

perched in a high tree outside the village, which 'Lisbeth and Molly admired so much—a watch house with a ladder up to it. George mounted the steps at once, and reported that he could see a crowd in the distance slowly approaching the village.

"Let us play a bold game," said Perran, "and face them at once. Run, Molly, bring a good store of beads and looking-glasses, and we will heap up a trophy as a peace-offering in the middle of the road here, and all stand by it."

"And I bring the guns, master," said Peter. "No, no," hastily ordered Perran, "leave them in the hut. You agree with me, George, it is utterly useless putting ourselves on the defensive. It is touch-and-go now, success or—death."

"And I think it will be success," said 'Lisbeth in a firm voice. She was standing up straight and brave by her husband's side, "but," her voice sank a little, though it never trembled, "I shall not mind if it is death, Perran dear, with you. Will you kiss me once?"

The husband and wife exchanged one embrace, one "God bless you!" and then they went to work with a will.

Captain Mostyn was still too weak to be exposed to the sun. He, too, made his short preparation for the worst, shook hands with the little band, and bade them leave him in the hut.

"I can only do one thing for you," he said cheerfully, "and I'll do that heartily, for I have a sort of feeling that God won't leave us in this bout without help."

"And pray sir, too, that we may find Jesse," begged 'Lisbeth.

Her unselfish woman's heart had room to feel for others. She had already placed food in the hut handy for the invalid, and Molly had fetched the pannikin full of clean cold water.

Yet it was, as George said, an "ugly job," saying that "Good-bye!" to the Captain.

"Not if you think that it means 'God be with you,'" said 'Lisbeth.

It was indeed time to be off. Hardly had the little party arranged themselves a few paces behind the heap of scarlet and glittering treasures, when a half-dozen natives emerged from the low plantation, at fifty yards distance, at a trotting pace.

They were an advance guard evidently, and greatly astonished at the sight that met their eyes.

Two moon-faced men and a moon-faced woman in the front rank and others behind! But the gorgeous spoil before them—that riveted their eyes most surely. They remained stationary one instant, then gave a shout to their comrades, when a vast horde broke from the shelter, and in a moment the little party were surrounded.

It was what the French call "a bad quarter of an hour," but the party, even the women, kept their pluck and calmness.

Perran put Joe forward to interpret. The lad had tried to run away earlier in the day, but his services were so indispensable that George had pointed his rifle at him, and made him clearly understand that he would pick him off on the slightest sign of forsaking them. Thus braced, and further fortified by a round of abuse from Peter—his dear friend—he thought better of it, and, though shaking inwardly, stuck to his colors.

No fear of the white men, no astonishment even seemed to move the Patiras, but much curiosity was apparent, and the pointing and chattering were continuous.

The chief, it seemed, was a little behind the rest, and they waited his arrival. Perran selected one or two of the leading men to whom to offer gifts, selecting these chiefly by the superior workmanship of the scrap of clothing they wore, and the number of dogs'-tooth necklaces and bracelets.

Several wore bracelets of human bones curiously fastened together.

All willingly accepted what was offered, and the party began to breathe more freely, since no attempt was made to injure them, or even take them prisoners.

"Ask them about the boy," begged 'Lisbeth, always thinking of Jesse.

But at that moment all eyes were riveted on a procession emerging from the shadow of the forest. First a row of men—a body-guard of royalty as it were; then the chief, a splendid fellow six feet in height at least, his body almost covered with ornaments; then a kind of litter, carefully shrouded from the noonday sun.

A favorite wife, perhaps!

No! 'Lisbeth gave a short cry of surprised joy, and, leaving Perran's side for the first time in all that anxious morning, made her swift way past guard and royalty, and threw her arms round the little wasted, recumbent figure on the litter.

Little Jesse! Little Jesse! She pressed the white face and golden head tenderly to her. She laughed and cried, and used all tenderest expressions to this angel-faced child, who lay, pale and half unconscious, before her, hardly looking like an inhabitant of earth, covered as he was with garlands of lovely flowers.

It was a strange scene—the lost found!

Amidst the confusion Perran did not omit to make humble obeisance to the lordly chief, signifying that the store of ornaments was for his use. Then he, too, bent over the fair young brother, trying to recall himself to his memory.

But Jesse was evidently ill—very ill.

"They bring him to the spring to cure," said Peter.

And so it indeed appeared to be. No wonder