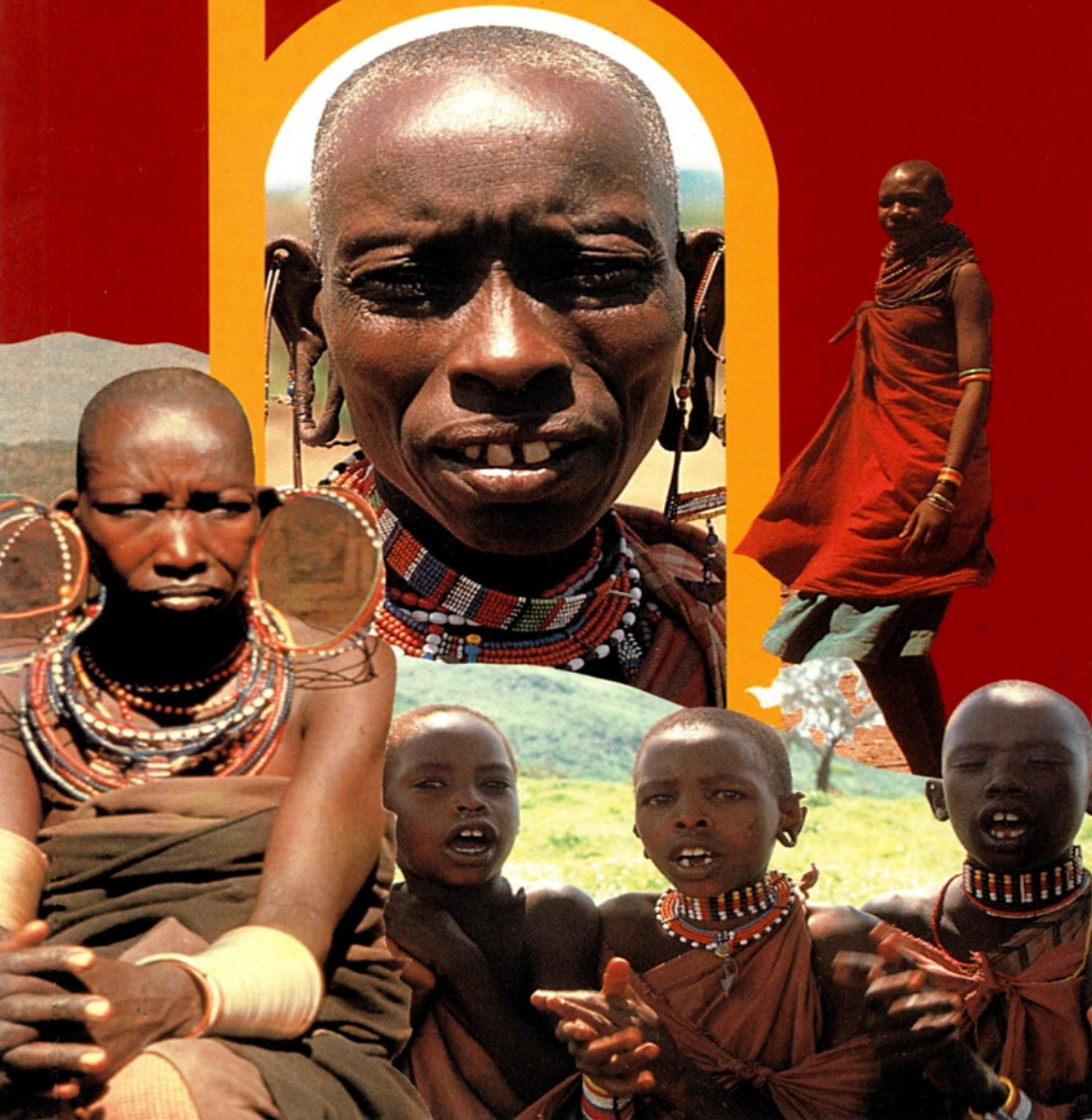
By

PAUL WHITE

THE JUNGLE DOCTOR

MAASAI



Maasai

By Paul White.

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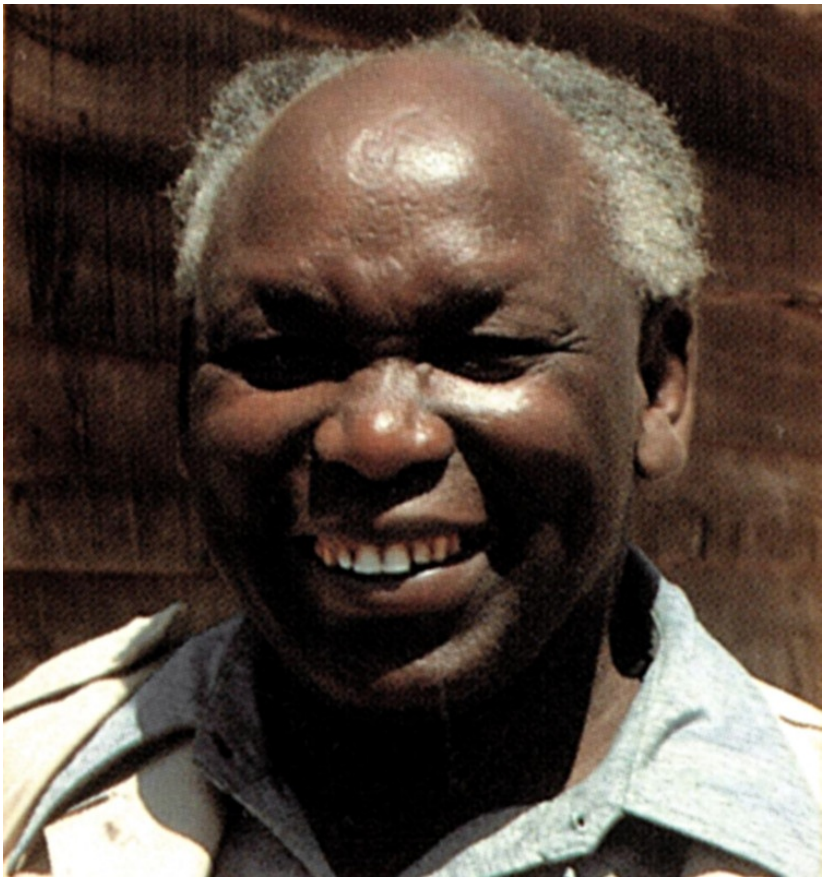
Dedication

With grateful thanks to two great men of the Bible Society:

- **John Mpaayei**, M.A. (Cantab.), Maasai leader on whose life this story is based.
- **Herbert Maxwell Arrowsmith**, M.B.E., visionary, achiever, encourager and motivator.



John Mpaayei

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Maasai Greeting

"Do you remember the day we dug up six cobra's eggs in the sweet potato garden, Bwana?" asked Daudi pumping up the small kerosene heater.

Jungle Doctor put a dish full of needles and forceps into a cut-down oil-tin—their makeshift steriliser. "How could I ever forget it, Daudi? How much better to squash them and not to have a battle on our hands when they hatched."

"*Ngheeh!* that's how I felt this morning. I never again want to see anything like that smallpox epidemic we had two harvests ago."

"That was a grim time—people dying by the score, children blinded and everyone who had it pock-marked for life." The doctor looked down at a scar the size of a fingernail on his left arm. "You and I and the hospital staff were safe, Daudi, because we'd been vaccinated."

The cheerful hospital assistant nodded and turned over the pages of the record book. "Today we've saved 130 people from the risk of another epidemic."

"That was one of the cheapest and most effective bits of disease-fighting that anyone could do. My concern is for those who didn't come."

Daudi ran his finger down the list of names. "All but two of those who did come were from our local tribe. Those other two were Maasai. There are a few of them coming to hospital these days but many, many others prefer to wear a charm round their necks." He shrugged. "Our people are learning but the Maasai who travel all over the country—wherever there is grass for their cattle—they are people who go their own way and say so with loud voices and sharp knives and long spears."

"True, but some of them are coming to the hospital. In time we'll win their confidence."

"*Kah!*" grunted Daudi. "It will take many days and there will be scorpions along the path." He looked up. "Here are some of them now."

Striding down the track were a group of tall warriors each carrying a spear. One of them was limping, a strip of blood-stained cloth tied round his thigh.

We greeted them. One solitary ochre-red arm gave curt acknowledgement. They were soon out of sight.

"Do you think those are the cattle thieves that have been making trouble round here lately?"

Daudi nodded and chuckled. The instruments were dried and stowed carefully in the back of the landrover. In went the foldable tables and chairs.

"And now for home," said Jungle Doctor as he coaxed their sturdy vehicle through a stretch of rough stones. "The Maasai have great potential, Daudi. With education they could be leaders in Africa."

He swung the steering wheel and they jolted onto the tight-packed gravel which was the main east–west road in Tanzania. Away ahead of them an animal staggered out of the scrub and fell. They peered through the East African heat haze.

"Stop! Quickly!" shouted Daudi. "It's a wild pig. He'll make fine food for the hospital." He grabbed a *panga*, leapt to the ground and rushed forward but the animal had struggled to its feet and made off into the jungle.

Near where it disappeared a motorcycle lay on its side and beyond it a figure sprawled in the dust. They ran to the unconscious man and bent over him. "He's alive," muttered the doctor and nodded with satisfaction as he saw Daudi move the injured man's head sideways and tilt his chin forward. "That's it. We mustn't let him swallow his tongue and choke."

Daudi nodded and asked, "Concussion?"

"Yes, and perhaps a fractured skull. He's a wise man, this one. That crash helmet probably saved his life. See, his left arm is broken. We must get him to

hospital but, first, off with his coat and shirt."

Removing the coat was a struggle. The same was true for the crash helmet only more so.

"He's breathing well, Daudi. Life matters more than clothes."

"Truly," said Daudi and dragged from under the front seat a first aid box. A few snips of the scissors and we were able to put on a useful temporary splint made from a medical journal and a roll of sticking plaster.

The injured man's eyes opened. He peered up at them and muttered in English, "What's happened? My machine… where?"

"You hit a wild pig and came off. The motorbike looks all right but you've broken an arm and your head has taken a solid bump. We are taking you to the hospital." His answer was a brief nod.

They shouldered the motorcycle into the back of the landrover and made its rider comfortable on the back seat. They drove slowly through tall elephant grass and, with the buildings almost in sight, the injured man slumped against Daudi.

"He's unconscious again, Doctor."

"Hang on as we cross the river." The landrover skidded dizzily in the mud on the far side but they reached the hospital safely.

Many willing hands helped to carry the unconscious man into the ward.

"*Kah!*" panted the doctor. "He's a big man, Daudi. I think he's a Maasai."

The injured man's eyes opened. In cultured English he said, "And you are an Australian."

The doctor grinned and nodded his head. "Now take things quietly. You're knocked about a bit. Left arm broken and a considerable bump on the side of your head. There's nothing that time and rest will not repair but you could easily have an elephant-sized headache."

Huskily he replied, "It is already there."

"We have the answer. Swallow these. They'll blunt the teeth of pain while we set your arm."

"They're great stuff," he whispered as the plaster was moulded round his forearm and before the plaster-of-paris was set he yawned and went to sleep.

As they were drinking tea in the office the doctor asked, "Have you any idea who he is, Daudi?"

"He looks like a person of importance, Bwana. How often would you see a Maasai riding a motor bicycle and wearing a safari jacket?"

"And a crash helmet," added the doctor. "Here is a Maasai with a difference. We've met so many who have time only for the old ways. They have scorn for schools and education, but there are some…"

A cheerful voice called, "*Hodi?* May I come in?" The postman swung off his battered bicycle. "Here is the mail, Doctor. *Yoh!* it becomes heavy after a hundred kilometre ride—a long way, especially if you have a pain at the place where your spine ends."

"Did you fall off, Yohana?"

He nodded. "That is exactly what I did. And behold, I hit the ground with speed."

"*Hongo!* And how did you manage that?"

Yohana spat. "It's those Maasai, Doctor. *Yoh!* They are a *kali* lot these days. They drink much beer. Their wisdom becomes less and their desire to do damage increases. *Kumbe!* And do they go round making trouble? Today six of them saw me. They all had spears. They shouted and started to run towards me but I pedalled with strength and left them behind. It was when I looked back over my shoulder that the front wheel found itself in a large hole and…"

He made comical hand-signs that drew a picture in the air of a somersault

and a heavy landing.

"Truly, they are fierce people."

"*Eheh!* And because of this many men of my tribe carry bows and arrows."

"Two years ago few of the nomad Maasai visited the hospital but these days more and more are coming."

"That is so, Doctor, and the closer they are to the hospital the less trouble they make. This is true particularly of those from the village they have set up on the other side of the river. But further away things are different. Only yesterday just beyond the hills to the east there was fighting between the tribes. The Maasai drove about fifty cattle through a man's standing corn and flattened it, *kabisa*."

"As you say, Yohana, it's different here. Is it the work of the hospital that makes them friendly?"

He smiled. "When the medicine of their witchdoctors does not help the women bring sick children to the hospital. They are helped and there is much talk. When there is fighting and they cannot stop the bleeding then men come for help."

"But, Yohana, is there never a thought in their minds that those of the hospital might put a little poison in the medicine? Take your wife, Esteri, if she had anger in her heart what trouble she could produce!"

Yohana and Esteri had been married a month before. He was in training as a teacher and was riding twice a week with the mail to earn money to complete his course.

He laughed. "The Maasai know that this is a hospital of those who serve God. This is not a place of poison and resentment. These days they are moving all over the country. Where there is good grazing they will set up a village. These are the ones we can help." He motioned backwards with his head. "Here are some of them now and they're *wakali*—fierce ones."

Up the hill from the river came a group of Maasai led by a commanding figure inches taller than those that were with him. There was red ochre rubbed into their hair. In their ear-lobes were bead ornaments, wheel-like and colourful. Each man wore a plain red cloth draped over his shoulders. Into the courtyard they stalked. The leader, who had lost one eye in a fight, came straight to the point.

"Bwana Doctor, in my family there is my elderly father, Olongo, who has seven sons. I, Korometti, am now the leader of the tribe. We have come because the old man is in great trouble. We need your help."

"Has he charms about his neck or his ankles?"

"*Kah!* We come for medicine not talk!" He drew himself up to his full height. His one good eye glittered with anger.

"There is purpose in my words, Korometti. If we are to help him we do it with the wisdom of the hospital ways, not sharing the task with the paths of magic."

Korometti nodded. "Some of my people follow the ways of witchcraft, but my father does not."

"Good. Now tell me. How does the trouble attack him?"

Immediately he started on a long story. It seemed that his father had had all sorts of tropical troubles and now he had developed one of the complaints of old men which made life a complete misery.

"We would like you to work with your medicines and to cure him with speed."

"Many like it this way, but, *kumbe!* you are a man who has many cattle. Behold, you like those cattle to reproduce their kind with speed, but behold, these things always seem to take time."

The tall African grunted his agreement. "This we understand. However, we desire that our *Mzee*—our Great One—Olongo, be helped with speed."

The doctor looked at the grim-faced group that squatted watching intently everything that went on. "These people of yours have stirred up strife on the roads and in the hills. We do not want trouble in the hospital. Will you see this does not happen if we agree to help the old man?"

"*Yoh!*" exploded Korometti, glaring at the half-circle of young men. "They do what I say. There will be no trouble."

"And if they choose to take no notice?" He smiled briefly but said nothing. "I see how it is, Korometti. You say—they obey."

"That is the way of our tribe."

"It is also the way of *Mulungu*—God. Here on earth He wants us to travel His path and do what He tells us. He has no time for those who shrug their shoulders when He gives orders."

Korometti took snuff from the antelope-horn bottle that hung round his neck. "We Maasai travel where we please and do what we please."

As if to prove this one of the young men squatting against the wall threw his spear at a passing chicken. It transfixed the bird, and immediately the courtyard was full of shouting. People jumped to their feet. A grim-faced man slowly fitted an arrow to his bow.

Daudi yelled, "*Basi!* Stop it! or someone will be killed."

But the archer took not the slightest notice. Deliberately he drew back the bowstring. In a second the uproar stopped; the silence was tense.

Korometti walked quietly forward. In a deep voice he called, "Let there be no fighting. Tell me, whose fowl was that?"

An old woman shuffled forward and pointed to the dead hen. Her voice was shrill. "It was mine. *Kah!* You Maasai are people of fierceness, and…"

The man with the bow shouted, "Let me put one of these arrows through that Maasai's leg!"

But Korometti, weaponless, spoke with complete calm. "What do you say is the value of your hen, Grandmother?"

"Two shillings," she quavered.

He fumbled in his clothing and produced the two coins. With quiet courtesy he placed them in the old woman's hand. "Receive this, Grandmother, and let there be peace between your tribe and mine."

"*Yoh!*" came a voice. "Did you see that! He paid! But it was the one with the long spear that killed the hen!"

"True," nodded Korometti, "I pay now, but make no mistake…" he turned a stern face towards the young warrior, "I pay now, but he will pay, later."

Korometti took snuff and then turned away. "*Kwaheri*, goodbye. We shall bring the old man in the morning."

Back in the ward the man with the broken arm was lying very still. His lips were moving soundlessly. "Headache?" questioned the doctor. His eyes opened and gave the answer.

"Right, I'm going to give you an injection. Rest is what you need most."

They watched him slowly relax and twenty minutes later he spoke huskily, "I must tell you who I am and what I do. My name is Peter, son of Pompo, from Narok in Kenya. I am an Education Officer. My work is to encourage Maasai to send their children to school—I am one of the tribe myself."

He put his good hand on his head. His face was wet with sweat. "The pain is less severe, Doctor."

"It will settle if you keep quiet. No more talk now. Remember, rest is more important than medicine."

Peter Pompo tried to prop himself up on his elbow. "One more thing—and it is of great importance. Please, Doctor, take no risks with the Maasai young men these days. They feast on meat and drink special medicines which can make them do wild and ugly things. Be careful. I know this only too well.

Was there not a time when I did the same?"

He sank back into his pillow exhausted and in a few moments was asleep. Daudi wrinkled his forehead as lightning flickered in the sky. "Storms! When the Maasai drink that brew he spoke of, anything can happen. *Hongo!* I hope the only storms we have here are thunderstorms."

That night the noise of heavy rain on the tin roof kept the doctor awake. His mind was filled with uncomfortable thoughts of drums and spears and hot-headed young men and his dreams were flavoured with battle.

Peter Pompo

An hour after dawn, with a rattle and a splash, a large truck crossed the river and ground its way up the hill, jerking to a stop at the hospital.

Korometti jumped down and strode up to the doctor. "We have brought my father, Bwana. He is very sick. Help him." It sounded more like an order than a request.

In the back of the lorry, lying on some blankets, was an old man. He looked dried up and wasted. There was that greenish tinge beneath the chocolate of his skin which spoke loudly of serious illness.

Carefully they lifted him down. Korometti gave instructions in a language with a lot of burrs and rounded sounds in it. Then he spoke with an air of authority. "You will help him at once?"

The doctor spoke quietly, "If you and your people will work with me, do what I say, and make no trouble in or near the hospital, then I will examine him and do all that I can for him. But understand clearly; his sickness is a severe one. He…"

Korometti interrupted. "My family demand to see all that is done."

"Your people may look through the window."

"They say they must be inside the room."

"I cannot agree to that. You may come in. The others may look through the window. But none may enter unless I ask them."

He jabbed the blunt end of his spear into the ground. "Bwana, it would be better that they all come in."

"This is impossible, Korometti, if the work is to be done properly. Your

father is the one who matters, not those who watch."

The tall Maasai shuffled his feet. "I will explain but it will not please them, even a little."

"That is not the thing of importance. Explain with strength; and remember, you are the chief and I expect you to see that they follow these rules."

They looked hard at each other for a long moment, then the Maasai chief nodded, "It is agreed."

The old man was soon lying on a bed. The African trained nurse, Esteri, pulled a plastic bag over a pillow and said in English, "Doctor, I have put a mackintosh underneath him. It would be wise to examine him on that first. Until he is washed he will cause great trouble to our bedding. That red ochre, *yoh!*"

She slipped the pillow under the old man's head and covered him with the red ochre-stained blanket which he wore. It was obvious that the old man's life was in considerable danger. Olongo groaned and made noises that told dramatically of his pain and misery. Outside the window his family were talking loudly. "What is he doing?" "For what reason does he beat on the old man's ribs with his finger?" "Why does he push the Great One's stomach?"

"Have you any medicines that will work for him?" Korometti asked over the doctor's shoulder.

"It isn't a matter of medicines to swallow. He will need to be cut with a knife. He will be in hospital for a month or even longer. But before we cut we must find the strength of his blood and the health of his heart and kidneys."

Eager faces filled the window as the medical team worked with microscope, stethoscope, test tubes and the blood pressure machine. As time moved on Korometti was getting irritable. He walked up and down. "What is his sickness? Explain it to me."

"It is the trouble of those whose hair is grey. His bladder fills but cannot empty. There is a gland the size of a child's fist that has swollen and blocks

the tube." Daudi picked up a length of rubber tubing. "Can you blow air through this?" Korometti did so with ease. The hospital assistant grasped the middle of the tube tightly. "What now?" The tall Maasai blew with all his strength. His cheeks ballooned but no air was forced through the tube. Daudi relaxed his fingers. At once Korometti's cheeks collapsed. He nodded gravely. "I understand."

"This, then, is Olongo's trouble. The pipe within him has this gland surrounding it, pressing on it."

The old man was sweating. He started to moan, "*Oooohhh-oohee*, I have great pain, I have great pain. *Ooooohhh-oohee*, there is no joy in me. *Eeeeh*, help me."

Persistent voices came from outside. "Give him medicine. Give him medicine!"

"We can help to empty the bladder but it will fill again. The thing that grips the tube must be removed to get rid of the cause."

The old man was becoming almost frantic. Daudi brought a tray prepared with syringes, bottles of local anaesthetic, a small and a large needle.

Querulously the old man said, "I must see your work—every bit of it."

Loud noises of agreement came through the window. The doctor smiled at Daudi. "We shall do even as you say, *Mzee*."

He injected a quick-acting local anaesthetic. "*Eeeeh*," moaned Olongo. "I suffer. I shall burst. I shall burst. I have wretchedness."

In a matter of seconds the larger needle was painlessly in place. A small fountain of yellow fluid came through it. Daudi was dexterous with a bucket. For a time the old man's voice was full of misery, then it began to change. "*Yoheee*, it becomes easier, easier. *Heeh*, that's better. The pain is less. *Ohhh*, much better. *Ohh*, much, much better. *Yoh!* Bwana, this is a thing of wisdom. You've conquered my disease. I am cured. I am cured. Let me now return to my house."

The next problem, and a very real one, was to make it clear that this was only temporary help. The cause was still there. "Korometti, you see the treatment has started, but you will know no man kills a lion with one stab of his spear. But the first thrust can make it possible to conquer the beast. What we must do is to remove the cause."

He nodded. "Remove the cause. Cut it out. Get rid of it. Do so at once."

"It's not as easy as that. Olongo has small strength—not enough for so big an operation. His blood is poor stuff. To remove this gland he must be given help, new strength."

Daudi nodded vigorously and told about blood transfusion, its need and the unique help it could give. Korometti shook his head. "This is not our custom. They will not agree."

"You speak words of truth," said Daudi. "Listen to them now."

Loud voices from outside were demanding this, objecting to that. "Talk to them with the words of a chief. Explain to them that there is no other way to save your father's life. This talk of, 'It is not our custom' and 'We refuse' is really saying, 'Let the Great One of our tribe die.' "

"*Yoh!*" exploded Korometti. "These are words sharper than a knife."

"Do you fear knives or do you want your father's trouble to be relieved?"

Korometti stood there like a statue. From outside angry, argumentative voices became louder. There was a waving of spears and knobbed sticks.

Old Olongo raised his head from the pillow. He quavered, "I would sleep. Make your noise elsewhere. Go!"

Korometti bent over him. "Sleep now, *Mzee*, and when the shadows are long we will feast and food will be brought for you." He went outside and shouted an order. The noisy crowd was suddenly hushed and soundlessly they followed him as he strode down the path to the Maasai village.

As they went out of sight Daudi said, "Behold, I'm glad that's over."

The doctor nodded. "And now we can get on with the ordinary work of the hospital. Will you give Peter Pompo another injection and I shall go and see the women and the children."

Esteri was busy in the women's ward. "*Yoh*, Doctor, we have been waiting for you for hours."

"*Eheh*, Esteri, I know it's late in the day but there was no way of hurrying that *shauri* with the Maasai. Now where shall we start?"

"Let's look at the premmies first, Doctor." They paused at a home-made incubator constructed from a packing case covered with mosquito wire and kept at a constant temperature by a hurricane lantern. The only special apparatus was a thermometer sticking up in one corner like a miniature flagpole.

"Both babies are gaining weight," smiled the staff nurse. "And the mothers are full of joy." They watched the complicated routine necessary to feed those premature infants. They examined and admired the two new arrivals and congratulated their mothers. There were injections to be given, stitches to remove and ten women and children to tend who were recovering from malaria.

Esteri called to a trainee nurse. "Sunset is coming close. Time for all the mosquito doors to be shut."

The doctor swatted one of these lethal insects that was zooming towards the doorway. "*Koh!* Esteri, our worst enemy is *mbu*, the mosquito."

She nodded. "And in these days of rains they will do more damage than all the Maasai spears in East Africa."

Daudi came bustling in. "Doctor, Peter Pompo is awake. He has words of importance to say."

A moment later they were in the men's ward. "What is the news, Peter?"

"The news is good. I have slept much of today, but I woke in time to hear

Korometti talking in the Maasai language to the young men outside the window. He is a man of wisdom and plans to kill a goat so that the young men may feast. When their stomachs are full he will tell them your words about blood transfusion. But you, Doctor, will need to have great patience. Our tribe are a people of pride. They scorn the new ways. Our age-old customs are still of great importance. Talk has little strength but seeing a medicine work is different."

"Our special problem is Olongo himself. His trouble is such that we cannot spend much time in discussion and argument. If we do he could lose his life."

"We should talk to God about it," said Daudi.

They prayed together. Both Daudi and Jungle Doctor opened their eyes and smiled at each other as Peter's deep voice joined in.

Night falls swiftly when the equator is not very far beyond the horizon. When they had prayed the doctor looked through the window. The great hills stood out dark against the glowing sky. There was the delicate tracery of acacia trees etched into the deep red of the clouds. The hot tropical air was heavy with the scent of frangipani and a faint tang of antiseptics.

From across the river came a medley of African sounds. "What's going on, Daudi?"

The Medical Assistant shrugged. "It is the dancing and singing of the young men. Before long some of them will become drunk and then we can perhaps have trouble."

An hour later a nurse was at the window. "Korometti has arrived, Doctor. He has brought food for his father."

As they walked towards the ward the drumming sounded louder and wilder. Daudi muttered, "Some of them are drunk with rhythm as well as beer. They scent battle. Hands easily stop drumming and reach for weapons. If the Maasai come full of words salted with anger then there is bloodshed."

In the ward Olongo was drinking milk from a bottle-shaped gourd. With a

sigh he settled back and closed his eyes. Korometti smiled and dragged from under the bed a leg of goat. "It is a gift for you, Bwana."

"It's a matter of praise, Korometti. We shall have a feast tomorrow."

They walked out into the night. There was a new feeling of friendliness. The three of them walked side-by-side along the wide path through the hospital garden. Startlingly the quiet of the tropical evening was cracked open by the sound of a *kudu* horn and a wild voice shouted, "The Maasai foul our country. They're a tribe of hyenas." Then came peal after peal of crazy laughter.

Korometti spat. "Bwana Doctor, I have said there will be no trouble from my people." His voice was hard. "But is it forbidden to tread hard upon a cockroach?" Soundlessly he strode into the darkness.

"*Hongo*," muttered Daudi, "this is the wisdom of those who torment wasps and kick over beehives. You can't do it and stay unstung."

Twisted Wisdom

Korometti stood outside the doctor's window. "Bwana, wake up and hear my news. Olongo slept with comfort but now, since sunrise, he complains with strength."

In the ward the old man was lying in bed rolling his eyes. "*Ooooh-heee, oooooh-heee*, I have great pain. There is no joy in me. I will burst. Help me. Help me. Your work of yesterday has failed. Give me stronger medicine. *Oooooh-heee.*"

A medical examination was made. His pulse was a mere thread. There was an ominous weakness in the sound of his heartbeats. His spleen was the size of a vegetable marrow from long-standing malaria.

Daudi had set up the surgical instruments as used the day before. "Start the work," shouted one of the ochre-clothed stalwarts through the window. Others took up the cry.

Korometti roared for silence and turned to the doctor questioningly. "Your father's life is a flickering flame. Call the elders of the clan and let these others be silent, then I will again explain the one way that can save Olongo."

Six Maasai leaders stood round under the shade of an umbrella tree. Behind them was the window above Peter Pompo's bed. "Great Ones, we speak of a matter of life and death. If I do nothing Olongo will die in four hours. If again I use the big needle as I did yesterday he will live for another day and tomorrow I could do the same thing."

A rumble of voices urged, "Do it then."

"But understand clearly, this is not the answer. We have two days—two days only. If by then we have not greatly strengthened his blood he will perish."

"Do the work with the needle and perhaps he will recover," growled an

elderly man.

"There is no perhaps. Korometti, your father's life depends on what you decide to do. But first, see this. I have a machine to tell us the strength of a person's blood. See, there are here six little glass tubes side by side. The first one has red fluid in it. That is the colour good blood should be. I will show you what we'd do." Pricking his own finger he collected a few drops of blood, drew them up into a glass device that looked like a thermometer and ran them into the second tube. After shaking it he put it beside the first one. They were both the same tint of red.

"Korometti, are you willing that the same be done for you?" He nodded. His and the doctor's blood were put side by side. They looked the same. The tribesmen watched through the window as the procedure was repeated with Olongo. His tube was a pale pink.

There was a nodding of heads. "Bwana, this brings light to our minds."

"Right. Our problem is that he is losing blood faster than he can make it. He cannot help himself, even a little. There is one way only to win this battle. Without new blood he will perish." He held up two half-litre bottles. "Unless we pour that amount of the right sort of blood into his veins I cannot remove the cause of his trouble."

"But, Bwana, you can't pour blood into a man."

"Oh, indeed you can."

There was a torrent of talk which stopped abruptly as along the path marched an excited group of the local tribe armed with bows and arrows. In the middle of them danced a strange figure brandishing a *kudu* horn.

Daudi whispered, "That one is Ndulele—in English, the bugle. He is a man of twisted wisdom who delights in trouble. He and his companions go to drive away the monkeys from the crops but behold the way he waves his arms! Is it not clear that he jeers at the Maasai as though they were the monkeys? *Yoh!* how loudly he mocks when he blows on that *kudu* horn!"

Korometti and his men were on their feet grasping spears. "Bwana Doctor," shouted Korometti, "I promised there would be no trouble but…"

The doctor shouted back even louder, "You Maasai, forget him. Was he not once hit on the head by a knobkerry? Since then he does crazy things. Forget him for the moment."

"Whether his head has been beaten or not there are those of the young men of our tribe who one day will close his mouth with strength." There was a snarl in the voice of the red-ochred warrior.

"We are talking of the life of one that has been your leader for years, not revenge on crazy people. The one thing that can save his life is Maasai blood from your veins. This can prove the quality of your tribe, not your ability to hunt hyenas."

Korometti was on his feet. "Those are strong words."

"True, and they call for strong action."

From nearby came a yell then angry voices. "*Yoh*," muttered Daudi, "this is a fight between local tribesmen and those ochre-red angry ones."

Towards them limped a young Maasai, his eyes blazing. He shouted, "Someone will bleed for this." He turned his back and lifted his red cloth. Protruding from where you might expect to find his hip pocket was the slender iron, business-end of an arrow. Its barb was a thumb's-length beneath the skin and when he moved, the iron shaft waggled like a happy dog with a small tail.

"Why don't you pull it out?" snapped Korometti.

The young man answered through clenched teeth, "This sort of arrow is not made to pull out."

"Then cut it out with your knife. Are you a child?"

The arrow-damaged man made as if to stride off down the path but the arrow head touched a nerve. "*Yah, oooh!*" he gasped.

"Wait, we have a way to remove this arrow head without pain. Watch, everybody, and you will understand that the ways of the hospital are different."

Daudi moved fast into the room where instruments were sterilised in a cut-down kerosene tin over a primus stove. Soon he was back and, using local anaesthetic, within five minutes the arrow head was out and two stitches were the only visible result of the incident.

The watching Maasai were amazed. "*Yoh!*" said one. "This is a way of wisdom."

"It certainly is not the custom of your tribe to have arrows removed in this way. When pain and trouble can be stopped is it not wise to travel a new path?"

There was a nodding of heads and not a little laughter. Daudi whispered, "It is a good thing that this has happened. This will show them…"

From a nearby boulder-studded hill the strident taunt of Ndulele's *kudu* horn altered the situation in a twinkling. Korometti spoke sharply. "Bwana, this attack with the arrow will stir the young men of my house to blind rage. I go now. Work with your big needle. Later I will return and we shall speak together of the medicine that my father needs and this matter of blood."

As he strode away Daudi said, "Doctor, I think he will do anything except the one thing that is required most of all."

Hastily they repeated the minor operation of the day before and old Olongo slumped back on his pillow. Then they stood beside Peter's bed. "What is the news?" asked the doctor.

He smiled. "The news is good. Less headache. The arm is comfortable but this certainly is a place of drama and since my home tongue is Maasai I have had an interesting time. We are going to have no little difficulty in convincing those tribesmen to give blood for the old man."

"When you say 'we' do you plan to have a hand in the matter?"

"I could help you as an advisor for I know the customs. I know the way my tribe thinks. Also, I have more than an inkling of the way you think."

The doctor grinned. "Peter, I am amazed at the way that you speak English. It's unusually good."

His eyes twinkled. "It improved when I was studying at Makerere University in Uganda, and a few years at Cambridge do quite a lot for both your vocabulary and your accent."

"How did this all come about, Peter? I had the idea that your people had little time for advance of this sort."

He nodded. "But you see, my father was a Christian. He saw a change was coming and said, 'It is not enough for my sons to grow up knowing only how to look after cattle. They will go to school and university.' And I learned much. The most important was to ask Jesus Christ to take charge of my life." He swung his legs over the side of the bed. "These Maasai are my people—the ones I must help. This above all is my life's work."

From immediately outside the window came a shrill blast on the *kudu* horn. Peter clamped his hands over his ears. "If someone does not silence that 'musician' I shall leap from this bed and give him a headache to match my own."

Mini Transfusion

The operation was over. An old man, blind for ten years, would see the countryside he loved in a few days when the bandages were removed.

Daudi and the doctor stood looking through the window at the blue of the coastal mountains of Tanzania. To one side, under a flame tree, was a silent group of Maasai. The sun brought out the red of the mud in their hair and the still-brighter tints of their neck and ear ornaments. The scarlet flowers above them accentuated the ochre-colour of their clothes.

Korometti saw them. He jumped to his feet. "They have finished. Come," he called to the young men. Daudi said softly, "They are more used to blood than anybody else but I have doubts that they will agree to our using a transfusion needle on them."

They went through the customary greetings, then Korometti asked, "What is the news of my father?"

"Come and see for yourselves." Reluctantly they walked into the ward. Old Olongo lay listless, his eyes closed.

"*Koh!*" whispered Korometti hoarsely. "He is gripped by weakness."

"Have you not seen this for many days? Life slips away from his grasp. Come, let us show you the way to stop his trouble from killing him."

Daudi took a sample of blood from the old man's arm and placed a drop on each of seven glass slides. Six young Maasai were lined up beside Korometti and Daudi collected a drop of blood from each man's index finger. They did not relish the taking of the sample. He smiled. "*Koh!* You who carry spears—do you fear the prick of a small needle?"

Poker-faced, they said nothing. The seven drops of blood were mixed separately with that of the old man. Fascinated, they stared at the seven little

pink patches on the glass slides. As they watched, changes took place. Three slides remained pink and clear; the other four looked as though fine red dust had been powdered into them.

"*Yoh!*" muttered Korometti, "some go this way, some go that."

"Truly. The clear ones are those whose blood we can use. The others are worse than useless. Now I want at least two of you to give a bottle of blood each. This is the special way you can help this leader of your clan."

There was sullen, hostile silence.

One of the warriors demanded, "How much would you take? A bottle as big as that?" He pointed to a small bottle holding about a cupful.

"*Kah!* Would a mouthful of water satisfy a thirsty man?" burst out Daudi. "You wouldn't hesitate to fight for him or to be gashed with spears in battle and bleed small rivers of blood on his behalf, and yet you make this fuss over a few spoonfuls. *Kah!*"

"He's right, Korometti," said the doctor. "We need two bottles this size." He held up litre containers. "Olongo needs them urgently. Nothing else will do. There is no other way."

One of the men whose blood was compatible stood forward. "I, of course, would be willing to do this, but I have had fever these days, and my strength is not all it might be. I have not enough blood for myself."

"*Eeeh*," agreed another, putting his hand on his head, "and I have not been strong these days. Perhaps it would be better if someone else gave his blood."

The third one clasped his hand over his stomach, "*Ooohee*, there has been a snake within me these days causing much irritation. My blood would not be the right sort."

Harshly, nearby sounded Ndulele's *kudu* horn.

"They are a bunch of rabbits concealed in the bodies of leopards!" he yelled. "Milk-drinkers, eh? *Kumbe*, is it that they have milk in their veins instead of

blood?"

A burst of angry words came from the ochre-clad warriors. Several cannoned into each other in trying to push their way through the door. But Ndulele dashed off into the jungle laughing in his high-pitched way. He disappeared well ahead of the pursuing spear-men.

"Korometti, call them back!" the doctor shouted. "When Ndulele has beer in his skin he has only the wisdom of a baboon."

He shrugged. "You heard his words, Bwana, and behold, even if I wanted to stop them, they have already travelled too far to be caught." Korometti held out his arm. "Bwana, take my blood, and use it to bring strength to my father."

"We can't do it, Korometti. Yours is not the right type. The wrong sort of blood brings death, not health." The doctor gripped his shoulders and almost shouted, "What must be done with speed is to save Olongo's life! We cannot even begin till those of your family give the blood that will make all the difference. We are waiting to work in a way that will bring good results. How can we fight this lion when your people cling to their spears?"

Korometti paced up and down and then burst out, "It is not our custom; this blood-giving is a new thing."

"*Eheh*, and in the meantime death reaches out for the old man, your father. Good customs let us preserve, but if…"

He nodded slowly, picked up his knobkerry and stalked away from the ward. Shortly after he was back with a broad-shouldered young man who made a great effort not to look sheepish.

"He is the one," said Korometti, "whose blood you said would be the right sort. He agrees to give a bottleful."

The doorway filled with ochre-clad figures, their faces dark with suspicion and hostility.

Daudi lay the unwilling blood-donor down, slipped the needle into a vein and blood flowed smoothly into the bottle. The young man was tense. His sweating face showed his stress. A low growl of conversation came from the doorway. The seconds ticked by, but before the bottle was even half full a harsh voice shouted, "Stop!"

Every minute the blood could be kept running was to the good. Daudi started an argument. "*Yoh*, behold, this is only a little, and is he not a man of strength? Did I not hear that he killed a leopard? See those muscles…"

"Stop!" shouted the voice again.

"What? Shall I stop so soon? Do you feel any dizziness?" He turned to the young man. "Have you a sensation as though thorns were being stuck into your fingers? Is there numbness in your hands? Do your legs feel weak? Or do you see *mabuli-buli*—cloudy things in front of your eyes?"

The sullen group of ochre-stained Africans all started shouting. "Stop. Take no more. *Basi!*"

Korometti looked at his men and then at Daudi and the doctor busy with the transfusion. Peter, who had been watching, spoke urgently in English. "Do as they say quickly. Agree with them now. They will agree with you later."

The words were hardly out of his mouth when Korometti ordered harshly, "*Basi!* Stop!"

Shrugging his shoulders, the doctor pulled out the needle, bent up the man's elbow and then covered the puncture with a small square of sticking plaster.

The watchers calmed down quickly when the blood collecting was over. They jostled to get a better view.

The doctor walked over and faced them. "*Yoh!* See and understand. Behold, in this bottle we have living blood. If there was enough it would save Olongo's life. But don't deceive yourselves. It is not enough. Now, answer me. If this blood stays in the bottle will it help the old man?"

"No, it must get into him."

"Right, and you shall see me do this."

"Bwana, get on with the work." Korometti's voice was urgent.

Efficiently Esteri and Daudi went to work and in a matter of moments the blood was running into Olongo's veins. All the Maasai were allowed in. They squatted on the floor and watched, tensely quiet.

A drum started beating. It was still going when the transfusion finished and its odd rhythm throbbed on at sunset when the doctor checked on the old man's condition. Everything seemed to be going well.

"Keep an eye on him, Esteri. Here is the syringe with the medicine that we might need to inject. If anything goes wrong, call me." She nodded.

The doctor was tired beyond words. The drums were now beating more loudly. There was something eerie about the whole atmosphere. Quietly he prayed, "Lord, please help me."

On the far side of the river he saw Yohana, the postman, pedalling with difficulty along the muddy track through the elephant grass. At the water's edge he skidded to a halt, picked up the bicycle , put the mail bag and his shoes on top of it and holding it over his head, waded into swirling, waist-deep water. Twice he staggered and almost fell. Up the steep bank he struggled then, back on his bicycle, he rode on through the gathering darkness.

The doctor was drinking tea. "*Karibu*, welcome, Yohana. Hot tea is better for postmen than flooded rivers."

He smiled. "Words of truth, Bwana. And my news is good. Here is the mail and the bag is dry. What is the news of the Maasai?"

"The news is good, but they are a difficult people. We've given old Olongo a blood transfusion but it has not been easy." Abruptly the rhythm of the drums changed and the *kudu* horn sounded pure insult. "Hear that, Yohana.

Your friend, Ndulele, hasn't helped by sticking his nose into the affair."

Yohana laughed. "Did you know that Esteri says that his nose is exactly like mine?"

Slowly Jungle Doctor put down his cup. "There's no humour in that. It could well mean that your life is in danger."

Blood Type "O"

Esteri's breathless voice came from the darkness outside the doctor's house. "Bwana, quickly, run to the ward! Old Olongo shivers with strength and the Maasai are gripped with fear."

The old man had suffered a delayed reaction following blood transfusion. Up the frangipani-scented grove they ran, the gaunt twisted limbs of the baobab trees seeming to bend down and clutch at them.

The hospital was full of shouting people. In the ward a score of Maasai crowded round old Olongo, who was shivering violently. The whole bed seemed to shiver with him. The rattle of his teeth added an eerie note.

The doctor tried to force his way through the excited crowd.

"Prop him up, prop him up!" insisted a woman's voice.

"Don't do that!" shouted the medical man. "Don't… or he will collapse."

They took not an atom of notice and heaved the sick man up into a sitting position. At once he fainted. His head flopped forward on his chest, his eyes turning up horribly. An old woman rushed outside and started the death wail.

"*Kah!*" panted Daudi as he darted through the door, "this is the end."

From the crowd seething round the bed came the dismal chant, "Olongo, the father of our people is dead. He's dead. He's dead!" Then a woman picked up a bucket of water and sloshed it over the old man's wasted body. The doctor stood back in alarm but the effect was dramatic in reviving Olongo. Water soaked the mattress, the bed and those who milled around him.

"Let him lie quietly," shouted Daudi. "Let the doctor through. See, he comes with *sindano*, the needle, to bring back strength."

He gave morphia to control pain and shock. Its immediate effect was small. Olongo continued to shiver.

His bed was changed; he was covered with blankets. Hot water bottles were tucked in beside him and the foot of the bed was raised. But the old man still looked deathly.

"*Hongo*," said Daudi in a low voice, "this may well be the end of our attempt to save him."

For hours the old man lay there shocked and shivering. In the darkness drums beat insistently. Most of the Maasai had walked off into the night, but there were always three of them squatting in the shadows, watchful, ready for action.

"Esteri," whispered the doctor, "go off duty now. You must be tired out."

She shook her head. "Let me stay for a while. Is it not my great wish to save old Olongo? And to do so would give me joy." She paused. Over the hills lightning flickered and there was a distant rumble of thunder. "Bwana, can you feel something dragging you down, like a weight round your neck?"

"It's been there for days, Esteri, but tonight it is stronger than ever. If only we had been able to give the old man more blood."

Esteri put her finger to her lip and whispered. "Behold, he sleeps at last."

Korometti had come silently through the door, his eyebrows raised questioningly.

"The old man sleeps. For the moment this is good but I have deep fears. He hasn't enough blood to do more than keep him going till midday."

The Maasai leader nodded his head slowly.

"Esteri, go and rest now. Korometti, don't let anyone disturb Olongo. Sleep is the important medicine for the moment."

He nodded. "Your words will be followed, Bwana." He lay down and covered

his head with a blanket.

Turning up the hurricane lantern the doctor wrote notes on the treatment given and to be given. Within minutes Korometti started to snore and there was unusual movement from Peter Pompo's bed. A cock crowed outside.

Peter's voice came softly, "Good morning, Doctor."

"It is morning truly, Peter. You should be asleep. Have you pain?"

"I'm feeling well, thank you. But I couldn't help hearing all that has gone on through the night. May I help you to see things through Maasai eyes?"

"Peter, that could be most helpful. But remember, you too must rest."

He smiled. "Have you been resting? Now listen, Bwana, I cannot say too strongly that now is the time to bring fight into your words. Wait till daylight and it could be too late. For a little time let me be the doctor. You sit here in the darkness and don't interrupt whatever happens."

Draping a blanket round his shoulders he moved slowly towards Korometti, perched himself on a three-legged stool and poked the sleeping man who leapt to his feet in alarm. The bandages round the young education officer's head had disguised him till that moment. Peter stretched out his hand. It was gripped. Peter's whisper came clearly.

"Give me the papers that are over there on the table and bring the lantern as well."

He turned these over till he came to one page which read: *Blood Type 'O' Rh Positive.* Round his neck was a fine silver chain engraved with the words: *Peter Pompo—Type 'O' Rh Positive.* He smiled. Korometti put the papers back. "My blood is the same as that of the old man. To give a large bottleful will do me no harm. I have done it before. I know. Your men think only of the ways of cattle. I have seen these new ways and know. Do you not want the old man to return to strength?"

"You are not of our family," said Korometti gruffly.

"Shall I let one of my tribe die because his family shut their eyes and close their minds?" snapped back Peter. He struggled to his feet. Dizziness made him stagger. Korometti grabbed him and held him up.

The doctor, too, moved fast. "Back to bed with you, Peter Pompo. You have no right to be walking and you know it." And, in English, "But I am glad you did."

Peter almost fell into bed. Korometti squatted beside him, his fingers playing irritably with the blanket over his shoulder. With some difficulty Peter spoke, "In our custom it is considered bad to say something you know is untrue. Do not we say, 'It is not so much a lie as a curse?' "

Korometti grunted assent.

Peter's voice was tense. "Then don't you realise that when your young men talk words about having no blood and being sick, and all the rest of the excuses, they are bringing down a curse on your father?" He put his hand to his head. The throbbing made it hard for him to think. He swallowed and went on, "These words of lying and excuse are a big thing but there is a matter I see as larger still. Christians have God's book and in this book it says, 'The man who knows how to do good and doesn't do it, to him it is sin.' Now look, I don't want God to count it a sin to me because I haven't given blood which I can spare, and which the old man greatly needs."

Korometti scratched his ear thoughtfully but said nothing. Peter grunted. "Now look, Korometti, if you want to carry the curse of your father in this matter it is up to you. I don't want that sin counted to me, because I haven't done the right thing. I have already made my choice and will give blood. You and the others must also choose."

Korometti's fingers continued to fiddle with his blanket.

Peter looked him full in the face. "The day before I had this accident did I not talk to you about sending at least four of the children of your village to school? Did you not say, 'We have no children'?" Peter lowered his head. "Does not this put you in the way of another curse?" He sighed. "I must sleep now. While resting is my responsibility, thinking is yours."

At dawn Esteri called at the door, "*Hodi*, Bwana, a baby of the Maasai named Nakarty has been brought in. He is full of pneumonia."

"It's a good thing we have plenty of penicillin, Esteri."

"It is indeed, for this child's father is a man of trouble."

Past the window, soundless as shadows, walked three of Olongo's sons. The sky was heavy with black clouds, and the rumble of thunder came from over the mist-covered hills. The drums were still throbbing with something sinister in their rhythm.

"This could be a difficult day, Esteri. Dark clouds, dark sounds and ominous happenings. Did you get some sleep?"

The nurse nodded and smiled. "The sun shines behind those clouds. Have comfort, Doctor. The old man's temperature is good. So is his pulse. And Peter has words to speak to you that should please you."

Down the path strode a weary-looking Korometti. "*Habari*, Bwana, what is the news?"

"The news is good. And what is yours?"

"We have praise for the medicine you call blood transfusion, Bwana. It is strong to help; the old man, my father, is better today."

"*Kidogo-dogo*, only a very little. He needs pints of blood, not spoonfuls. Come and look at him."

In the ward it was soon clear that the old man was still in danger.

Daudi came in with the pathology tray. "The Nakarty baby is very ill," he said. "His blood is full of malaria. Babies like this one give me no joy."

"Inject penicillin and give half a chloroquin pill by mouth. Pneumonia and malaria are our special enemies in the rainy season."

Daudi nodded and then wrinkled his forehead. "One thing I do not like is

that the father of this child is the man who beat Ndulele over the head with a knobbed stick."

"It's odd that a Maasai should do that. They told me he was hit with a spear."

"Doctor, it was Ndulele's own stick. An angry man dragged it from his grasp and beat him with it till he was unconscious. It took days for his wisdom to return. And since then his face has twitched and he takes fits. His mind is twisted. Listen to him now."

"There he is," said Esteri, pointing with her chin. "See him sitting on a rock under the buyu tree. *Kah!* Look at him. His nose may be shaped like Yohana's but there the likeness stops *kabisa*." She turned away in disgust.

In English Daudi whispered, "From the side, Doctor, those who did not know him well could easily think he was our postman."

Ndulele was sitting on his heels, his cheeks blown out as he sounded the *kudu* horn. Round him were a number of young men chanting to the rhythm of a drum. Their efforts obviously irritated the Maasai. One of them picked up a spear.

"Come, let us bring silence to that one whose mouth is full of words."

Several others were about to follow but Korometti's voice ordered sharply, "Peace! Have you not heard my words?"

"*Eh-heeh*," they growled. "But have you heard *his* words?"

"*Basi!* Stop! Stay here. These are my orders." He turned round. "Bwana, do you know the sick baby's father hates that man who sits and sings words that are insults?"

"*Kah!*" exploded Daudi. "I have medicine for this." He ran past the doctor clutching a red jar. Forcing his way through the group that clustered round Ndulele, he wrenched the *kudu* horn from the man's hand and smeared ointment over the mouth piece. Without a word he thrust the horn back into its owner's hand.

There was a chuckle in his voice. "That is the hospital's medicine for those who disturb the sick and bring no joy to the ears of all of us. Your mouth will be filled with fire."

Ndulele gaped at him and by sheer habit put the horn to his lips. He let out an ear-splitting yell, clawed at his mouth and rushed down the path that led to the river.

Korometti's voice cut into the amazed silence. "It is the medicine they rubbed into my stiff shoulder. Should that baboon blow into his weapon again…" he paused and burst into laughter, laughter that spread through the crowd like a grass fire.

Confidence Grows

"The pneumonia baby, Nakarty, is still very sick, Doctor, and his blood slide shows much malaria," said the nurse quietly.

The child's mother, a good-looking girl with huge bead ornaments in her ears, sat anxiously beside the cot. The baby's nostrils moved with each rapid breath. Esteri picked him up and placed him on a table facing her and made little comforting noises while from behind the doctor used his stethoscope.

The medical work was interrupted as the father strode into the room and demanded, "Give him medicine to drink, Bwana. Do it now."

The baby started to cry and then cough. "Quiet," breathed the doctor. "Your noise upsets the child. He is dangerously ill and needs more than medicine to drink."

The Maasai made no attempt to speak more quietly. "Give *sindano*, an injection, then!"

"I have and will do so again. But all this is not enough. Talk without shouting. The child must have rest. There is danger in his chest."

The angry father stamped his foot and demanded at the top of his voice, "Give him that injection and then let us go!"

"This is a way of no profit. The child will not recover if you follow that path."

"You don't trust your medicine, then?"

"The medicine is but one warrior in the battle. The child must sleep. Many times in the day is there need to swallow medicine for the cough. Rest there must be. Don't you realise that the noise you're making can only do harm?"

"This is not our custom. Give a needle of stronger medicine and let us go,"

growled the father.

"If you take the child now he will die and the fault will be yours."

"*Kah!* You cast a spell. These are words of witchcraft."

"They are words of wisdom—words which can save your child's life."

Muttering sullenly he turned his back and strode out of the ward. "*Kah!*" smiled Esteri. "There goes *mukamu*, a tough one indeed. It is good that he has understood even if only a little."

Daudi walked in. "I have just seen the man who hit Ndulele on the head. He looked like one who had lost a fight."

"Look, here comes Korometti," broke in Esteri. "If he had been here earlier we would not have had all that shouting."

In walked the tall Maasai leader. "*Habari?* What's the news?" asked the doctor.

"*Habari njema.* The news is good. But I have thirst, Bwana."

Daudi grinned and brought a small medicine glass full of water. Korometti looked at it in disgust. "That little amount! *Kah!* I said I was thirsty."

"*Hongo*," said Daudi with a serious face. "We have no more available."

Korometti's nostrils started to quiver. He looked at the tap and the tank outside. A frown clouded his face. "What is that, and that, and *that*?" He pointed to a large jug.

"Oh, those," said Daudi evenly, "that's water of a kind but maybe we need it ourselves. Anyhow it may not be good for the Maasai or…"

The grim lines of Korometti's face changed into a slow smile. "You're a man of cunning, Daudi. You are understood."

From down the ward Peter said in English, "That was fine strategy. Would

there not be wisdom in giving my bottle of blood soon?"

"There would indeed. Even now the instruments are being boiled. What a blessing it is that your blood group and his are the same. Everyone can see the good that small amount has already done; and another transfusion will make such a difference that many others will agree."

"What does he say?" asked Korometti in Swahili.

"He offers to give his blood and he hopes that this will bring both willingness and courage to the young men of your family."

"They don't need courage!" flared the Maasai leader.

"Maybe, but they do lack willingness. The sooner we start the job the better. Daudi, will you please cross-match their blood and set up for transfusion."

Quickly Daudi made the necessary tests. "Compatible, Doctor," he announced. "Shall I go ahead and collect from Peter?"

"Please, Daudi. I'll have a word with him first though." He walked across the ward.

"Giving this blood for my people to understand about medicine—and perhaps about schools—could be the key that opens up the whole situation."

"You're right, Peter, and what's more, it will make your head ache less." He paused and pointed through the window with his chin. "More and more patients are arriving even now. More and more of your people seek our help."

One of these was an old woman who came limping painfully up the path. She sat on a stool and displayed an abscess on her heel which was three times its usual size.

"She is the sister of my mother," said Korometti. "She has no joy in that foot."

"We will put her to bed and operate tomorrow early."

Daudi brought his apparatus, put a screen round Peter's bed and before long reported, "Blood collected, Doctor. Shall I start giving it to the old man?"

"Yes, Daudi, but run it slowly."

Every drop of that transfusion was watched by scores of eyes. Comments came in plenty from the onlookers. Korometti rather grudgingly explained, "The young men are amazed at the large amount of blood given by Peter, son of Pompo, but yet he comes to no harm."

Half an hour later he said, "They agree that strength returns to the old man's body."

"*Kah!* Surely even your eye that does not work can see this." A chuckle came from the region of Peter's bed.

When the transfusion was over Korometti motioned to his men. "You saw that, every one of you. You have watched life come back into our Great One. That was willing blood. Truly, unwillingness brings no joy—rather it brings a curse."

He looked hard at each individual and Daudi whispered, "Korometti specially has learned from what we have done. We can call today the day of the successful transfusion. *Kumbe!* Did this impress the Maasai! Life should be easier now."

Peter nodded. "All will be helped by this."

Thankfully it was a quiet day. The doctor snatched a few hours' rest and in the afternoon did the first stage of Olongo's operation. All went well and the tension seemed to drain out of the situation.

The old man slept well and as usual Korometti kept watch beside his bed. Early next morning he stood outside the ward and looked towards the hill in the jungle where his village was. "Doctor, will you not come to my place this afternoon to greet? We want to speak to you about my father, Olongo."

"If your people are willing to talk about giving more blood I'll come. But first

there is the matter of an old woman whose heel is in trouble. Also I must see the many sick folk who come for treatment and medicine."

Korometti nodded. "Bwana, I will stay here and we shall travel together."

"*Eh-heh.*"

The old Maasai woman's heel was greatly swollen. The doctor did an operation with the smallest amount of anaesthetic possible and brought to light a most ugly abscess.

"*Yoh*," she quavered, "let me sit in the sun for a while and then I will return to my village."

"It shall be even so, Grandmother. But instead of walking on your feet you will travel in the landrover, for there is no joy in putting weight upon a foot as sore as yours."

When everything was ready for the safari in the mid-afternoon, the pneumonia baby, who that morning had been in considerable danger, looked a different child. His mother sat beside him with a smile all over her face.

"*Yoh*, Bwana, this is a thing of wonder. A medicine of great power!"

This was echoed later on by Korometti and the old woman as they climbed into the landrover and were driven across the river bed which for once had no water in it.

The road wound uphill, through sugar-cane gardens, and then into the main highway from the coast of East Africa deep into the heart of the country. The trees above had the fine tracery of lace in their leaves and in their boughs, which spread elegantly above the road.

They passed a group of Maasai who bowed to Korometti and went silently on their way. A kilometre farther on he said, "*Basi*, stop, Bwana. We have nearly arrived."

Ten minutes' walk through dense green undergrowth brought them to a spot

where Korometti paused. He pointed ahead. "There is our village. Because we came on wheels we used the longer road. There is another shorter one that leads down to the river and up to the hospital. That is the way we travel on foot."

The village was set in a clearing close to water. They stopped under a great tree. Korometti whispered in the ear of a small boy and soon a three-legged stool was brought.

"Rest here in the shade, Bwana, and my family will come and greet you."

Soon the doctor was surrounded by Maasai men.

"Bwana, we seek news of the Great One."

"The news is good."

"Is your work on him finished?"

"No. It is merely commenced but it goes well so far. There is need for more strength to be given to him and, as you know, that comes from blood. Let the young men give this to him that he may recover fast."

They started to talk animatedly in their own language, their faces active, mobile, but giving no hint of what they were thinking. The doctor leaned back against the trunk of the tree and watched a herd boy drive the cattle into view. He thought how their life was centred on cattle and their thinking for centuries had ignored, or at least tolerated, the world around them. Cattle gave them food and drink, bedding and clothing. Cattle were their wealth—their life. Cattle had closed their eyes and minds to the outside world. This could not continue. Most of the tribe did not question their supremacy but some were acutely aware that they were falling far behind other tribes in the race for education.

In the Maasai ranks was material of a high order of leadership in an Africa where the unit was rapidly becoming not a tribe but a continent. If they held their place in this gallop of progress, would they let education lead them to a new but false position where cash would be the eye-blinder instead of cattle?

One fallen African leader had said, "Seek first the political kingdom." Others were modifying this to "Education first." But Jesus had said, "*Follow* Me… Seek first God's kingdom."

Fifty metres away the old woman whose heel had been treated selected a cow from those in the thornbush *boma*. She squatted down and milked it into a gourd. Then she called a young man who pierced a vein in the cow's neck with an arrow and ran blood into the milk. After a few moments she looked up.

"*Basi*, stop. It is enough!"

The bleeding was stopped by plastering the spot with mud. She shook the gourd vigorously.

Korometti stood up. "Bwana, the elders of my tribe have been talking and thinking many thoughts. We agree. Blood shall be given for my father. The affair of Peter Pompo opened many eyes. The elders of my people have praise for your medicine."

Then he beckoned to the old woman with the gourd and said, "It is our custom to give those we honour refreshment." He took the gourd and held it out.

"Korometti, if it is all the same to you, I would prefer tea."

There was a twinkle in his eye. "Bwana, when we come to your house we drink tea. When you come to ours…"

"It is well said," answered the doctor taking the gourd and drinking deeply. The Maasai crowded round and shook his hand. He produced a tremendous belch. "*Yoh!*" they laughed. "He shows appreciation of our food. Did you hear that?"

Bad-Luck Bird

Conversation stopped abruptly. Every eye in the village was fixed on a large umbrella tree. Again came the liquid notes of a bird. "*Til-til-til-til.*"

"That bird song is real music, Korometti."

He shook his head. "This is a sound that brings warning."

The doctor shaded his eyes. "*Kah!* All I can see is a bird that looks like a woodpecker with green wings, a white neck and a long red beak."

"You see well. This bird is called *ortilo*. Its name is the same word as we use for bad luck. When you hear *ortilo*, look out. If someone is going on a journey and he hears this bird cry he believes that he will meet bad luck if he doesn't turn back."

In the shadows by the thornbush fence stood the man who had hit Ndulele on the head. Furtively he took a small gourd from round his neck and shook it above his head.

"*Kah!*" grunted Korometti, "he is one of those who fear spells. You see how some of our people think. That gourd is filled with small stones to protect him. Now he has no more worry, for he thinks that after using his charm he is safe from the bad luck *ortilo* brings."

"Do all your people think this way?"

"No, Bwana. This is not the Maasai custom, but some of our people have come to do these things."

"Do you yourself believe about this bad luck bird?"

Korometti shrugged. "I know this bird. It is the friend of rhino and lion and leopard and buffalo. It warns them when a man is coming. When they hear

'*til-til-til-til*' they are ready. A man of understanding will also be warned and will look carefully where he is going. If you can't see an animal, you still know it is there hidden among the grass or in the bushes." He shrugged again. "To some it is magic. To others it is the way of understanding. But come and see my bull—a creature which gives me pride."

We walked together to the Maasai house. It was one and a half metres high and made of wickerwork plastered with a mixture of cow-manure and mud.

"*Karibu*, come inside, Bwana," he said and ducking his head went through the narrow, low doorway into a gloom relieved only by light that filtered in through cracks in the wall. In the dimness the doctor saw a broad levelled-out place as wide as two double beds and covered with cowskins made soft as chamois by much using.

"This is the place where the men sleep," said Korometti. He turned to another wide space partitioned off by mud and wickerwork. "Here the women sleep, and the children here."

The atmosphere was heavy with the reek of cattle and manure, a situation ideal for swarms of flies, but in the dimness there were no insects. Opposite the doorway stood the row of gourds in which the Maasai stored their milk.

Out in the daylight was the mud and muck of the cattle *boma* where the animals were kept at night. Here the flies were vastly active. The house formed three sides of this *boma* which was twenty metres square, and the fourth side was made of piled-up thornbush to keep out leopard and lion and hyena.

The main herd of cattle was not far away but in the middle of the *boma*, with a superior air like his master's, stood the bull. Korometti looked at him with admiration. "Let him be food for your eyes, Bwana, while I show you something that will cause you to wonder."

He disappeared into his house while the doctor stood waiting near the doorway, swishing at flies with a thornbush twig. Soon Korometti came back holding a modern metal suitcase from which he took a large veterinary syringe. He beamed all over his face. "For my cattle, Bwana. I give them

injections to save them from disease. Do not we both do the same work?"

He moved the plunger up and down and the doctor wondered how many germs went in with the anti-rinderpest vaccine. As Korometti put away the syringe, a glance into the suitcase revealed a pile of picture magazines, a safety razor, a five-battery electric torch and a transistor radio.

An eight-year-old girl dressed in clothing made from soft leather beautifully ornamented with red, white and yellow beads brought a three-legged stool. "It is for you, Bwana. My father goes to catch a chicken for you."

As he sat down she said, "My name is Maylanwe." Then, looking down at his hands, her face lit up with a smile. "Bwana, it makes me laugh when I look at the colour of your skin!"

"It is indeed difficult to have skin like mine, Maylanwe. I have only to do a little work and it becomes very dirty."

She nodded. "But your hands know how to stop pain. Bibi has praise for the work you did on her heel."

"I'm happy to know this. Have you heard the news of the sick baby, Nakarty?"

"We have fear because of his sickness. It is one that kills many babies."

"Have peace in your mind. He has had medicine of strength and, behold, he becomes less sick every hour."

"That is good, Bwana. Would you like to see my own brother?"

"I would indeed."

As she hurried away the doctor watched a flight of hornbill and listened to the notes of scores of small birds. The scene was quiet and peaceful, yet within five minutes' walk there were leopards, hyenas and pythons for those who knew where to look.

Maylanwe returned leading a three-year-old boy. "Here he is. His name is

Chongay."

The small boy took one look at the white face above him and turned his head away. Slowly his eyes came back and he smiled shyly. Suddenly he said something in Maasai and Maylanwe laughed. "He says that Father is very good at catching chickens."

This time, however, Korometti was having no little difficulty in catching a rooster. The small boy gurgled with delight as his father leaped over the thornbush *boma* and pounced on the bird. Soon he was back tying its legs together with a strip of bark. With natural courtesy he presented it. "Bwana, my gift to you." And then, smiling down, he placed his hand on the girl's head. "Bwana, my daughter, and my son whom I love with a great love."

Maylanwe smiled back at him. She picked up the little boy and, bending under his weight, moved down the path.

"Korometti, you love your children and they love you." With pride he watched them walk away.

A herd of cattle moved slowly past. The sun shone on the patchwork of their reds, blacks, browns and tans, patterned with white, the jig-saw of warm colouring blending with the greens of the forest.

Suddenly angry shouting came from the direction of the path through the valley that led to the hospital. Korometti grasped his spear. The little girl came running, her face full of fear.

"What's happened, Maylanwe?"

She said something in the Maasai language. Korometti beckoned to a group of his people. They strode off down the path. The child came close to the doctor as though for protection. He bent down. "What troubles you, Maylanwe?"

The little girl, with terror in her face, pointed down the path. "Down there!" she cried. "Down there! It is a thing of great fear. It is dark witchcraft."

She gripped his hand and together they hurried to a place where a huge tree overshadowed the path. Half-a-dozen Maasai stood staring at an elephant's footprint in the very centre of the track. Sticking out from the hole was a battered piece of cactus two metres long.

"Bwana," said Korometti, "you know what this is?"

The doctor nodded, pushed a stick under it and prised it out. Carefully avoiding the sharp thorns Korometti held it up by one end and spat on it. There were sighs of relief from the Maasai who had stepped back in alarm.

"*Kah!*" muttered one of them, "that has killed its witchcraft. It can do no harm now."

Korometti looked closely at the cactus. "It has been there for several days, Bwana. We might not have found it if elephant had not passed this way. Someone has ill will towards us. No Maasai would do this. But behold, there are some to whom it brings deep fear."

"Do you fear it?"

He shrugged his shoulders. "I fear it," he growled.

He looked up at the massive rocks above the track. A candelabra cactus was silhouetted against the sky. One of its huge spiky shoots had been wrenched off and buried in a shallow scooped-out trench that was almost as wide as the path itself.

Maylanwe, wide-eyed, clung to the red ochre cloth that was over Korometti's shoulders. She looked up into his face, "My father, I walked over it. My feet went over this place and with me was Nakarty who now has sickness in his chest. It was even as we passed this place that he started to cough."

Korometti looked down at the little girl. "How long ago was this?"

She shivered. "At dawn three days ago."

Korometti's voice shook with anger. He drove his spear viciously deep into a tall anthill. "So will it be with the one who did this evil!"

Storm and Flood

The next day was fine and clear. Everything seemed calm. Old Olongo was holding his own. Little Nakarty was playing in his cot, none the worse for his attack of pneumonia.

Esteri smiled. "It is a thing of happiness, Doctor. Nearly always in the morning things look much better than they did in the middle of the night. We…"

Daudi stopped her, for running towards them was Korometti. He panted, "Maylanwe is sick to death, Bwana. Come at once!"

As they ran to the landrover the doctor said, "Tell me what happened."

"It was the middle of the night, Bwana. She called to me and said, 'My father, within my head there is great pain,' and behold, Bwana, she burned with fever. Then she vomited with strength. After that she seemed to sleep, but then she cried again and again, 'Pain comes to my neck.' " He shook his head like a lion freeing itself of *tse-tse* flies. "I have always taken little notice of witchcraft, but that evil thing across the road—has it not power to damage? First the boy and now my daughter."

"Remember, Korometti, many people walked down that path and over that cactus and nothing happened to them. Stop thinking about magic. Maylanwe has a severe illness. We know it well. We must bring her to the hospital at once. There are medicines that will deal with her trouble. We will give her the same medicine that helped Nakarty."

"What happens in this sickness, Bwana?"

"It is as though you have fever. Then the neck becomes stiff, the eyes will not look straight, the thinking of the sick one becomes mixed and they speak nonsense. The neck becomes even stiffer…"

Korometti interrupted. "I know it, Bwana. I know it well. We call it the disease of death. None come back when they have started on that path. Surely this is witchcraft."

"No, Korometti. It is caused by a small germ. These deadly disease-producers breed with great speed. That's why we need to have her at the hospital so that we may look after her before those germs can become a great tribe. It's urgent and I don't like the look of the weather."

As he spoke the sun went behind a mass of black cloud. Lightning flickered and there came the low rumble of thunder. They jumped out of the landrover and ran to the village. Soon they were on the way back, the small girl in Korometti's arms.

The clouds seemed to bulge downwards, blotting out the mountain behind the hospital. Then came the sound of huge raindrops on the leaves of the trees a kilometre away. There was the continuous ominous growl of thunder.

As they slammed the landrover doors the storm struck. The sturdy vehicle slipped and skidded along the narrow high-crowned mud road. High-pitched, above the noise of the storm, came the frightened trumpeting of elephant. A dozen of the great creatures came pounding and churning their way through the sugar-cane gardens that led down to the river.

"*Koh*," said Korometti, "this is an evil situation."

An elephant, head down, came lumbering across the road. The doctor stamped on the brakes. The landrover skidded and came to a stop with two of its wheels crazily poised over the river bank.

"Out you get, Korometti. You'll have to carry her the rest of the way fast—and give Esteri this." He scribbled on an envelope, writing the name of the drug and the dose to be given and thrust it into Korometti's hand. "Send all the men that you can with a long, strong rope. It's no good trying to cross in the landrover. We'll have to fight hard to save the machine from being swept downstream."

The tall African nodded and strode off through the chest-deep water

carrying the sick child in his arms.

Working feverishly they dug a track for the wheels in the soft mud of the bank and Daudi rammed pieces of driftwood into it to give grip for the tyres. In the swirling water a post bobbed up and down. Daudi plunged in, grabbed it and wedged it against the side of the vehicle. Then he unwound the rope that was around the front axle and forced a length of hose over the exhaust pipe, fixing it so that it would point skywards at roof level.

From the sugar-cane gardens came the noise of elephant. A foaming wave swept down the river. The angry water started to cut away the bank beneath the wheels. The situation seemed desperate, when a crowd of hospital people dashed towards the stranded car through the pouring rain. Above the roar of the flood one of them shouted, "The elephants, Bwana, we had to wait till they passed."

First, one end of the rope was thrown over the wild water. Grasping it they fought their way across. The last man lost his footing. Dragging him to safety was like landing a huge fish. Cheerfully they heaved and pushed and pulled on the rope. The landrover lurched sideways. The turbulent river slapped against the side like waves against a boat.

"She's gone!" yelled someone.

Everyone heaved frantically and somehow three wheels were on solid ground. Sticks were rammed under them making a causeway. The engine roared. The front wheels spun wildly. Mud flew everywhere. Hastily more sticks were forced under the tyres. The sturdy vehicle started to move.

"Pull!" yelled Daudi. "Keep her going! Pull! Pull!"

The wheels gripped and with a neck-breaking jerk the landrover shot back on to the road.

"We'll have to drive to the top of the bank, Daudi, and leave her this side."

He nodded. "We can cross soon on the rope. See?" He pointed to a man on the hospital side of the river. Daudi held up the rope and a ball of string and

after some shouting and gesticulating tied a stone to the string and sent it rocketing over. Soon the rope was coaxed over the torrent and one end tied to a stout tree. The doctor anchored the other to the axle of the landrover and he and Daudi swung hand over hand across the flooded river.

Soaking wet, they struggled up the hill and, covered with mud, came to the children's ward. Esteri looked from one to the other, and at the pool of water that was collecting on the hospital floor. Her eyes twinkled.

"Doctor, already I have given the injection as you ordered." She held up the mud-stained envelope. "And I am boiling up the instruments you will require. She is in here."

The little Maasai girl lay quietly in bed. Her eyelids flickered and she moaned, "My neck! Oh, my head!"

"Lie quietly, Maylanwe. You will feel no pain," whispered Korometti.

The doctor scrubbed his hands and tied a hospital gown over his wet clothing. The little girl's eyes, neck and chest were carefully examined. Then picking up a small metal rod he stroked the satin-smooth skin of her abdomen. One side twitched in a normal reflex but the other side did not.

"This is what we call meningitis, Korometti. There is no doubt about it. You call it the disease of death. We have already given the medicine which is even now killing the *vidudu* within her."

Korometti pointed towards the small boy who was recovering rapidly from pneumonia. "Bwana, is this the same medicine as you gave him?"

"Truly, but it is not the same germ that we are attacking. Remember, the spear that will kill lion will also kill leopard."

Maylanwe was rapidly losing consciousness. Fluid was taken from her spine and examined under the microscope. "The matter is now plain, Korometti. This is certainly the disease called meningitis."

He nodded. "Bwana, will she be all right?"

"With the help of God, yes."

"*Heeh*," he sighed, "this hospital is a place of comfort. There is my father whose life we thought was finished. The old woman with the heel which gave her no joy. Then Nakarty, and now my daughter." He looked down at her. "*Yoh*, Bwana, do what is best for her."

Pedalling up the hill came Yohana. "Bwana, quickly. Near the Maasai village a youth has been bitten by a large, black snake. Travel with speed. Perhaps there may be time to save his life."

In the kerosene-driven refrigerator was an emergency kit with snake anti-venom and syringe ready for immediate use. The doctor grabbed it and ran outside.

"*Kah!*" said Daudi as they hurried down the hill to the river. "It is a good thing the landrover is on the other side, otherwise there would be no hope of getting there."

Fortunately the flooding had eased but even then it was with difficulty they waded through the brown, swiftly moving stream and struggled up the slippery bank on the far side.

"Who was the youth who was bitten?" asked Daudi.

"A Maasai. I heard them say that he and his companion had stolen a cow," said Yohana.

Daudi whistled softly. "This can lead to bitterness."

Yohana nodded. "The one who was bitten by the snake lies on the ground near to death. The other will probably die too. At the moment he is tied to a tree somewhere. Who can tell what awaits him when the Maasai young men have hands that itch to use their knives?"

Darkness was coming down rapidly. The mountains, generally blue and kindly-looking, were black and grim and made even more forbidding by the lightning which flickered above and behind them.

Daudi shuddered. "Evil is about tonight. Can't you feel it, Doctor?"

"I can indeed, but always remember God is stronger than the devil. Light can always beat darkness."

Swooping low over their heads out of the gloom came a dark bird. Yohana stumbled and nearly fell. He gasped. "Doctor, did you see what *that* bird was?"

"It was *toowe*, the owl. I'm not scared by that catcher of mice."

"You may not be," came Yohana's tense voice, "but many are. From long ago it has been our tradition that owls are the messengers of witches."

"Aren't you forgetting something in remembering this, Yohana?"

"I believe in God and His power, Doctor, but you can never understand these things that are born into us—things that live deep down in our bones. They will never be part of you." He shivered.

They reached the landrover and jumped in. The engine coughed and then spluttered into life. Daudi drove carefully onto the crown of the road.

"What about elephant, Yohana?"

"They will have gone, Doctor."

Daudi nodded in agreement.

"*Kah!* What are these?" He changed into the lowest gear.

Lightning was still flashing and, silhouetted directly in front, were four of the great creatures making havoc of a garden of young corn. Daudi put the headlights on them. The elephants tossed their trunks and squealed and moved off to one side.

"*Koh*, that was dangerous."

He stamped on the accelerator. "That was necessary."

They skidded sideways in a deep rut and ploughed on through the near darkness.

Suddenly in the middle of the track were people waving their arms. Daudi leapt down and talked with excited Maasai. He ran back to the landrover. "Doctor, it's too late. The poison has worked."

They looked down at a strong-looking young man lying obviously dead beside a large cobra.

"They found this man and his companion eating the meat of a cow they had stolen and killed," explained Daudi. "Seeing Korometti's people, they bolted. This one forced his way through a thornbush fence and as he pushed aside the branches the snake struck. He killed it with his stick but not soon enough."

In an eerie way the moon suddenly appeared between great skull-shaped black clouds. There was a bilious gleam about it. Daudi shuddered. "This is a night of darkness and evil."

They stood looking down at the dead man. "What will happen now, Daudi?"

"Nothing. The Maasai will not touch those who are dead. They will leave him there. The hyenas will do the rest."

A crop of goosepimples spread over the doctor. "What of the other meat thief?" he asked.

"I hear from the father of Nakarty that he is somewhere not far from here tied to a tree. They rely on hyenas to help them in this difficulty also."

"We can't let that happen. Yohana, what shall we do? We can't leave the boy out there to die."

"True, Bwana, but if we find and free him there will be anger and our purpose may suffer but…"

Daudi interrupted. "God knows all about it. We'll pray and do what we know is right."

Yohana nodded. “And we can leave the outcome to Him.”

Danger

"We'll want some *pangas* and lighting," said Daudi. "Let's wade across the river and collect them."

As they sorted out what would be needed for a jungle search on a cold, wet night they could see and hear what was going on inside the ward.

Outside the rain had ceased and the roar of the flooded river had quietened to a murmur. Peter and Korometti looked out over the hills that showed up starkly with each flash of distant lightning. Faintly and from far away came the howl of a hyena.

"*Hongo*," said the young education officer, "you have seen much of sickness and disease these days. Also you see and understand the usefulness of hospitals and the new ways of medicine."

Korometti said nothing.

Peter tapped on the windowsill with his finger. "Your father lives, the old woman Bibi's pain has gone from her foot, the small girl lies in bed with medicine working to save her life. You realise the need and value of hospitals. Now what is your answer to schools?"

Korometti shuffled his feet. Peter seemed to become taller. There was authority in his voice. "Don't tell me again that you have no children. God has given you children. He knows them all by name. As I told you before, when you lie in this matter you are cursing your children without realising it. Say if you wish, 'We don't want the children to go to school,' but don't say, 'We have no children.' "

Korometti drew a deep breath. "No one but a Maasai could say these words to me without feeling the weight of my knobkerry."

Peter stood directly in front of him, his chin set in a hard line. "But I am a

Maasai. And I understand the way you, a Maasai, think. And what is more, I know that when your children know what I know they will curse the name of the man who stopped them from going to school."

Korometti's hand clenched tightly. "Stop this talk of curses."

Peter leaned back against the wall. His face twitched as a spasm of pain shot through his head. "I know you don't like it, but a lion is not removed from your path by closing your eyes. These days in many parts of East Africa children are hating, yes, hating those who blocked them from going to school. Do you wish to lose the love of your own children? Speaking for myself I certainly do not want them to speak evil of my name when I am no longer an education officer. But they will bless me when they know what I am trying to do for them this day."

"You, Peter!" came Esteri's voice. "To bed with you. You say thunderstorms make your head ache and I am telling you that talking in a loud voice makes it ache still more."

"But I'm talking of things of importance."

She took his arm firmly and Korometti smiled for the first time that day as he saw the education officer gently but firmly led in the direction of his bed. Speaking in the Maasai language and just loud enough for Peter to hear he chuckled, "The ways of hospitals are different from those of schools."

Daudi, Yohana and the doctor had squelched doggedly through the thornbush scrub till they stood at the top of a small hill looking out over the rain-soaked Tanzanian countryside.

Daudi shivered. "I have no joy in the way that lightning makes the mountains look angry and every bush and tree seems to…"

The long howl of a hyena came from somewhere behind. The doctor tripped and nearly dropped the torch. "*Kah!* I object to hyenas. The noise they make gives me the horrors."

"*Hongo*," muttered Yohana, "then think how you would feel if you had been beaten till you ached all over and then were tied to a tree in the darkness with only your feet free to fight an animal which could easily break your leg bones with one crunch of his jaw."

Daudi chuckled. "That was a mouthful of uncomfortable words."

"*Ngheeh*," agreed Yohana vehemently, "and we have been searching for nearly an hour and the batteries of our torch have nearly reached old age."

Daudi spoke urgently, "I heard something."

They listened. Rain dripped from the trees above. The crickets sang on softly, monotonously. A bat swept past, changing its flight to miss Yohana's head by a fraction. "*Kah!*" he exploded, "the whole place is full of things of fear."

Daudi chuckled again. "The what's-its-name bird will start to sing *til-til-til-til* in a moment and then…"

A faint shout came from somewhere in the darkness. It was followed by the much louder howl of a hyena. Yohana grabbed the torch and plunged forward. They stumbled over a rise. Standing out in the darkness was a tree with light bark and starkly against this showed a pair of brown hands that struggled to free themselves from tightly tied rope.

Beyond the tree the torch showed up the gleaming eyes of a hunchbacked animal. The doctor ran at it yelling. The hyena disappeared, blending with the deep shadows.

"Careful, Bwana," shouted Yohana. "There are more than one of them."

The dim light from the torch revealed a Maasai boy who though utterly exhausted was very much alive. Daudi cut the ropes which bound him. They grabbed the lad before he fell.

"*Kah!*" exclaimed the postman. "It's young Debe who broke his leg last year!"

The boy was moving his arms up and down to make the blood flow. "I thought my life was ended," he croaked.

"You travelled a road that was full of peril," agreed Yohana. "Did I not tell you of the two ways, one that leads to life and the other to death?"

Debe nodded but said nothing.

"Let's go," said Daudi and led the way unerringly to the landrover.

The clouds were scudding like frightened buck past the moon and thunder still rumbled in the distance.

"*Eeeeh-heh*," said Yohana as they stumbled into the vehicle and Debe let out a deep sigh as the door slammed shut. The engine started without trouble but the headlights produced only enough light to make the journey back to the hospital eerie and somewhat hazardous. Everything large seemed big enough to be an elephant. The smaller shadows appeared to move furtively like hyenas. The boy sat there with his hands over his eyes as they bumped through potholes and skidded sideways in the black mud. Every now and then three pairs of eyes looked to the hills but the sky was clear. "*Huh*," grunted Yohana, "we might get through."

"If we can't we'll leave the machine on this side and wade across," said Daudi.

At the crossing they stopped and Daudi jumped out. "It's up to my knees!" he shouted through the darkness. A moment later he was back in the front seat.

"Hold on tight!" He shouted as he slammed the door. His foot pushed down the accelerator hard, the engine roared and they shot forward. A sheet of spray splashed up as the front wheels hit the water. The fast-moving tyres churned the sand for a split second but the speed and power of the four-wheel-drive took them on and up the opposite bank.

There were lights in the hospital. Esteri hurried out with her finger to her lips. "The news is good. Olongo sleeps and on the floor beside his bed is Korometti. *Kah!* how he snores!" She laughed softly and then went on. "The children also sleep. Maylanwe's neck is still stiff but her temperature doesn't rise. Three babies have been born…"

"What of Peter?"

"He sits in your office, Doctor, reading books. He says his mind is going like a clock. I told him to go to bed and he did but when Korometti slept he walked on tiptoe to your office and started reading."

Daudi moved quietly in that direction. The doctor wrote busily for some minutes and then said, "Come, Debe, swallow these pills and then there is one man you must talk to."

They walked into his office. He turned to Peter. "This is Debe who has been in trouble. Talk with him. Soon we will send food. Share it with him."

Peter nodded. He had already heard the story from Daudi. He handed Debe a blanket. The boy wrapped himself in it and sat on a stool, his face blank.

The food arrived. Peter helped himself and poured tea. In Maasai he said, "This is not the sort of meal that brings true joy to the teeth of our tribe, but it helps."

Debe sat still and silent.

"Meat," went on Peter, "that's the thing to make your stomach talk, and milk…" He paused. "But this tea brings warmth and strength." He poured out a cupful and put in four teaspoonfuls of sugar and pushed it towards the shivering boy.

Debe looked at it and made no move.

Peter went on eating. "*Kah!* You look like I did the day my companion and I stole a goat and took it to a place we thought was hidden and had a feast. *Kah!* But we were found out. And *hongo!* were we beaten!"

Debe stood up stiffly. "*Kah*, that's what happened today." He shuddered. "My companion is dead now and they tied me to a tree and there were hyenas…" He stopped.

"Drink your tea," said Peter quietly. "There are few young men who haven't done this at some time. Do we not both know how important the herds are

to our tribe? You must keep out of the way of those whose cow you have stolen. You might not escape a second time. The elders of your house will have no pleasure in what you have done."

There was fear in the boy's eyes. "My uncle's anger will boil. Already he threatens because I have learned to read."

Peter looked up quickly. "Where did you learn to read?"

"Yohana taught me at the hospital when I had my leg broken."

Peter was silent. He thought of the hostile way he had been received by the chief, Langaso, when he had talked about children going to school. He shrugged. "One thing is certain. You cannot go back to your village and your family until a sacrifice has been offered to make peace. A lamb must die."

Debe nodded and spoke in a subdued voice. "Bwana Peter, I know the words of God about the two ways. I have followed the wrong one."

"You have—and you see clearly where it leads." Peter paused. Someone was coming. He stood up suddenly and looked through the window. Moving quickly across the room he whispered, "Lie here as if you slept. A relation of the man whose cow you stole is near."

Debe threw himself on the floor and pulled the blanket over his head. Peter turned down the lamp and opened a cupboard door which largely hid the boy.

"*Hodi?*" came Korometti's voice.

"*Karibu*," answered Peter. "*Hongo!* You seek the Bwana?"

The chief shook his head. "I come to talk. The words you spoke of the children's curse made me dream. I cannot rest. My mind has no peace in it. You are of our tribe but you have seen many things in many places. You talk the language of the *Wazungu*, the Europeans."

Peter nodded. "I have travelled in their country, learned in their schools and universities and seen the way they live. Make no mistake, this way is coming

here. Radio, money, cars, shops, aeroplanes—everything!"

Korometti squatted on a three-legged stool and put his head in his hands. "You say your head feels dizzy because you hit it against the road. I say my head also turns round and round. I am hitting it against many things all the time."

Peter put his hands behind his neck and smiled quietly. "Speak. My ears are open."

"*Yoh!* It is truly said that we Maasai are people of cattle. We live in our *bomas*. We travel where we want to. We graze our cattle where the grass is good. Other tribes and other people walk the paths. Let them keep out of our way and all is well."

"You speak in the way of the thinking of many," agreed Peter. "We like to think of our tribe as being on a high hill above all others. But the rain falls on other places. The winds do not only blow on our people. Also, if a great flood comes it sweeps away even the Maasai if they stand in its path."

"*Ngheeh*," agreed Korometti. "You mention some of the sticks that beat my head. I am a leader of my people. I sell some cattle. I have this money, so I buy a radio. It speaks to me disturbing words. We learn Swahili to sell our cattle, but this language is a stick that beats us, for words we can understand with our ears come from here, from there, from everywhere—saying this and saying that. Truly our minds go round like the whirlwind."

"If you read newspapers it would be even worse," broke in Peter. "And when you read English there is a flood of books and magazines to open your eyes—to make thoughts grow in your mind like grasshoppers."

"Words in books do not speak to me," grunted Korometti. "But pictures do. I hear the words on the radio of Russia and I see the pictures in their magazines. Pictures that speak to me. This only increases my dizziness." He rolled his one good eye. "Then comes sickness. Does this not drag us from our hill? The medicines of our people do not work with strength. We come here to the hospital. It is a place of unusual kindness. This doctor, these nurses, Daudi and Yohana and the others—why do they do what we would

not?

"They teach new ways for medicines and they speak words of the *soul* which they say is sick and helpless. Are we of the great Maasai people helpless? Are we?" His voice trailed off as he scratched his ear in perplexity.

Peter smiled. "Is it not a Maasai custom to put a stone in the fork of a tree to hold back the sun if a man would reach the end of his safari in daylight?"

Korometti nodded without looking up.

Peter's voice hammered on. "Do you believe it? Does this stone do any good? Is this a way of practical wisdom? Does this really keep light on the path? Does this keep darkness away from us?" He stood up. "Does this stone keep what we fear from happening to us?"

Korometti grunted. "It is our custom."

Peter nodded. "You speak truly, and it is the custom of the Maasai to walk in the old ways. But we know, you and I, that the stone cannot hold back the sun. And we know, you and I, that we cannot hold back the ways of progress. Education, reading, writing, knowledge, will come…"

Korometti looked at him sullenly. "We do not want it."

"But you need it."

"No!" He thumped the floor with his fist. "No! And we don't need the God of the *Wazungu*, the Europeans."

Peter's voice was gentle. "*Mulungu*—the great spirit who made all men and all things—He is not a European."

Korometti rubbed his ear. "It is the custom of some of our tribe to pay a goat to a medicine man for a charm to keep our cattle from disease and the attack of wild animals. Others, and I am one of them, rely on our own strength and skill. What do we want with *Mulungu*?"

"You ask the wrong question." Peter Pompo put a hand on each side of his

head and leaned forward. "The one that matters above all is, what does God want of me?"

"*Koh!* What *does* God want of me?"

"In His holy book, the Bible, He warns of the danger when we take small notice of Him and arrogantly go our way."

Korometti stood up and leant on his spear. "What does He do to those who ignore Him and refuse to listen to His words? Does He punish? Has He hot anger? Does He destroy people?"

"God loves people, Korometti. He sees we are like those lost in the dark, travelling the road to disaster. He knows we are not able to help ourselves. His son, Jesus—the wise ones of long ago called him the Lamb of God—came to look for and to rescue us."

Korometti stood silent, his head on one side.

Pompo went on. "Tell me. If a son has broken the customs of our tribe and there is no longer peace between him and his father, what then? Is it not necessary for the cleansing animal, a lamb *olkipoket* to be sacrificed?"

Korometti growled. "But what has this…"

"Jesus is the Lamb of God, our *olkipoket*. We Maasai accept this lamb sacrifice to make peace between men. You and everyone else everywhere need Jesus to make peace with God."

"*Basi!* Stop! Enough!" snapped the tall man moving angrily through the door and into the night.

The figure lying under the blanket on the floor moved furtively. He peered round the room. "Bwana Pompo," he said huskily. "It is I who need *olkipoket*. Have I not done a great wrong and is not my life in danger?"

Two Bottles

Peter Pompo picked up the hurricane lantern and held it high above his head. There was a little smile round the corner of his mouth as he said, "Doctor's lives are full of problems." He nodded towards the bulging blanket in the corner and told all that had happened. "I see that you have the task of saving a man's life when he has no real sickness. You know that those who steal Maasai cattle die unless peace is made by sacrificing a lamb and another cow is given in compensation. Debe's uncle Langaso will refuse both of these and the young man will die—unless…"

The doctor grinned. "Peter Pompo, you are recovering. Ideas are replacing pain in that head of yours."

"Anger decreases with time, Doctor. It may be that there is a way out of this trouble."

"There is no chance of smuggling him away from here. The matter is known widely. There is no way of hiding in the jungle."

"The safest place," nodded Peter, "is in the ward. Who would look for him there? If his head is shaved and he is bathed with strong-smelling antiseptic soap which most Maasai despise, no one will come near him."

Daudi had been resting in a large chair. He laughed. "We shall bandage his head, dress him in hospital clothes and spread rumours of *ndeje-ndeje*, epilepsy, which many people fear. They will demand that he be put in the far corner of the ward and surrounded by a screen."

"This is wisdom," agreed the doctor.

Daudi stood up. "Send Peter to bed and we of the hospital will admit a heavily bandaged patient in the middle of the night."

Korometti strode up and down. He greeted the doctor curtly. "Bwana, we hear that there is a sick one, badly burnt, who has the disease which causes him to fall into the fire. This gives us no pleasure. Let him be moved."

The rumour had obviously flourished. "Suppose we put him in the bed in the corner and surround him with a screen?"

The tall man relaxed. "We agree."

"It will be done at once."

"Bwana, the young men have agreed to give blood for Olongo, my father."

The doctor nodded. "When the blood is in the bottles we can work. Then, and only then, can we begin. Tomorrow all will be ready."

Olongo was propped up on pillows. "Bwana, when will you work with your little knife?"

"Today your tribesmen will give blood and we will run it into your veins. Tomorrow we will operate."

The old man nodded. "It is well. And I know that your way is in the hands of God."

"How have these words come into your understanding, *Mzee*?"

"There are those who talk to me as they work. Esteri, she is not of my tribe, but she has kindness in her hands, also she sings the words of God and they grow in my mind." He paused for breath. "And Peter, son of Pompo—we talk many words together and I, the elder of our tribe, see that I am as small dust when God looks at me and He is all-powerful."

"Your sickness and your weakness have shown you this, Olongo?"

"Truly, Bwana."

"When you came into hospital you came because you needed help. It was your own wish. You could just as easily have turned your back on the

hospital and not come in."

"*Eheh*," agreed the old man, "that is indeed so."

"It is the same with God. He only can cure your greatest trouble."

The old man nodded. "The soul disease—sin."

"An evil thing this sin, Olongo. Like poison it works slowly. At first there comes a glow perhaps—for the taste of sin can be interesting at the beginning—but then it turns bitter and an ache takes the place of what promised to be happiness. Then comes an empty feeling. Things are not what you thought they would be. Misery pushes its way into your life. The sickness of your soul increases and the last step along this joyless road is hopeless death."

"*Eheh!*" agreed the old man. "Esteri has been telling me these words. *Hongo!* I did not think of them when there was health in my body but lying here and thinking makes a difference—a great difference." He closed his eyes. "I shall sleep now."

The doctor raised an eyebrow and he and Korometti walked out into the sunshine. "We could operate *now* if we had that blood. I will work directly two large bottles of blood are safely in the refrigerator of the pathology room…!"

The chief nodded. "The young men will come before midday."

An hour's journey away Ndulele walked cautiously along a dark path dragging an unwilling goat. He climbed a hill studded with granite boulders. Below the overhang of a mass of granite he saw the glow of a fire. He moved forward and called, "*Hodi?*"

A vague voice from the shadows answered, "*Karibu.*"

With fingers that fumbled the *kudu* horn player tethered the goat to a thorn tree and walked slowly towards the house of N'gombe, the medicine man. Heads close together they talked for a time. At last Ndulele pointed with his

chin towards the goat and N'gombe nodded.

"The matter is understood and I accept your gift. It is true that there are those who make dangerous and powerful medicines against you but wear this." He handed Ndulele a piece of greased string with a thumb-sized leather bag attached. "At all times wear this. Do not take it off even for a moment. It will protect you."

Eagerly the *kudu* horn player clutched the charm and hung it round his neck. "Are you sure it will keep me safe at all times?"

Medicine man nodded. "Wear this and behold, the magic of the doctors of the Maasai will have no strength against you."

"None at all?"

N'gombe shook his head. There was a hint of a sneer in his voice. "*Hata kidogo*, not even a little. Come again tomorrow. But this time bring a cow and I will tell you of a medicine of strength to bring sickness and death to the cattle of those milk-drinkers. But understand clearly, it is a medicine of no small cost." He made a gesture of dismissal.

Ndulele stumbled as he walked back down the steep path.

Five silent, sullen young men from Korometti's village walked up the path and stopped outside the ward. The rising sun shone red over the mountain. The shrill voice of an old man who carried milk bottles came to them.

"*Koh!* On the road I passed Ndulele. He drives a cow before him. He boasts that he will buy another medicine to bring sickness to the cattle of the Maasai." He finished with a thin chuckle.

The Maasai youths gave no sign that they had heard but two of them moved stealthily back the way they had come.

Daudi walked briskly to the pathology room, opened the door and windows and put out three stools for the blood donors. He expertly went about cross-

matching the blood and finished up by taking half a litre from one of them. There was no fuss but everything was met by smouldering hostility.

Later he went to make his report. "The news is good, Doctor, but not very. I have checked the three Maasai men. Two are compatible but of these one has a sickness that makes it unwise to use his blood."

Korometti's voice came from behind him. "I sent five men."

"Only three arrived," replied Daudi.

"We need at least two bottles of blood before we can operate on the old man," said the doctor.

Daudi nodded. "However, there is one other person we could use—that is Yohana, and he is willing."

"Korometti, I'm keen to get on with the job. Would there be resentment amongst your people if there is more sudden illness after this transfusion?"

"No, Bwana, this will not happen. I have thanks to Yohana."

"That's settled then. Let's call him."

"Here he comes now," said Daudi as the postman came to the door.

"*Habari?*" he greeted. "What's the news?"

"The news is good, especially that you are willing to give some blood. We have an urgent need."

"Doctor, I will give a large bottle full with joy. If I can help save the old man's life this will bring joy to both Esteri and myself."

"I have already cross-checked his blood," said Daudi. "It is exactly right. Shall I collect?"

"Please, Daudi."

Yohana nodded. "Esteri and I have been thinking that if Jesus loved us enough to give all of His life so that we could have eternal life, it is surely a small thing to give a bottle of blood that a man may have his ordinary life saved."

"Everything is ready," said Esteri. She looked across at her husband. "I'm glad it has happened this way. For many days we have prayed for the Maasai. They need Jesus very much."

Daudi called, "Come, Yohana. I am ready now."

Next morning in the operating theatre the instruments were all put out and covered with sterile towels. The old man lying on the operating table looked up at me. "Bwana, tell me again the words of God about the Door."

"*Eheh*, Olongo, you will find them in the last book in the Bible, the book called Revelation. The words come from the lips of the Son of God Himself: 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock.' This is the door of your life, Olongo. Then He says, 'I call *hodi*, may I come in? If anyone hears and opens the door, then I will come in and will eat with him and he shall eat with Me.' "

"*Yoh*, if we say *karibu*, will Jesus truly come in?"

"Yes, Great One—if we mean it with all our heart."

"Bwana, could it be that death might come my way before sunset tonight?" he asked softly.

"It could, Great One. The chances are not large. But it is possible."

The old man raised himself on one elbow. "Listen!"

The ochre-decorated tribesmen who were outside the window stood very still. The old man closed his eyes and prayed. "Jesus, Son of almighty God, it is I, Olongo, of the Maasai. I hear Your voice, Lord Jesus. Come into my life and also forgive my sin."

There was silence and then in a hoarse whisper, "Has He heard me, Bwana?"

"He has heard."

"Has He come in?"

"He has come in, for the Son of God does not speak promises that He does not mean to perform."

The old man nodded. "I understand. When I make a promise it is kept. When God Himself promises…" He nodded and smiled. "Surely He means to keep them."

Daudi hurried through the door. "Doctor, I have the second bottle of blood ready."

"Right. We'll run it in as we operate."

But before they started the doctor prayed, "Lord God, almighty one, please be with us. Your hand on Olongo to give him strength. Your hand on mine that I may work with special skill. Thank You for loving us. Thank You for caring for us. We pray this in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ."

The old man demanded that he be told about each step of the operation so a local anaesthetic was used. Esteri and Daudi assisted the surgeon. They were all acutely aware of anxious and curious faces watching intently through the window.

After an hour of complicated surgery the prostate gland, the cause of the old man's trouble, was safely removed. As the sewing-up process started Olongo muttered, "Surely it is not over yet?"

"Yes, Great One, it is. And all should be well. We will take you back to your bed in the ward but you must rest very quietly."

"*Eheh*, I shall do that."

As they carried Olongo back to the ward the doctor said to Korometti, "Stay here. I may want your help till the moon is high."

"I will do this," he agreed.

The doctor was barely out of sight when a young Maasai hurried up and talked vehemently. Korometti's hands moved and spoke eloquently of action.

"I have great praise indeed," said Ndulele. "The charm you made for me to wear about my neck has real strength."

The rising sun shone red on the immense granite boulders behind the medicine man's hut. Below it a young woman squatted under a castor oil bush beating with a sinister rhythm on a snakeskin-covered drum. Ndulele's glittering eyes were fixed on the medicine man. "You have made medicine?"

From inside his black cloth N'gombe produced a small packet wrapped in banana bark. "Medicine has been made. Medicine of great strength to bring sickness to cattle, but it is a medicine of no small cost."

"The gift is brought. It is a cow that has seen two harvests."

N'gombe stood up and went to inspect the animal. He looked at it carefully, raised his eyebrows and said, "Truly, you have no joy in the Maasai or their ways."

Ndulele spat. "Cattle, cattle, nothing else matters; this is the way to hurt them most."

The drumming filled the air. The medicine man's smile was half a sneer. "Surely to pay one cow for the death of many is a bargain for one with a mind like yours."

Ndulele almost grabbed the medicine from N'gombe's hand and muttering to himself he caressed the charm that hung round his neck. Then, with the lithe movement of a snake, he slipped among the rocks that towered above the jungle path.

Suddenly he froze into a brown statue in the deep shadow as to his nostrils

came the smell of cooking meat. He crouched behind a great cactus and peered down.

Far below him were ten young Maasai watching a cooking-pot simmer over a small fire. They were joined by two slim youths, one of whom carried two handfuls of shredded bark.

"Are you sure you found the right tree?" asked a voice.

Ndulele saw the nodding of the red-ochre head-dress below and heard words that brought a wild look back into his eyes.

"*Kah!* I heard that this one who blows on the *kudu* horn has medicine to kill our cattle. Let this *dawa* we cook bring purpose to your minds and strength to your arms."

In silence they watched the cooking-pot.

High above them Ndulele's face twitched and a slow vicious smile twisted his lips. Again he stroked the charm and whispered. "Protect me, and help me to deal with those who wait below to silence forever the music of my *kudu* horn."

He grinned widely as a baboon on a rock not far away barked a warning.

"Bark, monkey," he mumbled. "Tell them that my medicine works even faster on those it hits." He spat on his hands and began to dislodge an egg-shaped stone the size of a large water melon. With care he manoeuvred this to a spot where he hoped it would fall directly on the group below. He barked like a baboon. The silent group below made no movement. Ndulele gave the rock a great heave and threw himself down where he could see and yet not be seen.

The stone toppled forwards, slid on the sharply sloping granite, and moving faster and faster hurtled downwards. His eyes gleamed when he heard a Maasai cry out as the stone crashed among them. He barked again and again exactly imitating a baboon, and moving forward he peered down.

There was no sign of any Maasai alive or dead, but a baboon crashed through the undergrowth above the path they had taken.

Ndulele turned quickly and the medicine he had so recently purchased fell into the hole where the stone had been and lay there unnoticed. "*Yoh!*" he sniggered, dashing off to safety, "baboon appeared at the very moment he was wanted. This is a charm of strength." He stopped for a moment and groped for the packet of medicine. It was gone. A look of mad fury flashed across his face. He turned, muttering angrily, to look for it; but hearing running feet he realised his danger and silently disappeared into the elephant grass.

Debe, the fugitive, crouched over the fire in Yohana's house. "*Kah*, Bwana Peter, I have had nightmares these last two nights. When sleep came, all night long there were snakes that struck at me and spears and knives that stabbed. *Yoh!* It was a time of fear."

Peter nodded but said nothing.

After a while Debe spoke again. "While they operated on the old man yesterday I crept down here without being seen by anyone. Last night I slept here. My dreams were different but again there was cold fear. There was a *boma* in front of me and I could not pass it. Wherever I turned there it was." He shuddered. "Today I face anger and trouble."

"We will face it together," smiled Peter. "Let us go now to your uncle's village."

The track wound up a steep hill. Peter paused. Debe's hand gripped his arm. Below them, moving with planned purpose, came a dozen Maasai with spears and knobkerries, systematically combing the paths from the river to the foothills.

As they watched, Ndulele, lying on his stomach, wriggled out of a thick patch of elephant grass near a bend in the river. He slithered into the water with only his head showing and, holding a tuft of grass and corn-stalk debris

tightly against his scalp, he crossed the river. Then, bent double, he scuttled up a shallow creek.

"He has escaped," breathed Debe.

"For the moment," agreed Peter, "but, *kumbe*, if ever anyone needed *olkipoket*, the lamb that brings peace, it's Ndulele."

They walked on for a while and when Debe's village came into view. Peter said, "You cannot escape as he did by running away. You have two special problems."

Debe nodded but said nothing. Peter went on. "There is the barrier you cannot see yet which you cannot and dare not pass, and there is the question, 'Will your uncle give you a lamb to be *olkipoket*?' "

"He is one of my family. Will he not do this?" Debe's eyes were on the ground.

"Do you deserve it?"

Debe shook his head.

"Wait here then and I will speak for you. Think of this barrier you cannot see but which you cannot pass and of the lamb you cannot buy which in its dying can remove this barrier you yourself have made."

Peter strode away. For the first time the headache that had plagued him was quiet. There was strength in his body but his stride had no spring in it.

It was the day before his accident that he had previously visited this village.

Towards him came Langaso. They stopped, greeted one another in Maasai and then the village chief said, "You have heard our news." Not waiting for a reply his voice, hot with indignation, went on, "Debe, the son of my dead brother, steals a cow. He leads my son into this. They kill the animal and feast. They are found. My son is bitten by a snake. Debe is caught and for all I know is food for hyenas. He it was who asked to go to school—what a fool the boy was—he learned to read. He is the sort, like you, who turns from the

ways of our fathers."

Langaso paused for breath and Peter broke in. "The boy lives. Those of the hospital found him tied to a tree. He admits his wrongdoings. He asks that a lamb may be offered to make him clean."

Langaso boiled over. "*Kah*, they will demand a cow from me to pay for the one killed and I must pay. Shall I pay a perfect lamb as well?"

He stamped his foot in rage. "No lamb shall be found for this Debe. He is shut out from our village. He is shut out!" He turned on his heel and, pausing to shout, "No child from my village shall go near your schools!" he stalked away trembling with emotion.

Peter walked slowly back to the boy. He stood for a moment at the top of the ridge. On one side were the cattle and the river and standing corn. On the other, the church, the hospital and the school, the grain storage silos and the new airstrip. He spoke out aloud looking first to one side and then fixing his gaze on the buildings, "There has to be change. It cannot stay as it has been for generations." Then he started to pray, "Oh God, this is a matter of great difficulty. Please help the boy."

He sat on a flat rock and watched Debe walking restlessly backwards and forwards under the trees. Peter's head was throbbing. He struggled to his feet. "Debe, the way is shut. The barrier is still there. No lamb is available for *you*. No one will help. Only God can bring peace out of all this strife."

Drugged Soup

Korometti made an effort to relax. He stood beside his bull looking at his young warriors. Behind them were their spears stuck into the soft earth like huge pins in a giant pincushion. They squatted silently watching a pot simmering over a small fire.

A few more sticks were thrown onto the glowing coals. The pot bubbled and boiled over. Korometti beat a tattoo on the animal's rump with his restless fingers. "I am like that," he muttered. "One more matter of trouble and I shall boil over."

The smell of cooking meat reminded him of the cattle-thieves. He glanced at a cow standing somewhat apart from the herd. There had been sullen hostility in the eyes of the Maasai who had brought this cow, a replacement for the one that had been stolen from him by Debe and his friend. There was tension now between his village and Langaso's. At any time this could flare up into a fight.

Korometti shrugged. One of the adventurous ones was dead already. The other—his hand tightened around his stick. The bull, chewing placidly, looked round at him. Korometti scratched behind its ear and said, "It is a simple life for you. You are taken to grass and to water. There are those who protect you from teeth and claws. For you there are not two paths to choose from. Tell me, Bull, which road do I travel? Which road must I lead these people of mine?"

He looked across at the young men and said softly, "Would going to school do much for them?" His fingers moved on the strong neck of the creature which was his special pride. They came upon a tick. He squashed it. The bull shook his head.

"You think not, eh?" There was almost tenderness in Korometti's voice.

The soft stamp of hooves, the tinkle of cowbells, the familiar smell of the

cattle *boma* soothed him for a moment. But then harsh laughter came from the group around the fire.

Korometti's thoughts went to Ndulele. When those young warriors drank that broth they would be ready for desperate things.

Jarringly came *til-til-til-til*, the song of the bad-luck bird. In alarm the herdsman looked up, his eyes probing the undergrowth for wild animals. Korometti took in the whole scene. He gave the bull a gentle push. "Be off with you to the place where you belong. There is no danger for you."

He watched it lumber across to the *boma*, then walked to his house. Bending his tall body as he came through the doorway, he went into the gloom inside. He took down his locked metal suitcase and removed the transistor radio. He switched a knob. An African voice in Swahili told of fighting in the Middle East, of a military coup in West Africa, and of student riots in Asia. And then of a strike in a local High School.

Korometti spat. "Schools!" he muttered. "*Koh*, what does this learning give them?" The old ways were better than this. Then if you raided the Wakamba's cattle, there was a fight and some were killed. But the young warriors had to be strong. The old men drank beer, but the life of the tribe depended on the young men being disciplined. How often had he walked all day and all night too…

The announcer's voice broke into his thoughts. "A Maasai teacher has been severely injured in a brawl in a Nairobi beer-market."

Korometti's lip curled. He silenced the radio, rammed it into the suitcase and snapped the padlock shut.

The young men were drinking soup. *Til-til-til-til* sang the red-beaked woodpecker.

Towards him coming up from the hospital pedalled Yohana. Those around the fire jumped to their feet and grabbed their spears. "*Koh*," said one, "it is that trumpeter." He lifted his spear.

Korometti leaped over, knocking the spear from the warrior's grasp. "It is Yohana! Are your eyes blind?"

The young man groped for his weapon, but the look in the chief's eye stopped him.

Yohana jumped off his bicycle and walked briskly to Korometti, greeting him and shaking his hand, "I have come to call you. The child Maylanwe is gripped again by her fever."

A shout came from the group eating noisily around the fire. Korometti took a step towards them and then stopped. That drug-charged brew could set off a variety of mischief. He shrugged. It had happened before. His daughter was the one who needed him at this moment.

Through the branches above him he glanced at the sun. It was low in the sky. Quietly he spoke. "I shall arrive at the hospital before dark," he said.

Yohana, who was pumping up the front tyre of his bicycle, saw the Maasai pick up a stone and wedge it in the fork of a tree, then stride off through the elephant grass.

At the hospital, Jungle Doctor and Daudi were looking down microscopes. "See anything, Daudi?"

"A lot of white cells. Many more than normal."

"She has a bad infection of some sort. Any malaria parasites or tick fever *dudus*?"

Daudi shook his head. "Nothing like that."

"My slide is the same. This I'm afraid means that either Maylanwe has pneumonia, or that the meningitis germs are not being killed by those orange-coloured capsules."

Esteri came to the door. "Her temperature rises to 104°F, and her pulse you

can hardly count. She talks with the strange words of delirium."

"I'll examine her again. Try and keep those noisy ones quiet, Esteri. It is not easy to hear the sounds of pneumonia in the chest."

The little girl was held gently forward by the African nurse. There were the soft breath sounds that were to be expected.

"Hick!" He frowned and concentrated. "Hick!" The frown grew heavier.

"Hick!"

The doctor wrenched the stethoscope out of his ears and hurried to the door. "Stop that row. I'm trying…"

"Hick!"

"Who did that?"

"I did, Bwana, I… hick!… I have the… hick!… *nhwikwi-hwikwi*," said a long-faced man named Mikase.

"Well, please go and have them on the other side of the building."

"Hick! I don't want them, Bwana. It isn't that I like… hick!… them. I… hick!"

"Peter, try being a doctor for a while. Give him water to drink out of the wrong side of a cup. That may fix his hiccoughs. If it doesn't, see if holding his breath doesn't do it for him."

"Hick!" gulped Mikase.

The doctor hurried back to the little girl and again listened to her heart and chest. "I don't like it, Esteri. Lay her down quietly. Maybe I can find something tucked away in the medicine store that will help."

At the door was Peter smiling broadly. "It is no good, Bwana. My patient drank much water and spilled more. He held his breath till his eyes stuck out.

He says the snake within him shouts with misery."

"Try giving him a fright. Make a noise like a leopard just behind his ear. If that doesn't work, take some ice-blocks and hold them hard against the spot where this snake of his does its complaining. That should have considerable effect."

Peter grinned.

"Hick!" came Mikase. "Oh, Bwana, my… hick!… snake!"

"Why not hit it on the head with a knobbed stick?" suggested the doctor. "This is a sure way to stop snakes if you do it hard enough."

"It's not a matter of… hick!… laughing," growled Mikase.

"There are many things like that with us. Many things indeed. However, I shall look for a powerful medicine to stop those noises which give you no joy and interrupt my work." Korometti was standing silently in the group. The doctor gripped his arm. "Come, Korometti, we will seek medicine for the child." Together they walked into the small room with its walls lined with bottles. "The news is not good, not even a little, Korometti. Your daughter who means much to you has great fever. The usual medicines haven't enough strength to kill the germs that are the cause." He grunted with satisfaction and reached out for a bottle.

"Is that the answer to it, that stuff?" came Korometti's eager voice.

"Not for Maylanwe. But it may fix that man who hicks. It's… ah!" He was delighted. "Here's what I wanted." The doctor hit Korometti hard on the shoulder. "Here's what we both want. This stuff should give those miserable germs a bad time indeed. We've only four of them though. That's enough for one day."

"How many do we need?"

"Sixteen at least."

"I shall tell Olongo. He has been praying to the one you talk about, this Jesus.

He's been expecting you to find the medicine that is required."

"Has he? He can ask and expect an answer. I wish you could too. It grieves me that you take no interest in God's Lamb of cleansing. So the country of God is not yours to enter."

Korometti looked at the floor and drew a line with the toe of his sandal. After a long pause the doctor went on, "You heard that the boy who stole your cow is refused this cleansing animal by his relations?"

"I heard." Korometti's voice was hard. "He deserves it. He had this coming to him."

The doctor raised his eyebrows. "What of yourself? What do you deserve? What is coming to you?"

Korometti put his hand on the doctor's arm. "Bwana, stop saying words with no joy in them and give the medicine."

"I'll do that, but you keep on thinking of these uncomfortable questions."

Daudi reported, "The hiccoughs man has a good name, Bwana. Mikase means scissors. *Kumbe*, and does he not creak at the hinges?"

However, ten minutes after he had been given an injection, Mikase was a very contented man. "*Kah*," he laughed, "that medicine has strength to silence snakes."

"Hick!" said Daudi just behind him.

"*Koh*," grunted Mikase as the people around him chuckled. "That wasn't my snake. His voice is well known to everybody, especially the Bwana."

The cheerful mood of this group was not shared by the doctor. He knew only too well that the capsules he had found gave only a short breathing-space.

He went to his office and started to write letters.

"*Kah*," said Esteri coming wearily to the door. "What a day! *Kah!* Does that

little girl need nursing!"

"Sit down and let's work things out," said the doctor, scribbling on the back of an envelope. "The capsules we have will keep her going for twenty-four hours, that is till tomorrow afternoon late."

"Keep her going, Bwana; what do you mean?"

"She will have enough medicine in her blood till then to deal with the disease, but after that the germs will have nothing to stop them multiplying by the million."

"Does that mean they'll kill her?"

"I hope not, Esteri, but looking at it squarely, her defences are not strong. She could battle against these hordes of germs for two more days perhaps. But if we haven't further supplies by then, I'm afraid…" He paused. "Maybe there is some of this antibiotic at the Government Hospital near the post office where Yohana collects the mail. If so, everything will be fine, provided nothing happens to hold him up on the way back."

A worried frown spread over Esteri's face. She thought of floods, of falls off bicycles, and of hostile Maasai roving the roads. She said, "If there is none in the Government Hospital, what then?"

"If there isn't any there, things could be decidedly grim. However, we'll send telegrams to Dar-es-Salaam, and to Nairobi, for more. The best we can hope for is within twenty-four hours from Dar-es-Salaam. And even allowing for airmail from Nairobi, it would take at least forty-eight hours. And that could be too late." Esteri drew in her breath sharply. "Whichever way you look at it there is a chance, but a very slim one."

Yohana came cheerfully to the door. In the shadow behind him stood Korometti. The postman smiled. "*Hongo*, Bwana, that hiccough medicine was good. Many praise it. They say…"

The doctor interrupted. "True, Yohana, but our problem is Korometti's small daughter. We have enough capsules till this time tomorrow only.

There are two chances of obtaining more, perhaps three. Maybe there are some at the hospital near the post office where you collect the mail, Yohana. If so, everything will be fine. But if not, we'll send a telegram to Dar-es-Salaam and if they have them, they would send them up by train."

He scribbled again on an envelope. "That would take thirty-six hours from now. Perhaps this would be in time to save her. We'll contact Nairobi also, but that will take still another day."

"Nothing but perhapses!" burst out Esteri.

"Unless," said Korometti softly, "unless your God answers the old man Olongo's prayers. He expects Him to do so."

"God uses people to do His work for Him," said Yohana. "That's why I'll ride directly it is light with the letters and telegrams. You find the medicine, Bwana, and I'll bring it back. Have I not two wheels and two strong legs?" He turned and grinned at Korometti and patted him on the shoulder.

Jungle Doctor stood up and stretched. "Here are the letters and telegrams, Yohana. You know what to do?"

The smiling postman nodded. "First the Government Hospital, then telegrams to the big cities, and when that medicine arrives the wheels of my bicycle will turn as they've never turned before." He dropped his voice. "Bwana, Esteri has fever, but she refuses to keep away from these sick ones. She is taking medicine."

"If she has no temperature she should be all right. Malaria is a sickness that does strange things. Make sure she gets a good sleep."

That was more than happened to the doctor. He had a night of medical emergencies. Still dressed and looking bedraggled, he stood beside Maylanwe's bed and looked at the one remaining capsule in the bottle.

Through the window in the pre-dawn gloom he saw two figures approaching, one of them wheeling a bicycle. Underneath the flame-tree they stopped. A girl's voice spoke. "Watch out for those red-ochred men who

are full of wild medicine."

Yohana's laughing reply came, "They know me well. We must pray for those people, Esteri. You here as you do the nursing, and I as I pedal along the road. We have asked God that they may see the light, and walk in it. Let's keep on asking Him."

"*Heeh*," agreed Esteri. She passed her hand over her brow and shook her head a little.

"Are you sure you are fit to go on duty?"

She nodded. "It's only fever. It often does this to me."

They stood looking at one another for a moment and smiled into each other's eyes. "Goodbye, beloved," said Yohana, and swung onto his bicycle and rode away.

Help From the Air

Jungle Doctor slumped down into a chair. He muttered, "Sorry, Esteri, but I'm tired. It's been a good night. There was a little matter of twins then a Maasai with a huge abscess under his arm. Someone had tried to lance it for him with an arrow and had gone in too far and hit an artery. Oh, what a mess!" He yawned again. "But we saved four lives and that's not a bad exchange for eight hours' sleep."

Suddenly he noticed the nurse's teeth were chattering. "Not feeling well?"

Esteri tried to smile. "That attack of fever is still with me. Daudi did another blood-slide but saw only a few parasites. I've taken all the medicines in the usual way."

"But do you feel fit to come on duty?"

"*Eheh*, Doctor. You know what malaria is like."

"It is a thoroughly nasty disease and full of traps. Report to me without fail if your temperature goes up."

"*Eheh*," she nodded. "But if I can keep going I will. Today can see Maylanwe's life come from danger into safety. But I have an odd feeling." She shrugged.

"I have it too, Esteri. That's why I am going now to have an hour's sleep."

He walked slowly to the door and stopped in mid-yawn.

Silhouetted against the blood-red sky came a long line of spear-carrying Maasai. They turned away along a side track and disappeared as if by magic.

Esteri rubbed her eyes. "Bwana, were they there, or am I seeing things?"

"They were there, Esteri. And they are not visiting the sick. Something sinister is going on in those hills. Cattle raiding, I suppose. That will mean surgery for us. They are Korometti's men but they have been drinking drugged soup. That makes them irritable and full of fight. With this inside them they do things they are too well-disciplined to do normally."

Saying this he walked wearily down the path. Rest was a necessity. Even an hour's sleep would help, for a day's work at the hospital could be particularly difficult in the rainy season when tropical disease flourished.

He flung himself down on the bed and slept.

An hour later the alarm clock shrilled. Bleary-eyed he struggled up and resolutely walked to the hospital.

Half-way there he met Daudi running at full speed. "The radio phone is working, Doctor. They are on the air now. After many days of silence suddenly it works."

Six hundred kilometres away in Nairobi the East African Flying Doctor walked out onto the airfield. There was low fog. He went across to the control tower.

"Good morning," greeted the weather official. "Even the birds aren't flying yet. But it should clear in half an hour along the Rift Wall and let you on your way."

The doctor filled in those minutes checking over instruments and drugs in his emergency case. Rapidly the fog lifted. He warmed up the engine, went over his check list and then took off, flying low over the game reserve.

Zebra and gnu took little notice and giraffe looked up from their nibbling of the tops of umbrella trees, while gazelle bounded off at the sound of the sturdy little aeroplane.

He headed up through cloud and soon flew over a sea of white until he came to a place where first a four-thousand-metre black crater of Mt. Meru

appeared and then beyond it a six-thousand-metre crest of snow-capped Mt. Kilimanjaro. His instruments told him that he was flying over the radio beacon. He turned south, and then picked up the microphone and gave the call sign of his aeroplane: "FIVE YANKEE ALPHA BRAVO NOVEMBER to Foundation control. You read me? Over."

"Foundation Control to FIVE YANKEE ALPHA BRAVO NOVEMBER. Reading you loud and clear. Doctor, did you pick up that parcel of polio vaccine at the airport? Over."

"Roger, Roger. Have it with me. Are there any routine calls?"

"Hold on, Doctor, there's an emergency call coming through now."

A husky voice could be heard in the distance, and then the control operator's voice came. "That was Berega hospital. They're in urgent need of a particular variety of antibiotic. We'll send some to them by airmail. An airliner has been delayed and should be able to fly it to Dar-es-Salaam in time for tonight's train. I'll arrange to rush it to the International Airport. Over."

"Half-a-tick," said the doctor. "What was the name of that antibiotic? Over."

A crackle of sound came.

"Ah yes. I have some here. Can you put me through to Berega hospital?… Are you reading me, Berega? Over."

A crackling voice. "Reading you loud and clear. We have a pressing problem. A girl of about seven. Meningitis. Not responding. Giving her our last capsule today. The grey and pink ones. Over."

"Have. Repeat, have, box of sixteen with me. Will divert and fly over you in approximately two hours' time. Keep your eyes open for a small parachute. Hope they do the trick. God bless. Over and out."

Back at the hospital everyone trooped away from the office talking excitedly.

"*Kah!*" beamed Korometti. "We must tell Olongo. When he does his exercises to strengthen his body, then *kumbe!* does he not talk to God loudly? He feels he must speak with a large voice for God must be very old!"

Daudi grinned.

A few minutes later Korometti stood beside the old man's bed. "The pills are coming, *Mzee*!"

"*Oh-h-h?* And did you think they wouldn't? This had to happen, for God says to those of His tribe, 'Ask and it will be given to you.' "

"*Hongo*," gibed Korometti, "and if you asked for a herd of cattle would God send them from the sky?"

"*Kah!*" The old man's eyes flashed. "If God needed those cattle for something He wanted to do, He would. Oh, indeed He would! Didn't He send a sheep to be *olkipoket* for the boy his father planned to offer as a sacrifice?"

"*Olkipoket?*" repeated Korometti.

"Yes." The old man turned imperiously to Peter. "Tell the words."

Peter smiled. "The old man of the tribe long ago, very long ago, took his son on a long safari of days into the thornbush country. He had heard the voice of God. Was he willing to give God his son as a sacrifice? Did he love God more than the boy? Did he love God more than the gifts that God had given him?

"With a heart weighted with sadness he travelled, the boy beside him carrying the wood for the fire to burn the sacrifice."

"*Kah!* The wood that would burn his own dead body?" demanded Korometti.

"Just that!" nodded Peter. "The boy asked, 'My father, here is the wood, but where is the lamb that you will kill?'

"The man, Abrahamu, set his teeth and tried to keep his voice calm. 'My son,

God will provide Himself a lamb.'

"They walked on and came to the place God had spoken of—a high mountain. Abrahamu stopped, and with pain in his heart that who can imagine, arranged the wood and then he tied the boy by the hands and feet and placed him on the wood."

"He was the *olkipoket*," breathed Olongo.

"He was a boy filled with great fear," came Peter's quiet voice. "And then he saw his father's hand lifted holding a knife. He closed his eyes. But God's voice came, sharper than the knife. 'Abrahamu, hold! Don't touch the boy! Now I know that you love and trust Me with all your heart because you have not held back your only son from Me.'

"Abrahamu looked up and there in a thornbush was a ram. He took it and offered it as a sacrifice in place of his son."

"The animal that cleanses," mused old Olongo. "The boy lived because of that ram."

"Truly," said Peter, "and God tells us this in His book. He tells of the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of people from all tribes and nations, for sin is the great barrier which separates those who disobey Him from their God."

"Does God ever ask men to die for Him these days?"

"Yes. Remember those in the days of the Mau-Mau? Remember those who died in Burundi, in the Congo, in Uganda?"

"Their lives were wasted," growled Korometti.

"They weren't. These were the people who became living seed."

A lorry roared up the hill. The way it was driven spoke of urgency. It pulled up with a screech of brakes outside the door. The driver yelled, "Quickly, get them out of my machine! They're bleeding all over it!"

He greeted the doctor. "We have troubles. There's a man stabbed by a spear.

Kah! And does he bleed! The other has a great deep cut here." He held his fingers wide apart on the outside of his thigh. Rapidly temporary dressings were put over their gaping wounds.

As Daudi sterilised the instruments he asked, "What happened?"

"*Heeh!* We were working in our gardens. The Maasai came and drove their cattle right through the middle of the corn, flattening it out, *kabisa!*

"We called to them to stop but they came at us with spears and knives. *Yoh!* There were a dozen of them. There was wildness in their eyes."

The spear-wound man groaned. "Perhaps this is not hard to understand. Do we not hear that Ndulele has been planning to use special medicine to kill their cattle?"

"*Ngheeh*," agreed his companion. "And he tried to kill these very men who attacked us by trying to roll a stone on to them from a cliff high above."

The stitching up was almost over when shouting came from outside.

"Bwana, the aeroplane is coming. Hurry!"

The doctor was only just in time to wave a hand as the aeroplane roared low over the hospital. Suddenly from it blossomed out a small parachute made from a pocket handkerchief. Tied to it was a small box which contained the all-important capsules for Maylanwe.

A gust of wind caught the handkerchief and swung it away from the hospital. People ran towards it. From the fringe of jungle undergrowth a figure burst at high speed clutching in one hand the parachute and its special cargo and in the other a *kudu* horn. He dashed off again into the undergrowth. There was a moment of horrified silence.

From behind the doctor's office dashed a youth. It was Debe.

Daudi's voice came clearly, "He seeks to show that he is a true Maasai."

Esteri was thinking only of her patient. "Ndulele! That's who it is, and he has

our capsules. What he may do…"

Everybody knew exactly what he might do.

He burst into view again and then, leaping high, caught the limb of a tree and swung himself up.

Debe jumped after him. Ndulele stabbed at him with the sharp end of his *kudu* horn. The boy fell back to the ground. Ndulele's high-pitched voice came, "Keep away from me! Keep away from me or I'll destroy everything that's here!"

He ripped the handkerchief off and threw it down with its attached string. He tore open the carton that contained the capsules.

Debe went round the other side of the tree and, ignoring the thorns, jumped high and climbed on the far side of the trunk where Ndulele could not see him.

The doctor shouted, "Ndulele, stop that! Come down from that tree at once!"

The *kudu* horn player leered at him.

Daudi breathed, "He's going to destroy them, Bwana, unless we do something fast."

Ndulele had the lid off the box. He put the capsules into his hand. For a moment it looked as though he was going to throw them far and wide. And then he started to bite the tops off. White powder that could mean so much to the little girl two hundred metres away floated out into the morning air.

Korometti threw a stone. It hit the limb on which Ndulele was squatting. He cackled harshly as he bit three more of the capsules.

Round the trunk swung Debe. He kicked with his foot. Ndulele grasped the foot and tried to wrench him from his hold but Debe kicked with the other foot. Ndulele staggered, dropped the bottle, lurched to one side, and in falling hit his head a sickly crash against another limb. He landed in a huddled heap at the doctor's feet.

Daudi grabbed up the bottle. "Bwana, there is one in it stuck to the bottom. All the others…"

Korometti towered above the group. He looked bigger than they had ever seen him before. "He shall die for this," came his voice, cold with anger.

The doctor looked up. "You are probably right, Korometti. But not at our hands. We have one responsibility and that is to try and save him from dying."

"But he has killed the child in taking the medicines!"

"Maylanwe still lives. Yohana will bring more medicine and the one capsule still in the bottle gives us another four hours. Forget your anger and think only of the child. God is the one who will help us and His way is never to kill. He says, 'Love your enemies; do good to those who treat you in this sort of way.' "

"*Kah*, it's a crazy way."

"As you see it through your Maasai eyes, maybe, but God has a different way of doing things. He says if any man wants to come into His country and be a member of His tribe, he must be born again, become a new person, with new ways of living."

"*Kah*," said Korometti. "This I shall never do. Why does God let this sort of thing happen?"

"That's a question I can't answer and I won't try. But He has. There must be a reason."

Korometti spat.

The doctor examined Ndulele. Where his head had hit the limb his skull had been crushed—not broken, but crushed and dented in like a hard-boiled egg.

"He breathes very slowly, Daudi. See the pupils of his eyes. They are tiny. He is in a bad way. Carry him into the operating theatre. Now for Debe."

The boy was supporting his arm, which was bent oddly. His lips were open and he could hardly breathe for the pain. "Fractured ribs, broken arm! You'll have a lot of pain, but that's about all," said the doctor.

"I do not fear pain. I'm a Maasai," gasped the boy.

"*Kumbe!* You speak truly," came Korometti's deep voice. "You are indeed a Maasai to be proud of." He stretched out his hand.

"Don't shake his hand!" shouted the doctor. "You'll do more damage to his ribs and make my work harder."

He moved close to Korometti and dropping his voice said, "What about this loving your enemies business now?"

A few minutes later they were back in the ward. Suddenly there was vivid lightning followed by thunder which crashed so loudly that everybody ducked. The sky was black and rain blotted out the hills.

"*Kah!*" muttered Daudi. "This will flood the river and make it harder for Yohana to travel with speed."

"But could not the Flying Doctor bring us more medicines for the child?" asked Korometti.

"He's far away by now and operating. It's not likely he has any more capsules with him, nor could he obtain them where he is."

"Is there a chance though? Could you talk on the machine?"

"There is. Let's try the radio phone again."

The doctor switched it on, but no sound came. He changed frequencies, but still there was blank silence. Daudi ran outside and was back in an instant. "That lightning struck the aerial. The machine is dead!"

"*Hongo!* Then we have no voice to the outside world. Everything now depends on Yohana."

Operation

Daudi frowned. "Esteri's temperature is up, Doctor, and she has gone to bed. Hewa is not very experienced in the operating theatre."

"It isn't the staff that worries me, Daudi. It's the surgical problem itself. This will need everything we have in the way of both skill and equipment. There are special instruments that would make it much easier for us but we don't have them here. We'll have to improvise rather drastically."

"Is there a good chance of saving Ndulele's life?"

"Reasonable. And this operation may not only save his life but it may straighten out some of the strange things that have been happening to him since the first time he was hit on the head and his skull fractured. It could easily mean that his wisdom will be improved."

"*Yoh*, that would be a valuable thing. He would never allow us to examine him, let alone operate, before, Doctor. He refused, *kabisa*."

"He can't refuse this time, Daudi. He's unconscious. He has no choice in the matter. And neither have we. The only way to save his life is to operate. We can and we must make the choice for him."

Daudi was preparing the injured man for surgery when a very sick girl dressed in uniform tottered through the door.

"Doctor, I have come to do instruments."

"Thank you, Esteri, but you will help us best if you go back to bed."

She sighed, made as if to protest, but then nodded and shakily went back to her room.

"I wish Yohana were back," said Daudi.

"So do I, and for more reasons than one. But as I see it we can't possibly expect him before midday tomorrow and that depends on the rivers not being up."

Daudi started to check over the timetable of events. "The train from the coast arrives well after dark. Yohana collects the medicine. He rests till dawn. Then he rides with strength a hundred kilometres over bad roads. And if the river floods, *koh!* he may be delayed hours."

Hewa, Esteri's deputy, set out the instruments. The anaesthetic was commenced. The operation started. Daudi nimbly used a swab.

"*Koh*, the skull of Ndulele is thin bone."

"That's right, Daudi, and that bone is soft. That's why that thump against the tree made him crumple up like a wet shirt. Behold, his trouble is great."

The surgeon's fingers explored the dented-in part of the skull. His patient's condition was critical and his chances were not improved by the fact that the best instrument available had a kitchen flavour about it—an ordinary corkscrew. And to keep it company were two dessert-spoons with the last half inch of their handles bent to draw the damaged scalp sideways.

Picking up the corkscrew and twisting its tip until it was exactly beneath the cracked bone and not a millimetre more, Jungle Doctor tried to coax the dented-in skull to its normal position.

Daudi peered over his gauze mask. "Is this the dangerous part?"

"This is the critical part indeed. Watch the pulse, Daudi. Keep your finger on it. Let me know if there's any change."

They worked on, carefully removing pieces of splintered bone.

Suddenly Daudi said, "Doctor, his pulse has gone."

Off came the surgeon's gloves and for twenty minutes they battled to keep the heart beating and the lungs working—injecting stimulants, giving artificial respiration—doing everything that their equipment and supplies

allowed. Then, to everyone's intense relief, Ndulele started breathing again.

"Doctor," said Daudi, "he's bleeding!"

At once the doctor scrubbed up again and went on with the operation.

A great black cloud came over the sun. It was impossible to see to stitch up the scalp. A quiet voice spoke from outside the door, "Doctor, I thought you might need this." In his hand he held a powerful electric flashlight.

"Excellent. Thanks, Peter. Would you stand here and focus it on the wound?"

Surgery was rapidly finished.

"*Yoh*," there was deep satisfaction in Daudi's voice. "What a job!"

Ndulele's head was bandaged and over it they fitted Peter's crash helmet, for the bone of Ndulele's skull was as strong as a cracked and rotten coconut.

As he was being lifted onto a stretcher he stopped breathing a second time. The doctor reached for a syringe and five minutes later the *kudu* horn player's lungs were again working satisfactorily.

An hour later his pulse was quite regular. The pupils of his eyes behaved normally.

"What do you think has happened to him medically, Daudi?"

Daudi scratched his head. "Is it that the pressure inside his skull is now normal?"

"That is right. This is the same part of his skull that was injured years ago. I hope that I have been able to stop the brain from being irritated as it has been for years."

"Has this been the cause of the strange way he's been behaving?"

"I think so."

They walked across to the children's ward. Maylanwe's temperature was lower and she was conscious and able to take a little food.

"*Hongo*," said Daudi, "she certainly has improved on those pink and grey capsules. But look at the bottle."

It stood forlorn and empty on the bed-table.

"Things will be under control until midday at the earliest, Daudi. And then the temperature probably will rise. However, if those other capsules arrive with Yohana, at this time tomorrow she will still have a fighting chance."

All went well until four o'clock in the afternoon, when the little girl's temperature rose sharply and she became unconscious.

Debe lay propped up in bed breathing painfully. "To take a deep breath hurts like a stabbing knife, Bwana."

"How is your arm? Does that ache or give any trouble?"

"Not yet." His eyes smiled. "Doctor, I want to talk to Bwana Peter by himself. I have had a dream."

"Oh-ho, not the sort of dream I should know about, eh?"

"Bwana, you see you are not a Maasai."

Peter caught the last words, grinned at the doctor, and said, "Leave it to me."

He listened for a time to the boy's whispered words, whistled softly, and walked towards the hill capped with granite boulders which towered over the jungle and overshadowed the Maasai village.

Korometti came silently into the ward and said softly, "The young men of my village have been drinking this soup with special bark cooked in it. The medicine in this brew lights the fire of anger within them. Insults appear bigger and their own strength seems that of a lion. They say vengeance drives

them. They walk with the desire to kill in their minds."

"But why, Korometti?"

"They have heard that this Ndulele has medicine to kill our cattle. They want to stop him using it." And then with a wry smile he went on, "Have you not noticed that our cattle are most important to us?"

Old Olongo was being allowed up each day for a little while, but his legs would barely support him. Seeing that he was ready to get out of bed, Korometti moved swiftly, put his massive arm around the old man's shoulders, and they went together into the sun and squatted down.

"I heard your words," said Olongo. "Cattle are important to us. But people really matter more. Think of that boy Debe. He has proved himself a man."

Korometti nodded. "That may be, but he stole my cow."

"Did you never steal anything?" Olongo chuckled. "I seem to remember something happening to a large brindle cow once."

Korometti coughed and looked away. There was a long silence. Then he started to his feet.

Peter came striding down the path with a huge grin on his face. "Great Ones, come into the ward. Behold, there is a small gift that Debe wishes to give you, Korometti."

"Me? Give me?" Korometti was full of amazement.

Peter walked over to the boy's bed and said, "These were Debe's thoughts. The day that the stone was rolled down on your men, Korometti, the first thing that happened was that Ndulele drove a cow past the hospital along the track that leads to the house of N'gombe the medicine-man. Old Mele, who brings the milk to the hospital, knew this also. Your men"—he turned to the Maasai leader—"heard about this, because five of them came to give blood. But when this matter was understood, two of them went quickly to warn their friends and to deal with Ndulele before he could use what he was

buying. But that one was full of cunning. He surprised them from above. But in moving the large stone the medicine of hatred fell from his pocket."

"How do you know all this?" asked Korometti.

"Starting with his dream, Debe worked it out piece by piece. He also said, 'Would we not have heard the bragging words of the *kudu* horn player if he had put that medicine in the place where the cattle drink? *Could* he have kept his mouth shut? *Would* he have kept his mouth shut?' "

"*Koh*," nodded Olongo. "This is wisdom."

"Truly," agreed Peter. "Debe could not go himself because of his injured arm and ribs, but he said to me, 'Look in the hole where the stone was, and you will find the medicine.' And behold, he was right. The medicine was there right at the edge of the cliff."

"*Hongo*," said Korometti. "Debe, you did very well to travel along Ndulele's path with your mind."

The boy looked down. He didn't dare look the elder Maasai in the face. "Great Ones," he mumbled, "this is the medicine that Ndulele has made to kill your cattle. Take it." He held it out.

Korometti took it in both hands and spat on it. Through the window he called to two of his men. "Go quickly. Pass on the news that the danger is past for our cattle. Let the others do nothing rash. These are my orders."

Korometti's whole bearing became tense. He walked straight to the place where the women were preparing the evening meal. They took one look at him and stepped back. Roughly he pushed the pots and dishes to one side, and hurled the banana-bark wrapped parcel of medicine between the cooking-stones. With keen satisfaction he saw a bright yellow flame spring up. He spat on his hands, picked up a broken limb of thorn-tree and stood stirring the red coals until there was no sign either of banana bark or its contents. Then he threw the stick on the fire, watched it burn to ashes, and then strode up the hill and out of sight.

In front of him the road forked. One path led past the school. He followed the second, which wound through rough country. He tried to shut his ears to the *thump, thump, thump* of a football being kicked about by a score of shouting schoolboys. He could still hear them faintly as he climbed over the crest. On the far side the sound was blotted out by the tinkle of cow-bells as a herd crossed the path ahead of him.

His tension eased. He looked down at the cattle. Red. Brown. Black. White. And all sorts of variations. His nose quivered to the familiar smell. He recognised that he was hungry. He stood there savouring in his imagination the taste of milk and meat.

The hills in the distance were a deeper blue than the clear evening sky above him. He listened to the roar of the flooded river. It would be hours before any vehicle could cross. He started thinking of Maylanwe. Her sickness would have been under control by now but for that hyena of an Ndulele.

Korometti ground his teeth and slowly retraced his steps, his mind in a turmoil. As he came to the fork in the road he saw Peter waiting for him. The schoolboys were still playing. The sound of foot kicking ball irritated him.

Peter fell into step with him and said nothing until they were opposite the schoolhouse. "Do you feel better now that you know the threat has gone from your cattle?"

"Cattle!" snapped Korometti. "Who talks of cattle when the child Maylanwe lies dying?"

"*Hongo!*" Peter's eyebrows went up high. "You speak a great truth! Can you buy the girl's life back with cattle? Did the size of your herd do anything to put old Olongo back on to his feet? Anyway, what's the use of cattle when you come to death? You can't take them with you."

Korometti's eyes flashed. "And what value is there in your schools? Can you take those with you?"

Peter nodded patiently. "Schools do a lot of things that live on after the teacher has gone. If there were no schools there would be no learning, no

books, no medicine, no doctors, and Olongo and Maylanwe and the baby with pneumonia all would be dead now. And if I may mention the word cattle again, all of yours would be dead from the disease called rinderpest if you had not injected them with the medicine that comes because somebody at some time went to school."

Korometti scratched his ear and grunted. They strode on together for perhaps half a minute and then Peter said, "You have not spoken these words, but I know you are thinking them, and I agree with you. Going to school, learning to read and to write, and all the rest of it, this is not enough…"

The Maasai leader stopped, drove his spear violently into an anthill and shouted, "Now you'll start talking about God's country, of souls, of sin and of this Jesus Christ…"

Peter smiled. "Why not? These are the things in life that really matter."

Korometti wrenched the spear out of the anthill and stalked off towards the hospital. Peter followed more slowly.

The doctor came out of the ward and seeing Korometti and the question in his eye, he said, "*Sawa sawa*, just the same. I wish we could stop everything for a day. That would make the danger much less. Are there not those who say that you hold back the sun when you do this?" He picked up a stone and wedged it into the fork of one of the lower limbs of the flame-tree.

The Maasai leader looked at the doctor oddly. "*Kah!* Do you believe that?"

"No, I don't Korometti. I know it doesn't work. You may block a road with a flood or stop a truck with a great stone in a narrow road, you may fence in cattle with a thornbush *boma*, but you can do none of these things with time."

Sacrifice

In the hospital Daudi and Peter sat listening to the Tanzania Broadcasting Corporation.

"*Saa mbili usiku. Hii habari*," came a cultured African voice. Had the knob of the transistor radio been twisted a fraction of an inch they would have heard another voice say in English, "The time is 8 p.m. This is the news from the T.B.C."

Korometti came in and squatted by the wall. The broadcast was interrupted by crashing static. "*Kah*," muttered Daudi, "another storm is on its way. This will mean more water in the river and perhaps more delays."

They sat listening intently for a while, then the announcer said, "A dramatic battle is being fought for the life of a Maasai child in a hospital up-country. An emergency call was made to Nairobi by radio phone for urgent supply of a not commonly used antibiotic. The East Africa Flying Doctor was contacted in the air not far south of Kilimanjaro. He had some of the drug with him and dropped the life-saving medicine on the hospital in a parachute made from his pocket handkerchief. All is believed to be going well. That is the end of the news."

"*Kah!*" Korometti jumped to his feet. "Who told him? How…?"

Daudi shook his head. "Who is to know? The danger is if Yohana hears that broadcast he will not hurry. It could take all the urgency from his mind and the speed out of the wheels of his bicycle."

Korometti started his restless pacing to and fro.

At the railway station Yohana could not keep still. He had been to the hospital in the town hours ago and he held a letter in his pocket which read:

"Regret we have none of the antibiotic you mention."

For the hundredth time he peered down the railway line, although he knew the all-important train wasn't due for an hour. Restlessly he walked to the far end of the station. There was the vague blur of a voice talking in Swahili. Yohana moved closer and was in time to hear the announcer say, "That is the end of the news." He listened idly for a moment to a guitar player, then started walking up and down again.

As he passed the ticket-office the Station Master called, "I've just heard that the train is delayed. Washaways on the line. The rain has been very heavy. The train is not expected for at least two hours. Sit! Relax! Sleep! There's nothing you can do."

"Actually there is," thought Yohana. He called "*Kwaheri*," and walked quickly down the brightly lit street and turned in through the gateway of the church. Inside a group of men and women were praying. The postman joined them and prayed for the sick little girl, for his wife, for the Maasai tribe, for the hospital and those who worked in it. He joined in singing and talking about God.

In the distance came a shrill whistle. Yohana slipped silently out into the night and hurried towards the station. A bearded Sikh sitting in the driver's seat of a five-ton lorry greeted him. "*Habari*, what's the news, Yohana?"

"*Njema*, good, but I'm waiting for some medicines that are wanted urgently at our hospital. Truly, time goes slowly."

The Sikh nodded. "So does travel. Three times in the last fifty kilometres I came through deep water and there was another heavy storm in the hills not long after sunset."

"Does anyone you know travel in the direction of the hospital?" asked Yohana.

"None but the foolish would attempt it before dawn."

"But perhaps someone might try?"

"Perhaps someone will go towards the West. But no one would be so foolish as to come in here. Back there in the hills the road itself is a river."

"The doctor might drive along the road, river or not, to meet me in the landrover."

The Sikh smiled. "If so, the doctor and his landrover will be rolling down the river like pebbles. The water at the crossing near the hospital will be twice the height of a man." He was suddenly very serious. "It is not a river any more. It is a torrent. And yet an hour before dawn there will be water but not above axle depth of the landrover."

He and Yohana walked on to the station. The lights of the train showed brilliantly in the darkness as it came round a curve towards them.

When it pulled up at the station, bedlam seemed to break loose, people getting on and getting off, everyone shouting.

Yohana waited impatiently in the parcel office, and twenty minutes later his heart was in his mouth when the Indian clerk said, "There is no parcel."

All that remained on the shelf was a small packet. Indifferently the official fingered the label. "Wait a minute," he called. "This is for your hospital."

With huge relief Yohana read the label. "It is the one."

Carefully he wrapped it in a plastic bag and tied it with string so that he could wear it around his neck. "I shall sleep till second cock-crow," he thought. "Thus I shall travel faster."

"Bed!" said the doctor. "We're all tired and tomorrow looks like being more than strenuous, so rest we must have. This applies to Esteri particularly. She still has fever, but a few days in bed and she'll be fit again. It was working night and day that gave the malaria its chance to hit her so hard."

"I shall stay here," said Korometti. "Maylanwe may need me. Also Ndulele may have visitors." He swung a wicked-looking knobkerry.

On the table in the centre of the ward Daudi placed a bottle of strong ammonia. He grinned at the tense chief. "Pull out the cork, hold the bottle by the thick end and swish this medicine at their knees. There are few better ways of cooling anger than by making breathing stop for a small but useful time."

Korometti grunted.

All that night he sat on a three-legged stool in the shadow, or prowled about the hospital courtyard. From time to time he would look at his father's sleeping figure, or walk with great strides to the bed where Maylanwe lay muttering in delirium.

Once he heard the loud noise of a Maasai coming through the darkness. He dashed back to the men's ward and stood in the deep shadows, a sentry who would not easily be overcome.

Heavy-eyed he heard first cock-crow.

He was fighting sleep when second cock-crow sounded.

At this very moment half-a-day's walk away ten young men from Korometti's village sat round a fire drinking soup. One of them started trembling. He leapt to his feet, frothing at the mouth. "The word is that the *kudu* horn player will try to escape on Yohana's bicycle. Let's go and find him."

Yohana tossed in his sleep and started up. He switched on his torch. His watch said 4:30 a.m. He settled down to sleep again. It was useless. He ate two bananas, pumped up his tyres, checked that the parcel was in place round his neck, and then bowing his head he said, "Go with me on this safari, Lord, please." A moment later he swung into the saddle and pedalled off into the darkness.

He could go only slowly. His torch gave him only a miserably small patch of light to show up the hazards of the road. "*Kah*," thought Yohana, "it's better

than nothing, but not much."

Twice he fell heavily. The first time his front wheel went into a deep hole which was full of water and almost invisible. Soaking wet he proceeded even more slowly. Then the road seemed better and he speeded up, but near the bottom of a long hill he ran unexpectedly into a lake of mud and shot over the handlebars and landed face downwards in thick slush churned up by the tyres of heavy traffic. He staggered to his feet wiping the mud out of his eyes. His groping hands told him that his precious parcel was still safely round his neck in its plastic bag.

Headlights appeared over the crest of the hill behind him. Yohana dragged his bicycle to the side of the road and waved frantically, but the driver either took no notice or didn't see him. Flying mud hit him like a shower of gravel, and again he was in complete darkness.

Sick with disappointment, he groped for his torch and found what remained of it flattened and twisted in a deep rut where the lorry had driven over it.

Dripping and shivering he picked up the bicycle and using the water-filled tyre mark as a path he plodded on through the complete darkness.

The road wound on and up into the hills. Somewhere along here there was a fallen tree. He found it and sat waiting for dawn.

He was cold, wet and miserable. He prayed, "Oh God, help me to get the medicine to her in time."

Above him he saw the outline of a kapok-tree. The sky was becoming grey. Soon he could see the sisal plantations on each side of the road. In the gloom he pedalled up a long hill and sighed with relief when the light became stronger and the sun came up. He had always liked the long straight stretch that was before him and the gentle curve into the shade of tall trees at the end of it.

Amongst those tall trees stood the ten Maasai who had been drinking the drug-saturated soup. "*Kah*," said one, "see, he comes as I saw in my dream."

"Would he travel that way?" asked another. "Is he not trying to escape?"

A third spat. "Who is to know the ways of such as he is?"

Head down Yohana was pedalling strongly. The Maasai, wild-eyed, rushed out into the road. One of them yelled, "Kill our cattle, would you?" He threw his spear.

Two alarm clocks went off at the same time. Daudi rolled out of bed, dressed hurriedly and in the grey light of dawn hurried down the path where the road crossed the river.

The doctor groped for his alarm clock, switched it off, yawned mightily, then jumped out of bed as his mind started working. In a matter of minutes he was bending over Maylanwe. Her temperature was dangerously high, her neck was rigid and she muttered in delirium.

"She brings fear into the hearts of all of us," said the night nurse. "Never have I seen this sickness strike so hard. Will she have strength to fight it till the medicine comes?"

The doctor didn't reply. His problem was how to fill in the time till the capsules arrived.

He hurried round the hospital doing what needed to be done urgently and then stopped in front of Esteri's bed. Her eyes were half shut, her pulse raced and her chart showed high fever.

"Is Maylanwe any better?" came her voice faintly.

"Not yet, Esteri. I'm going in the landrover to pick up Yohana. Every minute we can gain gives us a better chance of saving Maylanwe. Now your instructions are to lie quietly and drink as much fluid as you can manage."

She tried to smile, nodded, and closed her eyes again.

Korometti was outside. The doctor gripped his hand. "I'm relying on you to

keep things quiet among your people. We'll be back with the medicine as soon as we possibly can."

Daudi came running up. "We can cross the river now. It's not even up to my knees."

Within minutes the landrover lumbered down the hill, splashed through the river, and went out of sight through the elephant grass.

Near the turn into the main road where Peter had had his accident, a jeep swung round and stopped with a jerk in the middle of the track. Out jumped an African policeman. "Doctor, I have a message for you. It is a matter of urgency that you go with speed. A man has been seriously injured—one of your own people."

"Who is he, Askari?"

"I'm not sure, but I think he is the one who brings your mail."

"What exactly has happened?"

"I don't know. My sergeant has stayed with him and he sent me on to call you." He saluted, jumped into the jeep and drove away up the road.

The landrover swayed as the doctor set off at full speed. "*Kah*," shouted Daudi to make himself heard above the roar of the engine. "I don't like this. In my mind I see those men we sewed up the other day who were gashed with spears and knives."

Nothing more was said for fifteen kilometres. The road was gravel and they made good speed. Round a sharp corner were a group of workmen. Daudi shouted, "Is the road all right beyond this?"

"The road itself is good if you keep in the middle. The sides are soft. But travel carefully over the bridges."

In the distance drums were beating. Daudi muttered, "Those are the drums for those who have died."

They drove on. The road wound through delightful country. Lacy-leaved trees met high above their heads. The countryside was fresh and green. The sun shone warmly from a blue and cloudless sky.

They had come to a long curve. Half-a-mile ahead lying on its side between high banks was a large truck. It was clear as they pulled up that unless strong action was taken the road was completely blocked. An Indian sat philosophically on a box. The doctor jumped out of the landrover. "It is urgent that we should pass. There is an injured man down the road."

The Indian driver shrugged his shoulders. "You cannot do this, sir."

"Can't we manhandle it out of the way or drag it to one side with the landrover?"

Again the Indian moved his hands expressively. "It will take many men and a large crane to move this lorry. Is it not loaded with cement?" He paused and then remarked casually, "But you have not far to go. The one you seek is down by the bridge." He nodded his turbaned head towards a group of people on the side of the road.

The doctor grabbed his case of instruments and ran, Daudi behind him.

In the background the drums beat louder.

Hurrying towards them came an African sergeant of police. "Doctor, come fast. His grip on life is small only."

The mud was a foot thick. Jungle Doctor slipped and fell headlong. Instruments, drugs, dressings, everything scattered and started to sink in the quagmire. "You go on," shouted Daudi. "I'll pick them up."

Soon the doctor was bending over Yohana, who was lying on the ground covered with a piece of blanket. His pulse was the merest flicker. His eyes opened. "Thank God you've come."

A quick examination showed that a spear had passed right through his chest. It was amazing that he was still alive. Daudi and the doctor did their best to

make him comfortable. An injection was given to ease pain.

Yohana shook his head and tried to smile. "I have only a few words left. Round my neck are the pills for Maylanwe." His tongue tried to moisten his lips. "Keep on helping the Maasai. They are people of worth, especially Korometti. Look after Esteri. Look after her and tell those who did this thing that I forgive them."

Daudi gave him a sip of water. The doctor said quietly, "We will do all these things, Yohana."

The dying man whispered again. "Bwana, tell me the bit from the Bible that speaks of heaven."

Quietly the doctor quoted, " 'By God's boundless mercy we have been born again to an ever-living hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Our inheritance is beyond the reach of change and decay and is unfading, reserved in heaven for us.' "

Yohana opened his eyes. He seemed to be looking far beyond those that stood around him. "It's wonderful," he whispered, "to belong to Him and to be one of His family."

Bending down close they could just hear his voice, "And look after Esteri."

Those standing round were in complete silence and then one of them started to his feet, the death cry on his lips.

Daudi jumped up. "Yohana would not rejoice in grief of that sort. You have just heard him speak of the joy he has in going to stand face to face with the One who is his Lord. There is no sadness for him in his passing. Come, let us carry him to the landrover that we may take him home."

They walked and slipped down the road carrying the blanket, and reverently placed Yohana's body in the back of the landrover.

In the hospital Maylanwe started to scream in her delirium, "Esteri! Esteri!

Esteri!" Nobody was able to soothe her. She could easily die if she were not quietened. Esteri knew this, and hearing her own name being called she automatically struggled up and staggered across to the children's ward. Here she sat beside the small girl and almost at once she settled down.

A sudden fear gripped Esteri. She said to one of the junior nurses, "Call Korometti!" And when he came, she said urgently, "Go and call the Bwana, wherever he is, and tell him the child's sickness is grave," and softly she added, "and so is mine. Tell him to come back quickly."

The Maasai chief did not hesitate. He strode outside, took a bicycle from under the buyu-tree and throwing aside his spear he pedalled down the road, swung the machine above his head as he waded through the river, remounted on the other side and moved with speed, his blanket flying behind him, the muscles of his legs rippling. He only looked up when on the wind came the faint throb of drums that spoke of death.

He moved fast downhill, then more slowly up the long rise on the other side. Near the top a group of the local tribespeople rushed out towards him. One of them fitted an arrow to his bow and shot. There was a jangle of spokes as the arrow struck and broke off. Korometti took not the slightest notice. He pushed on grimly.

In the landrover Daudi held the small parcel in its plastic bag. Slowly he undid the wrappings and looked at the pink and grey capsules.

"He died for little Maylanwe. *Yoh!* I can't believe it. He was alive, active, full of purpose an hour ago, but now he's dead. And that's the end of all his plans. It's finished. There is nothing we can do about it."

"Look at it carefully, Daudi. We can't see any pattern in God's plan, not at the moment anyhow, but we will one day. He works out the strategy, we do not. Remember, long ago when the disciples saw that Jesus was dead they were brokenhearted. They thought everything was finished."

Daudi nodded.

"But it was only the beginning. If Jesus hadn't died the whole of what we believe would have been a terrible mistake. And if He hadn't risen from the dead, then, as the Bible says, 'We of all men would be the most miserable.' But He did die and He did rise from the dead. Daudi, do you believe that Yohana's life is over, cold, like a struck match—finished?"

"No, Bwana. He lives on. His soul does. But I wish it was more easy to understand. He was so young, so full of plans to work for God…"

"Truly, but remember, Jesus was a young man when they killed him. But His words were, 'Unless a corn of wheat falls into the ground and dies it remains a single grain. But if it dies it will become a great harvest.' Remember, Stephen was a young man when they killed him with stones, but because of his death Paul who wrote so many epistles in the New Testament was influenced. John the Baptist was in his early thirties when he was murdered. And there were many others. God had purpose in their dying young."

Daudi nodded slowly then he sat forward. "Look who comes!"

Head down, Korometti was making that bicycle go as fast as it had ever gone. The doctor blew the horn loudly as his friend looked up and nearly fell off. He clamped on the brake and stumbled off the machine and dragged it to the side of the landrover.

"Bwana," he panted, "it's Esteri. Her message is, 'Tell the doctor to come and come quickly.' "

"Daudi, wedge that bike in the back seat and Korometti, climb up here and sit between Daudi and myself. When you have your breath back tell us what has happened."

After a few moments Korometti spoke. "The child, Maylanwe, is much worse. To help her Esteri came into the ward. She too has great sickness." He looked up at the doctor. "*Kah!* Are you sick also? Your face is the colour of milk."

"Korometti, in the back lies the body of Yohana. He was speared by a group of your own clan."

They drove in silence then Daudi whispered, "Will this road never end?"

At last they turned off from the main road. "The river," breathed Korometti, "what shall we find there?"

Using the four-wheel drive they steadily bumped and skidded through places where the flood had left its mark. The elephant grass blocked any sight of the river till the last minute. Then Korometti shouted, "It's rising!"

With the accelerator flat to the floor, the landrover ploughed through the rushing muddy water and rumbled up the far side. Even that last stretch seemed to take unusually long. At last they were at the hospital.

"Daudi, give two of the capsules to Maylanwe quickly. I'm going to see Esteri."

The doctor stumbled into the room where the nurse lay. She was in a coma and it was soon very clear that whatever was done now and whatever medicine given, nothing could stop Esteri taking the same path her husband had travelled only hours before.

Korometti and Daudi were at the door. "How is she?" they asked in one breath.

"It's malaria of the brain."

"They say she was with the child much of the time we were away but an hour ago she fainted and fell to the ground."

The girl's breathing faltered. The doctor reached for her pulse. It faltered and stopped.

Daudi's voice was heavy with emotion. "Truly, they travel together."

Korometti nodded and spoke huskily, "Both of them died to save my Maylanwe."

Jungle Doctor moved quietly from Esteri's bedside to the children's ward. Hewa was the nurse in charge. "Quiet is the important thing for Maylanwe.

No one is to come behind the screen." He bent over the unconscious little girl. Her skin was burning hot. Her lips were dry and her body tense. The stethoscope told the story of a heart beating fast but weakly.

The doctor beckoned Korometti to come inside and said, "She's unconscious. She can't swallow the capsules."

"Can't we give the medicine through a needle?" asked Hewa.

"Not this medicine, I'm afraid."

To Korometti the nurse's voice sounded hopeless when she said, "What shall we do then?"

The tall chief waited to hear no more. Dispirited and utterly weary, his legs aching from riding a bicycle far and fast, he thought, "Yohana and Esteri die for the child and all the work and sacrifice is wasted for she is so ill that she cannot swallow and because of this the medicine cannot enter her body to do its work."

Blindly, miserably, he walked into the deep green of the jungle.

Dark Dawn

In the ward, quietly and efficiently the doctor and nurse were at work. The nurse's eyes opened in amazement several times but she said nothing.

At last the doctor straightened his back and said, "We need a half-hourly chart: pulse, temperature and the number of times she breathes per minute. Do this with great care, Hewa, for in this way we can tell the way the battle goes on in her body."

He drew a diagram on a blackboard. "The temperature now is 104.4°F, pulse 120, respiration 24. Call me in half an hour."

Half an hour later he shook his head. The neatly recorded figures showed 104.8°, 128, 24.

Routine work in the ward kept him hard at work. He felt a touch on his elbow. Hewa, with concern written all over her face, said, "Bwana, will you check my figures, please?"

The thermometer read 106°. The pulse was extremely hard to count as the heart was literally racing. On the blackboard the graph started to take shape. "When it starts to come down, Hewa, then we'll know she's improving."

"*Kah*," whispered the nurse, "but it only goes up and up."

"Sponge her with warm water and give her two cups of fluid in the way I showed you. I shall be away for an hour. There is to be a service in the church for Esteri and Yohana."

The doctor was on his knees when again he felt a hand upon his shoulder. He tiptoed out of the church. Hewa panted, "Bwana, quickly, she is having such shivering as I have never seen!"

Maylanwe was lying quiet when, out of breath, they arrived in the ward.

Jungle Doctor shook down the thermometer, put it under the little girl's arm, held it to her side, and taking his stethoscope he listened to her chest. The heart was beating regularly, very much as it ought to beat. The temperature was not quite up to the hundred mark.

"Thank God, Hewa, the germs are losing the fight. She had what we call a rigor."

Maylanwe stirred. "My head aches and my neck hurts," she whispered.

The doctor placed a pink and grey capsule on her tongue. "Swallow this then, little one."

With some little difficulty she did, and then drank long and thirstily and went to sleep.

"No more pulse and temperature readings till she wakes," whispered the doctor to the smiling nurse. "She must sleep."

Peter and Olongo came back slowly from the church and sat under the flame-tree. "*Kah!*" said the old man, "those who have become God's people die differently from those who have not."

"They certainly *should*," agreed Peter. "God has a plan for everyone who asks Him to be his chief. When death comes it means that plan is finished, and ahead is the larger life that He has promised. There is no sadness in going to live with Someone you trust and love."

Olongo was still thinking of the burial. "It was as though people rejoiced. This I cannot understand. They sang with joy. None made the sounds of grief. But my heart is heavy. The girl showed me great kindness, and Yohana's blood, some of it still lives in my body; it is one of the reasons for my strength. But *kumbe!* he asked for no gift; he said there was joy in giving for my life. Within those two was something different, something not of the customs of any tribe that I know."

There was a long silence broken only by the call of a beady-eyed crow

walking along the ridge of the children's ward roof.

Debe, his arm in a sling, walked slowly out and rested his undamaged side against the trunk of the flame-tree. Peter tapped the old man on the arm. "The Leader that they both chose to follow lived this way, and died this way also."

"You speak of Jesus," said Olongo. "Your words are true. He was in their hearts, you could see it." The old man nodded his head slowly. "Yes, you could see it indeed."

Debe's husky voice startled them both. "They chose to travel the right path."

Peter's answer whipped back. "This path is open to you, Debe. There is *olkipoket* for you here, Jesus the Lamb of God. He takes away completely the sin of anybody who asks Him. Then He says, 'Follow Me!' And He expects to be followed and obeyed. Those who are His people must travel with open eyes, and ears that listen. When He beckons, you come; and when He says do something, you do it."

Again there was a long silence. Daudi hurried out of the children's ward and returned with a dish of instruments. He shut the door.

"*Kah!*" said Peter, "I wonder what's happening in there?"

Again time dragged by. Long shadows crept across the courtyard and the sky glowed red above the hospital roof. But still the door did not open.

After miles of walking Korometti limped back to the hospital, and, apparently seeing nobody in the shadows, he stopped under the flame-tree.

Wedged in a fork of one of the limbs was the stone the doctor had put there the day before. Korometti wrenched it out and looked at it grimly for a long moment, then suddenly he swung round on his heel and hurled it out into the tangled undergrowth.

Jungle Doctor opened the ward door in time to see him do it.

Korometti stood like a statue. Peter and Debe scrambled to their feet. It was Olongo who asked, "What is the news?"

"The news is good and there are no buts. The medicine in those capsules is great stuff," smiled the doctor.

"But she couldn't swallow it," burst out Korometti. "You said she couldn't, and I…"

"*Kah*," interrupted Daudi. "You should know by now there are more ways of crossing a river than by swimming. The Bwana took a small rubber tube and put it gently up her nose and down her throat into her stomach."

"But would those medicines go down the tube?"

"It isn't hard to tip the powder out of the capsules into a little water and pour it down the tube," explained the doctor.

Korometti had lost the droop in his shoulders. He stood at full height. "Then their lives were not given for nothing?"

"They certainly were not. Maylanwe is conscious. She has slept. She has even eaten a little. Come quietly though."

They stood round the child's bed.

"Where is Esteri?" she asked weakly.

"She has gone on safari," answered the doctor.

"Where to?"

"To God's country."

"She told me about it. She said I was not to fear because the Son of God welcomes those who come to Him. We talked to Him together."

"Rest now, Maylanwe. Esteri is full of happiness and so is Yohana. It is wonderful for them both to see Jesus face to face for they loved Him very

much."

The child nodded, opened her eyes and put out her hand to Korometti. She lay back on her pillow clutching her father's large hand and went to sleep.

Gift Accepted

"I shall always hate mosquitoes," growled Daudi, "especially because of Esteri."

He peered down his microscope. "Look at this blood slide from a three-year-old—full of malaria and his blood has no strength in it."

"All he needs is a pneumonia infection and he could be dead in twenty-four hours."

"That's it, Doctor, but it all starts with *mbu*, the mosquito. How I wish his bite really hurt, then people would take more notice." He sighed and put the cover over the microscope. "Do you feel the… the…" he struggled to find the word he wanted.

"The gap, Daudi? Yes. It is as though there is a great hole in our team. But it will be work as usual."

It was. A variety of tropical diseases kept them hard at work until the late morning.

"H'm," said the doctor at last, "that's that for today." He put his stethoscope in his pocket. "Daudi, let's go and see that wretched man who cracked his head on the buyu tree."

They found Ndulele conscious. His head was so heavily bandaged that it was hard for him to speak. A mumbling sound came from among the dressings.

Jungle Doctor bent down and asked, "What is your name?"

The injured man tried to shake his head. Finding it too painful he whispered, "I cannot remember."

"Where do you live?"

He screwed up his eyes in an effort to concentrate. "I come from… *Kah!* I cannot think."

"Don't try. Rest for the time being."

In the mid-afternoon they visited him again. The cunning glint had gone from his eyes.

"Have you been able to eat and drink a little?"

"Yes, Bwana."

"Do you remember anything yet?"

"No, but they say my name is Ndulele."

"Do they? And what have you been doing lately?"

"My memory is empty for these days but for things of long ago… *Yoh!* Nondwa, that is where I lived. The village of Nondwa." He put his hand gingerly to his bandaged head. "*Heeh!* It is hard to remember."

Outside the ward Daudi rolled his eyes. "Is this what is called amnesia?"

"It is. His mind is a blank for things that have happened recently but I'm afraid he will find that to forget things does not wipe them out—or their consequences."

Through both their minds flashed the recent tragic events. Daudi sighed again. "I was reading this morning, 'Your sins and your iniquities will I remember no more.' It is just as well for us that God is willing to forget when He forgives."

"Truly, but this only happens when we change our mind completely about doing the things God hates. Remember also, He expects us to keep our mind changed."

Daudi nodded and pointed with his chin. "Here comes Korometti."

The tall chief greeted them with a smile. "Maylanwe is even able to feed herself today. This is a matter of joy." Abruptly his smile disappeared. "But there is other news. They say that those who attacked Yohana thought he was Ndulele. Deep anger still stirs them and calls for his death. For the moment they think he will die from his injury."

"*Hongo!* Then we face more danger because he is recovering and he should be an entirely different person following the operation. The pieces of bone we removed had been irritating his brain."

Korometti scratched his ear. "But will he not pay for the evil he has done—the spells that he has cast, and those he has injured? Did he not roll a stone down on the young men and try to kill them? Can all this go without punishment? Can all this be forgotten?"

Jungle Doctor made no attempt to answer but said, "Now let me make it a little more difficult still. Ndulele has forgotten everything that happened recently, everything! As you wipe out footprints on the path with a broom, in exactly that way has this crack on the skull wiped out his memory."

Korometti spat. "He may have forgotten *kabisa*, but there are many who remember clearly and bitterly. They have no desire to forget. They will make him pay."

As he spoke a look of alarm came over Daudi's face. He pointed with his chin. Scarcely visible in the shadow beside the wall of the ward and moving with the stealth of an expert hunter came a Maasai with a spear.

Jungle Doctor turned urgently to Korometti but he was no longer there.

The ochre-clad figure paused at the window above Ndulele's bed. He peered in and his arm holding the spear moved slowly backwards.

Round the far corner of the ward rushed Korometti. He grappled with the Maasai, forcing his arm back until the spear clattered to the ground. Clamping his foot hard down on the weapon Korometti shouted something that sounded extremely forceful. The young man struggled wildly, broke away, and dashed off yelling curses.

"*Kah!*" said Daudi, "that one has been drinking the drugged soup. See the foam round his lips."

Korometti heard this as he came slowly towards them. "*Kah!* This medicine makes men do strange things. It is dangerous stuff. Those that take it say, 'It was the medicine that made my hand kill.' "

"Realise, Korometti, that is much the same thing with this Ndulele."

He shrugged and walked off in the direction of his village. Daudi watched him till he was out of sight. "Why should he protect Ndulele, the enemy of his people, unless he has learned the great lesson from Yohana?" When no answer came he went on, "It is no small thing that he has done. It may well be that the spears of the young men could be turned against their own chief if their minds are muddled with that drugged soup."

The same matter was disturbing Olongo's mind. At midnight he called Debe. "Go for the Bwana at once."

The boy hesitated.

"Call him, I said," ordered the old man in a voice that woke the ward. Peter swung out of bed. "Come, Debe, let us go."

Five minutes later they were explaining. "The old man feels danger in the air. He cannot sleep. He will make a great fuss and keep everyone awake unless you come," said Peter.

Wearily the doctor dressed. As they walked to the ward he said, "Peter, keep your ears open and advise me. We're in deep water."

When they came to the ward he sat down beside the old man, whose hand came out from under the blankets and gripped his arm. "Bwana, I must go to my *boma*, for the troubles of these days are great. The killing of Yohana, and what Korometti did tonight when he stopped Ndulele from being speared—there will be much talk. I must go, for my words have strength."

"*Eheh*, Great One, but can they not come here?"

"They will not come here."

The old man sank back exhausted on his pillow.

"Bwana, if I do not go, perhaps there will be those who seek vengeance."

"Olongo, God has words to say about vengeance. Those who follow Him need to follow His orders. He says, 'Leave this matter to Me. My orders to you are to love your enemies, and do good to those who do evil to you.' "

"*Koh*," muttered the old man. "God asks hard things of us."

"He's the Chief of our tribe, *Mzee*."

The old man nodded slowly. "You speak words of truth. I wish Korometti knew these things as we do, Bwana."

"You shall go home tomorrow, Olongo, but you must go quietly. You will sit in the sun. You will not attempt to do things except with your brain and your tongue, and with these you must be ready to work."

"*Eheh*," he nodded, "this is understood, but the way ahead is not easy. There are those of my people who have great praise for the hospital. But there are also those whose minds have not one word of good for you or for yours. Their minds are fixed on the old ways."

"Rest now, Great One. We will talk together to God before you sleep."

They bowed their heads and prayed, and a few moments later as the doctor passed Peter's bed a soft voice said, "This is the right way."

Next morning Jungle Doctor had just finished operating when Daudi put his head round the door. "Korometti and five of his family have arrived. Not the usual large number. He brings a gift, carrying it on his shoulder, a gift of exceptional size."

"*Hongo*, what is it?"

"The leg of an ox. It will make much stew for many people."

"Daudi, that man has a heart that is turned towards us. He is our friend. I only wish his heart were turned towards God as well."

"*Hongo*, it is slow work here, Doctor, like cutting a new road through dense jungle. You have to hack your way through it."

A few moments later they greeted Korometti and his men.

"I have brought a gift, Bwana." He swung the burden from his shoulder. "The work of the hospital is greatly praised. We rejoice that Olongo can now return home and that Maylanwe improves."

Daudi nudged the doctor with his elbow. "Bwana, accept it! Take it!"

But instead Jungle Doctor stepped backwards and held up his hand. Everyone gasped in amazement.

"It is a gift, Bwana," Korometti spoke slowly and distinctly.

The doctor took another step backwards. The Maasai leader frowned. "This is my gift, my thanks for the work that you have done for the sick ones of my family."

"Korometti, if I turn my back on you, place my hands in a position which makes it impossible for me to receive your gift, and if I close my ears to your words, what then?"

Korometti's eye flashed. "It would be an insult, a bad thing, a bad thing indeed."

The doctor smiled and walked up to him. "You speak words of truth. And my heart has joy in your thought, and rejoices to receive your gift. But through my mind runs a riddle, a parable."

"*Kah*," Daudi shrugged his shoulders and turned to all those who had

gathered around. "Truly, you never know what he will do next."

Korometti still looked doubtful.

The doctor smiled broadly. "Tell me, whose now is this great leg of ox?"

"It is mine, Bwana. Did I not slaughter a good animal for the purpose of bringing this to you?"

"And what must I do to make it mine?"

Korometti frowned. "*Koh*, surely you understand this matter. You receive it. You take it. When it is in your hands it is yours."

"And if I shrug my shoulders and walk in the other direction?"

"*Kah*, Bwana, an ugly action."

"But suppose I quietly, politely bow to you, farewell you and walk away without taking your gift, what then?"

"*Hongo*, that also would be an insult."

The doctor stepped up to him. "With great joy and thankfulness I receive your gift. It brings joy." He stretched his hand out and Korometti gripped it.

"It is a gift that brings my thanks to the hospital. I thank you with friendship in my heart."

"Nothing could make me turn my back on your friendship and your gift. But these days here in the hospital you have heard of the great gift that God offers. Have you thanked Him for His gift? It is a more than serious thing to turn your back on Him and His gift, to close your ears to what He offers."

A mask seemed to come over the tall man's face. He shuffled his feet and then with a harsh note in his voice changed the subject. "Bwana, the man with the cracked head…?"

"He improves."

"Will he live?"

"It is more than likely. After what we saw last night do you think the people of your tribe will forgive and forget?"

"This is a difficult matter, Bwana. Have I not brought a gift? Does this not show a change in my thinking and of many of my family? But there are many words in our camps amongst the young men." He leaned forward and tapped the doctor on the shoulder. "This Ndulele may have forgotten all the things he did but that does not mean that many members of my tribe have forgotten or forgiven."

"Say that again, Korometti."

With anger in his voice he almost shouted, "Don't you understand, Bwana?"

"I understand with great clearness. But the words you have spoken carry special weight."

He shrugged. "What I said was that to forget does not mean that you are forgiven."

"*Hongo*, then if you have done wrong it does not pay to forget?"

Korometti accentuated his words by thumping the ground with his knobkerry. "It is a thing of stupidity to forget. Have I not said…"

"*Eheh*, but suppose the person who has been hurt or insulted chooses to forget. What then?"

"*Hongo*, that means he has forgiven his enemy."

"That's the great point. You, Korometti, you and all of us have broken God's rules; because of that we should receive punishment. This is fair and right. If anyone says, 'I have forgotten my lies, the things like anger, pride and jealousy, and all the rest of it,' that doesn't mean that God has. He says most clearly that no sin goes unpunished. He says, 'The soul that sins shall die.' "

"*Hongo*, but we all die, Bwana."

"Our bodies, yes, but our souls live on as you have heard again and again. It is our souls that matter above everything. In this matter of forgetfulness though, God has a special thing to say to us, 'I, even I am He who blots out your transgressions. I will not remember your sins.' "

"But why should He? Why does He do this? We don't deserve it."

"Truly. We call this grace. The thing we don't deserve but which is freely given. The Lord Jesus Christ paid the debt we owe. He suffered the punishment we deserved. He is the great *olkipoket*, the Lamb of God."

Korometti nodded slowly. The doctor saw the tenseness of his jaw. His fingers tightened round his knobkerry. Then slowly he relaxed and smiled. "Bwana Doctor, we will now return to my village."

Wounds Heal

At Korometti's *boma* the people crowded round as Olongo slowly climbed down from the landrover. Although it was somewhat of an occasion the Maasai were strangely silent. Everyone was acutely conscious of drumming that came from a group of young men squatting under an umbrella tree.

Farewells were said and as soon as they were out of sight Peter leaned forward. "Doctor, those drums may sound angry to you but they speak to me of fighting and bloodshed."

"Do you think this means an attack on the hospital or on Ndulele?"

"Probably neither. My whole background whispers that all the resentment the hot-headed ones felt towards Ndulele they will pour out on Korometti."

Right through the hot evening Jungle Doctor sat listening to the ordinary noises of the night while he tried to concentrate on a book about tropical medicine. At last he gave up and went to bed.

Sleep had almost come when he first heard the alarm cry. Jumping out of bed he was half dressed when a young Maasai rushed up to the door.

"Bwana, come with speed. The hostile ones have attacked Korometti. He is close to death."

"Call Daudi. We'll go in the landrover."

The doctor pulled on his shoes and ran to the hospital, grabbed the emergency equipment and in a matter of minutes they were driving hectically down towards the river.

"What happened?" demanded Daudi. "Did you see it?"

The messenger nodded. "Ten of the young men, angry and full of fierceness,

came to Korometti's house. With no weapons in his hands he met them and talked with calmness and authority. It seemed after Olongo also had spoken that the matter was settled. Then one of the young men shouted, 'We are Maasai. We obey no orders. The older ones may prefer the forgiving ways of this Jesus. We don't want them!' Korometti did not raise his voice but he told them to go back to their houses. Then it was they attacked. He was wounded greatly with knives and spears. I think damage has been done more than your medicines can repair."

"*Hongo*," breathed Daudi, "if he dies it will be because he tried to protect us and Ndulele who was his enemy." He turned to the messenger. "Where are the wild ones now?"

"They ran. They saw the chief fall, probably dead. They fled with speed to the hills."

This was no time for careful driving. The doctor swung off the track and weaved in and out through the great trees, crashing through thornbush and undergrowth.

"Careful!" yelled the messenger. "There is a great hole in the road."

They skidded to a halt and ran fifty metres to where Korometti lay. He had been terribly gashed—butchered was the only word for it—but his heart was still beating. In a matter of minutes a primus stove was boiling water. A pressure lamp gave a pool of light for a jungle operation performed with the patient lying on a waterproof sheet, the doctor and his assistants kneeling beside him.

Shock had to be treated. Fortunately it was a hot steamy tropical night and there was no difficulty in keeping the patient warm. Then they set to work to stop the bleeding and to sew up the wounds. The surgery was not made easy by hordes of vicious mosquitoes nor was the surgeon's concentration assisted by the not distant trumpeting of elephant.

"His pulse is not good," warned Daudi.

"*Eheh*, he's greatly shocked. He's lost much blood. The sooner he's in

hospital the better."

At last he was ready to travel. Four silent Maasai pushed their way into the landrover after the stretcher and squatted uncomfortably on the floor. As they helped Korometti to bed one of them said, "Have we not come to give him blood?"

Daudi grinned. "We will take large bottles full!" And he did.

An hour before dawn with the transfusion running smoothly Korometti came back to consciousness. "I'm thirsty," he gasped.

He was given hot fluids and Daudi injected a million units of penicillin. "*Heeh*, Korometti, that medicine will have much work to do. Think of the germs that must be in those cuts. While you were being sewn up I measured them. Then I put all of them together and they were slightly more than your height!"

The injured man's one good eye twinkled for a moment. "*Hongo!* They attacked me with knives and spears. And they were my own people!"

"We heard the news in time to stop you from bleeding to death. Truly, they wanted to kill their chief because he wanted to forgive and forget."

"*Eheh*, Bwana," agreed Korometti. "But when they attacked me *yoh!* was there not relief in my heart that Jesus, God's Son, had forgiven me my many sins. My thought was that I was already about to greet Him and I would tell Him of my thankfulness to Him and also to Esteri and Yohana, for each of them pointed the way to Him."

"Your words bring joy to my ears, Korometti. But now you must sleep. For behold, when your wounds are healed you have much to do in helping your own people."

Next day Korometti's pulse was regular and strong, but his convalescence was not to be smooth. His temperature soared up and he perspired in a way that could flood germs into his wounds. His teeth chattered. Malaria hit him like a club. Medicines were given effectively. Then for two terrible days it

seemed that he had tetanus, lockjaw, but again treatment was successful.

Much of the time he was delirious. His talk was rambling, but out of it came the fact that he had been deeply touched by the lives of Yohana and Esteri.

Late one night the doctor walked into the ward. Korometti was sitting up in bed propped up with pillows. "Bwana, the news is good. My head is clear. My mind had been tossed around like the waters of the river in flood. Tell me all the news."

"Maylanwe is well. She has returned to your *manyatta*. The strength of Olongo increases each day. Peter has returned to his work. His head is better and his arm is better. So also is the arm of young Debe, who is going to school and living in Peter's house. And then there is a Maasai named Korometti who has been in bad trouble and has had much fever. It is important that he should eat much food to gain strength."

Korometti laughed and stopped suddenly. "*Yoh*, it hurts to laugh. All these scars. And, Bwana, what of Ndulele?"

"Daudi has heard many words in this matter and he says that the news is that the angry ones will not attack him again."

Korometti nodded his head slowly. "This is as I thought. *Koh*, he is a strange person."

"He is indeed. And don't expect him to be thankful for anything that has been done for him—either your work or that of the hospital."

The bandaged head nodded. "That is understood, Bwana. Do I not see now that many have no thankfulness even to the Son of God for what He did for them?"

The doctor pulled up a chair. "*Yoh!* For many days my head has been full of questions—things I wanted to know. But you lay there shivering and muttering and not able to talk. You said that when they attacked you there was relief in your heart that Jesus had forgiven you. But I want to know,

when did you ask Him? Why did you ask Him? What did you ask Him?"

Korometti chuckled and put his hand on the doctor's arm. "There were your words about my gift when I slaughtered a young bull and brought you a leg of beef. I had anger when it seemed you were rejecting what I had brought. I had red anger. But when I thought of almighty God Himself offering His Son as the Lamb who brings peace I saw that He had love, not anger, that He would forgive my rebellion. As they slashed me I knew He understood my heart and that I was forgiven."

For a week thunderstorm after thunderstorm rumbled in the hills. The river was in flood. The hospital was isolated.

Korometti's wounds were nearly healed. Daudi was doing his dressing one morning and he remarked, "There was a man here today who, following the new way, learned to read in six days."

"*Koh*," said Korometti. "Is that so?"

"But," said Daudi, "he was a very capable person. A man of my own tribe."

"*Hongo*," burst out Korometti, "I could do that…"

"*Eheh*," laughed Daudi, "do not say it. I will do it for you." He changed his voice to a passable imitation of the tall man whose leg he was bandaging. "Am I not a Maasai? Will I not learn in five days?"

"Four!" snapped Korometti.

And four days later he sat in the sun slowly but with huge satisfaction reading the New Testament in Swahili.

"The river is down today," said Daudi. "We can expect visitors."

At midday along the path came Maylanwe with a smiling baby on her back. Behind her walked Olongo. He stopped at the sound of a motorcycle.

"*Koh*," laughed the small girl, "see, Great One, it is Bwana Peter and behind him on the *piki-piki* is Debe."

"*Hongo*," smiled Daudi looking up from his microscope. "Grab your spear, Doctor, we're surrounded by Maasai."

They looked through the window. The group were shaking hands all round and talking excitedly.

"Hullo, Doctor!" boomed Peter's voice. "What a day of happiness!"

"Bwana," said Maylanwe, "does nobody see how well Nakarty is?" She looked over her shoulder at the smiling child.

"*Koh*, am I not a doctor? Is not the first thing I do to look for sickness? Have I not seen that he is well? And your grandfather? And your father? And yourself?" He laughed and stood back listening to some very interesting fragments of conversation.

"In four days? Did you…?"

"This reading is a matter of satisfaction. The Book now speaks to me…"

"Young Debe is doing well. I have no doubt he will be a teacher one day…"

Then came Maylanwe's voice. "Bwana Peter, I'm going to school soon…"

"She and eleven others. Olongo and I think that school is a good thing if you do not forget your soul…"

"*Kah*, I didn't think you liked people talking to you about souls!"

Korometti was on his feet stretching his legs. "*Hongo*, it is only people with dead souls that do not like talking about them. Mine is now alive. Come, let us walk to the church and say thank you."

Up the road together, not one behind the other in the old way, went the happy Maasai group laughing and talking.

The doctor sat down in front of his microscope. "Esteri and Yohana would have joy in this, Daudi."

"Truly, Doctor, for the seed is planted and this is good ground."

Peter adjusted his helmet, propped his motorbike against the hospital gate and looked towards the north-west. "Up there is Maasailand where there are pitiably few Christians. My safari will be to Narok where I will start my first village school for Maasai."

"It will be uphill, Peter. There will be those who say, 'Once a Maasai…' and shrug their shoulders. Who can help your fiercely independent tribe?"

"The answer is easy, Doctor. A Maasai. Why, the very day you brought me in here unconscious, had I not been talking in Olongo's *manyatta* about starting a school? The elders stood round and listened for a while and then one of them spat on the ground and they all proceeded to spit with strength and then walk away. But it's different now. Then Olongo was dying and Korometti was hostile. *Mzee* Olongo was a chief. Because of the work of the hospital he lives and he speaks with authority in the tribe. Korometti is of my generation. He is now my friend and a Christian. They have agreed that the children of their clan will come to school and others will follow. Young Maylanwe has joy in the thought as have her friends and in a few years even young Nakarty will also be learning. It has started!"

"And what of Debe?"

"A boy with potential. Before long he will make his way to Narok. And there are others like him. With God's hand on them they can be trained to be teachers and to explain to my tribesfolk about Jesus and what He did. This too is my plan."

The river was nothing but a stretch of moist sand. Peter pushed his motorbike over it. They gripped hands. The machine roared into life.

The doctor shouted, "Look out for wild pigs!"

Peter waved as he weaved his way along the track through the elephant grass.

Updating the Story

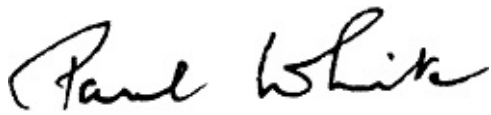
Letter From the Author

Considerable notable work has been done in C.M.S. Hospitals in Tanzania since it all started in the late 1920s. Many medical men and women and some seventy nurses have had the vision of the double-barrelled job of bringing help for both body and soul to East Africa.

They have worked and sowed and harvested. My share in this activity was a relatively short one. After I returned to Australia I combined medical practice with broadcasting the story of doctoring in Africa. These stories are factual but events are often superimposed to give a fuller picture of African life with its problems, challenges and action. These incidents from the lives of jungle doctors became radio scripts which in turn were shaped into Jungle Doctor books, the nineteenth of which was called *Jungle Doctor Sees Red*. When it was first written I carefully avoided using the actual names of people.

Peter Pompo is a much easier name for a non-Maasai to pronounce than John Mpaayei—who shares in the dedication of this book. I have written the following chapters in the first person because I have seen what God has done and is doing among the Maasai through John Mpaayei—Peter Pompo.

Again and again I have been asked what happened to this one or that one. These last chapters update that nineteenth book which told of happenings in the early 1950s.



1960

1960

"Once drink the waters of Africa and you will drink again" says the Swahili proverb. I was doing just this in a pleasant, partly-out-of-doors café in Kenya's capital, Nairobi. In its centre grew a thorn tree about as tall as the average man. On the wall the pictorial calendar featuring a giraffe told me it was June 15th, 1960.

In the doorway stood a broad-shouldered African. I was on my feet in a moment and hurrying across the room. "*Habari*, Peter Pompo."

He grasped my hand. "Welcome, Paul. What is the news?"

"My news is good." We walked back to my table. More tea was brought. "Tell me, what has been going on over the many days since we last talked? What of Narok and Kajiado?"

He sat opposite me, his face beaming. "In these years much, much has happened right through Maasailand. The news is good. Many have grown up to take responsibility. The schools have flourished and many children come. You remember Debe—now named Stephen? He is a teacher—a first-class one—and an evangelist. This is our aim. Teachers, evangelists, young people with fire for God in their hearts."

"And what of the older ones?"

He laughed. "Olongo lived till he was very old. Many became Christians through talking to him. Korometti is a chief in the tribe—a man of purpose. He gives me special help."

"And what of you, Peter? I hear that there are those that suggest you should play your part in African politics. You're a man with a degree and overseas experience. What do you say to them?"

My large friend put down his cup. "I have been offered posts overseas for my country but as I see it my responsibility is first to Jesus and the kingdom of God. I see God's book—His written word—as all-important. So I am working with the Bible Society." He glanced at his watch. "Paul, I must get

back to my work. Come and see us at Bible House."

We walked together through Nairobi—prosperous, full of people from all over the world, a city alive with progress and commerce. I saw Africans from a dozen countries and a score of tribes, most in trim suits with ties, some in tribal dress, some from the bush. There were Indian businessmen, turbaned Sikhs, Arabs, and all sorts of Europeans dressed for the most part in khaki shorts and safari jackets. The streets were full of traffic. We made our way along crowded footpaths under multi-storied buildings. People poured from a noisy bus terminal. Modern shops seemed to have everything to offer.

We turned into the street where the Bible Society was in action. Stopping in front of the window Peter said, "See, we have the Bible in Swahili, in Kikuyu, in Luo, in Luya, and the New Testament in Kamba. I will be full of joy when I see the whole Bible in Maasai translated in the way we speak it in the *manyattas*. These days I'm excited. I have found a translation of the Old Testament, the words of Moses and the Kings and Isaiah and the other prophets, the songs of David, the wisdom of Solomon—it's all there. It was done in 1936. The elders say the translation is good and the younger men agree with them."

We climbed the stairs to his office. A typewriter was chattering busily in a side room. "My secretary hard at work. She's a capable girl, Paul. Both she and her husband were in my class at Narok as were Korometti's children. From among the children of that school some are being trained as teachers and secretaries, health workers and nurses. My dream is of trained people bringing the Gospel to their own tribesfolk in their own language. Already some have passed through high school to the university. Among them will be future leaders in East Africa."

His smiling Maasai secretary came through the door with a letter for him to sign. He did this and then put down his pen. "One of the last things Jesus told us to do was to be witnesses to Him. He used the geography of Israel to make his point crystal clear. These days to me it is an order. 'You will be witnesses to me in Maasailand, in Kenya, in East Africa and the world at large.' "

I looked out of the window at the crowded footpath and beyond to the hills that stretched blue towards the south.

"Tomorrow morning, Peter, I fly to the hospitals in Tanzania. We'll go over Maasai territory in both countries. My great hope and prayer is that your vision will come true."

We prayed together and as we shook hands he said, "*Tutawonana badayi*—we shall see one another again later on."

1983

It was the morning of May 7th, 1983. The Air Zimbabwe jet flew over a large stretch of water. The pilot said, "We are at 34,000 feet above Lake Nyasa and in a few minutes we'll be over Tanzania."

My nose was against the window. Town after town came into view. I could see the thread far below which was the Great North Road (once called the Cape-to-Cairo Road), and there were the early stages of the Great Rift Wall.

This was the country that was built into my bones. I caught a glimpse of the East–West Railway. Along there would be Dodoma and amongst the small hills to the south, Mvumi. There was the edge of the Rift Wall and above it a collection of white roofs. There was Kilimatinde Hospital. Memories stirred of a hundred notable happenings.

There was an empty window on the other side of the jumbo jet. I went and looked through that window. Down there in the red-brown countryside, with the dry sandy river beds winding their way through it, was Berega Hospital. Not far from it two graves—Esteri and Yohana. I remembered how Jesus had said, "I tell you truly that unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies it remains a single grain. But if it dies it brings a good harvest. If a man wants to enter My service he must follow My way and where I am My servant will also be and My father will honour every man who enters My service."

Softly rolling mountains of cloud swept the earth from my view. The events of some quarter of a century ago passed through my mind like a television show. My reverie faded as, through the cloud, I saw the snow on the smooth

top of Africa's greatest mountain, Kilimanjaro. The clouds opened up. Beneath, the country was lush green. I was looking at the Maasailand of Kenya. As the aircraft lost height the tall buildings of Nairobi came into view.

We landed. It was friendly to hear instructions from the loud speakers in Swahili. The routine of passports, luggage collection and currency was smoothly negotiated and the door opened to the sunlight of Kenya. A deep voice called, "Paul, *habari?*"

I gripped a large hand. "Peter, the news is good. Did you bring your motorbike?"

There was a great deal of laughter as my luggage was loaded into his jeep. We drove through the heavy traffic of Nairobi and pulled up at a parking meter. My Maasai friend had a little less hair with a touch of grey in what remained. I saw where we were heading. He stopped. "Do you remember this place? Here thirst is quenched by Kenya-grown tea."

I nodded. "But that thorn tree has grown considerably since the last time we were here. That was the day when you told me about your target—your dream for the future for God in Maasailand."

Peter poured the tea. "It is no longer a dream. Tomorrow, Sunday, we shall drive together into Maasailand. There are people for you to greet. There are things for you to see that will bring joy to your heart. Last time you were here there were only a handful of churches—now over a hundred and twenty."

His voice boomed out in the Thorn Tree Café. "We will go down to the middle of the savanna at the foot of the Ngong Hills. It is a place where things are happening. They will expect you to greet them, also to give them a word from God."

Early next morning we set out. Although the equator was only just over the horizon we were 2000 metres above sea level. There was still mist in the dips between the hills and the wide spread of the countryside was dimpled with the shadows of the cotton wool clouds.

Peter grinned. "You'll find a jeep is the best way to travel where we're going

today, Paul."

We drove past Nairobi National Park and a signpost which read: To Maasailand. On the crest of the hill we paused. My friend spoke quietly, "This is *my* country and I am part of it. These are my people. There are a million of them here and in Tanzania, people who love their cattle, who love grazing them where the grass is rich and where there is water. When first we came here years ago, you and I, there was a rough dirt road. The hills were as they always have been but amongst my people were only a handful of Christians and fewer churches than I have fingers. But now it is different." He pointed. "See that small herd and beyond it a roof shining? That's where we're going first. The new buildings are schools on week days and church on Sundays."

We nosed our way along a rough track down the steep bank of a creek. The jeep bumped along in its lowest gear. We pulled up at a school and greeted dozens of people of all ages. The church itself was mud-brick with a corrugated iron roof. The carpentry was accurate but rugged. The desks had not been planned for long-legged Maasai. The singing was enthusiastic and all in the Maasai language as was Bible reading and prayer. Then Peter was on his feet. He spoke for quite a time, glancing at me smiling and doing expressive things with his hands. Then he turned to me and said in English, "I am telling them about what happened long ago at the hospital and now they want to hear from you. Tell them something they'll never forget. I will interpret."

I looked at the schoolroom full of interested faces and took carefully from my pocket the iron business-end of an arrow, the barbed needle-sharp head on my thumb, the other end on my little finger.

"The blacksmith who made this was a *fundi*—an expert. Look at this part and hear my story and my riddle.

"He made it himself. He made it to go in, to go in deeply and stay there. It was not made to come out.

"He sold this arrow with its shaft and nine others to a hunter, a fierce man. 'I will pay when I have tested them,' growled the *mukali*.

"There were angry words…" I looked at the chief who nodded, smiling "… till in high rage he grasped an arrow. The blacksmith ran but not fast enough. The arrow head went in this distance." I held up my little finger.

My listeners were intrigued. Peter's interpretation added edge to the story. "That blacksmith had trouble. The thing he had made himself easily entered his own body. He could not pull it out. He could not push it through. It gave him pain. It made every movement misery. He knew in time it would kill him.

"His great problem was that what he had made himself he could not get rid of by himself." I looked at Peter whose eyes were twinkling and asked, "What was the name of the arrow? Think about it while I tell you of what happened.

"We had the medicine that stopped the pain and within a few minutes the arrow head was safely out and the wound stitched up. The blacksmith put out his hand for the arrow head but I shook my head. 'It is mine. I want it for a special purpose. I want to tell people about a thing that they make themselves, a thing that they get into themselves and once it's in they can't get it out. And if they leave it there it makes them miserable and in the end it kills not just the body but the soul as well.' And its name?"

The chief was on his feet. "The name of that thing is sin."

"Truly, it brings death and the only one who can rescue you from your trouble is Jesus, God's Son."

Peter suddenly started talking in Maasai and I realised that he was telling how he had asked Jesus to deal with sin in his life and the great difference that forgiveness had made to him. As he finished the old chief stood to his feet. In his hand was a polished ebony stick. He came across and gave it to me ceremoniously with both hands.

"Your words have great value. Receive my chiefdom rod for you are a chief for the Lord."

Peter whispered, "He has conferred on you a great honour."

"Thank you, Great One," I said. "May you and I both serve our Chief, the Lord Jesus Christ, with all our hearts."

There was much farewelling and handshaking. The jeep skirted a small herd of cattle and Peter drove cautiously over grassland back to the road. We swung gratefully onto the tarmac road over a mild switchback of hills till we came to a collection of buildings, a fair-sized corn garden and, near the road, a large umbrella-shaped thorn tree.

"It was here, this very place," Peter spoke with enthusiasm. "Here I shared that early translation with the chief. He was not a Christian but he could read. Many of our ways of life in the tribe are like those described in the Old Testament so when you start talking about the Gospel and about Jesus, the good shepherd, there is no problem. Everything is understood. I shared that manuscript with him and read Isaiah 53. When I came to the part where it says, 'And He made His soul an offering for sin—or a sin offering—' in Maasai it's one word. You know it from long ago—*olkipoket*. I told this chief, 'Until our Maasai people know about this One, the Son of God who is the only one who can be the real *olkipoket* for the sin of mankind, they will not change. They will remain the same.'

"I spoke with great force. We talked for some time. He told me in detail of our Maasai custom of cleansing someone when he had sinned against others in our tribe. And I told him how I had asked the Son of God, the Lamb of God, to cleanse me from my sin. At the end he said, 'That's well said. The words are well written.' He said no more. He farewelled me and walked back over there to his *manyatta*. Not long after that I went to England. In letters my wife wrote me I heard that there was trouble in my tribe, that the elders had hot anger against the chief and had decided to put a curse on him. They cursed his house. They cursed his family. They cursed his animals—everything." Peter chuckled.

"What did they actually do?"

"It was very dramatic, Paul. They called a big meeting. It was a ceremonial cursing. They waited till he was on safari then a group of elders put blood on their mouths and walked round his house, howling like hyenas. They cursed —oh, how they cursed!"

"And what happened?"

"That was my question, too. I was in England waiting for news. How I waited! And it came. The District Officer wanted to arrest these men but the chief said, 'No, no, no. Let them alone. They don't know what they're doing. One day they will.'

"Then my letter said an astonishing thing. The chief is now called Moses. He and his wives and many of his family have been baptised. The words of God regarding the sin offering sank deeply into his mind. He's now indeed a Christian and because of this they are cursing him. He would not join in cattle stealing nor drinking beer. He would have no part in many of the customs which he had followed before. The whole of his life changed when he became a Christian.

"Many of the great ones of his tribe were upset. They said to him, 'You *must* have your revenge.' But he only smiled. 'We'll do nothing. We'll wait.'

"At the next tribal *shauri*, the kind of convention where everyone gathered, Moses got up, called the people to come round him and then made an address of thanks. He said he wanted to thank whoever had cursed him because his flocks had increased considerably. He wanted to thank whoever had cursed because by the grace of God he had two new children. And so it went on with all these speeches of gratitude to God and the people who cursed him. That cursing which would have demanded sharp revenge in the old way was turned to a loving rebuke. As a result of this people have been coming to God all over Maasailand."

"But Peter, have I been hearing right? You said he and his wives, plural, were baptised?"

"This is exactly what happened. He came to the local church and said, 'I'm here. My family is here. My wives are here. We need to be baptised.' "

Peter threw back his head and laughed. "Oh, the church authorities were in trouble. What should they do? The wives, yes—they would baptise them but the rule was, one wife only otherwise you are not a Christian. But Moses was

undoubtedly a Christian and being a chief he had many wives. He said, 'I have read God's word. The Great Ones of the early days who lived then as we live now, they had more than one wife. There was Abraham. There was Jacob, and David…'

"And so it was agreed. No more wives but those he had would still be in his house. And he has proved himself a Christian. Since then he has done much, much for God. He is a leader—a Christian leader amongst our people and he has explained much of the African way of looking at the Bible. And to our people the Old Testament speaks in a way that it does not to those of the West. I have heard him say, 'Genesis speaks clearly to me and Exodus and Leviticus and Deuteronomy. It makes sense to every one of us Maasai. We recognise that here is God in action amongst people whose lives were similar to the way our tribe now lives.' "

A cloud of dust was coming down a side road. Peter looked in that direction and went on, "The whole action of the Old Testament could almost have happened in a Maasai tribe. There are chiefs. These are virtually their kings. There are their judges. There are their many wives, their tribes, their cattle. All of these elements are there and in amongst them all there is redemption. It all makes good sense to a Maasai."

He was accentuating his points by thumping the steering wheel. Opposite us a large truck pulled up. The driver swung to the ground. "Peter Pompo, greetings. Praise the Lord."

"Paul, this is Caleb, maker of music—saga songs of God, telling of Jesus, His life, His death, His resurrection. They are songs with choruses. One person leads and the others join in the chorus."

Caleb nodded. "Those who cannot read can sing and they go to villages where people do not know God, places where they fear their witchdoctors. Here they sing and singing opens many doors. Children learn. The women learn about Jesus and the men hear as the songs are sung again and again."

"Yes," nodded Peter, "it's the way of evangelism. As they learn new truths we add new verses."

"It is how I learned," burst in Caleb. "Four years ago I had red mud in my hair, wore an ochre cloth, thought only of cattle and beer and women. But they sang songs of Jesus. I understood. I learned about repentance and forgiveness and everlasting life and I started making songs. They sing them right through Maasailand. Now I drive this truck. I am sent from place to place and wherever I go I sing and people come to God."

He turned to Peter. "Chief Moses is on safari but go to the *manyatta* of Jane. There are many there. They will rejoice to hear your words and to sing to you." He jumped back into his truck and shouted in Swahili, "We will see one another," and drove off singing.

"We were going to Jane's place anyhow. It is a Maasai house church," said Peter. He pointed with his chin to the Ngong Hills on the skyline. Jutting out was a round hill. "That is called the Lookout. It is where the cattle rustlers used to have sentries placed. They could see for a great distance and give warning if the police came over that far rise.

"The Maasai tribe have their own theology of cattle. You have heard the old tradition which says that God gave *them* all cattle. If anybody else has any, somewhere a mistake has been made. The Maasai have a responsibility and must show their respect for God by getting those cattle back. This is how they justify their raiding."

"Convenient for the conscience," I chuckled.

Peter changed to a lower gear. "In past days people travelled this path with caution but now it is different. This is not now a place known for its thieving but many come here to worship God."

Round a clump of thornbush we drove and there ahead of us was a large umbrella-shaped thorn tree.

Peter stopped the jeep. "There is one of our tree churches, the one Jane started. She became a Christian and wanted to tell the children of her *manyatta* area about Jesus, so she organised meetings under this tree. It is the place where the elders of the clans meet for their *shauris*, their discussions. She gathered her own children and any others who would come.

They sang choruses and the Christian saga songs. First only women came and later men. Now very many people worship God here.

"At the start there was singing and Jane quoted such parts of the Scripture as she had memorised and when she prayed it was obvious to all that she was talking directly to her Father in heaven. Later a twelve-year-old boy came to their *manyatta*. He had learned to read and he would stand up here and read from the Bible—not a handful of verses but whole chapters—the whole event. Of course, they sang and told what Jesus had done in their lives like Caleb did today to us.

"Jane learned to read. She borrowed a blackboard and as she learned she taught others. This shady tree has become a place of learning and devotion."

The children were the first to greet us—a dozen of them. They threw themselves at Peter but were a little shy with me. Coming towards us were two women—a tall stately young woman with a baby on her hip. Beside her walked an older version of herself with traditional bead ornaments.

"The younger one is Jane," explained Peter, "and that is her mother. They're fine people. Jane's a leader. People take notice of her, of what she says and does."

We were greeted with outstretched hands and tremendous smiles. People seemed to appear from nowhere. They seated themselves in the dappled shade underneath the tree. Logs had been cut to make seats and, in front, stout wood adzed to make a kind of lectern. There was considerable singing to welcome us. Jane greeted me, Peter interpreting. I replied and was asked would I thank those of my tribe who had made it possible for them to have the Bible in their own beloved Maasai language. I undertook to do it and am doing it here and now. Our visit went on till later in the afternoon when again there was considerable handshaking and farewelling.

As we moved towards the road Peter said quietly, "God is in this place."

A motor bicycle was coming up the road. The rider slowed down, stopped and propped his machine against a tree. "He is an evangelist in this area. His heart is full of love for God," explained Peter. "He has travelled overseas. You

will hear that he speaks English with a Canadian accent." He did.

We greeted and chatted for a few moments. Then he looked up at the sky, walked over to his *piki-piki*—lovely word—"You must excuse me." He smiled. "There is still an hour before sunset. They will want to hear the words that I have for them."

We watched him ride up the rough earth road. I saw a smile playing round Peter's mouth. "You're thinking what I'm thinking. We hope there are no wild pigs on this particular road." He laughed. "That's where it all started with you and me."

In the dusk the hill that separated the grazing lands from Nairobi and its suburbs came into sight. There was a tinge of pink in the piled-up cumulus clouds.

My friend behind the wheel said, "Well, Paul, you've seen some exciting things today, things you never thought could happen in the days when you first met Korometti."

I laughed, "Remember, those were the days when certain people shrugged and said, 'Once a Maasai…' "

"You've seen a rather different picture. I wonder what those people would think if they'd been with us today?" chuckled Peter Pompo.

Glossary

Ch—Chigogo
Sw—Swahili

assante (Sw)—thank you
bati (Sw)—corrugated iron
Bibi (Sw)—lit. grandmother—a term of respect
Bwana (Sw)—sir, mister, lord
bwete (Ch)—useless
chenga (Ch)—alarm cry
chidindilo (Ch)—prison, "The Hotel of King George"
chifuko (Ch)—a pocket, a bag, generally cloth with a purse-string around its neck
Chigogo (Ch)—the language of the Central Plains of Tanzania
chigongo (Ch)—swelling on the back
Chizungu (Ch)—English language
Daudi (Sw)—David (pron. *Dhowdee*)
debe (Sw)—a kerosene tin
dudu (Sw)—an insect; anything that creeps or crawls
eheh (Ch)—agreement—affirmative
fundi (Sw)—an expert, a trained person
hodi (Sw)—May I come in
hongo! (Ch)—behold
ilimba (Ch)—a musical instrument
kabisa (Sw)—very—emphasis
kah! (Sw)—an exclamation of surprise or disgust depending on tone of voice
karibu (Sw)—Come in, welcome. The reply to *hodi*
kaya (Ch)—house
koh! (Sw)—as for *kah*
kumbe! (Sw)—behold—with a raising of the eyebrows
kwaheri (Sw)—good-bye
lulo (Ch)—thank you (for congratulations)
lusona (Ch)—congratulations

machisi (Ch)—evil spirits
magu (Ch)—I don't know—with a shrug
mbisi (Ch)—hyena (pl. *mabisi*)
mbukwa (Ch)—good day (pl. *mbukwenyi*)
muganga (Ch)—witch-doctor
mutemi (Ch)—king, paramount chief
mzungu (Sw)—European (pl. *wazungu*)
ndege ndege (Ch)—convulsions
nghangala (Ch)—mead
ngheeh (Ch)—affirmative—with a nod of the head
ng'o (Ch)—no
nhonde (Ch)—marijuana
nyani (Ch)—monkey
panga (Sw)—a cane-cutting knife or machete
safari (Sw)—a journey
shauri (Sw)—a court case, discussion, dispute
sikuku (Sw)—a party or feast
taka taka (Sw)—rubbish
tula malaka (Ch)—scraping of the throat (native medicine)
ugali (Sw)—porridge
wadala (Ch)—old women, midwives
wubaga (Ch)—gruel
yaya gwe (Ch)—oh my mother—an exclamation
yoh! (Ch)—ejaculation of surprise or disgust

The End