

Extract from Keeper of the doves by Betsy Byworth

‘Another girl? Not another girl? Don’t tell me I’ve got another daughter?!’

These were the first words my father spoke after I was born. Of course I was just minutes old-way too young to remember –but I have heard the story so often that I really think it is my memory.

It was a hot summer evening, 1891, and thunder could be heard as a storm rolled in from the west.

Papa’s voice was very loud-especially when he was upset. The words certainly would have come through the door to Mama’s room, despite the thunder. ‘She’s a fine healthy girl,’ Grandma said. It was she who had brought the bad news. ‘Be grateful Albert’. Papa seemed not to hear her.

‘What’s left?’ he said ‘We have Abigail, Arabella, Augusta, Annabella!’

My father, in his despair, said the names so loudly that my sisters thought they had been summoned and ran in.

‘You have a sister’, he told them. I think they were disappointed as well.

1. Summarise the events of the narrator’s birth by putting these statements into the order in which they happened: (put a number 1 – 6 next to each statement)

The narrator’s sisters rushed in

The narrator was born

Grandma brought the news of her birth to her father

A storm rolled in and thunder could be heard

Father said each of the narrator’s sisters’ names

Granma told the father to be grateful his new daughter was healthy

Second extract : Keeper of the doves – Betsy Byworth

She came into the kitchen where we girls were having breakfast at the table. The cook, Rose, was cutting us slices of bread. Aunt Pauline leaned heavily against the table.

“You all right Miss Pauline?” Cook asked. We looked at our aunt. She did look a bit strange.

Aunt Pauline put one hand to her throat as if seeking the comfort of her brooch, then realised she had forgotten to pin it on that morning. She hesitated , then blurted out:

“I had a very upsetting dream last night ...”

2. Summarise Aunt Pauline’s actions as shown in the paragraph. Number each statement 1 -6

Aunt Pauline went into the kitchen

Aunt Pauline had a very upsetting dream

Aunt Pauline reached for her brooch to comfort herself

Aunt Pauline forgot to pin her brooch on

Aunt Pauline leaned against the Kitchen table

Aunt Pauline told the girls and Cook about her dream

