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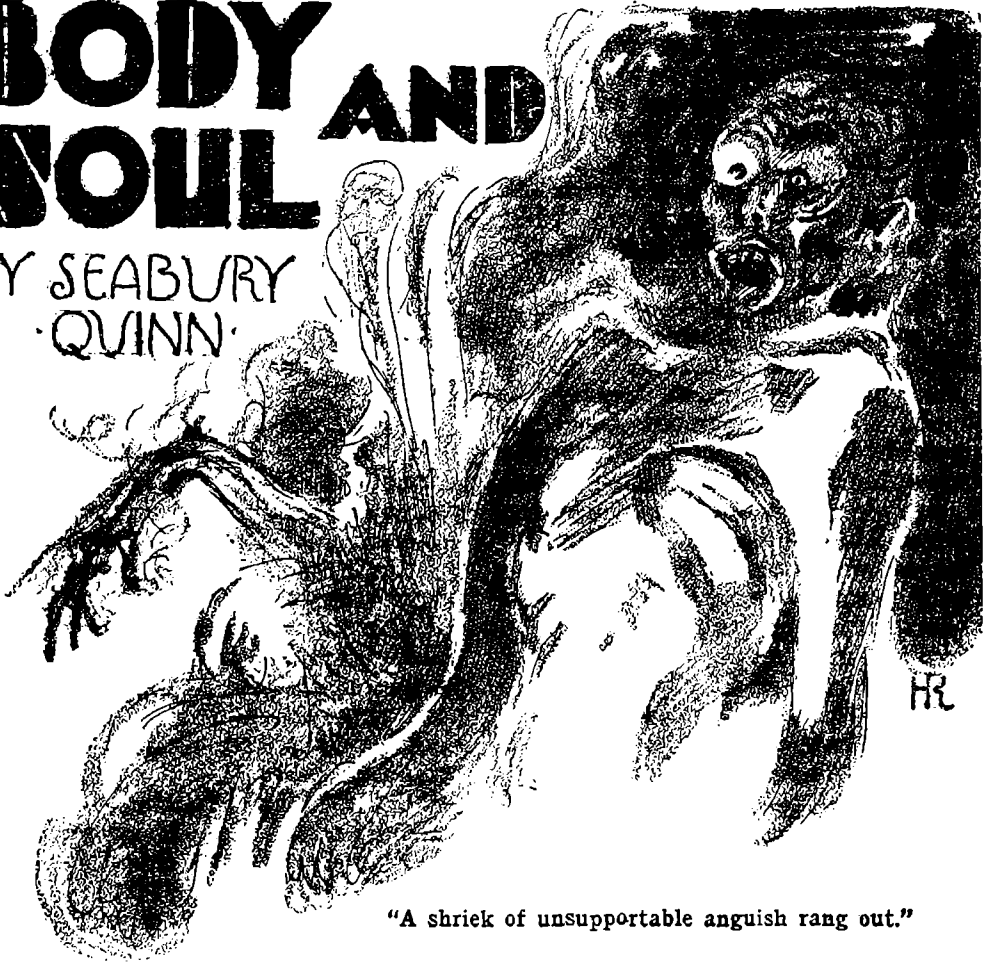
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# BODY AND SOUL

BY SEABURY  
QUINN



"A shriek of unsupportable anguish rang out."

I HAD had a strenuous day, for the mild epidemic of summer grippe had lasted over into September, and my round of calls had been double the usual number. "Thank heaven, I can relax for seven or eight hours," I murmured piously as I pulled the single blanket up around my chin and settled myself for the night. The hall clock had just struck 12, and I had no appointments earlier than 9 the following morning. "If only nobody is so inconsiderate as to break a leg or get the belly-ache," I mumbled drowsily, "I'll not stir from this bed until——"

As if to demonstrate the futility of self-congratulation, there came a sudden thunderous clamor at the front

door. Someone was beating the panels with both his fists, raining frenzied blows on the wood with his feet and shrieking at the top of his voice, "Let me in! Doctor—Dr. Trowbridge, let me in! For God's sake, let me in!"

"The devil!" I ejaculated, rising resentfully and feeling for my slippers and dressing-gown. "Couldn't he have had the decency to ring the bell?"

"Let me in, let me in, Dr. Trowbridge!" the frantic hail came again as I rounded the bend of the stairs. "Let me in—quick!"

"All right, all right!" I counseled testily, undoing the lock and chain-fastener. "Just a min——"

The caller ceased his battering-ram assault on the door as I swung it back and catapulted past me into the hall, almost carrying me off my feet as he did so. "Quick, shut it—shut the door!" he gasped, wheeling in his tracks to snatch the knob from my hand and force the door to. "It's out there—it's outside there, I tell you!"

"What the mischief——" I began, half puzzled, half angry, as I took quick stock of the intruder.

He was a young man, twenty-five or -six, I judged, dressed somewhat foppishly in a suit of mohair dinner clothes, his jacket and waistcoat badly rumpled, his once stiff evening shirt and collar reduced to a pulpy mass of sweat-soaked linen, and the foamy froth of drool disfiguring the corners of his flaccid mouth. As he turned on me to repeat his hysterical warning, I noticed that he caught his breath with considerable difficulty and that there was a strong hint of liquor in his speech.

"See here, young man, what do you mean?" I demanded sternly. "Haven't you any better sense than to knock a man out of bed at this ungodly hour to tell him that——"

"Ssssh!" he interrupted with the exaggerated caution of the half-tipsy. "Ssssh, Dr. Trowbridge, I think I hear it coming up the steps. Is the door locked? Quick, in here!" Snatching me by the arm he dragged me unceremoniously into the surgery.

"Now see here, confound you!" I remonstrated. "This is going a bit too far. If you expect to get away with this sort of thing, I'll mighty soon show you——"

"Trowbridge, *mon vieux*, what is it? What does the alarm portend?" Jules de Grandin, a delicate mauve-silk dressing-gown drawn over his lilac pajamas, slippers of violet snake-skin on his womanishly small feet, tiptoed into the room, his little blue eyes round with wonder and curiosity. "I thought I heard someone in ex-

trémity calling," he continued, looking from the visitor to me, then back again with his quick, stock-taking glance. "Is it that someone dies and requires our assistance through the door to the better world, or——"

"It looks as if some drunken young fool is trying to play a practical joke on us," I returned grimly, bending a stern look on the boy who cowered in the chair beside my desk. "I've half a mind to prescribe four ounces of castor oil and stand by while he takes it!"

De Grandin regarded the young man with his steady, unwinking stare a moment, then: "What frightens you, *mon brave*?" he demanded, far too gently, I thought. "*Parbleu*, but you look as though you had been playing tag with Satan himself!"

"I have—I have!" the youth replied quaveringly. "I tell you, it jumped at me just as I came past the park entrance, and I wasn't a hundred yards ahead when Dr. Trowbridge let me in!"

"U'm?" the Frenchman twisted the ends of his little blond mustache meditatively. "And this 'It' which pursued you, it is what?"

"I don't know," the other responded. "I was walking home from a dance at the Sigma Delta Tau house—been staggering it, you know—and stopped by the Victory Monument to light a cigarette when something—dam' if I know what—jumped out o' the bushes at me and made a grab at my throat. It missed my neck by a couple o' inches, but snatched my hat, and I didn't take any time to see what it would do next. I'd 'a' been going yet if my wind hadn't given out, and I happened to think that Dr. Trowbridge lives in this block and that he'd most likely be up, or within call, anyhow, so I rushed up the steps and hammered on the door till he let me in.

"Will you let me stay here overnight?" he concluded, turning to me appealingly. "I'm Dick Ratliff—

Henry Ratliff's nephew, you know—and honest, Doctor, I'm scared stiff to go out in that street again till daylight."

"H'm," I murmured judicially, surveying the young fool reflectively. He was not a bad-looking boy—quite otherwise—and I could well imagine he presented a personable enough appearance when his clothing was in better array and his head less fuddled with bad liquor. "How much have you had to drink tonight, young man?"

"Two drinks, sir," he returned promptly, looking me squarely in the eye, and, though my better judgment told me he was lying like a witness at a Senate investigation, I believed him.

"I think you're a damn fool," I told him with more candor than courtesy. "You were probably so full of rotgut that your own shadow gave you a start back there by the park gate, and you've been trying to outrace it for the last four blocks. You'll be heartily ashamed of yourself in the morning, but I've a spare bed, and you may as well sleep off your debauch here as in some police station, I suppose."

"Thank you, sir," he answered humbly. "I don't blame you for thinking I've got the jimjams—I know my story sounds crazy—but I'm telling you the truth. Something did jump out at me, and almost succeeded in grabbing me by the throat. It wasn't just imagination, and it wasn't booze, either, but—my God, *look!*"

THE exclamation ended in a shrill crescendo, and the lad half leaped from his chair, pointing with a shaking forefinger at the little window over the examination table, then slumped back as though black-jacked, his hands falling limply to the floor, his head lolling drunkenly forward on his breast.

Both de Grandin and I wheeled about, facing the window. "Good

lord!" I exclaimed as my gaze penetrated the shining, night-backed panes.

"*Grand Dieu—c'est le diable en personne!*" the little Frenchman cried.

Staring into the dimly lighted room was such a visage as might bring shudders of horripilation to a bronze statue. It was a long, cadaverous face, black with the dusky hue of old and poorly cured rawhide, bony as a death's-head, yet covered with a multitude of tiny horizontal wrinkles. The fleshless, leathery lips were drawn back from a set of broken and discolored teeth which reminded me somehow of the cruel dentition of a shark, and the corded, rugous neck supporting the withered face was scarcely thicker than a man's wrist. From the bare, black scalp there hung a single lock of coarse, straggling hair. But terrible as the features were, terrifying as were the unfleshed lips and cheeks and brow, the tiny, deep-set eyes almost fallen backward from their sockets were even more horrible. Small as the eyes of a rodent, set, unwavering in their stare, they reminded me, as they gleamed with hellish malevolence in their settings of shrunken, wrinkled skin, of twin poisonous spiders awaiting the chance to pounce upon their prey. It might have been a trick of the lamp-light, but to me it seemed that the organs shone with a diabolical luminance of their own as they regarded us with a sort of mirthless smile.

"Good heavens, what is it?" I choked, half turning to my companion, yet keeping most of my glance fixed on the baneful, hypnotic orbs glaring at me through the window-pane.

"God knows," returned de Grandin, "but by the belly of Jonah's whale, we shall see if he be proof against shot and powder!" Whipping a tiny Ortgies automatic from his dressing-gown pocket he brought its blunt muzzle in line with the win-

dow and pressed the trigger. Seven, eight shots rang out so quickly that the last seemed no more than the echo of the first; the plate glass pane was perforated like a sieve within an area of three square inches; and the sharp, acrid smell of smokeless powder bit the mucous membrane of my nostrils.

"After him, Friend Trowbridge!" de Grandin cried, flinging aside the empty pistol and bolting through the door, down the hallway and across the porch. "*Barbe d'une oie*, but we shall see how he liked the pills I dealt him!"

The September moon rode serenely in the dark-blue sky; a little vagrant breeze, coming from the bay, rustled the boughs of the curbside maple trees; and from the downtown section there came to us, faintly, the muted clangor of the all-night trolley cars and the occasional hoot of a cruising taxicab's horn. After the bedlam of the Frenchman's shots the early autumn night seemed possessed of a stillness which bore in on our eardrums like a tangible sound, and, like visitors in an empty church, we pursued our quest in silence, communicating only in low, breathless whispers. From house to hedge, over lawn and rosebed and tennis court we pushed our search, scanning every square inch of land, peering under rosebushes and rhododendron plants, even turning over the galvanized iron trash-can which stood by my kitchen stoop. No covert large enough to have shielded a rat did we leave unexplored, yet of the awful thing which had gazed through the surgery window we found no sign or trace, though we hunted till the eastern sky began to pale with streaks of rose and pearl and amethyst and the rattling milk carts broke the nighttime quiet with their early-morning clatter.

"GOOD mornin', Dr. de Grandin." Detective Sergeant Costello rose from his seat in the consulting-room

as de Grandin and I entered. "'Tis sorry I am to be disturbin' ye so early in th' mornin', more especially as I know what store ye set by yer breakfast"—he grinned broadly at his sally—"but th' fact is, sor, there's been a tidy little murder committed up th' street, an' I'm wondering if ye'd be discommodin' yerself to th' extent o' comin' up to Professor Kolisko's house and takin' a look around before th' coroner's physician messes everything up an' carts th' remains off to the morgue for an autopsy."

"A murder?" de Grandin's little eyes snapped with sudden excitement. "Do you say a murder? My friend, you delight me!"

"Yes, sor, I knew y'd be pleased to hear about it," the Irishman answered soberly. "Will we be goin' up to th' house at once, sor?"

"But of course, by all means," de Grandin assented. "Trowbridge, my friend, you will have the charity to convey us thither, will you not? Come, let us hasten to this Monsieur Kolisko's house and observe what we can see. And"—his little eyes twinkled as he spoke—"I beseech you, implore the so excellent Nora to reserve sufficient breakfast against the time of our return. *Mordieu*, already I feel my appetite assuming giant proportions!"

Two minutes later the detective, de Grandin and I were speeding uptown toward the isolated cottage where Urban Kolisko, one-time professor of psychology at the University at Warsaw, had passed the declining years of his life as a political refugee.

"Tell me, Friend Costello," the Frenchman demanded; "this Monsieur Kolisko, how did he die?"

"H'm, that's just what's puzzlin' all of us," the detective admitted. "All we know about th' case is that Murphy, who has th' beat where th' old felly lived, wuz passin' by there a little after midnight an' heard th' devil's own row goin' on inside. Th'

lights wuz all goin' in th' lower part o' th' house, which warn't natural, an' when Murphy stopped to hear what it wuz all about, he thought he heard someone shoutin' an' swearin', an' once or twice th' crack o' a whip, then nothin' at all.

"Murphy's a good lad, sor; I've knowed him, man an' boy, these last eighteen years, an' he did just what I'd expected o' him. Went up an' knocked on th' door, an' when he couldn't get no response, broke it in. There was hell broke loose for certain, sor."

"Ah?" returned de Grandin. "What did the excellent Murphy observe?"

"Plenty," Costello replied laconically. "Ye'll be seein' it for yerself in a minute."

Inside the Kolisko house was that peculiar hush which does reverence to the Grim Reaper's visits. Acting on telephoned instructions, Officer Murphy mounted guard before the door, permitting no one to enter the place, and the scene in the small, poorly lighted living-room was exactly as he had come upon it several hours earlier.

Like most dyed-in-the-wool students, Kolisko had regarded his home merely as a place to sleep, eat and store books. The room was lined from floor to ceiling on all sides with rough deal shelving which groaned and sagged under the weight of ponderous volumes in every language known to print. Piles of other books, unable to find accommodation on the shelves, were littered about the floor. The rough, benchlike table and the littered, untidy desk which stood between the two small windows were also piled high with books.

Between the desk and table, flat on its back, staring endlessly at the rough whitewashed ceiling with bulging, sightless eyes, lay the relic of Professor Kolisko. Clothed in a tat-

tered bathrobe and soiled pajamas the body lay, and it was not a pretty sight even to a medical man to whom death in its unloveliest phases is no stranger. Kolisko had been thin to the point of emaciation, and his scrawniness was accentuated in death. His white-thatched head was thrown back and bent grotesquely to one side, his straggling white beard thrust upward truculently, and his lower jaw had fallen downward with the flaccidity of death, half an inch or so of tongue protruding beyond the line of his lower teeth. Any doctor, soldier or undertaker—any man whose business has to do habitually with death—could not fail to recognize the signs. The man was dead, and had been so for upward of seven hours.

"Howly Mither!" Costello's brogue came strongly to the surface as he blessed himself involuntarily. "Will ye be lookin' at th' awfulness o' him, sors?"

"U'm," murmured Jules de Grandin, sinking to one knee beside the corpse, raising the lolling head and fingering the back of the neck with quick, practised hands, then brushing back the bristling beard to examine the scrawny throat attentively, "he had cause to be dead, this one. See, Friend Trowbridge"—taking my hand he guided my fingers slowly down the dead man's neck, then pointed to the throat—"there is a clean fracture of the spine between the third and fourth dorsal vertebrae, probably involving a rupture of the cord, as well. The autopsy will disclose that. And here"—he tapped the throat with a well-manicured forefinger—"are the marks of strangulation. *Mordieu*, whatever gripped this poor one's neck possessed a hold like Death himself, for he not only choked him, but broke his spine as well! If it were not for one thing, I should say such strength—such ferocity of grip—could only have been

exerted by one of the great apes, but——”

He broke off, staring with preoccupied, unseeing eyes at the farther wall.

“But what, sor?” Costello prompted as the little man’s silence continued.

“*Parbleu*, it could not be an ape and leave such a thumb-mark, my friends,” de Grandin returned. “The gorilla, the orang-utan, the chimpanzee, all have such strength of hand as to accomplish what we see here, but they are not human, no matter how much they parody mankind. Their thumbs are undeveloped; the thumb which closed on this one’s neck was long and thin, more like a finger than a thumb. See for yourselves, it closed about the throat, meeting the fingers which clasped it on the other side. *Mordieu*, if we are to find this murderer we must look for one with twice the length and five times the strength of hand of the average man. Bethink you—this one’s grip was great enough to snap Kolisko’s spine like a clay-pipe stem by merely squeezing his neck! *Dieu de Dieu*, but he will be an uncomfortable one to meet in the dark!”

“Sergeant Costello,” Murphy’s hail came sharply from the cottage door, “they’re comin’; Coroner Martin an’ Dr. Schuester just drove up!”

“All right, Murphy, good lad!” Costello returned, then glanced sharply at de Grandin. “Leave him be, Doc,” he ordered. “If th’ coroner an’ Dr. Schuester catch us monkeyin’ with their property there’ll be hell poppin’ at headquarters.”

“Very good, my friend,” de Grandin rejoined, rising and brushing the dust from his trousers knees, “we have seen as much of the body as we desire. Let them have it and perform their gruesome rites; we shall look elsewhere for what we seek.”

Coroner Martin and his physician came bustling in almost as the little Frenchman ceased speaking, glanced casually at Costello and suspiciously at de Grandin and me, then went at their official duties with only a mumbled word of greeting.

“What do you make of it?” I inquired as we drove toward my house.

“*Eh bien*, as yet I make nothing,” de Grandin returned. “The man was killed by paralysis resulting from a broken neck, although the pressure on his windpipe would have been sufficient to have slain him, had it but continued long enough. We know his murderer possessed hands of extraordinary strength and size, and is, therefore, in all probability, a man of more than usual height. Thus far we step with assurance. When the coroner has finished with the deceased gentleman’s premises, we shall afford ourselves the pleasure of a protracted search; before that we shall request our good friend Costello to inquire into Monsieur Kolisko’s antecedents and discover if he possessed any enemies, especially any enemies capable of doing him to death in this manner. Meantime I famish for my breakfast. I am hungry as a cormorant.”

The boasted appetite was no mere figure of speech. Three bowls of steaming cereal, two generous helpings of bacon and eggs, half a dozen cups of well-creamed coffee disappeared into his interior before he pushed back his chair and lighted a rank-smelling French cigarette with a sigh of utter content. “*Eh bien*, but it is difficult to think on an empty stomach,” he assured me as he blew a column of smoke toward the ceiling. “Me, I am far from my best when there is nothing but flatulence beneath my belt. I require stimu—— *Mon Dieu*, what a fool I am!”

Striking his forehead with the heel of his hand, he rose so abruptly that

his chair almost capsized behind him.

"What's the matter?" I asked, but he waved my question and me aside with an impatient hand.

"*Non, non*, do not stop me, do not hinder me, my friend!" he ordered. "Me, I have important duties to perform, if it be not too late to do them. Go upon your errands of mercy, Friend Trowbridge, and should you chance to return before I quit the surgery, I pray you leave me undisturbed. I have to do that which is needful, and I must do it uninterrupted, if you please."

Having thus served notice on me that I would be unwelcome in my own workshop, he turned and fled toward the front door like a luckless debtor pursued by collectors.

IT WAS nearly 4 o'clock that afternoon when I returned from my round of calls and tiptoed past the surgery door, only to find my caution unnecessary, for de Grandin sat in the cool, darkened library, smoking a cigar and chuckling over some inane story in *L'Illustration*.

"Finish the important duties?" I asked, regarding him ironically.

"But certainly," he returned. "First, dear friend, I must apologize most humbly for my so abominable rudeness of this morning. It is ever my misfortune, I fear, to show only incivility to those who most deserve my courtesy, but I was all afire with the necessity of haste when I spoke. Great empty-head that I was, I had completely forgotten for the moment that one of the best places to seek clues of a murder is the person of the victim himself, and when I did remember I was almost beside myself until I ascertained to which *entrepreneur des pompes funèbres*—how do you say it? undertaker?—my God, what a language!—Monsieur Kolisko's body had been entrusted by the coroner. Friend Costello informed me that Monsieur Mitchell

was in charge, and to the excellent Mitchell I hurried post-haste, begging that he would permit me one little minute alone with the deceased before he commenced his ministrations.

"H'm, and did you find anything?" I asked.

"*Parbleu*, yes; I found almost too much. From the nails of Monsieur Kolisko's hands I rescued some fragments, and in your surgery I subjected them to microscopic examination. They proved to be—what do you say?"

"Tobacco?" I hazarded.

"Tobacco!" he scoffed. "Friend Trowbridge, sometimes I think you foolish; at others I fear you are merely stupid. Beneath the dead man's finger-nails I found some bits of human skin—and a fragment of human hair."

"Well," I returned unenthusiastically, "what of it? Kolisko was an exceedingly untidy sort of person—the kind who cared so little for social amenities that he was apt to scratch himself vigorously when he chose, and probably he was also addicted to the habit of scrabbling through his beard with his fingers. Most of those European scientists with birds' nests sprouting from their chins are that sort, you know. He was shockingly uncouth, and——"

"And you annoy me most thoroughly, Friend Trowbridge," the little Frenchman broke in. "Listen, attend me, regard that which I am about to tell you: The skin and hair which I did find were black, my friend, black as bitumen, and subjected to chemical reagents, showed themselves to be strongly impregnated with natron, oil of cedar and myrrh. What have you to say now?"

"Why——"

"And if these things suggest an Egyptian mummy to you, as they may if you think steadily for the next ten or more years, I make so bold as to ask what would a professor of psy-



chology be doing in contact with a mummy. *Hein?* Answer me that, if you please. Had he been an Egyptologist, or even a student of comparative anatomy, there would be reason for it, but a psychologist—it does not make sense!”

“Well, then, why bother about it?” I retorted.

“Ah, but I think maybe, perhaps, there is an answer to the riddle, after all,” he insisted. “Recall the events of last night, if you please. Remember how that young Monsieur Ratliff came bawling like a frightened calf to our door, begging to be taken in and protected from something which assaulted him in the public thoroughfares. Recollect how we suspected him of an overindulgence in alcohol, and how, as we were about to turn him out, there appeared at our window a most unpleasant-looking thing which made mock of Jules de Grandin’s marksmanship. *Parbleu*, yes, you will recall all that, as well as that the ungrateful Ratliff child did sneak away from the house without so much as saying ‘thank you’ for our hospitality while we were out with Sergeant Costello viewing Monsieur Kolisko’s remains.”

“Then you’d suggest——” I began incredulously, but he rose with an impatient shrug.

“Ah bah, I think nothing, my friend,” he assured me. “He who thinks without knowing is a fool. A connection there may be between that which we saw last night and that which we viewed this morning. We shall see, perhaps. I have an engagement to search Kolisko’s house with Sergeant Costello this evening, and I suggest you accompany us. There may be that there which shall cause your eyes to pop from out your face with wonder. Meantime, I hear visitors in the reception-room. Go to your duties, my friend. Some neurotic old lady undoubtedly desires you to sympathize with her latest symptoms.”

“WELL, sor,” confided Sergeant Costello as he, de Grandin and I set out for the Kolisko cottage that evening, “this case beats th’ Jews, an’ th’ Jews beat the devil.”

“Indeed?” responded de Grandin politely.

“It sure does. We’ve been over Kolisko’s antecedents, as ye might call ‘em, an’ th’ devil a thing can we find that might lead us to a clue as to who killed him. ‘Twas little enough they knew about him, at best, for he was a stand-offish old felly, wid never a word for annybody, except when he wanted sumpin, which warn’t often. He had a few Polack cronies, but they wuz few an’ far between. Five months ago a felly broke into his house an’ stole some stuff o’ triflin’ value, an’ shot up a State trooper while tryin’ to escape to th’ next town. Kolisko appeared agin ‘im at th’ trial, as wuz his dooty, for he wuz subpenaed, an’ later visited ‘im in jail, I understand, but this felly—name o’ Heschler, he wuz—didn’t take anny too kindly to th’ professor’s visits, an’ he cut ‘em out.”

“Ah,” de Grandin nursed his narrow chin in the cradle of his hand, “perhaps it is that this Heschler harbored malice and wreaked vengeance on Monsieur Kolisko for the part he had in his conviction?”

“P’raps,” agreed Costello shortly, “but ‘tain’t likely.”

“And why not?” the Frenchman demanded shortly. Like most men who keep their own counsel, he was easily annoyed by others’ reticence.

“Because they burned him at Camden last night, sor.”

“Burned? How do you mean——”

“Sure, burned him. Bumped ‘im off, rubbed ‘im out, gave ‘im th’ chair—electrocuted ‘im. He was a murderer, warn’t he?” Costello elucidated.

“U’m,” the Frenchman gulped over the information like one trying to clear his mouth of an unpalatable

morsel, "you are doubtless right, Sergeant; we may regard this Heschler as eliminated—perhaps."

"P'raps?" echoed the amazed Irishman as I brought the car to a halt before the cottage door. "P'raps me neck! If you'll listen to me, I'll say he's been eliminated altogether entirely be th' State executioner!"

OUR search was startlingly unproductive. A few letters in envelopes with foreign postmarks, receipts for small bills for groceries and kindred household items, one or two invitations to meetings of learned societies—this was the sum total produced by an hour's rummaging among the dead man's papers.

"*Tiens*, it would seem we have come on the chase of the wild goose," de Grandin admitted disconsolately, wiping the sweat from his forehead with a pale blue silk handkerchief. "*Zut*, it seems impossible that any man should have so much paper of so little importance. Me, I think that——"

"Here's sumpin that might help us, if it's papers ye're after," Costello interrupted, appearing at the kitchen door with a rough wooden box in his hand. "I found it behint th' stove, sor. Most of it seems of little enough account, but you might find sumpin that'd——"

"Aside, stand aside, my friend!" the Frenchman ordered, leaping on the box like a famished cat on a mouse and scattering its contents over the living-room table. "What have we here? *Mordieu*, another receipt from that twenty-times-damned Public Service Company! Name of a rooster, did the man do nothing but contract and pay bills for electric light? Another one—and another! *Grand Dieu*, if I find but one more of these receipts I shall require a strait-waistcoat to restrain myself. What, another—ah, *triomphe!* At last we find something else!" From the pile of scrambled papers he unearthed a small, black-

leather book and began riffling through its pages.

Pausing to read an inscription at random, he regarded the page with upraised brows and pursed lips, seated himself beside the table and brought his eyes to within a few inches of the small, crabbed writing with which the book seemed filled.

Five minutes he sat thus studying the memoranda, his brows gradually rising till I feared they would impinge upon the line of his smoothly combed blond hair. Finally: "My friends, this is of the importance," he assured us, looking quickly from one to the other with his queer, direct glance. "Monsieur Kolisko made these entries in his diary in mingled Polish and French. I shall endeavor to render them into English tonight, and tomorrow morning we shall go over them together. Thus far I have read little, but that little may explain much, or I am much mistaken."

"TROWBRIDGE, my friend," de Grandin requested the following morning when my round of calls was finished, "will you please read what I have written? All night I labored over this translation, and this morning my eyes are not sufficient to the task of reading my own script."

He thrust a sheaf of neatly written foolscap into my hands, then lighted a cigarette and leaned back in his chair, his small hands locked behind his head, his eyes half closed, as he surveyed Costello and me lazily.

Glancing from de Grandin to the waiting detective, I set my pince-nez firmly on my nose and began:

April 5—Michel was here again last night, nagging me with his silly talk of the soul and its immortality. To think that one so well educated should entertain such childish ideas! I would have ordered him from the house in anger, as I did once before, had he not been more than usually insulting. After taunting me with the old story about a body's being weighed a few minutes after death and found lighter than before, thereby proving that something of material weight had passed from it, he challenged me to

prove the non-existence of any entity separate from the physical being. Fool! It is he who asserts the proposition, not I. Yet I must think of some way to confound him, or he will be everlastingly reminding me that I failed to meet his test.

*April 10*—Michel is a greater fool than I thought. I hold him and his faith in the hollow of my hand, and by his own act. Last night he proposed the wildest scheme ever broached by man. The burglar who broke into my house last month has been sentenced to death for killing a policeman. Michel would have me see the fellow in prison, arrange for a transmigration of his soul to a body which he will secure, and await results of the experiment. It is childish folly; I insult my own intelligence by agreeing to it, but I must silence Michel and his everlasting patter of the soul's immortality. I shall undertake the task, if only to prove my cousin a fool.

*May 16*—Yesterday I saw Heschler in prison. The poor fellow was almost beside himself with joy when I told him of Michel's wild plan. Not dying, but fear of punishment in the world to come seems to terrify the man. If I can provide a tenement for his soul which will enable it to remain away from the seat of judgment a little longer, he will be content, even though he has to live in the body of a child, a cripple or one already bowed with age. Living out the span of life in the second body we provide, he will so conduct himself as to win pardon for misdeeds committed in the frame he now wears, he vows. Poor, hood-winked fool! Like all Christians, he is bound hand and foot by the old superstitions which have come down to us through the ages. That Heschler, the burglar, should adhere to the *Christus* myth, the God fairy-tale, is not surprizing, for he is but an ignorant clod; but that my cousin Michel Kolisko, a learned man, should give credit to beliefs which were outworn and disproved in the Nineteenth Century is beyond my understanding.

*May 30*—Today I had another talk with Heschler. He is pitiaibly anxious to begin the experiment. It was childishly simple. Ordering him to gaze stedfastly into my eyes through the bars of his cell, I soon had him completely hypnotized. "You will hereafter cease to dread your coming execution." I told him. "From this time forth you will think of nothing but the opportunity of living on in another body which is to be afforded you. At the moment of execution you will concentrate all your will upon entering the body which will be waiting at my home to receive your soul." He nodded as I gave each command, and I left him. It will not be necessary to repeat my orders. He was already half insane with the ob-

session of prolonging his life. My work was more than half done before I gave him the directions. I shall not see him again.

The next page bore a clipping from the *Newark Call*:

Adolph Heschler, confined in the penitentiary at Camden awaiting execution for the murder of State Trooper James Donovan on the night of March 20th last, seems resigned to his fate. When first taken to the state prison he seemed in deadly fear of death and spent most of his time in prayer. Prison officials say that he began to show signs of resignation following the memorial services on May 30th, and it is said he declares his conscience is cleared by the thought that he shall be allowed the opportunity of atoning for his misdeeds. Curiously enough, Heschler, who has heretofore shown the most devout appreciation of the ministrations of the prison's Catholic chaplain, will have nothing further to do with the spiritual advisor, declaring "atonement for his sins has been arranged." There is talk of having him examined by a lunacy commission before the date set for his execution.

Another translation of the diary followed:

*August 30*—Michel has come with the body. It is a mummy! When I expressed my astonishment, he told me it was the best possible corpse for the purpose. After hearing him, I realized he has the pseudo-logic of the mildly insane. The body of one who has died from natural causes or by violence would be unfitted for our purposes, he says, since some of its organs must inevitably be unable to function properly. This mummy is not a true mummy, but the body of an Egyptian guilty of sacrilege, who was sealed up alive in a tomb during the Hyksos dynasty. He died of asphyxia, in all probability, and his body is in perfect condition, except for the dehydration due to lying so many thousands of years in a perfectly dry atmosphere. Michel rescued the mummy during his last expedition to Egypt, and tells me there was evidence of the man's having made a terrific struggle before death put an end to his sufferings. Other bodies, properly mummified, were found in the same tomb, and the dying man had overturned many of the cases and spilled their contents about the place. His body was so thoroughly impregnated with the odor of the spices and preservatives, absorbed from the mummies lying in the tomb, that it was not for some time his discoverers realized he had not been eviscerated and embalmed. Michel assures me the dead man will be perfectly able to act as an envelope for

Heschler's soul when the electrocution has been performed. Cousin Michel, if this body does but so much as wiggle its fingers or toes after the authorities have killed Heschler, I will believe—I will believe.

I laid down the final page of de Grandin's translation and looked wonderingly at him. "Where's the rest of it?" I demanded. "Couldn't you do any more last night?"

"The rest," he answered ironically, "is for us to find out, my friends. The journal stops with the entry you have just read. There was no more."

"Humph," Sergeant Costello commented, "crazy as a pair o' fish out o' water, weren't they? Be gorry, gentlemen, I'm thinkin' it's a crazy man we'd best be lookin' for. I can see it all plain, now. This here Cousin Michael o' Professor Kolisko's was a religious fy-nat-ic, as th' felly says, an' th' pair o' 'em got to fightin' among themselves an' th' professor came out second best. That's th' answer, or my name ain't—"

The sudden shrilling of the office telephone interrupted him. "Sergeant Costello, please," a sharp voice demanded as I picked up the receiver.

"Yeah, this is Costello speakin'," the detective announced, taking the instrument from me. "Yep. All right, go ahead. *What?* Just like th' other one? My Gawd!"

"What is it?" de Grandin and I asked in chorus as he put down the receiver and turned a serious face to us.

"Miss Adkinson, an old lady livin' by herself out by th' cemetery, has been found murdered," he replied slowly, "*an' th' marks on her throat tally exactly wid those on Professor Kolisko's!*"

"*Cordieu!*" de Grandin shouted, leaping from his chair as if it had suddenly become white-hot. "We must hasten, we must rush, we must fly to that house, my friends! We must examine the body, we must assure ourselves before some bungling

coroner's physician spoils everything!"

Two minutes later we were smashing the speed ordinances in an effort to reach the Adkinson house before Coroner Martin arrived.

**S**TARK tragedy repeated itself in the Adkinson cottage. The old lady, gaunt with the leanness of age to which time has not been over-kind, lay in a crumpled heap on her kitchen floor, and a moment's examination disclosed the same livid marks on her throat and the same horrifying limberness of neck which we had observed when viewing Professor Kolisko's body.

"By Gawd, gentlemen, this is terrible!" Costello swore as he turned from the grisly relic. "Here's an old man kilt at night an' a harmaless old woman murdered in broad daylight, an' no one to tell us anything certain about th' murderer!"

"*Ha*, do you say so?" de Grandin responded sharply, his little eyes flashing with excitement. "*Parbleu*, my friend, but you are greatly wrong, as wrong as can be. There is one who can tell us, and tell us he shall, if I must wring the truth from him with my bare hands!"

"What d'ye mean——?" Sergeant Costello began, but the little Frenchman had already turned toward the door, dragging frantically at my elbow.

"Clutch everything, *mes amis*," he commanded. "Retain all; me, I go to find him who can tell us what we need to know. *Mordieu*, I shall find him though he takes refuge in the nethermost subcellar of hell! Come, Trowbridge, my friend; I would that you drive me to the station where I can entrain for New York."

**S**HORTLY after 7 o'clock that evening I answered the furious ringing of my telephone to hear de Grandin's excited voice come tumbling out of

the receiver. "Come at once, my friend," he ordered, fairly stuttering in his elation. "Rush with all speed to the Carmelite Fathers' retreat in East Thirty-second Street. Bring the excellent Costello with you, too, for there is one here who can shed the light of intelligence on our ignorance."

"Who is it——?" I began, but the sharp click of a receiver smashed into its hook cut short my query, and I turned in disgust from the unresponsive instrument to transmit the Frenchman's message to Sergeant Costello.

Within sight of Bellevue's grim mortuary, enshrouded by the folds of drab East River fog as a body is wrapped in its winding-sheet, the little religious community seemed as incongruously out of place in the heart of New York's poverty-ridden East Side as a nun in a sweatshop. Striding up and down the polished floor of the bare, immaculately clean reception-room was Jules de Grandin, a glowing cigarette between his fingers, his tiny, waxed mustache standing straight out from the corners of his mouth like the whiskers of an excited tom-cat. "At last!" he breathed as Costello and I followed the porter from the front door to the public room. "*Morbleu*, I thought you had perished on the way!

"*Monsieur*," he paused in his restless pacing and stopped before the figure sitting motionless in the hard, straight-backed chair at the farther side of the room, "you will please tell these gentlemen what you have told me and be of haste in doing so. We have small time to waste."

I glanced curiously at the seated man. His strong resemblance to the dead Kolisko was remarkable. He possessed a mop of untidy, iron-gray hair and a rather straggling gray beard; his forehead was high, narrow and startlingly white, almost transparent, and the skin of his face was

puckered into hundreds of little wrinkles as though his skull had shrunk, leaving the epidermis without support. His eyes, however, differed radically from Kolisko's, for even in death the professor's orbs had shown a hard, implacable nature, whereas this man's eyes, though shaded by beetling, overhanging brows, were soft and brown. Somehow, they reminded me of the eyes of an old and very gentle dog begging not to be beaten.

"I am Michel Kolisko," he began, clearing his throat with a soft, deprecating cough. "Urban Kolisko was my cousin, son of my father's brother. We grew up together in Poland, attended the same schools and colleges, and dreamed the same dreams of Polish independence. I was twenty, Urban was twenty-three when the Tsar's officers swooped down on our fathers, carried them off to rot in Siberia, and confiscated most of our family's fortune. Both of us were suspected of complicity in the revolutionary movement, and fled for our lives, Urban to Paris, I to Vienna. He matriculated at the Sorbonne and devoted himself to the study of psychology; I studied medicine in Vienna, then went to Rome, and finally took up Egyptology as my life's work.

"Twenty years passed before I saw my cousin again. The Russian prescription had been raised, and he had gone to Warsaw, where he taught in the university. When I went there to visit him, I was shocked to learn he had abandoned God and taken to the worship of the material world. Kant, Spencer, Richet, Wundt—these were his prophets and his priests; the God of our fathers he disowned and denied. I argued with him, pleaded with him to return to his childhood's belief, and he turned me out of his house.

"Once again he earned the displeasure of the Tsar and escaped arrest only by a matter of moments.

Fleeing to this country, he took up residence in your city, and devoted himself to penning revolutionary propaganda and atheistic theses. Broken in health, but with sufficient money to insure me of a quiet old age, I followed him to America and made it the work of my declining years to convert him from his apostasy.

"This spring it seemed I was beginning to succeed, for he showed more patience with me than ever before; but he was a hardened sinner, his heart was steeled against the call of consciousness, even as was Pharaoh's of old. He challenged me to offer evidence of God's truth, and promised he would turn again to religion if I could."

For a moment the speaker paused in his monotonous, almost mumbled recitation, wrung his bloodless hands together in a gesture of despair, pressed his fingers to his forehead, as though to crowd back departing reason, then took up his story, never raising his voice, never stressing one word more than another, keeping his eyes fixed on vacancy. He reminded me of a child reciting a distasteful lesson by rote.

"I see we were both mad, now," he confided drearily. "Mad, mad with the sense of our own importance, for Urban defied divine providence, and I forgot that it is not man's right to attempt to prove God's truth as revealed to us by his ordained ministers. It is ours to believe, and to question not. But I was carried away by the fervor of my mission. 'If I can shake Urban's doubts, I shall surely win a crown of glory,' I told myself, 'for surely there is great joy in heaven over one sinner who repents.' And so I went about the sacrilegious business of the test.

"Among the curios I had brought from Egypt was the body of a man sealed alive in a tomb during the Hyksos rule. It was not really a

mummy, for no embalming had been performed, but the superheated atmosphere of the tomb in which he had been incarcerated had shriveled his tissues until it was difficult to tell him from a body mummified by artificial methods. Only three or four such bodies are known; one is the celebrated Flinders mummy, and the others are in French and British museums. I had intended leaving mine to the Metropolitan when I died.

"I brought this body to Urban's house the night before Heschler, the condemned murderer, was to be executed, and we laid it on the library table. Urban viewed it with disgust and skepticism, but I prayed over it, begging God to work a miracle, to permit the body to move, if only very slightly, and so convince my poor, misguided cousin. You know, gentlemen"—he turned his sorrowful, lack-luster eyes on us with a melancholy smile—"such things are not entirely unknown. Sudden changes in temperature or in the moisture content of the atmosphere often lead to a movement as the dehydrated tissues take up water from the air. The mummy of Rameses the Great, for instance, moved its arm when first exposed to the outdoor air.

"A few minutes after midnight was the time set for Heschler's electrocution, and as the town clocks began sounding the hour I felt as though the heavens must fall if no sign were manifested to us.

"Urban sat beside the mummy, smoking his pipe and sneering—part of the time reading an impious book by Freud. I bowed my head in silent prayer, asking for a miracle to save him despite his hardness of heart. The city hall clock struck the quarter-hour, then the half, and still there was no sound. Urban laid his pipe and book aside and looked at me with his familiar sneer, then turned as though to thrust the body of the Egyptian from the table—*then it sat up!*

"Like a sleeper waking from a dream, like a patient coming forth from the ether it was—the corpse that had been dead four thousand years rose from the table and looked at us. For a moment it seemed to smile with its fleshless lips, then it looked down at itself, and gave a scream of surprise and fury.

"'So!' it shrieked; 'so *this* is the body you've given me to work out my salvation! This is the form in which I must walk the earth until my sins be wiped away, is it? You've tricked me, cheated me; but I'll have vengeance. No one living can harm me, and I'll take my toll of human kind before I finally go forth to stew and burn in Satan's fires!'

"It was stiff and brittle, but somehow it managed to crawl from the table and make at Urban. He seized a heavy whip which hung on the wall and struck the thing on the head with its loaded butt. The blow would have killed an ordinary man—indeed, I saw the mummy's dried-up skull cave in beneath the force of Urban's flailings, but it never faltered in its attack, never missed a step in its pursuit of vengeance.

"Then I went mad. I fled from that accursed house and buried myself in this retreat, where I have spent every moment since, denying myself both food and sleep, deeming every second left me all too short to beg divine forgiveness for the terrible sacrilege I have committed."

"So, my friends, you see?" de Grandin turned to Costello and me as the half-hysterical Pole concluded his preposterous narrative.

"Sure, I do," the detective returned. "Didn't th' felly say he's mad? Be dad, they say crazy folks tell th' truth, an' he ain't stretchin' it none when he says his steeple's full o' bats."

"Ah bah!" de Grandin shot back. "You weary me, my friend."

To Kolisko he said: "Your story supplies the information which we so

sorely needed, sir. Whatever the result of your experiment, your motives were good, nor do I think the good God will be too hard upon you. If you do truly wish forgiveness, pray that we shall be successful in destroying the monster before more harm is done. *Cordieu*, but we shall need all your prayers, and a vast deal of luck as well, I think; for killing that which is already dead is no small task."

"Now what?" demanded Costello with a sidelong glance at de Grandin as we emerged from the religious house. "Got some more loonies for us to listen to?"

"*Parbleu*, if you will but give ear to your own prattle, you shall have all that sort of conversation you wish, I think, *cher Sergent*," the little Frenchman jerked back with a smile which took half the acid from his words. Then:

"Friend Trowbridge, convoy our good, unbelieving friend to Harrisonville and await my return. I have one or two things to attend to before I join you; but when I come I think I can promise you a show the like of which you have not before seen. *Au revoir, mes enfants*."

TEN o'clock sounded on the city's clocks; eleven; half-past. Costello and I consumed innumerable cigars and more than one potion of some excellent cognac I had stored in my cellar since the days before prohibition; still no sign of my little friend. The sergeant was on the point of taking his departure when a light step sounded on the porch and de Grandin came bounding into the consulting-room, his face wreathed in smiles, a heavy-looking parcel gripped under his right arm.

"*Bien*, my friends, I find you in good time," he greeted, poured himself a monstrous stoup of amber liquor, then helped himself to one of my cigars. "I think it high time we were on our way. There is that to

do which may take considerable doing this night, but I would not that we delay our expedition because of difficulties in the road."

"Be gorry, he's caught it from th' other nut!" Costello confided to the surrounding atmosphere with a serio-comic grimace. "Which crazy house are we goin' to now, sor?"

"Where but to the house of Monsieur Kolisko?" returned the Frenchman with a grin. "I think there will be another there before long, and it is highly expedient that we be there first."

"Humph, if it's Coroner Martin or his physician, you needn't be worryin' yourself anny," Costello assured him. "They'll be takin' no more interest in th' case till someone else gets kilt, I'm thinkin'."

"*Morbleu*, then their days of interest are ended, or Jules de Grandin is a colossal liar," was the response. "Come; *allons vite!*"

THE lowest workings of a coal mine were not darker than the Kolisko house when we let ourselves in some fifteen minutes later. Switching on the electric light, de Grandin proceeded to unpack his parcel, taking from it a folded black object which resembled a deflated association football. Next he produced a shining nickel-plated apparatus consisting of a thick upright cylinder and a transverse flat piece which opened in two on hinges, disclosing an interior resembling a waffle-iron with small, close-set knobs. Into a screw-stopped opening in the hollow cylinder of the contrivance he poured several ounces of gray-black powder; then, taking the flat rubber bag, he hurried from the house to my car, attached the valve of the bag to my tire pump and proceeded to inflate the rubber bladder almost to the bursting point. This done, he attached the bag to a valve in the nickeled cylinder by a two-foot length of rubber hose, poured some liquid over the corru-

gated "waffle-iron" at the top of the cylinder, and, with the inflated bag hugged under his arm, as a Highland piper might hold the bag of his pipes, he strode across the room, snapped off the light, and took his station near the open window.

Several times Costello and I addressed him, but each time he cut us short with a sharp, irritable "Sssh!" continuing his crouching watch beside the window, staring intently into the shaded garden beyond.

It must have been some three-quarters of an hour later that we sensed, rather than heard, the scuffling of light footfalls on the grass outside, heard the door-knob cautiously tested, then the scuttering of more steps, scarcely louder than the sound of wind-blown leaves, as the visitant rounded the cottage wall and made for the window beside which de Grandin mounted guard.

A puff of autumn wind, scented with the last blooms of summer's rosebeds, sent the light clouds drifting from before the moon's pale lantern, and, illuminated in the pallid light of the night's goddess, we saw framed at the window-square the terrifying vision which had followed young Ratliff's story of his escape two nights before.

"My Gawd!" Costello's bass voice was shrill and treble with sudden terror as the thing gazed malevolently in at us. Next instant his heavy service revolver was out, and shot after shot poured straight into the hideous, grinning face at the window.

He might as well have fired boiled beans from a pea-shooter for all the effect his bullets had. Distinctly I saw a portion of the mummy's ear clipped off by a flying slug of lead, saw an indentation sink in the thing's head half an inch above the right eye as a soft-nosed bullet tore through skin and withered flesh and frontal bone; but the emaciated body never paused in its progress. One withered

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# Body and Soul

(Continued from page 329)

leg was lifted across the window-sill; two long, unfleshed arms, terminating in hands of enormous length, were thrust out toward the Irishman; a grin of such hellish hatred and triumph as I had never conceived possible disfigured the object's visage as it pressed onward, its long, bony fingers opening and closing convulsively, as though they already felt their victim's neck within their grasp.

"*Monsieur*, you do play truant from hell!" De Grandin's announcement was made in the most casual manner as he rose from his half-kneeling posture beside the window and placed himself directly in the mummy's path, but there was a quaver in his voice which betrayed the intensity of his emotion.

A noise—you could hardly call it a snarl nor yet a scream, but a sound midway between the two—emanated from the thing's desiccated throat as it turned on him, threw out one hand and snatched at his throat.

There was a tiny spark of light, as though a match had been struck, then a mighty, bursting blaze, as if time had turned backward in its flight for a second and the midday sun had thrown its beams through the midnight blackness of the room, a swishing, whistling sound, as of air suddenly released from tremendous pressure, and a shriek of mad, unupportable anguish. Then the fierce blazing of some inflammable substance suddenly set alight. My eyes started from my face as I seemed to see the mummy's scraggy limbs and emaciated torso writhe within a very inferno of fire. Then:

"*Cher Sergent*, it might be well to call the fire department; this place will surely burn about our ears unless *les pompiers* hurry with their hose, I fear," remarked Jules de Grandin as

calmly as though advising us the night was fine.

"**B**UT—but—howly Mither o' Moses!" Sergeant Costello demanded as we turned from watching the firemen salvaging the remnants of Kolisko's cottage; "how did ye manage it, Doctor de Grandin, sor? May I never eat another mess o' corned beef an' cabbage if I didn't shoot th' thing clean through th' head wid me gun, an' it never so much as batted an eye, yet ye burned it up as clean as——"

"Precisely, *mon vieux*," the Frenchman admitted with a chuckle. "Have you never heard the adage that one must fight the Devil with fire? It was something like that which I did.

"No later than night before last a young man came crying and whimpering at Friend Trowbridge's door, begging for shelter from some ghastly thing which pursued him through the streets. Both Trowbridge and I thought he suffered from an overdose of the execrable liquor with which Monsieur Volstead has flooded this unhappy land, but before we could boot him from the door, behold, the same thing which you so unsuccessfully shot tonight did stick its unlovely countenance against our window, and I, who always go armed lest some miscreant do me a mischief, did fire eight shots directly into his face. Believe me, my friend, when Jules de Grandin shoots, he does not miss, and that night I shot exceptionally well. Yet when Friend Trowbridge and I searched the garden, neither hide nor hair of the one who should have been eight times dead did we find. 'There is something here which will take much explaining,' I say to me after we could not find him.

"Next morning you did come and

tell us of Professor Kolisko's murder, and when we had viewed his remains, I wondered much what sort of creature could have done the thing. The pressure exerted on his neck were superhuman, but the marks of the hand were not those of an ape, for no ape possesses such a long, thin thumb.

"Then we did find the dead professor's diary and I have the tiny shivers playing tag with each other up and down my back as I read and translate it. It sounds like the dream of one crazed with dope, I know, but there was the possibility of truth in it. Do you know the vampire, my friends?"

"The vampire?" I echoed.

"*Précisément*; the vampire, you have said it. He is not always one who can not die because of sin or misfortune in life. No. Sometimes he is a dead body possessed by some demon—perhaps by some unhappy, earth-bound spirit. Yes.

"Now, as I read the professor's journal, I see that everything which had transpired were most favorable for the envampirement of that body which his cousin had brought from Egypt so long ago. Yet the idea seemed—how do you say?—ah, yes—to have the smell of the fish on it.

"But when you come and say Miss Adkinson have been erased in the same manner as Professor Kolisko, I begin to wonder if perhaps I have not less nuts in my belfry than I at first thought. In Professor Kolisko's journal there was reference to his cousin. 'How does it come that this cousin have not come forward and told us what, if anything, he knows?' I ask me as we view the poor dead woman's body, and the answer was, 'He has most doubtless seen that which will not be believed, and hides because he fears arrest on a false charge of murder.'

"Right away I rush to New York and inquire at the *Musée Métropolitain* for the address of Monsieur Michel Kolisko, the Egyptologist. I

find his living-quarters in East Eighty-sixth Street. There they tell me he have gone to the Carmelite retreat. *Morbleu*, had he hidden in lost Atlantis, I should have hunted him out, for I desired speech with him!

"At first he would not talk, dreading I intended to drag him to the jail, but after I had spoken with him for a time, he opened his heart, and told me what he later told you.

"Now, what to do? By Monsieur Kolisko's story, it were useless to battle with this enlivened mummy, for the body of him was but the engine moved by an alien spirit—he had no need of brains, hearts and such things as we must use. Also, I knew from experience, bullets were as useless against him as puffs of wind against a fortress wall. 'Very well,' I tell me, 'he may be invulnerable to bullets and blows, but living or dead, he is still a mummy—a dry, desiccated mummy—and we have had no rain lately. It are entirely unlikely that he have gotten greatly moistened in his trips through the streets, and all mummies are as tinder to fire. *Mordieu*, did they not once use them as fuel for locomotives in Egypt when railways were first built there? Yes.'

"And so I prepare the warm reception for him. At one time and another I have taken photographs at night, and to do so I have used magnesium flares—what you call flashlight powder. At a place where they sell such things in New York I procure a flashlight burner—a hollow cylinder for the powder magazine with a benzine wick at its top and a tube through which air can be blown to force the powder through the burning petrol and so give a continuous blaze. I get me also a rubber bag which I can inflate and attach to the windpipe of the apparatus, thus leaving my lips free for swearing and other important things, and also giving a greater force of air.

"I reason: 'Where will this living

mummy go most naturally? Why not to the house where he received his new life, for the town in which he goes about committing murder is still new to him?' And so, when *Monsieur la Momie* returns to the place of his second nativity, I am all ready for him. Your shots, they are as ineffectual as were mine two nights ago, but I have my magnesium flare ready, and as he turns on me I blow the fierce flame from it all over him. He are dry like tinder, the fire seized on him like a hungry little boy on a jam-tart, and—*pouf*—he is burn up, incinerated; he is no more!"

"Do you actually mean Heschler's soul entered that dried-up body?" I demanded.

The Frenchman shook his head. "I do not know," he replied. "Perhaps it were Heschler; more likely not. The air is full of strange and terrible things, my friend. Not for nothing did the old divines call Satan the Prince of the Powers of the Air. How do we know some of those elementals who are ever on the watch to do mankind an injury did not hear the mad Koliskos' scheme and take advantage of the opportunity to enter into the mummy's body? Such things have been before; why may they not be again?"

"But——" I commenced.

"But——" expostulated Sergeant Costello.

"But, my friends," the little man cut in, "did you behold how dry that so abominable mummy was before I applied the fire?"

"Yes," I answered wonderingly.

"*Cordieu*, he was wet as the broad Atlantic Ocean beside the dryness of Jules de Grandin at this moment! Friend Trowbridge, unless my memory plays me false, I beheld a bottle of cognac upon your office table. Come, I faint, I die, I perish; talk to me no more till I have consumed the remainder of that bottle, I do beseech you!"