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Behold—the folly of the mortal known as Otto Marlin. He would do anything for knowledge...even kill his own kind! Blindly, he seeks to unravel the tangled web of mystery that is called life, little realizing that such matters are beyond his ken.

Ay, there are certain truths that man is not meant to know, certain realms of knowledge that he is forbidden to explore—And if he dares to defy his fate, his doom is sealed.

In the home-laboratory of Dr. Otto Marlin...

Here y'are, Doc! One kidnapped dame—just like you daisy!

Excellent! I'll pay you off later. Right now, tie her to that chair and unbend her—these walls are soundproof!

If—If you've had me kidnapped for money, I have none, my—my name's Vivian Lake...

I'm just a working girl...

Money doesn't interest me—only knowledge does! Knowledge! Other doctors fear, so they threw me out of the medical profession. Now I have a new drug—to be tried for the first time...on you!
THIS EXPERIMENT WILL PROVE WHETHER MY DRUGS REVERSE THE FLOW OF NEURONIC IMPULSES IN THE BRAIN'S TEMPORAL LOBE--THAT PART IN WHICH ALL THE UNCONSCIOUS MEMORIES OF PAST REINCARNATIONS ARE STORED!

YOU--YOU'RE MAD! REINCARNATION IS JUST A MYTH!

WHO--WHO ARE YOU! HOW'D YOU GET IN HERE?

WHEN WERE YOU TALKIN' TO, DOC?

NO ONE'S THERE!

IF YOU TAMPER WITH THIS INNOCENT GIRL'S LIFE, YOU WILL BE DOOMED BY HER... FOREVER!

YOU--YOU DIDN'T SEE ANYONE... HEAR ANYTHING? THEN I--I MUST HAVE BEEN IMAGINING THINGS! I'D BETTER GET ON WITH THE EXPERIMENT...

AAAARRRGGHHH! NO! PLEASE... NOW HONESTLY!

OHNN... I'M BEING TORTURED... I SEEN TO BE IN THE PUBLIC STOCKS! A CROWD IS SHOUTING... THE PEOPLE OF SALEM, MY FELLOW TOWNSPEOPLE ARE GLAMORING FOR MY BLOOD...!

WITCH! WITCH!

"YES, I SEE IT ALL CLEARLY NOW! I'M ACCUSED OF BEING A WITCH... THEY'RE TORTURING ME! I CAN'T KEEP FROM CONFESSING...!"

CONFESS, WITCH! TELL US WHICH AGENT OF THE EVIL TAUGHT YOU THE SECRETS OF WITCHCRAFT--AND YE SHALL BE FREE!

STOP! 'TWAS OTTO MARLIN OVER THERE--HE TURNED ME INTO A WITCH, AFTER I SOLD MY SOUL TO HIM!

NO, MY RESEARCHES HAVE SHOWN THAT EVERY HUMAN BEING HAS HAD COUNTLESS PREVIOUS LIVES WHICH AREN'T REMEMBERED! I SHALL PROVE TO YOU--NO, IT IS FORBIDDEN FOR ANY MORTAL TO REVERSE THE FLOW AND LEARN THE SECRETS OF THEIR PAST LIVES!
"Instantly, the crowd surges toward Otto Marlin... Seize him... Hang the devil's agent!"

"The crowd falls back from Otto's demons, and I know he will wreak his vengeance upon me by having his hellish fiends claw me to death..."

"Fear him not! Hurl a pointed stake at his heart... and he will perish!"

"The girl was right / Look - the demons vanish!"

"I... I... ooh!"

"She - she's dead... At least in this world - but since the curious time flow was reversed, her spirit still inhabits her body back in the witch-hunting days of Salem! The question is, was it just a coincidence that she caused the doom of a man called Otto Marlin back in the 17th century...?"

"Just then, outside..."

"I'm sure to get the chair for murdering that girl... but with this drug I can escape the police... and the present... I'll go back in time... luck I prepared some capsules of the temporal drug..."

"I'll take more of the drug than I gave the girl... I'll go back even further in time... and thereby escape the doom of the 17th century Otto Marlin... just in case that was one of my reincarnations..."

"Look - there's the license plate of that kidnap car that was reported an hour ago!"

"BAM!"
A minute later...

This guy's dead, too---he's probably the one who killed the girl! I guess that closes the case!

No, the case of Otto Marlin is not yet over---for his spirit still lives on... in the past?

What happened? Wait---I remember! I was Otto Marlin, of 1953---my theories of reincarnation were right! And apparently memories aren't wiped out when one goes back to a past life...!

A knight in sixth-century English armor---so I must be back in King Arthur's time! And if I'm Merlin, the greatest sorcerer of the age, then I know all about medieval wizardry as well as twentieth-century science!

Merlin---Camelot needs thy help!

The Black Knight's army has attacked the town---while King Arthur and his men are out battling the barbarians in the north! Camelot will fall unless thy mighty magic helps us!

Ah, all of Merlin's knowledge is flooding into my mind! Fear not! I will summon denizens from the beyond to help ye!
And later... the Black Knight's army has been destroyed—but I'll let my "dragons" teach the villagers to fear my power! Ha ha! And to think people in the twentieth-century believe dragons were only mythical creatures of King Arthur's times!

evil mortal! You have sealed your own fate and the instrument of your destruction will be the reincarnation of the girl you slew in the twelfth-century! Your nemesis awaits you—through all your doomed lives!

wha...? the apparition again!

The apparition's gone! But I'd better prepare some more of the temporal drug... Just in case I have to leave this incarnation in a hurry! Luckily, the drug can be made from herbs which are found in all ages!

Afterwards, upon the return of King Arthur to Camelot...

That—that girl! She has the face of Vivian laser—the girl I killed in 533!

Hail, mighty wizard! I have heard of thy feat in destroying the army of the Black Knight! Truly thou art the power behind my throne!

so thou art merlin! even I—Vivian, lady of the lake—heard of thee from afar! King Arthur rescued me from the barbarians... but I pray that no one will rescue me from thee!

According to the ancient legends, merlin was destroyed by the lady of the lake because she didn't return her love! I must get rid of her... before the legends come true!
So it was that Merlin, alias Otto Marlin, prepared his temporal drug and lay in wait for one of the servants of Vivian, Lady of the Lake.

Stop quaking, fool! Slip this powdered love potion into thy mistress's drink tonight when I call on her— and I will give thee great riches! Vie in— and my dragons devour thee! I will obey thee, O mighty magician!

But the servant's loyalty to his mistress was greater than his fear of death...

...and he said, 'I need no love potion from Merlin— I already love him! Place the potion in my drink tonight!'

Down, down through the whirlpool of the ages again, where the centuries tick away like fateful seconds.

Until...

Wha... where... p on— this is another of my incarnations— that witch Vivian must have switched glasses with me! Now I'm a necromancer in ancient Egypt! Once again I have escaped death...

So that

Quaff deeply, my lovely one!

Ha ha! That drink will send her back 2,000 years in time... and I'll have foiled that apparition's prophecy of my doom!

Rise up, O Bast, goddess of life... and Thoth; god of the dead— to accept this human sacrifice!
HEAR ME, OT MARLOF, MIGHTY NECROMANGER! I, PHARAOH OF ALL EGYPT, HEREBY BESTOW UPON YOU HALF THE GOLD IN MY TREASURE HOUSES — FOR SUMMONING UP THE SACRED GODS! AND MY WIFE, THE QUEEN, JOIN ME IN HOMAGE TO YOU!

WHY — THE QUEEN? CAN I NEVER ESCAPE THAT FACE?

JEALOUS OF THE NECROMANGERS BROWING POWER, THE QUEEN STEALTHILY FOLLOWED HIM INTO THE TOMB OF THE DEAD, HOPING TO LEARN HIS SECRETS.


SO IT WAS THAT, UNKNOWN TO EACH OTHER, THE NECROMANGERS AND THE QUEEN DUGGED EACH OTHERS DRINK AT THE FEAST OF ANUBIS — AND BOTH WERE INSTANTLY SWEPT BACK, BACK INTO THE MISTS OF THE AEONS — BACK TO THE TIME WHEN THE EARTH WAS YOUNG AND MAMMALS DID NOT YET EXIST.

I MUST KEEP CLOSE WATCH ON THIS NECROMANGER AND DESTROY HIM BEFORE THE PHARAOH STARTS GIVING HIM ALL MY WEALTH.

I MUST NOT LET HER BE THE INSTRUMENT OF MY DOOM IN THIS INCARNATION! I'LL DESTROY HER BY GIVING HER ENOUGH OF THE TEMPORAL DRUG TO SEND HER BACK INTO THE DAWN OF HISTORY.

BY IBIS — THOSE ARE THE DEADLIEST POISONS KNOWN! I WILL HAVE MY SERVANTS SODOR THE EARTH TO GATHER THOSE DRUGS — AND AT THE FEAST OF ANUBIS, OT MARLOF WILL DIE.

Before you enter this section, I must warn you of the legend of the swamp. Many, many years ago, a small tribe of Seminole Indians made this land taboo to all strangers. This is their sacred burial ground. All the members of the tribe are long dead, but it is said the spirit of their chief still watches over it.

Soon they camped for the night, but suddenly the swamp shook with an agonized scream.

Fred—Is there a ghost located here? We're being watched!

Fred's scream brought witnesses to the gory scene. He lay dead on the floor with a tomahawk buried deep in his skull, and there was no way for any living being to have entered the room to commit the ghastly crime. The tomahawk was inspected by authorities and proved to be one used by an extinct tribe of Seminoles long dead. The devilish hand of fate had reached through time and space to fulfill its dreaded destiny!

From the sinister interior of the Florida Everglades, comes a haunting and almost unbelievable story. Hundreds of years ago, as today, certain sections of this vast swampland were unexplored because of the dangers lurking there. But in 1926, two adventurous hunters prepared to enter this mysterious swamp and travel its forbidden areas...

Fred—Is there a ghost located here? We're being watched!

The vision of his friend being slain by a ghostly image of an Indian was enough for Fred. He hastily threw his gear into the canoe and fled, but the Indian's horrible face followed him...

I came as I promised. Trespasser!

You are doomed. Trespasser!

The panic-stricken man made his way back to civilization. In his New York apartment, the sight of the Indian ghost still haunted him. The two months had come to an end and this night was the night the eerie voice had doomed him.

Suddenly...

The Indian... AAAAII!!
Some men will kill for love, others for fame... but Professor Harlow Griffith killed for both on that fateful day at the excavation site on Mt. Pindus, Greece.

The ancient inscription in this cave warns against trying to find out what's hidden behind the wall. It may be the archaeological find of the age, Professor Griffith! So I'll place the dynamite right at the base of the wall.

I must take this chance! This is the perfect opportunity to get rid of him.

...and if this discovery brings me fame, I'm going to marry a certain girl on our expedition staff... or Nancy Blake!

So you think, fame and the girl will be mine! Die, Roger Townley... die!

The Stampede of the Centaurs

LO! After countless aeons... we are free!

Boom!

But the ways of destiny are strange... and a murderer's eternal damnation can take more forms than the mind of man can conceive! For the explosion that blew a man's body to atoms also ripped away the protective wall of the genturies, and unleashed a monstrous terror from the ancient past...
Als the blast of the explosion settles
to the nave floor...

Wha...Centaurs? But—But they can't be
real! The shock of the explosion must
have battered my senses!

Hail, mortal
who released us from our
Age-Old
Tomb!

You—you speak...
You are real! But—
but how could you
have stayed alive in
an Airless Tomb for
countless Centuries?

We have the gift of eternal
life! Back in the dawn of
time, Hercules conquered
us and imprisoned us within
the hollow core of this
mountain—but we could
not slay us! And how, how
can we repay you for
having freed us for a new
life of evil? Command,
and we shall obey!

If I had the gift of eternal
life, I would never have to
bear being condemned to death
for the murder of Roger
Townlet! Can you
grant me immor-
tality?

Ixion can
—and we
can summon
Ixion!

Appear, o
tortured Ixion,
who was chained
by Perseus to
the fiery wheel
of Hades for having
created the race of
centaurs! Appear,
and grant immortality
to another friend of the
centaurs!

It—it's a fiery wheel...
and it's coming straight
toward me!

No! Stop!
Yaaaah!
You were not born a Centaur, so you can return to your human form at any time merely by wishing to do so. Likewise, you can always change from your human to Centaur form at will, and how you can join us as we scatter to the four corners of the earth. To wreak such evil as present-day mortals never dreamed of.

If they scatter, they'll never bring me the fame I'll need to win Nancy Blake! No! Wait!

I'll place another batch of dynamite here, so I can reseal them in the cave if they try to defy me. I'll never let the greatest discovery of all time escape me!

Hide here in your cave until tonight. When I'll show you how we can commit greater crimes than you ever dreamed of!

We swore to obey the one who freed us, so we will do whatever you say. But only until tolerant! After that, we must have the freedom we have waited for so long!

Those Centaurs will bring me wealth as well as fame! Lurking them into cages and putting them on exhibition will mean riches for me... and Nancy! She won't spurn my love when she learns I'll be the richest and most famous archaeologist of all time!
Soon afterwards, in one of the tents of the Mt. Pinicus archeological expedition...

The inscription on this Greek urn should show whose ashes are inside. But I wish Roger were here to help me with the translation...

NANCY! NANCY!

Is that you, Roger, darling? Be calling me darling! I've made the greatest discovery of the ages, Nancy—and as my future bride, you'll be able to share my fame!

Bride? How many times must I refuse your proposals, Harlow? You have no idea what a girl really wants. There isn't a spark of romance in you!

So she wants romantic things, eh? Well, I know just the romantic bauble that will win any girl's heart!

Later, back in the lair of the centaurs...

Tonight we attack the Royal Greek Museum in the town at the foot of Mt. Pinicus! You will wreak all the evil you yearn for... and I will steal the fabulous jeweled tiara of Helen of Troy!

And so, that night, a holocaust of horror descends upon a Greek village.

Kill! Kill!
"Ah, I've finished the translation... If these ashes of the Hydra are spilled at the feet of its eternal enemy, the Hydra will return to life to wage eternal war!"

"That inscription is ridiculous... The Hydra was just a mythical nine-headed monster! But I think I'll take a sample of these ashes and have the expedition chemist analyze them!"

"Later, in Dr. Nancy Blake's tent on the slopes of Mt. Pinbus..."

"What! Women through the ages would have given their lives to possess the Tiara of Helen of Troy! Surely the woman I love will at least give me her hand in marriage for it!"

"And now, back to the mountain cave... Until I can think of more evil sport for you!"

"You have indeed provided us with great sport! We trust you to lead us into a life of evil—and we will do as you say!"

"Strange... I thought I heard hoofbeats outside! Oh... it's only you again!"

"Yes! I've come to prove I do not know about the romantic things a woman really wants! I have something for you that Cleopatra would have sold her kingdom for!"
OH, THOSE JEWELS... THEY'RE BREATH-TAKING! BUT WAIT... THAT LOOKS LIKE THE JEWELLED TIARA OF HELEN OF TROY! YOU MUST HAVE STOLEN IT! I WANT NO PART OF IT... OR OF YOU!

I'LL NEVER MARRY YOU... AND THAT'S FINAL! I THINK YOU'RE UGLY... AND A BIT MAD! NOW GET OUT OF HERE AND LEAVE ME ALONE!

YES, I AM MAD... ABOUT YOU! I'VE GOT ONE FINAL GIFT TO OFFER YOU... THE GIFT OF ETERNAL LIFE... AS A CENTAUR!

OHHH! YOU—YOU'VE CHANGED INTO A CENTAUR! AND WHEN YOU BECOME ONE, YOU'LL BE FORCED TO ACCEPT ME... BECAUSE YOU'LL BE ONE OF MY KING!

YOU—YOU FIEND! PUT ME DOWN! STOP!!

HA! HA! HA!

GREAT SCOTT! A LIVING CENTAUR! AND IT'S GOT NANY! WE'VE GOT TO STOP IT!

HOW? WE CAN'T EVEN FOLLOW IT IN THE DARK! HER FATE IS OUT OF OUR HANDS!

AFTER A WILD BALLOON BACK TO THE INNER CAVE OF THE MOUNTAIN...

HERE IS ANOTHER ONE TO BE CHANGED INTO A CENTAUR!

VERY WELL; WE SHALL SUMMON IXION ONCE MORE!

OH, THOSE ASHES THAT FELL OUT OF MY POCKET... THEY'RE WHIRLING AROUND! WAIT! I REMEMBER NOW! THE ANCIENT ENEMY OF THE CENTAURS WAS THE HYDRA!
A MOMENT LATER, OUT OF THE ASHES OF THE DEAD PAST...

THE HYDRA... OUR ETERNAL ENEMY OF YORE!

THE—THE PROPHECY WRITTEN ON THE UNK NUN WAS FILLED!

As the nine heads of the ancient monster strike out in different directions, now's my chance to get out of this hellish place!

THE PAIN! THE PAIN!

But it was Dr. Nancy Blake's fate to trip on a loose rock as she ran out of the inner cave... just as it was Professor Griffith's fate that his intended victim should fall on the detonator he had placed a safe distance from the hidden dynamite!

My—my dynamite went off! We're sealed in here forever!

The—The gift of eternal life is now a curse! I cannot die... but must suffer the Hydra's tortures through all eternity!

EE REYAN/ THE PAIN! THE PAIN! OH, WHY CAN'T I DIE? I DON'T WANT IMMORTALITY NOW! IF ONLY DEATH COULD BE MY FATE... DEATH!

Yes, the ways of fate are strange and relentless... as Harlow Griffith will know till the end of time...
The tale of "the cave of the vampire bat" has been a topic of rapt discussion for years among the people of Mexico. In 1933, a trio of Americans from Hollywood came to scout a location in a deserted region of Mexico. They were planning a horror movie and had decided on this particular area because of the many weird tales they had heard about it.

The actor walked into the murky tunnel and disappeared. Soon the ominous silence of the black cave was broken by a mad screaming and chaotic beating of wings.

The three men explored the interior of the cave.

It's Bently—he's in trouble! B-bat—They're coming for us!

The air was suddenly filled with huge, flapping wings and glowing evil eyes. The two men fainted from fright.

An hour later they came to their senses. The cave was empty—silent once again. Their thoughts turned to their missing comrade, Bently. They followed Bently's route into the tunnel and came upon a scene of horror.

Great heavens—Bently! N—he's turned into a vampire bat!

The two men fled to the village to report the awesome affair to the authorities. They were met with knowing glances by the townspeople. The people already knew of the evils that surrounded the cave of the vampire bat. But the two Americans made certain that the terrible fate their friend had met would not occur again. They returned to the cave with dynamite and sealed it forever against the terror of the vampire bat.

The end.
It started simply enough for Tony Pascal, stealing, cheating, petty robbery, picking for paltry francs—then came the fateful night when desperation drove him to murder! But as he wiped the blood off his hands, he found himself face to face with a horror he couldn't destroy...

You belong to the devil, some day he will call for you!

So, the old man lied—his purse is stuffed with many francs tonight Tony Pascal is rich! But what's that noise?

Gendarmes! It's the guillotine if they catch me!

Halt! Stay where you are!
But Tony fled through the darkened streets as if the devil himself were after him...

I'll turn the lamp off and lock the door! There... that's it! They'll never think to look in here!

You come not to sell or to buy! I know these things! There is evil in your eye! Get out!

I've got to shut the old fool up—fast!

Mercy, m'sieu! I... oohs!

Not much time! Got to put out the lamp—I can hear feet pounding on the cobblestones in the distance!

The shades are drawn!

Now I'll loot this musty old shop and... Sacre! My hands—what has happened to my hands?

The killer escapes! We've lost him in the fog!

Safe! They'll never catch me now!
Tom shrunk from the sight; the old man's blood stained his hands.

Ah! This cloth does the trick! In fact, this old mirror with the strange frame should bring me many francs.

Blood, the old man's! To be seen now with blood on my hands would mean the end! I must...

Strange! The reflection doesn't look like me! There's something horrible about the face in the mirror!

Horrible, eh? Come with me, killer of old men, and I will really show you demons from hell!

No, mon ami, you are my slave now, for you locked into the devil's mirror!

There is no escape, Tony Pascal—though I must admit it was you who freed me when you removed the cloth from the mirror. Come, follow the path of no return!

This must be some horrible nightmare! I'll wake up and find it was only a dream.
But it was no dream, and as Tony slowly realized this, fear clutched his heart.

It—it's true! This is really happening!

By the demons of darkness, it assuredly is! Look into 'The Chamber' where my minions work and plead!

Here is another one. Tony Pascal! This one is especially reserved for murderers!

And this, my friend, is where the unfortunate victims of the guillotine work for me. But coming back to you—Which chamber would you like?

Here is another one. Tony Pascal! This one is especially reserved for murderers!

But fair is fair! For releasing me I will let you return to the living—on one condition you must take the mirror with you—and once each month, one with evil in his heart must look into it! For the slaves you send me, I will give you fame and fortune. But you yourself must never look in the mirror!

No, you are a crafty one, Tony Pascal!

Agreed—gladly!

Then the flames spurted higher, and slowly, the horror images faded from Tony Pascal's mind. He found himself drifting aimlessly through space...
AND WHEN TONY NEXT AWOKE—
WHERE AM I? WHY, I'm BACK IN MY OWN ROOM! IT WAS ONLY A DREAM AFTER ALL—I KNEW IT!

BUT AS HIS BLEARY EYES LOOKED AROUND THE DREAMY BASEMENT ROOM...
NO... IT WAS NO DREAM! THERE IS THE MIRROR—THE DEVIL'S MIRROR! THE ONE I MUST NOT LOOK INTO!

I'LL FIND OUT ONCE AND FOR ALL HOW TRUE THIS IS—I'LL CALL IN HENRI, WHO ALWAYS SEEMS A BARBARIAN, AND GET HIM TO LOOK INTO THE MIRROR! CERTAINLY HE'S EVIL ENOUGH! HE'D SLIT ANYONE'S THROAT FOR A HANDFUL OF FRANCS!

AND MOMENTS LATER...
YOUR GENEROSITY OVERWHELMS ME, TONY—AND MAKES ME SUSPICIOUS! WHAT IS IT THIS TIME?

I NEED A FEW FRANKS, QUICKLY! LOOK, I WILL SELL YOU THIS SILK TIE FOR ONLY TWENTY FRANCS!

MERCI, MON AMI, I WILL TAKE IT, AND—THE MIRROR! WHAT'S WRONG? NO, THERE'S NOTHING THERE! SCOUNDREL, YOU MUST HAVE DRUGGED MY WINE!

ARMS CLUTCHING ME! HELP ME, TONY! HELP ME!

YOU'LL GET NO HELP FROM ME, HENRI! AND I HAVE ESCAPED THE FATE OF THE MIRROR! I'VE DELIVERED THE FIRST ONE OF MY BARBARIAN—LET'S SEE IF THE DEVIL REMEMBERS HIS PROMISE!

AND WHEN TONY NEXT AWOKE—
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YOU'LL GET NO HELP FROM ME, HENRI! AND I HAVE ESCAPED THE FATE OF THE MIRROR! I'VE DELIVERED THE FIRST ONE OF MY BARBARIAN—LET'S SEE IF THE DEVIL REMEMBERS HIS PROMISE!
His Chateau was known all over town, and the villagers bowed as he rode past, but Tony Pascal was frightened, for as the months passed he was running out of friends.

Come, my dear, I have a most pleasant surprise for you!

The HELLION—she'll pay for the name's she called me years ago!

And soon, in his private study...

For me? Oh, how beautiful!

Try it on, dearest— you can see now it looks in the mirror over there.

But why for me, Tony? After all, we've not always been the best of friends, and—what's that in the glass?

Aah! What kind of trick are you playing? Whatever it is, make them stop this instant! Please—hurry!

Help! Please save me! Save you? Years ago you called me a stupid fool and tried to steal from me. Now it's my turn to repay you!

Months passed. The former petty thief who had cleverly eluded his fate, became more and more lonely in his large Chateau. Finally he decided that what he needed was companionship. The companionship of marriage. But he must take care—for the woman he marries must have no evil in her heart!
AU REVOIR, ANNABELLE
DO NOT FRET IN LESS
THAN A WEEK I SHALL
RETURN TO YOU!

WAIT! THERE'S
SOMETHING
FAMILIAR ABOUT
THE SHAPE OF
THIS MIRROR—
SOMETHING EVIL!
NO! NO!
THERE MUST BE
SOME MISTAKE!

AND THIS TIME
I PERSONALLY
COME FOR YOU!
TOO BAD, BUT I
WANTED YOU NEVER TO
LOOK INTO THE
MIRROR!

THIS WAY... AND THIS TIME
IT IS THE PATH OF NO RETURN!
THIS TIME YOU MUST CHOOSE YOUR
CHANNEL WHERE YOU
WILL DWELL FOR
ETERNITY!

WHAT'S THIS, A NEW MIRROR, EH?
I'LL SPRUCE IT UP A BIT BEFORE
I CALL ANNABELLE!

NON, THERE
RE NO
MISTAKE,
MON AMI— YOU ARE
LOOKING INTO THE
DEVIL'S MIRROR!

BUT SOMEONE
MOVED IT—
I ALWAYS KEPT
IT IN THE
LIBRARY!
ANNABELLE—
ANNABELLE!

A FEW DAYS LATER, TONY PASCAL
RETURNED HOME UNEXPECTEDLY AS
HE STOOD IN THE FOYER...

ANNABELLE, I'M
RIGHT HERE—
LISTEN TO ME!

SHE CAN NEITHER SEE NOR
HEAR YOU, TONY PASCAL,
AND IT WILL NOT HARM
HER TO LOOK IN THE
MIRROR, AS THERE IS
NO EVIL IN HER
HEART! COME!

ON! IT WAS A SURPRISE THAT HIS YOUNG BRIDE WAS
PLANNING—A SURPRISE INDEED!

THERE! THAT OLD MIRROR ANTHONY
HAD IN HIS STUDY LOOKS SO MUCH BETTER
OUT HERE, PARTICULARLY WITH
THIS NEW FRAME!
Willy Martin was running, running. He ran fearfully, pausing every once in a while to look back at the awful thing chasing him. Then he would moan and race on through one narrow, deserted street after another. His breath came in gasps so that he thought his lungs would burst, but still he didn’t dare stop.

Dimly he heard the tumult and cheers still issuing from the fight arena he’d left, but gradually the sounds grew fainter, and there was just the clatter of his steps on the pavement—and coming closer all the time was the muffled, soft patter of something after him. Not a man, not a human really, but some ghastly aftergrave thing; some hideout, unstoppable apparition that looked like Mike Kelly who had died a year ago tonight in the ring.

Willy Martin longed to stop, but he had to go on. Finally his feet gave out under him and he staggered, then tripped, and as he fell, he turned his face upward and looked fully on the bloodless countenance of Mike Kelly, standing there in his tattered boxing trunks, pieces of the foul earth from which he’d wrested himself still clinging to him, and the awful stench of the undead came up and surrounded Willy Martin as the first blows began to fall and be screamed to agony...

It had all begun just a week ago, this awful premonition that Mike Kelly had returned from the grave to avenge himself. And at first Willy Martin didn’t believe it, and then he wouldn’t let it stop him.

Just a week ago fight manager Willy had returned to his office, propped his feet up on his desk, and gloated. Today he’d signed the dead Mike Kelly’s protégé, Pete Rodriguez, to fight in the Arena in a championship bout.

Rodriguez would be slaughtered in the ring, but Willy didn’t care. He stood to make a lot of money on the deal. There hadn’t been as sweet a setup since he’d sent Mike Kelly into the ring with a bad heart, knowing he couldn’t win. He’d made a lot of money on that bout, too.

Willy didn’t know what made him think of Mike at that moment, unless it was the fact that Rodriguez and Kelly had been close buddies. Rodriguez had come to Willy with Stardust in his eyes shortly after Mike’s death.

"Please, Mr. Martin," Rodriguez had pleaded. "Tell me if I’ve got a chance. I want to win the championship for Mike. He wanted to be champion, but he died. Now, if I can do it, I want to be champion for Mike."

Willy’s eyes had slid thoughtfully over Rodriguez. The kid wasn’t top-notch, he knew, but that didn’t matter. He’d look good for a few rounds. Willy shrugged.

"You can do it, Pete," he said. "You can do it easy."

Rodriguez started training that day, and it was that night that Willy had his first bad dream. It seemed to him that he was walking past Mike Kelly’s grave, and somehow Mike had gotten out of it. He grabbed Willy’s jacket as he passed, holding him fast.

"Don’t doublecross the kid," Mike warned. "Nothing will stop me, not even the grave—don’t doublecross Pete!"

The dream had been so real that Willy had awakened in a cold sweat. He lit a cigarette with a shaking hand and turned up the light. He was relieved to hear the first stirrings of morning outside his window.

But once he’d showered and shaved, he’d dismissed the dream and continued training Rodriguez. Nothing more had happened, not till the week before the fight when he sat in his office feeling good because the contract was signed. Then he’d thought of Mike Kelly and that dream, and slowly his eyes had been drawn to the large, plate-glass framed picture of Kelly that hung on the opposite wall in the long row of fighters Willy had handled.

As Willy stared at the picture, the room seemed to be filled suddenly with a whispering, "I’ll come back from the grave if you doublecross the kid," Mike warned again. "Remember, Willy..."

The rasping voice swirled around the room, and as Willy sat frozen, it seemed to him that Mike Kelly’s golden boxing gloves, tucked beneath the frame picture by their knotted strings, stirred slightly. Then all was still again.

Abruptly Willy pressed the buzzer underneath his desk that summoned Chuck Maloney in a shuffling walk into his office.

"Did you hear someone talking in here?" Willy demanded of his trainer.

Maloney scratched his head thoughtfully. "Didn’t hear a sound," he said. "I was just outside, too. Why?"

Willy hesitated a moment, and then burst forth. "I could have sworn Mike Kelly was in here talking, warning me not to let Rodriguez fight. It was his voice. I know it!"

But then, as Chuck Maloney looked at him suspiciously, Willy said abruptly, "Never mind. Forget it. I must have been dreaming."

Once Maloney left the office, Willy strode over
to the small mirror that hung at one end of the room. He looked carefully at his reflection.

"Don't go getting soft," he told his reflection. "Don't go developing a conscience. Mike Kelly's dead!"

He was about to turn away from the mirror, when he was suddenly conscious of someone, something standing beside him, peering into the glass over his shoulder, grinning at him!

It started first as a vapor, a vague cloud, and gradually as he stared, it shaped itself into the hideous, decayed, but recognizable features of Mike Kelly!

With a cry, Willy tore his gaze away from the mirror and left the office. But once outside he managed to still the furious pounding of his heart, and when he thought of the money he'd make on Rodriguez' fight, he determined that no ghost would stop his plans. It was just a week till the fight. He'd stand it till then, and afterward he'd go away, maybe to Florida, where he'd relax and forget the nightmares he was having.

It wasn't until fight night at the Arena that Willy looked at the contract Rodriguez had signed. He was in the dressing room when it fell out of his jacket pocket. And as he went to pick it up, he noticed the signatures of the two fighters. The Champ's signature was present, but on the line where he'd watched Rodriguez laboriously pen his name there now stood the signature of Mike Kelly!

Willy shouldered his way with Rodriguez to the ring. Here among the crowd, he started to feel better, safer, and he mopped his forehead. He was anxious for the fight to be over, to be able to put this whole ghastly business out of his mind.

He watched as Rocco, the champ, came down the aisle and clambered over the ropes amid the cheers of the mob. Rocco was cool and confident. When the bell rang, he came out from his corner like a tiger.

By the time the first round was over, it was apparent that Rodriguez didn't have a chance. He was taking an awful beating, and at the end of the round, as he went to his corner, he turned an agonized, bewildered gaze on Willy.

Willy sat there, chewing his cigar, not meeting the kid's eyes. The sooner the fight was over, he thought, the better. All he wanted now was to collect his share of the gate money and go away. Rodriguez could go back on the dump heap then.

The second round began, and it was a slaughter. Rodriguez refused to lie down, still not aware what was happening to him. Finally his chin connected with Rocco's left, and he went down and out like a light. He was down for almost the entire count, when it happened.

Suddenly, as though he were standing behind Willy, Mike Kelly's voice said clearly, 'I've come back from the grave, Willy. I told you I would.'

Like a man mesmerized, Willy stared at the ring. Rodriguez had gotten up while the crowd roared their surprise. But what they couldn't see, Willy knew, was the other figure in the ring, the decayed, decomposed, beyond-the-grave creature, his gilded boxing gloves glinting at the spotlight.

Mike Kelly stalked alongside Rodriguez, directing the kid's blows, making each one count, giving a supernatural strength to the kid. And a shocked roar developed among the fight fans as murmurs grew, 'Rodriguez is fighting like Mike Kelly! It's as though he were Mike Kelly!'

The fight ended in the third round, and as the referee raised the surprised kid's triumphant hand, the figure that stood in the center of the ring turned his malevolent gaze on Willy Martin.

With a strangled cry, Willy tore himself from the ring. He pushed out into the aisle, seeking to lose himself, but when he looked back, he saw Mike Kelly stalking after him.

No one in the arena was aware of what was happening as Willy pushed his way through the crowd. But when he came outside, Mike Kelly stood just a short distance away, his glove uplifted in a menacing boxing gesture.

"Now, Willy," the spectre whispered. "Now!"

It was then Willy Martin took to his heels fleeing away from the Arena, away from his guilt, away from the awful creature he could not lose...

As the first blows began to fall Willy Martin screamed in agony, but relentlessly, mercilessly, they continued to fall.

Gradually he sank into a bruised, battered heap. It was all over by the time anyone came upon him. All he could utter through his twisted features was the name, 'Mike Kelly,' and he died.

Were it not for those two words, "Mike Kelly," that Willy whispered, the grave might not have been opened. But when Chuck Maloney discovered Mike's boxing gloves were missing from beneath his framed picture, although the police scoffed they decided to investigate.

When the grave was first approached, it was apparent it had not been disturbed. Grass grew evenly over the top, the headstone was in place. But shovels bit into the earth anyway as diggers probed the secret of Willy Martin's strange death. Finally the grave was open, and Mike Kelly's coffin was lifted out.

They forced back the lid and inside they found the year-old corpse of Mike Kelly, decayed and lifeless. He lay in the rest he'd gone to a year before. But inexplicably, tied on his dead hands were the polished, gilded boxing gloves that had hung by their knotted strings underneath his picture in Willy Martin's office. And strangest of all they were spotted now, with Willy Martin's blood...
A SNAKE PEOPLE

HE INSTANT I ENTERED THE TINY SWISS TOBACCO SHOP, I WAS SEIZED BY A STRANGE AND UNEXPLAINABLE SENSE OF DANGER. WAS IT BECAUSE OF THE BURNING LOOK IN THE OLD WOMAN'S EYES OR WAS IT THE CHOKING SMELL OF DECAY AND AGE THAT BROUGHT FRIGHT TO MY HEART? HERE, IN THIS SHOP, THE FIRST LINK IN THE CHAIN OF TERROR WAS FORGED TO TRANSPLANT ME INTO A WORLD OF SUCH LOATHESOME HORROR, OF SUCH UNFORGETTABLE AND BIZARRE FORCES, THAT DEATH ITSELF WOULD HAVE BEEN A BETTER FATE THAN ITS LIVING MEMORY.

YOU'VE BEEN DOING SOME MOUNTAIN CLIMBING, EH? THEN YOU MUST TRY THE PEAK NEAR MY NATIVE VILLAGE OF ZELLMOTT. YOU'LL NEVER FORGET IT!

I APPRECIATE YOUR INTEREST, MADAM, BUT NOT THIS TRIP. MY VACATION ENDS DAY AFTER TOMORROW.

AT THAT MOMENT, I HEARD A SILENT MOVEMENT FROM THE REAR OF THE SHOP, AND...

MY DAUGHTER GILDA, YOUNG MAN. PERHAPS SHE CAN CONVince YOU TO ACCEPT MY INVITATION.

BUT OF COURSE, YOU MUST VISIT ZELLMOTT!
"She seemed to glide toward me, and when I looked into her face, I could see the green depth of her eyes beneath the long sweep of her lashes. Her beauty was intoxicating.

Zellmott is different. You will find it the most exciting experience of your entire life.

I don't know my plane called for

The door is locked! Wait! That sign! It can't be!

Zellmott left me. I'll find it the most exciting experience of your entire life.

I fled in terror. The loathsome spectacle plunging my thoughts into abysmal depths of horror and wild panic. Yet that very same evening, as my train rounded a long, sweeping curve, I saw it...

It's the tower Gilda spoke of... and the mountain! It's magnificent!

Then forget your plane tonight your train will pass an old tower atop a steep hill. Zellmott left just beyond you will go there.

I-- I'm not sure.

In what seemed a half-trance, I slowly backed out of the shop. The girl's haunting eyes never leaving mine, but when I was outside..."

Why, it's a package of tobacco! She put it in my hand, and I haven't paid for it!

Bewildered and shocked, I looked through the window. I was aware of an immediate change. The girl and the old woman were gone, and so were the weird and grotesque furnishings. Then, a revolting horror loomed before my eyes!

That snake! It's alive!

Perhaps it was the peculiar aroma of the tobacco that Gilda gave me that made me behave in such strange and sudden a manner. I can offer no explanation for my action, but a sharp and irresistible impulse compelled me to get off that train..."
MY MIND WAS SO CONFUSED BY THE STRANGE COURSE OF EVENTS, THAT I WANTED TO FLEE... BUT FLIGHT WAS IMPOSSIBLE WHEN I HEARD GILDA'S VOICE IT FELL UPON MY EARS LIKE THE THINKING OF A THIN HISSED SNAKE, CARESSING AND OVERPOWERING IN ITS SWEETNESS...

YOU ARE NOT UNHAPPY TO FIND ME HERE ARE YOU? I WANTED ONLY TO MAKE YOUR STAY HERE MORE COMFORTABLE YOUR ROOM IS WAITING, HER...? MY NAME IS MICHAEL CORNING -- AND I WILL STAY.

LET ME GO, GILDA! I CAN STILL KILL IT! NO, YOU MUSTNT! IT MEANT NO HARM!

A MOMENT LATER, THE OLD CRONE EMERGED FROM THE ROOM WHERE THE SNAKE HAD ENTERED, HER RAGE WAS TERRIFYING, BUT EVEN MORE SO WAS THE LIVID WILT ACROSS HER CHEEK!

IN ZELLMOTT WE DO NOT HARM SNAKES, HERR CORNING -- NEVER! HE MEANT NO HARM BY IT, LEAVE US ALONE!
Do not become alarmed by my mother's anger. She detests cruelty against all creatures... even snakes!

But was it a snake, Gilda?

Of course, Michael—what else? Come now, after my night's rest you will have forgotten it. Good night, and sleep well.

All right, Gilda. I'll see you in the morning.

When morning came...

What sort of village is this, Gilda? I have seen no people and last night...

No questions now, Michael! Go to the mountain, near its peak you will find a cavern. I will meet you there later, and explain all.

Someone, her words were like a command—my command—felt impelled to obey. All that morning I struggled up the steep slopes, and with every step it seemed as though I could hear Gilda's haunting voice calling to me from above, urging me on.

The cavern at last? She must be inside, waiting for me!

The moment I entered, I was seized by a paralyzing fear, and then I saw the unspeakable horror which tore the single word from my lips!

Gilda!

We have awaited your arrival, Michael. Now you shall learn the answers to your questions!

Half crazed, with terror, I turned to flee!

You can't escape, Michael Corning! We claim you as one of us!
With my final strength I broke free from the repulsive jaws, and fleeing the cavern, I half ran, half slid down the mountain side. Hour later I regained consciousness.

That snake bit me! I got to find help—fast!

This is not the bite from an ordinary snake, the thing that attacked you was far more loathsome. I am not right!

Yea, it was hideous!

You are the victim of the greatest evil ever brought upon man—the ancient snake's worshippers of Zelmott have placed their mark upon you!

Snake worshippers!

The old man swept back the covers on the bed. I was horrified!

My son! Bitten, as you, only two weeks ago!

Time is short. My son is far gone, but if you are to spare yourself this horrible fate, we must act quickly. Together we may still destroy this evil—but we must hurry!

Of course, I'll do anything you say!
At the head of the stairs, a gruesome sight sprang into view.

The one on the throne... she is the leader. The others are past victims of her hideous evil. We must act quickly!

Perhaps it was their venom—flowing in my veins which made me incapable of resisting her call. I walked toward her, drawn to her evil beauty as a moth to a flickering flame.

At the same time, the meeting place...

Discover this passage by chance recently. It leads to their meeting place?

In one deafening blast the cavern floor split open. And a moment later, piercing screams broke loose as the snake creatures tumbled forward into a boiling well of sulphurous liquid.

Taking a small package from the cabin, the old man led the way. Later when we entered a passage in the mountain's base, a feeling of horror rose within me.

Michael, coring, blood of our blood, step forward! I sense your presence amongst us, and there can be no escape. Come, Michael, come...

When the old man was at my side, tearing at his package, a moment later a spluttering bundle was hurled at the spitting, writhing mass.

DIE, you monstrous fiends!

Wait, my son! Resist... wait!
I saw Sela, her body a mass of snake-like scales, submerge into the bubbling sulphur pit!

Unknown to me the old man had scooped up a fum of the bubbling liquid from the sulphur, I confess. Since that liquid was able to destroy their evil, it is quite possible that a small dosage will destroy their venom which still flows in your veins. We should know in a few days! Drink it, my son!

Actually, the village of Zellmott has been deserted for two hundred years, ever since some of its inhabitants had been burned at the stake for witchcraft and snake worship!

Let us hope their evil has been destroyed for always!

I see that snake has caught your eye. My son found it the other day on a hiking trip near the deserted village of Zellmott. If you'd like to buy it...

Yes! At any price!

Tearing my eyes away from this last and final horror, I followed the old man down the passageway and out of the mountain...

We must hurry! Every moment we lose, their venom mixes further with your blood! But there may still be a way of saving you, as well as my son!

Before returning to the states, I was determined to go back to the tobacco shop for a last look. I didn't really expect the owner to believe my story...

It's fantastic! Besides, I was hardly closed. You saw the sign! This shop now, but it did happen. There was an old woman here, and...

That night, alone in my room, I threw the cursed thing into the flames...

Now my only hope and prayer is that I have destroyed the last of the snake worship. But what if there are still others waiting for some innocent customer in an out of the way shop? What then?
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