

minutes, we mourned for our guide. But it is one of the fixed laws of travel in a foodless, fireless, houseless, roadless land that no feeling, however sacred, can be indulged, *standing still*. "Move on!" That is Alpha and Omega as you must learn them there, provided you wish to remain You. So it was that, cursing Caliban lightly for the bad heart that was in him and for his evil face, yet hoping he might not suffer on his long journey homeward, we saddled up and began to spear a way outward and onward.

We said we must travel south-westward—toward Rudok—and we hoped to find trace of some path, or an occasional pile of stones laid by the hand of man. It was a grievous job, I remember, getting out of the valley. The gorge, which was its vermiform appendix, was attempted by us, but refused us admission, scattering boulder behind boulder. So we turned away from it, and climbed out, having to unload the ponies and man-handle our goods in the first quarter mile, covering, all told, about a mile of progress in three hours of labour. Some of the ponies were badly shaken up and bruised from falling, but we had lost none. Here, as in the Polu gorge, Mohammed Joo ranged on the field, a valorous Achilles, saving, not destroying.

More than once our most precious packs had trembled to their fall, as the ponies slipped and gripped against a thousand-foot roll down the luring slope, which seeing I, at the rear, unable to pass, could but cry out for our Achilles, who then, holding in some spider-fashion to the face of the steep, found his way to the point of peril, got foot-hold or hand-hold