

She dropped her head submissively once more. A cold chill ran visibly across her shapely shoulders. Through a mist of horror that seemed to obscure her vision she groped with her hands feebly for some one.

"Alan," she cried, "help me! help me!"

Alan restrained himself with a terrible effort. To wake her now would be no less than homicidal.

She drew herself up again proudly to her full height. Her voice a second time rang cold and majestic. She spoke still as the mouthpiece of the pitiless Kalee :—

"While your eyes remain open for ever in sleep, you shall have no other help but mine—but Kalee's. You shall see me floating like a black Terror for ever before you. You shall worship me and serve me all your life long. Mystical, awful, bloodthirsty, implacable, I shall stand beside you and watch over you always."

Then she pealed out a few sonorous words of rolling Hindustani. Sir Donald alone knew what they meant :—

"I am Kalee, Kalee, the swarthy fury, of a hideous countenance, dripping with gore, crowned with snakes, and hung round with a garland of skulls at my girdle. I am she, the horrible, of mis-shapen eyes; menacing, trident-topped, riding on a tiger: the Black One, the fierce, the terrible, the bloody-toothed. My fangs are red with the flesh of my victims. Choose, choose, this day, which you will take: choose, between me and Death, my votary."