

Well, one night it were my turn to wait, an' I waited till it were near morning, an' at last I couldna keep awake any longer, an' I just out an' said, 'I think, your lordship, it's time for reasonable folks to have done wi' crack reading an' go to sleep.' 'Fellow!' he shouted, like one stark mad—'fellow! do you know to whom you are speaking?'—'Ay, your lordship, that do I, but I'm afeared o' naught—neither lord, duke, earl, nor king—for the matter o' that!'

"I doubted I'd lose my place, but Mrs. Clark begged his lordship's forgiveness for me, and I wasna dismissed. But I made up my mind his lordship shouldna sleep more nor one night again at Annesly Hall.

" 'Mrs. Clark,' I said, 'you'd rather the brutes would not spoil your white counterpane?' 'Ay, J——,' she said, 'but I dare not offend his lordship.'

"Well, I didna say aught, but I just went about it: and this is how I did it. The great bed in his lordship's room had heavy curtains, an' they were hung on brass rings that run on brass bars, an' they made a deal o' noise an' rattlin' when they were drawn. I found a big ball o' packthread, an' I run one end through all the rings on one side, and th'other through all the rings on th'other side; and when I carried the two ends down the posts and along the floor I cut a clean slice off the bottom o' the bedroom door, so that the thread would be sure to pull easy-like; an' I put the rug over the thread, an' then I couldn't ha' told myself aught was wrong.

"After me tellin' his lordship a piece o' my mind about his crack reading, they took the next man to me to wait on him for that night, an' I thought it would be morning before he ever would have done, he was so intolerable long. But at last I heard the door of his lordship's room open, an' soon as everything was quiet I peeped through the crack and made sure the master and the brutes were all sleepin'. Then I pulled the thread. It was an awful shriekin' the rings made over the brass bars, an' in a second, crack! went a pistol, an' the dogs barked; crack! went another pistol, and the dogs howled, an' his lordship called, 'Help! help! Thieves! thieves!'

"I ran to my bed fast as my legs would carry me, an' in a minute all the doors in the house flew open, an' candles were flarin' and women screamin', and all the men poundin' on his lordship's door an' callin' 'Open the door, my lord. There be five o' us here, and we'll soon make sure o' the rascals!'

"Some one come an' tried to waken me, but you know I had my breeches on, an' if I'd got out o' bed they'd knawn I was at the bottom o' the mischief.

" 'Go 'long to the great room, an' I'll come,' I said at last, yawnin', an' then, makin' as if I had just hauled on my clothes, I joined the men