

She could not help remembering that her mother was inclined to be nervous during a thunder-storm. One of her earliest recollections was of hearing her father say: "We must go downstairs little girl, and help mamma be cheerful while this storm lasts." Of late years she had taken up that father's work, or tried to, and was generally at hand to "help mamma be cheerful" during a storm. Now she was perhaps quite alone; and when an unusually brilliant flash of lightning flooded the room, followed instantly by the deafening peal of thunder, Marjorie wished earnestly that she had not left her.

But when the thunder ceased, and the rain, which had been falling in torrents, came only in gentle drops, the spirits of the company began to rise. They were ready now for pleasantries and merry little thrusts at the expense of the more nervous. By the time the belated supper was again ready the rain had ceased altogether, and the guests were hilarious. That is, most of them were. It was impossible for Marjorie Edmonds, being the girl she was, to forget that they were still seven miles from home, and the hour was nearing in which she had told her mother they would be sure to return. But then, of course, mother would take the storm into consideration, and not expect them so early. It was surprising how long they lingered at that supper table! The clock struck ten while they were still eating nuts and guessing conundrums. And they lingered still, in spite of the