

wouldn't mind the blackmail if he played the game for it; but now he's gone and arranged to cut all our blessed throats—yours, mine, and the skipper's and the lot of us, and then take the hooker down to some of the Dutch islands and sell your tin on his own account!"

"Oh! That's the game, is it?" said Flint, and he spoke with meticulous nicety this time, because he really was amazed.

"Yes, sir! He'd have done it a week ago, only he's afraid of the gunboat people coming over to visit us, and he wants to get more tin on board. That's why he put off tackling my Chinamen till today. He's got the Malay quartermasters and khalassies all fixed, and it was the chief quartermaster came to old Yong Lee, my 'No. 1' fireman, this evening, and asked him could he run the engines for them for a week. Yong Lee bit the bait like a fish, and they told him everything. Then he came and blew the gaff to me!"

"Why was that, I wonder?" asked Flint.

"Why, sir, the old boy knew as well as I do that they'd jab a kris through his gizzard the jiffy they'd done with him. You've no idea, sir," concluded the engineer, "what bloodsome devils these pirates are!"

"Well, I seem to be learning, at any rate," sighed Flint. "We are all as Allah made us! The hawk and the hawk's prey!" Well, I'll be damned!"

"What's that, sir?" asked the chief. "Nothing," laughed Flint. "I should not be swearing on the bridge deck. At the same time, Captain Gibney, would you regard it as a bad breach of etiquette if the charterer were to make a professional suggestion to the commander?"

"Lord! no, sir!" replied the skipper, highly flattered.

"Well, what price clapping your quartermasters into irons and firing off a shot or two as a hint to your friend on the Reptile?"

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BUT your tin, sir!" expostulated Gibney. "Those beggars will scoff or sink every other ounce of it that tries to pass the Kwala if you once raise the alarm. They tell me there's still over a hundred tons of it on the way. A hundred tons of tin is a fortune!"

"I suppose it is!" admitted Flint sorrowfully; "still it wouldn't be much use to me if I was dead!"

"Right, oh! sir!" said Gibney, and he went into his cabin for Flint's snipe gun, while McGlew went below to summon his second and third and the two Eurasian mates to assist in manacling the Malays.

"And to think that I tried to play the game by the boundaries!" chortled Flint to his own soul. "So that's what he meant when he talked of the hawk and the hawk's prey—to knife the whole lot of us!"

Captain Gibney emerged from his

cabin with the snipe gun and fired two shots down the Kwala.

"I'll follow you in an instant, captain," said Flint as Gibney went below to supervise the arrest of the Malays; "I just want to get my revolver."

He ran down to his cabin for the weapon. When he came on deck again he looked up the Kwala apprehensively. Something told him that the pirates were watching the ship.

Surely enough, as he looked toward the inlet whither the Inche retired every evening he saw the shadowy outline of a boat pulling out from the mangoes. Meanwhile rough shouts and blows on the main deck told him that the Malays were showing fight. There were enough men below, however, to subjugate the quartermasters without difficulty, while he felt that it was his own particular duty to attend to that shadowy boat.

When she came within about fifty yards he could plainly see that she held half a dozen occupants, so he hailed her to stop or he would fire.

"It is only the pilot, tuan!" called back the voice of Inche Mahmud. "We heard shots and bad noises, so we hurried to ascertain what was the matter."

"Come no nearer, pilot!" warned Flint. "The captain has arrested his quartermasters, who tell him that his pilot is Inche Mahmud, and that his men are pirates, one and all!"

The boat quietly drew nearer.

"Stand back, pilot!" again warned Flint. "The captain has signaled the gunboat. Did you not hear the shots, thou fool! Look down the Kwala! There come the boats! The quartermasters say you mean to murder us!"

Bang!

It was from the pilot's boat the flash came, and a bullet sang past Flint's ear.

Bang!

Another flash, and Flint threw himself on the deck, with a hot scar on the shoulder where a bullet had just grazed the skin.

Two white men-of-war boats, swinging into full view, cheered as they pulled for the steamer. Like a wraith the fishing boat sped back toward the shadows of the mangrove swamps. For appearances sake Flint fired a couple of shots into the sky as Gibney came rushing up the gangway.

"You're not hurt, sir, are you?" gasped the latter. He was out of breath after his scuffle with the quartermasters.

"Not a bit!" said Flint, "only a touch on the shoulder. Here come the Reptile boys. Better look slick and let down the gangway for them!"

Half an hour later, having heard the whole story so far as it lay within the knowledge of Captain Gibney or Mr. McGlew, Lieutenant Hesketh turned to Flint with the sigh of a disappointed man.

"I suppose you couldn't help us to bag the beggars, Mr. Smith?" said he. "You

know we'll give 'em beans and honey if you can only put us on to them!"

"For the Lord's sake, don't drag me into it!" pleaded Flint. "Why, they'd kris every miner and boatman that ever did a hand's turn for me if they dreamed that I was informing against them. Moreover, I have no more notion than a crow as to where the beggars hide themselves when they're not blackmailing me!"

Back in the darkness of the mangroves the Inche Mahmud lay under a load of sorrow such as no pirate of the Palinggu had ever been called upon to bear. When he arose and looked forth to seaward in the pink flush of the false dawn it was to

see the Lady Raffles dipping her flag as she lumbered past H. M. S. Reptile.

In view of the fact that it still lacked a couple of hours of gunfire, the warship had not yet got out her colors. In a moment, however, the white ensign was broken over her stern rail and dipped with punctilious politeness to the trader.

Then the Lady Raffles went chugging through the turquoise sea, with Flint's fortune safe below her hatches.

The Inche Mahmud withdrew his gaze from the harrowing spectacle.

"Bismillah!" he sighed, with the fortitude of the true believer. "It is the will of God!"

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THE JAM GOD

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his teeth into it; and even as he did so it disappeared and he awoke, gasping and choking under the broiling blackness.

"I'll have to take that canteen down to the stream and fill it," he muttered, rising unsteadily and proceeding toward the bank. To his surprise he found that rain had fallen. He was treading in ooze, which rose higher and higher until it clogged his footsteps. He struggled, but now it held him fast, and he was sinking slowly but persistently, now to the waist, now to the shoulders. Frantically he thrust his hands downward to free himself, and withdrew them, sticky with jam! He scooped up great handfuls greedily; and even as he raised it to his mouth it vanished, and he awoke once more in his tent.

He flung himself out of bed with an oath, took down his canteen and started toward the river. The noise of the tom-toms was louder than ever, proceeding, apparently, from some point in the bush a little to the left of the king's palace. Scrambling and struggling through the thorn thickets, he reached the sandy bed of the stream, filled his water bottle at a pool, and drank greedily.

It was that still hour of night when the man-voiced clamor of the bush grows hushed, because the lions are coming down to drink at the waters. The rising moon threw a pale light over the land. The tom-toms were still resounding in the bush, but to Peters' distorted mind they took on the sound of ripe mangoes falling to the ground and bursting as they struck the soil. He counted, "One, two, three," and waited. He counted again. There must be thousands of them. Peters began to edge his way through the reeds in the direction of the sound.

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AFTER a while he came to a wall of rocks, perpendicular and almost insurmountable. He paused and considered, licking his lips greedily as the thud, thud continued, now, apparently, directly in front of him. All at once his eyes, curiously sensitive to external impressions, discovered a little secret trail between two bowlders. He followed it; a great stone revolved at his touch, and he found himself inside the sacred groves. He went on, gulping greedily in anticipation of the feast which awaited him.

Suddenly he stopped short. He had seen something that brought back to him with a rush the realization of his whereabouts. Seated in the shelter of a cactus tree, not fifty yards away, was King Mtetanyanga, wearing his three opera hats, one upon another, in the form of a triple crown, and drinking his own rum with Raguet, under the shade of Raguet's umbrella. Prone at their feet crouched Tom, the interpreter.

"His majesty say, 'How you fix him Ju-Ju?'" translated Tom.

"Tell his majesty my Ju-Ju stronger than the Englishman's Ju-Ju," answered the Frenchman. "My Ju-Ju eat up his Ju-Ju. He very sick. If I choose, he die."

"Ugh!" grunted the king, when this explanation was vouchsafed, apparently impressed.

"Tell his majesty my Ju-Ju stronger

than his own Ju-Ju. If he no sign treaty, eat up his Ju-Ju," Raguet went on.

A flow of language came from the king's lips.

"His majesty say he bring his Ju-Ju; see whose greater," said the interpreter.

Vaguely aware that treachery was impending, but crazed now by the falling mangoes, Peters left them palavering and followed the trail. All at once he emerged into a tiny clearing and stood blinking at a fire, round which a group of men priests, as he knew from their buffalo horns and crane feathers, were reclining, hammering upon tom-toms and shouting in various stages of intoxication. The firelight blinded their eyes.

Peters stood still uncertainly. Then his eyes fell upon a sawed-off tree trunk, in the hollow of which lay something wrapped in a white cloth, surrounded with snake skins. He had come by this secret road into the actual presence of the great Ju-Ju.

Curiously he inserted his hand, lifted the object out and examined it. Inside was something of a strange yet familiar shape, oval, and flattened at the ends. He lifted its wrappings, and there, in his hand, he saw a can bearing the legend: "Greenaway's Best Jam!"

He looked at it in solemn and holy meditation; then sitting down, he drew the can opener from his tunic and wiped it clean upon his sleeve.

After a while a babel of sound broke in upon his ears. Men had come running up, brandishing spears, stopped, flung themselves upon the ground prostrate in front of him. The priests were there, frantically abasing themselves; Mtetanyanga, his opera hats rolling unheeded on the ground. Their cries ceased; they veiled their eyes. Then from the dust came the feeble tones of the interpreter:

"His majesty say you eat him Ju-Ju—yours greatest Ju-Ju; he want to sign treaty."

But Peters, waving the empty can over his head, shouted: "I've eaten jam, I've eaten jam! It's pineapple—and I don't care!"

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Not So

"Oh, grandma," exclaimed little Margaret, who had been rumaging through an old bureau drawer in the attic. "What a curious old key this is!"

"Yes, dear," replied her grandmother. "That was your grandfather's latchkey."

"And you keep it in memory of the old days?"

"No, my dear. In memory of the old nights."

Inharmonious

"What's the matter with them Twisterino brothers that does the contortion act?" demanded the circus proprietor. "They're always scrappin' among themselves."

"They can't help it, boss," replied the manager. "You see, two of 'em is Germans, one is a Frenchman and the other one is a dago, and every once in a while they git to arguin' about the war."

Why the Barber Roared

MY BARBER," said Mr. Goslington, "is the best man in the shop; but I do not like the way in which he thanks me for my tip.

"He says 'Thank you!' in a tone so loud that it can be heard along the whole line of chairs and by all the waiting customers. I am a modest man and I do not like to have attention thus drawn to me.

"But what could I do about it? I could scarcely ask him to speak lower, could I? I could only wince a little and wish inwardly that he would be less pronounced in his thanks, while I wondered that a man who was at once so proficient and so gentle in the exercise of his professional art should be so lacking in tact and grace in his manner of expression.

"But one day it all came clear to me, with a jolt that gave me a greater shock than I had ever experienced by his loud advertisement of my generosity.

"The fact was that his loud spoken thanks were not intended for me solely;

in truth in this he was not considering me at all; he was simply using me as a sounding board from which to make a proclamation, audible to all, that here, just stepped down from a chair, was a gentleman who had given a tip.

"With these thanks thus spoken there was promulgated the unmistakable accompanying idea that this was a shop in which tips were customary; and I have no doubt whatever that more than one man who, before, had been wavering as to whether he should give a tip or not was won over to the right side by my barber's unblushing proclamation, of which I had been for so long the unconscious medium of communication.

"Thus with my true knowledge of the real significance of my barber's loud thanks I was made to suffer the added shock of personal humiliation; and yet I could not but admire his audacity in planning and his boldness in execution, and so I still stick to him, for he is the shop's best barber."—[The Sun.