

minent peril of detection, was a prospect calculated to fill one with the frenzied delirium of a nightmare made real. Put yourself in his place, I ask you.

His slippered feet spurned the thin snow as he moved rapidly back toward the west. Ahead of him he could detect the clumped outlines of the taxicab, and at the sight of it he quickened to a trot. Once safely within it he could take stock of things; could map out a campaign of future action; could think up ways and means of extricating himself from his present lamentable case with the least possible risk of undesirable publicity. At any rate he would be shielded for the moment from the life which might at any moment awaken in the still sleeping and apparently vacant neighbourhood. Finally, of course, there was the hope that the drunken cabman might be roused, and once roused might be capable, under promise of rich financial reward, of conveying Mr. Leary to his bachelor apartments in West Eighty-fifth Street before dawn came, with its early-bird milkmen and its before-day newspaper distributors and its others too numerous to mention.

Without warning of any sort the cab started off, seemingly of its own volition. Mr. Leary's gait became a desperate gallop, and as he galloped he gave voice in entreaty.

"Hey there!" he shouted. "Wait, please. Here I am—here's your passenger!"

His straw hat blew off, but this was no time to stop for a straw hat. For a few rods he gained upon the vehicle, then as its motion increased he lost ground and ran a losing race. Its actions disclosed that a conscious if an uncertain hand guided its destinies.