After a time, my voice began to go all trembly. I started to say silly things like, “Oh Dad, please tell me where you are! Please answer me! Please, oh please...” And I knew that if I wasn’t careful, the sheer hopelessness of it all would get the better of me and I would simply give up and lie down under the trees.

“Are you there, Dad? Are you there?” I shouted. “It’s Danny!”

I stood still, listening, listening, listening, and in the silence that followed, I hear or thought I heard the faint, but oh so faint, sound of a human voice.

I froze and kept listening.

Yes, there it was again.

I ran towards the sound. “Dad!” I shouted. “It’s Danny! Where are you?”

I stopped again and listened.

This time the answer came just loud enough for me to hear the words. “I’m here!” the voice called out. “Over here!”

*It was him!*

I was so excited my legs began to get all shaky.

“Where are you, Danny?” my father called out.

“I’m here, Dad! I’m coming.”

With the beam of the torch shining ahead of me, I ran towards the voice. The trees were bigger here and spaced further apart. The ground was a carpet of brown leaves from last year and was good to run on. I didn’t call out any more after that. I simply dashed ahead.

And all at once, his voice was right in front of me.

“Stop, Danny, stop!” he shouted.

I stopped dead. I shone the torch over the ground. I couldn’t see him.

“Where are you, Dad?”

“I’m down here. Come forward slowly. But be careful. Don’t fall in.”

I crept forward. Then I saw the pit. I went to the edge of it and shone the light downward and there was my father. He was sitting on the floor of the pit and he looked up into the light and said, “Hello, my marvellous darling. Thank you for coming.”

“Are you alright, Dad?”

“My ankle seems to be broken,” he said. “It happened when I fell in.”

The pit had been dug in the shape of a square, with each side about six feet long. But it was the depth of it that was so awful. It was at least twelve feet deep. The sides had been cut straight down into the earth, presumably with a mechanical shovel, and no man could have climbed out of it without help.

“Does it hurt?” I asked.

“Yes,” he said. “It hurts a lot. But don’t worry about that. The point is, *I’ve got to get out of here before morning.* The keepers know I’m here and they’re coming back for me as soon as it gets light.”

“Did they dig the hole to catch people?” I asked.

“Yes,” he said.