

According to regulations I should have answered "No," and closed my door in his face.

But I parleyed with him.

"I am afraid I have nothing worth giving you," I said.

"Anything," he whispered, huskily—"any cold victuals."

"Larry will scold," I thought, "and so will Carrie," but I said aloud:

"I will see."

I was shivering with cold myself by this. I did not want to leave him standing on the freezing porch. If Carrie had been with me I should have asked him inside; as it was, I closed the door gently, feeling much ashamed; and I went back to my kitchen.

Carrie had taken my sewing-machine into the kitchen and was rattling away on it, making her a dress.

"Carrie, have we any cold victuals?" I asked guiltily and humbly.

She looked up, thoroughly disgusted.

"Norm," she answered very positively. "Nary bit o' nothin'."

"Are you sure, Carrie?"

"Yessum, I is. I cooked 'nuff bread dis mornin' to las' a whole week. An' whar is it now? Tramps done kyard it off. Got to bake ergin to-morrow. Can't keep no victuals in dis house."

"Isn't there a bit of cooked meat some-where, Carrie? No pie, nor anything?"

"Norm. An' mighty little raw meat. An' dar ain't no mo'n a dus' o' flour in dat las' bar'l we got. Got to buy flower tomorrow. You knows we keeps a tramp bo'din' house, ma'am" — with privileged sarcasm.

Carrie doesn't like me to go into my own cupboard, but in spite of her disapprobation I searched for provisions. All I got for my pains was a small piece of corn bread.

"I tole you dar warn't nothin' in dar," said Carrie with cynicism.

I went to my cracker-jar on my little tea-table and