

Hope and Faith



No one said much the next morning as they rose earlier than usual to a cold, gray day. They ate a quiet breakfast together. Their faces were grave as they waited for the carriage to take their mother to the station. Instructing the girls not to worry, Mrs. March told them to have hope and keep busy. All four took her advice to heart. They hugged Marmee close one last time before she and Mr. Brooke rode away.

When the carriage was quite out of view, the girls went back inside the house, remembering

their new motto: "Hope and Keep Busy," Jo and Meg returned to work. Amy and Beth stayed home to help Hannah. They found relief in their routine. News about their father was also a great comfort. Mr. Brooke sent a bulletin each day—and it seemed Father was truly getting better. The days flew by as fat letters were exchanged between their home and the hospital in Washington. The letters became a wonderful lifeline during this difficult time.



Ten days had passed since Marmee left for Washington. While the girls were working hard to "hope and keep busy," they also took many breaks. That morning, Beth reminded Meg and Jo to go to the Hummels, for Mrs. March had asked them to look after the unfortunate family in her absence. Meg was too tired to go, and Jo was