

hurry; goin' arter the Doctor for ole Miss, who's aartin she's goin' for to die this time."

"You don't seem in much of a hurry," said Ike.

"No," returned the other, ole Miss has died a heap o' times, by spells, so I reckon she'll hang on this time till I git back, jist so she can jaw me for bein' gone so long."

So they parted, the stranger negro to go for the Doctor, and Ike to go to Mrs. Crane's with his berries, and Aunt Judy's cranberry pie. He had often wondered during his ride whether Fanny would not give him a piece of the pie. As often as the thought entered his brain, he would turn down the white napkin, and take a peep at the tempting pastry; then he would touch it with his fingers, and finally take it up and smell of it just a little!

While he was making his way into Mrs. Crane's kitchen, Julia and Fanny were in their room, the windows of which were open and looked out upon a balcony, which extended entirely round the house. There was no school that day, and Fanny was just wishing she could hear from home when a servant entered the room, and said there was a boy in the kitchen, who wished to see Miss Fanny.

"A boy want to see me," said Fanny, "who can it be?"

"Reckon he's from yer home, 'case he says how he belongs to Marster Middleton," said the negro girl.

"Oh, joy!" exclaimed Fanny, "somebody from home; how glad I am! Come, Julia, won't you go down too?"

"No, indeed," said Julia scornfully, "I am not so anxious to see a greasy nigger. I hope you will not take it into your head to ask him up here."

But Fanny did not answer, for she was already half way down the stairs. Going into the kitchen she found Ike, and seemed as delighted to see him, as though his skin had been snowy white. Ike delivered all his messages, and then presented Aunt Judy's pie.

"Dear Aunt Judy," said Fanny, "how kind she is," then seizing a knife she cut a liberal piece for Ike, who received it with many thanks.

"Now, Ike," said she, "you must wait here until I go out and get a ribbon for Aunt Judy's cap, and some tobacco for old Aunt Katy." So saying she ran up stairs to her room.

When she entered it, Julia exclaimed, "In the name of the people, what have you got now?"

"Oh, a pie, which Aunt Judy sent me," said Fanny.

"How ridiculous," answered Julia, "I don't think Mrs. Crane would thank Aunt Judy for sending pies to her house."

"Mrs. Crane need know nothing about it, and would not care if she did," said Fanny, and then she added, "Ike is down stairs, and he says father is coming after us in two or three weeks."

"Great Heavens!" said Julia, "what is he coming for? Why does he not send a servant?"

"And why cannot father come," asked Fanny.

"Because," answered Julia, "who wants that old codger here. A pretty figure he'd cut. I think. I should be ashamed of him; and so would you, if you knew any thing."

"I know he is odd," said Fanny; "but he is my father, and as such I would not be ashamed of him."

"Well, I'm ashamed to own that he is my father, any way," answered Julia; "but where are you going now?" she continued, as she saw her sister putting on her bonnet.

"I am going to buy some ribbon for Aunt Judy, some tobacco for Aunt Katy, and some candy for the children," answered Fanny.

"Well, I do believe you haven't common sense," said Julia, "but where is your money to buy all these things?"

"Oh," said Fanny, "I've concluded not to go and hear Fanny Kemble to-night. I had rather spend the money for the servants; it will do them so much good."

"You certainly are a fool," said Julia. Fanny had been told that often, so she did not reply, but hastened down stairs, and was soon in the street. As she turned the corner, she could see the windows of her room, and the whole length of the balcony on that side of the building. Looking in that direction, she saw Dr. Lacey sitting out on the balcony, and so near her window that he must have heard all the conversation between herself and sister! She thought, "Well, he of course thinks me a little silly dunc; but I do like our blacks, and if I ever own any of them, I'll first teach them to read, and then send them all to Liberia." Full of this new plan, she forgot Dr. Lacey, and ere she was aware of it, had reached the store. She procured the articles she wished for, and returning to Mrs. Crane's, gave them to Ike, who was soon on his way home.

At supper that evening, the conversation turned upon Fanny Kemble and the expected entertainment. "I suppose you are all going," said Mrs. Crane to her boarders. They all answered in the affirmative except Fanny, who was about to reply, when Dr. Lacey interrupted her by saying, "Miss Fanny, will you allow me to accompany you to hear Mrs. Butler this evening?"

Fanny was amazed. Was it possible that the elegant Dr. Lacey had honored her with an invitation to accompany him to the literary treat! She was too much surprised to answer him, until he said, "Do not refuse me, Miss Fanny, for I am resolved to have you go!" She then gracefully accepted his polite invitation, and at the same time glancing toward Julia and Mrs. Carrington, she saw that the former frowned darkly, while the latter looked displeased. This damped her happiness somewhat, and as soon as supper was over, she hurried to her room.

Mrs. Carrington was a gay, fashionable woman, and was just as willing to receive attention from unmarried gentlemen now as she had been in her girlish days. Her husband was an officer in the United States army, and was absent a great part of the time, but she had never cared much for him, so she managed to pass the time of his absence very happily in flirting with every handsome, wealthy young gentleman who came in her way. When Dr. Lacey appeared, she immediately appropriated him to herself. 'Tis true, she somewhat feared Julia might become a rival, but of the modest, unassuming little Fanny, she had never once thought, and was greatly surprised when Dr. Lacey offered to escort her to the Reading. She had resolved on having his company herself, and when she saw the frown on Julia's face, she flattered herself that she could yet prevent Fanny's going.