

# Lincoln the Mystic.

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battle of Sharpsburg was fought. My father was then with my eldest brother in the hospital at Washington. Intending to visit him, I went by permission of Mrs. Lincoln to the White house nothouse, to obtain a bouquet of flowers for him. Miss Parnie and myself applied to the private entrance, expecting only to receive the flowers and depart. Mrs. Cuthbert, Mrs. Lincoln's waiting woman, eagerly met us at the door. "O, my dear young ladies," she exclaimed in her broken French fashion, "the madame is destracted. Come to her, I beg of you. She waits you very much."

## Mrs. Lincoln's False Vision.

Struck at her earnestness we went upstairs and were ushered into her bedroom. Mrs. Lincoln, in a loose wrapper, her long, beautiful hair down her back and over her shoulders, was distractedly walking up and down the room. As she saw me she came forward and exclaimed, "O, Miss Nettie, such dreadful news; they are fighting at the front; such terrible slaughter; and all our generals are killed and our army is in full retreat; such is the latest news. O, I am glad you have come. Will you sit down a few moments and see if we can get anything from 'Beyond?'"

No hint of the battle had as yet reached the public. I was surprised. I threw my things aside and we at once sat down. "Pinkie" controlled me instantly, and in her own original way assured Mrs. Lincoln that her alarm was groundless; that while a great battle had been fought and was still in progress, our forces were fully holding their own; and that none of the generals, as she had been informed, was slain or injured. She bade her have no fear whatever; that they would get better news by nightfall, and the next day would bring still more cheerful results.

This calmed her somewhat, and after I awoke she talked very earnestly with me to know if I fully trusted and believed in what was said through me. I assured her of my confidence in whatever was communicated, and it seemed to give her courage. It was now approaching 1 o'clock, and Mr. Lincoln entered the room; he was bowed as if bent with trouble, his face looking anxious and careworn. He shook my hand in a listless way and kindly inquired how I was, shaking hands with my friend also. He sat down at a little stand on which Mrs. Cuthbert had placed a cup of tea and a plate of crackers. It seemed that it was his custom at this hour to partake of this frugal lunch. Mrs. Lincoln instantly began to tell him what had been said. He looked up with quick interest.

## Lincoln Is Cheered.

My friend Parnie said: "Perhaps Mr. Lincoln would prefer to hear it direct; would you not like to, Mr. Lincoln?" He said: "If it would not tire your friend too much, yes." I hastened to assure him that I felt no weariness whatever and again I was soon under control. This time it was the strong, clear utterance of one we had learned to call "Wisdom," and Parnie told me that Mr. Lincoln listened intently to every word. For twenty minutes "he" talked to him, stating clearly the condition of affairs at the front, assuring him of what news he would receive by nightfall and what the morrow would bring forth, and that in nowise was the battle disastrous, and, though not decisive particularly in char-

acter, was sufficiently so to be a gain, not a loss, to the Union cause. He brightened visibly under the assurances given, and my friend said she had never seen me more impressive or convincing when under control. Evidently "they" felt his need in that hour and met it. When I awoke his tea stood untasted and cold, and as none seemed to think of it that should have done so, my friend quietly arose and, taking it from the stand, handed it to Mrs. Cuthbert and said: "Change this for a hot cup of tea, and bring it soon." No one seemed to think she was stepping out of her place in thus thinking of the weary man before us. It was quickly brought and he drank it with a relish, but left the crackers untasted. He shook us warmly by the hand and with a pleasant smile passed back to his private apartments.

I need not say that our hands were well filled with flowers when we left the White house. However, it was then too late to go to the camp. The next morning, on our way to the hospital, we called at the White house and received from Mrs. Cuthbert the assurance that the news had been received as predicted and that "Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln were both feeling much better and full of hope."

Taking the cars at Fourteenth street, we made our visit to Mount Pleasant hospital. Its thousands of clean, white empty tents, full of little cot beds, suggested the possibilities of war, but presented none of its horrors. My brother was better, although still in bed, and my father was glad to see his visitors. We staid a few hours and he showed us over the departments, taking us to the surgeons' headquarters, where all seemed quiet and peaceful. We returned to the city, little dreaming of the scene that would greet us when we again visited the camp.