

She awoke, gasping for breath, and lifting her heavy eyelids saw that some one was standing over her and that a heavy hand was laid on her breast. She pushed the hand aside and sat up.

Such an ugly, grotesque figure of a black woman as stood over her; her face like midnight, her features large and protruding, a white nightcap perched on the top of her grizzled tufts of hair, bunches of white cotton wool sticking out of her ears, a padded dressing-gown enveloping her shaky limbs, her trembling fingers shading her candle.

"You are dropping wax on my bed," said the girl coolly.

The old woman's face contracted with rage, and drawing back she looked as if she were about to hurl her brass candlestick at the occupant of the bed.

"You cannot frighten me," said Vivienne proudly; "do not try it."

The black woman burst into a series of revilings and imprecations mixed with references to fire and brimstone, coffins, murderers, fiery chariots, and burning in torment, to which Vivienne listened with curled lip.

"You are a capital hater, Mammy Jupiter," she said ironically, "and I suppose the vials of your wrath have been filling up all these years. But I really wish you would not disturb me in the middle of the night."