

The Lost Road

great city would shelter them. It was worth a dozen bullets.

He reached New York in a snow-storm, a week before Christmas, and went straight to the office of his lawyers. They received him with embarrassment. Six weeks before, on the very day they had cabled him that Mrs. Stedman was in New York, she had left the charitable institution where she had been employed, and had again disappeared.

Lee sent his trunks to the Army and Navy Club, which was immediately around the corner from the recruiting office in Sixth Avenue, and began discharging telegrams at every one who had ever known Frances Gardner. The net result was discouraging. In the year and a half in which he had been absent every friend of the girl he sought had temporarily changed his place of residence or was permanently dead.

Meanwhile his arrival by the transport was announced in the afternoon papers. At the wharf an admiring trooper had told a fine tale of his conduct at the battle of the crater, and reporters called at the club to see him. He did not discourage them, as he hoped through them the fact of his return might be made known to Frances. She might send him a line of welcome, and he would discover her whereabouts. But, though