

AMOS JUDD

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Amos Judd by J. A. Mitchell & A. J. Keller

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J. A. MITCHELL & A. J. KELLER

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BY

J. A. MITCHELL

ILLUSTRATED BY A. J. KELLER



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ILLUSTRATIONS

FROM DRAWINGS IN COLOR BY A. I. KELLER



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I

AT the station of Bingham Cross Roads four passengers got off the train. One, a woman with bundles, who was evidently familiar with her surroundings, walked rapidly away through the hot September sunshine toward the little village in the distance.

The other three stood on the platform and looked about, as if taking their bearings. They were foreigners of an unfamiliar species. Their fellow-passengers in the car had discussed them with an interest not entirely free from suspicion, and their finally getting out at such an unimportant station as Bingham Cross Roads caused a surprise which, although reasonably under control, was still too strong for concealment. From the windows of the car at

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least a dozen pairs of eyes were watching them. The two men and the little boy who composed this group were of dark complexion, with clean-cut, regular features. The oldest, a man of sixty years or more, had a military bearing, and was, if one could judge from appearances, a person of authority in his own country, wherever that might be. Although the younger man seemed to resemble him, it was in such a general way that he might be either his son or no relation whatever.

But the little boy had excited a yet greater interest than his companions. Although but six or seven years old, he comported himself with as much dignity and reserve as the gentleman with the silver hair. This gave the impression, and without apparent intention on his part, that he also was an important personage. His dark eyes were strikingly beautiful and, like those of his seniors, were distinctly foreign in design.

A M O S J U D D

When the train moved away the three travellers approached the man with one suspender, who filled the position of station agent, baggage-master, switchman, telegraph operator and freight clerk, and inquired if there was a conveyance to the village of Daleford. He pointed to a wagon at the farther end of the platform; that was the Daleford stage. In answer to further questions they learned that the next train back again, toward New York, left at six thirty; that Daleford was seven miles away; that they could spend an hour in that village and catch the train without hurrying.

The only baggage on the platform consisted of two peculiar-looking trunks, or rather boxes, which the multifarious official knew to be theirs, as no similar articles had ever been manufactured in America. They were covered with designs laid on in metal, all elaborately engraved, and it was not suspected along the route that these profuse and tarnished or-