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KNOWLES CHAPTER No. 12, O. E. S.—Meets a Masonic hall the first and third Monday evening in each month. Visiting members cordially invited.
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A. O. U. W.—Charity Lodge No. 7 meets first and third Fridays of each month, 7:30 p. m. Lodge room in Union block.
H. C. BURNS, M. W.
J. D. BAKER, Recorder. 10

CUSTER POST No. 9—Meets the second and fourth Saturday of each month in Union hall at 7:30 p. m. on second Saturday and at 10:30 a. m. on 4th Saturday. All members of the order are cordially invited to attend our meetings.
J. B. STILWELL, Commander.
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L. T. L. at 3 p. m.
MRS. H. F. ALLEN, Pres.
CLARA G. ESSON, Sec'y.

SUMMONS.

In the circuit court of the State of Oregon for Yamhill county.
Mary J. Duffy, plaintiff,
vs.
Walter L. French, Nathan French, Mary E. French, Nathan Schloss, Michael Schloss, Julius Schloss, Jonas Schloss, Laura J. Schloss and George H. Pistle, defendants.

To Walter L. French, Nathan Schloss, Michael Schloss, Julius Schloss, Jonas Schloss, Laura J. Schloss and Geo. H. Pistle, defendants above named:

IN the name of the state of Oregon you and each of you are hereby notified and required to appear and answer the complaint filed against you and the other defendants in the above entitled court by the first day of the term following the expiration of the time prescribed in the order for publication of this summons, to-wit, Monday, the 25th day of March, A. D. 1896, and if you fail so to appear or answer, for want thereof the plaintiff will apply to said court for the relief prayed for in her complaint, to-wit: For a judgment and decree against the defendant Walter L. French for the sum of $5,000.00, with interest thereon at the rate of 9 per cent per annum from the 21st day of June, 1894, and for her costs and disbursements of suit, and the further sum of $500.00 attorneys' fees in said suit, and for the sum of $22.50, with interest thereon from February 24, 1895, and for a decree foreclosing the mortgage pleaded in the complaint, and for an order of sale of the mortgaged real premises, to-wit:

Situate in Yamhill county, State of Oregon, and being the s hf of the s hf of the original donation land claim of Thomas Hubbard and wife, claim No. 52, Notification 1425, in township three (3) south of range three (3) west of the Willamette meridian, more particularly described as follows: Commencing at the southeast corner of said donation land claim, thence north on the east line of said donation land claim 23.25 chains, thence west parallel with the south line of said claim to a point on the west line of said claim 23.25 chains north of the southwest corner of said claim, thence south 23.25 chains to the southwest corner of said claim, thence east on the south line of said claim to the place of beginning, containing 160 acres more or less. Also the homestead claim No. 728 of Richard S. Johnson, described as the west half of the northeast quarter and the southwest quarter of the southeast quarter, and lot two (2), three (3) and four (4) of section twenty nine (29) in township three (3) south of range three (3) west of the Willamette meridian, containing 173.17 acres, more or less. Also the north west quarter of the northeast quarter of section twenty-nine (29) in said township and range, containing 40 acres, more or less, and being part of the homestead claim No. 710 of Nicolas Carlin.

And for a decree barring and foreclosing said defendants and each of them, and all persons claiming by, through or under them or either of them, of all equity of redemption in or right to said premises or any part thereof, and for such other and further relief as may be meet and equitable in the premises.

This summons is published for 6 weeks by order of Hon. H. H. Hewitt, judge of said court, made February 19th, A. D. 1896. 8-7
M. J. MACMAHON, Att'y for Plaintiff.

THE PEOPLE OF THE MIST.

By H. RIDER HAGGARD.

[Copyright, 1894, by the Author.]

This statue was fashioned to the shape of a huge seated dwarf of hideous countenance, with bent arms outstretched in a slightly forward direction and palms turned upward as though to bear the weight of the sky. This fearful colossus stood, or rather sat, upon a platform of rock, and not more than four paces from its base, so that the outstretched hands and head bent slightly forward, overhung it indeed, was a circular gulf measuring perhaps 30 yards across, in which seething waters raged and boiled. Whence they came and whither they went it was impossible to see, but Leonard discovered afterward that here was the source of the river which they had followed for so many days. Escaping from the gulf by underground passages that it had hollowed for itself through the solid rock, the two branches of the torrent passed round the walls of the town, to unite again in the plain below. How the pool itself was supplied Leonard was destined to learn in after days, so nothing need be said of it here.

Between the steep polished sides of this rock basin and the feet of the statue was placed an altar, or sacrificial stone. Here on this ledge, which covered an area no greater than that of a small room, and in front of the altar stood a man, bound, in whom Leonard recognized Olfan, the king, while on either side of him were priests, naked to the waist and armed with sacrificial knives. Behind them again stood the little band of settlement men, trembling with terror, nor were their fears groundless, for there among them lay one of their number dead. This was the man whose nerve had broken down, who had shrieked aloud in the darkness, and in reward had been smitten into everlasting silence.

All this Leonard saw by degrees, but the first thing he saw has not yet been told. Long before the brilliant rays of the moon lit the amphitheater they struck upon the huge head of the dwarf idol, and there upon this giddy perch some 70 feet from the ground and nearly 100 above the level of the seething pool of water sat Juanna herself, enthroned in an ivory chair. She had been divested of her black cloak and was clad in the robe of snowy linen cut low upon her breast and fastened round her waist with a girdle.

Her dark hair flowed about her shoulders, in either hand she held the lilies, red and white, and upon her forehead glowed the ruby like a blood red star. She sat quite still, her eyes set wide in horror, and first the moonlight gleamed upon the gem bound to her forehead, next it showed the white and lovely face beneath, then her snowy arms and breast, the whiteness of her robes and throne and the hideous demon head whereon it was fixed. No spirit could have seemed more beautiful than this woman set thus on her dizzy throne in that dark place of blood and fear. Indeed in the unearthly light she looked like a spirit, the angel of beauty triumphing over the hideousness of hell, the angel of light trampling the devil and his works. It was not wonderful that this fierce and barbarous people sighed like reeds before the wind when her loveliness dawned upon them, made ethereal by the moon, or that thenceforth Leonard could never think of her quite as he thought of any other woman. Under such conditions most well favored girls would have appeared beautiful. Juanna did more; she seemed divine.

As the light grew downward and the shadows thinned before it Leonard followed with his eyes and presently discovered Otter. The dwarf, naked except for his girdle and the fringe upon his head, was also enthroned, holding the ivory scepter in his hand, but in a seat of ebony placed upon the knees of the colossus, nearly 40 feet below Juanna. Then Leonard turned to consider Francisco's position and his own and found it terrible enough. Indeed the moment that he discovered it was nigh to being his last, for in company with two priests of the snake they were standing on the palm of the right hand of the idol, that formed a little square, which they had won in the darkness through a tunnel hewn in the arm of stone. There they stood unprotected by any railing or support, and before them and behind them was a sheer drop of some 90 feet to the water beneath or to the rock of the platform.

Leonard saw and for a moment turned faint and dizzy; then, dropping the butt of his rifle on the stone, he leaned upon the barrel till his brain cleared. It was well for him that he had not known what lay beneath when but now he thrust his foot into vacancy, for then his senses might have failed him. Suddenly he remembered Francisco and opened his eyes, which he had closed to shut out the yawning gulf beneath him. It was not too soon. The priest had seen also, and consciousness had deserted him. Even as Leonard turned his knees gave way, and he sank forward and downward. Quick as thought Leonard stretched out his right hand and caught Francisco by the robe he wore; then, resting his weight upon the rifle, he strained at the priest's falling body with all his force in such a manner that its direction was turned, and it fell sideways upon the platform, not downward into space. Leonard dragged at him again and thrust him into the mouth of the little tunnel through which they had reached this dreadful eminence, where he lay quiet and safe, lost in a blessed insensibility.

All this took place in a few seconds. The two priests of the snake, who stood by them as calmly as though their feet were still on the solid earth, saw it, but made no movement. Only Leonard thought that they smiled grimly, and a horrible fear struck his heart like a breath of ice. What if they waited a signal to cast him down? It might well be so. Already he had seen enough of their rites to enable him to guess that theirs was a religion of blood and human sacrifice. He shivered and again turned faint, so faint indeed that he did not dare to keep his feet, but sank into a sitting posture, resting his back against the stone of the idol's thumb.

CHAPTER XIV.

Still the silence endured, and still the moonlight grew, creeping lower till it shone upon the face of the seething waters, and, except in the immediate shadow of the walls, all the amphitheater was full of it.

Then the voice of Nam spoke again from far away, and Leonard looked to see whence he spoke. Now he saw. Nam, attended by three priests, was perched like an eagle on the left palm of the colossus, and from this dizzy platform he addressed the multitude. Looking across the breast of the statue, Leonard could just see the outstretched arm and catch the outline of the fierce face of the high priest of the snake as he glared down upon the people.

"Hearken, ye dwellers in the mist, children of the snake! Ye have seen your ancient gods, your father and your mother, come back to rule you and to lead you on through war and peace, to wealth, to power and to glory. You see them now by that light and in that place wherein only it is lawful that we should look upon them. Say, do ye believe and do ye accept them? Answer, every one of you, answer with your voice!"

Then a mighty roar of sound went up from the gathered thousands, a roar that shaped itself into the words, "We believe, and we accept!"

"It is well," said Nam when the tumult had died away. "Hearken, ye high gods, O Aca, and O Jal, bend down your ears and deign to hearken to your priest and servant, speaking in the name of your children, the People of the Mist! Be ye kings to reign over us! Accept the power and the sacrifice and sit in the place of kings! We give you rule through all the land. The life of every dweller in the land is yours. Yours are their cattle and their goats, their cities and their armies. For you the altars shall run red; the cry of the victim shall be music in your ears. You shall look upon him whom long ago ye set to guard the secret awful place, and he shall crawl beneath your feet. As ye ruled our fathers, so shall ye rule us, according to the customs which ye laid down forever. Glory be to you, O Aca, and to you, O Jal, immortal kings forevermore!"

And the great audience echoed in a shout that rent the skies, "Glory be to you, O Aca, and to you, O Jal, immortal kings forevermore!"

Then Nam spoke again, saying: "Bring forth the virgin, that fair maid who is destined to the snake, that he may look upon her and accept her as his wife. Bring her forth also who 12 months gone was vowed in marriage to the shape of the stone, that she may bid her lord farewell."

As he spoke there was a stir behind the idol, and presently from either side of it a woman was led forward by two priests on to the little space of rock between its feet and the edge of the gulf and placed one to the right of the altar and one to the left. Both these women were tall and lovely with the dark and somewhat terrifying beauty of the People of the Mist, but there the resemblance between them ended. She to the left was naked except for a girdle of snakeskin and the covering of her abundant hair, which was crowned with a wreath of red lilies similar to the flower that the priests had given to Juanna. She to the left, on the contrary, was clothed in a black robe round which was broidered the shape of a blood red snake, whose head rested on her breast. Leonard noticed that the appearance of this woman was one of extreme terror, for she shrank and trembled, whereas that of the flower crowned bride was jubilant and even haughty. For a moment the two women stood while the people gazed upon them. Then at a signal from Nam she who was crowned with flowers was led before the altar, and thrice she bowed the knee to the idol, or rather to Otter, who sat upon it. Now all eyes were fixed on the dwarf, who stared at the girl, but made no sign, which was not wonderful, seeing that he had not the faintest idea of the meaning of the ceremony. As it chanced, he could not have acted more wisely—at least in the interests of the bride—for here, as elsewhere, silence was held to give consent.

"Behold, the god accepts!" cried Nam. "The beauty of the bride is pleasing in his eyes. Stand aside, Saga, thou blessed, that the people may look upon thee and know thee. Hail to thee, wife of the snake!"

Smiling triumphantly, the girl moved back to her place by the altar and turned her proud face to the people. Then the multitude shouted:

"Hail to thee, bride of the snake! Hail to thee, thou blessed, chosen of the god!"

While the tumult still lasted she who was clad in the black robe was led forward, and when it had died away she also made her obeisance before the idol.

"Away with her that she may seek her lord in his own place," cried Nam.

"Away with her! Her day is done," echoed the multitude. Then, before Juanna could interfere, before she could even speak, for, be it remembered, she alone understood all that was said, the two priests who guarded the doomed woman rent the robe from her, and with a single swing of their strong arms hurled her backward far into the pool of seething waters. She fell with a fearful shriek and lay floating on their surface just where the moonlight beat most brightly, flung this way and that by the eddy of the whirlpool. All who could of the multitude bent forward to see her end, and overcome by a fearful fascination Leonard flung himself on his face, and craning his head over the stone of the idol's hand watched also, for her struggling shape was almost immediately beneath him. Another minute and he would have foregone the hope of winning the treasure he came so far to seek not to have yielded to the impulse.

For as he stared the waters beneath the feet of the idol were agitated as a pond is agitated by the rush of a pike when he dashes at his prey. Then for an instant the light gleamed upon a dull, enormous shape, and suddenly the head of a crocodile reared itself out of the pool, the head of a crocodile, but of such a crocodile as he had never heard or dreamed of, for the head alone was broader than the chest of the biggest man, its dull eyes were the size of a man's fist, its yellow fangs were like the teeth of a lion, and from its lower jaw hung tentacles, or lumps of white flesh, which at that distance gave it the appearance of being bearded like a goat; also the skin of this huge reptile, which could not have measured less than 50 feet in length by 4 feet in depth, was here and there corroded into rusty excrescences, as though some fungus or lichen had grown upon it like gray moss on an ancient wall. Indeed its appearance seemed to point to extreme antiquity.

Hearing the disturbance in the water, the reptile had emerged from the cave where it dwelt beneath the feet of the idol to seek its accustomed food, which consisted of the human victims that were cast to it at certain intervals. It reared its hideous head and glared around. Then of a sudden the monster and the victim vanished together into the depths.

Sick with horror, Leonard drew himself back into a sitting posture and glanced toward Juanna. She was crouched in her ivory chair overcome, and her eyes were closed, either through faintness or to shut out the sight of dread. Then he looked down at Otter. The dwarf was sitting as still as the stone effigy that supported him and staring fixedly at the water. Evidently in all his varied experience he had seen no such thing as this.

"The snake has accepted the sacrifice," cried Nam again. "The snake has taken her who was his bride to dwell with him in his holy house. Let the offerings be completed, for this is but the first fruit. Take Olfan, who was king, and offer him up. Cast down the white servants of the mother and offer them up. Seize the slaves who stood before her in the plain and offer them up. Lead forth the captives and offer them up. Let the sacrifice of the crowning of kings be accomplished according to custom, that the god whose name is Jal may be appeased; that he may listen to the pleading of the mother; that fruitfulness may fill the land and peace be within its gates."

Thus he cried, while Leonard felt his blood turn cold and his hair rise upon his head, for though he could not understand the words he could guess their purport, and his instinct told him that a great danger threatened them. He looked at the two priests who stood by, and they glared angrily on him in answer. Then his courage came back to him. At least he had his rifle and would fight for his life. It would go hard if he could not put a bullet through one or both of them before they got a hold on him.

Meanwhile the priests below had seized the king Olfan, whose giant form they were dragging toward the stone of sacrifice, but of a sudden for the first time Juanna spoke, and a deep silence fell upon the temple and all within it.

"Hearken, People of the Mist," she said, and her voice falling from that great height seemed small and far away, though so clear that every word was audible in the stillness of the night.

"Hear me, People of the Mist and ye priests of the snake! Aca is come again, and Jal is come again, and ye have given them back their rule after many generations, and in their hands lie the lives of every one of you. As the old tradition told of them, so they are, the mother and the child, and the one is clothed with beauty, the symbol of life and of the fruitful earth, and the other is black and hideous, the symbol of death and the evil that walks upon the earth, and ye would do sacrifice to Jal that he may be appeased according to the ancient law and listen to the pleading of the mother that fruitfulness may fill the land. Not so shall Jal be appeased, and not because of the sacrifice of men shall Aca plead with him that prosperity may reign in the land.

"Behold, the old law is done away! We give you a new law. Now is the hour of reconciliation. Now life and death walk hand in hand, and the hearts of Aca and Jal have grown gentle through the ages, and they no longer crave the blood of men as an offering to their majesty. Henceforth you shall bring them fruits and flowers and not the lives of men. See, in my hand I hold winter lilies, red and white; blood red they are and white as snow. Now the red flower, token of sacrifice and slaughter, I crush and cast away, but the white bloom of love and peace I set upon my breast. It is done. Gone is the old law. See, it falls into the place of the snake, its home, but the new law blossoms above my heart and in it. Shall it not be so, my children, People of the Mist? Will ye not accept my mercy and my love?"

The multitude watched the red blooms as, bruised and broken, through the light and the shadow, they fell slowly to the seething surface of the pool. Then it looked up like one man and saw the white lily set upon Juanna's whiter breast. They saw, and moved by a common impulse rose with a sound like the rush of the wind and shouted:

"Gone is the day of blood and sacrifice. Come is the day of peace! We thank you, mother, and we take your mercy and your love."

Then they were silent, and again there was a sound like that of the wind as all their thousands sank back to the seats of stone.

Now Nam spoke again in a voice of fury that rang through the still air like a clarion.

"What is this that my ears hear?" he cried. "Are ye mad, O ye dwellers in the mist, or does the mother speak with a charmed voice? Shall the ancient worship be changed and in an hour? Nay, not the gods themselves can alter their own worship. Slay on, ye priests, slay on, or ye yourselves shall die the dreadful death."

The priest below heard, and seizing the struggling king cast him with difficulty down upon the stone.

"Leonard, Leonard," cried Juanna in English, addressing him for the first time by his Christian name, as even then he noticed, but looking straight before her that none might guess to whom she spoke. "These priests are going to kill you and all of us except Otter and myself. If you can, when you see me point my hand, shoot that man who is about to sacrifice the king. Make no answer."

Leonard heard and understood it all. Resting his back firmly against the thumb of the statue, he shifted his position a little so that the group below him came within his line of sight and waited, watching Juanna, who was now speaking again in the language of the People of the Mist.

"This I promise you, ministers of blood," she said, "if ye obey me not ye shall indeed die the dreadful death, the death unknown. Hearken, my servant, who art named deliverer," and she looked down upon Leonard, "and do my bidding. If one of these shall dare to lift his hand against yonder man, slay him swiftly as you know how."

"Smite on," screamed Nam, "smite on and fear not."

Most of the priests drew back affrighted, but one ruffian lifted his knife, and as he did so Juanna pointed with her hand. Then Leonard, leaning forward, covered the priest's great breast with his rifle as surely as the uncertain light would allow. Unconscious of his fate, the priest muttered an invocation, and now the knife was about to fall upon the throat of Olfan, when fire and smoke sprang out far above him, the rifle rang, and shot through the heart he leaped high into the air and fell dead. Terror seized the witnesses of this unaccustomed and to them most awful sight.

"The gods speak with flame and thunder!" one cried, "and death is in the flame."

"Silence, dogs!" screamed Nam. "Ye are bewitched. Ho, you who stand on high, cast down that wizard who is termed deliverer and let us see who will deliver him from death upon the stone!"

Then one of the priests who stood by him made a movement to grasp Leonard and cast him down, but the other was terrified and could not stir. The first man stretched out his arm, but before it so much as touched its aim he himself was dead, for, seeing his purpose, Leonard had lifted the rifle and once more its report rang through the temple. Suddenly the priest threw his arms wide; then he fell backward, and with a mighty rush dived into sheer space to crash lifeless on to the stone floor below, where he lay, his head and hands hanging over the edge of the pool.

Now for the first time Otter's emotions overcame him. He stood up on the knees of the dwarf, and shaking the scepter in his hand pointed with it to the dead priests on the paving below, at the same time crying in stentorian tones:

"Well done, baas, well done! Now tumble the old one yonder off his perch, for I am weary of his howlings."

This speech of Otter's produced even a greater effect on the spectators, if that were possible, than the mysterious death of the priests. That he whose name was silence should cry aloud in a strange tongue, of which of course they understood no single word, was a dread and ominous thing that showed his anger to be deep. But Leonard took no heed. He was too much engaged in covering the second priest with the barrel of his repeater. This man, however, had no liking for such a dreadful death. Swiftly he flung himself on to his knees, imploring Leonard to spare him in humble accents and with gestures that spoke more plainly than his words.

Taking advantage of the pause, again Juanna cried aloud: "Ye see, People of the Mist, that I make no idle threats. Where are they now, the disobedient ones? The tongue of flame has licked them, and they are dead, and as they have perished so shall all perish who dare gainsay my word or the word of Jal. Ye know us for gods, and ye have crowned us kings, and gods and kings we are indeed. Yet fear not, for on the rebellious only shall our anger fall. Answer, though, Nam. Wilt thou do our bidding, or wilt thou die also as thy servants died?"

Nam looked around desperately. He looked down on the multitude and found no help there. Long had they cowered beneath him. Now hope was born in their breasts, and in the presence of a power greater than his, and if only for awhile they broke his yoke and the yoke of their red superstitions. He looked at the company priests. Their heart was out of them. They were huddled together like knots of frightened sheep, staring at the corpses of their two companions. Then he bethought him of Otter. Surely there was refuge in the god of blood and evil, and he cried to him:

"The mother has spoken, but the mother is not the son. Say, O Jal, what is thy command?"

Otter made no answer, because he did not understand, but Juanna replied swiftly:

"I am the mouth of Jal, as Jal is my hand. When I speak, I speak the words of Jal. Do his bidding and mine or die, thou disobedient servant."

This was the end of it. Nam was beaten. For the first time in his life he must own a master, and that master the gods whom he had himself discovered and proclaimed.

"So be it," he said sullenly. "The old order passes, and the new order comes. So be it. Let your will be done, O mother and O son. I have striven for your glory, I have fed your altars, and ye threaten me with death and put away my gift. Priests, set free that man who was king. People, have your way, forget your ancient paths, pluck the white flower of peace and perish. I have said."

So he spoke from on high, shaking his clinched fists above his hoary head, and was gone. Then the priests unbound the limbs of the ex-king, and he arose from the stone of death.

"Olfan," cried Juanna from on high, "thou that wast the king, we, who have taken thy kingship, give thee life and liberty and honor. See that in reward thou servest us well, lest again thou shouldst lie upon that bed stone. Dost thou swear fealty to us?"

"Forever and forever, O mother and O son. I swear it by your holy heads."

"It is well. Now, under us once more we give thee command of the armies of this people, our children. Summon thy captains and thy soldiers. Bid those that brought us thither lead us back whence we came, and there set guards about us, so that none troubles us. For you, our people, for this time fare you well. Go in peace to dwell in peace beneath the shadow of our strength."

CHAPTER XV.

It was at this juncture that Francisco recovered his senses. "Oh," he gasped, opening his eyes and sitting up, "is it done, and am I dead?"

"No, no, you are alive and safe," answered Leonard. "Stay where you are and don't look over the edge, or you will faint again. Here, take my hand. Now, you brute," and he made energetic motions to the priest, indicating that he must lead them back by the path they came and at the same time tapped his rifle significantly.

The man understood and started down the dark tunnel as though he were glad to go, Leonard holding his robe with one hand, while with the other he pressed the muzzle of the loaded rifle against the back of his neck. Francisco followed, leaning on Leonard's shoulder, for he could not walk alone. As they had come, so they returned. They passed down the steps of stone which were hollowed in the body of the colossus. They traversed the long underground tunnel, and once more, to their intense relief, they stood upon the solid ground and in the open air. Now that the moon was up and the mist which had darkened the air was gone they could see their whereabouts. They had emerged upon a platform of rock within a bow shot of the great gates of the palace, from whence the secret subterranean passage used by the priests was gained, its opening being hidden cunningly among the stone work of the temple.

"I wonder where the others are?" asked Leonard anxiously of Francisco.

As he spoke Juanna, wrapped in her dark cloak, appeared, apparently out of the stones of the wall, and with her Otter, the settlement men bearing their dead companion, and a considerable company of priests, among whom, however, Nam was not to be seen.

"Oh, is that you, Leonard?" said Juanna in English and in a voice broken with fear. "Thank heaven that you are safe!"

"Thank heaven that we are all safe!" he answered. "Come, let us get on. No; we can walk, thank you," and he waved away the priests, who produced the litters from where they had hidden them under the wall.

The priests fell back, and they walked on. At the gate of the palace a welcome sight met their eyes, for here stood Olfan, and with him at least a hundred captains and soldiers, who lifted their spears in salute as they advanced.

"Olfan, hear our bidding," said Juanna. "Suffer no priest of the snake to enter the palace gates. We give you command over them, even to death. Set guards at every gate and come with us."

The ex-king bowed and issued some orders, in obedience to which the sullen priests fell back murmuring. Then they all passed the gates, crossed the courtyard and presently stood in the torchlit throne-room, where Juanna had slept on the previous night. Here food had been prepared for them by Soa, who looked at them curiously, especially at Leonard and Francisco, as though indeed she had never expected to see them again.

"Hearken, Olfan," said Juanna, "we have saved your life tonight, and you have sworn fealty to us. Is it not so?"

"It is so, queen," the warrior answered. "And I will be faithful to my oath. This heart, that but for you had now been cold, beats for you alone. The life that you gave back to me is yours, and for you I live and die."

And he glanced at her with an expression in which, as it seemed to Juanna, human feeling was mixed with supernatural awe. Was it possible, she wondered with a thrill of fear, that this savage king was forgetting the worship of the goddess for that of the woman. And did he begin to suspect that she was no goddess, after all? Time would show, but at least the look in his eyes alarmed her.

"Fear not," he went on. "A thousand men shall guard you night and day. The power of Nam is broken for awhile, and now all this company may sleep in peace."

"It is well, Olfan. Tomorrow morning, after we have eaten, we will talk again, for we have much to say. Till then watch!"

The great man bowed and went, and at last they were alone.

"Let us eat," said Leonard. "Hello, what is this? Spirit or a very good imitation of it. Well, I never wanted a glass of grog more in my life."

When they had finished their meal, at the request of Leonard, Juanna translated all that had been said in the temple, and among her listeners there was none more interested than Soa.

"Say, Soa," said Leonard when she had finished, "you did not expect to see us come back alive, did you? And that is why you staid away?"

"No, deliverer," she answered. "I thought that you would be killed, every one of you. And so it must have come about had it not been for the Shepherdess; also I staid away because those who have looked upon the snake once do not desire to see him again. Many years ago I was bride to the snake, deliverer, and had I not fled my fate would have been the fate of her who died this night."

"Well, I don't wonder that you ran," said Leonard.

"Oh, baas," broke in Otter, "why did you not shoot that old medicine man, as I told you? It would have been easy when you were about it, baas, and now he would have been broken like an eggshell thrown from a housetop and not alive and full of the meat of malice. He is mad with rage and wickedness, and I say that he will kill us all if he can."

"I rather wish I had," said Leonard, pulling his beard. "I thought of it, but I could not do everything, and on future occasions, Otter, will you remember that your name is Silence? Luckily these people do not understand you. If they did, you would ruin us all. What is the matter, Soa?"

"Nothing, deliverer," she answered, "only I was thinking that Nam is my father, and I am glad that you did not shoot him, as this black dog, who is named a god, suggests."

"Of gods I know nothing, you old cow," answered Otter angrily. "They are a faroff people, though it seems that I am one of them—at any rate among these fools, your kinsman—but of dogs I can tell you something, and it is that they bite."

"Yes, and cows toss dogs," said Soa, showing her teeth.

"Here is another complication," thought Leonard to himself. "One fine day this woman will make it up with her respected parent and betray us, and then where shall we be? Well, among so many dangers an extra one does not matter."

"I must go to bed," said Juanna faintly. "My head is swimming. I cannot forget those horrors and that giddy place. When I first saw where I was, I nearly fainted and fell, but after awhile I grew more used to it. Indeed while I was speaking to the people I quite forgot my fear, and the height seemed to exhilarate me. What a sight it was! When all is said and done, it is a grand thing to have lived through such an experience. I wonder if any one has ever seen its like?"

"You are a marvelous woman, Juanna," said Leonard, "and I offer you my congratulations. We owe our lives to your readiness and courage."

"You see, I was right in insisting on coming with you," she answered somewhat aggressively.

"For our sakes, yes; for your own, I am not so sure. To tell you the truth, I think that we should have done better not to have come at all. However, things look a little more promising now, though Nam and his company have still to be reckoned with, and we don't seem much nearer the rubies, which are the main object."

"Yes," said Juanna, "but you have got to find them. Come, Soa, undress me. I feel half dead. Good night."

"Francisco," said Leonard as he rolled himself up in his blanket, "you had a narrow escape tonight. If I had missed my hold!"

"Yes, Outram, it was lucky for me that your arm was strong and your mind quick. Ah, I am a dreadful coward, and I can see it now!" and he shuddered. "Always from a child I have believed that I shall die from a fall from some high place, and when I saw I thought that my hour had come. At first I did not understand, for I was watching the senora's face in the moonlight, and to me she looked like an angel. Then I saw, and my senses left me. It was as though hands were stretched up from the blackness to drag me down—yes, I saw the hand—but you saved me this time, Outram, though that will not help me, for I shall die in some such way at last. So be it. It is best that I should die, who cannot conquer the evil of my heart."

"Nonsense, my dear fellow!" said Leonard. "Don't talk like that about dying. We can none of us afford to die just at present—that is, unless we are obliged to do so. Your nerves are upset, and no wonder! As for 'the evil of your heart,' I wish that most men had as little. The world would be better. Come, go to sleep. You will feel very differently tomorrow."

Francisco smiled sadly and shook his head, then knelt and began to say his prayers. The last thing that Leonard saw before his eye closed in sleep was the rapt girlish face of the priest, round which the light of the taper fell like an aureole, as he knelt muttering prayer after prayer with his pale lips.

It was 9 o'clock before Leonard awoke next morning—for they had not slept till nearly 3—to find Francisco already up, dressed, and, as usual, praying. When Leonard was dressed, they adjourned to Juanna's room, where breakfast was ready for them. Here they found Otter, looking somewhat disturbed.

"Baas, baas," he said, "they have come and will not go away!"

"Who?" asked Leonard.

"The woman, baas, she who was given to me to wife, and many other women—her servants—with her. There are more than 20 of them outside, baas, and all of them very big. Now, what shall I do with her, baas, I, who came to serve you and to seek the red stones that you desired, and not a woman tall enough to be my grandmother?"

"I really don't know and don't care," answered Leonard. "If you will be a god, you must take the consequences. Only look here, Otter, look up your tongue, for this woman will teach you to speak her language, and she may be a spy."

"Yes, baas, I will see to that. Is not my name Silence, and shall women make me talk—me, who have always hated them? But—the baas would not like to marry her? I am a god, and my heart is large. I will give her to you, baas."

"Certainly not," answered Leonard decidedly. "See if the breakfast is ready. No, I forgot. You are a god, so climb up into that throne and look the part, if you can."

As he spoke Juanna came from her room, looking a little pale, and they sat down to breakfast. Before they had finished their meal Soa announced that Olfan was waiting without. Juanna ordered him to be admitted, and presently he entered.

"Is all well, Olfan?" asked Juanna.

"All is well, queen," he answered. "Nam and 300 priests held counsel at dawn in the house of the priests yonder. There is much stir and talk in the city, but the hearts of the people are light because the ancient gods have come back to us, bringing peace with them."

"Good," said Juanna. Then she began to question him artfully on many things, and by degrees they learned more of the People of the Mist.

It seemed, as Leonard had already guessed, that they were a very ancient people, having existed for countless generations on the same misty upland plains. They were not, however, altogether isolated, for occasionally they made war with the savage tribes. But they never intermarried with these tribes, all the captives taken in their wars being offered in sacrifice at the religious festivals. The real governing power in the community was the society of the priests of the snake, who held their office by hereditary tenure, outsiders being admitted to their body only under very exceptional circumstances. The council of this society chose the kings, and when they were weary of one of them they sacrificed him and chose another, either from among his issue or elsewhere. This being the custom, as may be imagined, the relations between church and state are much strained, but hitherto, as Olfan explained with suppressed rage, the church had by far the best of it. Indeed the king, for the time being, was only its mouthpiece or executive officer. He led the armies, but the superstitions of the people, and even of the soldiers themselves, prevented him from wielding any real power, and unless he chanced to die naturally his end was nearly always the same—to be sacrificed when the seasons were bad or Jal was angry.

The country was large, but sparsely populated, the fighting men numbering not more than 4,000, of whom about half lived in the great city, the rest occupying villages here and there on the mountain slopes. As a rule, the people were monogamous, except the priests. It was the custom of sacrifice which kept down the population to its low level, made the power of the priests absolute and their wealth greater than that of all the other inhabitants of the country put together, for they chose the victims that had offended against Jal or against the mother goddess and confiscated their possessions to the service of the temple.

Thus the great herds of half wild cattle which the travelers had met with on the plains belonged to the priests, and the priests took a fourth of the produce of every man's field and garden—that is, when they did not take it all, and his life with it.

Twice in every year great festivals were held in the Temple of Jal, at the beginning of the spring season and in the autumn after the ingathering of the crops. At each of these festivals many victims were offered in sacrifice, some upon the stone and some by being hurled into the boiling pool beneath the statue, there to be consumed by the snake or swept down the secret course of the underground river. The feast celebrated in the spring was sacred to Jal, and that in the autumn to the mother goddess, and there was this difference between them—that at the spring ceremony female victims only were sacrificed to Jal to propitiate him and to avert his evil influence, while at the autumn celebration males alone were offered up to the mother goddess in gratitude for her gifts of plenty; also victims were occasionally thrown to the snake that his hunger might be satisfied, and the priests had other rites that, Olfan added, they would have an opportunity of witnessing if the spring festival which should be celebrated on the second day from that date were held according to custom.

"It shall be celebrated," said Juanna almost fiercely.

Then Leonard, who had hitherto listened in silence, asked a question. "How is it," he said, "that Nam and his fellows, being already in absolute power, were so willing to accept the gods Jal and Aca when they appeared in person, seeing that henceforth they must obey, not rule?"

"For two reasons, lord," Olfan answered. "First, because the gods are gods, and their servants know them, and, secondly, because Nam has of late stood in danger of losing his authority. Of all the chief priests that have been told of, Nam is the most cruel and the most greedy. For three years he has doubled the tale of sacrifices, and, though the people love these sights of death, they murmur, for none knows upon whom the knife shall fall. Therefore he was glad to greet the gods come back, since he thought that they would confirm his power and set him higher than he sat before. Now he is astonished because they proclaim peace and will have none of the sacrifice of men, and Nam does not love such gentle gods."

"Yet he shall obey them," said Ot