

"If father only don't find it," cried Jack and Sue, and they hid it carefully away. Then locking the door very securely, the children with the poor mother, who was sick and lame, all went to bed to *keep warm*. They were very much afraid their father would come home, and once Sally cried out in a frightened voice: "Hark! isn't somebody coming?" But Jack answered drowsily, "It's only a window shutter, or the other family up stairs," and soon they were all sound asleep.

About twelve o'clock that night the poor slave was trying to get home. The king, who loves to torture his victims, had refused to give him drink without money, and so he was coming home as crazy and as fierce as some wild animal. But the king had some work for him to do, and he said to his slave, "Your wife was busy drawing brushes to-day, and this is her night to be paid for them. You had better go home, and see if there isn't something to eat in the house, or maybe you can steal her money. Never mind if she is sick and lame, and your little children starving. So the slave reached home, and finding the door locked, gave it a great kick. The poor frightened wife heard him, but dared not let him in. But he was very strong and angry, and in a few minutes he burst open the door, and was in the room. Before the poor woman could speak he dragged her out of bed, and said,—

"So you dare to keep me out of my own room; I've a good mind to kill you!" and he looked at her with two eyes very much like those you've seen in pictures of great hungry tigers. Then he cried again, clutching her shoulders till they were black and blue, "Give me your money, and I'll let you go."

But she only sobbed and begged him to have mercy. Then he pounded and beat her, for you know the goodness was burnt out of his heart, and at last when she almost fainted, he threw her out into a great snow-heap, and then fastened the door with nails, so she could'n't get back.

He looked for the money in vain, and at last shook up Jack to make him tell where it was.

"I don't know, indeed, father," cried Jack.

Then King Fire-water whispered, "Their mother has taught 'em. They'll tell a lie for *her* any time. They love her a great deal the best."

The slave was mad with rage, and seizing the little warm sleepers, one after another, in their scant-dresses and bare feet, in a row against the wall. A very sorry little regiment they were, shivering with cold and fright. Poor baby tumbled over again and again, and vainly tried to comfort himself with his thumbs.

Then came the angry question, "Which do you like best—your mother or me?"

Poor little children! In their innocence and simplicity, the answer came in a prompt chorus, "*Mother.*"

The furious man seized an old stick in the corner, and began most unmercifully to whip his little shrinking children, one after the other, down to poor baby who only cried gaspingly through his blue lips and little chattering teeth, "Mammy, mammy, mammy!"

The poor mother, almost wild at hearing her children's cries, tried in vain to open the door, then flying around to the window she arrived just in time to see the heavy blows fall upon poor innocent baby's shuddering limbs, and she sent up a cry so shrill and piercing, that the neighbors windows flew up on every side and soon two or three strong men came to the rescue. They forced open the door, and the wicked man was caught and tied down with strong cords.

King Fire-water never helps his slaves when they are in trouble—he only mocks and sneers. So when the judge said the man must go to jail, and stay there three months, there was no one to help him, or say a word to comfort him. Everybody was glad to see him go, even, I fear, his own little children.

Now, perhaps, you will think that when this slave comes out of prison he will