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ILLUMINATION

by Carolyn Golledge

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Indiana Jones had not been joking about Marcus Brody's ability to lose his way even in his own museum. Thus, not wanting to spend weeks wandering the desert, he had quickly caught up to his old friend, slowed his horse, and redirected traffic as Henry and Sallah joined them. They rode for some time directly into the setting sun, Indiana and Sallah leading the way toward an oasis where they could comfortably pass the night and rest and water the horses. Indiana had never felt better in his life - the water from the Grail Cup had done more than just erase all evidence of his struggle with a Nazi tank. He was sure his father felt the same way, and both could have easily ridden all night. But the horses wouldn't last, and while Sallah was tougher and fitter than he looked, they were all concerned for Marcus, who was showing signs of the stress and exhaustion he'd endured as a prisoner of the Nazis.

So it was that the tall date palms of the oasis were a welcome sight, silhouetted against a starlit desert night. Cool, clean drinking water, a wash, and the night breeze combined with a meal of dried food found in the saddle bags had all four men ready for sleep. Henry and Indiana stayed awake longer than the others, discussing the day's events, but in truth, simply enjoying the depth of the new bond between them. Indiana had always known his father loved him and was loved in return, but there had been resentment and a growing gulf. Now that tension was gone forever, and Indiana relished the easy affection he had uncovered. His father's use of the name "Indiana" had touched Indy's heart in a way nothing else ever had. Henry had gladly chosen his son over the Grail, the personal obsession that had created the rift between them in the first place. And though Henry never spoke of it, Indiana knew his father was equally moved by the easy courage of Indy's leap of faith, a step taken in the name of love rather than lust for an archaeological relic.

Father and son had both learned a lesson that would forever alter their perspective on such things. The longing for the mysteries of the past would never leave their veins, but never again would it be used to cover an aching sense of loneliness. It was the first time Indiana had come away from a quest voluntarily empty-handed, yet never had he felt so contented, so relaxed. He lay flat on his back beside the oasis pool, listening both to its murmurings and his father's voice, his head cushioned on a saddle and his eyes fixed on silver stars framed by palm fronds. He would not have been aware that sleep had claimed him but for the touch of hands tucking a blanket about him and a deep voice saying, "Good night, Son. Sleep well."

Indiana Jones smiled drowsily and rolled onto his side, drawing the blanket even closer about him. "Good night, Dad," he mumbled, remembering the last time his father had tucked him into bed. He must have been no more than eight years old. It felt just as good now as then.

* * *

That night's wondrous peace was shattered completely with the arrival of the new day. It was a stark, shocking contrast. Indiana had been tucked into bed like a child and was awoken by the prodding of a rifle barrel in his guts. His eyes snapped open, focusing upon a pair of jack boots topped by a Nazi officer's uniform and a cold, leering smile.

"Morgen, Doktor Jones!" the Nazi greeted. "Get to your feet! Careful!" he warned as he was his prisoner's hands reaching for his holster. "You wouldn't want to see your friends hurt, now would you?"

Furiously, Indiana transferred his glare from the officer to the other Nazis who surrounded Marcus, Sallah and Henry. There must have been a dozen rifles bearing down on them. He had no choice but to obey orders and surrender his weapons. An infantryman stepped forward and herded him over to join his friends. "Where the hell did they come from?!" Indy growled to his father.

"As I recall," Henry explained casually, "Some of the scum ran off before the temple came down around our ears yesterday."

"Shit!" Indy said concisely, himself now remembering the superstitious reaction of some of their guards to Henry's miraculous recovery. In the elation of that moment, it had simply not occurred to him that those men would report to their bosses - and Donovan's vehicle and radio would have been available to them. Indiana drew a deep breath

and let it out slowly, his mind already hunting for solutions, for means of escape.

"What are they doing?" Sallah asked beside him.

Indy looked back to the camp and saw that the Nazis were carrying out a very thorough search. "The Grail?" he said with some surprise,

speaking to his father. Henry nodded. Sallah repeated his question and Indy answered with, "I think we're in trouble." Sallah groaned.

It didn't take the Nazis long to realise that what they wanted wasn't to be found amongst their prisoners' belongings. The officer stormed back toward them, his blue eyes ablaze, but as much with determination as anything else.

"So, where have you hidden it, Jones?" he asked as he halted beside father and son.

"Hidden what?" Indy and Henry said in unison.

The officer nodded sharply to one of his men, and the soldier, a huge man with immense, muscular shoulders, grinned delightedly, stepped forward, then rammed both clenched fists into Indy's stomach. All the air left Indiana's lungs in an agonising rush, leaving him no room even to groan. Gasping, blinded by pain, he sank to his knees, clutching at his burning gut. Before he had a chance to get his wind back, the soldier's knee came up and cracked against Indy's jaw, causing his teeth to slice through his lower lip. The force of the blow sent him sprawling backward to lie dazed in the warm sand. He was groggily aware of his father moving to protect him as the Nazi prepared to kick him again.

"That's enough!" Henry spat, his tone dangerously quiet. "You're wasting your time. We don't have the Grail."

Indy got his vision to focus in time to see the officer's astounded reaction to this response. Then he was hauled to his feet by two infantrymen who had been standing behind him. Not one to take blows without retaliating, and seeing that the muscular henchman's expression showed his belief that the victim had been beaten into submission, Indy attacked. Head and shoulders down, he rammed into the guard's midriff. Much to Indiana's dismay, the fellow merely gasped and staggered a little. Still, he was off balance, and as the infantryman grabbed his arms, Indy swung both feet up and kicked the man in the genitals. That did the trick: Muscelface fell to his knees, mouth and eyes rounded in amazed appreciation of the pain flaring through him. Indy smiled with

satisfaction, looked to his father and was surprised to see open approval there.

"Dumkopfs!" the officer roared. "Hold him! Tie him to that tree!"

More soldiers joined the two and Indy was dragged to the nearest palm tree. Ropes were produced and wound tightly about him, fastening him so snugly to the trunk that he could barely twitch. Indy's eyes remained defiant as the officer approached him. There was something even more chilling about Nazis than snakes, he thought as he stared hard into those ice-blue eyes.

"Now," the man said, looking toward Henry, "Listen carefully, Doktor Jones. I will only ask once more. Where have you hidden the Grail?"

"And I, Herr Nazi," Henry said calmly, "Will tell you only once more, we no longer have it."

The officer's face tightened with absolute rage. "Very well, Doktor Jones, you give me no other choice." Coldly, he turned and watched as his henchman got to his feet, hunched over and hurting, but glaring at Indiana with murder in his eyes. "Karl," the Major ordered, "Perhaps you would like some vengeance? You may use your knife."

The henchman's sickeningly pleased smile was backed by gasps of horror from Henry, Marcus and Sallah, all of whom instinctively made to place themselves between the Nazi and their defenceless friend. The infantrymen raised their rifles and forestalled further intervention. The henchman chuckled to himself with maniacal pleasure as he drew a razor-edged knife from its sheath and stalked toward his bound prey.

More than a little afraid, Indiana fastened on to his anger instead, finding his sheer hatred of such creatures gave him more than enough courage to direct a deadly cold glare of his own deep into the madman's eyes. There was a very satisfying hesitation before the German came any closer. The upraised blade caught the glow of the rising sun, its edge becoming a vicious, dull red. The Nazi laughed softly, deep in his throat, as he saw this symbol of what he desired. One of the infantrymen reached out and tore Indy's shirt, baring his chest to the knife.

"Wait!" Henry pleaded.

"Cut me, and I swear you'll never see the Grail," Indiana promised steadily, holding the officer's gaze now. He felt the cold blade nick the skin below his ribs, but he didn't so much as flinch, maintaining that visual promise and adding again the one word, "Never."

"Halt!" the officer called as the henchman prepared to plunge the knife deeper. "Halt!" he roared again. This time, reluctantly, Karl obeyed. There was an outrush of air as Indy's friends breathed again. The officer came closer. "Very well, Jones," he said. "We have a deal. Give me the Grail and you and your friends may go unharmed."

"I don't do deals with Nazis!" Indy replied softly. "I was only telling you that nobody gets anything out of me with a knife. Got it?"

The Nazi's teeth clenched as he fought to hold back a childish fit of tantrum. He had the man at his mercy! Why couldn't he see that?! "Sehr gut, Jones!" he ground out. "Let us see how brave you really are! Karl!" Leering his pleasure, the henchman stepped up to the prisoner, forcing Indy's head up as he pressed the point of the blade into his jaw. Slowly, he dragged it down the man's throat, pausing at more sensitive places, and working his way toward the heart. Ignoring the threatening rifles, Henry pushed forward, but the soldiers closed about him. "He's your son, Doktor Jones," the officer taunted. "I wonder how long you will allow him to suffer before you tell me what I need to know. I will not leave here without the Grail. Life is not pleasant for those who fail Der Fuhrer."

Henry Jones' eyes were wild, more desperate than Indy would have believed possible. "Dad," he said softly. "Remember what you said about the armies of darkness. If we ..." Further words were cut off as he drew a sharp, hissing breath, biting down against pain as the knife suddenly cut deeper.

"In God's name, stop this!" Marcus shouted, struggling against his guard's hold, his expression horrified as he saw a line of red following the knife as it traced Indy's ribs.

"Stop!" Henry said sharply. Indy looked up at him and he added, "They'll never find it back there, Son. Please, boy. I can't."

Indy nodded agreement. Henry was right. In the mess back at the Temple, it would take a long time, if ever, to recover the Grail. Maybe somehow during that time they could find a means of escape. Any sense of defeat was eased by relief as Henry's bargaining with the officer resulted in Karl being forced to put away his knife. Nonetheless, he was left tied uncomfortably tight to the tree, exposed to the burning sun as it climbed higher and the Germans rested after their night's journey. He tolerated it all as stoically as possible - the searing heat, the flies stinging his sticky, bloodied cuts, the cruel taunts of the Nazis who held water flasks to his lips then withdrew before he could drink, and the muscle cramps. But as morning became afternoon and the Germans prepared to break camp,

Indiana's courage deserted him in a sudden rush of panic as he caught sight of something slithering toward him through the hot sand.

"Dad!" he bellowed. "Dad!"

Surprised, many of the Germans turned and stared at him, then began snickering and laughing, believing the hot sun had finally fried the man's brains and melted his resolve. Equally surprised, Henry got to his feet, determined to reach his and further surprised when he met no opposition. "What is it, boy?" he asked in concern as he came up beside the bound man. But Indiana seemed incapable of speech, trembling and sweating, his eyes wide with fear. "Easy, Junior," he said reassuringly, "I'll get you out of here." He began tugging at the knots. One of the soldiers saw what he was doing and moved to stop him, but the Major ordered Indiana's release.

"Get him up on a horse!" he instructed. "Give him some water and bind his hands."

With the soldier's assistance, Indy was quickly freed. He immediately tried to back away from the tree, tripping and falling, but still desperate to move away.

"Junior?" Henry queried. "Are you all right?" He passed the water canteen an infantryman handed to him, and Indiana gulped greedily, on his feet now and still backing away.

"Snakes, Dad," Indiana finally managed to explain. "I hate 'em."

Henry turned and looked back. Sure enough there was a serpent slowly making its way up the tree trunk. He shuddered, wondering how he would have felt if he had been bound so close to rats. He clapped his son's shoulder in sympathy. "Intolerable," he said. "Intolerable."

* * *

Major Haufmann was still uncertain about the Jones' story that the Grail had been buried in a cave-in. But given their desperate circumstance and the fact that the sacred relic was definitely not with their belongings even though they'd had no warning of attack and therefore no reason to hide it, there seemed no other logical conclusion. Doktor Jones senior claimed that they had been on their way back to Iskenderun to seek the aid of a team of diggers, supplies, and machinery. That seemed

plausible enough, if indeed the temple had collapsed, and it was only a matter of a few hours before that claim would be proven.

He had hoped they were lying: the Fuhrer was not known for patience in these matters. The Major was dismayed when at last he came face to face with the destroyed site. The Joneses had tried to convince him that they were of no further use and should be freed. As angry as he was, that idea had still allowed Haufmann room for laughter. Did they really think him such a fool?! Even covered over by a cave-in the temple layout would be familiar to archaeologists and they would have all the experience necessary for directing the dig. Also they had been last to lay eyes on it, and knew precisely where it had fallen. Major Haufmann gave them extra incentive by informing them that the Fuhrer would not wait forever and if they had not found the Grail within a reasonable time, Marcus Brody would be executed. To forestall any escape attempts, the old man was being held prisoner far from his friends back at the palace.

More men and equipment had arrived in the past week and the dig seemed to be progressing very efficiently. Major Haufmann was very proud of himself. But all that pride and self-confidence vanished within the space of the next few terrifying minutes. The earth beneath him suddenly shuddered and heaved, throwing him down, then tossing and rolling him as the tremors continued. Out here in the open, he realised he was fairly safe, but tons of stone and earth cascaded down about the temple mouth. He wondered how far that fall extended inside where the Joneses, their diggers and guards were working. He had ignored the archaeologists' warnings that the temple site was not stable, that it needed extensive shoring before they should proceed further. Haufmann had been certain they were simply trying to stall. It was a costly mistake, he realised as at last the earth stilled once more and he got to his feet to survey the damage. He would be severely disciplined once the Fuhrer learned of this latest setback. He sighed and shook his head dispiritedly. Well, at least he was alive and unharmed, the Joneses were probably dead, or soon would be if they weren't soon dug free. Squaring his shoulders, the Major began organising a rescue team; after all, he still needed the archaeologists' expertise. He would also have to make a report, but perhaps now his commanders would listen and respond to his demands for heavier earth-moving machinery.

* * *

Deafening noise. Darkness. Choking dust. Earth turned to violent tossing seas. To Henry Jones it seemed to go on forever. He could see nothing, nor hear over the roaring thunder of crumbling, cracking stone.

His mind's eye replayed again and again his last image of his son, digging away at the rear wall - the same wall that had split apart like an egg cracking open. Huge slabs of stone rained down and Henry Jones' heart froze, stopped once more with the certain belief that he had lost his son forever.

Finally, it was over. The noise was the first to still, then the violent tremors became mere shivers, but the dust continued to make the air barely breathable. Somehow some of the lanterns had survived the upheaval, but clogging dust still limited vision to not much more than an arm's length. Henry rolled free of the loose debris covering him, got to his feet, and staggered blindly toward what he hoped was the rear of the temple.

"Junior!!" he shouted hoarsely, managing the pleading cry only once before dust filled his lungs and he gave way to a fit of coughing. Suddenly, Sallah appeared beside him, carrying a lantern, his dark brown eyes revealing the same fear. Their gazes locked, each filled with desperate hope, but finding no comfort from the other. They turned and ran forward. Through the settling dust they could see that the temple's rear wall was now no more than a huge mound of rubble. There was no sign of Indiana, nor his diggers or his guard.

"Indy!!" Sallah called. He turned toward Henry and asked, "Where?"

Desperately, Henry tried to recall an exact location. It all looked so different now and the fall was so immense. If his son was still alive, he could suffocate before they even found the right place to dig. "I ... I'm not sure," Henry replied. "Somewhere near the centre I think. You start there and I'll work toward you from here."

Both men were startled as some of the rubble seemed to come to life, heaving upward as someone moved beneath it. Henry and Sallah hurried to assist, bitterly disappointed when their prize turned out to be one of the diggers. But at least now they had a better idea of Indy's location as the man informed him he had been working right beside him. They scrambled about on their knees, shoving away armfuls of sand, prying at clumps of rock - and praying for all their worth. Henry's terror and grief were too deep-seated to allow him room for much gratitude when the two surviving German guards joined them and the work went faster.

Time passed and Henry knew his son could not have lasted this long without air. The Germans stopped working. He roared at them, cursing and simultaneously pleading with them to continue. The elder of the two, a grey-haired sergeant, coldly turned away. The younger trooper's eyes filled with pity and he hesitated, but then was shoved away by his

companion. "We're all dead anyway," the elder said. He nodded toward the entrance corridor and Henry realised for the first time that the quake had entombed them. He dismissed that knowledge and returned to digging, Sallah and the injured digger assisting, their movements heavily weighed with the belief that they would free no more than Indiana's dead body.

Then Henry's hand met with something soft, warm, and wet. He grabbed at it and was sure he heard an answering moan. "Please, God!" he sobbed, calling to Sallah, "I've found him!" then "Junior!! Junior!? Can you hear me?"

The Germans turned back and everyone froze, listening. "There!!" Henry exclaimed. "I hear him! Junior!"

Sallah frowned; he had heard nothing. He flicked a glance to the Germans and their eyes showed the same doubt. Then they all heard it, the one muffled, weakly questioning word, "Dad?"

Tears cut through the dirt on Henry's cheeks as he turned and urged, "He's alive!! Dig, damn you, dig!!"

The Germans hurried forward and Sallah warned, "Carefully!"

Henry explained. "Don't bring that down on him!" He nodded toward a precariously balanced slab only feet from them. Desperately they cleared away the rubble, wondering how much air the man could have left. The left arm was uncovered first and all were dismayed to see blood matting the torn shirtsleeve. Elation replaced disappointment when the arm moved and Indiana's hand groped frantically toward them. Henry grasped the hand and held it to his cheek. "Hang on, son," he said huskily, "We're almost there!"

Finally, they cleared Indiana's torso, discovering the reason he had not suffocated. His head and shoulders were protected, sheltered beneath a section of one of the lion's heads that lay balanced across a huge column of rock. Had that column fallen only six inches closer, Indiana would have been crushed.

"D-Dad? Dad? Get me outa here, will ya?" Indy's voice said shakily from within that shadowed recess. "My arm hurts."

"Easy, Junior, easy," Henry soothed. "We have to go a little slower here or we'll bring it all down again."

"Not much longer, Indy," Sallah added. He grabbed at Henry's shoulder, his eyes dark with sorrow as he indicated what he had

discovered. Henry's eyes widened in shock as he saw that Indiana's right arm had been savagely broken, twisted at an impossible angle, not bleeding heavily, but a tiny piece of white bone protruding from the one dark red stain below the elbow.

"Easy, Son, easy," Henry continued talking soothingly as he returned to digging. The last of the rocks were cleared from the slab hiding Indy's head.

Sallah turned to ask the Germans' aid in lifting the broken piece of statue, annoyed that they had not already done so. Then he saw the reason for it. "Oh no," he whispered.

Henry turned sharply about and fear flooded him yet again as he saw that his son's legs were pinned beneath a second slab. The younger German said softly, "We cannot move it. It is too heavy."

Henry's despair became savage fury and he growled, "Then get up here and help us move this one!" The soldiers obeyed, and, working in unison, the four men strained and heaved, and the slab finally rolled clear, bringing forth another cloud of dust and a minor fall of rubble. Henry leaned forward quickly, protecting his son's face. Then as he sat up, Indiana smiled shakily at him and said, "Hi Dad! Just can't get rid of me, can you?"

Henry, sobbing openly, slid an arm beneath his son's head and held him to his chest. "Thank God!" he repeated over and over, stopping only when Indiana protested. He straightened up, sniffed and smiled, then said, "Let's see if we can splint that arm for you. All right, Junior?" He began dabbing at a gash on his son's forehead, cleaning away the blood trickling into Indy's eyes.

"Don't call me Junior!" Indy said, half-jokingly, wanting to ease his father's concern, but pain making him sick to his stomach. "Don't worry about the arm, just get me outa here!"

Henry and his companions exchanged nervous glances, wondering how best to explain. "Son," Henry said carefully, "Can you move your legs?"

There was a tense moment as they watched the man try, his eyes filling with surprise over the pain. "Hell, I can't even feel them!" Indy replied, struggling to sit up a little and keep his arm immobile at the same time. More pain flared in his chest, worsening as he drew a gasping breath.

"Easy," Henry warned, gently propping him up.

Indy blinked, staring in amazement at the heavy slab pinioning his legs from the knees down. "Ahh shit!" he said weakly. "Now what!"

"Maybe if we dig in under your legs we can drag you free," Sallah suggested.

Indy sighed, slumping back heavily against his father's supporting arm. "Yeah. Looks like the only way." He looked around, assessing the damage to the temple, then asked, "The corridor?"

"Completely blocked," one of the Germans answered miserably.

"Oh great!" Indy scowled. "It'll take them days to dig their way back in here!"

"Maybe not," Henry said more confidently than he felt. "Once Major Haufmann reports this second cave-in, Hitler'll be so disappointed he'll probably buy up all the earth-moving equipment in the area!"

Indy closed his eyes over the worsening pain. "Hitler to the rescue! Wonderful!"

Henry squeezed his son's shoulder. "Sallah, see if you can find his jacket, will you? And my coat, whatever you can find to use as blankets and bandaging. Everything was stacked with the packs in the middle of the floor. I don't think it's buried too deeply there."

"Right," Sallah obeyed, moving off but giving Indiana a quick smile first. It was as well the Germans had been using the temple as a makeshift prison, sending supplies inside at meal breaks. The two soldiers, Henry noted, were not working at moving stones from the blocked passage. "Be careful you two!" he called. "It's not stable!" They nodded back at him, and continued less frantically. He looked down at his son, heartsick when he saw that Indy's pain had finally become near agony, breaking through the barrier of shock. He was shivering and moaning very softly. Henry wiped more blood and dirt from Indy's face, alarmed by the pallor he found beneath. He began stroking the tousled hair in a pathetic gesture of comfort. "Easy boy," he said gently. "We'll get you out of here. I promise."

Indiana swallowed hard against the stabbing pain. Unable to find his voice he merely nodded, his lips moving with a faint, responding smile.

"The arm the worst?" Henry asked, almost too afraid to openly speak of it. He added, "Do you think you're hurt ... inside?"

Indy shook his head slightly. "Maybe some broken ribs. N-not too b-bad." He shivered violently, moaning with the pain of the tremors. "So c-cold."

Tears filled Henry's eyes as he observed this suffering, wondering if his son could be wrong about internal bleeding. Only a doctor could say for certain. His son could be dying for want of medical assistance! Henry swore, so that, surprised, Indiana opened his eyes and looked up at him. "C'mon Dad," he assured. "I'll be okay. Trust me."

Henry summoned an answering smile. "Sure you will, Son," he affirmed. "Nothing stops the Jones boys!"

"I found these," Sallah announced proudly, crouching down beside them. In his arms he carried Indy's jacket, Henry's coat, a blanket, and a canteen.

"Good work, Sallah!" Henry congratulated. "This'll keep you warm, Junior!" He was somewhat alarmed as his son did not protest the title he hated so much. Indiana was weakening rapidly. Gently, Sallah lifted his friend's head, tucking an empty tool bag beneath it as a pillow. Henry held the canteen to the man's lips, feeding him the water slowly, but Indiana pulled away after only two mouthfuls, despite his obviously desperate thirst.

"We're going to have to ration that," Indy warned. "It'll be days before they reach us, but I think the air will last. Look."

Henry and Sallah turned in the direction of Indy's gaze and noted with relief the movement of a clear air current through the dust, coming from high above and to the rear of the temple.

"It m-must open onto ..." Indy bit down hard, closed his eyes, then continued, "The chasm between us and the Knight's ..." Pain cut him off again.

"Lie quiet, Son," Henry advised. "Save your strength. We'll strap your arm. See if we can make it more comfortable for you, then we'll get you out from under this thing, okay?" Indiana nodded, his eyes remained closed, his face gleaming with sweat, the skin waxy and white. Anxiously, Henry squeezed his son's shoulder then set to work assisting Sallah with the splinting of the broken arm.

Somewhere during that process, Indiana lapsed into unconsciousness. Henry and Sallah were pleased he could no longer feel pain, but also frightened by this unnatural stillness. They called the Germans away from

the passage, asking for their help in digging beneath Indy's legs. For a time it seemed their efforts were in vain, but the loose earth beneath the man's legs finally gave way, creating just enough space to allow him to be dragged clear. The left trouser leg was quickly soaked with blood as circulation was fully restored. Indiana began to moan as the agony reached him even in his deep sleep. The left leg had also suffered a compound fracture.

"God in Heaven," Henry prayed aloud. "Please send us help soon."

* * *

Hours passed. They heard digging sounds and shouts from outside, overjoyed that the fall may not have been as wide as they had at first thought, but still estimating it would be days before help arrived. Henry was grimly certain his son could not last that long. The man lay tossing and dripping with delirium, and Henry could not even spare the water to cool his face. Nor could he sit with him for more than the few minutes he allowed himself to rest. He, Sallah and the soldiers laboured hard, moving rock from their side of the passage. The surviving digger had suffered a broken ankle and shock, but was managing to watch over Indiana to some extent, calling to Henry whenever the man began struggling so hard against fevered dreams that he might cause himself further injury.

* * *

Fire. Flames licked at him, flaring higher and higher. He was back in the Temple of Kali. Somehow it was he who was the sacrifice, not Willie. The cage lowered closer and closer, the heat more and more intolerable. Then, just as he thought death would bring him blessed release, the cage rose, allowing him room to live, to suffer, to be lowered into the fire yet again. He moaned and prayed, struggled to break free, but shackles pinioned his arms and legs, white hot, burning into his very bones.

Then there was laughter. Evil, gloating laughter. Mola Ram's savagely painted face hovered above him, delighting in his agony. More laughter and Donovan was there, too, then Belloq and others who were dead, but yet here somehow to taunt him, to add to his pain. He cursed and struggled, but the pain only worsened. For a fleeting moment the heat lessened, giving him wondrous respite as something cool soothed his burning brow. A gentler, welcome face appeared above him, swimming through the distortion of the waves of heat, and from somewhere far off his father's voice called to him. "D-Dad," he answered. "Dad, help me."

They're here. They're burning me alive. Help me." The coolness descended again, and then a miraculously pain-free wave of darkness washed over him, carrying him far from the fires of Kali and the cruel laughter of his enemies.

* * *

"Jones!" The German sergeant yelled. "Don't waste water on him!"

Henry knew the man was probably right. The water, what little they had, was desperately needed to replenish depleted body fluids, but that knowledge did nothing to erase his anger. Left to himself, Henry would sooner endure killing thirst than see his son suffer like this. "He's burning up!" he answered pleadingly. "If I don't get the fever down, he'll die!"

"He's dying anyway," the old soldier snarled. His eyes showed no trace of shame or pity as he levelled his pistol at Henry Jones. "Give me the water."

Henry's eyes darkened further with disgust. "So now you're going to shoot me? What will that prove?"

"You're right," the German said coldly. He moved the pistol barrel until it was aimed squarely at the injured man. "We need you to dig. I'll put him out of his misery. He won't bother you any more."

Before Henry could take action, the younger soldier jumped to his feet and blocked his superior's aim. "There's no need for that, Heinrich!" he pleaded. He turned to Henry. "Give him the water, Doktor Jones. Please.:

Filled with savage hatred, Henry obeyed. The sergeant snatched the water bottle and took a quick gulp before putting away his pistol. "Wise move, Herr Jones," he sneered. He made to hand the canteen to his partner but the young man, shamefaced, turned away, shaking his head and returning to the digging.

Henry glared at them for a while, then turned back to his son, cradling him and comforting him as best he could. "Please don't die, Junior," he pleaded, whispering over and over. "Hang on to me. Please don't die." He held his son's hand tightly, afraid to release it, unwilling to return to the digging work for fear that Indiana would die the moment he left him. "Fight them, Son," he urged. "Fight them for me. You can do it." The words continued long into that second night, though

there was only the faint gleam of lantern light to mark time here. With the words, Henry's hand stroked, wiping away the sweat and easing what he could of his son's burden.

"He's so still now," Sallah commented. "So quiet."

Henry knew his son had entered the deeper state of unconsciousness known as coma. At least now there would be no pain.

* * *

Indiana Jones found himself wandering in darkness, alone but unafraid. No thoughts intruded on his peaceful solitude, and he cared for none. Somewhere at the back of his mind, he was aware that he had escaped some terrible ordeal. He was content to drift, unthinking and free. There was a light, beckoning in the distance, and hypnotically, he was drawn toward it.

Someone suddenly blocked his view of that strangely entrancing light, and, mildly annoyed, he halted and looked toward the person's face. "You!" he gasped, noting somewhere that he spoke without a voice.

Elsa Schneider smiled at him. She was just as beautiful as ever, perhaps even more so. She wore an expression unlike any he had ever seen from her before, one of gentle, amused concern. He recalled the last expression he had seen on that lovely face, and guilt stabbed at him. He had tried to hard to hold her, but she wouldn't listen, wouldn't help herself. She had been so terror-stricken as she fell, but now she was at peace, her blue eyes serene. Remembering that incident, Indy realised there was something very wrong here. Fear grabbed at him. Suddenly he seemed to slip backwards. The beckoning light dimmed and pain lunged for him. He remembered that agony and knew he needed the light so as to escape from it. Still Elsa blocked his forward progress.

"No," she said softly, compassionately. "You must go back."

"Let me by!" he replied angrily.

"No," she repeated. "You tried to save me, Indy, even after all I had done to you. Now it's my turn to help you."

"I can't go back there," Indiana whispered desperately, remembering the agony.

"Listen," Elsa urged. "Your father is calling to you."

Sure enough, Indiana could hear his father say, "Please, Son, don't leave me. I can't bear to lose you, too. Come back to me, boy."

Indy turned toward the broken, fearful voice, almost unrecognisable as that he was accustomed to from his often stern, always confident father. Gasping with shock, he saw, seemingly at an immense distance and somewhere below him, his own limp body cradled in Henry's arms. Nearby Sallah also looked on anxiously. Understanding dawned, and he swung back to Elsa. "You're dead," he said flatly. "Am I dead, too?"

"You will die if you don't go back - now," Elsa warned.

Indy looked back to that broken body, remembering the agonised dreams, the fire, the weakness, the thirst; and there was still no help to be had for him. What chance could he possibly have? What purpose would his continued pain serve? He looked up into Elsa's oddly gentle eyes. "I ... I don't ... I'm not sure I can," he mumbled. "I'm not sure I even want to."

"You will not suffer long," Elsa promised. "I will send the Grail to help you."

"The Grail's lost!" Indy shouted, despairing anger in the words. How he had prayed for its healing powers.

"I will find it for you, I promise." Elsa suddenly seemed to recede from him, and Indiana heard his father calling once again, "Come back to me, Son."

Still uncertain, Indiana turned back toward the light, a light that offered so much. "My son," a woman's voice said softly. "My little one."

Indiana's heart leapt with joyful recognition. "Mom!" he called. "Mom?!"

She was there, only an arm's length from him, smiling at him proudly as she had always done when he was a small boy returning with some tale of sporting victory, or another excellent school report clutched in his hand. She had delighted in sharing his successes, unlike his father who had always been so busy. "I love you," she said. "Go to your father, Indiana. Please. He needs you badly. Tell him I love him. Go now. You will be safe with Henry. Go."

Suddenly feeling reassured and happy to obey, Indiana smiled and nodded. "I love you too, Mom," he said, feeling himself falling down, rushing into his body.

* * *

"He can't hear me, Sallah," Henry said brokenly to his friend. "He's gone too far from us."

Choked by emotion, Sallah could do no more than nod sad agreement, grasping Henry's arm in a show of sympathy. Indiana was barely breathing now, his pale face free of all sign of pain and very peaceful-looking.

"I sat with him like this once before, you know," Henry continued, patting his son's limp hand. "We almost lost him then, too. He was only six years old. The influenza epidemic ..."

And the memory became real, drawing Henry back in time, back to that first tiny cottage in which he and Mary had known so much joy. But this had been a time of great sorrow. It was summer and he had been away from home, tracing down yet another clue to the existing of the Grail. A telegram had arrived, informing him of his son's grave illness. Now, in his mind's eye, he stood at the boy's bedroom door again, filled with the fear that he had come too late. The child was so pale, so still, so small, dwarfed by the huge body of the dog he loved so much. Indiana, they had named the malamute husky, and it was totally devoted to the boy, never far from his heels, waiting bright-eyed for his return from school. Now the animal lay across the foot of the bed, its eyes dark and soulful, fastened immovably upon its sick master.

"Mary," Henry said softly. His wife sat beside the bed, desperately holding her son's tiny hand.

She looked up at him, anxious, and angry because of her helplessness. "He was asking for you yesterday," she said accusingly. "He called for you all day. Now it's too late. He asked you not to go, but, oh no, you had to go after that damned Grail again!" she burst not tears and drew her son's limp body close to her breast. "He's dying, Henry."

"Mary!" he exclaimed, somewhere beneath the tide of emotion, surprised to hear her curse. He went to her, embracing her and wrapping his arms about his son at the same time. "I'm sorry. I'm sorry." He

kissed and soothed her, then drew back to look long into her eyes. "I'm here now. We're together now. We won't let him die."

And so they had worked, labouring beyond the point of exhaustion, urging their son to come back to them. As the light of sunrise filtered into the room on the second morning of his return home, Henry watched as the boy opened his eyes, smiled up at him and said, "Dad? Where were you? I was looking for you." He had cradled his son and wept with joy. He'd thought he had learned from that experience, but Indiana's recent words returned to haunt him: "We never talked."

"Was I that bad, Son?" he asked, looking down at the son who was now a man. "When we lost your mother ... I just ... couldn't talk anymore. Not like we used to."

"Henry?" Sallah questioned.

Then another voice said clearly, distinctly, "Mom! Mom!" Alarmed, they looked down at Indiana, sure he was at the point of death. But, much to their amazement, the man's eyes opened, bright and alert, and he smiled up at them.

"Dad?" Indiana said, the happiness of the vision still with him as he found himself again lying on the earthen floor, looking up into his father's anxious eyes. "I saw Mom! She said to tell you she loves you."

Tears burned, blurring Henry's vision. He nodded and smiled, but all his relief at his son's returned awareness left him in the belief that this was one final burst of fevered energy, the man was hallucinating. "Be still, boy," he urged, resuming his stroking of the damp hair. "Rest."

Indiana shook his head, fighting the heaviness of his body, puzzlement filling his eyes as he saw his father's disbelief. "I did see her!" he insisted. Pain sprang back to life with a sickening surge and he gasped against the shock of it, feeling Henry hold him tighter in response, steadying him. "It was so p-peaceful there," he continued stubbornly, trying to explain, but also needing the memory to sustain him, to help him battle the pain. "Beautiful." He looked back into his father's sorrowful eyes, holding his gaze, desperate to convince him. "She's happy there, Dad," he assured. "She's waiting for us."

"Shh, Son, shh," Henry soothed. "You're going to be all right. They're not far off reaching us now, boy."

Indiana shook his head frustratedly, then remembered something else. "Elsa said she'd send the Grail to help us."

Sallah and Henry exchanged despairing glances, wishing there was something they could do to ease Indiana's delirium. Henry looked angrily toward the Germans who sat listening at the passageway. "He needs water," he begged. "Please. Give him some water."

The older man did not react, ignoring the plea completely, but the younger met Henry's desperate eyes, his cheeks flushing with shame. He turned to his sergeant and said, "Please, Heinrich." The trooper reached out for the canteen and the sergeant whirled about, snatching it back and knocking the younger man down.

"It's mine!" he screamed. "Don't touch it!"

"Bastard!" Henry swore, his body tensing with his need to attack the man.

"Don't worry, Dad," Indiana assured. "We'll find the Grail again. Elsa promised."

Henry looked back to his son, intending to smile and reassure him, but struck dumb by the depth of awareness and intelligence in the man's eyes. Indiana certainly didn't look delirious; in fact, he smiled in response to his father's surprised expression.

"Trust me," Indy said, then winked.

"Junior?!" Henry queried in astonishment. "You're really awake?!"

Indiana grimaced over another wave of burning pain, sure his broken bones were turning to molten lava beneath his skin. All his good humour vanished beneath that assault. "No, Dad," he muttered irritably. "I'm t-talking in my sleep! Damn! It hurts! I hope she hurries!"

"But Son ..." Henry protested. "She's dead!"

"I know," Indiana replied in a whisper, and a dreadful doubt began to gnaw at him. Maybe it had been all a dream. No, it was too real, more real than anything he had ever experienced before. But the pain was unbearable. "C'mon, Elsa," he pleaded. "I cant take it much long -"

The plea was cut short as an ominous rumble filled the cavern. The earth trembled, then began to shake violently. "No!!!" Henry fought to protect his injured son as best he could, but the ground shifted and

flowed beneath them. Indiana screamed raggedly as his broken limbs were jolted. Small stones and soil began raining down, and Henry flung himself over Indiana's upper body, shielding him. Sallah did likewise for the man's broken leg, cursing and begging for the quake to stop as he heard Indiana's continued agonised cries.

There was a tremendous cracking, rending sound, and the cavern floor split apart only feet from them, spewing up a new shelf of rock which halted only when it was three or four feet higher than the original section. The cries of the German soldiers were muted as they were tilted and rolled back further toward the sliding fall that had been the blocked passageway. Then, as suddenly as it had begun, the earthquake stopped. It became incredibly, strikingly quiet and still. The only sound was Indiana's less strident cries. He lay gasping and shivering as the worst of the pain abated, his fingers still clutching desperately at his father's shirt front.

Henry sat up, checking his son for further damage, finding fresh blood on the bandaging but nothing worse. "It's over, boy. It's over now," he soothed.

But Indiana was uncaring, his eyes wide with amazement as he stared at a point just beyond his father's shoulder. He released his grip on the man's shirt so as to raise a shaky hand and point toward the object catching the shafts of light now entering the cavern. "Dad, look!" he said in awe. "Look! It's the Grail!"

Henry swivelled about, stunned as he discovered his son was right. "Sallah!" he called, and his friend hurried to retrieve the relic from where it had been returned by the earth's upheaval. Also stunned by this turn of events, Sallah nonetheless reacted swiftly, scrabbling through the rubble, coughing as dust filled his lungs, then slowing reverently as he picked up the cup. He returned carefully, placing the sacred object within Henry's outstretched hands. "Thank the Lord!" Henry whispered. Smiling, he turned to his son. "Take it," he said. "You earned it."

Indiana shook his head, wanting to tell his father that he had worked much longer, given up more, but pain threatened to overwhelm him, to push him back into the blackness. But for the Grail, he would have willingly surrendered to that promise of peace. He clung desperately to consciousness, the agony nauseating him. He retched but had nothing to bring up. His mouth was so dry it felt full of sand. If only he had some water! His lips were split and bleeding and he licked hungrily at the moisture. Distantly, he felt Henry closing his weak fingers about the Cup, but what good was it to him without water?

Henry had come to the same conclusion. He turned about, searching frantically for their German companions, hoping they still had the canteen and had not been buried. Joy filled him as the two came staggering through the dust, seeking the comfort of the group and the extra light which flooded that end of the cavern. "Over here! Quickly! Bring the water!" Henry called in guidance, and the soldiers made their way down the newly formed incline. They came to a halt, rubbing dirt from their eyes, blinking in amazement as they caught sight of the Cup within Indiana's grasp.

"The Grail!!" the younger one said, his voice full of awe.

"Yes," Henry replied. "It can save my son, but I need water." He looked up at the older man, dismayed when he immediately backed away, clutching the canteen to his chest. "Please. Give me the water."

The Nazi shook his head, smiling almost insanely, the past three days of interment pushing him too far. "It's mine. No water for him. He's dying."

"The cup can save him!" Henry shouted, but the man only laughed and backed further away.

"Please, Heinrich!" the youngster said softly, approaching his superior warily. "Just give him a mouthful. The Cup does work. I have seen it."

The old sergeant shrugged and turned away. "So what," he said uncaringly.

Henry had no intention of accepting refusal. He flung himself at the sergeant and they went down in a tangled heap, Jones struggling to reach the water bottle and the Nazi, his gun. The soldier succeeded at the same time Henry did, but fortunately his first shot went wide. Henry heard, but ignored the danger. He had the water; all he cared for was to bring it to his dying son.

"Halt or I will kill you!" the German screamed. Henry continued to walk forward, his back turned defencelessly to the gun. He heard the trigger cock and prepared for the impact, making to throw the canteen to Sallah who sat protectively by Indiana. Then there was another crashing rumble, not an earthquake, the sound coming from the entrance. Voices followed and more Nazis swarmed into the temple. Making use of the distraction, Henry hurried to his son, taking the Grail from Indiana's dangerously weak grasp and filling it with water.

"I will take that now, thank you, Doktor Jones," Major Haufmann's cold voice said from behind him. Henry ignored him, reaching to lift Indiana's head. "Now!" the Nazi roared, and a bullet impacted less than an inch from Indiana's broken arm.

Henry swung about, his eyes ablaze. "In the name of the Lord! Just let me give him the water!! Then you can take it!"

"I will take it now," the Major snarled, raising the pistol toward Indiana's heart. "Do not waste its powers." Sickening inspiration filled the Nazi's eyes and he added, "I have what I want; I no longer need either of you."

Horrified, Henry stared into the bore of the gun as it moved toward him. He closed his eyes, awaiting death.

"Hold!" a calm, resonant voice called, breaking the stillness. The Grail Knight suddenly emerged from the rear of the cavern, his armour gleaming in the dusty beams of light as he came striding toward them. By the time Major Haufmann had recovered from the shock, the knight was standing between him and the Joneses, his sword drawn and upraised in what the Nazi saw as a pathetic gesture of protection. "You have no claim to the Cup," the Knight informed him. "You have not been tested."

Major Haufmann's lips twisted into a leering laugh. "Stand clear, old man," he warned. "Or I will shoot you, too!"

"Death holds no fear for me," the Knight replied, but surprising them all, he stood to one side. "Give him the Cup, Doctor Jones," he said quietly.

"But ..." Henry protested. "My son!"

"I will protect him, he who vanquished me," the Knight promised, looking down at Henry with a gentle smile. "Do as I bid."

Looking into those calm, wise eyes suddenly convinced Henry that all would be well, so long as he did what he was told. He stood and held the Cup out to the Nazi. Major Haufmann snatched it and immediately gulped down the water. "Immortality is mine!" he exclaimed. His ever-present henchman looked beseechingly, greedily from him to the Cup and back again. "Drink, Karl!" the officer laughed. "Der Fuhrer wishes immortality for all his army! The world will soon be ours! Drink!"

The trooper needed no further urging. Eagerly, he took the Cup, refilled it and swallowed the contents. Leering victoriously, he passed

the Grail to his fellow soldiers. They drank, coldly ignoring the agonised moans from the dying man at their feet. Only one refused, drinking only after he was threatened into obedience. The young soldier who had been entombed with the Joneses seemed greatly shamed by the actions of his countrymen. Finishing his turn with the Cup, he looked pleadingly to his superior, compassion giving him the courage to ask, "Please, Major, allow me to give some to Herr Jones. He is in pain."

Surprised and grateful, Henry met the young man's gentle eyes. "Thank you," he said sincerely, reaching up as the trooper offered him the Cup. There was a shattering, echoing blast as the Major fired, the bullet tearing into the youngster's back. He staggered, the force of the impact driving him to his knees. Sallah hurried to steady him, but the young man, eyes wide with surprise, waved away the assisting hands and got to his feet unaided. As he turned about, Henry saw there was no sign of blood or a wound, just a ragged hole in the man's uniform. All present stared over-awed at this evidence of the Grail's promise.

"It works!" the Major exclaimed. "Karl! Return it to me!"

The henchman moved to obey, reaching toward the Cup still lying where the trooper had dropped it. But the Knight was faster. He retrieved the Cup and passed it to Henry. "Give my friend to drink," he instructed gently, his eyes saddened as he observed Indiana's suffering. "He is sorely in need."

The Major's face set into hard, cold lines of absolute fury as he prepared to fire upon the Knight. Then his expression altered to despairing, disbelieving shock, his eyes round with horror as his body refused to obey him. He was frozen as rigidly as one of the Temple statues.

"You are under my power now," the Knight informed him, his grey eyes lighting with victory. "All those without compassion who drink from the Cup are eternally damned. Yes, you have immortality, but nothing more. Your only salvation lies in finding the courage to cross the Seal. Then you face the same fate as the other evil one."

"Donovan?" Henry asked. The Knight nodded and Henry allowed himself a delighted chuckle before at last turning to minister to his injured son. Indiana had told him of the horrible manner of Donovan's death.

Indiana was barely conscious and Henry had to ease him up, urging him softly to drink. Groggily aware of what this fluid meant for him, and achingly thirsty in any case, Indiana fought the darkness and pain, struggling to swallow the water. Immediately the liquid erased his

thirst, sating him instantly, and washing away the painful dryness of his swollen lips and throat. He felt its soothing coolness spreading through his veins like a brilliant tide of light, erasing the dark, gnawing agony as if it had never been. The sensation was the greatest luxury he had ever known. He swallowed more easily now, and strength followed in the wake of comfort. He found at last he was able to open his eyes, eager to look into his father's eyes once more, share the miracle of his healing. Henry's gaze met his, bright with elation. Indiana sat up a little further, feeling no pain from ribs or arm, curious to see the effects as Henry tended to the fractures. The makeshift bandages were unravelled from about the wounds which were still ugly, swollen and bruised, crusted with dried blood, but causing him not the least pain.

There was no more water within the Cup. Henry turned about, searching. All the Germans stood immobile, incapable of movement, having surrendered their willpower to the Grail Knight who stood watching them with evident satisfaction. He lifted his hand palm outward in the same salute he had given Henry and Indiana on their last meeting. But now that salute was directed at the young trooper who had done his best to aid Indiana. The young soldier found, much to his amazement, that he was free. He nodded thanks to the Knight, then hurried to pick up the Major's canteen. Grinning boyishly, he carried it to Henry.

"Such is the reward for compassion," the Knight informed him smilingly.

The youngster crouched down beside Indiana, his eyes showing some anxiety as he saw that the man's injuries had not disappeared. "Doctor Jones ..." he said hesitantly. "Are you still in pain?"

"No," Indiana answered with a smile. "I'm fine." To prove the point, he reached out his right arm and clasped the trooper's hand warmly. "Thank you," he said sincerely.

The soldier flushed, but his lips curved into a proud smile. "I am glad you will be all right," he answered. They both turned and watched as Henry began pouring water from the Grail onto the fractures.

Indiana gasped, more in surprise than pain, as a strange tugging grabbed at his limbs, a mild stinging sensation spreading through them. He had seen it happen once before, but it amazed him nonetheless. The water hissed and bubbled about the wounds, then subsided, clearing away, revealing smooth, healthy flesh. Indiana felt like cheering. Instead, he tested his legs, relishing the separation from the earth on which he had lain for what seemed an eternity. He stood straight and tall, revelling in the strength returned to him. Henry was staring at him, tears coursing

down his cheeks, a smile of wonderment playing about his eyes. "Dad," Indiana said softly, took one step forward and drew the man into a hard, fierce embrace of pure, joyful love. That moment's reunion felt even better than their embrace upon the cliff top when he had first understood just how great a love his father held for him. They broke the embrace to gaze long into each other's eyes, then Indiana said gleefully, "Enough resting! Let's go find Marcus!"

End

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