

The Sleep of Ages

By STUART MARTIN

A woman's cry across the centuries—real, poignant, and he knew what he must do. . . .

“THEY say that the man is mad; long years of excavating in the vast necropolis of Thebes has turned his brain.” Jordan sipped his coffee in the pavilion of the bungalow and flicked his cigarette in the direction of the lone figure standing at the base of the cliffs. “I’m not surprised. But he secured the papyrus, for all his madness.”

“Who is he?” asked Borden, his eyes on the tall, thin individual his fellow excavator indicated. “He looks more Arab than European.”

“Everybody in Luxor and Karnak knows him,” replied Jordan. “He has haunted the mountain and valley of the tombs for years. Some days you will see him up near the Colossi of Memnon, some times at the Rameseum, some times at Der-al-Bahri. You see all these caves tunneled in the limestone cliffs? He is searching for the tomb he wants to find after having lost it in a sandstorm. Dalling is his name. He was an officer in the Egyptian army, but threw up his commission to go excavating. Here he comes.”

The lonely figure had turned in their direction and came slowly over the sand toward the bungalow. He was still a young man, and his frame, if thin, showed signs of a strength that was enduring and unsuspected. His eyes had a strange, far-away look in them, as if he was used to gazing across vast

spaces and inspecting heights. There was something almost noble in his bearing, something aristocratic in his gesture that destroyed a first hasty conclusion that he was an ordinary person. He came slowly up the steps of the verandah and faced the two men who had come to Egypt to serve the science of archaeology.

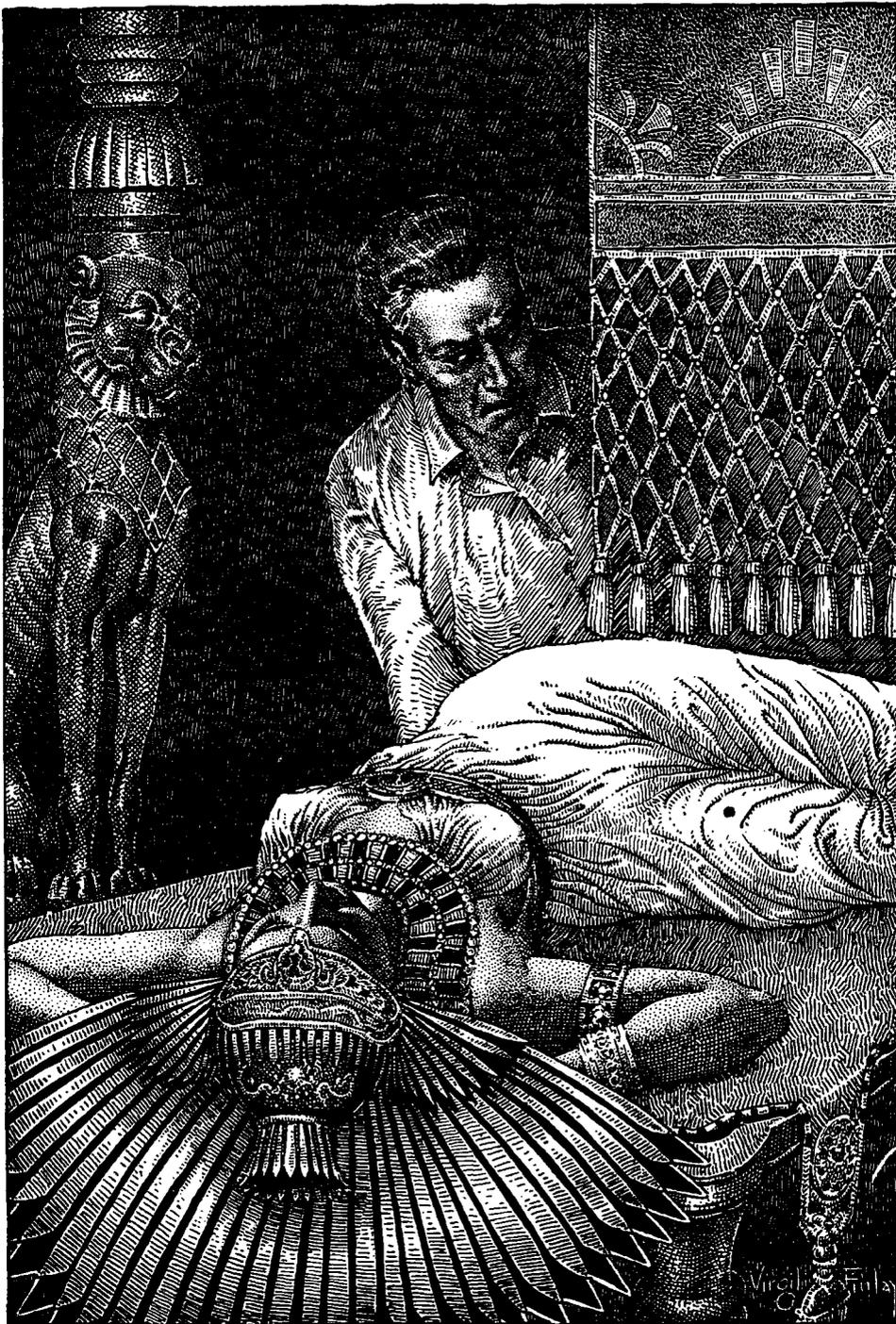
“Could I have a word with Mr. Borden?” he asked quietly.

“I am Borden. Won’t you sit down? You are Dalling—ex-Captain Dalling—aren’t you?”

The stranger bowed and a sad smile passed over his features.

“Yes, I’m Dalling. Most excavators have heard of me. They have all been warned—about me. But still I want a few words. It’s about the papyrus and the tomb, you know.”

He drew his chair close to the two scientists and rubbed his palms softly together while his eyes were fixed on the valley and the mountain beyond. Here and there, through the sunlight, the dark formations of the entrances to the tombs looked like blots on the face of the limestone rock. Beyond the hills the Theban plain stretched east and west, north and south. The white garments of the workers among the tombs gleamed in the dazzling light, and the sound of an occasional pick striking against the rock came like a small, sharp tap over the sand dunes.



"Beloved Sais! Awake! I, your lover, call you!"
There was a slight movement as of a sleeper stirring. . . .

Dalling sipped at the coffee which had been brought out by a servant for him, but he declined the cigarette which was offered. For some minutes the three men sat in silence, Jordan and Borden watching the face—the fascinating, wistful face of this man whom everybody said was mad.

"I came to see if you would take the trouble to enter the tomb," said Dalling at last. "You are excavating in the valley—"

"We are working on one of the ancient kings' burial places," interrupted Jordan, "but I am afraid that I can't promise to start any other excavation meantime. You see, we have reached the inner chamber where we expect the mummy is lying, and after we have opened it we'll be going away. But if we can give you a hand in any other way we'll do it."

Dalling sat biting his lip. It was the answer he had received for many seasons from every excavator to whom he had applied to aid him in his quest. They all fought shy of this man who talked as he talked.

"You won't find the mummy in the chamber you are about to open," he said quietly. "It was to save you labor that I came. The chamber is empty—rifled by Arabs generations ago, so there's no loot left for you."

There was a hint of sarcasm in his tone as he referred to the "loot," but it dropped out of his voice at once and he leaned across the table earnestly.

"Maybe you are like the others and think that I am mad? Maybe you believe that it was the sunstroke that sent me raving about the girl who lies down there in the heart of that cliff? Will you listen to my story. I tell you, you must listen. You are on the wrong track for your dead Pharaoh, but you are on the track of the tomb I have been

searching for these five long years. Won't you listen to me?"

HIS eyes began to glow with eagerness and his voice trembled as he clenched his fist and tapped the table with his knuckles.

Jordan drew a long breath and glanced quickly at his companion.

"Please don't excite yourself, Dalling," he said soothingly.

But Dalling had risen to his feet and stood with a flushed face and tense arms by his side, quivering from head to foot. For a moment it seemed that he was about to spring at Jordan; but suddenly he turned on his heel and walked to the front of the verandah and looked across the valley and the tombs. His long arms were stretched out in a mute appeal to something invisible and his face seemed to have suddenly taken upon it something of the sublime ecstasy of a saint.

"He's on the old tack," whispered Jordan to his friend. "His madness makes him think there is a girl somewhere in the tombs calling to him. He babbles about it incessantly and claims that he is the reincarnation of her lover in ancient Egypt. Look out; we're in for the story which he tells to all the excavators."

Dalling had turned and came back to his chair on which he sat down heavily. He turned a worn face toward the two scientists.

"If I tell you my story, will you listen?" he asked with the pathetic appeal of a child. "I expect you have heard some of the gossip they talk about me. Won't you hear what I have to say for myself? You've got to listen, for you're working near the place. And Sais is there. Yes, you've got to listen. If only I had the money to employ workers for myself!"

"Don't tell us if it gives you pain, old man," said Borden gently. "Maybe some other time—"

"There will not be any other time," interrupted Dalling quickly. "I tell you this is the time. I have been over at the tomb you are working at. Your men have started to dig into the inner chamber. They will find nothing. I told them so, and I tell you so. And you might leave soon and the great chance would have passed. My God, to think that you men won't believe me! Well, can you deny the story on the papyrus? Can you deny that?"

"How do you know that we'll find nothing in the inner chamber?" asked Borden.

"Because I have been there already."

The statment made the two excavators sit up straight in their chairs; but they glanced at each other and then slid back to their positions of ease. What he had just said proved that Dalling was mad surely, for the tomb at which they were working was a new one, only recently discovered, and had no appearance of ever having been rifled by Arabs.

"You don't believe me? All right. I'll prove it."

Dalling leaned his elbows on the table and faced them. There were pink spots on his cheeks by this time and there was an unnatural light in his eyes. Before they could sidetrack him he was off on the story which he had told to others; the story which earned for him the pitying contempt of all who worked in the Valley of the Kings during the season.

"It is well over five years since I threw up my commission and started to find the tomb," he said. "I needn't go into details of the first time I was attracted toward Egyptology. Can a man live in this district and not be attracted?

Every time I was able to get leave I came here and did some digging. I had money then. My natives were good workers. At first I went round the Rameseum, the Mortuary Temple of Rameses II. You know the pillars of that temple. It is legendary that one of the pillars falls when a tomb is disturbed. One pillar fell when I was there.

"It was the third from the west end facing Thebes. You know it, maybe. The thud of its falling came across the valley to me as I sat in my tent and everybody in Medinet Habu went out to see. The cloud of dust it raised was floating in the moonlight when I arrived. I took a photo of the thing as it lay and sent it to the authorities in Cairo. I don't know what they did with the picture."

"It is framed in the museum," put in Borden. "I saw it as I visited the museum on the way here. Your name is on it."

"I wouldn't be surprised if they had doubted even that photograph," said Dalling bitterly. "They've doubted everything else I have sent them—every letter I wrote asking them to help in the greatest find of all."

He passed his hand over his face wearily, closing his eyes as if he was tired; but next moment he was bright again and eager.

"I mentioned the photograph to let you see that I am not talking as madly as they give me credit for. Well, after the fall of the pillar I came over here, and after the preliminaries were complete I started to work out a theory. Hitherto, I had been digging more or less at random. Now I began to excavate with reason. I started near the tomb of Seti I, a Pharaoh of the Nineteenth Dynasty and father of Rameses II."

"But the tomb of Seti I has been

emptied long ago," exclaimed Jordan. "Anybody knows that. His alabaster coffin in London now."

"Yes, I know, I know, I know. I was not after Seti I. I was digging down into the heart of the cliff, believing that in this way I would hit upon more than one tomb. I was using an old method. If you know your Egyptology as well as you are credited, you will know that some fifty years ago some Arabs discovered a shaft at the bottom of which was a tunnel. In that tunnel more than fifty mummies were found. They had lain there for more than a thousand years—all members of royal families too."

"That is true," murmured Jordan. "They are all at Cairo now."

"Yes," cried Dalling, "but the tunnel was never explored to its end. These mummies had been taken there for safety by the priests during some troublous time the country was passing through. They had never been taken back to their tombs. Among them was the body of Seti I. It was in that tunnel that I made my discovery."

HE PAUSED and gazed anxiously at the two men before him. It was clear that he was controlling himself with difficulty. His face bore a strained look and his glance was constantly whipping from one to the other of his listeners.

"I went down the shaft—that very shaft where the Arabs went half a century ago. I was lowered by my workmen; most of them are still to be found in Luxor, if you want to question them. You know what I found, don't you?"

Jordan cleared his throat, intending to say something to relieve the tension which Dalling's eagerness had aroused. But Borden, his companion, did not know Dalling's story, and bent forward.

"What did you find?" he asked quickly. "What did you find, Dalling?"

"I found Sais," came the brief reply; and as he said it the man clasped his hands tightly in an attitude of prayer. It was as if he had mentioned a holy name.

"Sais? Who was Sais?" persisted Borden, in spite of the warning nudge from Jordan.

"Ah! Then you do not know? Jordan has not told you? Let me explain."

He drew from his pocket a roll of parchment which he spread out on the table. It was covered with Egyptian hieroglyphics, and Dalling's eyes seemed to grow misty as he raised them toward his questioner.

"This is a copy of the papyrus which they took from me when I was in the hospital. They took the original from me, saying I was mad. They said I had sunstroke. The fools! Listen, Jordan, it is no use you trying to wave me aside. How many times have I asked you to help me? Every season you have come here. Always you have promised—anything but what I have asked. And now, by Heaven, you've got to do it. I tell you the chamber you are about to open is empty, but there is another. Look here, sir."

He stabbed the parchment with his forefinger and Borden bent his eyes on it.

"You may read this after I have finished, then you'll wonder if I have made up this story. Man, I tell you I couldn't have made it up. Down in that tunnel I thought that I was really going mad; but then I understood things before they dragged me up to daylight and took me to the hospital. Where was I in the story? Oh, yes, I went down into the tunnel. I had an electric torch with me and I kept flashing it about. The tunnel was bare stone—bare as the palm of my

hand. It was dark and cold, too. I crept along, fingering the slabs of rock as I went. I traveled maybe three hundred yards and then I felt a loose slab—a loose slab, as I sit here!

"I started to work on it with a small jimmy which I carried. It took me maybe an hour to get it worked free; and I looked into the hole. It was dark as night. I crawled through and found myself in another chamber. Can you guess where I was? I was in the antechamber of Seti I's real tomb. It had been stripped bare. Débris lay about. The remains of his royal couch were lying in ruins. A footstool or two and several jars. All broken. I came back to the tunnel and went up into daylight. My men thought I had been very long down there, but I did not think about them. I believed I was on the point of making a discovery and I collected some provisions and tools and went down again.

"I wanted to work alone and without interruption. This time I went farther along the tunnel until I came to a blank wall. I started to tear it down, and I worked like a demon. I got the wall down at last and once more I crawled through. This time I was in a lighted chamber. It was Seti I's tomb. It was bare. That, too, had been rifled. It is a large vault and the light came from a shaft of a pillar high above ground. Through the center of that pillar the light—a sort of dim gray twilight—was coming.

"By this time I was tired, so I sat down to rest. Maybe I fell asleep. I don't know. But I woke to hear the trickling of water. You know it was a common trick for the priests who buried ancient royalty in Egypt to sink wells near the place so that the tomb's existence might be disguised. Well, I listened, and I heard water trickling. I went round that chamber diligently and

tapped every stone. One of them sounded hollow.

"It was just on the level with the floor. I removed it and found that I was faced with a flight of steps. I mounted them. They were dark, but dry—dry as dust. They led me into a passage and I walked slowly, for I was beginning to fear that I might lose my way. The whole of the mountain over there is tunneled with such passages. I came to a blank wall again. This one took me longer to break down, but the thought of what might be on the opposite side acted like wine in my veins. I worked hard and I got through once more. I was—where do you think?"

Both his listeners shook their heads; but Borden, not knowing the tale, had his eyes fastened on those of Dalling.

"I was in the chamber which you are digging for now. You have reached it from the top. I reached it by the way the priests went all these years ago."

"Impossible!" cried Jordan.

"It's true, anyway. I have that mountain and valley so worked out to a fraction that I know every yard of it, or seem to know it. But that's not what I wanted to tell you, sir. I was to tell you about Sais. Ah, Sais!"

He dropped his head in his hands again and remained as if he was shutting out some sight from his vision; or perhaps he was conjuring up some sight which he could best visualize when his face was covered.

"You've heard of Queen Hatshopsitu?" he asked suddenly. "She's called the Catherine II of Egypt."

Borden nodded and smiled.

"She reigned in Thebes about 1530 B.C.," he said. "She completed the work of her father, Tetuhtimes I in erecting the temples of Thebes and Karnak. She desired to be thought a man by her people and she claimed that her daughters

were direct descendants of the Sun God Amon Ra.

"I SEE you know of this wonderful queen," went on Dalling. "There is no record of whom her daughters married. But we know that one of them disappeared. Sir, I found this girl. Her name is Sais. She lies over there in a chamber near the one you intend to explore. That is why I came to you—"

"But, Dalling," cried Jordan suddenly, starting up. "this is new! This is not your story—"

"Sit down, Jordan, sit down. I tell you I can't keep myself from being excited and I came to you now because the circle is complete. Oh, you still think me mad. I tell you, it is you who are mad. What was I saying?"

"It was about this girl, Sais," whispered Borden.

"Oh, yes. I was saying that I went through the inner tomb you are about to open. Yes, I went through it. And, there, on the west side there is a huge slab shaped like a door. I pried that open. I was working with the light of my torch, and as I tried to move the slab I turned my head and there, on the floor of the tomb—the tomb you are about to enter—I saw a man lying. I took my torch and looked at him. Then I bent down and touched him. He vanished into a thin layer of dust at my feet."

"Was it a mummy?" asked Borden.

"No, it was all that remained of a man. He had been lying there for several thousand years, Borden. The air of the place was so thin that he had been preserved; but the moment I touched him he fell away—just a flat outline of fine powder remained. I touched the dust and lifted some and let it drift through my fingers. Fancy that. A man lying there all these centuries and then

to vanish just when I touched him. There was something eerie about it. At his side there was a piece of papyrus. I lifted it and read it by the light of my torch. This is a copy."

He pushed the parchment across to Borden, who took it but did not read. He wanted to hear the end of the fantastic, fascinating story.

"I stepped through the doorway I had hewn," went on Dalling, "and I found myself in a small tomb. It was quite small. I looked around. There was no sarcophagus, no coffin, no mummy. Just a plain rock-hewn room. In the center was a couch, the supports of which were models of the Hathor Cow, and on the couch there lay a form. I stepped across and looked. It was the form of a girl.

"She lay there, wrapped in her robes, her hands crossed on her breast. I stood looking at her and never had I seen such beauty. She was not pure Egyptian. She had a strain of Semitic in her. The face was pale, almost white. Her feet were shod with gold sandals. Round her arms were bracelets. On her head was a coronet. In her ears were earrings. And she was not a mummy. She was not embalmed."

"What?" This time even Borden's voice had a ring of disbelief in it.

"What I say is true, Borden. I had handled too many embalmed Egyptians not to know. At first I was afraid to touch her lest she should vanish like the man I had touched at the door. I stood watching her. Not a movement, not a sound in all that place disturbed us. I never saw such beauty."

The vision was still with him and his hearers could see that the strange dream to this man was very real. Over his face there crept a wonderful, peaceful, beatific ecstasy.

"Go on," said Borden, and Dalling came out of his dream.

"It was some time before I dared touch her, and then I let a finger rest on one of her draperies, which were hung over her and reached the floor. The thing withered—just dropped out of sight and lay in a small heap of dust such as you might carry in your cupped palm. I touched her hands. They did not wither. I am not romancing. I am not telling you an insane imagining. If you would only believe me!"

He broke into sobs which shook his frame; but Borden, in spite of the whispered remonstrance of his friend, put out his hand and touched Dalling.

"Go on," he said once more.

"Yes, I'll tell you all I know. I became frightened, then I looked on her and—I fell in love with her. Have you any idea of what it is to have an affinity somewhere in the world? Maybe you haven't. What's the use of trying to explain? I can't explain. But can you think, just think, what emotion you would experience to know that at last you had met, or seen, the girl who had been destined for you at the foundations of the world—"

"Steady, Dalling," warned Jordan; but Borden held up a hand to his friend and nodded to the other man sympathetically.

"I can't tell you how I knew the truth. I can't explain. It just seemed as if all the ages, all mankind of the ancient peoples, all the world itself, had been made, all circumstances had been fulfilled, so that she and I could be brought together. You understand, don't you? They say that heaven makes men and women in pairs. Maybe there's a slip somewhere in the generations, even in the centuries, and one half misses the joy that might be his or hers—maybe the machinery has gone out of gear a long time back—oh, what's the use of trying to explain? I knew it as I

looked at her. That's all I can say. Isn't that enough?"

He let his hands hang helplessly by his sides as he turned to stare out across the Valley of the Kings, who slept as they had slept through the ages.

"How did you get out?" asked Borden.

"Out? Oh, yes. But I forgot to tell you. I knew that if I came out and told the world what I had found people would laugh at me. So I sat down and opened the papyrus and began to read. After that I rose and bricked up the door again lest some one would find the chamber. And then—it was hard work—I didn't know what to do. What I had read in the papyrus made me feel queer. I sat down to think it all out. And when I woke my torch had burned itself out and I was in darkness.

"I started to search for my way back to the tunnel where my men were waiting for me. And I don't remember any more until I woke up in the hospital. And ever since they have thought me mad and they laugh when I tell my story. But you don't laugh, Borden. You are sensible. Won't you let me be with you when you open the inner chamber of the tomb you are working on? Just let me be with you, and if my word is not true that the tomb is empty then I will admit that you have a right to be skeptical; but Sais is there and she must be rescued. I'm feeling tired now. I must sleep—"

"You can sleep in the bungalow, Dalling," said Borden suddenly, moved with great pity for the man. "Better turn in now and I'll waken you when we go to the tomb. That will be tomorrow."

"You promise?" cried Dalling eagerly. "You promise?"

"Yes, I promise. If the tomb we are going to open is empty, then I'll help

you to get back to the chamber where this Sais is," Borden said, and he led the other man indoors.

IN a few moments he came out and drew his chair close to the table.

"Jordan," he said, "that man's on the verge of a collapse through exhaustion."

"He has collapsed often. It's his own fault, you know, poor devil. He stands out there on the mountain and seeks aimlessly through the valley day and night, never resting, until he is down and out. You don't believe what he said, do you?"

Borden shook his head, and lifted the parchment, glancing at it.

"You needn't wade through that, Borden. I'll tell you in, a few words what's in it. The man who wrote it was evidently the man Dalling says he found. Maybe he was a priest. The papyrus tells how Queen Hatshopsitu tried to make her daughter, Sais, marry an official, and the girl refused because she was in love with some one else. She fled with her lover and hid in the tomb which was being built. They were bricked up together. To save her from death by starvation the lover hypnotized her and so put her to sleep. That's the tale on the papyrus. Now, is it feasible that hypnotism could last all these years? Silly, I call it."

But Borden was staring at his friend.

"Who knows?" he asked slowly. "Who knows? We cannot limit such a sleep. The Egyptians were able to suspend animation for long periods—miraculously long periods. It was with them an art. All the priests were hypnotists. It's very strange—"

"All right, we needn't argue that, but to my mind the claim Dalling makes proves his madness."

"What does he claim?"

"Well, when the Arab workmen

found him he had been down below for over a week, wandering through darkness all that time, lost and raving and shouting for aid. They found him lying in the tunnel. He was in a burning fever and was taken to the hospital. The papyrus was in his pocket. The doctors said he had had a touch of sun before he went down. His mind never recovered its balance. Of course we are all sorry for him. His agony must have been terrible when he was lost without light, or hope, alone in the blackness of the ages. There are few men who would have remained sane. When he awoke in the hospital he began to jabber about having touched his former self—"

"His former self?"

"Yes. Every Egyptologist knows that it was the ancient belief that the Sleep of Death lasted three thousand years, and then the dead woke up at the touch of Anubis to another life. Well, Dalling believes that it was himself who lay there dead beside this girl Sais; himself in a former incarnation, of course. It was his former self that he touched and resolved into dust, and it was from this former self that he took the papyrus. That is what he says. Personally I think he's crazy. But the papyrus is in Cairo and Dalling is here. Now you have the whole story, and you've brought extra trouble on us if you insist on his going to the tomb we are opening to-morrow. I expect he'll go wild. I'm going to have some officials down to watch him."

"I see," said Borden dreamily. "I see."

For some time neither of them spoke. The sun was sinking behind the Valley of the Tombs of the Kings and the great, gaunt limestone mountain cast its enormous shadow over the ravine, making it seem mysterious and terrible.

Jordan stirred suddenly.

"I wish Dalling hadn't come," he

said. "He's brought a subtle unsettling influence with him as he always does. I'm going to turn in."

Borden did not answer. His eyes were fixed on the rugged cliffs now deep in shadow in which the tombs lay silent and weird. Over them was the profound slumber of the centuries.

The moon rose as the stars disappeared, and then Borden seemed to waken out of his dream. He shivered in the cold air and sighed; then he, too, went in to his sleep.

THEY were awakened by their Arab servant shortly after sunrise the following morning. Dalling was missing. He had gone out some time during the night, and the bed in which he had lain down was tossed and tumbled about.

"He's always the same," said Jordan. "Every time he impresses any one with his story he does something erratic. But he'll turn up later. I expect he has gone over to the tomb."

The workmen had collected at the bungalow, and after a short breakfast the two excavators started across the valley. The tomb they were about to open had been discovered by Jordan, and Borden had come out from England to aid in the task of uncovering the inner chamber and tabulating the finds. Both were Egyptologists of some stand-

ing, and all England waited on the report they would send home.

They reached the tomb entrance, and the workmen were let down the shaft cautiously, one by one. The two excavators followed. At the foot of the shaft a workman met them with consternation.

"There is a man down here," he said. "He is at the far end of the tunnel hammering on the door of the inner chamber. He is hammering with his fists. We cannot make him understand."

"I'll bet it's Dalling!" cried Jordan.

They hurried along the tunnel. It was Dalling.

He was standing at the door of the inner chamber, his hands beating helplessly against the huge slab and calling a name.

"Sais! O Ket Sais, nehes!"

"Sais! O Little Sais, awake!"

Borden laid a hand on the man's arm and began to whisper to him.

"Stand back, Dalling! Stand back! We'll have the door down in a jiffy! If she's there you'll see her! I promise you, you can enter first!"

Dalling let his hands drop. Great beads of perspiration were rolling down his face and his eyes were wild and unnatural.

"Let me in first," he repeated. "Yes, yes, that is the best way! You will see.

"I Talked with God"

(Yes, I Did—Actually and Literally)

and, as a result of that little talk with God some ten years ago, a strange new Power came into my life. After 48 years of horrible, sickening, dismal failure, this strange Power brought to me a sense of overwhelming victory, and I have been overcoming every undesirable condition of my life ever since. What a change it was. Now—I have credit at more than one bank, I own a beautiful home, own a newspaper and a large office building, and my wife and family are amply provided for after I leave for shores unknown. In addition to these material benefits, I have a sweet peace in my life. I am happy as happy can be. No circumstance ever upsets me, for I have learned how to draw upon the invisible God-Law, under any and all circumstances.

You too may find and use the same staggering Power of the God-Law that I use. It can bring to you too, whatever things are right and proper for you to have. Do you believe this? It won't cost much to find out—just a penny post-card or a letter, addressed to Dr. Frank B. Robinson, Dept. 7, Moscow, Idaho, will bring you the story of the most fascinating success of the century. And the same Power I use is here for your use too. I'll be glad to tell you about it. All information about this experience will be sent you free, of course. The address again—Dr. Frank B. Robinson, Dept. 7, Moscow, Idaho. Advt. Copyright 1939 Frank B. Robinson.

She is there. But you must be careful not to disturb her with your hammers. You hear? She will know me, but she will not know you. My God!"

He stood aside, his hand in that of Borden as the workmen attacked the door. An hour's work brought it down and they were in the tomb of the king they had come to disturb.

Dalling was the first to enter, but he did not look at the chamber. He made straight across the place to another slab on which were a number of hieroglyphics. He did not hear the disappointed cry of Jordan. The tomb was empty just as Dalling had said it would be.

The ruins of the place were littered about the floor, mingling with the rubble.

"Look, Jordan, look!"

Borden had gripped his friend's arm and pointed toward Dalling. He was clawing at the slab to which he had rushed, tearing pieces of brick and rock away from its edges with his hands.

"Let him alone," whispered Borden as Jordan was about to step forward. "Let him alone, man! Watch!"

They stood still as the dead whose tomb they had come to plunder, they and the workmen, watching Dalling.

He worked with feverish haste until the slab was ready to be moved. Then he seized it and slid it aside—a slab which two ordinary men could hardly move.

Next moment he picked up a torch and slipped on tiptoe through the narrow opening.

Borden and his friend craned their necks.

The gleam of the torch in the chamber which Dalling had penetrated sent a warm twilight radiating across the floor and up the walls.

In the center of the apartment was a couch, and on it was what seemed to be a mummy. Then Dalling's light went out suddenly, and his voice rose plaintively, gently, with a strange soothing croon, like that of a mother over a sleeping child, or a lover returned from a long absence.

"Sais! Hat benben! Hat benben!"

The plaintiveness gave way to another note; a note of tenderness which made the voice of the speaker tremble and trill.

"Little Sais! Awake! I, your lover, call you!"

Suddenly the voice ceased. From the dark interior there came a slight movement as of a sleeper stirring. A small startled scream, then a sigh like the passing of a soul into the great beyond, mingled with the soft answer of a girl's voice.

"O almeh! I have slept well, beloved! Anubis calls us! Come!"

Then silence.

Ten minutes passed before the two listeners tiptoed into the chamber.

They found Dalling kneeling by a bier, his fingers clutching a pair of gold bracelets. No mummy was on the couch but a necklace and some ornaments lay amid a layer of fine dust. There was a smile on Dalling's face. Anubis had called him also.



The Devil's Bodyguard

By CLYDE IRVINE

I NEVER find myself in the silvered atmosphere of the North of Scotland but I find the old tales coming alive around me as if Time had stopped centuries ago and had never gone on again.

And I never walk across the purple heather, or see the blue mist of the hills without wondering if this whole land isn't as misty as a dream and as unsubstantial as the silvered light that seems drained out of the sky and spread over the earth like a screen.

Up here, where eagles wing overhead and scream defiance, and every yard is haunted by a ghost, it does one no good to carry with him the cynicism or the skepticism of the lands below. For here there is something besides the natural law, something that evades logic, a queer, indistinguishable feeling that perhaps we do not know everything and it's a good thing we don't.

I'm saying that just now because I don't want you to get the idea I'm an old fuss-budget who is imposed upon easily or whose credulity is such that a fairy-tale will seem gospel truth to me. But, in the hills above Kilcraggie, *I saw fairies!*

There's plenty of fairy rings all over Scotland and plenty of tales to go with them. But this was the biggest Fairy Ring I'd ever seen and I've seen the one at the Eildon Tree and others in Perthshire where Kirk was supposed to have been taken by them and never seen again.

I stopped to gaze at it and the languor and beauty of its setting overpowered me so that I felt I never wanted to go away from the silver glowing around it,

to the gloom and darkness of the Glen of Weeping, below.

And so I sat down and began to wonder about it and wish that I'd been born long ago when romance and glory and the Springtime of life was blooming fair and lovely on this lovely land. For those were the days when the fairies would come to the homes of the people and their little tinkling bells would be heard in the moonlight as they hurried about on their business, some good and some mischievous, but none of it outright *evil*.

That was left to bogles and to lepraunchauns, to elves and wills o' the wisp, who lured drunken yokels into bogs that closed above their heads and drowned them.

AND as I sat there, thinking like this, the daylight was waning and the purple gloom that comes down on the mountains was falling like a royal cloak over the majestic shoulders of Ben Fruach while far away the setting sun, gilding the snows of the mountain, made the snow-cap gleam like a diadem, as if the great escarpment was indeed a king, looking over his subjects from an illimitable height.

It was then I saw the fairies.

They'd come out like little blossoms, green and blue and brightly scarlet, and glittering in iridescent beauty, such tiny little creatures that six of them could have stood on my hand.

The little fairies, dressed in their filmy robes that fluttered about them like the wings of butterflies, flew over the little men in their bright, tight suits, with their scalloped boots looking ridic-

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