

before the Lucifer sails, and I can run no risks by lying late abed here."

"Your honor shall be called betimes," said Basmorne.

Supper over, the tired traveler ascended the stairs once more, and, after seeing that the bolt which secured his room from intrusion was shot home, prepared to go to bed.

In that age beds were well canopied. Indeed, what with tester, valance, and curtains draping it to the very floor, a bed was a tiny close room where folks nowadays would expect to smother outright. The traveler had been a soldier, used to sleeping in the open air on many a bivouac, and he thirsted for fresh air. As soon as he had undressed, he tried to shift the bed a little nearer the window opening on the back yard, the only window he had ventured to leave open. But the bed would not move. He found that it was fastened securely by its legs to the floor.

What can be the object of that? he asked himself.

Now whether the darkness—for he had blown out his candle, brought back the suspicions suggested by the warning of the hostler at the Edisto Ferry inn or whether this odd circumstance of a bed made fast to the floor brought fresh doubts to his mind, certain it is that he lay there upon the bed wide awake in spite of his weariness.

"Is this worthy of Malcolm McAlpine?" said he indignantly to himself. "Shall an old soldier and hunter lie awake because one inn-servent chooses to put a bad mouth on another inn? It is ridiculous, but I'll take another look out of that window and then come back and go to sleep." He was hardly at the window when he heard the voice which he now knew to be that of the innkeeper's wife calling out in what he could not help describing to himself as a devil's croak: "Have you filled the big caldron as I told you, Ahab?" "yes ma'am," a negroe's voice replied, "He full and he duh bile now."

"Keep it hot! I want it to peel the skin as soon as it hits," said the same cruel voice.

"She is making preparations for cleaning a hog," said Mc-