

Dual Warning

In the chapter titled "Dual Warning," dated February 21, significant events unfold in Washington and Philadelphia surrounding a potential assassination threat against President-elect Abraham Lincoln. General Winfield Scott, after receiving alerts about the threat from Dorothea Dix via railroad executive Samuel Felton, initiates an investigation. He enlists the help of John A. Kennedy, the head of New York City police, who has already dispatched detectives to scrutinize the situation. Scott offers Kennedy assistance from Colonel Charles P. Stone, who is newly appointed as inspector general of the District of Columbia Militia by Scott.

As the tension builds, Kennedy's detectives infiltrate Southern cities, notably Baltimore, where one detective, David S. Bookstaver, poses as a music agent and uncovers alarming chatter about plots against Lincoln. The urgency escalates as Lincoln is scheduled to arrive in Baltimore soon. General Scott discusses the conspiracy with Secretary of State William Henry Seward, prompting Seward to send an urgent message to his son, Frederick, instructing him to deliver a warning to Lincoln in person.

Frederick boards a train to Philadelphia, where he finds Lincoln staying at the Continental Hotel. Meanwhile, Lincoln's aide, Norman Judd, meets with Allan Pinkerton, who conveys severe concerns about the assassination plot and urges immediate action. Despite the warnings, Lincoln remains dignified and skeptical, opting to stick to his planned schedule and address a significant public event in Philadelphia.

Later, Frederick finally meets Lincoln, who reviews the reports of the conspiracy calmly. He questions:

1. How the intelligence was gathered.
2. The involvement of specific individuals regarding the threats.

Lincoln expresses disbelief in the plot's severity, contrasting the disparate intelligence sources. He insists on deliberation before making any decisions. Despite the gravity of the situation, Lincoln's demeanor reflects a composed leader grappling with the conflicting pressures of public duty and personal safety, promising to consider his father's advice about altering his travel plans before his audience with the people the following day .