

ous and evil force which Antony Ferrara controlled was being focused upon him!

Slight sounds from time to time disturbed the silence; and to these he listened attentively. He longed for the arrival of his father—for the strong, calm counsel of the one man in England fitted to cope with the Hell Thing which had uprisen in their midst. That he had already been subjected to some kind of hypnotic influence, he was unable to doubt; and having been once subjected to this influence, he might at any moment (it was a terrible reflection) fall a victim to it again.

Cairn directed all the energies of his mind to resistance; ill-defined reflections must at all costs be avoided, for the brain vaguely employed he knew to be more susceptible to attack than that directed in a well-ordered channel.

Clocks were chiming the hour—he did not know what hour, nor did he seek to learn. He felt that he was at rapier play with a skilled antagonist, and that to glance aside, however momentarily, was to lay himself open to a fatal thrust.

He had not moved from the table, so that only the reading-lamp upon it was lighted, and much of the room lay in half shadow. The silken cord, coiled snake-like, was close to his left hand; the revolver was close to his right. The muffled roar of traffic—diminished, since the hour grew late—reached his ears as he sat. But nothing disturbed the stillness of the court, and nothing disturbed the stillness of the room.

The notes which he had made in the afternoon at the Museum were still spread open before him, and he suddenly closed the book, fearful of anything calculated to distract him from the mood of tense resistance. His life, and more than his life, depended upon his successfully opposing the insidious forces which beyond doubt invisibly surrounded that lighted table.

There is a courage which is not physical, nor is it entirely moral; a courage often lacking in the most intrepid soldier. And this was the kind of courage which Robert Cairn now called up to his aid. The occult inquirer can face, unmoved, horrors which would turn the brain of many a man who wears the V.C.; on the other hand, it is questionable if the possessor of this peculiar type of bravery could face a bayonet charge. Pluck of the physical sort, Cairn had in plenty; pluck of that more subtle kind he was acquiring from growing intimacy with the terrors of the Borderland.

"Who's there?"

He spoke the words aloud—and the eerie sound of his own voice added a new dread to the enveloping shadows.

His revolver grasped in his hand, he stood up, but slowly and cautiously, in order that his own movements might not prevent him from hearing any repetition of that which had occasioned his alarm. And what had occasioned this alarm?

Either he was become again a victim of the strange trickery which already had borne him, though not physically, from Fleet Street to the secret temple of Méydûm, or with his material senses he had detected a soft rapping upon the door of his room. He knew that his outer door was closed; he knew that there was no one else in his chambers; yet he had heard a sound as of knuckles beating upon the panels of the door—the closed door of the room in which he sat!

Standing upright, he turned deliberately, and faced in that direction.

The light pouring out from beneath the shade of the table-lamp scarcely touched upon the door at all. Only the edges of the lower panels were clearly perceptible; the upper part of the door was masked in greenish shadow.

Intent, tensely strung, he stood; then advanced in the direction of the switch in order to light the lamp fixed above the mantelpiece and to illumin-