

IN THE DARK OF NIGHT A PHONE JANGLED ERRILY, CALLING DOCTOR MORRIS FISHER TO THE MOST TERRIBLE ADVENTURE OF HIS CAREER! THE NEXT FEW HOURS WERE TO PLUNGE HIM INTO THE MOST OF EVENTS SO HORRIBLE THAT NO MAN COULD FACE THEM AND KEEP HIS SANITY—OR HIS LIFE! THE GAME WAS DEADLY, THE STAKES HIGH AND FOR THE PLAYERS THERE WAS NO RETURN FROM GAME OVER! LISTEN NOW TO THE BELL AS IT BOUNDS A KNELL AT MIDNIGHT...

SKULLS of DOOM



MOMENT! THE PHONE RINGS ON THE bedside table of Doctor Fisher...

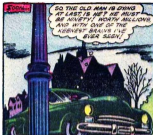
OH, NO! NOT ANOTHER PATIENT WITH A STOMACH-ACHE! I'M COMPLETELY BUSIED!

BUT there is something different about this call...

DR. FISHER? THIS IS THE SURVIVOR OF MARSLIAN! YOU MUST COME AT ONCE! MY MASTER IS DYING!

MARSLIAN! DYING? I'LL BE THERE AT ONCE!





INSTANTLY THE DOCTOR BEYOND SOMETHING UNCANNY ABOUT THE DEATH ROOM...



THERE IS NO TIME FOR QUESTIONS! NOW—WHEN I DIE YOU MUST TAKE OUT MY BRAIN AT ONCE! PUT IT IN A CASSET THAT TABU WILL GIVE YOU! MY BRAIN IS NOT REALLY GONE AT ALL! I SCREAMED IT! AND YOU MUST RETURN IT! DO YOU PROMISE TO DO THIS? DO YOU?



THE DOCTOR, STABBED BY THE WORD REQUEST, MAKES A PROMISE...



MOMENTS LATER...



A GREAT OPERATING TABLE IN Agypt

NO TIME TO WASTE! WILL I'M SAMING THE SKULL OPEN, YOU CAN BE EXPLAIN!

THE STORY BEING IN EGYPT, FIVE THOUSAND YEARS AGO! THERE WAS A REB PRIEST CALLED VISNU!

VISNU! BELIEVE I'VE HEARD THAT NAME! DIDN'T THEY MAKE A GOD OF HIM AFTER HE DIED?

YOU ARE CORRECT! BUT THEY DID MORE...

BEFORE HE WAS REMOVED THEY REMOVED HIS BRAIN AND PRESERVED IT! FOR SOME STRANGE REASON THE BRAIN DID NOT DIE!

NOW WAIT A MINUTE, TABU! YOU'RE NOT GOING TO TELL ME...



BUT I AM, SIR! THIS IS THE BRAIN OF VISNU! MR. MAXIMILIAN DISCOVERED IT IN A TOMB SOME SIXTY YEARS AGO! IT WAS STILL ALIVE! HE DARED TO TAKE IT AND HAVE IT PUT INTO HIS OWN SKULL! LATER HE HAD A DREAM IN WHICH VISNU CAME TO HIM!

AND NOW THE BRAIN MUST BE RETURNED?



YOU GUESSED IT, SIR! VISNU WAS VERY ANGRY, BUT HE PERMITTED MR. MAXIMILIAN TO KEEP HIS BRAIN PROVIDED IT WAS USED FOR GOOD PURPOSES — AND ONLY IF IT WAS RETURNED AFTER MR. MAXIMILIAN'S DEATH!



LATER... AS YOU SAY, INCREDIBLE, BUT TRUE! MR. MAXIMILIAN USED THE ANCIENT WISDOM OF THE BRAIN TO GOOD ADVANTAGE. AS YOU KNOW, BUT NOW IT MUST GO BACK TO ITS TOMB IN EGYPT! YOU HAVE BEEN CHOSEN, SIR, BECAUSE ONLY A DOCTOR COULD REMOVE THE BRAIN WITHOUT HARMING IT!



OF ALL THE CRAZY YARNS... BUT SOMEBODY I BELIEVE IT! AND IF IT IS TRUE, WHAT A CHANCE FOR ME! A BRAIN — ALIVE AFTER FIVE THOUSAND YEARS! I CAN HARDLY WAIT TO GET TO MY LAB AND TAKE A GOOD LOOK AT IT!



FASCINATED BY THE BRAIN AND THE NERVOUS SYSTEM CONNECTED WITH IT, THE DOCTOR WORKS DAY AND NIGHT...



NO QUESTION ABOUT IT: THE BRAIN IS EXTREMELY OLD, THE TISSUE SHOWS THAT CLEARLY! AND THE DEGREE OF DEVELOPMENT SHOWS THAT IT IS HIGHLY DEVELOPED AND COMPLICATED!

NO WONDER OLD ARABIAN HAS SO MUCH SUCCESS! WHO WOULD DARE BE WITH A BRAIN LIKE THIS? ANSWER: YOU, NOW IT CONTINUES TO LIVE! IT WOULD BE A PITY TO PUT IT BACK IN SOME DECAYING TOMB!



BY NOW THE DOCTOR'S OWN BRAIN IS HARD AT WORK! NEXT DAY HE VISITS HIS OLD MEDICAL SCHOOL...



HELLO, DEAN BAXTER! I WONDER IF YOU COULD DO ME A FAVOR? I NEED A BRAIN — JUST ANY OLD BRAIN WILL DO!

I THINK WE CAN MANAGE THAT FOR ONE OF OUR MOST BRILLIANT (GRADUATED) COME WITH ME TO THE DISSECTING ROOM!

AND... LATER...

WHAT IS THIS YOU SAY, SIR? YOU CANNOT RETURN THE BRAIN TO EGYPT AS YOU PROMISED?

NO! I'M MUCH TOO BUSY! I ONLY MADE THAT PROMISE TO A DYING OLD MAN! IF YOU WANT TO RETURN THE BRAIN — HERE IT IS!



YOU HAVE BROKEN FAITH, BUT TABU WILL NOT! I WILL RETURN THE BRAIN IN YOUR STEAD! GOODBYE, DR. FISHER!

GOODBYE, TABU! GOOD LUCK ON YOUR TRIP!

BUT THAT NIGHT THE DOCTOR CHUCKLES AT HIS OWN CLEVERNESS...



VERY NEAT! TABU NEVER GUESSED THAT I SWITCHED THE BRAINS! NOW I CAN STUDY NISHAM'S BRAIN TO MY HEART'S CONTENT!

SEVERAL DAYS LATER, THE DOCTOR MEETS UPON A MORE DARING PLAN...



I KNOW YOU WERE KICKED OUT OF MEDICAL SCHOOLS, BUT YOU WERE ONCE A BRILLIANT BRAIN SPECIALIST! IS ANY OF THAT SKILL LEFT?

I'M AS GOOD AS DEAD, AND DOCTOR FISHER! ALL I NEED IS A BREAK!

LATER... WE'RE GOING TO A SPECIAL LABORATORY I'VE FITTED UP FOR YOU. I WANT YOU TO PERFORM A VERY DELICATE OPERATION! IN ABSOLUTE SECRECY!



WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT ANYWAY?

THIS BRAIN! I WANT YOU TO REMOVE ANY BRAIN AND REPLACE IT WITH THIS ONE! DO IT AND DON'T ASK QUESTIONS! I'LL PAY YOU HANDSOMELY!



B-BUT YOU MIGHT D-DIE! IT'S BEEN YEARS SINCE I TOUCHED A SCALPEL! I DON'T UNDERSTAND ANY OF THIS—HOW CAN YOU...

BUT TORRES, OUTLINED FROM MEDICINE, AT LAST AGREED TO ASSIST IN THE OPERATION...



REMEMBER EVERYTHING I TOLD YOU! THERE MUST BE NO SLIPS! AND ABOVE ALL, NO ONE MUST KNOW OF THIS!

YOU'RE TAKING AN AWFUL GAMBLE, LETTING A GR-SCORDED OLD HUNK LIKE ME DO THIS OPERATION! BUT I'LL DO MY BEST!

SO DR. MORRIS FISHER FALLS AWAY INTO DARKNESS, STRAPPED AS USUAL ON THE OLD MAN'S RUSTY BELL...



NOW LET'S SEE—FIRST THE TRANSVERSE SLASH TO LOOSEN THE SCALP, SO IT CAN BE PEELED BACK!

TWO WEEKS LATER...

I THINK IT'S SAFE TO TAKE THEM OFF NOW, FISHER! I REALLY DID A REMARKABLE JOB! BUT I WANTED TO ASK YOU ABOUT THAT BRAIN!



LATER, TORRES, LATER!

FIRST WE'LL HAVE A LITTLE DRINK TO CELEBRATE! BUT I HOPE YOU DIDN'T TELL ANYONE OF OUR LITTLE EXPERIMENT WHILE I WAS COMVALESCING!



NOT A WORD!

MEANTIME TABU BRACES THE LONG JOURNEY TO EGYPT! ONE NIGHT ON THE UPPER Nile...

AT LAST I CAN RETURN THE BRAIN TO VISHNU! THEY BOTH OF US CAN REST IN PEACE! BUT I AM STILL FUZZLED BY THE BEHAVIOR OF DOCTOR FISHER!



TWO MUST BE THE ANCIENT TOMB OF VISHNU! ACCORDING TO MY INSTRUCTIONS I MUST PLACE THE CASSET WITH THE BRAIN ON THE STONE COFFIN, THEY SAY A PRAYER...



...OF THANKS FOR THE USE OF THE BRAIN!

I, TABU, SERVANT OF MAXIMILIAN, THUS DO PAY HONORAGE TO VISHNU, THE MOST VENERABLE AND WISE ONE!



BUT SUDDENLY...

L-LIGHTNING! THE TOMB IS S-SHATTERED! VISHNU MUST BE ANGRY WITH ME!



A SPECTRAL FIGURE LOOMS FROM THE COFFIN...

FOOL! CURSED MORTAL! HOW DARE YOU ORDER ME THIS BRAIN? DO YOU THINK VISHNU DOES NOT KNOW IT IS THE BRAIN OF ANOTHER?

ANOTHER? B-BUT I DO NOT UNDERSTAND! IT IS YOUR BRAIN VISHNU! I RETURN IT AS MY MASTER BADE ME!



LIAR! IT IS THE BRAIN OF A MURDERER, A CRIMINAL, TAKEN FROM A HAMBLER'S BODY! VISHNU KNOWS! DIE, NOW!



AAAAAEEEEEE--

AND IN THE MEANTIME THE DOCTOR PROCEEDS...



EVERYTHING IS SOUND MY BOYS. THERE WERE NO QUESTIONS ASKED ABOUT OLD FORDS — AND THE MONEY HAS BEEN ROLLING IN! I GET MORE PATIENTS EVERY DAY!

THAT NIGHT HE MADE A BRILLIANT SPEECH BEFORE A LEARNED SOCIETY...



NOW IN CLOSING, LET ME QUOTE FROM THE FAMOUS GREEK SCHOLAR EPICETUS; HE ONCE SAID...

MARVELOUS! ONE WOULD ALMOST THINK HE WAS THERE!

ASTOUNDING FUND OF KNOWLEDGE!

LATER...



I WAS EXCEPTIONAL TONIGHT BATES! HAD THEM HANGING ON EVERY WORD! AND MY NOTE IF THEY ONLY KNEW THAT IN MY SKILL IS A SHAM FOR THOUSAND YEARS OLD!

I'M GLAD, SIR!

AS HE REACHES HOME...



GOOD EVENING, SIR! THERE IS A GENTLEMAN WAITING IN THE STUDY! A PATIENT, I BELIEVE!

A PATIENT! YOU KNOW I NO LONGER SEE ORDINARY PATIENTS!

BUT THE PATIENT IS CERTAINLY NOT ORDINARY...

YOU WANTED TO SEE ME! A HEAD ROUND OF SOME KIND?

YES, DOCTOR! YOU MIGHT SAY THAT!

SO...



I'VE GIVEN UP ORDINARY PRACTICE BUT SUCH A CASE AS YOURS INTERESTS ME! MUST HAVE BEEN A SHASTLY ACCIDENT TO REQUIRE ALL THESE BANDAGES!

SHASTLY IS THE WORD, DOCTOR!

THE LAST BANDAGE FALLS AWAY AND THE DOCTOR — SCREAMS...



YIIIIEEEEEEEEEEEEEE—

SHASTLY ENOUGH, DOCTOR? AND NOW PLEASE, I WANT MY BRAIN!



LATER, A STARK AND TERRIBLE FIGURE IS SILHOUETTED AGAINST A BLOOD-RED MOON...

NOW YISHNU CAN RETURN TO HIS TOMB IN PEACE! PERHAPS TO SLEEP FOREVER!



BEHIND IN THE SILENT HOUSE, IS ALL THAT IS LEFT OF DR. MORRIS' FISHER! LIKE MANY BEFORE HIM HE HAD LEARNED A TERRIBLE LESSON - KNOWLEDGE MUST BE EARNED! IT CANNOT BE STOLEN...

