

Story by Kitty Thompson, aged 11 (Category 10-12)  
Based on Queen Victoria's Governess, Baroness Lehzen.



## **COURAGE**

“Your Father and I are going abroad for a while,” Annabelle’s mother explained.  
“Who’s going to look after *me*?” Annabelle cried.

Events happened in quick succession, soon Annabelle found herself sitting at dinner with only her new governess for company...

Her governess was appropriately named Miss Hawk. Like her name, she was cruel and wicked with an imperious nature. Tall, with dark brown hair she wore a long dress with a full skirt more appropriate for decades earlier, pulled in at the waist.

Annabelle sat and ate quietly, not knowing what to think of Miss Hawk. The governess sat up straight, glaring. The meal seemed to last forever, once they had finished Miss Hawk ordered Annabelle upstairs. Annabelle wondered if Miss Hawk seeking to make a first impression or whether this was likely to happen every night. She remembered evenings reading with father and hoped he would be home soon. Their departure had been far too quick, with little explanation and Annabelle felt abandoned.

Next morning she went downstairs for breakfast and ate in silence with Miss Hawk opposite. For the rest of the morning Annabelle took lessons with Miss Hawk, who relied on the books in Father’s library for information. Lunch was left for Annabelle in her room, during the afternoon she was left to herself to play the piano and sew.

Her quiet day lasted until suppertime. Annabelle's puppy Twinkle seemed very interested in Miss Hawk from the day she arrived, although Miss Hawk clearly hated dogs! Twinkle tried to pinch Miss Hawk's food and she roughly shoved the pup out the way, which Annabelle thought was harsh. Miss Hawk snarled at her and sent her to bed. "I haven't finished my supper?!" protested Annabelle.

She was sent upstairs and locked in her room with Twinkle banished to the kitchens in disgrace. Cook was fond of the naughty pup, so Annabelle had no concerns for Twinkle's. How could she endure the imperious Miss Hawk until her parents returned home? She had to do *something*, but what?

Annabelle stood until she noticed the window open with the wind blowing gently through the thin curtain. Suddenly Annabelle knew what to do. She would climb out and down the pipes on the house, make her way along the street to her grandma's house and stay there until her parents arrived, hopefully Annabelle could persuade her grandmother to help improve the situation.

Her mind made up Annabelle got to work opening the window further. It was quite stiff but before long she found herself wandering down the dusty streets on her way to her grandmother's...

They decided it would be best for Annabelle to stay for the night and go back in the morning. Next day Annabelle said goodbye to her grandmother saying-

"Miss Hawk scares me, she is so strict."

"Have courage Annabelle, your parents will be back soon, I'm certain. Until then you know where I am if you need me." said her Grandma softly as she waved goodbye.