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The Pure Faith  
by TS Weddell

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"You and I are very much alike, my friend. Archaeology is our religion; yet we have both fallen from the pure faith..."

CONNECTICUT, June 1927

"I'm sorry, Marcus, but, dammit--it makes me mad!"

I'm afraid I have to agree with you, Indy, although I would use the word 'mad' in the sense we British do--insane. I arranged this dinner invitation to Doctor Arnsleigh's house tonight because he is the sort of man whose friendship could do much to advance your career. And instead of making yourself pleasant, you sat all evening in the corner of the man's library, glaring and sulking like a school boy!"

The early summer twilight was balmy, and the June bugs and tiny night insects buzzed and sang in the bushes as the two men made their way through the quiet streets of the little college town, heading back to Indy's small frame house near the campus. Jones stared down at the sidewalk as he went along, his hands in his pockets and his shoes scuffing the pavement, looking very much like the school boy Marcus had likened him to. Overhead, a pale quarter moon shone down through the arching elms.

"That's just the point, Marcus--his library! Elliot Arnsleigh is one of the legends of the archaeological field, a man I admired, practically worshipped

when I was a kid growing up. And his library shelves were crammed with Pre-Columbian sculpture, Egyptian faience, Chinese bronzes--All priceless museum quality stuff. That man has been skimming the cream off his digs!"

"Oh, come now, Indiana. There isn't an archaeologist alive who hasn't kept a souvenir or two of his work."

"Not me!" Indy replied vehemently. "Look, I know how things used to be. Men like Giovanni Belzoni and Bernardino Drovetti--semi-amateur adventurers stripping Egypt of its archaeological treasures and destroying a hell of a lot of valuable knowledge in the process. But archaeology has changed. We're supposed to be scientists and scholars now, working to increase understanding about our human past, not to provide decorations for some rich man's coffee table--or our own, either! The things we dig up should stay where they were found."

Marcus chuckled. "If that were true, Indiana, I'd be out of a job. Where do you suppose nine-tenths of the exhibits at the National Museum come from?"

"I guess you've got me there, Marcus," Indy admitted grudgingly. "But I still think that artifacts are national treasures that belong to the countries in which they're unearthed. To take them for our own use amounts to stealing."

Brody rolled his eyes and sighed. "Heaven preserve me from young fire-brands," he muttered softly into the night.

"What was that, Marcus?"

"Nothing important, Indy. I'm almost afraid to ask, but as long as we're on the subject, are you one of those radicals who believe that the British Museum ought to return the Elgin Marbles to Greece?"

"Damn right! And they should send back the Zodiac ceiling from the temple of Denderah, too, while they're at it!"

"You cite an extreme example, Indy, and to an extent you're right. But may I suggest you look at the issue from another point of view? As you say, the field of archaeology has had a checkered past. Early excavators like Drovetti and Belzoni were little better than grave robbers, but they were dealing with an era and a country in which temples and pyramids were being dismantled for building materials, tombs were being looted and their contents given away as political bribes, and one Egyptian general even went so far as use the face of the Sphinx for artillery target practice! Might not their efforts, as crude as they may have been, have preserved treasures that would otherwise have been lost, until the original owners are ready to . . . well, appreciate them more? And might not seeing artifacts from all over the world in our American museums fuel enthusiasm among the general public for further archaeological research?"

Indy shrugged. "Perhaps, Marcus. But two wrongs never make a right."

Brody shook his head. "Ah, Indiana, you're young still. In my youth I saw things just as clearly as you do now. But with age and experience, the moral vision tends to blur from stark black and white into shades of gray."

"If you're suggesting that I compromise my principles, Marcus, then don't hold your breath. That would make me no better than my old classmate Rene Belloq. Word has it he's been seen selling a pair of Scythian gold armbands on the black market in Marrakesh!"

"I wasn't suggesting anything of the kind, Indy, merely that you might in time become a shade less rigid and a shade more pragmatic." Brody stopped, turned, and faced his young friend. "Look, Indiana, I don't mean to quarrel with you. Let's change the subject, shall we?"

Indy turned his head and grinned. "Good idea, Marcus."

The two men walked on through the summer night. "Well," began Marcus, rather too heartily after a short uncomfortable silence, "how is that nice young teaching assistant of yours--Esther, is that her name? I had rather expected she would be joining us this evening; you two have been such a pair recently. Is she well?"

Indy let out a short, sardonic laugh. "Hah, Marcus, this just isn't your day for peaceful conversation! Esther's flown the coop--taken a powder, as the saying goes. We had been planning to teach a summer course together while she began work on her doctorate. That was the plan anyway. Then last week she moved out of her apartment in the dead of night. Left me a note saying I would know why, but I'll be damned if I do. Women--who can understand 'em?"

Marcus looked stricken. "Oh, dear, I seem to have put my foot in it again. I'm sorry, Indy."

Jones shrugged. "Don't worry about it, Marcus. I've already found another woman to spend my summer with."

"Really, Indiana, when it comes to you and the opposite sex, I..."

"You can wipe that look of shocked disapproval off your face, Marcus. This is strictly professional." Indy turned to his older friend, revealing a sly grin.

"The woman I'm spending my summer break with is Margaret Goldsmith. She has an ongoing dig--a Pre-Columbian city and temple complex--and she wrote to me a while back saying she needed an assistant and asking if I knew of anyone. Since my summer plans were shot to hell, I volunteered myself for the job."

"Margaret Goldsmith, you say? Charming woman! I met her last year at the annual convention of the American Archaeological Society and we discussed her work at some length. It sounded very interesting. Exactly where is this dig?"

"South America--some little banana republic or other. I forget the name."

"Take care, Indiana, how you use the term 'banana republic' down there," Marcus warned. "The natives can get a bit huffy about things like that--with reason, I might add."

"Hell, Marcus, you know I'm smarter than that. But just between you and me, the description is accurate. The country's had six changes of government in the past twenty years and a new name to go along with each. I honestly forget what the current one is. And even if I knew it, the name might have changed again by the time I get down there. I'm told there's some kind of civil war going on right now."

Brody's forehead furrowed with concern. "War? I don't like the sound of that. You and Doctor Goldsmith won't be in any danger, I hope."

Indy shook his head. "Maybe civil war is too glorified a term to use. It's more like some bandit malcontents causing trouble in the hinterlands. I don't think they'll have any reason to bother us."

"I certainly hope not," Brody replied.

The two men had reached Indy's house, and they turned to head up the short front walk. A solitary light burned inside the entry hall, casting a rectangular splash of color out onto the floor of the porch through the stained glass panel in the front door.

Jones fumbled in his pocket for his house key. "Care to come in for a drink before you head for home, Marcus? I have a full bottle of gin in the study."

Brody's face brightened with anticipation. "An occasional glass of gin is one of the small pleasures I've missed most about living here since your country embarked upon the 'noble experiment' of Prohibition."

"Yeah, this is supposed to be some pretty good stuff," Indy remarked as he pushed the door open. "My bootlegger says he actually scrubbed out the bathtub for this batch."

On the porch, Marcus sighed. "On second thought, Indy, I think my liver and I will pass on that offer. It's late, and it's a long drive back to the city."

Indy grinned from the doorway as Marcus headed back down the walk to his car, which was parked at the curb. "Suit yourself, Marcus. Maybe when I get back this fall."

"Yes, maybe," Marcus chuckled. At the curb, the older man turned, his hand poised on the handle of his car door. "We may have our little difference of opinion, Indiana. About bathtub gin and . . . other things. But you're a good friend. Take care of yourself this summer."

Indy smiled. "You know me, Marcus--strictly by the book. I will."

#### SOUTH AMERICA, JULY 1927

By the time he arrived there, Indiana Jones was still not entirely clear about the exact name of the tiny country in which he would be spending his summer hiatus, but as the rough dirt road over which the Model A truck was bouncing did its best to shake the fillings loose from his teeth, he decided a good name for the place would be the goddam-ends-of-the-earth.

Surely there was little evidence of civilization. Jones had taken a train from the coast, crossing over several borders in the process, and he had been met at a "station" little more than a few huts and a wide clearing in the jungle by Doctor Goldsmith's head digger, a trim, dignified middle-aged man who had introduced himself as Pedro. The sunbaked clay of the town square had immediately petered out into rut-ridden dirt. Now, an hour later, they were travelling through thick jungle, and Indy often had to clutch protectively at his hat as he was swatted by low-hanging branches and greenery that encroached upon the track.

"You must forgive the quality of the road, Doctor Jones," Pedro remarked as one especially severe pothole brought a grunt of surprise out of Indy. "My country is a poor one to begin with, and with the present political troubles, there is even less money to spend on improvements."

Jones turned to his driver. "No need to apologize. If I had wanted only paved highways to ride on and soft beds to sleep in, I'd've studied something different in school--like accounting! Heck, this is nothing. I was on a dig in a little canyon in Arizona once, where the rail in was too rough even for mules, so we had to carry the equipment in on our backs."

Indy fell silent. That had been the dig on which he had first met Margaret Goldsmith, when he, an eager but promising undergraduate had been brought along as cheap labor by the dig's co-sponsor, Abner Pavenwood. That had been back in the early days when his talents were just beginning to catch his professor's eye, before they had become colleagues and friends . . . before he had met Ravenwood's daughter.

The truck began to slow. "Here we are, Doctor Jones," Pedro said, breaking into Indy's deep thoughts as the Model A pulled to a stop in a large cleared area.

Indy stepped down from the truck, pulling his small duffle bag after him. He travelled light--just a few changes of clothing and his bullwhip were all he needed for the summer. The dig itself had the look of an established well-run site. A number of workers--Indy made a ball-park guess of about thirty--were at work on various areas of the site. Some buildings stood bright and gleaming after restoration, only a chipped brick or missing roof here or there testifying to the fact that their hey day was more than a thousand years in the past and their inhabitants long since turned to dust. Others--gratifyingly more others--stood as indistinct mounds covered by jungle vegetation, waiting for the archaeologist's pick and shovel to resurrect them from their decay. Indy looked around him and smiled--this was what it was all about.

"Indy! Indy Jones! It's good to see you!"

Jones grinned at the sound of a voice that had been described by more than one irreverent undergraduate as the result of a mating between a fog horn and a jackass. He turned to see a pleasant, plump-faced woman of about sixty, with wisps of iron gray hair peeking untidily out from underneath a battered straw hat, striding briskly across the open area of the camp. She was wiping the dirt from her hand onto the rather broad seat of her rumpled jeans.

"Hi there, Maggie. You're a sight for sore eyes."

"Not too sore, I hope," she said, "because I can't wait to show off my little domain to you. I'll have the cook give you some lunch--you must be starving after your trip--and then I'll give you the grand tour."

"If it's all the same to you, I'll skip lunch and get to work right away. Just put a shovel in my hand and point me in the right direction." Although Indy had not eaten since a meager breakfast on the train that morning, somehow the idea of food did not appeal to him. He chalked up his lack of appetite and vague feelings of nausea to the rough trip or perhaps to a mild case of turista he had picked up along the way.

"Well, if you're eager to work, you're in luck," Maggie told him as she led the way across the compound, clambering over piles of dirt and leaping trenches like a woman half her age. "Things are just getting exciting. We're within a day's more work of digging on the opening of an annex to the main temple. The workmen are clearing the doorway right now."

"So I see," Indy remarked as they came in sight of the area. A series of neat, stepped trenches marked off by strings and stakes bit into the mound of dirt that had silted in the temple's doorway. Two diggers with pickaxes and shovels were digging yet a deeper level, while others were carefully sifting through the piles of loose dirt they were tossing aside. "Found anything important?"

Maggie shook her head. "Not really--just a few bits of metal and pottery and some ostraca--but then I wasn't expecting to. Still, we have to do things by the book, don't we?"

"Damn right," Indy agreed, picking up a nearby shovel. "The more hands we have digging, the faster we can crack that door and get to the good part. And I could stand to work off a little energy after being cooped up in a classroom all year." With that, he set to work.

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By the middle of the next day, the huge stone door lay completely exposed. Indy and Pedro set their shoulders to the cold stone and pushed. With a creak and a groan, the heavy door pivoted upon its crude bearings and swung inward, while Indy quickly averted his face from the rush of foul air that escaped from the widening crack. For some reason, rank odors had been bothering him lately.

Coughing, he stood back and said to Maggie, who was standing behind him, "The honor is yours, Doctor Goldsmith."

The two archaeologists, Indy following Maggie, entered the dim temple. There was no treasure to be seen, no gold, no precious gems, but there was much of value to the trained eye. With a happy exclamation of pleasure, Maggie hurried off to examine a frieze on the far wall, while Indy shone his electric torch around the confines of the temple. Something in a corner niche caught his eye, and he went to look at it, crouching down on one knee to bring the object to eye level for closer scrutiny.

"Oh, Maggie," he whispered, "you've got to see this!"

Maggie came over, and when she saw the focus of Indy's attention, she let out a soft laugh. The object which had captured Indy's fancy was a small figurine of a woman made out of unbaked red clay. Her hips were broad, her belly and breasts were huge and pendulous, and her face was set in an expression that could only

be called unique. No doubt the primitive artist who had fashioned her had intended it to be a smile, but it more closely resembled a grimace.

"Now there's a face only an archaeologist could love," Maggie chuckled.

"Well, I think she's absolutely beautiful," Indy said, totally captivate by the figurine's naive artistic vigor. "One of the best examples of an early era fertility goddess I've ever seen. I'm almost tempted to put this little darling in my pocket and take her home with me."

"Fortunately, your old mentor, Abner Ravenwood, taught you better than that," Maggie reminded him.

"Yeah, thanks to Abner, there are a lot of things I know better than to do . . . or should have known," he said quietly.

"Well, for what it's worth, Indy, I'd like to keep her all to myself, too," Maggie told him. "But her real value is not so much for her 'looks'--whatever those may be. She'll be catalogued carefully and examined so that she--and the context in which she was found--can tell us about the culture that created her."

"I know that, Maggie, but you can't blame me for having a fantasy now and then."

"Hardly," she laughed. "Especially when the temptation is so great. And speaking of an archaeologist's dream, I want to show you the frieze on the south wall. Seems to be from a much later era than your figurine, but you'll appreciate it all the same."

Jones nodded and started to rise from his half-kneeling position. "Coming right away . . . oof--ouch!" he said, as a twinge in his abdomen brought him up short.

Maggie pushed her glasses down her nose and peered at him sharply. "Something wrong, Indy?"

He shook his head. "It's nothing. I must've strained a muscle digging yesterday. I guess two semesters of sitting behind a desk have left me more out of condition than I thought."

"Well, take it easy. If you give yourself a hernia here, you're in big trouble. The nearest doctor is sixty miles away."

"Hernia foey! I said I was a little bit out of shape, not one foot in the grave," Indy grumbled, ever so slightly embarrassed by Maggie's matter of fact discussion of his intimate equipment. "Now stop making such a fuss, 'Mother' Goldsmith, and show me that frieze you were talking about. I'll be all right."

But in the end, he wasn't. A little past midnight, after an afternoon spent in cataloguing the numerous artifacts in the annex and a light evening meal which he was again curiously uninterested in eating, Indy was awakened from a fitful sleep by a sensation of deep malaise that could no longer be ignored. Kicking off his sweat-sodden sheets and pausing only to pull a shirt around his shoulders, he stumbled out of his tent into the tropical darkness. He got no more than a few yards before being violently sick into the nearest bush. There he stayed, helplessly doubled over, while his stomach emptied itself in a series of wracking spasms. When at last there was nothing left to bring up, he found himself drenched in sweat, trembling with weakness and listening to the incongruously peaceful chirping of the night insects.

He felt a hand on his shoulder and heard a familiar voice. "Indy?"

"Oh, god, Maggie--go away," he said, mortified that anyone should see him in such a condition.

"I'm okay."

"Well, pardon me for saying so, Indy, but you don't look okay. And you don't sound okay. You've been making enough noise to wake the dead. Have you been drinking the water?" she asked.

"Aw, c'mon, Maggie! YOU know I'm not that stupid. I probably just ate something at dinner that disagreed with me."

"Food poisoning? If that were the case, we'd all be sick. Pedro, is anyone else in the camp feeling ill?"

"No, Doctor Goldsmith." Indy heard Pedro's voice say from somewhere further back in the night.

Oh, great! he thought to himself. The whole camp was probably turned out to watch him throw up. Miserably, he curled his body into an even tighter ball and kept his face averted. The sweat that had broken out all over his body had turned icy. He began to shiver violently.

"Are you feeling cold?" Maggie asked.

"Yeah--freezing. I just want to go back to bed."

"Hmmm . . . you feel burning hot to the touch. You must have a fever."

Her voice took on a new note of concern. "Indy, I want you to turn around so I can check something out."

"Maggie, I can't. I . . . don't have anything but this shirt on."

Maggie made a disgusted sound. "This is no time to be prudish, Indiana Jones. I'm sure you have nothing to show me that I haven't seen a hundred times before. Besides, I'm old enough to be your mother!"

Her tone of voice brooked no argument. Meekly, grateful that the darkness would hide the color he felt rushing into his cheeks, Jones did as he was told. He was met with the sight of Maggie dressed in a rumpled denim jacket she had thrown on over her nightgown, her hair hanging down in two crooked braids. Behind her, Pedro held aloft a lantern.

Carefully, Maggie began to prod Jones's belly, moving in a clockwise direction downward from the navel. Her large-knuckled hands, wrinkled and calloused from years of handling a pickaxes were surprisingly gentle. Slowly, as she worked, she began to raise one eyebrow. "I'm afraid I've just discovered I'm not as old as I thought I was," she said with a sly deadpan face.

Jones was forced to laugh in spite of his embarrassment. "Dammit, Maggie, you're incorrigible--oh, Jesus!" His half-protest abruptly turned into a hiss between clenched teeth, as a white-hot shard of pain erupted in his lower abdomen just above the right leg in response to her probing. All trace of teasing drained from Margaret Goldsmith's face. "Pedro," she said, turning quickly to the head digger, "get the truck and make sure there's enough fuel in the tank. I'm going to have to get Doctor Jones to the hospital in Los Gatos as soon as possible. Hurry!"

Jones allowed Maggie to help him to his feet, and for the first time, he realized how truly bad he felt. Maggie's supporting arm beneath his elbow was the anchor that kept the world from spinning crazily around on him. All thought of modesty was forgotten now, as she assisted him in putting on his trousers and boots. It was the first time anyone had helped him dress since he was four years old. There was a flare of headlights through canvas and the roar of a motor as Pedro drove the Model A up and parked it in front of the tent. At the door, Indy, walking hunched over like an old man, said, "Stop. My hat."

"Your hat?" Maggie said in a tone that she might have used on a small boy who had forgotten his teddy bear.

"Yeah, my hat," Indy said, retrieving his fedora from its hanging place on the tent pole. "I bought it the day I was accepted into the University of Chicago. It's lucky."

"What do you need luck for?" Maggie said humoringly. "I'll be driving you myself."

"I rest my case," he said.

Maggie made a wry face, pretending to be insulted, but her act failed to disguise the worry in her eyes. Both of them knew the gravity of the situation, far from medical help and with time of the essence. In those days before the discovery of effective antibiotics, far too many families had lost a member to an appendix that had ruptured before a surgeon could intervene. The ensuing peritonitis was not an easy death, and Indy knew he would have need of all the luck his hat could give him before the night was through.

Later, Indiana Jones found that he could summon up no coherent memory of that long night. That, in itself, was a mercy, for the rough roads made the long journey into Los Gatos an ordeal for him. Very quickly, he became too exhausted and wretched even to curse as each new jolt of the truck sent waves of fiery agony coursing through his body. He lay back in his seat and stared upward at the tropical foliage as it whipped past, alternately concealing and exposing the bright yellow disc of the full moon overhead.

Snatches of poetry began to run through his head, disjointed lines from a book of the works of Rudyard Kipling his mother had given him for his tenth birthday. By the old Moulmein Pagoda, looking eastward to the sea, there's a Burmese girl a sitting and I know she thinks of me. Now what had brought those words to mind right now, of all times, he wondered, until the sight of palm fronds flashing past overhead answered his question for him. The next line: For the wind is in the palm tree and the temple bells they say, 'Come you back, you British soldier, come you back to Mandalay. Not the world's greatest poetry, surely, but Kipling's exotic imagery had sparked a young boy's imagination and fueled his appetite for adventure in faraway places. And the repetitious, almost doggerel rhythm made the poetry liable to stick in the mind. The words flowed on through his brain; he could not make them stop. On the road to Mandalay, where the flying fishes play, and the dawn comes up like thunder out of China 'cross the bay. There seemed to be a thundering in his head, too, but, oddly, the old rhyme helped to take his mind off the pain. And the truck bounced on through the night.

Sometime later, during a queer, half-waking dream about Elephants piling teak in the sludgy, squdgy creek, the quality of the jolting changed. The truck was travelling over cobblestones. Maggie jerked the truck to a stop and after a

time, Indy heard voices conversing hurriedly in Spanish. He felt himself being lifted out of the front seat and laid on a stretcher. Now, instead of branches passing overhead, he saw cracked plaster ceilings stained with watermarks and flyspecks. Maggie's face came briefly into view, looking frankly worried, and Indy smiled to notice that she was still wearing her nightgown hastily stuffed into the waistband of her pants. "The temple bells are calling," he told her dreamily, and a tear appeared in the corner of her eye. She thinks I'm delirious, he told himself, and she's right.

Then the stretcher passed under another doorway and Maggie was left behind. Arms reached out to transfer Indy onto a table, and he felt someone beginning to undo his trousers--a nursing Sister wearing a surgical mask--but by this time, he was beyond embarrassment. A heavy gauze cone was lowered onto his nose and mouth, and Jones smelled the sickish sweet odor of ether. His last conscious thought before everything went dark was the classic prayer of everyone going under the knife: Oh, God--I hope they don't start cutting before I'm completely out . . .

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It seemed he had closed his eyes but briefly. When he opened them again, the room swam drunkenly for a moment; then his gaze fixed on a nut brown face surrounded by a wilted white wimple--a nun, either the nursing sister from the operating room or another one, he couldn't tell. He remembered and moved his right leg experimentally. The resulting sensation of pain and pressure made him decide not to repeat the experiment for awhile. So Maggie had been right.

The Sister murmured something in Spanish and disappeared, to be quickly replaced by Maggie. She was smiling, and her hair looked a little tidier than it had the night before. "Hello, Indy. Back among the living, I see."

Indy swallowed and licked his lips. Even so, his first words came out in a weak croak. "How did it go?"

"We got you here in time--just in time," Maggie said. "The doctor said your appendix was this close to bursting." She held up her circled thumb and forefinger, almost touching. "You're a lucky man, Indiana Jones."

"Luck my . . . foot," Indy muttered ungraciously. "If I were really lucky, I'd've waited till I got back to the States before I got appendicitis so I could be sick in comfort. Or better yet--I wouldn't have gotten sick at all."

"Hmmm--I can see you're already feeling well enough to be grumpy, so I won't ask you about that," Maggie said in a humoring tone. "For your information, the doctor says I can move you out of here and into a hotel in another three days. You should be more comfortable there."

"Isn't that a little early to be releasing me?" Jones asked.

"If it were a hospital in the States, yes," Maggie answered. "But, frankly, they need your bed. The nuns do the best they can here, but most of the government support is going to the military hospitals. I can tend to you just as well in a hotel room."

A brief glance up and down the ward confirmed Maggie's statement. The patients, both male and female, lay on threadbare sheets, two to a bed in the case of the children. Somewhat chastened by the sight, Indy asked, "How long will I be laid up?"

"About two weeks of bed rest, and then you'll be able to get back to work providing you avoid anything strenuous."

Jones sighed. "Aw, hell, Maggie--I'm sorry. I'm supposed to be helping you with the dig, and instead you miss two weeks of work taking care of me. Some assistant I turned out to be!"

Maggie shrugged. "Not the way things have turned out, actually. The news came in last night while they were operating on you. General Guerrero's rebel troops have moved into the area near the site, and the government troops have gone in after them. Until it's over, the government has closed the roads in and out of the province. So it's a fortunate thing you took sick--or else we might have found ourselves in the midst of the fighting."

Painfully, Indy hoisted himself up onto one elbow. "What about our people at the dig site? Will they be all right?"

Maggie shook her head. "There's nothing at the site that should be of any interest to either side. And I trust Pedro to handle anything that arises. After ten years of working with me, he can practically keep the dig going without me."

But Jones could see from the troubled look on her face that she was just as worried as he was.

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In the end, it was three weeks before the authorities lifted the ban on travel and opened the road to the dig site. Indy, who had mended faster than even the doctors had predicted, and who had been driving Maggie Goldsmith crazy for the past ten days by pacing his hotel room like a caged leopard, peered anxiously out of the open truck as it neared the camp. When Maggie pulled to a stop in the main quadrangle and shut off the engine, they were met by an ominous silence.

The look of the camp had changed. Neat to begin with, it had taken on a disheveled appearance. There had been strange vehicles there, more than three of them, as evidenced by the various tread marks that crisscrossed the dust of the field, and horses, too. Hoof prints were present in great number, and there were droppings aplenty, already drying in the hot tropical sun. The blackened remains of campfires, several days cold, dotted the area, and garbage and broken liquor bottles were strewn about. Someone had been using them for target practice, Jones noted, but not, he observed dryly, without emptying them first. All of what he saw gave him a very bad feeling in the pit of his stomach.

Indy climbed down stiffly from the truck and stood staring silently at the mess. He barely noticed as Maggie came up beside him.

"My God--it looks like the Mongol Hordes just threw a fraternity party here," she said disgustedly. "I hope Pedro and the others had the sense to clear out before--"

As if in response to her statement, a head poked warily up from behind a large crate. "Pedro!" Maggie shouted, her voice bright with relief.

Recognizing the two Americans, Pedro sprang up from his hiding place, dropping a large piece of wood he had been clutching for self defense.

"Doctor Goldsmith--Doctor Jones! Thank the good God it is you! When I heard the sound of the engine, I was afraid they were coming back." He looked somewhat the worse for wear. One arm was held awkwardly close against his chest, and as he got nearer, Indy could make out darkening bruises on his face.

"They?" Maggie queried. "What happened here, Pedro?"

"Soldiers . . . they came here after the battle, three, no, four days ago. I tried to stop them..."

Filled with a sudden sense of foreboding, Indy took off towards the temple annex, moving as fast as the healing incision in his side would allow. Inside the doorway, he stopped short, and a soft sigh escaped him.

"Damn!" Maggie said from the doorway behind him, echoing his sentiments exactly.

The tiny room was a shambles, its contents strewn and smashed. The frieze which had so delighted Maggie was defaced with Spanish obscenities which had been scrawled onto the face of the stone in charcoal and paint

In one spot, it looked as if someone had taken a sledgehammer to the carving in an attempt to break through the wall itself.

"They were looking for gold," Pedro said. "'All those rich Norte Americano archaeologists dig for gold and jewels,' they kept saying to me. And when I told them it was not so, they went tearing through the camp looking for the treasure they were sure was there. And when they did not find it, they became angry and began to smash for the joy of it. It is like this all over the camp."

Maggie looked sadly at the wreckage of her work. "They've destroyed things far more precious than gold."

"I tried to stop them, Doctor Goldsmith. But they were so many, and I had sent the rest of the men away for safety."

"You did right, Pedro. And you mustn't blame yourself," Maggie said quickly, noting the look of distress on the head digger's face. "Human life is the most important thing of all. It's fortunate you weren't hurt any worse."

"Fortunate?" Pedro shook his head angrily. "I think not! Did you know, Doctor Goldsmith, that my father was a village school teacher? He gave me what education he could, but our family was too poor to send me to the university as I had wanted. So I cannot be a doctor or a lawyer, or even a man of letters to help my people--I can only work as a simple digger. But I am not ashamed, because the work is important. To help you to uncover evidence of a complex, ancient culture in these parts will give my countrymen pride and prove to the world that we are more than a nation of backward peasants and Indians. At least so I had hoped! But now look at what those . . . those barbarians have done!"

"Was it Guerrero's soldiers who did this?" Maggie asked wearily. Then, a more sinister thought struck her. "Or was it the government troops?"

Pedro let out a short, bitter laugh. "Does it truly matter, Doctor Goldsmith? Does it matter to the poor farmer which of the sides has stolen his chickens? Or shot his son? Together they have this country torn between them like two mongrel dogs fighting over a bone, and when they are finished, there will be nothing left for anyone else."

Indy listened to the exchange dully. A pile of reddish fragments in one corner of the room had caught his eye. Slowly, he approached and knelt, taking up a handful of shards. It was the little clay goddess figurine--or rather what was left of her--broken into a thousand pieces after being hurled carelessly aside by some soldier in search of nonexistent jewels and treasure. The little statue was beyond any possibility of repair. The only recognizable fragment was the piece that had formed the wonderfully unique face, with its enigmatic grimace-smile. It gazed up mockingly from Indy's palm. Even as he watched, the unbaked clay crumbled back into dust and slid through his fingers. Jones's mouth hardened, and he bit back a curse at the inexpressible waste of it.

Would it have been so very awful, he asked himself? Would it have been so very terrible if he had broken the rules of archaeology three weeks earlier by putting the little goddess into his pocket and taking her back to his tent? If he had, she would be safe there now, not lying in a thousand pieces on the temple floor. The chain of archaeological evidence might have been broken by removing the figurine from the temple, destroying some of its value, but at least the statue would have remained in existence as a work of art. A priceless, unique work of art.

Jones could not help remembering his earlier self-righteous statement to Marcus: "Two wrongs don't make a right." Well, in this instance, a right and a wrong had added up to precisely nothing.

"I'm sorry," he whispered to the pitiful pile of dust at his feet. Next time, he wouldn't be quite so rigid. Next time . . .

"There's the enemy for you, Indy."

Maggie's voice, coming from over his shoulder, startled him, and he jumped.

"The enemy," Maggie explained. "It isn't time or wind or water--or all the other forces of decay, although they do play their part. The main enemy in our field is ignorance--and plain old human greed."

"Dammit, Maggie. If it hadn't been for my getting sick, we would have been here."

"And then what?" A wicked light flared in Margaret Goldsmith's eyes. "Frankly, Indy, if I had seen those bastards looting my dig, I would have been tempted to kick a few butts myself. And then we would have ended up bruised like Pedro. Or worse. No, Indy, you can't win them all."

"So what do we do now?"

"Me?" Maggie asked. "I guess I keep on going the way I have been. I may ask the government for a few guards. Although I'm not sure I entirely trust the government at this point either. As for you--I think of all the undiscovered sites all over this planet. All the precious heritage that may be lost. We just don't have the manpower to get it out of the ground in any sort of scientific way right now. I'm glad you've gone into teaching. The more archaeologists we train, the more we'll save."

"And until then?" Indy asked.

Maggie shrugged. "As I said, you can't win them all. In the meantime, you can help me clean up this mess."

Indy nodded and rose to follow Maggie out of the annex. She was right, you couldn't win them all. But you could win some. If anyone was going to rob graves, so to speak, it could be someone who did it with an eye to artistic value, rather than just the mere monetary. One wouldn't have to sink to Belloq's level, of course . . .

"Indy? Are you coming? Sometimes I think I've lost you," Maggie called.

"No, Maggie, I'm not lost." Indy followed her out into the daylight, but already his mind was far away in the future, looking forward to the next summer. Honduras, China, maybe even Madagascar. So much to be done.

End

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