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# THE STRANGE RIDE OF MORROWBIE JUKES.

BY RUDYARD KIPLING.

(Continued)

Then I gingerly put the corpse out on the quicksand. In doing so—it was lying face downward—I tore the frail and rotten khaki shooting coat open, disclosing a hideous cavity in the back. I have already told you that the dry sand had, as it were, mummified the body. A moment's glance showed that the gaping hole had been caused by a gunshot wound. The gun must have been fired with the muzzle almost touching the back. The shooting coat, being intact, had been drawn over the body after death, which must have been instantaneous. The secret of the poor wretch's death was plain to me in a flash. Some one of the crater, presumably Gunga Dass, must have shot him with his own gun—the shot that fitted the brown cartridges. He had never attempted to escape in the face of the rifle fire from the boat.

I pushed the corpse out hastily and saw it sink from sight literally in a few seconds. I shuddered as I watched. In a dazed, half-conscious way I turned to peruse the notebook. A stained and discolored slip of paper had been inserted between the binding and the back and dropped out as I opened the pages. This is what it contained: "Four out from crow clump; 8 left; 9 out; 2 right; 3 back; 2 left; 14 out; 2 left; 7 out; 1 left; 9 back; 2 right; 6 back; 4 right; 7 back." The paper had been burned and charred at the edges. What it meant I could not understand. I sat down on the dried bents, turning it over and over between my fingers until I was aware of Gunga Dass standing immediately behind me with glowing eyes and outstretched hands.

"Have you got it?" he panted. "Will you not let me look at it also? I swear that I will return it."  
"Got what? Return what?" I asked. "That which you have in your hands. It will help us both." He stretched out his long, birdlike talons, trembling with eagerness.

"I could never find it," he continued. "He had secreted it about his person. Therefore I shot him, but nevertheless I was unable to obtain it."

Gunga Dass had quite forgotten his little fiction about the rifle bullet. I received the information perfectly calmly. Morality is blunted by consorting with the dead who are alive.

"What on earth are you raving about? What is it you want me to give you?"  
"The piece of paper in the notebook. It will help us both. Oh, you fool! You fool! Can you not see what it will do for us? We shall escape."

"His voice rose almost to a scream, and he danced with excitement before me. I own I was moved at the chance of getting away."

"Don't skip! Explain yourself. Do you mean to say that this slip of paper will help us? What does it mean?"  
"Read it aloud! Read it aloud! I beg and I pray to you to read it aloud."



You can tell a healthy woman by the way she dances. When a healthy woman dances every nerve and every muscle and every drop of blood in her whole body dances. For the moment she resembles in grace and easy movement a bird. That is the dance of health.

There is another measure to which tens of thousands of women are keeping step. It is a slow and solemn measure, and is the "Dance of Death." The woman who fails to take proper care of herself in a womanly way is keeping step to this measure and is unfitted for widowhood and motherhood, and doomed to an early grave or to a life of suffering. Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription is the best of all medicines for ailing women. It acts directly on the delicate and important organs of femininity and makes them strong, healthy and vigorous. It allays inflammation, heals ulceration, soothes pain and gives rest to the tortured nerves. It fits for widowhood and motherhood. It banishes the squeamishness of the period of suspense and makes the little stranger's advent easy and almost painless. It insures baby's health and an ample supply of nourishment. It has transformed thousands of nervous, sickly, fretful women into healthy, happy wives and competent mothers. It sends the blood dancing to the quick-step of health, through the veins of maid, wife and mother. All good druggists sell it.

"I was all broken down from nervous prostration," writes Mrs. Henry Barlow, of Lonsdale, Providence Co., R. I. "Since taking Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription I have had more relief than from all the doctors' medicine."

A clear complexion. Any one can have it who keeps the blood pure. Constipation causes impure blood. Dr. Pierce's Pellets cure constipation. One is a laxative, two a cathartic. Never gripe. Druggists sell them.

I did so Gunga Dass listened delightedly and drew an irregular line in the sand with his fingers.

"See now! It was the length of his gun barrels without the stock. I have those barrels. Four gun barrels out from the place where I caught crows—straight out: do you follow me? Then three left. Ah, how well I remember when that man worked it out night after night! Then nine out, and so on. Out is always straight before you across the quicksand. He told me so before I killed him."

"But if you knew all this why didn't you get out before?"

"I did not know it. He told me that he was working it out a year and a half ago, and how he was working it out night after night when the boat had gone away and he could get out near the quicksand safely. Then he said that we would get away together. But I was afraid that he would leave me behind one night when he had worked it all out, and so I shot him. Besides, it is not advisable that the men who once get in here should escape. Only I, and I am a Brahman."

The prospect of escape had brought Gunga Dass' caste back to him. He stood up, walked about and gesticulated violently. Eventually I managed to make him talk soberly, and he told me how this Englishman had spent six months night after night in exploring, inch by inch, the passage across the quicksand; how he had declared it to be simplicity itself up to within about 20 yards of the river bank after turning the flank of the left horn of the horse-shoe. This much he had evidently not completed when Gunga Dass shot him with his own gun.

In my frenzy of delight at the possibilities of escape I recollect shaking hands effusively with Gunga Dass after we had decided that we were to make an attempt to get away that very night. It was weary work waiting throughout the afternoon.

About 10 o'clock, as far as I could judge, when the moon had just risen above the lip of the crater, Gunga Dass made a move for his burrow to bring out the gun barrels whereby to measure our path. All the other wretched inhabitants had retired to their lairs long ago. The guardian boat drifted down stream some hours before, and we were utterly alone by the crow clump. Gunga Dass, while carrying the gun barrels, let slip the piece of paper which was to be our guide. I stooped down hastily to recover it, and as I did so I was aware that the diabolical Brahman was aiming a violent blow at the back of my head with the gun barrel. It was too late to turn round. I must have received the blow somewhere on the nape of my neck. A hundred thousand fiery stars danced before my eyes, and I fell forward senseless at the edge of the quicksand.

When I recovered consciousness, the moon was going down, and I was sensible of intolerable pain in the back of my head. Gunga Dass had disappeared, and my mouth was full of blood. I lay down again and prayed that I might die without more ado. Then the unreasoning fury which I have before mentioned laid hold upon me, and I staggered inland toward the walls of the crater. It seemed that some one was calling to me in a whisper. "Sahib! Sahib! Sahib!" exactly as my bearer used to call me in the mornings.

I fancied that I was delirious until a handful of sand fell at my feet. Then I looked up and saw a head peering down into the amphitheater—the head of Dunnoo, my dog boy, who attended to my collies. As soon as he had attracted my attention he held up his hand and showed a rope. I motioned, staggering to and fro the while, that he should throw it down. It was a couple of leather punkah ropes knotted together, with a loop at one end. I slipped the loop over my head and under my arms; heard Dunnoo urge something forward; was conscious that I was being dragged, face downward, up the steep sand slope, and the next instant found myself, choked and half fainting, on the sand hills overlooking the crater. Dunnoo, with his face ashy gray in the moonlight, implored me not to stay, but to get back to my tent at once.

It seems that he had tracked Pomic's footprints 14 miles across the sands to the crater; had returned and told my servants, who flatly refused to meddle with any one, white or black, once fallen into the hideous village of the dead, whereupon Dunnoo had taken one of my ponies and a couple of punkah ropes, returned to the crater and hauled me out, as I have described.

To cut a long story short, Dunnoo is now my personal servant on a gold-mine for a month, a sum which I still think far too little for the services he has rendered. Nothing on earth will induce me to go near that devilish spot

again or to reveal its whereabouts more clearly than I have done. Of Gunga Dass I have never found a trace, nor do I wish to do so. My sole motive in giving this to be published is the hope that some one may possibly identify, from the details and the inventory which I have given above, the corpse of the man in the olive green hunting suit.

Britons Unable to Speak English.

It is not generally realized what a large number of Britons, born and bred at home, have never succeeded in mastering the national language. In Wales, according to the last census taken, there are no fewer than 508,936 people who cannot speak English, Welsh being their only language. In Scotland there are 48,738 persons who can speak nothing but Gaelic. And in Ireland there are 32,121 who can express themselves only in the Irish tongue. Of course, these are mostly old people, and English is gradually displacing the native languages of Ireland and Wales.

It is a curious circumstance that while in Wales fewer people speak both English and Welsh than in Scotland nearly five times as many use both languages as those speaking Gaelic alone, while in Ireland 20 times as many speak English and Irish as those who speak Irish only.

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