

say again. I have spoken, I, who am the king's servant. Let the will of the king be done."

Then I stood waiting to be killed. Thrice Dingaan looked on me with fear in his face striving with its rage. When at last he spoke it was one word, "Go!" not three words, "Take him away."

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE WAR WITH THE HALAKAZI PEOPLE. Now, my father, I must tell of how Umslopogaa the Slaughterer and Galazi the Wolf fared in their war against the People of the Halakazi.

The headmen asked would he then make war on Dingaan, the king? Umslopogaa answered, No, he would win the favor of the king thus, and he told them of the Lily maid and of the Halakazi tribe in Swaziland, and of how he would go up against that tribe.

Now the headmen said yea to this, and some said nay, and the talk ran high and lasted till the evening. But when the evening was come Umslopogaa rose and said he was chief under the ax, and none other, and that this was his will that they should go up against the Halakazi.

Now they ran to the spot and saw a little hole in the rock scarcely bigger than an ant bear's burrow, and through the hole came sounds and some light.

Then Umslopogaa crept into the hole, taking no shield, but holding Groonmaker before him, and at his heels crept Galazi. When he had gone the length of six spears he stretched out his hand and, as he trusted to do, he found the feet of that man who had gone before and died in the place.

Then Umslopogaa crept into the hole, taking no shield, but holding Groonmaker before him, and at his heels crept Galazi. When he had gone the length of six spears he stretched out his hand and, as he trusted to do, he found the feet of that man who had gone before and died in the place.

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many men to win the great cave, and there must the work be finished. Thither then went the Slaughterer presently with such of his impi as was left to him. Alas! many were slain. But how could they have died better than in that fight? Also those that were left were as good as all, for now they knew that they should not be overcome easily while Ax and Club still led the way.

Now they stood before a hill measuring perchance three thousand paces round its base. It was of no great height and yet unclimbable, for after a man had gone up a little way the sides of it were sheer, offering no foothold to the rock rabbits and lizards. No one was to be seen without this hill, nor in the great kraal of the Halakazi that lay to the east of it, and yet the ground about this was trampled with the hoofs of oxen and the feet of men, and from within the mountain came the sound of lowing cattle.

"Here is the nest of the Halakazi," quoth Galazi the Wolf.

"Here is the nest indeed," said Umslopogaa, "but how shall we come at the eggs to suck them? There are no branches to this tree."

"But there is a hole in the trunk," answered the Wolf.

Now he led them a little way till they came to a place where the soil was trampled at the entrance to a cattle kraal, and they saw that there was a low cave that led into the cliff like an arch way such as you white men build. But this archway was filled up with great blocks of stone placed upon each other in such fashion that it might not be forced from without. After the cattle were driven in it had been filled up.

"Not here may we enter," said Galazi; "follow me."

So they followed him and came to the north side of the mountain, and there, two spear casts away, a soldier was standing. But when he saw them he vanished of a sudden.

"There is the place," said Galazi, "and the fox has gone to earth in it."

Now they ran to the spot and saw a little hole in the rock scarcely bigger than an ant bear's burrow, and through the hole came sounds and some light.

Then Umslopogaa crept into the hole, taking no shield, but holding Groonmaker before him, and at his heels crept Galazi. When he had gone the length of six spears he stretched out his hand and, as he trusted to do, he found the feet of that man who had gone before and died in the place.

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droke and fled. Then the rest came through in peace.

CHAPTER XXIV. THE FINDING OF NADA.



The dress was the dress of a man, but this was no man's form.

Umslopogaa marshaled his companions. "Little light is left," he said, "but it must serve us to start these comes from their burrows. Come, my brother Galazi, you know where the comes hide; then take my place and lead us."

So Galazi led the impi. Turning a corner of the glen he came with them to a great open space that had a fountain in the midst of it, and this place was full of thousands of cattle. Then he turned again to the left and brought them to the inner side of the mountain where the cliff hung over, and here was the mouth of a great cave. Now the cave was dark, but by the door of the cave was stacked a pipe of resinous wood to serve as torches.

"Here is that which shall give us light," said Galazi, and one man of every two took a torch and lighted it at a fire that burned near the mouth of the cave. Then they rushed in, waving the flaming torches and assegais aloft. Here for the last time the Halakazi stood against them, and the torches floated up and down upon the wave of war. But they did not stand for very long. The People of the Ax drove them out into the open and finished them by starlight among the cattle.

In one corner of the cave Umslopogaa saw a knot of men clustered around something as though to guard it. He rushed at the men and with him went Galazi and others. Very soon most of them had spoken their last, for Groonmaker clave through them as an assegai cleaves the air, and there were others to deal with those he left. But when Umslopogaa was through by the light of his torch he saw a man, tall and slender, who leaned against the wall of the cave and held a shield before his face.

"You are a coward!" he cried, and smote with Groonmaker. The great ax pierced the hide, but missing the head behind rang loud against the rock, and as it rang a sweet voice said:

"Ah! my brother, slay me not. Wherefore are you angry with me?"

Now the shield had come away from the holder's hands upon the blade of the ax, and there was something in the notes of the voice that caused Umslopogaa to smile no more. It was as though a memory of childhood had come to him in a dream. His torch was burning low, but he thrust it forward to look on him who crouched against the rock. The dress was the dress of a man, but this was no man's form. Nay, rather that of a woman lovely to look on and well nigh white in color. She dropped her hands from before her face, and now he saw her well. He saw eyes that shone as stars, hair that curled and fell upon the shoulders, and such beauty as was not known among our people. And as the voice had spoken to him of something that was lost, so did the eyes seem to shine across the blackness of many years and the beauty to bring back he knew not what.

He looked on her in all her beauty and she looked on him in his fierceness and his might, red with war and wounds. They both looked, while the torchlight flared on them, on the walls of the cave and the broad blade of the Groonmaker, and from around rose the sounds of the slaying.

"How are you named who are so fair to see?" he asked at length.

"I am named the Lily now. Once I had another name. Nada, daughter of Umbova, I was once, but name and all else are dead and I go to join them. Slay me and make an end. I will shut my eyes that I may not see the great ax flash."

Now Umslopogaa gazed upon her again and Groonmaker fell from his hand.

"Look on me, Nada, daughter of Umbova," he said in a low voice, "look on me and say who am I."

She looked once again, and yet again. Now her face was thrust forward as one who gazes over the edge of the world. It grew fixed and strange. "By my heart!" she said, "by my heart thou art Umslopogaa my brother who is dead, and whom dead as living I have loved ever and alone."

Then the torch flared out, but Umslopogaa took her in the darkness and pressed her to him and kissed her, the sister whom he had found after many years, and she kissed him.

"You kiss me now," she said, "yet not long ago that great ax shore my locks, missing me by but a finger's breadth, and still the sound of slaughter rings in my ears. Ah! a boon of you, my brother, a boon! Let there be no more death since we are met once more. The people of the Halakazi are conquered, and it is their just doom, for thus, in this same way, they slew those with whom I lived aforeside. Yet they have treated me well, not forcing me into wedlock and withholding me from Dingaan. So spare them, my brother, if you may."

Then Umslopogaa lifted up his voice, commanding that the killing should cease, and sent messengers running swiftly, with these words: "This is the command of Bulalio, that he who lifts hand against one more of the people of the Halakazi shall himself know the ax."

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