

HEART OF THE WORLD.

BY H. RIDER HAGGARD

A Strange Story, Taken From a Manuscript Bequeathed by an Old Mexican Indian to His Friend and Comrade, an Englishman Named Jones.

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...tongues, but still there are a row picture. In the old times, when they did not ask questions, it was otherwise, for then men of pluck were ready for anything, from revolution down to the stringing up of a coach load of fat merchants, but now is the day of small profits, and we must be thankful for such trifles as providence sends us."

"Such as the two Americans who got drunk and killed each other," suggested the senior, whose tongue was never of the most cautious.

Instantly Don Pedro's face changed, the sham geniality born of drink went out of it, and was replaced by a hard and cunning look.

"I am tired, senior," he said, "as you must be also, and if you will excuse me, I will light another cigar and take a nap in my hammock. Perhaps you will amuse yourself with the others, senior, till you wish to go to rest." And, rising, he bowed and walked somewhat unsteadily to the hammock that was suspended at the far end of the room.

When Don Pedro had retired to his hammock, whether the Indian girl, Luisa, was summoned to swing him to sleep, I say his son Jose and the American outcast, Smith, both of whom, like the rest of the company, were more or less drunk, came to the senior and ask him to join in a game of cards. Guessing that their object was to make him show what cash he had about him, he also affected to be in liquor, and replied noisily that he had lost all his money in the shipwreck, and was, moreover, too full of wine to play.

"Then you must have lost it on the road, friend," said Don Jose, "for you forget that you made those sailors a present from a belt of gold which you wore about your middle. However, no gentleman shall be forced to play in this house, so come an I talk while the others have their little game."

"Yes, that will be better," answered the senior, and he staggered to an empty chair, placed not far from the table at which I remained, and was served with spirits and cigars. Here he sat watching the play and listened to the conversation of the gamblers.

All this while I sat at the little table where my dinner had been served, saying nothing, for none spoke to me, but within hearing of everything that passed. There I sat quiet, my arms folded on my breast, listening attentively to the tales of outrage, wrong, and murder practised by these wicked ones upon my countrymen.

Presently Don Smith called out: "Look at that Indian rascal, friend; he is as proud as a turkey cock in spring time; why, he reminds me of the figures of the king in that ruin where we laid up last year waiting for the senora and her party. You remember the senora, don't you, Jose? I can hear her squeaks now," and he laughed brutally, and added: "Come, King, and have a drink."

"Gracious, senior," I answered, "I have drunk."

"Then smoke a cigar, O king."

"Gracious, senior, I do not smoke tonight."

"My lord cacique of all the Indians won't drink and won't smoke," said Don Smith, "so we will offer him incense," and taking a plate he filled it with dry tobacco and cigarette paper, to which he set fire. Then he placed the plate on the table before me, so that the fumes of the tobacco rose into the air about my head.

"There, now he looks like a real god," said the American, clapping his hands. "I say, Jose, let us make a sacrifice to him. There is the girl who ran away last week, and whom we caught with the dogs—"

"No, no, comrade," broke in Jose; "none of your jokes to-night; you forget that we have a visitor. Not but what I should like to sacrifice this old demon of an Indian himself," he added, in an outburst of drunken fury. "Curse him! he insulted me and my father and mother, yonder on board the ship."

"And are you going to put up with that from this wooden old Indian god? Why, if I were in your place, by now I would have filled him as full of holes as a coffee roaster, just to let the lies out."

"That's what I want to do," said Jose gnashing his teeth; "he has insulted me and threatened me, and ought to pay for it, the black thief." And drawing a large knife he flourished it in my face.

I did not shrink from it; I did not so much as suffer my eyelids to tremble; though the steel flashed within an inch of them, for I knew that if once I showed fear he would strike. Therefore I said calmly:

"You are pleased to jest, senior, and your jests are somewhat rude, but I pass them by, for I know that you cannot harm me because I am your guest, and those who kill a guest are not gentlemen, but murderers, which the high-born Don Jose Moreno could never be."

"Stick the pig, Jose," said Smith. "He is insulting you again. It will save trouble afterward."

Then as Don Jose again advanced upon me with the knife, of a sudden the senior sprang up from his chair and stood between us.

"Come, friend," he said, "a joke is a joke, but you are carrying this too far, according to your custom," and seizing the man by the shoulders, he put out all his great strength and swung him back with such force that, striking against the long table with his thighs, he rolled on to and over it, falling heavily to the ground on the further side, whence he rose cursing with rage.

By now Don Pedro, who had wakened, or affected to waken from his sleep, thought that the time had come to in-

"Peace, little ones, peace!" he cried sleepily from his hammock. "Remember that the men are guests, and cease brawling. Let them go to bed; it is time for them to go to bed, and they need rest, and by to-morrow your differences will be healed up forever."

"I take the hint," said the senior, with forced gaiety. "Come, Ignatio, let us sleep off our host's good wine. Gentlemen, sweet dreams to you," and he walked across the room, followed by myself.

At the door I turned my head and looked back. Every man in the room was watching intently, and it seemed to me that the drunkenness had passed from their faces, scared away by a sense of some great wickedness waiting to be worked. Don Smith was whispering into the ear of Jose, who still held the knife in his hand, but the rest were staring at us as people stare at men passing to the scaffold.

Even Don Pedro, wide awake now, sat up in the hammock and peered with his horny eyes while the Indian girl, Luisa, her hand upon the cord, watched our departure with some such face as mourners watch the outbearing of a corpse. All this I noted in a moment as I crossed the threshold and went forward down the passage, and as I went I shivered, for the scene was uncanny and fateful.

Presently we were in the abbot's chamber, our sleeping place, and had locked the door behind us. Near the washstand, on which burned a single candle, set in the neck of a bottle, sat Molas, his face buried in his hands.

"Have they brought you no supper that you look so sad?" asked the senior. "The woman Luisa gave me to eat," he answered. "Listen, lord, and you, Senor Strickland, our fears are well founded; there is a plot to murder us to-night; of this the woman is sure, for she heard some words pass between Don Pedro and a white man called Smith; also she saw one of the half-breeds fetch some spades from the garden and place them in readiness, which spades are to be used in the hollowing of our graves beneath this floor."

"I am afraid that we have been too venturesome in coming here," I said, "and unless we can escape at once we must be prepared to pay the price of our folly with our lives."

"Do not be downcast, lord," said Molas, "for you have not heard all the tale. The woman has shown me a means whereby you can save yourselves from death, at any rate for to-night. Come here" and leading us across the room he knelt upon the floor at a spot almost opposite a panel in the low wainscoting of cedar wood with which the wall was clothed to a height of about three feet.

The panel slid aside, leaving a space barely large enough for a man to pass. Through this opening we crept one by one, and passed down four narrow steps to find ourselves in a chamber hollowed out of the foundations of the wall, so small that there was only just room for the three of us to stand in it, our heads being some inches above the level of the floor.

"How can we save ourselves by crouching here like rats in a wall?" I asked of Molas. "Doubtless the secret of the hiding place is known to those who live in the house, and they will drag us out and butcher us."

"The woman Luisa says that it is known to none except herself, lord, for she declares that not two months ago she discovered it for the first time by the accident of the broom with which she was sweeping the floor striking against the springs of the panel. And now let us come out for a while, for it is not yet eleven o'clock, and she says that there will be no danger till after midnight."

"Has she any plan for our escape?" I asked. "She has a plan, though she is doubtful of its success. When the murderers have been and found us gone they will think either that we are wizards or that we have made our way out of the house, and will search no more till dawn. Meanwhile, if she can, Luisa will return and, entering the chamber by the secret entrance, will lead us to the chapel, whence we think—"

"Where is this secret entrance, Molas?"

"I do not know, lord; she had no time to tell me, but the murderers will come by it. She did tell me, however, that she believes that a man and a woman are imprisoned near the chapel, though she knows nothing of them and never visits the place, because the Indians believe it to be haunted. Doubtless these two are Zibalbay and his daughter, so that if you live to come so far you may find them there and speak with them."

Some minutes before midnight we extinguished the light, and, creeping one by one through the hole in the paneling, closed it behind us and took our stand in the little dungeon. Here the darkness was awful, and as the warmth of the wine we had drunk passed from our veins our fears gathered thick upon us and oppressed our souls.

Finally the senior touched me. "Hark!" he whispered into my ear, "I hear men creeping about the room."

"For the love of God be silent," I answered, gripping his hand.

CHAPTER IX.

THE DEED.

Now we placed our ears against the panelling and listened. First we heard creaks that were loud in the stillness, then soft heavy noises such as are made by a cat when it jumps from a height to the ground, and a gentle rubbing as of

If you want old exchanges for reading, or to stop the wind away call at the Bohemia Nugget office. For sale cheap.

There are about 30,000 men at present actively engaged in mining smelting, and milling ore in Colorado. In California there are about 20,000.

The Baker city Democrat says that a single blast recently exploded in the Bonanza mine, at a depth of 500 feet, brought down about 30 tons of ore, of which 20 tons contained \$63,000 the most of which was fine gold.

Ike Guker, the discoverer of the famous Great Northern mine, near Canyon City has received from the Trans-Mississippi exposition, at Omaha, a beautiful silver medal and diploma, awarding him for his fine display of wire gold, thread gold and gold bearing quartz taken from his mine, the Great Northern. —Oregon Mining Journal.

The Salem Journal in that valuable paper's "X rays" column quotes Shakespeare as having said "The good men do live after them." As we are not a Shakespearean scholar, just for our personal satisfaction we should be pleased to have the Journal "X rays" man name the play, act and scene in which this quotation as per the Journal may be found.

A Manila correspondent advises any "young man, if he has money, if he wants to make a fortune, to come there at once." The advice may be well intended, but if we were a young man and "had money," we'd just stay right in Cottage Grove. As we haven't got the money we'll probably stay anyway, that is until we see some of our good citizens coming toward our office with a jug of molasses and a sack of goose feathers.

NOTICE OF FORFEITURE.

Cottage Grove, Lane County, Oregon
January 11, 1899.

To ALEX CONTNER:—

You are hereby notified that we have expended at least \$200, in work and labor on each of the two mining claims known and recorded in the Mining Records of the Bohemia Mining District in Lane county, Oregon, as the "Drum Lomond" and "Opportunity" mining claims, as will appear by certificate filed January 13, 1899 in the office of the County Clerk in said Lane county, in order to hold said premises under the provisions of section 2324 Revised Statutes of the United States, being the amount required to hold the said two claims for the years 1897 and 1898, respectively, and if within ninety days after the completion of the publication of this notice, you fail, neglect or refuse to contribute your portion of said expenditure as a co-owner, your interest in the said claims will become the property of the subscribers, under said section 2324.

J. H. WHITE,
A. M. WHITE.

SUMMONS.

J. P. Currie, Plaintiff,
vs.
James E. Thorp, Minnie M. Thorp and J. W. Gowdy, administrators of the estate of E. P. Thorp, deceased defendants.

In the Name of the State of Oregon, you are hereby required to appear and answer the complaint filed against you in the above entitled suit by the first day of the next term of the above entitled Court following the expiration of the time prescribed in the order for publication of this summons, which first day will be on the 6th day of March, 1899, and if you fail to so appear and answer, for want thereof, plaintiff will apply to said Court for the relief demanded in his complaint, to-wit:—For the foreclosure of a certain mortgage executed and delivered by E. P. Thorp to J. W. Gowdy on the 14th day of April, 1894, to secure the payment of a certain promissory note given by said E. P. Thorp to said J. W. Gowdy for \$625.00, due April 14, 1895, with interest at the rate of 10 per cent per annum from maturity until paid, which said mortgage conveyed to said J. W. Gowdy for the first purpose the following described real property, to-wit:—Lot 1 and the east half of lot 2 in Block 3 in Long and Landers' Addition to Cottage Grove in Lane County, Oregon, which said mortgage and note were on the 14th day of January, 1899, assigned to this plaintiff. And for a decree barring and foreclosing you and each of you from any and all right, title or interest, as heirs at law of said E. P. Thorp, in and to said real property and every part thereof. This summons is published by order of the Hon. J. W. Hamilton, Judge of the above entitled Court, made January 19th, 1899.

J. E. Young,
Atty. for Plaintiff.

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C. Y. Benjamin, editor and proprietor of the Roseburg Plaindealer since 1887, died at his home in that city January 11, 1899. Mr Benjamin since his connection with the Plaindealer has made it one of the best county papers in the state, and he enjoyed the reputation of an honorable, upright and conscientious man.

SECRET SOCIETIES.

COTTAGE GROVE LODGE, No. 51, A. F. & M.—Meets first and third Saturdays each month.

COTTAGE GROVE LODGE, K. O. T. M.—Meets every Thursday evening.

JUVENILE LODGE, K. O. P., No. 46.—Meets in Odd Fellows' hall every Wednesday evening.

BOHEMIA CAMP, No. 266, W. OF THE V.—Meets first and third Fridays each month.

ST. VALENTINE Circle, No. 121 W. of V.—Meets the second and fourth Mondays each month.

COTTAGE GROVE LODGE, No. 68, I. O. O.—Meets in Odd Fellows' hall every Friday evening.

COTTAGE GROVE CHAPTER, No. 40, I. O. O.—Meets every 2nd and 4th Friday.

REBEKAH LODGE No. 34, I. O. O.—Meets every first and third Friday in Odd Fellows' hall.

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