

tended to be hunting for his pipe, which, as a matter of fact, was on the floor beside him. He realized this after a little, but in his agitation he found great difficulty in getting into his seat again, and would have fallen had Cassy not made a step forward and caught him with her free hand.

Mr. Shacklett was not at all mollified by this timely aid, but kept his anger glowing.

“You see we ain’t dead, don’t you? Hey? ’T ain’t all the time that I’m shaky this way. It’s only because our nigger’s dead. She was a good nigger, — a right good nigger. We raised her from a baby. *She’s* dead, but we ain’t, by grabs! One time a man come in the door there. He was lots bigger’n you are, but we did n’t want him about, and I had to get my gun and shoot him. *He’s* dead, but we ain’t. No, by grabs. We don’t look like we’re dead, do we? Hey?”

All this time Cassy Tatum stood with her baby on her arm, staring at the old people with open-mouthed wonder, not knowing what to say or do, and unable to frame any excuse for her intrusion that she thought likely to appeal to their childish understanding. But she caught a humorous twinkle in Mrs. Shack-