

in his ghastly face. There were caldrons, and lizards, and cross-bones, and tame serpents, and curious devices carved on the walls, ceiling and floor, like all other such places, and the white, grinning skulls that were scattered about formed a hideously revolting sight in that darkened room.

"The Egyptian stood before a smoking caldron and, drawn up to his full height, his size appeared almost colossal. His dress was a long, black robe, all woven over with scorpions, and snakes, and other equally pleasing objects, that seemed starting out dazzling white from this dark background. Altogether, the room looked so like a charnel house, and the wizard so like a supernatural being, that I am not ashamed to own I felt myself growing nervous as I looked around.

"The interpreter, who stood behind, opened the scene by asking me my name, age, birthplace, and divers other questions of a like nature, which he wrote down in some sort of hieroglyphics and handed to the Egyptian. Then, bidding me advance and keep my eyes fixed on the caldron and not speak a word, the interpreter left the room.

"My heart beat faster than was its wont as I approached this wild being, and found myself completely alone with him in this ghostly, weird place. He took a handful of what I imagined to be incense of some kind, and threw it on the red, living coals, muttering some strange sounds in an unknown tongue as he did so. Presently a cloud of smoke arose, dense, black and suffocating, filling the whole room with the gloom of Tartarus. Slowly, as endowed with instinct, it lifted itself up and spread itself out before me. And looking up, I beheld—"

Willard Drummond paused, as if irresolute whether to reveal the rest or not; but Sybil grasped his arm, and in a voice that was fairly hoarse with intense excitement, said: "Go on."

"I saw," he continued, looking beyond her, as if describing something then passing before him, "the interior of a church thronged with people. Flowers were strewn along the aisles, and I seemed to hear faintly the grand cadences of a triumphal hymn. A clergyman, book in hand, stood before a bridal pair, performing the marriage ceremony. The features of the man of God are indelibly impressed on my memory; but the two who stood before him had their backs toward me. For about