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won't disturb the other horses! How often have you got to be told that a horse needs sleep as much as a man? The squadron won't be fit to march a mile if you keep 'em awake all night! Lead him out quietly, now! Whoa, you brute! Now—take him out and keep him out—put him in the end stall in my stable when you've finished him—d'you hear?"

He flattered himself again. With all these mysterious messages and orders coming in from nowhere, he told himself it would be good to know at all times where Ranjoor Singh's charger was, as well as a service to Ranjoor Singh to stable the brute comfortably. He told himself that was a very smart move, and one for which Ranjoor Singh would some day thank him, provided, of course, that—

"Provided what?" he wondered half aloud. "Seems to me as if Ranjoor Singh has got himself into some kind of a scrape, and hopes to get out of it by the back-door route and no questions asked! Well, let's hope he gets out! Let's hope there'll be no court-martial nastiness! Let's hope—oh, damn just hoping! Ranjoor Singh's a better man than I am. Here's believing in him! Here's to him, thick and thin! Forward—walk—march!"

He turned out the guard, and the particular troop sergeant with whom he wished to speak not being on duty, he ordered him sent for. Ten minutes later the sergeant came, still yawning, from his cot.

"Come over here, Arjan Singh," he called, thinking fast and furiously as he led the way.

If he made one false move or aroused one suspicion in the man's mind, he was likely to learn less than nothing; but if he did not appear to know at least something, he would probably learn nothing either.

As he turned, at a distance from the guard-room light, to face the sergeant, though not to meet his eyes too keenly, the fact that would not keep out of his brain was that the fat babu had been out in the road, offering to eat Germans, a little while before he and the colonel had started out that evening. And, according to what Brammle had told him when they met near the colonel's quarters, it was very shortly after that that the squadron came out of its gloom.

"What was the first message that the babu brought this evening?" he asked, still being very careful not to look into the sergeant's eyes. He spoke as comrade to comrade—servant of the "Salt" to servant of the "Salt."

"Which babu, sahib?" asked Arjan Singh, unblinking.

NOW, in all probability, this man—since he had been asleep—knew nothing about the message to groom Bagh. To have answered, "The babu who spoke about the charger," might have been a serious mistake.

"Arjan Singh, look me in the eyes!" he ordered, and the Sikh obeyed. He was taller than Warrington, and looked down on him.

"Are you a true friend of the risaldar-major?"

"May I die, sahib, if I am not!"

"And I? What of me? Am I his friend or his enemy?"

The sergeant hesitated.

"Can I read men's hearts?" he asked.

"Yes!" said Warrington. "And so can I. That is why I had you called from your sleep. I sent for you to learn the truth. What was the message given by the fat babu to one of

the guard by the outer gate this evening, and delivered by him or by some other man to D Squadron?"

"Sahib, it was not a written message."

"Repeat it to me."

"Sahib, it was verbal. I cannot remember it."

"Arjan Singh, you lie! Did I ever lie to you? Did I ever threaten you and not carry out my threats—promise you and not keep my promise? I am a soldier! Are you a cur?"

"God forbid, sahib! I—"

"Arjan Singh! Repeat that message to me word for word, please, not as a favor, nor as obeying an order, but as a friend of Ranjoor Singh to a friend of Ranjoor Singh!"

"The message was to the squadron, not to me, sahib."

"Are you not of the squadron?"

"Make it an order, sahib!"

"Certainly not—nor a favor either!"

"Sahib, I—"

"Nor will I threaten you! I guarantee you absolute immunity if you refuse to repeat it. My word on it! I am Ranjoor Singh's friend, and I ask of his friend!"

"The babu said: 'Says Ranjoor Singh, "Let the squadron be on its best behavior! Let the squadron know that surely before the blood runs he will be there to lead it, wherever it is! Meanwhile, let the squadron be worthy of its salt and of its officers!"'"

"Was that all?" asked Warrington.

"All, sahib. May my tongue rot if I lie!"

"Thank you, Arjan Singh. That's all. You needn't mention our conversation. Good night."

"Fooled," chuckled Warrington. "She's fooled us to the limit of our special bent, and I take it that's stiff-neckedness!"

HE hurried away toward Colonel Kirby's quarters, swinging his lantern and humming to himself.

"And this isn't the Arabian Nights!" he told himself. "It's Delhi—Twentieth Century A. D.! Gad! Wouldn't the whole confounded army rock with laughter!"

Then he stopped chuckling, to hurry faster, for a giant horn had rooted chunks out of the blackness by the barrack gate, and now what sounded like a racing car was tearing up the drive. The head-lights dazzled him, but he ran and reached the colonel's porch breathless. He was admitted at once, and found the colonel and Brammle together, facing an aide-de-camp. In the colonel's hand was a medium-sized, sealed envelope.

"Shall I repeat it, sir?" asked the aide-de-camp.

"Yes, if you think it necessary," answered Kirby.

"The sealed orders are not to be opened until out at sea. You are expected to parade at dawn the day after to-morrow, and there will be somebody from headquarters to act as guide for the occasion. In fact, you will be guided at each point until it is time to open your orders. No explanations will be given about anything until later on. That's all. Good night, sir—and good luck!"

The aide-de-camp held out his hand, and Colonel Kirby shook it a trifle perfunctorily; he was not much given to display of sentiment. The aide-de-camp saluted, and a minute later the giant car spurned the gravel out from under its rear wheels as it started off to warn another regiment.

"So we've got our route!" said Kirby.