

way I always notice people's hands—though neither white nor slim, were long and shapely, especially about the nails. His face was too much disfigured to show to advantage, but his skin was a clear brown in colour, and his hair jet black and straight, as were also his long lashes; but the eyes they shaded were a clear, light grey, much like Harold's. His teeth were even and white, and he was well grown, and carried himself well. He was clothed in a somewhat shabby suit of grey, and was gaitless of collar or tie. When he smiled he had a look of Harold, and when he was grave, as he mostly was, he somewhat suggested the young Maori interpreter.

Well, we went on and on, up hill and down dale, and it began to darken rapidly. Sometimes we went through wide glades, and sometimes we had to push through tangled creepers and ferns. We walked for the most part in silence, for I was getting desperately tired, and my guide did not seem to be a youth of a talkative habit. Tihitoto began to seem to me like a mirage that retreated ever as I advanced, and I wondered what Harold would have thought had he seen a vision of his wife tottering through the dusky bush at that hour, or my new relatives, if they could have guessed where I was. I wished heartily that I had never left the steamer, unattractive place as it had formerly seemed to spend the night in.

At last it was quite dark, but I didn't mind that as I would have had I been alone. I was relying with a beautiful confidence on my pretty boy guide. I could only just see him as he walked along in front of me. The path seemed to be growing rougher and rougher all the time, and though he stepped lightly along I stumbled at every other step, and mourned inwardly.

At last I stopped and cried: 'Surely we're off the path! surely we have walked much more than half a mile!' and simultaneously the boy stopped and exclaimed: 'I say, I'm off the track!' 'Are you?' I said, helplessly. 'Not lost?'

'I'll find it again,' he answered confidently, and he fell on his knees and felt about in front of him with his hands. Then he struck a match, still kneeling, and looked all round anxiously.

It looked so strange—the sudden glimmer of yellow light shining on the trunks of unfamiliar trees, all tangled over with creepers and damp moss, and giving glimpses of limitless blackness on either hand. I shivered as I looked round, and my heart sank.

The boy struck match after match, and we searched backwards and forwards till his whole box was exhausted, but without avail. By the light of the last two or three we found what we believed to be the path, but after following it down into a thick gully it ceased to be a path and we found ourselves brought to a halt in utter darkness and confusion. I put out my hand in the gloom and met that of my juvenile guide, and we clasped hands tightly.

'Isn't this a go!' he said in a subdued voice. 'It's my fault. We'll just have to wait till daylight. I'm regularly lost.'

'Wait till daylight?' I echoed with a sigh. 'Oh, dear! I am tired.'

'Here's a flat stone here,' he said, feeling about in the dark. 'If you sit down on it and lean your back against these punga's it'll rest you a bit.'

'Thank you,' I said, sliding gingerly down on to the stone, and no sooner was I off my feet than I realised how very tired I was, and I thought with a melancholy longing of white pillows and sheets, and then of tea and food.

'I wish I'd thought of bringing something to eat,' I murmured aloud.

There was a gentle rustling at my side, and something was poked into my hand as it lay on my knee.

'Oh! what's that?' I said, starting.

'It's only a biscuit and a chunk of coffee,' said my boy, apologetically. 'It's one of those slip biscuits, you know—jolly tough, but not bad if you're hungry. Do you like them?'

'Well, you are a good, kind boy,' I said. 'When I'm tired you find me a seat, and when I'm hungry you give me your own supper. Thank you very much, but indeed I couldn't think of robbing you.'

'You aren't robbing me,' he answered eagerly. 'No, really, I had my tea before. I couldn't eat it. Won't you, please?'

'I haven't had anything since mid-day,' I said, 'so I will very gratefully eat the biscuit, but you must take the coffee.'

'Halves, then,' he said, snapping it into

two pieces. It's almond coffee, this is. Do you like almonds?'

'I said I did, and basted myself with the hard biscuit.'

'Will anyone be out looking for you? he asked me next.'

'No,' I answered, 'nobody knows where I am. The people at the town think I'm on the steamer. She stuck down the river, you know, and I tried to walk to Tihitoto—and my husband is in Auckland.'

'You are married?' queried my little guide with interest.

'Yes,' I answered, and then added, 'What about you? Won't your people be very anxious if you're missing? A—a what is your name? What can I call you?'

'Jerry,' he said, laconically. 'No, o, my people don't know where I am, and they don't care either.'

'Then we are a pair of strays,' I said. 'Why this is quite a curious adventure, isn't it? Oh! what's that?'

It was only on owl that passed suddenly and screeched, but it nearly sent us into each other's arms with fright. We laughed, but our hearts were beating audibly.

'Oh! that did give me a start,' he panted. 'You aren't scared, are you? There's nothing to hurt, you know, not a jolly thing.'

'Oh! I'm not frightened,' I said, airily, 'but it's so dismal and ghostly.'

'Oh! don't let's talk about 'ghosts,' he said earnestly.

'All right,' I said, 'it's no use making ourselves miserable. We must just endure till morning. I'm all to blame for not going back to the road when you advised me to.'

'No, it's my fault,' he said, 'for leading you wrong. My word! I would be in a scare if I were lost here by myself.'

'So should I,' I said, 'but you mustn't try to blame yourself. I'm only too much obliged to you for your kindness in helping and escorting me.'

(To be continued.)

IN DARKEST NEW YORK.

In his report of the work of the past year to the New York City Mission and Tract Society, John Jaeger, superintendent of the mission at No. 136, Chrystie street, speaks thus of the conditions which obtain on the lower east side of the city:—

'My field of labour is in the darkest section of New York city, where the population is more dense than in any of equal size, not only in this city, but the world. It embraces that part known to the police as the eleventh precinct. This precinct is only nine blocks square, but it contains more inhabitants than the city of Albany. It starts at the beginning of the Bowery and extends east along Division street to Clinton-street, then north to East Houston-street, then back to the Bowery and to Chatham square.'

'Within these narrow limits we have people from every quarter of the globe—Americans, Irish, Germans, Italians, French, Hungarians, Englishmen, Chinamen, and a dozen other nationalities. But Polish and Russian Jews form the majority of the population. In some of these sections in the tenement houses you will find four or five families on a single floor, and often two or three families in a tenement apartment.'

'Beside these classes, that form the regular inhabitants of the section, there is a large percentage of "floaters" or "transients," who form the population in the lodging houses. It is within the narrow limits of this section that we find the cheap lodgings where men and women who manage to secure five, ten, or fifteen cents find shelter over night.'

'This is eminently the section of crime. During the last year an enormous percentage of the population of this precinct was detained in the Eldridge street Station, charged with some violation of the law, five thousand of these being women. There is hardly a "crook" or "confidence man" in the whole country who has not at some time or another been an inhabitant of this section. The riff-raff of the world, coming to New York, seeks the Bowery and drifts in there. One-half of the prisoners that appear in the Essex Market Police Court come from it, although four other police precincts send their prisoners to this court. Twenty murderers were ar-

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Lillia August