

## SOLUTION

**T**HE ghostly fire that walks the fen,  
 Tonight thine only light shall be;  
 On lethal ways thy soul shall pass,  
 And prove the stealthy, coiled morass,  
 With mocking mists for company.

On roads thou goest not again,  
 To shores where thou hast never gone,—  
 Fare onward, though the shuddering queach  
 And serpent-rippled waters reach  
 Like seepage-pools of Acheron,

Beside thee; and the twisten reeds,  
 Close-raddled as a witch's net,  
 Enwind thy knees, and cling and clutch  
 Like wreathing adders; though the touch  
 Of the blind air be dank and wet,

As from a wounded Thing that bleeds  
 In cloud and darkness overhead—  
 Fare onward, where thy dreams of yore  
 In splendour drape the fetid shore  
 And pestilential waters dead.

And though the toads' irrision rise,  
 As grinding of Satanic racks,  
 And spectral willows, gaunt and grey,  
 Gibber along thy shrouded way,  
 Where vipers lie with livid backs,

And watch thee with their sulphurous eyes—  
 Fare onward, till thy feet shall slip  
 Deep in the sudden pool ordained,  
 And all the noisome draught be drained,  
 That turns to Lethe on the lip.

—From "Ebony and Crystal," by Clark Ashton Smith.

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