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ghosts, and every night there come more and sit with him, sit all round him, look at him with great eyes, just like you look at me, till at last when Asiki finish eating up his spirit, he go crazy, he howl like man in hell, he throw away all the gold they give him, and then, sometimes after one week, sometimes after one month, sometimes after one year if he be strong, but never more, he run out at night and jump into canal where Yellow God float, and god get him, while Asiki sit on the bank and laugh, 'cause she hungry for new man to eat up his spirit too."

Jeeki's big voice died away to a whisper and ceased. There was a silence in the room, for even in the shine of the electric light and through the fumes of champagne, in more than one imagination there rose a vision of that haunted water in which floated the great Yellow God, and of some mad being casting himself to his death beneath the moon, while his beautiful witch wife, who was "hungry for more spirits," sat upon its edge and laughed.

Barbara broke the silence which she felt to be awkward.

"Why do more ghosts come every night to sit with the queen's husband, Jeeki?" she asked. "Where do they come from?"

"Out of the dead, miss, dead husbands of Asiki from beginning of the world; what they call Munganas. Also, always they make sacrifice to Yellow God. From far, far away them poor niggers send people to be sacrifice that their house or tribe get luck. Sometimes they send kings, sometimes great men, sometimes doctors, sometimes women what have twin babies. Also the Asiki bring people what is witches, or have drunk poison stuff, which blacks call *mauvi*, and not been sick, or perhaps son they love best to take curse off their roof. All these come to Yellow God. Then Asiki doctor, they have Death-palaver. On night of full moon they beat drum, and drum go, Wow! Wow! Wow! and doctors pick out those to die that month. Once they pick out me, oh! good Lord, they pick out *me*," and as he said these words he gasped, and with his great hand wiped off the sweat that started from his brow. "But Yellow God no take me that time; no want me, and I escape."

"How?" asked Sir Robert.

"With my master, Major's uncle, Reverend Austin, he who come to try to make Asiki Christian. He snap his fingers, put on small mask of Yellow God which he prig, Little Bona herself, that same face which sit in your office now," and he pointed to Sir Robert, "like one toad upon a stone. Priests think that God make herself into man, want holiday, take me out into forest to kill me and eat my life. So they let us go by, and we go just as though devil kick us—fast, fast, and never see the Asiki any more. But Little Bona I bring with me for luck, tell truth I no dare leave her behind, she not stand that; and now she sit in your office and think and think and make magic there. That why you grow so rich, because she know you worship her. When victim offered to Big Yellow God, priest-men bring him to edge of canal, where the great god float. Then, if Yellow God want him, it turn and swim across water."

"Swim across water! I thought you said it was only a mask of gold?"

"I don't know, miss; perhaps man inside the mask, perhaps spirit. I say it swim across water in the night, always in the night, and lift itself up and look in victim's face. Then priest take him away and kill him, sometimes one way, sometimes another. Or if he escapes and they not kill him, all same for that Johnnie, he die in about one year, always die, no one

ever live long if Yellow God swim to him and rise up and smile in his face. No matter if it Big Bona or Little Bona, for they man and wife joined in holy matrimony, and either do trick."

As these words left Jeeki's lips, Alan became aware of some unusual movement on his left, and looking round, saw that Mr. Champers-Haswell, who stood by him, had dropped the cigar which he held to the floor, and, white as a sheet, was swaying to and fro. Indeed, in another instant he would have fallen, had not Alan caught him in his arms and supported him till others came to his assistance, when between them they carried him to a sofa.

"Oh, confound you and your fetish! Be off, you old donkey," almost shouted Alan.

"Major," replied the offended Jeeki, assuming his grand manner and language, "it was not I who wished to narrate this history of blood-stained superstitions of poor African. Mustn't blame old Jeeki if they make Christian gents sick as Channel steamer." "Be off," repeated Alan, stamping his foot.

So Jeeki went, but outside the door, as it chanced, he encountered one of the Jew gentlemen, who also appeared to be a little "sick." An idea striking him, he touched his white hair with his finger and said:

"You like Jeeki's pretty story, sir? Well, Jeeki think that if you make little present to him, like your brother in there, it please Yellow God very much, and bring you plenty luck."

Then acting upon some unaccustomed impulse, that Jew became exceeding generous. In his pocket was a handful of sovereigns, which he had prepared to stake at bridge. He grasped them all and thrust them into Jeeki's outstretched palm, where they seemed to melt.

"Thank you, sir," said Jeeki. "Now I sure you have plenty luck, just like your grandpa Jacob in Book when he do his brudder in eye."

(To be continued.)

MR. DOOLEY ON HARD TIMES.

"I SEE," said Mr. Hennessy gloomily, "that wan iv thim big bugs down East says we're goin' to have hard times this winter."

"Cheer up," said Mr. Dooley; "if they come, ye'll niver notice thim. They'll not be diff'rent enough to excite ye'er attintion. That's wan good thing about th' station in life to which we have been called an' locked up without bail. Our peeryods iv hard times are broken now an' thin be more hard times. Just as soon as we begin to tire iv hard times with too much work, we have worse hard times with less work. It evens things up a good deal. I suppose ye think ye've been goin' through an era iv prosperity, as Hogan calls it. But I haven't noticed anny diff'rence in ye. Ye wear th' same kind iv overhalls, an' th' same thrusty weapon that ye have always used to break th' stubborn slag pile is acrost ye'er shouldher. I haven't noticed that ye've grown bloated an' flushed with wine since eighteen ninety three. Ye are th' same frolicksome buck that ye were in thim sad days, with th' same complaints about th' prices iv things. Ye are, as Hogan wud say, th' same rilitive distance fr'm a tenderline steak that ye were thin."

"What diff'rence does it make to ye how far ye move forward, if ivry-thing else moves forward ahead iv ye? Now, as thin, ye are chasin' th' willow-th'-wisp iv good groceries. As ye begin to retreat they come back, but there's niver a day whin ye can reach out an' seize thim. Th' dinner pail is always full, but not full iv angel cake."—American Magazine.



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