

V

THE THRESHOLD OF THE NEVER-NEVER

“**C**ROCODILE is a very bad lot,” said Madge to Parker as they walked homewards together. “But please don’t say anything about this at the station. You see, I want to go on with your party to the head-waters of the MacArthur River. An old school friend of mine, called Millar, has gone there on a trip with her father to fix on the head station for a new run, and I want to visit her. They went round from Port Darwin by boat to the MacArthur, so saved the greater journey overland.”

Parker promised. He was a chivalrous man, and anyhow he thought the party need not trouble about any number of hostile niggers. He would, however, from a sense of duty, drop a hint to his master about the attitude of Crocodile, but not until the expedition had started.

Then Madge thanked the manservant for his timely help, and expressed the hope that the thorns did not hurt much. Parker’s reply was vague, although his sensations were the reverse. He promised himself the pleasure of a settlement with Crocodile on the first available opportunity.

Before we left the cattle station that day, Madge had won her point that she should go with our party