

and therefore made all kinds of *detours*, and always found the fellow kept me in view, but at a certain distance. Then I set off to run as hard as I could, and for the second time in my life my athletic capabilities have stood me in good stead. I distanced him, reached the wood in the neighbourhood of Windmouth, and remained there concealed until it was perfectly dark. Then I set out for the town, and found lodgings for the night.

This morning I went out, and again found men dogging my steps. At last I have managed to escape them. I shall not tell you where I am, lest my father should question you. Now you can plead perfect ignorance as to my whereabouts. I shall, probably, not go away without seeing you. Meantime go to the place we fixed for to-night—every evening at five o'clock, until you hear something more from me. Only carefully avoid getting into any trouble on my account. That is now the only thing I am afraid of.

Your affectionate brother,
F. BRERETON.

Maud read and re-read her brother's letter, wondering whether it was possible that her father had heard that he was in the neighbourhood, and had set men on his track; wondering whether she could help in any way to soften his feelings with regard to Frank. That they had hitherto undergone no change she felt perfectly convinced. One thing she certainly could and would do. She would go to the wood every evening at the appointed time and look for her brother.

On the following day, Mr. Brereton, telling Maud that he must finish his business at Windmouth, left her, promising to be home by half-past six. This arrangement suited Maud admirably, for it not only gave her time to go to the wood, but would enable her also to be at home in time to receive her father on his return.

Five o'clock found her stationed on the knoll of the wood, watching and waiting.

Watching and waiting! What a vista of dreariness and hopelessness those words open out! Who cannot recal some epoch in his life, when he has looked and longed, and prayed for something which never came? Something, perchance, which God in His infinite mercy saw fit to deny, but the thought of which for a while filled the whole soul of the watcher with pain or pleasure, as hope or despair gained the upper hand. With most the aching void is after a while filled with some other object, equally perhaps, but differently cherished. And well it is that but few know by little experience what is described as the depth of man's misery,

"Not to fear because all is taken,
Is the loneliest depth of human pain."