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"I am Esau, the son of Isaac, and my people live far to the southwest at Beersheba."

"What, the great shiek Isaac, the son of Abraham?"

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"Ah, the story of the greatness and riches of Abraham and Isaac has spread through all the country. But," he added, a shadow of resentment crossing his face, "why are thy people so exclusive? Are not the Hittites and other nations dwelling in the land great in riches and power? Why should Abraham and Isaac and their people continue as strangers in the land and refuse to mingle with us?"

An awkward pause followed during which Esau struggled for an answer. He had a vague realization that it had something to do with the religion of his people. He was familiar with the worship of Jehovah, and had often heard his father and grandfather speak of the false gods of the nations about them and declare that they must have nothing to do with them, but he had never before come face to face with such questions as this stranger had propounded, and for want of better answer, he parried the questions, by asking: "And art thou a Hittite?"

"I am Beeri, one of the chiefs of the Hittite kingdom. But tell me," he persisted, "why do thy people have so little intercourse with the nations about them?"

"I think it is because our religion forbids," stammered Esau, not understanding just why it should.

"But are not the gods of the Hittites just as good as the gods of Abraham and Isaac? Why need our worship separate us? But come, thou dost need rest and refreshment, after thy cruel fall. It is not far to my home." And stooping down, he gathered up the scattered arrows and replaced them in Esau's quiver, and then started down the path, while Esau followed.

"Thy coming is well timed," said Beeri, as they drew near to the chief's tent, "for the people are gathering for a feast to the gods on the morrow."

A feast to the gods? Esau started, uneasily. What would his father and mother think of his presence at such an affair? He was on the point of saying that he could not remain, when the laud of Beeri flashed through his mind, and he asked himself: "Is our God better than the gods of the Hittites? What harm can come from sharing in their feast?"

Beeri noted the hesitation and embarrassment, and asked, in a tone of displeasure: "You will not refuse to remain?"

"No," hastily responded Esau, too fearful to make the reply he knew he ought to make.

"Good, and here we are," he added, as they reached the tent and the servants came hurrying forward to receive them and make them comfortable.

"Sit you here and rest, while I look after the preparations for the morrow," said Beeri, directing a servant to place a rug for Esau in the entrance to the tent, and then departing.

The tent was large and roomy, more pretentious than any about, and occupied a knoll overlooking the grove where the people were gathering, and in the center of which was the great image around which the feast was to be held

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"Yes, the same," responded Esau.

"Ah, the story of the greatness and riches of Abraham and Isaac has spread through all the country. But," he added, a shadow of resentment crossing his face, "why are thy people so exclusive? Are not the Hittites and other nations dwelling in the land great in riches and power? Why should Abraham and Isaac and their people continue as strangers in the land and refuse to mingle with us?"

An awkward pause followed during which Esau struggled for an answer. He had a vague realization that it had something to do with the religion of his people. He was familiar with the worship of Jehovah, and had often heard his father and grandfather speak of the false gods of the nations about them and declare that they must have nothing to do with them, but he had never before come face to face with such questions as this stranger had propounded, and for want of better answer, he parried the questions, by asking: "And art thou a Hittite?"

"I am Beeri, one of the chiefs of the Hittite kingdom. But tell me," he persisted, "why do thy people have so little intercourse with the nations about them?"

"I think it is because our religion forbids," stammered Esau, not understanding just why it should.

"But are not the gods of the Hittites just as good as the gods of Abraham and Isaac? Why need our worship separate us? But come, thou dost need rest and refreshment, after thy cruel fall. It is not far to my home." And stooping down, he gathered up the scattered arrows and replaced them in Esau's quiver, and then started down the path, while Esau followed.

"Thy coming is well timed," said Beeri, as they drew near to the chief's tent, "for the people are gathering for a feast to the gods on the morrow."

A feast to the gods? Esau started, uneasily. What would his father and mother think of his presence at such an affair? He was on the point of saying that he could not remain, when the laud of Beeri flashed through his mind, and he asked himself: "Is our God better than the gods of the Hittites? What harm can come from sharing in their feast?"

Beeri noted the hesitation and embarrassment, and asked, in a tone of displeasure: "You will not refuse to remain?"

"No," hastily responded Esau, too fearful to make the reply he knew he ought to make.

"Good, and here we are," he added, as they reached the tent and the servants came hurrying forward to receive them and make them comfortable.

"Sit you here and rest, while I look after the preparations for the morrow," said Beeri, directing a servant to place a rug for Esau in the entrance to the tent, and then departing.

The tent was large and roomy, more pretentious than any about, and occupied a knoll overlooking the grove where the people were gathering, and in the center of which was the great image around which the feast was to be held

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