

"He 's tol' us all to go!" snapped Maria.

"Not me!" said Jim Crow. "I 'se always stood by de boss, an' now he 's gwine to stan' by me. I guess I know! Oh, Mee-ri er, Mee-ri er! don't—don't!"

Two sharp, quick, agonized cries broke from his grayish lips as Maria forced his little hands from their hold upon the table; then she gathered him up in her fierce, strong arms, and so went out of the basement door with this—their last bundle.

Those two piercing, all-abandoning cries had reached even to the floor above.

"What 's that?" I cried, and running to the parlor window, I caught a glimpse of a shadowy figure with a child over its shoulder. As they moved from me, for one chill moment the light fell full upon two straining, upraised eyes, and two piteous, pale little palms held vainly out to those five stories of stony silence; and then a great wave of inky darkness swept over them, and carried from me and mine, far out on the briny, bitter ocean of life, my little Jim Crow.