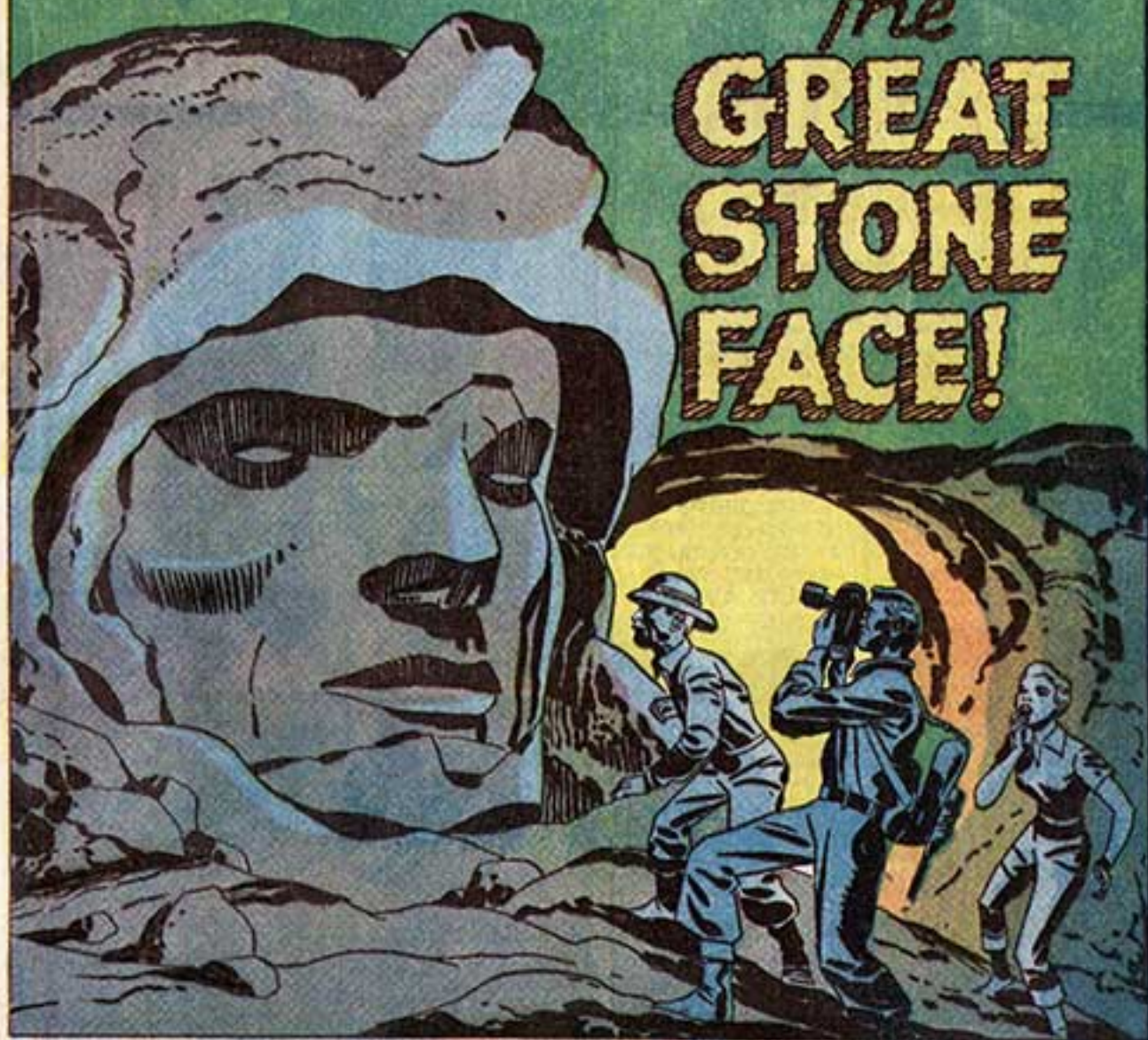


WHAT WAS THE INCREDIBLE MYSTERY OF

# The GREAT STONE FACE!



ALL WE COULD SAY WHEN WE FOUND IT WAS...



BUT A  
STATUE LIKE  
THAT--IN THE  
HEART OF  
AFRICA!

IT ISN'T  
ANCIENT  
EGYPTIAN,  
BABYLONIAN,  
OR OF ANY  
KNOWN ORIGIN!



THE  
KAZIRI TRIBE-  
MEN DIDN'T  
CARVE IT, THAT'S  
A CINCH!

TRUE.  
BUT THE  
KAZIRI  
HAVE A  
MYSTERY OF  
THEIR  
OWN!



MISTER VAN REIK, WHOM MY FATHER, PROFESSOR MATTHEW HOLDEN HAD HIRED TO GUIDE OUR PARTY TO THE KAZIRI COUNTRY, JOINED US IN THE CAVE OF THE STATUE!

YES. THEY ARE DIFFERENT FROM ANY OTHER TRIBE IN AFRICA!

VAN REIK!  
YOU KNOW MORE ABOUT THEM THAN ANY OTHER MAN!



I DISCOVERED THE KAZIRI! AS FAR AS I KNOW, I WAS THE FIRST OUTSIDER THE KAZIRI HAD EVER SEEN! THEY NEVER LEAVE THIS TERRITORY... IT'S A LAW OF THEIR RELIGION!

AND A STRANGE RELIGION IT MUST BE FROM WHAT YOU'VE TOLD ME! NOW WHAT ABOUT THESE CEREMONIES YOU MENTIONED?



FIRST THINGS FIRST, SIR! WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO SEE WHAT THEY'RE DOING TO YOUR JEEP?

THE JEEP?  
GOOD GRAY!  
THOSE CURIOUS SAVAGES WILL MAKE A MESS OF IT!



OUR JEEP HAD STALLED WHEN WE'D COME TO THE VILLAGE. NOW, THE KAZIRI WERE SWARMING ABOUT IT LIKE FLIES... CHATTERING LOUDLY AND USING THE TOOLS FROM OUR KIT...

SEE HERE, YOU SCOUNDRELS... GET AWAY FROM THAT CAR!



FATHER WAS VERY UPSET... THAT IS, UNTIL CARL MOFFET, HIS ASSISTANT, EXAMINED THE JEEP...

QUICK, CARL... WHAT'S THE DAMAGE?

DAMAGE?  
WHY, SHE PURRS LIKE A KITTEN!



YOU SEE, PROFESSOR... THEY FIXED IT! THESE PRIMITIVE PEOPLE WHO NEVER SAW A CAR... OR USED A MODERN TOOL!



THEY NEVER USED THEM... BUT THEY HANDLE MODERN TOOLS LIKE EXPERT MECHANICS!



IT SEEMED THAT WE'D STUMBLERD ON SOMETHING SO IMPORTANT THAT ALL THE HISTORY BOOKS WOULD HAVE TO BE REWRITTEN. THAT'S WHAT MISTER VAN REIK TOLD ME LATER...

I-I DON'T UNDERSTAND THE FULL MEANING OF IT, MISTER VAN REIK!

I CAN ONLY TELL YOU WHAT I SUSPECT, MISS!



THAT'S WHY I TOLD YOUR FATHER ABOUT THIS PLACE. HE'S QUALIFIED TO FIND THE REAL STORY BEHIND ALL THIS!

YOU KEEP YOUR RIFLE IN CONSTANT READINESS! ARE YOU EXPECTING TROUBLE?



YES, I THINK SO! I'M SORRY YOU INSISTED ON COMING ALONG!

BUT THE KAZIRI AREN'T WAR-LIKE. THEY DON'T EVEN HAVE ANY WEAPONS!



THAT JUST MEANS THAT THEY ARE STRONG...POWERFUL... LIKE THE ELEPHANT OR LION, WHO HAVE NO NATURAL ENEMIES! WHAT IS THE WEAPON THAT MAKES THE KAZIRI SO STRONG?



THE DEEPENING MYSTERY OF THE KAZIRI PEOPLE AND THE GREATER MYSTERY OF THE STATUE IN THE CAVE FILLED ME WITH DREAD. THAT NIGHT, THE DRUMS BEGAN TO BOOM...



WE WERE OUT OF OUR TENTS IN SHORT ORDER. MISTER VAN REIK, WITH RIFLE IN HAND, WAS SPEAKING HURRIEDLY TO FATHER...

THIS IS IT, PROFESSOR...THE CEREMONY THEY TALK ABOUT!

YOU MEAN -- THE SOUND THAT COMES EVERY THOUSAND YEARS?



IT COMES FROM THE STATUE...ONCE EVERY THOUSAND YEARS!!

BUT WHAT IS THIS SOUND?

WHAT A STROKE OF LUCK FOR US TO HAVE COME AT THIS TIME!



IT WAS LIKE NO TRIBAL CEREMONY I'D EVER SEEN. TO ME IT LOOKED MORE LIKE A DRESS PARADE AT WEST POINT... PRIMITIVE SAVAGES ENGAGED IN CLOSE ORDER DRILL...



WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF IT, PROFESSOR? YOU'VE BEEN STUDYING THEM...

IT'S BEGINNING TO FORM A PICTURE! THEIR HEAD-DRESSES... MADE OF ANIMAL SKINS AND WOVEN GRASS... ARE PRIMITIVE COPIES OF HELMETS FOR TECHNICIANS... PILOTS... CREWMEN...



TECHNICIANS WITH NOTHING TO SERVICE... PILOTS WITH NOTHING TO FLY!

NOT FOR COUNTLESS CENTURIES! LOOK AT THE CHIEF... HIS HEAD-DRESS... HIS SUIT OF SKINS...



DON'T YOU SEE WHAT IT REPRESENTS? A SPACE SUIT! THESE PEOPLE ONCE MADE CONTACT WITH BEINGS FROM OUTER SPACE!



I COULDN'T BELIEVE DAD WAS SERIOUS... BUT HE WAS! THEN HE TURNED TOWARD THE CAVE...

THE PROOF LIES IN THE STATUE... TO THE CAVE... QUICKLY!

THE KAZIRI MAY NOT WANT US IN THERE RIGHT NOW!



SWIFTLY WE RAN TO THE GREAT WALL OF THE CLIFF RISING ABOVE THE KAZIRI VILLAGE. FATHER HAD EVIDENTLY DONE SOME PREVIOUS INVESTIGATION OF IT... FOR HE REACHED INTO A HIDDEN CREVICE AND PULLED SOMETHING INSIDE. SUDDENLY, A HUGE DOOR OPENED!

WHAT IS THIS PLACE... HOW DID YOU FIND IT?

WHEN I REALIZED WHAT I WAS LOOKING FOR!



WE HURRIED DOWN IMMENSE SILENT CORRIDORS AND GARGantuan ROOMS WHICH HONEYCOMBED THE INTERIOR OF THE CLIFF. IT WAS LIKE A VAST UNDERGROUND CITY... AND WE SCURRIED IN ITS CORNERS LIKE INTRUDING ANTS...

HERE IS WHERE THEY TEACH THEIR MECHANICS... BLUEPRINTS MEMORIZED BY EACH GENERATION!



THERE WAS NO END TO THIS IMMENSE PLACE. WE CLIMBED GIANT STEPS AND RODE UPWARD IN COLLOSAL ELEVATORS UNTIL WE EMERGED IN WHAT DAD CALLED "A CONTROL ROOM..."



NO! THE STATUE! OR THE PART OF HIM YOU DON'T SEE FROM ABOVE!

THEN-- H--HE WAS ONCE-- ALIVE!



CORRECTION! *IS* ALIVE! HE IS IN SUSPENDED ANIMATION... HIS HEART BEATS ONCE EVERY THOUSAND YEARS!



THAT WAS THE SOUND THE KAZIRI LISTENED TO EVERY THOUSAND YEARS. I REMEMBER SCREAMING AS THE WORDS SANK IN. I REMEMBER RUNNING WITH DAD, CARL AND MISTER VAN REIK... RACING THROUGH HALLS OVER 100,000 YEARS OLD AND INTO THE COOL, CLEAR NIGHT OUTSIDE...



THE KAZIRI CAME AFTER US WITH SOMETHING THAT IGNITED THE WHOLE JUNGLE AND SET IT ON FIRE. HOW WE ESCAPED I'LL NEVER KNOW TILL THIS DAY...



BUT I'LL NEVER FORGET THE SINGLE BOOMING THUMP THAT CAME FROM THE GIANT'S CHEST... AND THE GUST OF WIND CAUSED BY THE INHALE AND EXHALE OF ONE BREATH TAKEN AFTER A THOUSAND YEARS...



NOR THAT FRACTION OF A SECOND WHEN THOSE GREAT IMMOBILE EYES CAME ALIVE TO WATCH US AS WE RAN... EYES THAT STILL WAIT AND WATCH THE WORLD... FOR WHAT?

