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WEIRD TALES ISSUED 1st OF EACH MONTH

Drums of the Congo

By KATHERINE VAN DER VEER

A freighter'll soon be sailing to the shores of Zanzibar,
 To isles of pungent spices where pearls and sapphires are.
 Beyond the seas are coco-palms and frangipani flowers,
 Red temples swing their golden bells to measure out the hours—
 But breaking through these reveries an ancient rhythm comes,
 I can hear the urgent throbbing of the Congo drums.

BOM-M-M, bom-m-m, while the jungle holds its breath,
 BOM-M-M, bom-m-m, they call to war or death,
 Beating, beating, on the hollowed wood,
 Ghost-drums summon a ritual of blood.

The fishing-schooner Abigail goes out of port today,
 To plow her long green furrow in a lonely arctic bay,
 Where seals can bask on icebergs, and wind blows through the spars
 On men in shining oil-skins beneath the frosty stars.
 But louder than the gull's cry, overhead and under,
 Piercing through the shaking sky with a voice of thunder:

BOM-M-M, bom-m-m, calling war or death,
 BOM-M-M, bom-m-m, till the jungle holds its breath,
 From the sounding-board of Africa insistent rhythm comes,
 The unforgotten throbbing of the Congo drums.