

seemed no reason why the family heirlooms in silver and china should be laid away; so the table was pretty, as of old. Mrs. Edmonds surveyed its prettiness almost with a groan. She had allowed herself to become so nervous over possibilities, that all her dainty preparations for a late supper looked like so many mockeries. Still, she went once more and sat down in the "Sleepy Hollow," drawing a wrap about her and resolving to be reasonable. "What *could* have happened?" she asked herself for the hundredth time; "not an accident, surely; because there were so many of them, that we should have heard of it before this time. As for their not starting for home to-night, that is nonsense. Don't I know that I would never be left here alone? More than that, she promised."

Her mental argument was interrupted by the sound of footsteps overhead, and her thoughts were turned into a new channel. Mr. Maxwell was at home then; she had not heard a sound from his room before. He must have let himself in when she went to the coal closet for that lump of coal. It was strange he was up so late, or rather so early,—for the little clock on the dining-room mantel at that moment murmured in soft, silvery tones: "One, two!" They struck terror to the watcher's heart. It was actually two o'clock, and Marjorie for the first time in all her nineteen years was away from her!

The mother started abruptly, and giving herself