

but no other person could value her as he did. Even when the matter was explained by him as being one of so little consequence she suddenly grew faint and almost dropped into a chair. In a moment he was at her side. Her handsome face became almost suddenly pale. I never saw cheeks blanch so quickly. I never before heard such a faint pitiful sigh, I never saw lips quiver so with mental emotion, and then she muttered scarcely louder than a whisper, "My dream, my last night's dreadful dream."

John's lips were compressed again—this was his peculiar symptom when in trouble or great agitation of mind—and now he was evidently suffering from an emotion which he tried to conceal. Poor fellow! I knew his distress was great at the moment; though it was a struggle for him not only to appear calm, but to seem surprised at the deep concern which we all manifested.

"What's all this for?" cried he, endeavoring to infuse a symptom of annoyance into his words. "Anna, I expected more sense from you, but really, you act like a child."

In spite of his attempt to reproach, there was a tenderness in his accent which touched her—it touched us all—she opened her eyes and tried to smile. The effort, faint as it was, only caused a tear to fall on her cheek: it dropped on his hand which lay on her shoulder, and, as quickly as he saw this fresh evidence of her affectionate heart, he turned from her and looked appealingly at me, and then I saw that his own eyes, like mine, were filled with tears.

He hurriedly left the room, but soon returned, followed by my mother. He had resumed his apparent unconcern and came in smilingly. "Now," said he, turning towards where Anna was sitting, "this is Christmas time, when, according to the good old custom, all should be joyful. Let us have a merry night of it. What's the use in borrowing trouble. Let us tell stories, sing songs, and have a dance if you like—yes, we must have a dance. You can play," pointing to me, "Anna can play, and when you get tired of the piano, I can follow up and scrape a tune or two on the violin. That's it," said he snapping his fingers gleefully, "let

us have a dance and don't bother yourself about dreams or predictions, everything will be all right."

"But my dear," said my mother, "if you are determined to leave us early to-morrow you should go to bed and have a good night's rest."

"I won't have time to sleep much to-night," he replied. "I must leave here at four in the morning to reach Toronto for the early train. I shall have all day to-morrow to rest in the car. It may be a month or two before we meet again, so let us make the most of the time we have, and be merry."

My mother expressed a hope that some arrangement could be made when he got to Rochester so as to get his brother free from liability to service in the Federal Army, and that he and Thomas might return together. My father, too, had hopes in the same direction, and stated his intention of accompanying John as far as Rochester. John made no objection to this, and, under the circumstances, we tried to feel content that they should leave together, hoping for the best.

Shortly after this John went out, in order to see the captain of his company. The captain and most of the men were then assembled in the drill shed, a little distance from where we lived. When John informed them that he had come to take leave of them, perhaps to take service under another government, one and all of his companions expressed the most sincere regret that he had felt obliged to leave home and friends under such short notice; and, to their generosity be it recorded, more than one of the volunteers present offered to take his place, or rather the place of my brother Thomas, who had been drafted. But John would not hear of this; he said that he alone had the best right to go as a substitute for his brother.

It was ten o'clock at night when he returned; he found it so difficult to part with so many of his companions. All had something to say to him and this delayed him longer than he expected. He soon donned his civilian dress and laid his uniform aside. During his absence we had talked the matter over and had agreed among ourselves not to appear