

because you are those two things and—and—one other!"

She snatched a mirror from a little ivory table—a modern mirror—bad glass, bad art, bad workmanship, but silver warranted.

"Look in it and then at him!" she ordered.

But he did not need to look. The man on the bed was not so much like himself as the woman was like her, but the resemblance seemed to grow under his eyes, as such things do. It was helped out by the stain his brother had applied to his face in the Khyber. King was the taller and the younger by several years, but the noses were the same, and the wrinkled foreheads; both men had the same firm mouth; both looked like Romans.

"How did you get that scar?"

She came closer and took his hand, holding it in both hers, and he felt the same thrill Samson knew. He steeled himself as Samson did not.

"A Mahsudi got me with a martini at long range in the blockade of 1902," he said dryly.

"Look! Did he get his from a spear or from an arrow?"

Almost in the same spot, also on the dead man's left hand, was a scar so nearly like it that it needed a third and a fourth glance to tell the difference. They both bent over the bed to see it, and she laid a hand on his

shoulder. Touch and scent and confidence, all three were bewitching; all three were calculated, too! He could have killed her, and she knew he could have killed her, just as she knew he would not. Yet what right had she to know it!

"Athelstan!"

SHE pronounced his name as if she loved the word, standing straight again and looking into his eyes. There were high lights in hers that outgleamed the diamonds on her dress.

"Your gods and mine have done this, Athelstan. When the gods combine they lay plans well indeed!"

"I only know one God," he answered simply, as a man speaks of the deep things in his heart.

"I know of many! They love me! They shall love you, too! Many are better than one! You shall learn to know my gods, for we are to be partners, you and I!"

She laughed at him, looking like a goddess herself, but he frowned. And the more he frowned the better she seemed to like him.

"Partners in what, Princess?"

"Thou—Ismail dubbed thee Ready o' wit!—answer thine own question!"

She took his hand again, her eyes burning with excitement and mysticism and ambition like a fever. She

seemed to take more than physical possession of him.

"What brought them here? Tell me that!" she demanded, pointing to the bed. "You think he brought her? I tell you she was the spur that drove him! Is it a wonder that men called her the 'Heart of the Hills'? I found them ten years ago and clothed her and put new linen on their bed, for the old was all rags and dust. There have always been hundreds—and sometimes thousands—who knew the secret of Khinjan Caves, but this has been a secret within a secret. Some one, who knew the secret before I, sawed those bracelets through and fitted hinges and clasps. The men you saw in the Cavern of Earth's Drink have no doubt I am the 'Heart of the Hills' come to life! They shall know thee as Him within a little while!"

She held his hand a little tighter and pressed closer to him, laughing softly. He stood as if made of iron, and that only made her laugh the more.

"Tales of the 'Heart of the Hills' have puzzled the Raj, haven't they, these many years? They sent me to find the source of them. Me! They chose well! There are not many like me! I have found this one dead woman who was like me. And in ten years, until you came, I have found no man like Him!"

She tried to look into his eyes, but he frowned straight in front of him. His native costume and Rangar turban did not make him seem any less a man. His jaw, that was beginning to need shaving, was as grim and as satisfying as the dead Roman's. She stroked his left hand with soft fingers.

"I used to think I knew how to dance!" she laughed. "For ten years I have taken those pictures of her for my model and have striven to learn what she knew. I have surpassed her! I used to think I knew how to amuse myself with men's dreams—until I found this! Then I dreamed on my own account! My dream was true, my warrior! You have come! Our hour has come!"

She tugged at his hand. He was hers, soul and harness, if outward signs could prove it.

"Come!" she said. "Is this my hospitality? You are weary and hungry. Come!"

She led him by the hand, for it would have needed brute force to pry her fingers loose. She drew aside the leather curtain that hung on a bronze rod near the bed, led him through it, and let it clash to again behind them.

Now they were in the dark together, and it was not comprehended in her scheme of things to let circumstance lie fallow. She pressed his hand, and sighed, and then hurried, whispering tender words he could scarcely catch. When they burst together through a curtain at the other end of a passage in the rock, his skin was red under the tan and for the first time her eyes refused to meet his.

"Why did they choose that cave to sleep in?" she asked him. "Is not this a better one? Who laid them there?"

HE stared about in a great room far more splendid than the first.

There was a foundation in the center splashing in the midst of flowers. They were cut flowers. The "Hills" must have been scoured for them within a day.

There were great cushioned couches all about and two thrones made of ivory and gold. Between two couches was a table, laden with golden plates and a golden jug, on pure white linen. There were two goblets of beaten gold and knives with golden handles and bronze blades. The whole room seemed to be drenched in the scent Yasmini favoured, and there was the same frieze running round all four walls, with the woman depicted on it dancing.

"Come, we shall eat!" she said, leading him by the hand to a couch. She took the one facing him, and they lay like two Romans of the Empire with the table in between.

She struck a golden gong then, and a native woman came in who stared at King as if she had seen him before and did not like him. Except for the jewels, she was dressed exactly like Yasmini, which is to say that her gauzy stuff was all but transparent. But Yasmini uses raiment as she does her eyes; it is part of her, and of her art. The maid, who would have shone among many women, looked stiff and dull by contrast.

"I trust no Hill woman—they are cattle with human tongues," Yasmini said, frowning at the maid. "Even in Delhi there was only this one woman whom I dared bring here with me. You brought my men-servants! They are loyal, but as clumsy as the bears in their cold 'Hills'! Rewa Gunga brought me this one disguised as a man—you remember?"

She nodded to the servant, who clapped her hands. At once came a stream of Hillmen, robed in white, who carried sherbet in bottles cooled in snow and dishes fragrant with hot food. He recognized his own prisoners



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