

THE MAN WITHOUT A SHADOW

the estate of house painter. To match the room, it should have been served on thick dishes, and should not have comprised half the variety that was here offered to me. But the thought went away as quickly as it came, possibly because I was really hungry, and I settled to my meal with the expectation of enjoying it.

I was half through, when something brought that disquieting notion back to me. There seemed to be an odd taste to everything I had eaten. It was no taste that I recognized. Everything was perfectly cooked, but certainly every single article on that tray had a faint suggestion of that same curious flavor.

And then my knife and fork dropped with a clatter from my nerveless hands. I knew now why I had not suddenly been reduced to the coarse fare of a laborer. I knew why the doctor had advised me to eat. The food was drugged.