

words the news of its having been wrecked, and all on board lost. I did not cry; and when Stewart whispered to me to tell him what was in it, I said, "Yes, dear, I will to-night, but not now, for we might disturb mother."

In about an hour she opened her eyes and looked at us, but, before we could give her the wine, she had closed them again. It was evening before she became conscious enough to take it, and, after having done so, she fell again into a heavy stupor.

Stewart and I had been sitting with her all day, and I only remembered then that he, poor boy, had had nothing to eat since morning. He had fallen asleep in the arm chair, and looked so pale and worn out that my conscience reproached me for my want of thought, for he was not a strong boy. I went out to the kitchen to tell Mattie to prepare us some tea, and found her sitting before the fire with her apron over her head.

"Mattie," I said, "will you please get us some tea."

"It's ready, Miss, this long time, but I was afeerd to call you, in case of wakin' Missis, poor lady! And is he really drowned, Miss Robina? Oh! poor Master! poor Missis!" and the apron went over the head again and the broad shoulders heaved.

"Don't, Mattie, oh don't! or you will make me unable to bear it. Get up and help me, for I need your help," I said. "We must only think of Mother now, for I know from the way the doctor looked this morning that he thinks she is in great danger; and, oh, what if we were to lose Mother too?"

I did not dare think of it, for I knew how necessary it was that I should keep calm, in case she awoke.

"Bring the tea into the dining-room, and then come and sit beside Mother, while I give Master Stewart some," I said.

"I will indeed, Miss," answered poor Mattie, glad to be of some use, and

who, I think, had felt neglected at not being wanted before. She had lived with us five years, and was much devoted to us all; but she was very demonstrative, and accustomed to give vent to her feelings of either joy or sorrow with uncommon zest; therefore, I had thought she was better out of the way.

When I went back to the room Stewart was awake.

"Come, dear, and we will have our tea, and then I think you had better go to bed, for you look tired," I said.

We went out together, and, after sending Mattie in, we sat down to our lonely meal. I tried to talk a little, praising Mattie's nice, hot buttered toast, though I could hardly taste it; and he, poor boy, seemed to turn sick at the sight.

"I can't, Robbie—I can't take any," he said; and then he went up-stairs.

After looking to see that Mother was all right, and, feeling confident from the look on Mattie's face that she was safe in her hands, I followed him. He was sitting in the moonlight, at the open window, for it was one of those lovely evenings in the beginning of September. I went and stood beside him.

"You need not tell me, Robbie," he said, "for I know all. I read the letter when you were out of the room."

His arm went round me as he spoke, and I, putting my arms around his neck, drew his head on to my shoulder, and we sobbed there together as if our hearts would break, in that our first great sorrow—I, a girl just entering on my eighteenth year, and Stewart, who was twelve. We stayed there until the doctor's carriage warned me that I must go down.

"Good-night, dear," I said, kissing him. "Go to bed, Mattie and I will sit with Mother to-night, so you must take all the rest you can, and be ready to sit up with me to-morrow."

I went down and let the doctor in. He sat silently looking at Mother until I could bear it no longer.

"Doctor," I said, "you must tell me