

“No, I ain't. Tell her dat a' ole nigger 'oman fum de country want ter see her.”

Cousin Rebecca T. was listening at the farther end of the hall, and thought she recognized the voice. The girl turned away with a smile to deliver the message, but her mistress was standing near. With a wave of her hand, Cousin Rebecca T. dismissed the servant, saw her safely out of hearing, and then opened wide the door.

“Come in, Mimy,” she said in a voice as serene as a summer morning; “come into my room. I have n't seen you in a coon's age.” She dropped easily into the vernacular of Rockville and the region round about. She took Aunt Mimy somewhat off her guard, but this only served to increase the agitation of the old negro. Cousin Rebecca T. led the way to her back parlor.

“Come in,” she said kindly. “How have you been since I saw you last?” She shut the door and caught the thumb-bolt. “Sit in that chair. Now, what have you to tell me?”

Aunt Mimy saw that the thin white hand of her old mistress trembled as she raised it to her hair.