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From the other things he came back always to the one or two realities. He held fast by them in case everything should go. The intent, purposeful look of the terrier, the dash and adventure in the boy's face ! And sometimes, out of all these vague realities—other people's realities that he was only looking on at as if they were living pictures—a reality of his own would force its way. And then he would move his hand a little—he lay almost motionless all day long—and push his breast pocket against himself so that he could hear the faint crackle of paper inside it. There it was always, whenever he made the effort : the faint crackling of paper doubling on itself, letters written in Canada and sent to him across the ocean. And now he was bringing them back again.

How he had waited for those letters. Days would pass, sometimes weeks would pass, and he would hear nothing, and then he would lie hour after hour in such an agony of waiting that the fear of death would seem only a sort of afterthought, nothing compared with this aching longing to know how his wife fared.