

I stared blindly at the Judge. Did He say “pardoned”?

My Friend beside me looked into my eyes and smiled. “You are saved,” He said. “Your debt has been paid.”

Guilty—yet pardoned! How could it be? What has happened to the debt? Then I remembered the whip; I remembered the nails, and I knew who had paid my debt. My heart broke in a rush of tears as I flung myself at my Friend’s feet. There I wept and I cried until all the fear and the pain and the hurt had been washed from my heart.

How long I clung to Him, I do not know. He stood there with His hands on my head and the kindest, most loving look on His face. I tried to say thank you, but the words would not come. But I knew He was my Friend. He had found me, and I had found Him. And oh, I would never let Him go.

Well, that all happened to me in a dream last night. But though it was a dream, it was very, very real. When I awoke this morning, the tears were running down my face and I kept saying over and over again, “He paid the debt; He paid the debt! I was guilty, but He paid the debt!”

Then I realised that was not only a dream. It was all very true, and that the greatest debt I had ever owed was paid by another. As soon as I got out of bed, I knelt down and admitted my guilt to God. I told him all my sins and that Christ Jesus had paid my debt on the cross, and I begged Him for pardon. And God did pardon me; He forgave me my sins. And somehow He also changed my life. I shall never be the same again.



Best of all, my shining Friend has not left me. He has been with me all day. His forgiveness, His kindness, His love has been all around me. Oh, if you could only know Him too! How I wish you knew Him. He is so kind, so loving and so forgiving. He is sweet rest, and He is peace. But there are not enough words to tell you what He is. I only know that you too will love Him when you come to know Him as I know Him.



This handsome young fellow with the big smile is Edward Kelly, of Coff’s Harbour