

A VISION OF A METROPOLIS

By MADGE ELLSWORTH

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There is in New York what is called the Riverside drive, on which stands General Grant's tomb. A long strip of park overlooks the Hudson river and the heights, or Palisades, on the opposite side.

One summer night a young man in evening dress sat on a bench in this Riverside park. He had been during the evening—well, perhaps it is better not to say where he had been. New York is an artificial city and possesses many attractions for those inclined to gaiety and at night is an illuminated pleasure ground. In its streets, some of them bright almost as day with electric lights, one may see a mixture of every degree, from the highest to the lowest.

This young man, a student in Columbia college, had been spending the evening to suit himself and before going to his room near by wished to get the air in the park. It was deserted except by himself, and he found the change from the bewildering crowds in the streets refreshing. He sat some time without a single person passing.

Extremely drowsy, he was falling into a dose when he suddenly became conscious that there was some one sitting on the other end of the bench. Rubbing his eyes, he looked and saw a young girl, her head resting on the back of the bench, her face, which was very pale, turned toward the stars. She was faintly dressed, and the student had but little doubt as to the class to which she belonged. He was about to rise and leave the park when the girl said in a faint voice:

"Take me to my room."

"Are you ill?" he asked.

"Unto death."

"Where is your room?"

"Not far. Come, I will show you."

She put out her hand for him to help her to rise, and he noticed that it was cold. In assisting her he did not need to exert any strength, for she was light as a feather. Indeed, it did not seem to him that there was any weight at all in her. She put her arm through his and leaned on him, but still there was no weight.

"Have you no home?" he asked.

She shuddered. "Don't speak to me of home. When a girl comes from the country to New York home is a thing of the past."

"Not all girls."

They walked on in silence. The arm resting on his was not only cold, like her hand, but there was a dampness about it that seemed to chill him to the very marrow. Moreover, he fancied he heard a faint gurgling, like running water. The route to her room lay through lonely streets, and the student would have been glad to be free from her. But he feared that if he disengaged himself she would fall. So he walked on, constantly yielding to the chill of her presence as if a woman of ice were walking beside him.

There is a park on the other side of the heights from the Riverside drive, and into this the two descended. Passing a bench, the girl sank down into it, saying:

"I can't go any farther."

Seeing that she was falling from the bench, he held her up, and, believing she had lost consciousness, he laid her out upon it. He chafed her hands and fanned her with his hat, striving to revive her. Finding that she still remained unconscious, he put his face down to hers to learn if he could detect warm breath. He could not. Placing his hand on her heart, he could not feel its beating.

The student felt troubled. He was too chivalrous to desert the girl. When she came to consciousness finding herself alone might turn the scale against her. And yet he was not sure that she was dead. Suppose he were found in such a situation with a dead girl. His whole life would be blighted. He knew not what to do. He tried once more to revive his companion and, failing, resolved to go for assistance. It would be far better for him to go, find some one to help and tell a straight story than to be found at dead of night with a dead woman.

The park is narrow, and the student, crossing it, entered one of the streets near by. Catching sight of a policeman, he called to him and told him there was a woman in the park who needed assistance. But a few minutes were required to go to her, and on the way the student gave the cop a bare outline of what had happened. As they approached their destination the student was surprised to find the bench empty.

Thinking he had mistaken another for the one on which he had left the girl, he went to the next on either side. Both were vacant. Then he looked up at the cop and said in a startled voice:

"She's gone."

"I thought you said she was dead or dying."

"She was."

The policeman went back to his beat, and the student went home. The next morning the latter saw an account of the suicide by drowning of a girl in the Hudson river off Riverside park. The body had not been recovered.

The student gave up his college course. It was said that he had studied too hard. Be this as it may, he went into a sanitarium, where he remained a long while.

The Mississippi River.
John L. Mathews in his "The Conservation of Water" says that 100,000 men standing on the banks of the Mississippi with shovels and an unlimited supply of rich earth at hand and tilling twelve hours every day 365 days in the year could not throw into the Mississippi as much soil as the river annually carries into the gulf of Mexico.

Man and His Weight.
A well proportioned man should weigh two and one-third pounds for every inch of his height.

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