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## Contents of Summer Issue, 1932

Cover Design	M. Brundage
The Dragoman's Confession	Otis Adelbert Kline 292
<i>Mosul—Hamed the Dragoman falls in love with a Chinese princess, and has a surprising adventure</i>	
Pirate Whelp	Warren Hastings Miller 322
<i>Malaya—a complete novel about a great sea battle, and the beautiful wanton who ruled the native state of Kota Sembilan</i>	
The Twisted Three	S. B. H. Hurst 358
<i>Burma—a complete novelette about Bugs Sinnat, the Tooth of Buddha, and two mysterious murders</i>	
The Further Adventures of Ali Baba	Allan Govan 386
<i>Bagdad—what happened after the death of the forty thieves</i>	
The Bend in the Road	James W. Bennett 395
<i>Shanghai—a strange tale of rickshaw racing</i>	
The Black Adder	Dorothy Quick 405
<i>India—a dancing-girl tries to thwart the rajah's burning passion</i>	
The Hidden Monster	David H. Keller 412
<i>Chinatown—an Oriental story transplanted to America</i>	
A Battle Over the Tea-Cups	August W. Derleth 417
<i>Manchuria—guile fights guile as two Chinese generals meet</i>	
Jungle Twilight	Clark Ashton Smith 420
<i>Verse</i>	
Cobra Teeth	M. Small 421
<i>Shanghai—a strange story of double-dealing, blackmail and murder</i>	
The Souk	425
<i>A chat with the readers</i>	
The Snare	Arreph El-Khoury 430
<i>Arabia—a pilgrim returns from Mecca to find he has been mulcted of his money</i>	

# The Twisted Three

By S. B. H. HURST

*A story of Burma, two mysterious murders, and the theft of the sacred Tooth of Buddha—a tale of Bugs Sinnat of the Secret Service*

IT CAME floating down the Rangoon River.

Through the centuries strange things, many of them, and wonderful things have floated past Rangoon and the old Burmese village that stood there before the British made their capital there, but never such a ghastly jest as this. A murdered white man who had been stabbed through the heart, sitting bolt upright in a chair fastened in one of the small boats called *sanpans*. In the dead man's mouth a big cigar at an angle; on his head a black "top" hat, and in his hands a large brass crucifix! Floating down the river, and seen by the police and horrified spectators on the steamers as the morning mists were lifting from the

water and the *paddy* fields, and the sun was rising in a swift flame. . . .

Two hours later Horace Sinnat, of the secret service, known to his intimates as "Bugs," sat in the office of his friend Williams, the superintendent of police. Immediately upon the discovery of the dead man in the *sanpan* Williams had talked to Bugs on the long distance phone, and Bugs had come from the ancient city of Pegu in a fast plane. . . .

"I knew the case would interest you," Williams was saying. "It's so damned weird!"

"Any clues at all, Yank?" asked Bugs. "You would think there ought to be a million," answered Williams, "what with all that theatrical set-up, but there is only



*"Tied to a chair and wearing a top hat, the corpse came floating down the Rangoon River."*

one that is definite. That is the *sanpan*. The license number of the *sanpan*, X.X.0034, which tells us that the *sanpan* was owned by one Sin-byu. My men are looking for him. His address was, of course, his *sanpan*. He lived on it, and slept on it; cooked his rice and ate his *napi* in its tiny cabin, as all these *sanpan wallers* do. I have sent out a net of men to get this Sin-byu, and find out all about him and his associates. The top hat tells us nothing, except that it was made in London; the crucifix is one of thousands

that you can pick up all over the country —issuing from Catholic missionaries. . . . Doctor Sims says the man was killed with one thrust of a very thin blade, sort of stiletto, from in front. His identity is unknown to us."

"Whoever did it," said Bugs thoughtfully, "must be very sure of himself—must feel safe, not afraid of being found out. Otherwise he would not have gone to all the time and trouble, and taken the risk of that weird set-up in the boat. The *why* of that weird set-up probably

holds the secret—if we could figure out *wby* the corpse was sent down the river dressed up like that we might begin to get somewhere. Body was quite naked, eh?"

"Except for the top hat," answered Williams. "He was wired to the chair—native, bamboo chair! . . . Ah—here comes the sergeant!"

A sergeant of white police came into the office.

"Find Sin-byu?" asked Williams quickly.

"Yes, sir," replied the sergeant gravely. "Found his dead body!"

"Where?"

"Found it under the piles of an old wharf, well up-river, sir! Other *sanpan wallers* identified it. One of the Sikh police found it. And Sin-byu was killed the same way as the white man in the boat. Stabbed through the heart."

"Dead long?" asked Bugs.

"Several hours, sir," answered the sergeant. "The assistant surgeon says the man was killed, probably, about midnight."

"Same time as the white man," said Bugs. "Murderer killed both of them about the same time. His killing of Sin-byu was because he wanted the boat—a commonplace killing that will not tell us much. . . . All right, Yank, I'll take the case—but let your men do all they can. This looks more than queer—it's involved!"

IT DID not take Bugs long to change his identity. In less than an hour he became to all who saw him one of those powerfully built Burmese who catch their own fish, prepare and peddle it. Bugs was hawking *napi* (which is a dried fish of the utmost pungency) through narrow streets. He was dressed in a stained *sarong*, and his voice echoed disturbingly wherever he went. Such a Burmese can

go anywhere without question, and the well-known toughness of the *napi* men is a protection.

As he yelled fish he did a lot of thinking—about the *wby* of the ghastly travesy of the sacredness of death. Surely, only a maniac could so act upon a dead man! That crucifix—did that indicate a religious maniac of another creed, a creed that hated Christianity? The cigar, cunningly fastened in the dead man's mouth! The old London "topper." Truly the strangest thing that had ever come to this secret service man of strange adventures was this murder. . . .

Thinking, he had progressed through the narrow streets of old wooden native dwellings—huts, shacks, and here and there an old and unpainted two-story building. He pushed through the crowds, and shouted his tale of fish. And now he had reached the wharf where the body had been found—the body of Sin-byu. There was no curious crowd—death is a small matter in Burma, and a *sanpan waller* who has no family arouses small grief. Besides, it was very hot and the old wharf lacked shade. But a big, bearded Sikh policeman stalked about, his spotless turban glistening in the sunlight. . . .

"*Napi! Napi!*"

Bugs walked on the wharf. The policeman, whom Bugs knew well, sniffed in disgust—for only a Burmese can eat *napi*—but Bugs approached him as if expecting to make a sale.

"*Napi! Napi!*"

The policeman turned on his heel and walked away, but Bugs followed him, crying his wares. Then did the Sikh turn and say things which in the Punjab are considered most impolite.

"But, Ruttan Singh!" exclaimed Bugs in the same dialect.

The mouth of the policeman opened. Then he grinned and saluted.

"Don't salute me!" said Bugs. "When did Ruttan Singh go *puggly*?"

"*Sahib! Sabib!* You will yet be the death of me. Only by your voice and the manner in which you speak did I know you! So surprised was I, although I ought to know, that I for a moment did become *puggly*—forgot myself—and saluted. . . . What is the order, *sahib*? Please do not command me to buy any of that damnable fish!"

"You will arrest me, Ruttan Singh!" said Bugs.

"*Sahib?*"

"Yes, arrest me—it does not matter for what. Then we will have a scuffle, and you will fall and dirty your uniform on this filthy wharf, and I will escape from you. You may pretend to pursue, but you will go the wrong way!"

"*Atcha, sahib!*"

"I am going to be very rude," said Bugs.

Bugs became very rude. His voice shrilled and rumbled by turns, as he said things in the toneful Burmese tongue which no policeman—if he understood—would stand for. Then, when the Sikh grabbed him, they wrestled.

"Not too much," whispered Bugs. "It's *bot garam!*"

"Hot as Jehanum," grinned the Sikh. "Now, run, *sahib*!"

Bugs ducked and began to run, as the jubilant crowd gathered from everywhere—every sort of native of India, China, and Burma, with a few tattered malion whites. The big Sikh had slipped to his knees. The crowd enjoyed this. Bugs ran through a lane the crowd made for him, and it closed like a wave that has been broken as he got through—making a wall through which the Sikh had to push his way. No man molested the policeman, but by the time he got past the crowd Bugs was nowhere in sight. He was well hidden in a Burmese drinking-shop, where

the one-eyed proprietor welcomed him as one who hated Sikhs and all police, and truly had a reason to, as Bugs knew. For that one-eyed man, huge and fat, was not merely a dispenser of bad liquor. He had served several short terms in jail. He was a receiver of stolen goods, but the government had never succeeded in convicting him for anything more than disorderly conduct—which meant anything.

"Hide me!" Bugs panted as he rushed into the den.

"What have you done, *napi*?" asked the huge Burmese, peering at Bugs through his one, sinister eye.

"I tried to kill that Sikh, but failed. Yet will they give me six months, eh?"

"More than that for attempted murder, if they can prove it! Come this way."

**T**HE big man led the way hurriedly. For so large a man he was very fast on his feet, for he had one time followed the decent occupation of a professional wrestler.

"With my fish-knife I tried to cut out his stomach!" panted Bugs as he followed. "But he managed to grip my wrist, and the knife did fall on the wharf. Then I had to trip him and run, for he was about to blow his whistle and summon a regiment of Sikhs. He picked up my knife!"

Which was true. And Ruttan Singh was now telling another Sikh of this attempt to stab him, and artistically leading the other Sikh in the opposite direction from where Bugs had gone. . . .

"Why did you try to kill him?" asked the big man as he opened a door in the floor, and led Bugs down some steps.

"Nothing much," said Bugs gruffly. "It is my business—I mean, I feel that way sometimes. Feel that I must kill a man or go mad. And that big Sikh looked so nice and white that I wanted to see how the blood of him would look running down his white uniform. I get that way

—must kill. Just as one feels he must love!"

"You were seen by many?"

"No," said Bugs. "No witness to the knife, except that it is there in the hand of the Sikh. He was fast and knocked it out of my hand before any man—hearing our voices—came to look!"

"You need practise," sneered the big man. "This way!"

He had opened another door, a door no one not knowing it was there could have found in that dark cellar. And now he led the way down a tunnel in the earth—a tunnel of creeping things, centipedes, and worse.

"Why did you come, so trusting, to me for help?" growled the big man.

"This place was the first place I saw as I ran. I don't like it much!"

And Bugs allowed his voice to tremble somewhat, and he slowed up and hung back as if afraid to follow the big man much farther.

"You fellows are all alike," sneered the big man. "You run amuck now and then, and then, when the passion to kill leaves you, you are a lot of cowards, afraid of the dark! Come on! I have harbored you, and if you go back the police will know it—and you are not worth getting into trouble for! I am now sorry I helped you—coward! But you will pay me—in obedience! Or you will be sorry!"

"Where do you take me?"

And now the voice of Bugs was the voice of a badly scared man, reacting in terror, as all men who run amuck in the East do, from the blind passion to kill after it subsides.

"To where you may hide," the sinister voice answered. "Where you can hide until the Sikh forgets—or I need your services!"

"I obey," stammered Bugs.

He knew thoroughly that unpleasant neighborhood near the old wharf, but a

careful search through police records had revealed only one place in which lived any one who had served a term. Others arrested in that neighborhood and sent to jail had been transients. But the big man had lived there for years, taking his incarcerations as a matter of course—apparently—and always with a clever lawyer to plead for him. A *babu* lawyer, a native of the Deccan. This entire adventure might, probably would, lead to no solution of the mystery of the man in the top hat, but it was the only way of approach Bugs could think of. . . .

THE big man led Bugs into a stuffy cave—dug into the earth many years before, by its looks. He had lighted a small lantern. There was some ventilation, but Bugs could not see where it came from.

"You will wait here—food will be brought to you—until I need you!" said the big man.

"I do not like waiting in the dark," exclaimed Bugs.

The big man laughed.

"So I will not wait! Besides, I have business needing my attention," went on Bugs.

"You will do—" the big man began but stopped suddenly.

"Sit down—on the floor!" snapped Bugs.

So quickly had he pulled his revolver from under his *sarong* that the one-eyed man had not seen the motion.

"Sit down," said Bugs. "I want to talk to you."

The big man obeyed. He was watching Bugs like a leopard waiting a chance to spring.

"Better not try it," drawled Bugs. "I practise with this gun by shooting the heads off snakes—and your head is bigger!"

The big man glared balefully.

"I wanted the conversation to be private," went on Bugs, "or I would have talked to you upstairs. I had nothing to arrest you for—so I let you 'hide' me."

"You a Burmese policeman?" asked the big man.

"Probably," said Bugs. "But one who does not accept bribes!"

He was thinking, "Third degree stuff is hardly ethical, but needs must when the devil drives!" Aloud he continued, "You will be so very polite as to tell me what you know about the killing of an unknown white man, who he was, and, also, something concerning a dead *sanpan wallee* in whose boat the dead white man drifted down the river. Don't pretend you don't know, because all Rangoon knows this thing has happened!"

"I know nothing!" snarled the big man.

"So!" drawled Bugs. "Then I will allow you to stay here until you remember! Food *may* be sent to you! I myself will visit you at times. Unless you lied, or bragged, you can never get out of here. When you unlocked both those doors I noticed what fine American locks they had—and that they were made of iron, covered cunningly with teak! And you said that there was only one key for each door! And that you had the keys with you always! You bragged overmuch. . . . I will take those keys. . . . You were alone upstairs when I came in—no one will know where you are. It's dark and lonely down here—you had better remember about the murders, and tell me so that I can take you to prison, where you will be more comfortable!"

The big man laughed sarcastically.

"What you threaten to do is not legal," he said.

"Of course not," agreed Bugs, smiling. "That's why I do it! No doubt you would like me to summon your clever *babu* lawyer."

The big man shrugged, but Bugs saw that he was tensed for a spring. Suddenly the big man laughed again. He tried an old trick.

"Your gun is not loaded!" he said.

Bugs laughed, but he did not take his eye off the big man or look at his gun. Instead he kept it pointed at the big man's head.

"I wonder how many other ignorant but rough men you have brought down here—and used later!" he said quietly. "For of course after you showed a man this hide-out of yours you would never give him a chance to tell any one else about it! Try and sleep, for I am going to leave you."

He backed toward the door, went through it and ostentatiously locked it. He went along the passage and made a lot of noise locking the other door. Then he very quietly came back. The locks, well oiled, made slight noise as he returned. Very quickly he opened the door to the cave again—just in time to see the big man slip through a cleverly concealed panel which looked like nothing but the earth of the cave wall. Bugs followed—down another tunnel. The big man ran and stumbled along another narrow passage.

Bugs did not fire. He did not wish to hurt, or arrest, the big man. And he made no effort to catch him. He saw the big man disappear in the sunlight that streamed into the tunnel when he flung open a door that opened just above the river. And he heard the big man plunge into the stream, and swim away frantically among the piles of the old wharf. Then Bugs turned back.

**H**E WENT back to the drink shop, his gun still in his hand, and now it held several men, all shouting for the proprietor, wanting drinks. They stared at Bugs, but he took no notice of them.

In the street he saw Ruttan Singh and another Sikh. He beckoned to them.

"Here are keys, Ruttan Singh. Explore the place below. Then station two men down there day and night. Arrest any man who comes. But, first, close tightly the door you will find that opens onto the river."

Ruttan Singh saluted now without comment from Bugs.

Half an hour later, Bugs, still a Burmese in appearance, was driving a big, powerful but apparently decrepit car along the ancient road that leads to the old capital of Burma, Pegu, forty odd miles from Rangoon. From Williams he had learned that so far the murdered white man had not been identified.

"The one-eyed man did not kill him," mused Bugs, as he dodged a sacred Hindoo cow on the high road. "If this goes on there will be more Hindoos than Burmese in this country! . . . No, and neither did he kill the *sanpan waller*. But he may know who did it. I will have him watched—it's the only line I have as yet. That elaborate tunnel of his is fairly harmless, although he may have put a dozen of his hirelings out of the way. A good deal of illicit merchandise—that's what the cave and tunnel are for. But my little men will find out something!"

He had entered the old city that sits under the shade of the great Schwe-madaw pagoda, and he had driven his car to the very poorest quarter, just south of the abandoned Buddhist burial-ground. There, in a mean street of huts, he stopped the car. He got out and entered the shack nearest the cemetery. He suddenly stood still.

"Ah!" he said aloud. "Now I know why the one-eyed man took me down below. It did not seem reasonable that he should admit a stranger who was running from the police into his hiding-place! That puzzled me! At any other

time the one-eyed man would have told me to go to hell and do my own hiding. He wants a man he can use, a man wanted by the police! That *babu* lawyer will be interesting!"

He entered the shack. Eleven little men of the jungle rose as one from their mats and ran to greet him joyfully. Again Bugs paused, and they waited respectfully, none speaking.

"That voyage down the river. The murdered man may have been dead six hours, as the doctor says, but he only began his voyage half an hour or so before sunrise—otherwise he would have been farther down the river—where he was meant to be. Somebody blundered!" Aloud he spoke to the eleven little men. "Greetings, my children, I have a task for you."

"*Sabib! Sabib!* We thrill toward the hunting!" said the leader of the little men of the jungle—who was known as the Snake Man, because he loved and worshipped the reptiles.

"As always!" exclaimed Bugs affectionately.

For these little, illiterate men had worked for him for years, and many of his most spectacular successes had been due to their working. They could go anywhere and remember all they saw; and they would die for Bugs cheerfully. One of them, the Dog Man, had given his life for the secret service man some years before. . . .

"We take a ride together," said Bugs, "and while we ride to Rangoon I will tell you of your quest. Pile into this big car I have outside."

THEY piled in like eleven children, chattering happily about the joy of the ride they were about to take. Bugs started the car. He drove toward an opening in the ancient city wall—which is forty feet thick—through this and into

the glaring open country. Then he spoke to the little men and their chatter ceased. He told them about the murders, of the old wharf where the *sanpan waller*'s body had been found, and he accurately described the big man with one eye. . . .

"You will find him and watch him and watch all with whom he talks," he said. "And the Snake Man will take your reports concerning this watching, and he will report to me at the place appointed—at the time of the evening meal daily. But if anything that seems to be more important than the watching takes place, then will he come to me at once!"

So they reached Rangoon. The little men scattered to their task. Bugs ran the car into the police garage, and went to see Williams again.

"Ah," said Williams, "you got back just in time—the dead white man has been identified."

"Good," said Bugs. "Who and what is he?"

"He has been in and out of Rangoon for some months," said the police superintendent. "Lives, when in the city, at that small, cheap hotel called The Oxford—you know the place. He registered as James Briggs, from New York, U. S. A. Nobody knows his business. He said he was just a tourist. No letters or other means of identification found in his trunk—I went through it myself. Seems to me that he was just one of those wandering white men who live on their wits. If he was a *pukka* tourist he would never have lived in that hotel—as you know. His entire lack of identification other than the name he gave the hotel people seems to indicate a lack of entire respectability—but I may be wrong there. However, I have not cabled New York—not yet!"

Bugs nodded.

"Yank," he said, for Williams was American born, "I believe that you will

find the clothing of Briggs somewhere in the river not far downstream from the wharf where the body of the *sanpan waller* was found. Drag for it, will you? The stiletto may be with the clothes! Of course the stuff may have drifted, but I don't think so—it has not had time. You see, I am convinced that the body of the *sanpan waller* and the clothes of Briggs were weighted and sunk near the wharf—all fastened together, clothes and *sanpan waller*. Somebody blundered, working hastily, and the body of the *sanpan waller* got away from the bundle of clothes and the stones, or what not, supposed to hold it down. The murderer was not such a fool as to trust the river—he tried to help it! But that wharf is just at the part of the Upper Bend where a swirl of water comes down—just below that branch of the Irrawaddy which meets the Rangoon river. And the river, instead of hiding the body of the *sanpan waller* for ever, washed it clear of the weights and among the piles of the wharf!"

The telephone on Williams' desk shrilled. He took the receiver off the hook.

"Yes! Who? The governor's secretary! . . . Very well, connect us, please!"

He turned to Bugs. "It's the governor! What can have happened? Must be mercy hell when Lord Cameron phones me like this!"

Bugs stared, as puzzled at this unexpected call as was Williams.

"Yes, my lord!" Williams was speaking into the phone again. "What? Good grief! . . . What, sir? . . . Find Bugs! He is here! . . . Yes, my lord!"

Williams handed the receiver to Bugs. "This is certainly the limit," he said as he did so.

"Bugs?" said the governor.

"*Pickhead*," answered Bugs, giving the code word arranged between them—

which was the nickname given by the secret service man to Cameron when they went to school together, when Cameron invented the nickname *Bugs* for his friend.

"The tooth of Buddha has been stolen!" said the governor, so gravely that he seemed to groan.

"My God!" exclaimed Bugs. "But it does not seem possible!"

The tooth of Buddha, worth infinitely more than all the rubies Burma ever produced! *The tooth of Buddha—stolen!* As Bugs said, it did not seem possible....

"Great Scot, Pickhead! But it seems as impossible—as impossible as stealing a lone cub from a tigress!"

"I want you to drop the case you are now working on, and go on this tooth mystery!" the governor of Burma was saying. "For heaven's sake go to the Inner Monastery, and talk to the Abbot—he is about out of his mind!"

"The mind of the Abbot is a mere detail," replied Bugs, very gravely. "I need hardly mention what this will mean, old man—with the mind of the people bent upon revolution, and seeking an excuse!"

"Please go to the monastery, Bugs," said the governor. "What's a murder more or less when compared to this thing?"

"I'll be there in thirty minutes—soon as I can shave and dress," said Bugs. "Hands off as far as the police are concerned, eh?"

"Of course," replied the governor. "Sikhs and Christians would not be admitted to a Buddhist Holy of Holies—you go as the representative of the government of India—and you have your own clever way of getting anywhere you want to go! Keep me posted, old man!"

And the governor hung up.

"It can't be a bluff on the part of the Buddhists—something to stir up relig-

ious emotion in the country and so weld the people into one real hot rage against the British government?" asked Williams.

"Not with that Abbot: he's as honest as the Bishop of London!" answered Bugs. "I must hurry and look into it. . . . In the meanwhile, carry on, will you?—about the dragging for the clothing of Briggs. My little men will advise me of any other happenings!"

Bugs, now well dressed and a white man again, drove in a big car with a liveried driver, to the central Buddhist monastery of Rangoon, through streets which are a mixture of East and West in the styles of their buildings—a mixing of the very old and the new. A large office building, steel and concrete, stared across at the blackened teak monastery which had been built when the ancestors of the men who built the office building were painted savages. Into the courtyard Bugs had the driver take him, past the curious little school where a monk was teaching Burmese children, as the monks have done freely for two thousand years.

As the personal representative of the governor of Burma Bugs was admitted to the old Abbot.

A lined and wrinkled brown face that had much of the benign expression of the Buddha, hands that trembled and a body that rested frailly in its "throne"—and a voice that pleaded with Bugs, as if the representative of the government could do anything he wished to do.

"This disgrace to me, after two thousand years! That most precious thing in all the world—a tooth of the Blessed One. And stolen away. Oh, man, please find it for me. But not to punish the thief, but to restore that lost glory to this, my monastery!"

Bugs bowed gravely to the pathetic old man.

"Will your graciousness please give or-

ders that I may be taken to the violated shrine?" he said.

"You will find *it*!" the old man exclaimed.

"The governor has ordered that everything in the power of the government shall be used in the search," answered Bugs.

The old man sighed gratefully. He turned to one of the monks about his throne—a big man, a man from the hills of the Shan States, as Bugs deduced.

"Conduct this excellent man to the violated shrine," said the Abbot. "See that all honor is done to him, and that every opportunity for investigation is afforded."

The big Shan bowed and courteously indicated the way to Bugs.

How old that winding passage smelled! Black with age, and with an eery rustling which, while it was but the eternal draft blowing through the ancient place, seemed to be the whispers of two thousand years of dead and forgotten monks.

Then the shrine. The sanctuary. A room of heavy wood, always freshly gilded. The mighty teak table on which the tooth, in its gold case, had rested. A gold case no longer there. An empty table. Five devotees kneeling there. Not monks, but Buddhists from outside the monastery.

The big Shan pointed eloquently to the empty table. The devotees, heads bowed to the floor, squinted up curiously.

"There was a guard?" asked Bugs.

"There was, and is always a guard," replied the Shan. "See!"

He showed Bugs a recess, across the face of which was a wooden grille. Going close to this—the light was very dim—Bugs saw the face of a monk peering through the grille. The guard of the shrine. . . .

"What light was here?" asked Bugs.

"Just the sacred lamp," said the Shan.

He pointed to a very small gold lamp suspended from the low ceiling. It was burning—it was always burning.

"The light is of course always dim in here?" said Bugs.

"The place is far too sacred for glare or noise!" answered the Shan reproachfully.

"Exactly!" agreed Bugs. "And now show me how the thief got in."

UNTIL this moment Bugs had imagined that the theft was an inside job—although the horrible sacrilege of such an act, since an inside thief would be a monk, had seemed to bar that opinion. The tooth had been stolen after the shrine was closed to all but the monks—after sunset the previous evening. But when the big Shan bowed and began to lead Bugs along another passage—to where the burglar had entered—the idea of an inside job seemed even more far-fetched.

Entry had been effected, apparently, by a very remarkable workman. On the outer wall of the monastery compound there was no sign. A rope or something like that must have been used to scale the compound wall. This indicated two or more men. Then a hole had been cut with a fine saw in that part of the monastery nearest the shrine—in the wall of the passage. The solid teak must have made the cutting a long task. A rough hole through which a man of average size could crawl. Bugs examined it very carefully. His own wide shoulders were too big for the hole. He stood in the passage in deep thought, while the Shan, respectfully silent, stood by his side. Through the hole came the noises of Rangoon—a symphony of strangeness. And also, vague and alluring, the smell of the early cooking-fires for the evening meal. . . .

"I wish to see him who was on guard

last night!" said Bugs, turning away from the hole in the old wall.

The Shan bowed again.

"We have our methods of correction," he said. "But for the benign influence of the Lord Buddha the punishment for such a person as this monk, who slept when on guard duty, would be death! But so far, beyond solitary confinement, the Abbot has not decided what punishment, other than death which is not permitted, this sin merits. . . . This way, please."

The place had been dug out of the ground—ages ago. This dungeon of the monastery, dark, foul, damp. It was so small that it reminded Bugs of the "Little Ease" in the Tower of London. It was most like a grave—without the peace of death to its unhappy occupant!

"He waits there," said the Shan, "for what pain befalls, and for what his next incarnation 'rewards' him with. It is likely that he will be a crawling worm when he is born again!"

The unfortunate monk—a young man—fairly grovelled in the pit.

"Please stand up," said Bugs quietly. And, as the poor fellow obeyed, Bugs turned to the Shan and said, "Will you kindly get me some sort of a light? It is needful that I examine this man carefully."

The Shan bowed and went to get a lamp. Bugs seized the prisoner by the shoulder.

"I won't hurt you," he whispered gently.

The Shan was out of sight. Bugs released the shivering monk.

"Tell me quickly—how much opium do you use every day?" said Bugs.

"None, your honor," whimpered the young monk.

"I thought so," muttered Bugs, in English, which the monk did not understand. Then, in Burmese, "Yet, you slept last

night, and while you slept thieves came and stole the tooth of the Blessed One. . . . Why did you sleep when on guard of the most precious thing in Burma?"

"I . . . I don't know . . . I can not understand why, my lord," whimpered the monk, upon whom the greatest tragedy in Burmese Buddhist history was blamed.

"I thought so," Bugs again muttered in English.

"My lord!" trembled the monk.

"Never mind," said Bugs gently. "Keep a stout heart, and do not allow your conscience to trouble you overmuch. Remember that the mother and the father of Conscience is *Fear*. . . . I hear the Shan returning!"

The big monk was bringing the lamp Bugs had requested. Bugs took it with thanks. And then he stood and surveyed the prisoner.

"Enough!" he said sternly.

He returned the lamp to the Shan.

"Let us leave this shivering wretch who forgot his duty," he said. "He can not help us, for he slept—he did sleep when he should have watched! . . . Let us, for a moment, return to the shrine—after that I must leave you and report to the governor."

The always courteous Shan bowed again. He seemed amused and puzzled by the actions of the secret service man—as if he were courteously endeavoring to admire all that Bugs did. . . .

**B**ACK at the shrine, Bugs again examined the grille of the guard-box. He walked to the door and listened to what noise came in from the city through the unhealed opening in the wall of the passage. The devotees were rising from their prayers and preparing to leave the monastery. Bugs watched them casually. Suddenly he tensed, but the attendant Shan saw no sign of this tensing.

"I thank you very much," Bugs was

saying. "And now I must leave you and make my report. I will not again intrude my presence upon the good Lord Abbot."

He followed the devotees to the courtyard, toward the gate. He beckoned the driver of his car, and bowed farewell to the Shan monk. Then he walked rather swiftly to the gate. . . .

Across the road the ever faithful Snake Man was standing idly. He always knew where Bugs was to be found. Evidently he had some news for the secret service man. But Bugs had something more important than any news. He made certain signs to the little Snake Man—much as a catcher makes his signals to the pitcher—and the Snake Man scratched his left ear, and—followed one of the devotees who had just left the shrine. It was the Snake Man's job never to allow the devotee out of his sight—so had Bugs signalled. An old and wasted man, this devotee. Thin, with a strange face. Not a Burmese, but a native of the Peninsular, of India proper. It was his face that had brought the tension to Bugs. A very interesting face—if found in a Buddhist monastery. For Bugs had seen—very faint it was, as faint as the man's religious feelings would allow—Bugs had seen between the eyes, just above the nose of this old man's face—a *Hindoo caste mark!* . . . In a Buddhist monastery!

Some knowledge of India's religious prejudices may be necessary to understand fully the significance of this discovery—only possible to a keen observer with extraordinarily keen sight. The monks, suspecting nothing, had not noticed it. A Hindoo worshipping in a Buddhist shrine! . . . What did this mean? . . . It was one of the strangest—in many ways the strangest thing Bugs had ever seen during his long service. . . .

He got into his car. . . .

"The government building," he told the driver. The car left the monastery,

O. S.—6

into the quick twilight of a Burmese evening. The flying foxes now and then crossed a low moon. Of a sudden it was velvet dark, and much cooler—and all the scents of all the flowers and trees rose in gratitude to the coolness, while the stars came through the velvet of the sky like careless diamonds.

"Pickhead will be waiting for me," mused Bugs. "But, by the Lord, that caste mark on that old chap's forehead must mean something—something damned important. But the Snake Man will find out who he is and all it's possible for him to find out. I must at once get in touch with that anomalous old man. . . . I wonder how the weird murder case is working out! . . . Here we are!"

**H**E GOT out of the car and ran up the steps leading to Lord Cameron's private office. The secretary, who was just leaving for the night, said that the governor was waiting. Bugs went in.

"Any luck, Bugs?" asked the worried governor when they were alone.

"Lots!" said Bugs laconically.

"Ah!" exclaimed the governor. "Thank God for that! You know, of course, that fanatical Buddhists are saying, all over Burma, that Christian missionaries stole the tooth—as an insult to Buddhism!"

Bugs' face was grim.

"We are bound to have trouble in Burma—some time," he said gravely. "And it won't be any passive resistance, like Gandhi, either. . . . But it won't come—won't be brought to a head by the tooth of Buddha! I am still far from knowing who got the tooth—if, indeed, it has left the monastery. . . . No, no, the old Abbot knows nothing about it. . . . You know, Pickhead, I don't like to talk about a case, even to you, until the solution is in my hands—but this I will tell you. In the first place, the hole in the monastery

wall was sawed from the inside! And, in the second, I found a well-marked Hindoo praying in the Buddhist shrine!"

"Great Scot!" ejaculated the governor.

"That's all I know—as yet!—but it's a lot, as I said," went on Bugs. "And now, old man, I must go. For the next twenty-four hours or so look like busy ones for me. So long!"

He shook hands with the governor and returned to the office of Williams, the superintendent of police.

In Williams' office he found Williams, his assistant and a white police sergeant eagerly examining some wet clothing.

"You were right, as usual," beamed Williams. "Bugs, you're a wizard. See!"

He exhibited a shirt, coat and pants, on which there were blood stains the water of the river had not obliterated.

"Fastened to a large shackle," went on Williams, "with native coir rope. But see! The rope is broken on one of its loops—a loop just about the size of the circumference of Sin-byu's, the *sanpan* man's body!"

Bugs looked at the grisly things. The shackle was from the anchor cable of some big ship.

"Anything in the pockets?" he asked.

"Not a blasted thing," exclaimed Williams.

"Then this find won't help much," said Bugs. "It was obvious, when the *sanpan* waller's body was found, that these clothes would not be far away. No sign of the stiletto, of course?"

"No sign," said Williams.

"Well, I must go now—so long!" said Bugs. "That other case, you know, Yank!"

The American nodded, and Bugs left the police headquarters. He walked slowly to his room. He was very tired, and his brain felt worn out and useless. He had his servant bring him a whisky and soda and a sandwich. Then he lay

back in a long cane chair with a pungent Burmese cheroot in his mouth and dismissed his servant for the night. The servant was faithful and trustworthy, but Bugs was expecting the Snake Man—a *jungly waller* who instinctively distrusted servants!—and he wanted to be alone when the Snake Man arrived with his report.

But he had to wait some time. So long, in fact, that he felt slightly worried lest the little man of the jungle had been hurt in the traffic of the city. But finally he heard the thin, high-pitched, hissing whistle the Snake Man used when playing with his snakes—which was a signal between them. He opened the door.

THE Snake Man came in slowly, hanging his head, cringing like a dog that feels it has done wrong.

"What's the matter?" asked Bugs quickly.

The Snake Man sighed deeply.

"*Sabib!* Oh, my father and my mother, I have failed thee! I am no longer worthy to be thy man!"

Bugs smiled.

"You have never failed me before," he said gently, "and failure can be remedied. Tell me about it."

The little man squatted on the floor, looking up at Bugs like some strangely intelligent monkey, and spoke.

"I did follow the man you told me to, *sabib*. He went into a shop that sells spice. I waited, but he did not come out. I would have gone in the shop with him but that I did not want him to think I followed. I waited; then, fearing, I, too, went in and asked the price of turmeric. It was so and so. I spoke of the old gentleman—there was nothing else I could do—to the shopkeeper, who, to my surprise, was a Burmese. He pointed to the back door, and told me the old man had bought a pound of *dhali* and gone out

that way! I followed like a thirsty dog, but I saw nothing of him. . . . Will my father and my mother forgive me? For lo, I have wandered all about this blasted city, even up the hill to the great pagoda have I been, where the red-eyed beggars insulted me until I hit two of them—but never a sign of the old man whom my father bade me follow from the old monastery gate!"

"There is nothing to forgive—you did your best!" said Bugs. "And what you have just told me has helped me. I feel in me something growing, like a seed in good ground—something which will grow into what we want to know concerning certain matters. Tell me the location of the shop, then go and eat and sleep, and see me tomorrow."

The Snake Man told Bugs the place of the spice shop and went out. He turned at the door again, and spoke sorrowfully.

"Behold we have all failed thee, which we have never done before. For none of the others, or I, have seen a trace of the one-eyed man—as I came to tell thee at the monastery gate!"

Bugs laughed. His brain was working again.

"Never mind," he said. "Let the others continue to seek until I have better game for them—but I am now thinking that the one-eyed man is like a mere water buffalo that gets in the way when the hunters seek tigers—a nuisance, hardly worth shooting at. Good-night!"

"Good-night, *sabib!*"

But there would be no sleep for Bugs that night. On such important cases he regarded sleep as a mere waste of time, until exhausted nature made him close his eyes. He got out of the chair and began making up as a native—a very low-caste native, a *topas*, one of those pariahs who perform the filthiest of necessary tasks in India. Then he put out the light, and went down the fire escape as noise-

lessly as a lizard. . . . In the street he mingled with the crowd not at all—being careful to walk mostly in the roadway as the low estate of his religious birth (low-caste Hindoo) commanded.

**I**N THIS guise he reached the police station again, entering as one of the *topases* who nightly clean up the halls and offices. There was still a light in Williams' office. Bugs went to the door and opened it. Williams was alone, writing at his desk.

"Never mind cleaning up here yet," he growled. "Get out!"

"Send that cable to New York yet?" drawled Bugs.

"Good Lord, how you startled me! Yes, I sent it, you blooming low-caste Hindoo, you—you had me utterly fooled, Bugs. You're a marvel! No answer yet, and I doubt if there will be one of any help to us. Briggs might never have been in New York—just wrote the name of the city on the hotel register because he had to write some name. And his name might not be Briggs, and there are lots of Briggs's in New York. Even if he had a police record it would take a long time to check up on him—if it could be done at all!" answered Williams.

"I was going to suggest you save the poor government the price of the cable," drawled Bugs. "Glad my make-up is all right. I want the *dossier* of that *babu* lawyer who defended my one-eyed friend—there are so many Lal Muckergees that I don't want to go to the wrong house. Bit of a shyster, eh?"

"Yes," said Williams, "but we have nothing on him. As you know, Bugs, lots of such lawyers defend thieves for three-fourths the value of the loot, but we never proved it on Lal Muckergee. Maybe we had other things to do that were more important!"

"Thanks," said Bugs. "I will now try

to get a job as a *topas* in a high-caste Hindoo's house. Lovely prospect. Lal Muckergee interests me."

He went from the *shana* up the rise, and then turned to the right toward the district of the rich Hindoo. He was careful to avoid kicking a sacred cow that bothered him, and this care was not due to his being in his bare feet! He had no trouble at all in entering the servants' quarters of Lal Muckergee's house. After all, a *topas* may be a Hindoo, if a very low one. . . .

THE usual monkey-like chattering among the servants as they squatted about a charcoal brazier and smoked their queer pipes—which look like coco-nuts with a hole out of which they suck the tobacco, the bowl stuck in the top, in another hole. The chattering castes were well marked, and only a *topas* shared a pipe with a *topas*, and so on up the caste line. Bugs had no desire to suck at a *topas's* pipe! He chewed betel-nut vigorously, which was not quite so nasty.

They chattered, and Bugs learned many things about the master of the house, Lal Muckergee. About his opium hour, and other things. Then Bugs left the servants wrapped in an argument. He apparently melted into the night.

Thus it came about that the ponderous Lal, at the time appointed by his hungry nervous system, waddled into his most sacredly private room. To appreciate how private this was one must understand something about the privacy of the East. He lighted a small brass lamp with ruby glass. It threw a kindly glow upon the comfort of the divan, upon the soft cushions, and rugs. But, to the horror and rage of Lal Muckergee, it also threw its mellow light upon an unspeakable, an untouchable outcast of a pariah—a *topas!* A *topas* who reclined in apparent comfort in Lal's pet, imported from London arm-

chair! For a moment Lal was too astonished, too outraged to speak. But when he recovered he spoke as only a high-caste native of India can or would speak to another man.

This thing of low caste, who had polluted the chair, so that Lal could never again use it without losing caste, without defiling himself—and so on.

And then Lal almost fainted. His frenzied utterances, his threats of punishment and torture were suddenly halted by:

"Shut the door, and shut up!" commanded Bugs in English.

"What?"

"Shut the door!"

"You police, eh?" countered Lal. "This entrance is illegal. No search warrant. I will complain to authority. I will have you dismissed. I will have my servants burn your feet. I will——"

No man ever lived who could draw quicker than could Bugs. The dumfounded and frightened Lal Muckergee saw suddenly in the hands which a moment before had been empty—a revolver which was pointed at him.

"Shut the door and sit down, damn you!" growled Bugs, affecting a roughness foreign to him. "There is no search warrant required when I arrest a man for murder!"

"Murder!" gasped Lal, shutting the door and obeying Bugs by taking a seat.

"As an accessory to murder, I tell you you are under arrest," went on Bugs.

"But this is absurd! I am a well-known lawyer. You have made a mistake!"

"If I have," drawled Bugs, "the mistake will be righted. You will, of course, be detained a few hours—probably all night at the police station. If I am mistaken, then, the police will apologize. You may even bring suit. But you will stay in jail all night! Are you ready to go?"

"My servants will——" began the scared *babu*.

Bugs lifted his gun significantly.

"I don't expect any trouble with your servants," he drawled. "In the way of duty the law allows me to shoot to kill—every one who tries to interfere with an officer of the law. Are you ready to go with me, *babu*?"

The *babu's* eyes were wide—the pupils dilated with the craving of the opium hour. To be compelled to spend a night in jail would be torture, because opium smoking was not permitted by the *thana*—the police. . . .

"May we not wait?" he pleaded, the need of opium driving him, as Bugs had calculated.

"Wait?" snapped Bugs. "What do you mean—wait?"

"I am innocent man!" the *babu* shivered. "I am a member of the Bar! I am graduate of Oxford University! I am a gentleman! You should not be rough with me, Mr. Policeman, who are so clever at disguise. I—I would like to wait here a little while. I will not try to escape!"

"When one arrests a man in connection with a murder charge one does not wait for the convenience of the accused," said Bugs gravely.

"But—but, can not you see, sir?" the *babu* broke down utterly. Tears ran down his cheeks, his vast body trembled like a jelly. He was in great pain, and the situation had become too much for him. With his need of opium had come that dreadful feeling of fear which comes when the need grows acute, accentuated horribly by being accused of murder and the dread of spending hours, or days, or weeks, in a cell without the opium to which he had for years been addicted. "Sir, Mr. Policeman, be merciful. . . . I—I must smoke!"

"Well, light a cigar and come along,"

said Bugs, as if he did not understand. "I don't mind your smoking."

"Can't you see? Can't you see?" wailed the *babu*. He seemed about to fall on his knees before Bugs. "It's—it's opium I need!"

"I have seen that for—for some time," replied Bugs. "And you are certainly in bad shape. In such bad shape that you, a lawyer, have never even asked who was murdered—who accused you of having, er, helped to murder!"

"That's because I never murdered anybody—what do I care who has been murdered when I know I am innocent of any murder?" For a moment his sense of innocence gave the *babu* strength.

"The murdered man floated down the river this morning, in a *sanpan*, naked, with a top hat on, a cigar in his mouth, a crucifix in his hands!" said Bugs.

"Ah!" the *babu* became as indignant as his sufferings would allow. "And you think I am such a fool as to do a thing like that?"

"Not you—you helped, that's all. The thing was done by a one-eyed client of yours, one Frangpau!"

"He did not do it," the *babu* fell on the floor, his nervous strength altogether gone. "He never killed in his life, either. A bully, yes! A big rough brute, but no killer. My God, let me smoke!"

"You have seen Frangpau today," Bugs went on unmercifully. For a moment he paused, his brain working. "Yes, he is here in this house!"

"My God," groaned the *babu*; "who are you?"

"I, too, am an Oxford man," said Bugs gently. "My name is Sinnat!"

The *babu* heaved to his feet. He took hold of Bugs' knees, apparently indifferent to the gun. "This is—an honor. You are—ah, the greatest man in Burma. But I am completely innocent. And, for God's sake . . . for the sake of the old Col-

lege . . . please, Sinnat *sabib*, let me smoke one pipe!"

"If I do you will tell me all I want to know?" said Bugs.

"Everything, sir!" the *babu* answered eagerly.

"Go ahead and smoke," said Bugs.

"God bless you," said the *babu*.

A MINUTE later he was inhaling huge-ly, and the pungent smoke of opium filled the room. Bugs had no doubt that the *babu* was innocent. And he had been convinced for hours that the one-eyed man had not done the murder. At first it had seemed that Frangpau was a tool—he might have fastened the body in the *sanpan*. If he had done that, then he had killed the *sanpan waller*. And, as Bugs had deduced, the reason the little men had failed to find him was because he was hidden in the lawyer's house. As Bugs had hinted to the Snake Man, however, a new theory was growing in his mind. And if he could entirely eliminate the *babu* and Frangpau from all connection with the murders, then the new theory took on added plausibility. He sat there quietly, thinking hard, while the *babu* gratefully smoked opium.

"Answer my questions truthfully, *babu*," said Bugs, "and I give you my word of honor not to use what you tell me against Frangpau. This will protect your honor as regards your client. Unless Frangpau killed a man today I am not interested in him. When you feel more comfortable let me know, and I will ask you the questions."

"I accept your word, Sinnat *sabib*," answered the *babu*, whose nerves were becoming quiet. "You have deduced that my client, scared to death, as you might say, is hiding here. When he heard about the body of the *sanpan* man being found near his place, he got fearful. Then when a policeman pretended to be running

away . . . down Frangpau's passage . . . ah, but of course that was you. Gad, you are clever! In a moment I will be able to talk more coherently."

"He threatened me, believing I had run amuck and tried to knife a Sikh—threatened to keep me prisoner because . . . I see! He meant to run and let the police know in some roundabout way that a man was hiding in his godown, a man who had tried to knife a Sikh. I see! He was scared he would be accused of the murder, and so he, with seeming generosity, took me down there so that the police would find me, and accuse me of the murder of the *sanpan waller* whose body had been found so near Frangpau's strange opening to the river! For of course Frangpau did not connect the murder of the *sanpan waller* and the murder of the white man in the *sanpan*—only the police knew the license number of the *sanpan*. Frangpau did not even know whose body had been found under the wharf!" said Bugs.

"With your brain," the *babu* gasped in admiration, "you do not need to ask questions! You can figure out for yourself!"

"Thanks," drawled Bugs. "But you must tell me just why Frangpau has made that remarkable arrangement of underground places!"

"He did hear that a *sanpan waller's* body was the body discovered," said the *babu*, "but he was afraid to ask questions. That place underground, that opening to the river—surely you know what that is. I would rather you told me than that I, er, betrayed my client!"

"I have no interest in a receiver of stolen goods from river pirates!" grinned Bugs.

"Now you know all about Frangpau," murmured the *babu* thankfully.

"Yes," answered Bugs. "And good-night, *babu*. . . . I am quite sure that neither Frangpau nor yourself knows any-

thing about the murders—you know no more than any newspaper reader. . . . I must go!"

"Some refreshment, sir?" asked the *babu*.

"No thanks, Muckergee! And of course you must not come to the door with me—it would look damnable queer for a Brahmin to be seen politely escorting such a low-caste person as I appear to be to the door of his house, eh?"

"You are a wonderful man, Sinnat *sabib*!" said the *babu*.

IT WAS nearly two in the morning when Bugs reached his room again. He had no time for sleep, for he had to arrange a difficult disguise—difficult in the sense that he had to take with him certain credentials. It was the hour before the dawn when he left his room again, when that strange, salt breath from the Bay of Bengal strays over the capital of Burma.

Early workers were about as Bugs walked slowly, with bent, devout head, toward the central monastery. As the day came with its sudden, scented splendor he was presenting himself at the entrance of the *pongy*'s dormitory—as a pilgrim monk who had trudged from the far rock temple of Powingdaug, a pilgrimage of months, so that he might acquire merit in his next incarnation, both by his pilgrimage and by the honor he did to himself by bowing at the shrine of the tooth of the Blessed One, Gotama Sidhatha, the Glorious Buddha!

Bugs knocked on the old teak door of the *pongy*'s dormitory, as the rising sun drenched the ancient place with light. An old monk, the dean of the *pongy*, opened it. Bugs bowed very low.

"I, father, am an unworthy stranger who seeks to honor himself and acquire merit by visiting this sacred place. I have walked from far-away Powingdaug, and I have here with me my credentials,

written for me by Ard-byu-sin, the blessed Abbot of Powingdaug!" said Bugs.

The dean of the monks extended his hand for the paper. While he read it Bugs mused: "I hope my writing of the Burmese is near enough to that of old Ard-byu-sin's. He's a good old chap, and I would not want him to think unkindly of me. But it's hardly likely that this old monk is an expert on penmanship—even if he has ever seen the Abbot's writing."

The wrinkles on the old dean's face were merging into a smile of welcome. He courteously returned the paper to Bugs.

"You are more than very welcome," he said, opening wide the door. "And you must be weary. I beg you to refresh yourself with us at our morning meal."

Bugs' voice trembled with emotion as he answered.

"Good father, I thank you gratefully. But I have come very far for merit! Permit me, then—and, oh, be not offended! —to first bow myself at the blessed shrine —to prostrate myself at the shrine of the Tooth of our Blessed Lord, Buddha! . . . After that, if you will, I will refresh myself!"

The old *pongy* closed the door. His voice broke in a sob, as he said: "Friend from far places, I feel my heart breaking at the news I must tell you. My brother, you have come a long way—to find an empty shrine! The Tooth of the Blessed One has been stolen!"

"Stolen!"

Bugs screamed like a wounded hare. Other monks crowded about him, sympathizing.

"But I have come so far! So far! So far!"

He wailed like a man who had lost his sweetheart, by death, on their wedding day. His voice echoed through the ancient monastery. Every man in the place, except the Abbot and some who

could not leave their tasks, came quickly. From among these a deep voice spoke reprovingly.

"The loss is as much, if not more ours than thine, brother! Do not think all the grief is thine!"

It was the big Shan monk who had taken Bugs to the shrine, who had shown him the hole in the wall and the unfortunate guard in the dungeon.

"You are weary, brother," added the dean gently.

"Yet I must kneel at the violated shrine," murmured Bugs, tottering feebly forward. "Will you show me the way?"

He looked into the heavy, dark face of the Shan monk as he made the request. That one nodded and pointed to the passage leading to the shrine. And Bugs went in there and knelt. Several other devout Buddhists from outside, not monks, were there before him. . . .

**B**ugs crouched like a very weary and sad man.

*"Om mane padme hum!"* [ "Ah, the Jewel of the Lotus! Oh!"] As it would be in English.

Other worshippers were coming in—kneeling on the floor one behind the other, in rows.

The murmur of the streets, coming through the hole which—as Bugs had suggested on his first visit—had not been closed up again. The subtle, monotonous murmur of prayers. . . . Bugs was very tired and sleepy. He was watching the worshippers carefully, but his eyes were heavy and he almost dozed.

Voices. . . . Peddlers crying their wares. . . . The distant, discordant calls of the bramely-kites, and the caw of crows. . . . Voices. . . . Bugs felt the need of strong tea. . . . Voices. Voices that seemed to enter his consciousness like ghosts, from nowhere. . . . Prayers repeated until the sound of them was

meaningless as the prattle of a river. . . . And the noise of Rangoon. . . . Noise coming through that hole, when both the imprisoned guard and the big Shan monk had said that they had heard no sound the night the Tooth of Buddha was stolen! The whine of a street car, the hoot of a motor horn—coming from the outside, through the hole, not through the solid teak walls, breaking into the soft murmur of "Ah the Jewel of the Lotus" like the noise of a boat upon a stream. . . . Bugs bit his lips, blinked his eyes, shook his head slightly—otherwise he could not have kept awake. The sounds were hypnotic.

Then, suddenly, a sound that was not of the stream of sounds. A voice speaking quickly, sibilantly. Some emotion in that voice—a heavy voice. What was that emotion? The speaker was trying to hide it, trying to control his voice. . . . Then another voice. The voice of an old man who was angry—who could not control that anger in his voice, though he was speaking as softly as he could. . . .

Bugs was very wide awake now.

Footsteps in the room of the shrine. . . . More worshippers? . . . A large shadow under the little lamp. . . .

The big Shan monk, his face distorted with some sort of passion. . . . And, kneeling ostentatiously, the old man on whose forehead Bugs had seen the Hindoo caste-mark. But there was no mark there now. And that faint mark the day before, that displaced headgear, had only been seen by Bugs.

He did not kneel there long. Hardly three minutes. When he got to his feet the Big Shan monk was leaving the room. They went out together. And Bugs, a weary, tottering pilgrim, who, too, looked like an old man, followed them. Followed them out to the courtyard, walking very quietly. There the

big Shan turned suddenly. He spoke to Bugs.

"Are you going without breakfast—somewhere?" he asked.

"My soul is too sad for food," answered Bugs. "I will walk up the hill to the great Shwe-dagon pagoda, and make my obeisance there."

"It is well, brother," answered the Shan.

The old Hindoo took no notice of Bugs. There are so many such pilgrims in Burma. Bugs walked slowly ahead. He knew that the two were talking heatedly. . . .

As the bare feet of Bugs stirred the dust of the street outside, he saw the faithful but dejected Snake Man, and made the sign to him. Fifty yards away was another of Bugs' little men. The old Hindoo was coming through the gate of the monastery. The little man fifty yards away had flashed the signal to another of the eleven. As the old Hindoo left the monastery the signal was reaching every one of the eager little *jungly walers*.

"They will not lose him this time," muttered Bugs. "He dodged the Snake Man, but not intentionally. It was an accident. He did not know he was shadowed."

THE Shan had disappeared, but Bugs continued to walk slowly in the direction of the great pagoda. At a corner of the street he turned away. And in a few minutes he was in his room again, drinking the tea of which he felt so badly in need.

"What an interesting time would have been had by all—if a single monk had discovered that that old man was not a Buddhist but a Hindoo!" he muttered. "Which fact, of course, puts that big Shan in about the worst light a man can be in

—in India! It is the first time—perhaps the first time in history—the first time I have heard of such a thing. It is as extraordinary as it would be for a Mohammedan *mullah* to welcome a Christian pork-butcher, carrying a sample of his wares, into a mosque!"

Bugs lit his pipe, and went on.

"It was, indeed, worse than that. Because the Hindoo pretended to be a Buddhist, and so desecrated the most sacred shrine in all Buddhism!"

The telephone rang. It was Williams, the police superintendent.

"Bugs?"

"Yank!"

"Last night somebody broke into the room that chap Briggs had in the hotel. Went all through it! Turned it upside down. Even tore the paper off the walls, and broke the furniture."

"So?" drawled Bugs. "I am not surprised! Might even say that I half expected something like that would happen!"

"What?" exclaimed Williams.

"Any word from New York?" asked Bugs.

"No!"

"Didn't expect there would be," said Bugs. "You will probably get a cable saying the New York police can't place Briggs. . . . I will see you sometime today. Good-bye!"

Bugs drank some more tea.

"This very strange affair, and I can not remember one more strange, is about to come to a head," he murmured. "I believe I have most of the factors of the problem, but the putting of them together to make a solution is—er, risky!"

He took a bath, and had some breakfast. Then he dressed as an Englishman, phoned for a government car and was about to start for the monastery as the

representative of Lord Cameron when the Snake Man appeared—smiling.

"We have found the place, *sabib*!" said the little *jungly waller*.

"Good!" exclaimed Bugs. "Rich man, eh?"

"Very fine house, that old man has," said the Snake Man. "Many servants. But rude. I asked for a meal of curry and rice, but they told me to go to hell—which is not a decent telling!—and spoke about beating me with rods!"

Bugs laughed contentedly.

"Did you happen to mention that the High Priest of your religion is the Dreaded Devil of the Chin Hills, and that you are an expert in telling fortunes from warm chicken livers—the killed bird being exactly seven months old?" he asked.

"Yes, *sabib*," answered the Snake Man. "That I did when I became angry with the servants—as became my honor!"

"All right, but do not allow the servants to see you again," replied Bugs. "You no doubt told them their futures were, er—clouded!"

"Very black things did I tell them, *sabib*—they deserved such a telling," agreed the Snake Man.

"Keep out of their sight, venture not too near the house of the rich old Hindoo. But keep *him* in sight—that is, order my other men never to allow him to leave the house without following him! After giving the others this order do you wait outside the old monastery—I may need you. Here are ten rupees. . . . I now go to the monastery," said Bugs; and the Snake Man slipped down the fire escape.

**T**HE big car purred its way to the monastery courtyard. Bugs nodded, as it were, to the huge pillars of the gateway.

He murmured: "That extraordinarily

set-up corpse! And the theft of the Tooth—equivalent to the theft of the Crown Jewels from the Tower of London. All this within the same hour, in the same city!"

He asked for the big Shan monk, after ringing the strange old bell at "The Entrance of the Alien Guests." The big monk appeared tired, and his face drawn. Bugs spoke sympathetically.

"You are worried, and I can understand. Such a loss! But rest assured the government will never give up until this priceless relic is again restored to the Shrine."

"The government!" The monk for a moment forgot his politeness—his voice rasped. Then, "Pardon me, but, as you say, I am upset—I can not sleep. I fear, *sabib*, that all the power of the British Empire can never restore the Tooth to its Shrine!"

Bugs laughed good-naturedly.

"Well—we will do our best, anyway. And now, will you permit me to interview that guard who slept on duty?"

The monk opened the passage door and led the way, after an apology for doing so. Bugs felt his heart thumping. From his mind a great truth was breaking—painfully. That strange intuitive faculty which had made him famous was burning in a clear flame. But he was not flattery himself.

"Of all the blasted numbskulls," he was thinking, "I am the prize article. I take the cake. The penny bun, as that music hall comedian used to say. My God, what a stupid ass I have been!"

He hesitated behind the monk, as if about to turn and leave the monastery. Then he followed on.

"May as well talk with the poor chap," he thought.

But when he stood in the dungeon "Bugs," Horace Sinnat, Indian Secret

Service, 006, Domestic, knew where the missing Tooth of Buddha was hidden!

"And that's why they killed him!" he muttered.

**T**HE poor imprisoned monk appeared starved. Bugs wondered at this. Was the man doing penance, as it were, or was he denied food? The big Shan was obviously his jailer. What a lot of power that big Shan seemed to have in the monastery!

"He looks sick," said Bugs.

The big Shan shrugged his shoulders. "He is lucky to be alive," he said cruelly.

"There might be a difference of opinion about that," snapped Bugs.

The surprised Shan stared at him. Bugs felt something reptilian in those eyes. He went on diplomatically.

"I referred to the old philosophical problem of evil and pain, which the Blessed Buddha so nobly discussed," he said. "Is it lucky to be alive?"

The monk smiled.

"Sometimes, clever man!" he said slowly.

Bugs took a paper out of his pocket.

"I am going to make a test," he said, "of this imprisoned monk who slept at his post of guard. It is known as the Binet, or Wundt word test. You see, here are words. And here is my stop-watch!"

The monk from the Shan States frowned. This psychological test was so far beyond his knowledge that he suspected it. But he could not refuse the representative of the governor of Burma.

Bugs addressed the prisoner.

"When I speak a word, tell me in return the first word that comes into your head after you hear the word I speak," he commanded.

He took a pencil out of his pocket; then with stop-watch and paper went on

with the test—the frowning Shan watching avidly.

"Thanks," said Bugs after it was over. "I wished to find out," he said to the Shan monk, "if this prisoner knew anything about the stealing of the precious relic. He knows nothing—as my test proves."

The Shan smiled cynically.

"Is there some magic in that asking of words?" he asked.

"The purest of magic—pure science!" drawled Bugs.

"Will it lead you to the missing Tooth and the thief who stole it?" asked the Shan.

"Oh no," replied Bugs cheerfully. "I don't need it for that."

"What do you mean, *sabib*?" said the Shan slowly.

"Quite a lot! Yes, quite a lot, as they say in America!" answered Bugs.

And with this cryptic answer he left the monastery.

**B**ACK in his room he phoned the governor.

"Forget the strain upon your august mind, Pickhead, my son!" he drawled.

"Great Scot, Bugs!"

The governor's answer was as lilted as Bugs had known it at school. Bugs' words had told him that the greatest of all secret service men knew that, again, he would succeed.

"Can you retrieve the, er, dentist?" went on Lord Cameron.

"Feel pretty confident, but, of course, unkindly fate may have butted in—I must hurry!" replied Bugs.

"Find out anything about that murder case?—I won't keep you if you are in a hurry," the governor spoke quickly.

"That bizarre matter was the guiding hand," drawled Bugs. "So long!"

He hung up and called Williams, the superintendent of police.

"Get me five Sikhs," he said. "Post them about that old dock, with the news that the Department of Buildings has declared the place unsafe. Keep every one away! It must be so considered for an hour or so, and then declared safe again. This is probably silly of me, but I am nervous about—about something! Come there yourself—you will get there before I can. All this may be like locking the stable door after the hoss has been kidnapped, but—hurry them blooming Sikhs, Yank!"

Bugs threw off his good clothes—he did not wish any one to see him in his guise of governor's representative where he was going. He slipped into faded dungarees. As a somewhat grimy stoker from some steamer he went out. The Snake Man met him.

"What word, *sabib*?" he asked.

"Nothing," replied Bugs. "Just keep on as you were. If you see a big Shan monk leave the monastery, watch where he goes."

Then Bugs hurried, walking, to the old dock where the body of the *sanpan waller* had been found, from which the clothes of the murdered Briggs had been recovered.

"And," he muttered as he hastened, "that remark of mine to the Shan—'quite a lot, etc.'—should compel a meeting. Lord, I hope no one has got ahead of me—by accident!"

As Bugs reached the river the deep whistle of a large steamer woke the echoes. She was leaving F'ngoon, going down-river.

"Ah!" exclaimed Bugs. "Now, I wonder! But there are so many steamers going in and out—and so many people on them!"

He was perspiring freely when he reached the old dock. The Sikhs were unostentatiously posted to warn people away from its lack of safety. One was putting up a barrier. Bugs saw Williams, and the Yank came forward and ordered the Sikh to allow Bugs to pass.

"What now, old fellow?" asked the Yank.

"Let me think—and act a part," said Bugs slowly. "Watch me, but please don't say anything. For you may think I am crazier than usual!"

The old wharf was surrounded by a high board fence. At the place where the Sikh was putting up a barrier there had once been a gate. It was a small wharf, as wharves go, and for years had never been used for anything more pretentious than a landing for *sanpans*.

Bugs stood at the entrance, just inside the barrier. He appeared to be concentrating his mind upon something. He walked slowly from the barrier to the slight, narrow sloping platform where *sanpan wallers* landed what few passengers ever used that wharf. The sloping platform ran between heavy old piles—big but rotten logs, standing like a palisade. . . .

Bugs walked slowly. Suddenly he started, as if he had heard ominous sounds behind him.

"Ah!" he muttered. "At the first sound of the pursuers he waited a moment. Then he jumped forward, thinking to get away in the *sanpan*. He was about to step into the *sanpan* when he realized that he had not time to get away with the treasure that way. . . . He leaned against these old logs. . . . He had no time to get away. . . . He would have to pretend that he did not have it. . . . So he turned, and thrust it into . . . into . . . into"—Bugs' arm was thrust far in between two old piles—"into . . . ah . . .

Yank, old son . . . keep it strictly under your hat . . . but here, in its little gold case is . . . *the Tooth of Buddha!*"

And Bugs drew the treasure from its hiding-place. Only the sergeant Ruttan Singh and Williams saw the sunlight gleaming on the gold. The other Sikhs heard the words, but their sternly disciplined faces never betrayed their knowledge. They were trustworthy, of course—but Bugs had thrust the golden case, after one hasty look at the tooth it contained, under his stained dungarees. It was unlikely, but still, alien eyes might be watching—from somewhere with glasses.

"The age of miracles," the big American was panting with excitement. "The age of miracles is not past—when Bugs goes on a case!" he exclaimed. "You knew the priceless thing was there?"

"Unless some one had accidentally found it, which was unlikely," answered Bugs. "The people who wanted it didn't know where it was—I knew that! So I . . . well, after acting like a blockhead for twenty-four hours or so, I, or my subconscious mind, or whatever it is, managed to figure out where the thing was hidden." He paused, and laughed slightly. "I wonder if, after all the fuss over this thing through the centuries—I wonder if it really is a tooth of Gotama!"

"More likely the tooth of a coolie that some old priest palmed off on the monastery," grinned the American.

"No," answered Bugs gravely, "I don't think so. Now and then one may doubt the authenticity of a relic like this, but, somehow, I don't. You know the sort of 'psychic' feelings I get now and then. Well, Yank, somehow this thing under my coat gives me a sacred feeling—like a great cathedral, or an ancient tomb or something like that!"

"But . . . but," Williams, carried away

by the dramatic finding of the tooth, had for a moment missed the significance of it, "but this connects that weird corpse in the *sanpan* with the theft of the tooth!" he stammered.

"Of course," drawled Bugs.

"But the murderer . . . who was it?" demanded Williams.

"I will clear it all up within a few hours, I hope," replied Bugs. "To be candid I am not quite certain who used the stiletto. But I do know that it was not the one-eyed receiver of stolen goods whose place your men have been watching since yesterday. . . . Not a word to any one! I will tell Lord Cameron, of course, but until I see certain parties well locked behind the bars of your excellent jail this gold box with its treasured relic reposes in the vaults of the Treasury. . . . Drive me over to the government building, will you, old man?"

"But why the naked body in the *sanpan*, the cigar in its mouth, the top hat and the crucifix?" asked Williams.

"That is quite a question, Yank, quite a question!" drawled Sinnat. "Bide a wee! We have not reached the end of the story yet!"

**T**HAT wandering *sais* [native groom] was a merry fellow! He could tell tales of love which would have made Boccaccio look to his laurels. He made all the servants laugh, and he made love to the women, with distant smiles, as it were, until they crowded to listen to his stories. He was a clown and an adventurer, and he had no trouble obtaining curry and rice, and sweet cake; indeed, such were forced upon him. He was apparently a Hindoo of decent caste, and had served several rajahs. . . . Yes, his love of women had gotten him into trouble! He admitted it! . . . Now, for that true and laughable tale of the sultan of

Swat! It was, the *sais* said, his best tale. Such a comedy! Such a sultan! . . . His wives said—— The wives of the sultan, of course, were meant. The *sais* did not tell stories about his own wives. That was because he had never married. . . . Oh, no, *just bat na junter*—the *sais* knew nothing whatever about telling lies!

Over the city the evening came. There is nothing like it in all the world. It is as if a fever patient suddenly finds the heaven of health and cool sweetness, with a kiss from a lovely woman—and the stars came out. Bugs had left his laughing audience. The Snake Man had signalled a message. The big Shan monk was leaving the monastery—as if about to go for a walk!

"I knew that what I said to the Shan would bring about a meeting," Bugs thought as he answered the signal. "But where will it be? For of a certainty a Buddhist monk will not come here—will not visit openly the house of a Hindoo—and he is walking out without any sort of disguise. Ah!"

The next moment he bowed servilely to the old Hindoo owner of the house. This one had come out and was crossing the compound. He took no notice of Bugs' bowing. This was usual, and not due to the very faint light. He walked rather swiftly. Bugs, among the deeper shadows, followed.

Where would they meet, these two strangely assorted criminals? And that at the moment was the rub of it—not the question of where they would meet, since Bugs and his men could follow both of them, but the fact that while Bugs had reasoned out the majority of the truths which proved the Shan and the Hindoo to be crooks, he entirely lacked evidence to bring about a conviction. His logic might convince a jury and a judge, but British law demands evidence not pure mathe-

matics. Bugs would have to get that evidence—how and where would he get it?

The old Hindoo was shuffling through the dark, along a street so narrow that no autos used it. Bugs nodded as the old man turned a corner.

"They will meet at the spice shop, where the old Hindoo dodged the Snake Man. How innocent is the owner of that shop, I wonder? And, of course, that is where the old Hindoo donned his Buddhist garb before going to the monastery, because of course he dared not be seen leaving his own house as a Buddhist!"

**T**HE shop could be smelled before it was reached. The pungent aroma of aromatic spices. But there was no light in the place. The old Hindoo had stopped at the back door—the door through which he had left when the Snake Man lost him. He was putting a key into the lock of the door. He showed no evidence of nervousness, so far as Bugs could see.

"Because he owns the place," deduced Bugs. "Things grow clearer!"

The old man opened the door suddenly, slipping quickly into the shop and locking the door after him.

"Now I will have to burgle to get in," muttered Bugs. "What a quiet little lane this is! The city sounds as if miles away."

He stood pressed against the door, listening intently. He could hear the old Hindoo moving about inside the shop. It was fairly obvious that he would admit the Shan monk through the other door. Bugs was as certain that the Shan would come as he was that the sun would rise in the morning. Like all grooms, Bugs carried some bits and snaffles—or, rather, like a native who wishes the world to know he is a groom he carried them. He had had some difficulty preventing these badges of his trade from jingling as he followed the old man. From amid this

stuff he now took several skeleton keys. Complicated locks are not common to native shops. He expected no trouble opening the door—unless the old man heard him.

"Hope the old brute's a bit deaf," he muttered as he inserted a key. "Ah!"

Quite clearly he heard the old man opening the front door of the shop. Bugs worked his key. He timed the opening to coincide with the old man's opening of the other door. Like an eel Bugs slipped into the dark, smelly place—but he did not lock the door behind him. He left his bits and snaffles outside. The old Hindoo did not hear a thing. There was no light in the place.

"He will not light a lamp," thought Bugs. "Not such a fool as to take that chance—a very secret meeting this!"

Just a whisper when the meeting began. The big Shan had come through the front door. The old man had locked it again. And two of the gang Bugs had come to think of as *The Twisted Three* were squatting in the dark of the shop, six yards or so from where Bugs lay hidden!

A whisper in Burmese, the Shan speaking.

"That government snake suspects something. So I sent word to thee for this meeting!"

"What can he suspect? We have left no tracks!" whispered the old man.

"About the Tooth, I mean," answered the Shan. "He does not believe the thief came through the hole I sawed after I put the guard to sleep."

"What of it?" growled the old Hindoo softly. "What I want to know is where Briggs hid the thing. I hired a room in that dirty hotel—in the servants' quarters. Paid a filthy yard man to let me have his bed. Then I went through the room Briggs had. Not a thing did I find!"

"Could he have thrown it into the

river—just before we, er, we gave his spirit permission to depart—to hell, as I hope?" asked the Shan.

The two men were no longer whispering.

"No!" The old Hindoo gritted his teeth. "The swine! After all the business we have done together! He tried to get away with the most valuable thing we ever—collected. Half a million dollars was what he said the man from New York would pay. They were to meet that night on the English steamer. The liar! For when I looked up the passenger list there was no such name as Briggs said would be there. And the steamer was sailing at midnight! Had we been five minutes later, Briggs would have gone down-river in the *sanpan*, and he would be well on the way to England by now!"

"I know all this." The Shan seemed very tired. "He *did* go down-river. And I . . . Hindoo, you seduced me into this felony. Your clever talk. And now my unhappy conscience will for ever haunt me!"

The old man laughed.

"Your *what*? What you craved was a hut up in the forest of the Chin Hills—women and babies. So, for the money I paid you, you did a job for me. Don't rant. And now—oh priest who tired of celibacy!—oh monk who outraged his vows!—now, as I said this morning, I want my money back. The job fell down. I was pleased when your poor soul became afraid of that government detective. For those fellows have no brains! But pleased I was when you arranged this meeting—here, alone in the dark—for I mean to get back my money. You dare not refuse! I am powerful, respected, lived here in Rangoon for years. I can easily get word to the Abbot about what you have done! And your fellow monks will tear you limb from limb! You might

think to implicate me! But when you think of being torn to pieces if you open your mouth—you'll keep it shut. So, you will return me the money and return to your monastery. No one will ever be the wiser! I promise you that. My silence, defiled priest, will be your reward. If you don't do what I say—then let Buddha help you!"

"Rat!" snarled the Shan.

"Not so rude," the old miser chuckled. "I have that old Italian stiletto in my hand. I might even make it look like suicide! The money, priest!"

Bugs heard the big Shan grind his teeth.

"I wonder," he growled, "if after all, you did not find the Tooth, and are hiding it! It's just like you to do that, and then demand back the money!"

The old man chuckled.

"How easily you become excited!" he said. "After I drove this fine knife through Briggs, and sent the *sanpan waller* to keep him company—he had hired the *sanpan waller* to row him down the river, and so, ha! ha! down the river they went—then you became excited. Insisted upon fixing him up like a theater show. You said it would throw the police off the track—look so mysterious. Maybe it did, but it was so funny watching you work that way—trying to 'disguise' a corpse. Ho! ho!"

"You are insane," growled the Shan. "But answer my question! Where is the Tooth?"

The old Hindoo laughed insultingly. And, suddenly, like an angry dog the big Shan launched himself at the old man! There was a short struggle, a thin scream. It was over before Bugs could stop it.

The big Shan was lying across the dead body of the Hindoo, the stiletto, wet with the Hindoo's blood, in his hand, when

Bugs covered him with his flashlight and revolver.

The Shan, speechless, stared at Bugs, terrified.

"Lie quiet," said Bugs grimly. "In case you do not recognize me, I am the government man who visited the monastery recently! Lie quiet now!"

The Shan did not move. He probably could not. Bugs blew his police whistle. Blew it again. The door rattled violently. It was the Snake Man.

"The other door," shouted Bugs.

The Snake Man ran around the building. Bugs continued to blow his whistle. The front door rattled again, as the Snake Man came in the back door.

"Open this door," said Bugs. "The key is in it!"

The Snake Man obeyed. A white sergeant of police and a Sikh rushed in, their flashlights lighting up the entire scene.

"What the——"

"I am Mr. Sinnat, Jenkins!" said Bugs quietly. "This monk is your prisoner. Take him to the station. Be very careful he does not kill himself. Search him for poison. I was afraid he might try to make me shoot him by trying to fight me. I will be down soon, and talk with him. The corpse is that of a certain rich Hindoo—have it taken to the Hindoo part of the morgue."

**T**HE governor greeted Bugs joyfully. "You did it again, old chap! How? Was it intuition?"

"Some, maybe," answered Bugs. "A lot of luck helped. The intuitive part had to do with two such unusual crimes in the same city about the same hour! But I was very stupid. It took me a long time to realize that two such crimes *must* be related—the law of averages should have told me, knowing Burma as I do—the law of averages as applied to crime in

Burma, I mean. Crime in Burma may be brutal, but it is usually commonplace, seldom spectacular. And here were two spectacular crimes. When I realized that, and acted on that intuitive assumption, if it is intuition—then every bit of evidence that turned up tended to confirm the theory. But I will give you the details.

"Had I been really clever I should have known at once that there were three men—twisted together, as you might say, in crime. For that dead Briggs, all dressed up, was a perfect clue to a perfect logician, which I am not. Not even a mad murderer would dress up a corpse like that and sink the *sanpan waller*, after killing both with the same weapon. No, the dressing up indicated another man, *not* the murderer but connected with him, and *afraid of being found out*. The actual murderer had no fear of being found out! But the other, the Shan monk, had fear. You see, 'conscience makes cowards of us all,' and that Shan had done what to him was the most damnable thing a man may do. But I was not sufficiently clever to deduce all this at first. I had to get the facts first.

"Well, when the tooth was reported missing the solution began working in my think-tank. It was so pitifully obvious that the hole had been sawed from inside, and that the guard had been doped. I had a few words with Lal Muckergee, merely to clear the one-eyed man from my way. This left the obvious old Hindoo and the Shan monk. I don't have to tell you that a Hindoo praying in a Buddhist monastery is in itself a clue to some skulduggery—it looms like a danger sign. And when the old man went through the

spice shop! Well, he had a private room there, where he donned his Buddhist robe. He could not do this and walk out of his own house. He owned the store, and a well-paid Burmese ran it for him.

"The old Hindoo had become rich through miserliness and crooked work. Briggs, of course, was one of those Englishmen who go about the East—no, he was not an American: one look at his trunk was enough to show that—picking up what they can to sell to collectors. He would, if he could, steal a big ruby from a temple—'idol's eye' stuff, you know. This was the most ambitious project—stealing the Tooth of Buddha. He had worked with the old Hindoo for some years. Then Briggs, wanting all the loot himself, bought a passage on a steamer leaving at midnight. I looked up the passenger list, and found 'Walter Barlow, Manchester, England,' and the clerk described Briggs to me as Barlow. He had the *sanpan waller* waiting. But the old Hindoo and the Shan suspected this double-cross, and followed. You know the rest. But it was rather clever of the Shan to dress up the body that way in order to throw police off the track. Of course, a sneer at Christianity, both from the Hindoo and the Shan, suggested the crucifix. Which was bad for the Shan. Because that very clever chap who works for Williams, the finger-print expert, has clinched the case. The Shan perspired freely and his thumb print was on the crucifix! But I was not clever, Pickhead. I have good ears, though! When I was in the monastery, disguised as a Buddhist, I overheard something the old Hindoo said to the Shan monk!"

