

“Oh, do wait a little longer, mother—I’m reading such a beautiful book,” was my reply, instead of immediately hastening to do my duty, as I should have done. Several times my mother reminded me of my poor little charge, and each time I replied, “Wait just a minute.” But *my* minute and many other minutes slipped away, until the deepening twilight forced me to close my book. Filled with pleasant fancies, which the story in question had awakened, I hastened to retire, without bestowing a single thought upon my little brood, of which, to tell the truth, I was beginning to grow weary.

Judge of my surprise and mortification when, upon rising the next morning and looking from my window, I discovered directly beneath it, perched upon large sticks, two dead chickens. Underneath each was a placard, upon which was printed in large, showy letters, “Mrs. Indott and Individual departed this life early this morning. For the cause of their death refer to Punctual Fanny.”

The thought of the chickens I had neglected to house produced in my mind no very pleasing sensation. Already I beheld two of them dead before me. The rest might have shared the same untimely fate. Where now was my imaginary triumph? Alas, it had vanished, and I