***Lyddie***

***Chapter 23 – Vermont, November 1846***

It was a cold evening when Lyddie's [stage coach](http://bookbuilder.cast.org/view_glossary.php?book=112287&word=88495#curr)  finally reached Cutler's Tavern.  Lyddie felt like it looked exactly the same as when she had left but it somehow felt different because she had changed.

Lyddie walked into the [tavern](http://bookbuilder.cast.org/view_glossary.php?book=112287&word=88496#curr) and saw Triphena.  Triphena came over and gave Lyddie a big hug.  Triphena began asking Lyddie questions about what she would do now that she didn't work at the factory.  Lyddie told Triphena that Mama had died and Uncle Judah had sold the farm.  Lyddie felt sad telling Triphena how her life had seemed to have turned out.



Lyddie told Triphena that she wanted to come back and work at the tavern.  Triphena lauged and thought that Lyddie was joking.  However, Lyddie was very serious and when Triphena told her that there was no space for a new [housemaid](http://bookbuilder.cast.org/view_glossary.php?book=112287&word=88497#curr)  Lyddie was [devastated](http://bookbuilder.cast.org/view_glossary.php?book=112287&word=88498#curr) .  It felt like just another place where she was not wanted.

Lyddie spent the night at the tavern and then decided the next day to head to the Phinney's and visit Charlie and Rachel.



Before Lyddie went to see Charlie and Rachel she stopped at the cabin. In a way she wanted to say goodbye to the cabin before she could never go back again.  As Lyddie walked up to the cabin she saw a dark [figure](http://bookbuilder.cast.org/view_glossary.php?book=112287&word=88500#curr).  Soon, she realized it was Luke Stevens.  Luke was excited to see her and invited her over to eat dinner.  Lyddie wanted to say no, but she was so hungry she said yes.



As Lyddie and Luke walked down the [path](http://bookbuilder.cast.org/view_glossary.php?book=112287&word=88501#curr)  towards his house, Lyddie started to bring up the letter he had sent her when he [proposed](http://bookbuilder.cast.org/view_glossary.php?book=112287&word=88502#curr)  to her.

Lyddie said, "About your letter Luke..." and then she paused feeing [uncomfortable](http://bookbuilder.cast.org/view_glossary.php?book=112287&word=88503#curr) .

Luke said, "[Ignore](http://bookbuilder.cast.org/view_glossary.php?book=112287&word=88505#curr) the letter Lyddie, I shouldn't have asked, it was silly".

Lyddie felt [relieved](http://bookbuilder.cast.org/view_glossary.php?book=112287&word=88506#curr) .

Then Luke asked, "What will you do now that you have nowhere to go, Lyddie?"

Lyddie said, "I will go to [Ohio](http://bookbuilder.cast.org/view_glossary.php?book=112287&word=88507#curr) . There is a college I can go to there that will take women".



Lyddie looked up at Luke and as she looked at his face could see how [gentle](http://bookbuilder.cast.org/view_glossary.php?book=112287&word=88508#curr) he was and how one day she would love him.  She wished she could marry him now but knew that she needed to go off and finish college first.  Lyddie stared at Luke for a long time and wanted to ask him to wait for her, but she knew that she couldn't.

Luke said, "I'll miss you, Lyddie".

Lyddie looked up at Luke and [giggled](http://bookbuilder.cast.org/view_glossary.php?book=112287&word=88509#curr) .  She thought to herself, we can still hope Luke, but said nothing else out loud.

Chapter 23, "Vermont, November 1846," involves Lyddie's return to Cutler's Tavern. Triphena welcomes her back and they have a cordial and lively conversation. Lyddie was hoping to find work at the tavern, but there is none for her. She spends the night there and finds readjusting to the quiet of the countryside to be difficult.

The next day Lyddie walks to her old cabin. No one is there, but Lyddie lets herself in and starts a fire. Luke comes in and is surprised to see her. Luke insists that she stay the night, maybe longer. Lyddie informs Luke that she will leave to go attend college in Ohio. Even though she is resolute on leaving and "facing the bear," Lyddie has a feeling that she will return one day to marry Luke.