

JOE WIGHT

STEAMBUSTERS



WIGHT

STEAMRAIDERS PRESENTS STEAMBUSTERS

"STEAMBUSTERS and THE LADY & THE TIGER"
(Part Two) Story & Art by Joe Wight



Jia Song

Fascinated by both the study of science and the supernatural, Jia pursues both to the exclusion of all other philosophies. Introverted and clinical, Jia sees little advantage in social interaction. She is the primary inventor, but Jia and Emma have collaborated on several ghost-hunting devices.

Gwendoline Moffet

Determined and defiant, Gwen is known for her loyalty to her friends and her big mouth. While innovative and brilliant, she is less interested in study and drawn to adventure. Gwen is one of the chief test pilots for her father, Brian Moffet, the famous designer and entrepreneur, owner of MOFFETWORKS.

Emma Winter

Born with second sight, Emma is more aware of the mystical aspects of her surroundings than her two friends. Her interest in science is more a means to an end rather than a pursuit for knowledge. Pragmatic and empathetic, Emma often sees solutions and opportunities her two friends cannot.

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THE ENGLISH CHANNEL, SEVEN MILES NORTH OF MARGATE, 1893...



WH...?
WHAT
IN THE
WORLD?



CAN'T BE!
MOVIN'
AGAINST
THE WIND!

AN' JUST
LOOKIN' IS
GIVIN' ME
SHIVERS!
CAN'T HOPE
TO OTRUN IT,
NEITHER!



VINCE!
VINCE,
AIN'T YA
WATCHIN'?



WHAT IS IT,
REUBEN?
THAT!
THAT'S WHAT
IT IS, BOY!



RUDDY
GREAT
SQUALL,
HEADED
RIGHT FOR
US!

NEVER
SEEN THE
LIKE!

WEREN'T
THERE A
MINUTE
AGO!

WELL, IT'S
HERE NOW,
BOY!

BRING DOWN
THE MARKER,
AND BATTEN
ALL HATCHES!

WHATEVER
IT IS...



...IT'S BOUND
STRAIGHT FOR
LONDON!



MEANWHILE, ABOVE THE LONDON TOY SHOP OF BAO SONG...

LADIES, I DO NOT DOUBT YOUR DETERMINATION.

BUT THE SPIRIT MR. COOK HAS INADVERTENTLY RELEASED IS FAR TOO POWERFUL AND ANCIENT TO BE DEFEATED BY MORTAL BEINGS.

I FEAR THE WORST.

IT IS SAID THAT WHEN THE WARRIOR SOUL OF XANG TI IS FREE FROM ITS JADE PRISON, ZIAL THE DEMON SHALL RETURN TO THIS DIMENSION...

...RETURN TO DROWN MANKIND IN A SEA OF WOE.

WITH RESPECT, FATHER, IT'S JUST ANOTHER OLD LEGEND.

AFTER ALL, WE APPROACH THE 20TH CENTURY!

ISN'T IT FAR MORE LIKELY THAT SOMEONE HAS CONCEIVED AN ELABORATE SCHEME TO DO MR. COOK AN INJURY...OR WORSE?

AGREEP.

BUT WE MUST UNCOVER THE TRUTH!

AND I AM CONFIDENT THAT ANY SO-CALLED "DEMON" CAN BE SUBDUED BY SCIENCE!

SAY YOU SO, CHILD? THERE ARE STILL FORCES IN THIS WORLD FAR BEYOND WHAT YOUR QUAIN'T NEW RELIGION SHALL EVER FATHOM.

UM... ...YES, WELL, TELL US MORE, OLD ONE!

I AM SIXTY-TWO.

WELL DONE. PRAY, CONTINUE.



IN CHINA, ALMOST A THOUSAND YEARS AGO, THERE WAS AN AGE KNOWN AS THE FIVE DYNASTIES AND TEN KINGDOMS.

IT WAS VIOLENT AND MERCURIAL. WARLORDS AND ARMIES FOUGHT ACROSS THE LANDS.

ZHU YOUZHEN WAS THE EMPEROR, BUT MUCH OF THE HISTORY OF HIS REIGN WAS LATER DESTROYED BY THE TANG DYNASTY.

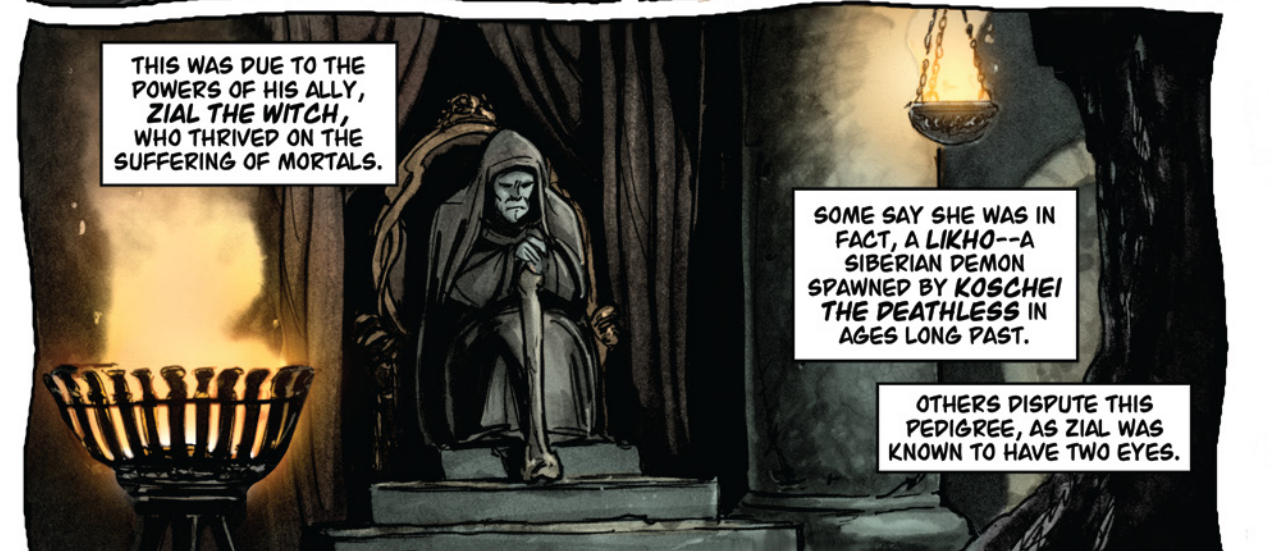


THE EMPEROR HAD MANY GENERALS. ONE WAS NAMED JUN TAI, THE INDESTRUCTIBLE.

HE WAS A FIERCE, RUTHLESS WARRIOR WHO, IT IS SAID, COULD NOT BE KILLED, NO MATTER WHAT WOUND HE MIGHT SUSTAIN IN BATTLE.



THIS WAS DUE TO THE POWERS OF HIS ALLY, ZIAL THE WITCH, WHO THRIVED ON THE SUFFERING OF MORTALS.



SOME SAY SHE WAS IN FACT, A LIKHO--A SIBERIAN DEMON SPAWNED BY KOSCHEI THE DEATHLESS IN AGES LONG PAST.

OTHERS DISPUTE THIS PEDIGREE, AS ZIAL WAS KNOWN TO HAVE TWO EYES.




BUT I
DIGRESS.

IN THE RANKS OF JUN
TAI'S ARMY, THERE
WAS A YOUNG WARRIOR
NAMED XANG TI.


HE WAS
NOBLE IN
ALL BUT
BLOODLINE.

HIS SOLDIERS NAMED
HIM HU TAI-- "THE
GREAT TIGER".




OF COURSE, THERE WAS
ALSO A PRINCESS INVOLVED.
HER NAME WAS LIN XIU, A
YOUNG NOBLEWOMAN FROM
JINGNAN WHO WAS VERY
BEAUTIFUL.

THE MORE XANG TI
LOOKED AT LIN XIU,
THE LESS HE
THOUGHT OF WAR.



IT WAS NOT LONG BEFORE
LIN XIU KNEW SHE LOVED
XANG TI AS WELL.



TOGETHER, THEY PLANNED
TO ABANDON JUN TAI'S
FORTRESS CITY FOREVER.

IF ONLY THAT
PLAN HAD
SUCCEEDED.