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CHAPTER XVI

I WOKE up suddenly. A minute ago I had seen Peter Kennedy kneeling by the sofa, his head against Margaret's dress. He had looked young, little more than a boy. Now he was by my side, bending over me. There was grey in his hair, lines about his eyes.

"You've grown grey," was the first thing I said, feebly enough, I've no doubt, and he did not seem to hear me. "My arm aches. How could you do it?"

"Do what?"

"She was so young, so impetuous, everything might have come right. . . ."

"She is wandering," he said. I hardly knew to whom he spoke, but felt the necessity of protest.

"I'm not wandering. Is Ella there?"

"Of course I am. Is there anything you want?" She came over to me.

"I needn't write any more, need I? I'm so tired." Ella looked at him as if for instructions or guidance, and he answered soothingly, as one speaks to a child or an invalid:

"No, no, certainly not. You need not write until you feel inclined. She has been dreaming," he explained.