

well realized. A dizzy sickness came over her. It passed in an instant, and she stood, pale indeed as death, but with every faculty aroused, every nerve strung, to meet the need of the moment. Time enough would there be for tears and wailings, should the worst prove true; at present she must *act*—not waste, in idle sorrow, moments as precious as years.

Half-way between Mary's cottage and the lake, stood the rude cabin of an honest Irishman, who, with his "boys," two stalwart young men, had come, not long before, to reside in the neighborhood. In less than five minutes, Mary was on her way thither; her infant, warmly wrapped up, clasped even more closely than usual to her bosom, as if she feared to lose what might now be her only earthly treasure.

Great was the astonishment of honest Tim Martin and his household, when Mary Gray suddenly appeared in their midst, (none of them ever knew exactly how she came there, for she had entered without knock or call,) and still greater was the sympathy of their kind hearts, when, in accents of forced calmness, she told her story, expressing her belief that something, (she could not bring herself to speak more plainly,) had befallen her husband, and imploring them to aid her in her search for him. Gladly would they have persuaded her to remain in the cabin with the good dame, while they went forth upon the search; but Mary was inflexibly determined to share in it.

"Ye can be of no use, darlin'," said the good-hearted fellow, when the simple preparations for starting were completed; "ye're better here by far; you, too, that slip about upon the ice like a cat in walnut shells."

"I shall stand as firm to-night as any of you," said Mary, as she gave her child to Mrs. Martin, and stepped out of the cabin. "It's no use talking, Mr. Martin; do you think I can sit here when James is perhaps —" She could not finish the sentence, but she was understood.

With rapid steps the little party set off, followed by the dog, which, however, they lost sight of soon after they left the shore. Mary kept her promise of standing firm upon the slippery surface of the lake, for a far deeper fear had banished all timidity for herself, and it would scarcely have been felt had her path