

A clerk who worked very hard was usually very punctual arrived at his office very late one morning. He had bruises on his face, a scratch on one of his lips, sticking-plaster on his left wrist and thumb, and a bandage on his right shoulder. He had also hurt his knees, ankles and some of his toes.

The manager of the office was not a patient man, and he had been waiting for the clerk, because he had some work to give him. When he saw him come in at last, he said angrily, 'You're an hour late, Tomkins!'

'I know, sir,' answered the clerk politely. 'I'm very sorry. My flat is on the eighth floor, and just before I left home this morning, while I was closing one of the windows, I slipped and fell out.'

'Well,' the manager answered coldly, 'did that take you an hour?'