

No one answered her. She had begged Madison to go over it all again — and she had summed it up herself. There was — the Patriarch.

There was utter silence in the room now, save only for that low, solemn boom of distant surf — for Madison had stopped his nervous pacing up and down, and stood now by the Patriarch's arm-chair gazing into the fireplace.

The minutes passed, and the silence in that dim, shadowed room grew tense — and tenser still — until the very shadows themselves, as the lamp flickered now and then, seemed to creep and shift and readjust themselves in stealth. No sound — no movement — utter stillness — only, from without, the mourning of the surf, like a dirge now.

And then, with a sudden sob, Helena flung out her arms across the table toward the Patriarch.

"Oh, if he could only speak!" she cried pitifully. "If he could only speak — he would show us the way out."

The words seemed to come to Madison as an added pang. He turned his eyes instinctively from the fireplace to the Patriarch beside him — and then, a moment, as a man stricken, he stood there — and then reaching quickly for the lamp from the table he held it up, and leaned forward toward the figure in the chair.

Helena, startled at the act, rose almost unconsciously to her feet, her hands holding tightly to the table edge — looking at Madison, looking at the silent form where Pale Face Harry, where the Flopper looked.