

# My Watch

**(USA)** *Mark Twain*

MY beautiful new watch had run eighteen months without losing or gaining, and without breaking any part of its machinery<sup>1</sup> or stopping. I had come to believe it infallible<sup>2</sup> in its judgments about time of day, and to consider its constitution and its anatomy<sup>3</sup> imperishable<sup>4</sup>. But at last, one night, I let it run down. I grieved<sup>5</sup> about it as if it were a recognized messenger and forerunner<sup>6</sup> of calamity<sup>7</sup>. But by and by I cheered up, set the watch by guess, and commanded my bodings<sup>8</sup> and superstitions<sup>9</sup> to depart. Next day I stepped into the chief jeweler's to set it by the exact time, and the head of the establishment<sup>10</sup> took it out of my hand and preceeded to set it for me. Then he said, "She is four minutes slow-regulator<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>**machinery** n. the working parts of a machine

<sup>2</sup>**infallible** adj. not capable of being wrong or making mistakes

<sup>3</sup>**anatomy** n. the parts or causes that form or create sth

<sup>4</sup>**imperishable** adj. never to be forgotten

<sup>5</sup>**grieve** v. to cause (someone) to feel sad or unhappy

<sup>6</sup>**forerunner** n. a sign of sth that is going to happen

<sup>7</sup>**calamity** n. an event that causes great harm and suffering

<sup>8</sup>**bode** v. (n. boding) to be a sign of (a future event or situation)

<sup>9</sup>**superstition** n. a belief or way of behaving that is based on fear of the unknown and faith in magic or luck

<sup>10</sup>**establishment** n. a place or organization where people live or do business

<sup>11</sup>**regulator** n. a device for controlling the level or amount

wants pushing up.” I tried to stop him—tried to make him understand that the watch kept perfect time. But no; all this human cabbage<sup>12</sup> could see was that the watch was four minutes slow, and the regulator *must* be pushed up a little; and so, while I danced around him in anguish<sup>13</sup>, and implored<sup>14</sup> him to let the watch alone, he calmly and cruelly<sup>15</sup> did the shameful deed. My watch began to gain. It gained faster and faster day by day. Within the week it sickened<sup>16</sup> to a raging<sup>17</sup> fever, and its pulse<sup>18</sup> went up to a hundred and fifty in the shade. At the end of two months it had left all the timepieces of the town far in the rear, and was a fraction<sup>19</sup> over thirteen days ahead of the almanac<sup>20</sup>. It was away into November enjoying the

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of sth (such as speed or temperature)

<sup>12</sup>**cabbage** n. a person who leads a dull or inactive life

<sup>13</sup>**anguish** n. extreme suffering, grief, or pain

<sup>14</sup>**implore** v. to make a very serious or emotional request to (someone)

<sup>15</sup>**cruel** adj. (**adv.** cruelly) used to describe people who hurt others and do not feel sorry about it

<sup>16</sup>**sicken** v. to become sick or to cause (someone) to become sick

<sup>17</sup>**raging** adj. causing a lot of pain or distress

<sup>18</sup>**pulse** n. a strong, regular beat or pattern of sounds in music

<sup>19</sup>**fraction** n. a part of amount of sth

<sup>20</sup>**almanac** n. a book published every year that contains facts about the movements of the sun and moon, changes in

snow, while the October leaves were still turning. It hurried up house rent, bills payable, and such things, in such a ruinous<sup>21</sup> way that I could not abide<sup>22</sup> it. I took it to the watchmaker to be regulated<sup>23</sup>. He asked me if I had ever had it repaired. I said no, it had never needed any repairing. He looked a look of vicious<sup>24</sup> happiness and eagerly pried<sup>25</sup> the watch open, and then put a small dice-box into his eye and peered<sup>26</sup> into its machinery. He said it wanted cleaning and oiling, besides regulating—come in a week. After being cleaned and oiled, and regulated, my watch slowed down to that degree that it ticked like a tolling<sup>27</sup> bell.

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the tides, and information of general interest

<sup>21</sup>**ruinous** adj. causing or likely to cause damage or destruction

<sup>22</sup>**abide** v. to accept or bear (someone or sth bad, unpleasant, etc.)

<sup>23</sup>**regulate** v. to set or adjust the amount, degree, or rate of (sth)

<sup>24</sup>**vicious** adj. very violent and cruel

<sup>25</sup>**pry** v. to raise, move, or open (sth) with a tool

<sup>26</sup>**peer** v. to look closely or carefully especially because sth or someone is difficult to see

<sup>27</sup>**toll** v. to ring slowly