

Foster wished he had been more tactful and thought his comrade's amusement might better have been restrained; but Lawrence resumed: "It must have been annoying to leave the mill when you had much to do. The curious thing is that when you set off from the Crossing with me you declared you were tired of working for dollars."

"Mr. Foster's tiredness didn't prevent him from working for his friends," Alice interposed.

"He must work, anyhow; that's the kind of man he is, and I don't suppose he was much disappointed when he got a strenuous holiday."

Then Featherstone turned to Foster. "I imagine we both dislike formal speeches and Lawrence, knowing this, means to smooth over our meeting. For all that, there's something to be said, and now, when the others are here, is the proper time. When we got your telegram in England I was overwhelmed by gratitude and regret. I saw, in fact, what a fool I had been." He paused with a gleam of amusement in his embarrassment. "Indeed, I'm not sure that the recognition of my folly wasn't the stronger feeling. Now I'm half-ashamed to apologize for my ridiculous suspicions and must ask you to forget all about them if you can."

"They were very natural suspicions, sir. I couldn't logically blame you and honestly don't think I did."

"Well," said Featherstone, "it's some comfort to reflect that my wife and daughter knew you better. I'm glad to think you're generous, because there is no amend I can make commensurate with the service you have done us."

"In one sense, it was an excellent joke," Lawrence