

record whatever being kept of the names or condition of those who had miserably fallen. How was it possible for us to entertain the least hope, especially as we knew that both John and William—who were well aware of our anxiety concerning them—would not leave even the least opportunity pass without sending us some kind of a communication. Their long continued silence, therefore, told its own sad story, and we believed them to be dead.

My brother Thomas was now with us, and though not very strong, took the management of our little farm, and did the best he could. My father having failed so much during the last few months, was now almost a confirmed invalid. He believed that he had lost his son, and this having preyed so strongly on his mind, brought him at times to a very low condition, leaving but little prospect of his restoration. Anna Strong's health became also very much impaired, and she was urgently advised to leave the neighbourhood for a change of air and scene. She left us to visit some relations more than two hundred miles distant, and though I tried my best to appear calm at the moment of this separation, and to say a few words of hope and encouragement to her, yet how vain were my efforts; for this parting opened as it were an old wound which bled afresh; our tears mingled when we took our affecting farewell; and when this tender, amiable friend departed—it might be forever—I felt as if my cup of sorrow were nearly overflowing, and that I could never be happy again.

But this cup of affliction had yet to receive another bitter drop. In less than six months from the time that Anna went away, another terrible woe came upon us. My poor father, having lingered for some weeks fluctuating between life and death, could stay no longer. His loving heart had ceased to beat, and when he was borne away from us to his place of rest I felt that were it not for the duty I owed to others, and the necessity of my further efforts for the benefit of my remaining parent, I would have been glad to have been laid by his side, my eyes, like his, closed in the last deep sleep.

Such thoughts were, however, useless :

much, I knew, was now depending on me. The health of my brother Thomas was not very good, and not having been accustomed to hard labor—such as was necessary on newly cleared land—he could do little more than superintend work done for us, such as we could hire. Strange to say that the exertion which I and my mother had to make seemed to do us good; our thoughts were perhaps kept from dwelling too long on one sad subject; the activities of every day life scarcely left us time for the continuous depressing thoughts which would have been enervating to body and mind. No, in the busy day time we had to attend to various matters about the place; it was at night, when all was still, that I was often and often left without healthy repose for hours while thinking of the past; and even in my troubled dreams, when they came, there was no genuine ray of hope, while at times, when the necromancer sleep brought back our absent ones, it seemed as if they had but returned to appear as shadowy forms in another leave-taking.

Ah me, what wanderings I have had alone to those spots so often frequented in other days when I had one dear friend by my side who made the world look so beautiful, who made the sternest landscape appear like a portion of paradise and who painted the future in colors so glowing, golden and roseate. In my loneliness of heart I would many a time, when I could find a little leisure, steal away to those places where we often went together and sit thinking of the past, thinking whether *he* still thought of me, and then I would often be suddenly startled by the imagination that both he and my poor brother were among the slain. Still I found much relief in visiting those retreats. The turn in a path, the moss-covered rock, the shadow of a tree, will often bring back some fond remembrance dear to the heart forever.

There was one particular spot on the top of a high hill nearly a mile from our house where I loved to go on quiet Sunday evenings. The summit of this elevation was shaded by a large hemlock tree—one of the original foresters—and beneath this was a large jutting rock almost covered with ferns and mosses, one