narrator, a newspaper correspondent, is traveling across India by second-class train when he meets Peachey Carnehan, a white man planning to extort money from a local prince.Dravot and Carnehan, disguised as a mad priest and his servant, depart for Kafiristan, secretly carrying with them twenty British Martini rifles.They are planning an expedition to conquer Kafiristan, and they would like the narrator to provide them with books and maps to plan their journey.The narrator agrees to do so because he and Carnehan are both Masons.Reluctantly, the narrator agrees to help them.

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