

pose I may get used to it, but at present the sight of such a ferocious crowd of natives fills me with horror. It's all very well for Ellis and other fellows to say they won't do any harm - anyway they look as if they'd love to tear one to pieces and were only waiting for the right moment to do it. On I had to go however, As the circle of spearmen broke to let me through to the Chiefs assembled in the centre and then closed again, I felt as if my knees were going to give way. The office orderly was close behind me carrying a chair, and the interpreter followed him. These two men seemed to be my only friends, and I was not quite certain that they had not seen through me, and were not scorning me in their hearts. I got through somehow - I shook hands (a thing I loathe doing, I can't stand the feel of a black man's hand) with all the Chiefs, and then I asked them their reasons for being so slack, and without properly listening to their replies, gave them the necessary slating. Of course they promised everything Ellis wanted, and they all complained of the evilness of their followers, and asked for permission to tie up and torture various of the worst offenders by way of a salutary demonstration to the less bad of what they would incur if they did not immediately mend their ways. This I curtly refused, and without waiting to hear anything else, and I am afraid without further handshakes, I strode back to the office. I sank on my chair with a sigh of relief. I had only been absent twenty-five minutes, and I realized that the Chiefs had never been so curtly treated before. - a palaver of this sort is seldom over in less than two hours. Voices neared and rose and fell, and I heard Mahomed protesting to someone. It was old Chief Kamiti who was hurt and angry at my treatment of himself. He was quoting Ellis to Mahomed and saying he must see me again, for I had not heard what he had to say, neither had I received

his present of a bullock. Mahomed stood firm - he soothed the old man as best he could, and finally told him I was ill (how I blessed Mahomed!) and so got him to go quietly away.

Do I show my feelings, I wonder, in my behaviour or fact? Mahomed must see something - it's a horrid idea. I almost called him back and saw Kamiti. I ought to have done so; I ought to have seen all the Chiefs again in the afternoon; instead of which I told Hamis I had fever and went and lay on my bed.

December 31st. 11 p.m. Fort Eliot.

This is the day, or rather the night, one is supposed to confess and renounce one's old sins and make good resolutions for the New Year. I am going to confess. It has come to me during these six days that I have been alone that I am a coward - a real funk. I am all right if there is another white man about, even when I'm not actually with him, but no sooner am I alone - worse than alone, the only white man in the midst of natives - than something seems to snap in me, the something that in the proximity of my fellow whites keeps me erect. I just go to pieces. Everything and everybody seems to be a menace; the most trivial actions or expressions on the part of any of the coloured people fill me with suspicions; the most usual and ordinary behaviour on the part of my boys or the men fills me with distrust. I feel as if I must always be looking over my shoulder to catch the hidden dread which perpetually lurks just behind me. It is that awful feeling of what one fears being behind one, just out of sight, that is my undoing. It is nothing one can face and have out - it is a creeping, silent, mighty foe which never shows itself, and for this very reason is more acutely felt. When I am near a white man it retires altogether; all I feel of it is an oc-

occasional whispering movement. When I am alone it possesses me, dominates me, crows me. I actually feel as if I were shrinking before the upraised lash of a whip - so far the whip has only been upraised, what will become of me when it falls? Even now, as I sit here in Ellis's house writing, secure and comfortable, my boy on the verandah only waiting for me to express a want to hasten to fulfil it, the sentry padding up and down on his beat in front of the gate, my whistle to my hand, the blowing of which would in a few moments surround me with the entire armed force, even now the sweat stands on my forehead and my heart is turned to water within me. The lamp throws a bright light on this table, my paper and my hand, but outside this bright circle what dark shadows lurk? Sullen, black patches like crouching forms ready to spring upon me, waiting for me to become absorbed, for me to forget their presence only for a moment - and they would be on me, <sup>bearing</sup> me down to the black beyond of unspeakable horror. Has any other man ever felt like this, or am I a pariah in my cowardice? Is it some personal peculiarity, unknown and unfelt at home, brought into being through isolation? What is it? Why am I thus cursed? One never thought of fear at home; everything was natural - one's pluck, if required, always seemed to be there all right, and mine (if I thought of such things at all) was tested on more than one occasion. Why is it so different here? I seem to feel the hostility of blood, mind, and methods all beating as a great pulse - the country throbs with it, a giant, many-headed engine slowly getting up the necessary impetus with which to crush the white man and his influence. The spirit of Africa is arming against us, ~~silently~~ waiting for its armament to be complete to crush and trample us down into its red earth which even our blood will not stain. A great wave, wiping us out and leaving no traces, sucking us back into the mighty whirlpool of oblivion. It has all

got hold of me to such an extent that I cannot get right myself un-  
 helped. I have decided that directly Ellis gets back I shall put  
 it all to him. If anyone understands he will, and his mind is big  
 enough not to condemn and despise me utterly. One thing is certain,  
 and that is I can't go on like this. I must be half mad now - I  
~~must~~ jump at the slightest sound, and shake and sweat if anyone en-  
 ters my presence unseen. It's no good cursing myself, and shame  
 doesn't help. I have tried to keep the thing under, and unspoken,  
 but now it's out. I have kicked myself in my thoughts, I have made  
 all sorts of excuses for myself, but the naked truth of it all is,  
 I am a coward, a damned coward. I am afraid of niggers, I am afraid  
 of Africa, and I am afraid of all the dreadful things I feel without  
 even knowing what they are. May God and Ellis help me.

January 5th. 1906. Fort Elliot.

A runner has just come in from Ellis saying he is really ill,  
 and being carried in here as quickly as the men can managed up and  
 down these infernal hills. He ought to be here in three days. He  
 tells me to send in to Kissembi for a doctor. I did this within  
 fifteen minutes of the arrival of the runner. Mahomed says the run-  
 ner will reach Kissembi tomorrow, so the doctor ought to be here al-  
 most as soon as Ellis is. Poor old Ellis, I do hope he's not too  
 bad. It is almost impossible to imagine him ill, he is the embodi-  
 ment of life and mental strength, and gives one the impression that  
 nothing could defeat him. They ought to have a doctor out here -  
 it's rough luck on the men right away from head-quarters; no one  
 seems to mind what happens to them. If they slip up they get hauled  
 over the coals all right, but as long as they don't make an obvious

mess of things they are left absolutely to themselves - pieces of humanity cut off from the mass and flung away into remote bush to rot or worry through as best they can. One can't be surprised if men in these circumstances go under. Human beings are mostly gregarious, and enforced solitude is morally detrimental to the average man. I don't suppose I should ever have stood revealed unless I had been left absolutely to myself. I shall feel a different creature once I have shoved my confession on to Ellis. I firmly believe he is the only man who can help me, and I somehow feel that when once he knows I shall get all right again.

January 9th.

Ellis was brought in at mid-day. I couldn't even go out to meet him, as Mari (the Chief) brought in the bodies of some of his men who were murdered about twenty miles to the south, in Kathais' country. I had to see him at once, but told him I would speak to Ellis about it. Mari wants me to go out with some police, and as Ellis is ill I expect I shall have to, though of course I can't budge till the doctor comes. I thought Ellis was dead when they brought him in - he looks awful, has fallen away to nothing, and is so weak he can't even raise himself. He was seedy when he left, and gradually got worse and worse, and of course took no care of himself. He suffers horribly. If only he doesn't die! After the attacks of pain, and before the opium has taken effect, he looks like a dead man. Pray God the doctor comes before it's too late.

January 10th.

The doctor (Fergusson, a Scotchman) arrived at 1 a.m. this morn-

ing having got through from Kissembi in twenty-four hours - pretty good going. He is going to take Ellis into Kissembi and put him in hospital - says if he leaves him here he won't have a chance of recovery, as he would be worried from morning till night with station and native affairs, and that the only thing is to get him right away. It must be a matter of at least a month before he is fit to return, and meanwhile there seems little or no chance that another man will be sent out. I shall have to manage single-handed as best I can - it's a bit rough on the station as well as on myself.

January 16th.

They have gone - left yesterday morning, and here am I alone once more. Poor old Ellis, he little knows what it means to me! He was much too sick for me to mention my own worries to him, though he just managed to tell me one or two things he wants me to do. "A splendid chance", he called my being left in charge of a district after only a few months in the country; ~~and~~ he says he will make a point of sending in a special report about it on his return. I don't feel very sanguine, but, after all, a month isn't very long, and I shall hang on somehow. Once Ellis is back my difficulties will be over. He was awfully decent to me; said I was just the sort he liked having with him, and he told me to go slow and not to take things too <sup>much</sup> (to heart. As regards Mari's murdered men, he says he believes it is a put up job, as Mari has always hated and been jealous of Kathai. He says I had better take twenty men and go straight out to Kathai, and enquire both en route and there what the truth of the matter is. Fighting is, he says, quite out of the question, and the twenty men are merely to make a show. I ought to be able to do this

all right. Ellis told me among other things that when I travelled I should always leave Sergeant Mahomed here - he is absolutely to be trusted and he will see that no hanky-panky goes on in the Station during my absence. All the same I wish I could take him with me; he is such a splendidly plucky chap, and he knows this country and the natives inside out. I mean to start the day after to-morrow.

January 26th.

I have been and come back - and I never thought I could be as thankful to see any place as I was when I got the first view, about an hour away, of Fort Elliot. The whole thing has been a nightmare, and I don't believe I slept a wink during my week of absence. The going was very bad, and when we got to Kathai's, on the second day, we had to do another march into the heart of his country to the place where the men were killed. What first roused my suspicions was that Kathai made excuses not to accompany ~~us~~<sup>us</sup> - said it would be better for him not to be there as I wanted to consult the elders of the villages concerned, and his presence might prevent their speaking the truth. True, he sent his head-man with us as guide, and to arrange for food for the men and porters, and he sent a small following of his own picked spear-men. I could not refuse these latter, as they were sent as a sort of guard of honour for me, but their presence made me distinctly uncomfortable. In the first place, they seemed to think they must hang about me, and even in camp if I walked a few yards from my tent, two or three of them rose like spirits from under my feet and shadowed me wherever I went. I complained to the Corporal, but he said they did it by Kathai's orders; he had told them to take great care of me; no white man had ever been injured

in his country, and he didn't intend, if he could help it, that one ever should be.

We camped close to the village where Mari's men were killed, and the elders and all the natives, thousands of them, evil-looking and evil-smelling, came in for the palaver. It was an affaire d'amour: Mari's men were after some of Toki's (the chief elder) women; they got into Toki's hut at night, and he actually found them with his third and fourth wives. Naturally, and according to native law justly, he killed them on the spot. Toki, the artful, had smelt a rat, and had hidden six of his own spearmen in the village, and these six armed men had made short work of the three unarmed ones. Toki himself sent the bodies in to Kathai, who forwarded them, with a warning, to Mari. There seemed no doubt that this was the truth; the erring ladies were produced for my inspection, and they made no secret of their unfaithfulness. Toki offered them to me as a present, and seemed rather hurt that I declined to accept them. As it was fairly late by the time everyone had had his say we decided to stay where we found ourselves for the night. Stacks of food and firewood were brought in for us, and no sooner had the moon risen than the native drums began to beat, and dances were started on every hill and market place. The row was awful, but it was the unceasing, regular rhythm of the drums that led me to believe that the dances were only a mask for what was really a call to arms. Each individual drummer drummed the same call on his drum; it started close to our camp, and we could hear it, faint and far away, on the furthest hill - the same, always the same. The thing beat itself into my brain until I was certain it meant mischief. Hundreds of natives were still in and round our camp, some mixed with my men, some standing in groups, all talking volubly. I gave orders for



them all to leave at once. Corporal Juma seemed surprised, but my order was promptly obeyed. I then doubled the guards and fires, gave out extra ammunition, and told all the sentries to report to me personally every hour. Acquiescent silence, mingled with blank amazement, met my orders. I made no attempt to undress but sat in my tent, my revolver on the table, my rifle across my knees. The drumming persisted, and the shrill cries of the dancers rose and fell as the night wore away. By midnight however, all was quiet. The only sounds I could hear from my tent were an occasional click of a rifle as the sentry brought it down to stand at ease, the crackling of the fires, rising to a roar as they were replenished, and the yawns and whispers of the men as they changed guards. Several times I emerged and inspected the camp myself. Only I and the sentries were awake - profound sleep held everyone else silent. Towards four o'clock it began to drizzle, not real rain, but a white, wet mist, which descended like a sheet of cotton wool and wiped out everything. At six o'clock when I wanted to break camp the mist was still impenetrable. It was a grand chance for the natives; only our guide knew the path, and in the thick mist he might easily miss it - he might even do so intentionally. He had slept in Toki's village - what if Toki had bribed him to mis-lead us? He suggested that we should delay our start, and this in itself looked to me as if there were some evil plot on foot. Corporal Juma, much to my surprise, was anxious I should fall in with this suggestion, and himself stated that it was easy to miss a path - all native paths being so much alike - when one could not see the guiding landmarks of hills, forests etc.

At 6.30 I was so jumpy I could wait no longer. The porters were sitting humped up in dreary circles round their fire; the men stood about cold and wet, and, I believe, as anxious as myself to be

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gone. I gave the order to start, and off we set in single file, down the slippery, greasy path. Man-high bush shut us in on either side, and nothing could be seen. The wet mist lay motionless over everything. I felt suffocating, and as if I were caught in a trap. Waller's tales of the natives who hid in the bush along the paths and fired poisoned arrows as one passed came back to me; and our own powerlessness in such circumstances was apparent. What could we do? Nothing at all - we could not even be certain we were on the right path. Suppose we were being led into an ambush to be murdered, tortured and mutilated by the natives! All sorts of horrors filled my mind. Robertsen, at the coast, had told me of white men being murdered for the sake of certain portions of their anatomy which the witch doctors needed to make medicine with. And who would know if we were murdered? It would be days, if not weeks, before the news would reach Kissembi. We were cut off entirely, with no chance of help or rescue.

I was so deep in these miserable thoughts that it came as a start to me to find ourselves on the top of a ridge of hills and in bright sunlight. The mist had dropped away like a shed garment, and lay in floating wisps over the bottom of the valley. I breathed a sigh of relief - we could not only see our path now but also our surroundings, and it was comforting to be convinced that we were really going in the right direction. We proceeded much more cheerfully, but to my horror the guide stopped suddenly an hour later and said he had lost the way. A tunnel of greenery surrounded us - nothing was to be seen in any direction. The guide was quite undisturbed, and said we must turn back, and that in about half an hour we should strike the path. All my old fears rushed in on me again, doubled by the fact that I was convinced I heard a rustling in the bushes, a rustling which

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moved along with us. This was the cul-de-sac - we had been led to a place where defence was impossible, where we could not see either friends or enemies. Every moment I expected to hear the ping of an arrow - I almost felt it quivering and stinging in my flesh. On and on we went, turning and twisting, but never emerging from the sea of thick bush. At last I could stand it no more - I knew I should be the one to be murdered, there was no escape for me. Once I was hit it was all over. How could I disguise myself, efface myself, become as a black man? Suddenly a solution came; my khaki was protective - thus clothed my body might have belonged to a policeman, it was only my white Ellwood helmet that made me distinguishable, for all the coloured men wore red fezes. Corporal Juma was immediately in front of me; I touched him on the shoulder and said, "I want to wear your fez; take my helmet and wear it yourself." He immediately obeyed, but a look of such comprehension passed over his face that I felt in a moment he knew my vile secret. At the time he said nothing, but when we had been going for about an hour, he turned towards me with a reassuring smile, and said "These natives are good; they would not harm either white man or any Government servant. There is no need for fear".

I do not know what I replied, for I was by no means convinced. From now on Corporal Juma kept up a running conversation with me and the guide, and before long it was apparent that we were anyhow on the right road, for we crossed one of the rivers Kathai's men had bridged for us the day before. The sun came out blazingly hot, and with no protection for my neck I began to feel faint and queer. Suddenly all went black before me, and down I went. The last thing I remember was thinking I had after all been hit without knowing it. When I came to, Juma was bending over me; he had forced some water between

my lips, and when he saw I was conscious he said,

"Your helmet is close to you; we are only a hundred yards from Kathai's village; he is sending men down to carry you in".

So I was not hit, only faint from the sun - and Juma knew I was a coward. Kathai himself came bustling down, but with Juma's arm I walked the remaining few yards, and after a rest and good night felt none the worse physically - mentally I was paralysed with shame. I managed to finish the palaver with Kathai the next morning, and told him that I was most satisfied with his people and all they had done for me. We did a short march that afternoon, and in to Fort Eliot next day. Now what I want to know is, are the men talking of me and laughing at my cowardice. I don't even know how many of them saw that I was wearing Juma's fez. What will he do? Of course he is bound to tell; no black man can hold his tongue, even when it is to his own advantage to do so. I am ashamed to show my face, and yet I must go out and about as if nothing had happened. This is indeed a nice way to keep up the traditions of Ellis, and the prestige of the white man! Can I ever retrieve what I have lost? If only Ellis were here I might still have a chance.

### February 2nd.

It is over a fortnight since Ellis left - with luck he ought to be back in a couple of weeks. I have had no news of him except one note written two days after he reached Kissembi. -----

The mail is just in, and with it a letter from Ellis. Allah be praised, he is almost well, and says though the doctors insist on his remaining for his full month, he will start on the 15th without fail. With this certainty to look forward to I feel I can carry on - nothing seems to matter as it did. The men do think a lot of Ellis;

after the arrival of every mail Mahomed, with a peering crowd behind him, has come up to ask the news. When I told him just now that Ellis would be leaving Kissembi in less than two weeks he was quite overcome with relieved delight. He said,

"We black men don't care for hospitals; it so often happens that the doctors wish to cut some part of you off when you are in hospital - they send you to sleep whole, and you wake up with only one arm, or perhaps, a hole in your stomach, and Allah alone knows what they have taken out. We feared for "Ever-Ready", though we well know he has never feared for himself. Praises be to Allah that he returns so soon".

I saw some of the Chiefs this afternoon, and told them they must hurry up with their hut tax as Ellis will be back so soon. From the 1st January till the end of the financial year, (31st March) the bulk of the hut tax comes in. The native ever procrastinates, and he naturally leaves the payment of his tax till the eleventh hour, and this year he seems to be leaving it till the twelfth. It is extraordinary, and a thing one never realises in western countries, what a colossal influence one human being can have. Ellis is a force as strong and unwavering as gravity - his presence here keeps natives at the distance of a hundred miles in hand. His word is law. He is a veritable god. His absence, even when he is in Kissembi, causes a visible alteration in the natives, and also in our own men. They are less inclined to obey; they are insistent with impossible demands; they are slack because of the temporary removal of a strong and dominating moral force. They vert with incredible rapidity, and it is their susceptibility to individual influence which hastens this. The right man can do everything, even his mistakes are successes. The wrong man can only do harm, for his right actions, being performed by himself, become disasters.

February 28th.

It is all over with me - Ellis is not coming back. At the last moment he had a relapse, and as his leave was long over-due the doctors have bundled him home for six months. He is very sick about it - didn't want to go, but as they told him he anyhow wouldn't be allowed to return here owing to the bad water and absence of a doctor, he had to give in. Today he actually sailed. He wrote me a much too decent letter, and said he would put it most strongly that another man, and a senior one at that, should be sent out here at once. He said lots of decent things about me and my work - God, if he only knew what I really am! And yet he's such a splendid fellow that I am sure he would help and not despise me. All I know is that unless that other chap arrives soon, I shall probably do something final - desert and make for Kissembi, or resign, in fact do anything to get away from myself - the self which possesses me when I am alone.

Mahomed nearly broke down when I told him Ellis had gone home. Every single man in the Station looks gloomy; the natives, on the contrary have assumed a jaunty, and devil-may-care attitude. I only hope they don't mean to give trouble. The hut tax has been pouring in since I told the Chiefs of Ellis's immediate return; it remains to be seen what will happen now he isn't coming.

March 20th.

I haven't had the heart to write lately, chiefly I suppose, because if I write truthfully it must be to my own discredit. There has been no word of the new man - if he doesn't arrive by the end of the month I must write in and say I decline to remain alone here any longer. I can't do it - at times I feel positively ill and just like

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turning my back to the wall and having done with it all. When I go out in the Station the men look knowingly at one another as I pass; the very children stop at their play and whisper. If I turn my head I almost see the finger of scorn pointed at me. I ought to go into the district - the hut tax has ceased coming in altogether, and we are still thousands of rupees short of our estimated revenue - but I daren't go. I am sure the natives are restless; certainly those who come into the Station show that things are not as usual with them, as if I go among them they will very likely rise and wipe us out. The Chiefs always have difficulty in keeping the spear-men in order, and next month is anyhow the one in which it is the custom for murders to be perpetrated by the Wa-kiki. They get a sort of lust for blood, and just go out and kill anyone that's handy. Ellis told me about it, and said it was almost impossible to stop. If he couldn't stop it what can I do?

April 14th.

Mahomed came to see me in my house today; he beat about the bush a good deal and said he hoped I would not be offended with him, and that he knew I had only been a short time in the country etc.etc. It then came out that he wants me to travel. He says neither the men nor the natives understand my staying in the Fort. Ellis travelled every month, and as he was always popping up unexpectedly in remote corners of the district the natives were afraid of misbehaving, as if they did he invariably turned up and caught them out. He hinted there might be trouble if the district is left to itself much longer. So my surmise is correct - the natives are about to rise. Mahomed knows it, and even he and the men are getting nervous. I

told Mahomed I would consider what he had said and let him know what decision I come to. How can I decide? I can't face travelling through this awful bush, marching in a trap the door of which may close on me any minute - I daren't sleep in a tent, only a flimsy piece of canvas between me and the natives with their spears and arrows. I couldn't face the crowds of hostile looking natives, men, women and children, which would press round me and hem me in in every camp. Their sinister drums and shrill voices would drive me mad. Here in the Fort I have at least a stone house to live in; I can shut doors and windows and feel secure from everyone but myself. After all no one but myself knows what I endure when I am alone. I cannot bare the dark now, and my lamp burns brightly all the night - if the flame flickers I wake with a start, if a step approaches my house my revolver is cocked and ready.

When will the answer come to my letter demanding that someone be sent out? I would rather suffer any indignity, rather be under the heel of my greatest enemy, rather be branded as coward from one end of the country to the other than continue to remain here alone.

April 16th.

The answer has come - it is what I felt all along it would be. So many men have gone on leave that at present there is literally no one to send. Every man in the country is doing at least two men's work, and one is lucky if it's not three or four. Collins, the Acting First Secretary (everyone is "acting", as nearly all the heads of departments are on leave) writes very decently, says Ellis spoke so highly of me that though he knows it is a pretty hard job for a man who has been so short a time in the country to run a district like this, he is sure I shall manage all right. He says it



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won't be for more than three months at the outside - promises for July at the latest, and says if I would like a change of Station when the new man comes, he will do his best to fix it up for me. Says if I am in any difficulty I am to write to him and he will help in any way he can. The only difficulty I am in, I can't write about - at least not to him.

April 29th.

Mahomed has been to me again. There have been a series of murders out north, and Mari has been in to say he is having so much trouble with his people, that if I don't visit his district he can't be answerable for the consequences. The natives at a distance all believe that Fort Eliot has been abandoned because there has been no travelling since Ellis left. On the other side of the Zara River raiding has started, and beyond Kathai's a number of women have been collared. The whole district is closing in round me; the trap of circumstances has been well laid, and the mouth of it is slowly being drawn to. Mahomed himself is really anxious - he assures me that if I go he will be responsible for the safety of the Fort, but he said plainly if I do not go, anything might happen. Natives are peculiar people, very sensitive to feel any change of conditions, and though when first Ellis left it was possible to put them off with their demands till his return, it is now known that he is not coming back, and something must not only be done but done immediately. -----

My decision is taken; I have told Mahomed that directly the Station accounts and the monthly report are finished I will go on tour. I allow a week for finishing things here. I have told him he may tell the men and Chiefs that I now mean to travel, and I have told him to see that a good lot of porters are ready for me on the

5th May. It is the only thing to do, but how I shall get through with it God knows. I cannot see all Ellis's work going to blazes - the foundations of it are already cracking, and once they go beyond a certain distance it will mean beginning at the beginning all over again. Since Ellis first fought his way in here three years ago he has held the Wa-kiki in the hollow of his hand; he has punished them when necessary, but having felt the heaviness of his avenging hand they have given him little trouble. Of course holding them has been a constant strain - a taut strain which might snap at any point, and Ellis himself told me that these people are so tricky you can never be sure of them. Your only chance is never to relax your vigilance for a day, and never to pass over an act of disobedience. You must be aware of everything that is going on, and you must be on the spot directly any trouble starts. You must know more than they do, and you must act and strike with unfailing promptitude. To appear and punish before the culprit thinks you can even have heard of his wrong doing; to come to the help of the weak in their moment of need; to prevent disobedience and insubordination by your constant presence in districts of unrest; to show your trust of the loyal, as well as your knowledge of the double-dealer - I know it all; I know what I ought to do. Sitting here I can think it all out as I know Ellis would wish me to act. I can see myself starting out to do it - it is the end I cannot see.

May 21st.

Why did I ever come here? Why did I ever try to accomplish what I knew I must fail to achieve? Why did I not write definitely to Collins, as I made up my mind I would, to say I could not go on alone

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here. It has all been a hideous failure and I am branded coward as visibly as Cain was branded murderer.

It began badly - the porters, a sullen looking lot, arrived on the 5th, but deserted to a man during the night. The 6th and the 7th were spent beating up a new lot. The Chiefs came in in great distress saying their men refused to travel with me. Finally the requisite number were got together, and on the morning of the 8th I started. I took thirty police and a large quantity of extra ammunition, meaning to do a circular tour and be away a full three weeks. Instead of this I was back in a week, and I know now I shall never dare to leave the shelter of the Fort again. The men and natives know this too.

On the first day out five porters threw their loads in the bush and bolted. The police brought the loads in, and from the first camp we supplied the place of the deserters. Every day something untoward happened, and on the fourth day one of the porters had some sort of a fit and died. This did the trick - the other men stood out and refused to carry any more. The faithful Corporal Juma assured me that if I would go on with the advance guard he would bring the recalcitrate porters along, so I finally started. After a good three hours march we halted for the caravan to arrive. At the end of a long wait it came. Juma's methods, though drastic, had been efficacious. The porters were tied together in groups of five - tied with their own reams from neck to neck, one policeman in charge of each batch of five men. The march had been very slow, for the porters had been compelled, their reams being in use as fetters, to carry their loads on their heads, and not, as they usually do, on their backs. Their necessary proximity to one another further impeded their going. I must confess I was horrified to see my caravan arrive

in this wise, but Juma insisted, and even on arrival in camp kept the porters tied together. We started off in the same order the following morning, but after an hour's going - we were well into the district of the murders - I noticed that there were no natives working in the plantations as there usually are, neither did we meet with any along the road. Instead of this the surrounding hills were covered with people, and momentarily, their numbers were swelling. The farther we went, the blacker the hills appeared - black, only relieved by the glinting of spears in the sunshine. I called my men to halt, I felt I must wait for Juma. We stood on a grassy knoll under the shadow of a large fig tree. I could not take my eyes from the thickly covered hills. As I watched, the natives began to descend, at least so I thought. They appeared to be approaching slowly and shutting us in on all sides. This was more than I could stand. I hurriedly told my men to re-form, and started back, on the road we had just traversed to meet the caravan. The men were obliged to obey me, though my orderly begged me to remain where we were. He assured me that things were all right, and that our only danger lay in retreating - he said:

"The Wa-kiki are all cowards; they are like hyaenas, and never attack anyone who shows fight".

I would not listen to him, but set off as fast as my trembling legs would take me down the hill we had just climbed. I saw myself taken prisoner by these ant-like swarms of natives, and done to death in some hideous manner. I saw myself bound in their midst, subject to indignities and torture, finally cast out broken and mutilated to the hyaenas and vultures. Horror obsessed me, and as I stumbled on I heard - and this was a reality - the shrill war cry of the natives who were bearing down on us in the rear. My one idea