

"Of course he loves you—he's a reasonable man." Anna spoke in low and very tender tones, then she put a light hand on Mary's forehead and stroked back a loose wave of hair. "Come, dear, you must think of other things now," she whispered, "just as I must, for if the relief force does not reach us— Oh, Mary, Mary, the time has come when we must all put our house in order and prepare to meet our God."

Mary nodded her head, then both girls—for Anna was little more than a girl herself—leaned over the earthworks and studied the long line of distant hills, and the little missionary bride thought of her husband, but Mary could only dream of the man who had just come into her life—merely at its stormy close, perhaps.

"He's coming—I can hear his footsteps." Mary muttered the words low—half under her breath; then she glanced wistfully at her friend, and Anna realised all that the glance sought to convey, the mute appeal.

"I'm going, dear; I shall be with David in our room if you want me. He's lying down now; you know he was on picket duty all night."

"I know," Mary whispered back, and then she kept her quiet station by the wall, vaguely aware that Anna had slipped softly, almost silently away, nor was she in the least surprised when she presently heard her name pronounced in a man's deep yet clear voice; but a tell-tale blush dyed her cheek—she flew the woman's flag at once.

"Don't stand here by the wall, watching those silent sangars; come back to the Mission House. I am a man of few words, you know, Miss Fielder, and I don't often give vent to my sentiments, but I assure you I feel most frightfully cut up on your account—I hate to think of you here, shut up in this