

A tidal wave of sounds.

I don't know how long we stayed there, frozen, not knowing what we were supposed to do. It felt like an hour but I suppose it was only minutes. Then I carried Davy out into the hall. Uncle Martin was there, hopping on one foot while he pulled on his trousers. I stared at him but he didn't explain. He just ordered me to go and see if there was a telegraph message coming in. I turned to the door and reached for the handle.

"Don't go out there, Abby!" Bird screamed, clutching at me. "You'll be killed!"

I shifted Davy so I could hold him with one arm, then I pulled the big door open a crack. I stood staring out into the darkness. Except it wasn't all dark. I peered out but what I saw made no sense. I felt as though I were sleepwalking and in a strange place I had never been.

My arms shook and I was afraid I would drop Davy, so I put him down on the floor. Then I just stood, waiting for someone to tell me what to do.

The air was filling with dust — gritty dust that smelled of smoke. I blinked hard, but I could not see anything clearly in the darkness.

Then Uncle Martin grabbed my shoulders and yanked me away from the door into the hall. His fingers had a grip like iron. I was already off balance so I toppled over backwards and landed half on top of Davy, sprawled on the floor.

It is still hard to even write this.

Inside me, a voice kept saying, "He was right." And I knew "he" was Bird's grandfather. The mountain had walked, just as he had said it would. And it had walked right over Frank.