

"It was greater than he deserved," I protested hoarsely. "He was not the man to meet a death like that."

"A man! He was a vampire!" said Godfrey sternly. "He lived on the lives of others. Don't let your sentimentalism blind you, Lester."

"Oh, you didn't know him!" I cried. A hot resentment of fate was sweeping over me; I realised that, down at the bottom of my heart, I had never really believed in Tremaine's guilt—even now, I hardly believed in it!

Godfrey turned to Simmonds, who stood contemplating the scene with staring eyes, his lantern still open in his hand.

"It's hard luck, Simmonds," he said. "You're not going to get the glory, after all. But who could have foreseen a thing like this?"

Simmonds opened his mouth and shut it again, without uttering a sound.

"You'd better notify the coroner," continued Godfrey, "and, I suppose, to be strictly regular, I'll have to turn this necklace over to you for the night. Guard it well, Simmonds; it's worth a hundred thousand dollars."

"What!" stammered Simmonds. "Is it the—the—the——"

"Yes, it's the Delroy necklace. You'll have to go with us to Babylon in the morning, to attend the inquest. I fancy there'll be something of a sensation when we produce the necklace there—eh, Lester?" and he laughed a grim little laugh of anticipatory triumph.