Chapter II

"... DEAD MEN WORKING IN THE CANE FIELDS"

Pretty mulatto Julie had taken baby Marianne to bed. Constant Polynice and I sat late before the doorway of his chateau, talking of fires, demons, werewolves, and vampires, while a full moon, rising slowly, flooded the sloping cotton fields and the dark rolling hills beyond.

Polynice was a Haitian farmer, but he was no common jungle peasant. He lived on the island of La Gonave, where I shall return to him in later chapters. He seldom went over to the Haitian mainland, but he knew what was going on in Port-au-Prince, and spoke sometimes of installing a radio.

A countryman, half peasant born and bred, he was familiar with every superstition of the mountains and the plain, yet too intelligent to believe them literally true—or at least so I gathered from his talk.

He was interested in helping me toward an understanding of the tangled Haitian folk-lore. It was only by chance that we came presently to a subject which—though I refused for a long time to admit it—lies in a buffing category on the ragged edge of things which are beyond either superstition or reason. He had been telling me of five-people who left their skins at home and set the cane fields blazing; of the vampire, a woman sometimes living, sometimes dead, who sucked the blood of children and who could be distinguished because her hair always turned an ugly red; 1 of the werewolf—chæshe, in creole—a man or woman who

1 See Appendix, page 322.

... took the form of some animal, usually a dog, and went killing lambs, young goats, sometimes louses.

All this, I gathered, he considered to be pure superstition, as he told me with tolerant scorn how his friend and neighbor Osmann had one night seen a gray dog slinking with bloody jaws from his sheep-pen, and who, after having shot and exercised and buried it, was so convinced he had killed a certain girl named Uche who was generally reputed to be a chæshe that when he met her two days later on the path to Grande Source, he believed she was a ghost come back for vengeance, and fled howling.

As Polynice talked on, I reflected that these tales ran closely parallel not only with those of the negroes in Georgia and the Carolinas, but with the mediæval folklore of white Europe. Werewolves, vampires, and demons were certainly no novelty. But I recalled one creature I had been hearing about in Haiti, which sounded exclusively local—the zombie.

It seemed (or so I had been assured by negroes more credulous than Polynice) that while the zombie came from the grave, it was neither a ghost, nor yet a person who had been raised like Lazarus from the dead. The zombie, they say, is a soulless human corpse, still dead, but taken from the grave and endowed by sorcery with a mechanical semblance of life—it is a dead body which is made to walk and act and move as if it were alive. People who have the power to do this go to a fresh grave, dig up the body before it has had time to rot, galvanize it into movement, and then make of it a servant or slave, occasionally for the commission of some crime, more often simply as a drudge around the habitation or the farm, setting it dull heavy tasks, and bearing it like a dumb beast if it slackens.

As this was revolving in my mind, I said to Polynice: "It seems to me that these werewolves and vampires are first cousins to those we have at home, but I have never, except in Haiti, heard of anything like zombies. Let us
DEAD MEN WORKING

..."

BLACK SOCIETY

Erica and I were having a conversation about something we both care a lot about — the way people are treated in the workplace.

"I think it's important to have a safe and respectful environment," Erica said. "Do you agree?

"Absolutely," I replied. "We all deserve to be treated with dignity and respect."

Erica nodded. "Exactly. And it goes beyond just the workplace. We need to address how we treat people in society as a whole."

I agreed. "Yes, and that's why I really admire your work with the Black Society. It's making a real difference."

"Thank you," Erica said. "It's been a tough road, but we're making progress."

I leaned in closer. "Tell me more about your work."

Erica smiled. "Well, we're focused on empowering people and creating a safe space for everyone. We believe in the power of unity and collaboration."

I nodded. "That's amazing. How can I support your work?

"Just spread the word," Erica said. "And maybe even consider volunteering. It's a great way to make a difference."

I agreed. "I will definitely do that. Thanks for telling me about your work."

Erica laughed. "You're welcome. It's been nice chatting with you."

I smiled back. "Likewise. It was great talking to you."
I accepted, you see, and I work on and
I am known.
I work on and
I am known.

I am known.

I am known.

I am known.
If you do not know how to make this copy—or if you think

"I can't fix this."

the copy," he said, "I'll try to help you."

"But I don't know how to make a copy," she said.

"Well, I can do it for you." He handed her a black-and-white print of the copy and said, "This is what you need."
and unofficially so that he might keep his royal back turned and his royal eyes closed on that night. Kebreau was the brown-skinned Haitian Lieutenant-Chief of Gendarmerie for the Croix de Bouquet district, but unofficially he was political "king" of the Cul-de-Sac plain. Kebreau knew that Dort was a papato, Dieron a haspan. Kebreau knew the location of their haunts and knew that from time to time ceremonials technically against the law occurred there. Kebreau knew everything. But Kebreau was not active in persecuting the religion of his own devoted peasants. I am not suggesting that Kebreau was false to his uniform or that he connived overtly in the breaking of the law; he was one of the most conscientious gendarme officers in Haiti, but he couldn't stamp out Voodoo if he had wished, and why should he try when many of the wisest and most efficient white captains and lieutenants of other rural districts closed their eyes to many things that went on continually around them—when at Leogane, for instance, and in a village just east of Gonaives there were unburned mystery houses, obvious and unmissable, within clear sight of the great highway over which the motor cars of white generals frequently passed.  

But it was a duty of courtesy to inform Kebreau unofficially, a matter of good faith, as Dort and Dieron explained; so on Thursday morning they were going to tell him.

Thursday night late, a man came in to Port-au-Prince from Orblanche, finding my house and asking for Louis, with the message that everything was spoiled—that Kebreau for some unaccountable reason had told them they must not do it.

I was unhappy, and so was Louis. During the night, lying awake, it occurred to me that Kebreau might have heard they planned to have a white man present, and for that...