

"By sleeping alone during the cold nights of the past week," retorted Holstrom, ere Frederick could get time to breathe out a more respectful answer.

At this moment the subject was immediately dropped through the timely interference of Mr. Charlston, reading a paragraph of interesting news from the *Times*. After an hour's conversation on various topics the young woman arose and announced her intention of leaving; whereupon Holstrom sprang up, bade them all good night and immediately departed. Clara shortly afterwards left also, promising ere long to repeat her visit. It was customary for Frederick to accompany her home but on account of his illness that night George offered to convoy her to her residence, distant about one mile.

"Thank you, George, for your kind offer," replied Clara; "but there is no necessity to do so to-night; a female acquaintance who accompanied me to a friend's house a few doors from here, is expecting me to call for her, and perhaps I may be detained for some time, therefore, dear George, excuse me."

No sooner had Clara departed than Frederick, disguised himself in his father's old hat, overcoat and muffler, and immediately started in pursuit of Clara.