

# INTO THE PRIMITIVE

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### SYNOPSIS.

The story opens with the shipwreck of the steamer on which Miss Genevieve Leslie, an American heiress, Lord Winthrop, an Englishman, and Tom Blake, a brusque American, were passengers. The three were tossed upon an uninhabited island and were the only ones not drowned. Blake recovered from a drunken stupor, Blake, shunned on the boat, because of his roughness, became a hero as a preserver of the helpless pair. The Englishman was suing for the hand of Miss Leslie. Blake started to swim back to the ship to recover what was left. Blake returned safely. Winthrop wasted his last match on a cigarette, for which he was scolded by Blake. Their first meal was a dead fish. The trio started a ten mile hike for higher land. Thirst attacked them. Blake was compelled to carry Miss Leslie on account of weariness. He taunted Winthrop. They entered the jungle.

### CHAPTER V.—Continued.

"You'd find those thorns a whole lot worse," muttered Blake.  
"To be sure; and Miss Leslie fully appreciates your kindness," interposed Winthrop.  
"I do indeed, Mr. Blake! I'm sure I never could go through here without your coat."  
"That's all right. Got the handkerchief?"  
"I put it in one of the pockets."  
"I'll do to tie up your hair."  
Miss Leslie took the suggestion, knotting the big square of linen over her fluffy brown hair.  
Blake waited only for her to draw out the kerchief before he began to force a way through the jungle. Now and then he beat at the tangled vegetation with his club. Though he held the line by which he had left the thicket, yet all his efforts failed to open an easy passage for the others. Many of the thorny branches sprang back into place behind him, and as Miss Leslie, who was the first to follow, sought to thrust them aside the thorns pierced her delicate skin until her hands were covered with blood. Nor did Winthrop, stumbling and hobbling behind her, fare any better. Twice he tripped headlong into the brush, scratching his arms and face.  
Blake took his own punishment as a matter of course, though his tougher and thicker skin made his injuries less painful. He advanced steadily along the line of bent and broken twigs that marked his outward passage, until the thicket opened on a strip of grassy ground beneath a wild fig-tree.  
"By Jove!" exclaimed Winthrop, "a banyan!"  
"Banyan? Well, if that's British for a daisy, you've hit it," responded Blake. "Just take a squint up here. How's that for a roost?"  
Winthrop and Miss Leslie stared up dubiously at the edge of a bed of reeds gathered in the hollow of one of the huge flattened branches at its junction with the main trunk of the banyan, 20 feet above them.  
"Will not the mosquitoes pester us here among the trees?" objected Winthrop.  
"Storm must have blown 'em away. I haven't seen any yet."  
"There will be millions after sunset."  
"Maybe; but I bet they keep below our roost."  
"But how are we to get up so high?" inquired Miss Leslie.  
"I can swim this root, and I've a creeper ready to help you up," explained Blake.  
Switching action to words, he climbed up the small trunk of the air root and swung over into the hollow where he had piled the reeds. Across the broad limb dangled a rope-like creeper, one end of which he had fastened to a branch higher up. He flung down the free end to Winthrop.  
"Look lively, Pat," he called. "The sun's most gone, and twilight don't last all night in these parts. Get the line around Miss Leslie, and do what you can on a boost."  
"I see; but, you know, the vine is too stiff to tie."  
Blake stifled an oath and jerked the end of the creeper up into his hand. When he threw it down again it was looped around and fastened in a bow-line knot.  
"Now, Miss Leslie, get aboard and we'll have you up in a jiffy," he said. "Are you sure you can lift me?" asked the girl, as Winthrop slipped the loop over her shoulders.  
Blake laughed down at them. "Well, I guess yes! Once hoisted a fellow out of a 50-foot prospect hole—big fat Dutchman at that. You don't weigh over 120."  
He had stretched out across the broadest part of the branch. As Miss Leslie seated herself in the loop he reached down and began to haul up on the creeper, hand over hand. Though frightened by the novel manner of ascent the girl clung tightly to the line above her head, and Blake had no difficulty in raising her until she swung directly beneath him. Here, however, he found himself in a quandary. The girl seemed as helpless as a child, and he was lying flat. How could he lift her above the level of the branch?  
"Take hold the other line," he said. The girl hesitated. "Do you hear? Grab it quick, and pull up hard if you don't want a tumble!"  
The girl seized the part of the creeper which was fastened above and drew herself up with convulsive energy. Instantly Blake rose to his knees, and grasping the taut creeper



"It's Only a Beast That's Killed Something Down Below."

"The air feels like dawn," whispered Winthrop. "We'll soon be able to see the brute."  
"And he us," rejoined Blake.  
In this both were mistaken. During the brief false dawn they were puzzled by the odd appearance of the ground. The sudden flood of full daylight found them staring down into a dense white fog.  
"So they have that here!" muttered Blake—"fever-fog!"  
"Beastly shame!" echoed Winthrop. "I'm sure the creature has gone off."  
This assertion was met by an outburst of snarls and yells that made all start back and crouch down again in their sheltering hollow. As before Blake was the first to recover.  
"Bet you're right," he said. "The big one has gone off, and a pack of these African coyotes are having a scrap over the bones."  
"You mean jackals. It sounds like the nasty beasts."  
"If it wasn't for that fog I'd go down and get our share of the game."  
"Would it not be very dangerous, Mr. Blake?" asked Miss Leslie. "What a fearful noise!"  
"I've chased coyotes off a calf with a rope; but that's not the proposition. You don't find me fooling around in that sewer gas of a fog. We'll roost right where we are till the sun does for it. We've got enough malaria in us already."  
"Will it be long, Blake?" asked Winthrop.  
"Huh? Getting hungry this quick? Wait till you've tramped around a week, with nothing to eat but your shoes."  
"Surely, Mr. Blake, it will not be so bad!" protested Miss Leslie.  
"Sorry, Miss Jenny; but coconut palms don't blow over every day, and when those nuts are gone what are we going to do for the next meal?"  
"Could we not make bows?" suggested Winthrop. "There seems to be no end of game about."  
"Bows—and arrows without points! Neither of us could hit a barn door, anyway."  
"We could practice."  
"Sure—six weeks' training on air pudding. I can do better with a handful of stones."  
"Then we should go at once to the cliffs," said Miss Leslie.  
"Now you're talking—and it's Pike Peak or bust for ours. Here's one night to the good; but we won't last many more if we don't get fire. It's flints we're after now."  
"Could we not make fire by rubbing sticks?" said Winthrop, recalling his suggestion of the previous morning. "I've heard that natives have no trouble."  
"So've I, and what's more, I've seen 'em do it. Never could make a go of it myself, though."  
"But if you remember how it is done we have at least some chance."  
"Give you ten to one odds! No; we'll scratch around for a flint good and plenty before we waste time that way."  
"The mist is going," observed Miss Leslie.  
"That's no lie. Now for our coyotes. Where's my club?"  
"They've all left," said Winthrop, peering down. "I can see the ground clearly, and there is not a sign of the beasts."  
"There are the bones—what's left of them," added Blake. "It's a small deer, I suppose. Well, here goes."  
He threw down his club and dropped the loose end of the creeper after it. As the line straightened he twisted the upper part around his leg and was about to slide to the ground when he remembered Miss Leslie.  
"Think you can make it alone?" he asked.  
The girl held up her hands, sore and swollen from the lacerations of the thorns. Blake looked at them, frowned, and turned to Winthrop.  
"Um! you got it, too, and in the face," he grunted. "How's your ankle?"  
Winthrop wriggled his foot about and felt the injured ankle.  
"I fancy it is much better," he answered. "There seems to be no swelling, and there is no pain now."  
"That's lucky; though it will tune up later. Take a slide, now. We've got to hustle our breakfast and find a way to get over the river."  
(TO BE CONTINUED.)

### CHAPTER VI.

#### Man and Gentleman.

NIGHT had almost passed, and all three, soothed by the refreshing coolness which preceded the dawn, were sleeping their soundest, when a sudden fierce roar followed instantly by a piercing squeal caused even Blake to start up in panic. Miss Leslie, too terrified to scream, clung to Winthrop, who crouched on his haunches, little less overcome.  
Blake was the first to recover and puzzle out the meaning of the crashing in the jungle and the ferocious growls directly beneath them.  
"Lie still," he whispered. "We're all right. It's only a beast that killed something down below us."  
All sat listening, and as the noise of the animals in the thicket died away they could hear the beast beneath their feet tear at the body of its victim.



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