

who was to go by one of the morning coaches, and who, thereby, missed his journey. This misfortune made a lasting impression on the intelligent mind of Mr. Boots.

'Boots,' said I in a mournful tone. 'you must call me at four o'clock.'

'Do'ee want to get up, zur?' inquired he with a broad Somersetshire twang.

'Want it, indeed, no; but I must.'

'Well, zur, I'll car'lee: but will'ee get up when I do car'?'

'Why, to be sure I will.'

'That be all very well to zay overnight, zur; but it bean't all the zame thing when marnen do come. I knoa that of old, zur, Gemmen doan't like it, zur, when the time do come, that I tell'ee.'

'Like it! who imagines they should?'

'Well, zur, if you be as sure to get up as I be to car'lee, you'll not knoa what two minutes arter vore means in your bed. Sure as ever cloek strikes I'll have'ee out, dang'd if I doan't! Good night, zur!' and *exit*, Boots.

'And now I'll pack my portmanteau.'

It was a bitter cold night, and my bedroom fire had gone out. Excepting the rush candle, in a pierced tin box, I had nothing to cheer the gloom of a very large apartment,—the wall of which (now dotted all over by the melancholy rays of the rush-light, as they struggled through the holes of the box,) were of a dark-brown wainscot,—but one solitary wax taper. There lay coats, trowsers, linen, books, papers, dressing-materials, in dire confusion, about the room. In despair I sat me down at the foot of the bed, and contemplated the chaos around me. My energies were paralyzed by the scene. Had it been to gain a kingdom I could not have thrown a glove into the portmanteau: so, resolving to defer the packing till to-morrow, I got into bed,

My slumbers were fitful—disturbed. Horrible dreams assailed me. Series of watches, each pointing to the hour of four, passed slowly before me—then, time-pieces—dials of a large size,—and, at last, enormous steeple-clocks all pointing to four, four, four. 'A change came o'er the spirit of my dream,' and endless processions of watchmen

moved along, and mournfully dinning in my ears, 'Past four o'clock.' At length I was attacked by night-mare.—Methought I was an hour-glass—old Father Time bestrode me—he pressed upon me with unendurable weight—fearfully and threateningly did he wave his scythe above my head—he grinned at me, struck three blows, audible blows, with the handle of his scythe on my breast, stooped his huge head, and shrieked in my ear—

'Vore o'clock, zur; I zay it be vore o'clock.'

'Well, I hear you.'

'But I doan't hear you. Vore o'clock, zur.'

'Very well, very well, that'll do.'

'Beggin' your pardon, but it woan't do, zur. 'Ee must get up—past vore, zur.'

'The devil take you, will you—'

'If you please zur; but'ee must get up. It be a good deal past vore—no use for'ee to grumble, zur; nobody do like gettin' up at vore o'clock, as can help it, but he toald I to car'lee, and it bean't my duty to go till I hear'ee stirrin' about the room. Good deal past vore, 'tis I assure'ee, zur.'—And he thundered away at the door; nor did he cease knocking till I was fairly up, and had shown myself to him in order to satisfy him of the fact—'That'll do, zur; 'ee toald I to car'lee, and I hope I ha' car'lee properly.

I lit my taper at the rush-light. On opening the window shutter I was regaled with the sight of a fog, which London itself, on one of its perfect November days, could scarcely have excelled. A dirty drizzling rain was falling. My heart sank within me. It was now twenty minutes past four. I was master of no more than forty disposable minutes, and, in that brief space, what had I not to do! The duties of the toilet were indispensable—the portmanteau *must* be packed—and, run as fast as I might I could not get to the coach-office in less than ten minutes. Hot water was a luxury not to be procured: at that villainous hour, not a human being in the house (nor, do I firmly believe, in the universe entire,) had risen my unfortunate self, and my companion in wretchedness, poor Boots, excepted. The water in the jug was frozen; but by dint of hammering upon it with the handle of the