

SERGEANT. You wouldn't believe me, if I was to tell you.

HERBERT. I will, every word.

SERGEANT. Magic, then!--Don't you laugh!

HERBERT. I'm not. Got it on you now?

SERGEANT. Of course.

HERBERT. Let's see it.

(*Seeing the SERGEANT embarrassed with his glass, MRS. WHITE rises, takes it from him, places it on the mantelpiece and remains standing.*)

SERGEANT. Oh, it's nothing to look at. (*Hunting in his pocket.*) Just an ordinary—little paw—dried to a mummy. (*Produces it and holds it towards MRS. WHITE.*) Here.

MRS. WHITE (*who has leant forward eagerly to see it, starts back with a little cry of disgust.*) Oh!

HERBERT. Give us a look.

(*MORRIS passes the paw to MR. WHITE, from whom HERBERT takes it.*)

Why, it's all dried up!

SERGEANT. I said so.

(*Wind.*)

MRS. WHITE (*with a slight shudder.*) Hark at the wind! (*She sits again in her old place.*)

MR. WHITE (*taking the paw from HERBERT.*) And what might there be special about it?

SERGEANT (*impressively.*) That there paw has had a spell put upon it!

MR. WHITE. No? (*In great alarm he thrusts the paw back into MORRIS'S hand.*)

SERGEANT (*pensively, holding the paw in the palm of his hand.*) Ah! By an old fakir. He was a very holy man. He'd sat all doubled up in one spot, goin' on for fifteen year; thinkin' o' things. And he wanted to show that fate ruled people. That every-thing was cut and dried from the beginning, as you might say. That there warn't no gettin' away from