

ill and in the confusion the picture was lost, and to this day it has never been found."

"Perhaps some of the servants found it."

"No, for I rang for Katy, and it was lost in papa's room. Katy says she saw no picture, only papa lying on the couch drew her attention. Well, it was a mystery which some day may be unravelled. But, see, our fire is going out, and I have kept you up long enough with my chatter. So good-night, my dear."

Erica slept a troubled sleep that night, in which her father, Marjorie and the picture formed an endless confusion of faces and music and books. Next morning she rose so listless and unrefreshed that Marjorie felt anxious and wished her to stay at home for the day; but Erica laughed at her fears and said she would be better after her day's exercise.

The anticipated birthday celebration drew near, to Erica's keen delight; but a few nights before it, Marjorie, coming home, found Erica huddled in an arm-chair shivering and complaining of thirst.

"Oh, Erica," said Marjorie, tremulously, "you are ill."