

Skinny told us all this in such a quiet, patient, uncomplaining little voice, as Lucy and I were sitting on the door-step, waiting for aunt Mary to come out of the inner room, where she had gone to speak to poor Mrs. Brown. She went on with her work whilst she was telling us it, because she said she had such a great deal to do. She was on her hands and knees scrubbing the floor when we went in. She had no frock on at all, and no shoes and stockings, only a brown stuff petticoat that had had a piece of a different colour joined to it all the way round the bottom, to make it longer and warmer. She said she could not afford to wear a frock and shoes and stockings, except when she went out of doors. But still she looked tidy, for her face was quite clean, and her hair was well brushed and tied neatly up with bits of string; you know she could not afford to buy ribbon for it.

After a while we took out our pieces of bun and gave them to Skinny; we thought she had very likely had no breakfast that morning. She seemed very pleased, very pleased indeed, but did not offer to eat them; and when we asked her why she did not begin, she said she should like to save them for her