

arranged that Grace and the boys should go with her, and that I should follow with the horse to bring back the baskets about the middle of the afternoon. Little Mary declined to go with the others and said she would stay with me.

Grace and I parted that morning, with as little show of feeling as two people might exhibit, who expected to meet again a few hours later. She was in a merry mood, and, as she went off with her basket on her arm, she turned and kissed her hand to me gaily with a pleasant smile. Down the dark vista of years I can see that smile still on her beautiful face as I then saw it for the last time. When they were gone I resumed my work at the wood-pile, and little Mary sat close by and prattled to me in her childish way. At noon we had dinner, and then work was continued as before. It was between two and three o'clock when Mary, who had been very quiet for some minutes, suddenly startled me by exclaiming "O, Joe! look at the big, black smoke."

I looked up instantly and beheld a sight which froze me with horror. The whole sky to the north was black with smoke which seemed hardly a mile away and every moment drew nearer. I saw that the danger was imminent and that there was no time to be lost, if Grace and her mother were to be saved. In less time than it takes to tell the story I had the bridle on the horse, and with Mary seated in front of me, was galloping down the forest path which led to the barren.

The distance was three miles, but before I had accomplished half of it I met the fire. It was in vain that I attempted to get around it. I was forced to retreat, and it was only by the most desperate efforts that I was able to return by the path I had entered so