I saw as in a vision a man was lost in a forest. It was thick and overgrown with all manner of vegetation. He had been in that forest for a long time but still was wandering around lost. He did not know how long he had been there nor why he had ventured into such a place. Or if there was a time when he had not been in the forest. Yet he still continued onward; only guided by a vague feeling, which was a desire or perhaps it was simply a compulsion that seemed to spring from nowhere.

The brush tore through his cloths and into his flesh, which caused him to yell curses upon the forest. He had to drink from stagnant water, which was so bitter it caused his stomach to churn. He had to eat whatever the forest’s vegetation would yield to him. Although every time he found something edible, his hands were scraped by thorn or brier. He cursed his apparently aimless wanderings in the forest.

If the forest were struck by a single lightning bolt perhaps the whole thing would be consumed in flame or perhaps if he could find what he needed to just get a spark started himself it would be aflame just as well. He pondered this thinking that even he was consumed in the flames along with the forest at least he would no longer endure the endless hardships that he had be suffering. But that vague feeling seemed to banish such thoughts from his mind whenever they were about to forever seize control of his mind and drive him to madness. So the man continued onward, ever further into that seemingly endless labyrinth of foreboding trees and cruel thorn covered vegetation.

However, a curious thing happened in my vision. The man was proceeding onwards in his harsh endeavor, when he came across an old ruin made of stone. Night was beginning to fall and the man wished to take shelter from the cold night air. He found a spot to sit in that the moss had made soft and which the remnants of stone walls kept the cold winds at bay. He found a well from which he could get sweet waters to drink and wash the wounds that his journey had left him with. He found a fruit tree which was in what once must have been a courtyard, which he could eat from without fear of having his skin ripped by thorns.

He pondered and thought of many things. He wondered if this ruin was as old as the forest. He wondered if maybe it was built to keep the forest at bay or perhaps to tame it at least in some small measure. He thought of the person that must have built it. He then cursed the man who built the ruins, for not doing more to keep the forest at bay. He wished that the builder had built further into the forest and made a road of some kind, which others might travel in safety and comfort.

Then the man was seized with guilt for condemning someone long since gone, which even now was making the journey less harsh for others. He began to think that people such as himself must have allowed the place to fall in such disrepair. So he resolved to at least leave the ruin in better condition than he had found it before he left. He spent the next several days reinforcing the walls that had protected him, cleaning away some rubble near the well which gave him water, and removing vines that had begun to grow around the tree which fed him.

On the final night he stayed at the ruin he decided to get a good rest before leaving, for that feeling had returned once more but this time with more vigor than ever before demanding he continue on through the forest. And as he lay down to sleep he saw the night sky for the first time in a long time, he saw the stars and the moon all shine brilliantly. The night seemed friendly towards the man for the first time, the night air instead of being harsh and cold, smelled sweet and was like a balm for his wounds. As my vision of the man faded, I think I saw him smile as he closed his eyes as if he remembered why he was travelling through that seemingly unforgiving forest, and perhaps why he had that desire to continue onward.