

JULY 25c

Weird Tales



The cover illustration depicts a woman with blonde hair wearing a green, fringed dress, looking forward with a determined expression. To her left, a figure in a blue hooded cloak looks on with a concerned expression. To the right, a large, dense crowd of people is shown, some appearing to be in a state of panic or distress. The scene is set against a dark background with a bright, orange-red light source at the bottom right, creating a dramatic and mysterious atmosphere.

THE AVENGER FROM ATLANTIS

By EDMOND HAMILTON

•
Capt. S. P. Meek

C. L. Moore

A. W. Bernal

Paul Ernst

A MAGAZINE OF THE BIZARRE AND UNUSUAL

Weird Tales

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WEIRD TALES ISSUED 1st OF EACH MONTH

"He transferred the brain into the body of the blind old man."



The Avenger From Atlantis

By EDMOND HAMILTON

An epic weird tale that begins in ancient Atlantis and sweeps across the dusty centuries through Egypt, Babylon and Rome, up to our own time

THE crowd of white-robed men and women in the Square of Science gave way respectfully before me as I and my servant approached. Bowing until their spotless robes swept the green marble paving, they hailed me and made an opening for me.

"Way for Ulios, for the Guardian of the Force!" they called.

And others cried, "Make room for the greatest scientist in Atlantis!"

"Friends, I thank you for your cour-

tesy," I told them as I walked gravely through the respectful throng.

But in truth I was human enough to feel pride that they held me so highly. For in all Atlantis there was no one who did not know and honor the name of Ulios, the Guardian of the Force. And that was as it should be, since he who held the Force held Atlantis itself in the hollow of his hand.

The city seemed beautiful to me that spring morning. Under the blue sky, be-

side the blue sea, its snowy marble buildings towered in almost unreal splendor, a stainless beauty of white pillars and walls and porticoes. Over them hummed shimmering flyers, and through them ran the streets that were like rivers of green marble flowing into the lakes of the great squares.

All around me rose the great halls of science that bordered the Square of Science, towering alabaster structures that contained the laboratories in which our Atlantean scientists had wrested so many of nature's secrets from her. And at one side of the Square was a comparatively small building which outranked all the others in importance, the Hall of the Force, of which I, Ulios, was guardian and tenant.

Gathering my white robe around me, I walked up the steps of the Hall, followed by Sthan, my faithful servant. I entered and went through the corridors and courts inside to the white laboratories that were my own private work-rooms. There Etain, my wife, was talking with my assistant guardian, Karnath. She ran toward me as I entered.

"Ulios, Karnath has been telling me of your experiments in transferring living brains!" she cried.

"Then Karnath has talked overmuch for my content," I told her, frowning at my underling and trying to frown also at her.

But I could not frown at Etain, nor ever be the least angry with her, and well she knew that it was so. She was not wholly of Atlantis. Her father had been one of our nobles but her mother had been of the savage tribes that dwelt in the great, wild continents to the east, and this savage woman's barbaric beauty had so entranced the noble's heart that he had captured her and then wedded her.

There was still something of the un-

● Nine years ago, **Weird Tales** published a strange, eery story entitled "The Monster-God of Mamurth," an outstanding addition to weird literature. That story was the first story by Edmond Hamilton ever printed, and it was enthusiastically received by thousands of readers. Since then, stories have flowed in dazzling profusion from Mr. Hamilton's typewriter—short-stories, novelettes and serial novels—until today he is acknowledged as one of the few great masters of weird stories and science-fiction. He is today a leading contributor to many magazines, but the very finest of his stories are published only in **Weird Tales**. The accompanying story, "The Avenger from Atlantis," is an amazing tale of a weird pursuit that began in ancient Atlantis, and ended in the home of a Wall Street millionaire. We recommend it to you.

tamed in the beauty of Etain. Beautiful she was, with her night-black hair and soft black eyes that could flash yellow lights of passion, and with her white body that could be languorous and leopard-taut by turns. And well she knew the power her beauty had over me, a power so great that even now her hand on my arm and the touch of her clinging white robe stirred my pulse.

Nevertheless I told her as severely as I could, "Etain, there are some experiments which it is well to conduct but not well to publish to others. This of the brain-transference is such a one."

Karnath stepped forward and said hastily, "I only thought that it would interest the lady Etain. I meant no harm."

"No harm has been done," I told him

shortly. "But in future babble not of my work to anyone."

He bowed and left us, his dark, handsome face sullen and his black eyes narrowed in anger.

When he had gone, Etain asked me breathlessly, "But is it true, Ulios, that you could transfer a man's brain into another man's body? So that the first man would take up life in that other body anew?"

"I could, yes," I admitted. "I have done the thing many times with animals and corpses. But it would be an unholy thing to do it to living people and I never shall."

"Not even if I asked you to do it to me?" she cried.

I stared at her. "I do not understand you, Etain," I said finally. "Why in the name of all the gods should you wish your brain, your personality, transferred from your own lovely body into a different body?"

"I do not wish it now," she said. "But there will come a time when I shall wish it much, Ulios."

Her midnight eyes held my own anxiously. "Before many years my beauty will fade and I will become wrinkled and flabby and old. *Old!* A horrible fate that I dread above all others.

"But you could prevent that, Ulios! In a few years you could transfer my brain into some young and beautiful girl's body and so I would have youth and beauty again.

"And so could you regain youth yourself," she continued urgently. "You are already middle-aged, your dark hair graying and your keen eyes beginning to dull. You could take a young man's body in a few years, and we could live on so always, young and immortal."

"Etain," I told her sternly, "you know not what you say. Such immortality is

not for men, and he who strove to live on in that way would be guilty of black unholiness. We are born to age and die, and not to steal the bodies of others so that we may live unendingly. Banish such thoughts as these from your mind."

Etain stared at me with an unchanging face; then she said, "I see you do not love me, Ulios," and went out of the room.

I TURNED to my work and told myself that she would soon forget her wild fancy and that I had told her nothing but the truth. Yet as I worked, her face came always before my eyes; so that at last I dashed down my instruments and went out to make amends for any hurt I had done her.

She was not in her own chambers, and I searched through the building until at last I found her down in the mighty vault underneath the building, the Chamber of the Force. This was a great domed cavern hollowed from the solid rock under the building.

At its center rose a mighty pillar of brassy metal, which was the top end of a great rod running far down into the bowels of the earth. Inside this pillar lay the keys to the Force, locked up by a door that only I, the Guardian, and Karnath, my assistant, could open.

Only two men in all Atlantis were ever allowed to know how to reach those keys, at one time. For this mighty rod tapped the colossal volcanic forces of the fires underneath our land, and while it was necessary occasionally to make use of those forces, we knew that a too careless handling of them would bring catastrophe upon us. So the Guardian of the Force and his underling watched and warded the keys.

Etain was standing beside the great brass pillar and Karnath was leaning

eagerly toward her. He was talking to her and she was listening so intently that neither of them heard my approach.

"Were you my wife, I'd not refuse you what you asked as Ulios did," Karnath was telling her. "Why should you have to age and wither and die when immortal youth and beauty are his to give?"

"I can give you such unending youth and beauty, Etain," he continued eagerly. "I have learned well the process of brain-transference from Ulios."

"Then it is the last thing that you will ever learn from Ulios," I said freezingly.

Karnath whirled, startled, and Etain looked up quickly, though her expression did not change.

I pointed to the door. "Karnath, go! You are not worthy to be the assistant of the Guardian of the Force, and tomorrow I will pray the Council of Atlantis to depose you from your post."

His face grew black with menace and he hissed, "You know that if I am deposed I will be slain also, since only two men may know the secret keys of the Force. You wish to kill me for your jealousy."

"Go, before I forget that I am the Guardian," I told him in a cold fury, and he went.

I turned to Etain. "Why were you listening to him?"

She smiled at me, unfrightened by my sternness. "He stopped me and poured out his wild talk to me before I could get away."

"Perhaps I should report him to the Council this very hour," I said, frowning. "Karnath has revealed himself an evil man."

Etain told me, "He is a little angry, doubtless, but not dangerous. Let him go until tomorrow, Ulios."

Her soft white arms were slipping

warmly around my neck and in her black eyes was that mysterious smile that always seemed to deaden my own will. I thought no more of Karnath that evening.

At midnight I was sleeping soundly in our chamber when an urgent tugging at my shoulder awakened me. I sat upright in the dark chamber to find that Etain was not beside me and that it was Sthan, my squat, faithful servant, who had awakened me.

"Master, she is gone!" he cried. "Gone with Karnath!"

A cold bell seemed to strike in my heart, and I grasped his neck and cried, "Whom do you mean?"

"The lady Etain!" exclaimed the servant. "I saw her but now run to the roof with Karnath and embark in a flyer! See, there they go now!" he added, pointing through the great open portico at the end of the chamber.

I rushed to the portico and peered out. Before me lay the sleeping white marble mass of Atlantis, crowded against the dark sea. Above it rose the sheer, blue-black heights of heaven, blazing with winking, twinkling stars. There across the star-specked skies drove a tiny light, heading eastward and rising on a long slant.

I cried in mad rage, "Karnath has offered her endless youth and life and she has fled with him!"

Then I whirled. "After them!" I shouted to Sthan. "I will overtake them and have vengeance!"

We raced up the marble stairs toward the roof of the building where the flyers were parked.

As we came out onto the starlit, gleaming roof, it and the whole building beneath us shuddered slightly. It shuddered again, a little more violently, as we ran

toward one of the long, flat, stream-lined metal flyers.

"Master, the earth rocks!" cried Sthan fearfully.

"It is but a tremor—quick, start the flyer!" I shouted to him.

I swear by all the gods that I had no suspicion of anything else! Earth tremors were common enough in Atlantis, and had I dreamed that this was anything more, I would have forsaken my pursuit.

Or would I? Sometimes I believe that in my madness at that moment I would have held to my chase even had I known all. For mad I was with jealousy and rage against the fleeing pair as the flyer that bore Sthan and myself whirled up hummingly into the starlight.

"Head straight after them!" I yelled to Sthan as we lay flat on the little flyer's deck. "Follow their light."

"I follow, master," the faithful fellow cried.

WITH insane speed we plunged headlong across the sleeping city in pursuit of that receding speck of light. Suddenly terrific gusts of wind caught our flyer and began to bat it this way and that like a leaf in a gale. The air seemed to have abruptly gone mad, and only our safety-rings kept us from being dashed off the deck. Sthan yelled hoarsely and pointed back downward.

My blood froze as I looked back. The city of Atlantis and the dark countryside beyond it were rolling and heaving like waves in a heavy sea, the solid earth buckling and folding. A horrible grinding sound came up to us.

"Gods of Atlantis!" I screamed as I saw. "Karnath opened wide the keys of the Force before he and Etain fled! He has unchained the Force to destroy all our land so that there might be none left to pursue him and the traitress!"

My own black guilt crashed home to me. I, the Guardian of the Force, had deserted my post for personal vengeance when the Force I guarded was about to annihilate our land.

"Back—turn back toward the Hall of Force!" I yelled.

But Sthan, clinging to the deck, shouted, "The flyer will not obey her helm, master!"

Whirling and tossing high in the air, we saw the swift unfolding of the cataclysm back there. The whole city and land were heaving and rumpling wildly, rapidly shaking into fragments the countless splendid marble buildings. The little white block of the Hall of Force was suddenly blown into the air by a fiery, awful uprush of flaming lava.

The sky was lit with a lurid crimson glow from this spouting fire-fountain at the center of the city. We could glimpse tiny figures of men and women and children rushing into the streets to be killed by the downfall of molten lava or the crash of marble.

The volcano at the center exploded a mountain-mass of flaming rock skyward. There was a prolonged, world-shaking roar of direst diastrophism far below, and then we saw the whole land shaken violently for a last time. Then:

"Master, the land sinks!" screamed Sthan, his eyes dilated.

Frozenly, rigidly, I stared down at the land that was being destroyed because of my neglect of my duty. With terrible grinding and grating, a long and awful chord of solemn earth-agony, the land sank downward in the dark. The foam-maned stallions of the sea rushed in wild triumph across the foundering land, a charging host of new destruction. They met the flaming volcano, and sea and fire hissed in deadly battle, filling the air with steam.

Then as our wildly gyrating flyer was whirled downward by a freak of the mad air-currents, we glimpsed through a rift in the swirling steam the last of the land sinking under the waters. A single little point of land, and on it a small marble building that gleamed a last moment in the smothering darkness. Then it was engulfed, and under us the land was all gone, and where Atlantis had stood, the great deeps of the ocean now swirled and spun.

I lifted my arms toward the sky as our flyer began to cease its gyrations.

"Gods of Atlantis, the sin is mine!" I cried. "I am the Guardian who failed his land, and I will atone with my life for that sin. But first I will find those two who also sinned, and they also shall atone. Through all eternity I will pursue them, and the vengeance of Ulios shall strike them before Ulios takes vengeance on himself!"

Sthan, chattering with fear, clinging to the deck of the rocking flyer, caught my arm. "Master, where now? There is no more Atlantis—no more Atlantis for ever!"

I pointed a quivering hand toward the paling dawn. "Eastward, after the flyer of Karnath and Etain! From henceforth, the world holds only our quest for vengeance!"

So I, Ulios of Atlantis, began the quest of vengeance and atonement that was not to end for many a weary century.

First came Sthan and I to the wild, savage lands of North Africa. It was not long until we found the flyer of Karnath and Etain, discarded by them because of the depletion of its power.

We had shortly to discard our own flyer for the same reason. But Sthan and I went on on foot, following the trail through a thousand dangers. And the traitor and traitress were now aware of

our pursuit, for they fled always before us.

Barbaric tribes, and monstrous beasts, and storm and desert and mountain we conquered. A year passed, another and then another, and still we had not overtaken the two who fled before us.

Life to me had become but one thing—the quest. Somewhere, sometime, I would come up with the traitors, Karnath and Etain, who had destroyed my land for ever. I knew it. I would atone for my own sin, but first vengeance upon those two would be mine.

Sthan followed me like another shadow, steadfast and faithful, never faltering. We two, and the two we tracked, were the last four people of mighty Atlantis now left on the earth!

Year after year we hung to the trail, sometimes losing it for many months but always finding it again. I had lost all measurements of time, but knew that Sthan and I had become gray-haired.

Then one day we came upon a mound of earth near a small savage village. We dug into it and unearthed two bodies. They were the bodies of Karnath and Etain!

Karnath's hair had become gray and Etain's beauty had faded, but they were undoubtedly the two I sought. For a time I could only stare at them. How *could* I be deprived thus of my vengeance?

Then I turned their bodies over and saw that the brains were missing from their two skulls. I understood then, and wild joy filled me. I was not to be cheated of my vengeance after all.

"Sthan, look!" I told my servant. "The two we hunt are not dead after all!"

"But these are surely their bodies, master," he said, perplexed.

"Aye, but they no longer inhabit these bodies. Karnath has transferred the brain of Etain to some new, young body and

has taught her how to transfer his brain likewise into a younger form. They think they will escape me by this means, live on past me. But I will find them! You and I, Sthan, will also take new, strong bodies for ourselves so that we may continue our search."

"But I could not do a thing of marvel like that, transfer your brain to another living body," the faithful fellow protested.

"I will teach you how, Sthan. And we will be able to take new bodies whenever we grow old, just as Karnath and Etain plan to do, and thus we will follow them down through time until we find them."

WE SETTLED near the village of savages and there for some time I busied myself in preparing instruments and in teaching Sthan the delicate, wonderful process for the transference of living brains. I was in no hurry. I knew that those I pursued could not go far enough to escape me, and that they would not die. My vengeance was sure.

When Sthan, after long practise, had become expert in the operation, we abducted two young warriors from among the savages and I transferred Sthan's brain into the skull of one of them.

Sthan's new skull healed and his new nerve-connections knit to his brain almost as I watched, due to the marvelous therapeutic powers of Atlantean science. He stood upright in his new body in an hour or so, and then Sthan moved my brain into the other young savage's body.

I awoke from that operation, no longer the gray, aging Ulios, but a new Ulios, one strong and young and filled with vigor.

"Now for the pursuit again!" I told Sthan.

The trail of Karnath and Etain led us

farther east across the cruel wilderness of North Africa.

A generation passed, and another, and another, while we slowly tracked the guilty pair through those mighty wilds. Time had become meaningless to us, for when we grew feeble we had but to stop and take new bodies, and those we pursued were doing the same.

We lost the trail for half a generation in great deserts and salt lakes far southward, but again we found it. It led finally northeast toward a barbaric people that had established a rudimentary civilization in the lush, fertile valley of the Nile. These people, who called their land Egypt, had but a few scraps of remembered knowledge left by Atlantean explorers long ago for the basis of their civilization. The trail of Karnath and Etain led us to a small town south of the Egyptian capital of Memphis.

We entered this place of mud huts clustered beside the tawny Nile, thronged with people in short white kirtles, who looked with curiosity at our desert garb.

Suddenly there was a stir along the street and the people bowed low as a palanquin borne by black slaves swung past. In the palanquin lay a woman of dark beauty clad in a fine, almost transparent robe, heavy snake-bracelets of gold on her wrists. Her eyes met mine a moment as she passed.

Concealing the sudden fierce joy in my breast, I asked a villager, "Who was that lady?"

"She is the wife of the noble Kahotep. They came here but recently, but have already won great favor with Pharaoh."

I told my servant, "Sthan, our search ends here."

We went to the villa of Kahotep, a square brick house surrounded by a high wall that enclosed green gardens and arbors and a pool.

As we approached the door, a half-dozen armed retainers suddenly spilled from it and overpowered us. Two people came out of the square dwelling then, a tall, powerful Egyptian with mocking eyes, and the woman I had seen.

"Greetings, Ulios!" said the tall noble mockingly. "I would never know you in that body, but Etain knew you, and so we were expecting you."

I looked at the dark, beautiful woman whom I too had instinctively recognized as Etain. Then I looked back at Karnath.

"Karnath, when your evil-doing loosed the fires that destroyed Atlantis, I and my servant alone were spared," I said. "The gods spared us because the sin of your evil deed was partly mine and to atone I must take vengeance."

Cruelly he laughed, and so too laughed Etain. "Great words for one who is in my power!" he said.

Then he continued mockingly, "Ulios, it is time that you and Sthan took new bodies. Your present ones are aging—as, alas! all bodies do—and I shall furnish you now with suitable new ones."

He uttered an order and the retainers brought two men into the courtyard. They were both very old. One of them was quite blind, without eyes, and the other was almost wholly paralyzed.

"These are the new bodies that I shall give you and Sthan," said Karnath. "Are they not strong, young, desirable bodies?"

He ordered us dragged into one of the rooms of the house, where were his instruments and preparations.

THE thing was soon done. My brain he transferred into the body of the blind old man, Sthan's into the paralytic's.

"Now," said Karnath, "you shall be

taken into the desert and there you may hatch new schemes of vengeance. And as you die, bethink you of Etain and me living on—for ever."

The retainers took us far into the cruel, searing wastes of the desert and left us there. Blind and feeble, I felt the torturing blaze of the sun destroying my faint strength. But I did not despair.

"Sthan," I said to the living log that my servant now was, "we cannot die yet, for my vengeance is not achieved."

"Yes, master," whispered the faithful Sthan.

I took his paralyzed body in my arms and then, his eyes guiding my way, I started with tottering steps across the wastes.

I could not die yet—I knew it. The knowledge upheld my trembling, senile body through the terrible next two days.

How I endured in those days, without food or water, under the awful sun, dragging the paralyzed form of my servant with me, I know not. But at last we stumbled into an oasis of desert folk.

In superstitious awe of us, they treated us kindly. We soon recovered a little strength. In my blind mind still beat only one thought—Karnath and Etain! We must procure new bodies. Paralyzed, Sthan could not effect the transference of brains, so I must do it first to him. But could I, blind as I was?

I did it, the gods alone know how. Blindly, gropingly, I moved his brain into the body of the young desert dweller I had managed to ensnare and capture. When Sthan recovered, he easily secured another young man and transferred my brain into his body.

"My vengeance still waits!" I cried, young and strong once more. "Sthan, we return now to that village."

But when we re-entered it, Karnath and Etain were not there. Egypt was rent

by war, dark invaders from Ethiopia advancing on the land, and like the other terrified Egyptians, the traitor and traitress had fled down the Nile for safety.

I followed with Sthan, but nowhere in lower Egypt could I find them. The Ethiopian invasion had swept away their trail, and for four full generations Sthan and I searched before we found it again.

It led eastward and northward across the great deserts into nearer Asia. Inexorably, relentlessly, we followed it, using body after body, even as those we followed passed from body to body. Generations became centuries as we searched up through nearer Asia for those two.

Years had become like hours to us; a generation seemed but a short time. It seemed that no sooner did we assume new, young bodies than they were old and worn out and it was necessary to take still other ones.

One thing Sthan and I were ever wary of, and that was that neither of us should be killed by accident. For if but one of us were left, there would be nobody to transfer that one's brain to a fresh body and so he must die in that body.

Through peoples, wars, cities without number, we followed the trail. The rude civilizations rising in the world meant nothing to us who had seen Atlantis in her glory. Never, except perhaps in thousands of centuries, would wrecked Atlantis be equaled.

THE trail led finally to a great new city in the northeast, called Babylon. On a spring evening Sthan and I, in the guise of two Hittite chiefs, passed across a bridge over the Euphrates, dotted with round boats of skins and reeds, and approached the thick walls of Babylon.

"Sthan, our quest draws to an end. I

feel that Karnath and Etain are in this city," I said.

"Then we shall find them, master."

We passed through Babylon's brass gates into streets of big mud-brick buildings thronged by the dark Chaldeans. They were dressed in long white tunics of linen and wool and wore turbans over their long hair. To our left rose the brutal bulk of the Temple of Marduk, squat and square and mighty. Farther beyond it lay the flat, extensive palaces of the king.

I stopped a passer-by and asked him, "Friend, can you tell a stranger one thing? Who is reputed the most beautiful woman in Babylon?"

He stared disdainfully at my Hittite garb and said, "Only a stranger indeed could be ignorant that Tocris, the queen of our king Nabonidus, is the most beautiful woman in Babylon and the world."

"Sthan," I said, "the two we seek have become a king and queen. For well I know that this Nabonidus and Tocris must be Karnath and Etain, since Etain would ever choose for herself the most beautiful body she could find."

That day I asked for an audience with the great king, saying that I brought homage to him from my Hittite tribe.

It was many days before my audience was granted. And when I was finally ushered into the presence of Nabonidus, they permitted only me to enter, and searched me for weapons. I chuckled grimly at their precautions, for I had a copper knife so cunningly hidden in my hair they could not find it.

Nabonidus sat on a carven stool in the cool green hanging gardens of the palace roof, overlooking the Ishtar Gate.

He had a long, dark face and suspicious eyes, and beside him sat Tocris, his queen, a tall, beautiful woman with

slumbrous eyes. "Etain!" my brain shouted.

I crawled slavishly forward, bumping my head upon the cold tile flags as the chamberlains had instructed. My heart was bursting as the moment of my age-old vengeance approached.

I raised myself, apparently overcome by awe. Nabonidus leaned forward impatiently. Instantly the knife flashed into my hand and stabbed forward at his heart.

Tocris was too quick for me. Her brooding eyes had read my intention and with tigress swiftness she knocked my arm aside.

There was a wild shouting of officers and running of guards. Held helpless by soldiers, I faced the king and queen.

Nabonidus looked more closely at me, and then his dark face smiled. And so too smiled Tocris.

"Welcome, Ulios," he said. "It was our thought that sooner or later you would come."

"Aye, and it is your thought too that sooner or later the gods will permit me to wreak their vengeance on you both," I said.

I saw haunting fear ripple swiftly over their faces a moment, the ever-present dread that had followed them down the centuries.

"You were ever a learned fool, Ulios," mocked Tocris-Etain. "Your gods will have to find a new instrument of vengeance, for here your quest ends."

"Aye, and this time there will be no escape for you as in Egypt," Nabonidus said. "All Babylon watches you die in torment tomorrow morning."

They locked me in the deepest of the palace's dungeons and set guards at my door five deep.

I slept calmly on the brick floor. I knew that I would not die.

Two hours before dawn I was awakened by a chipping and scratching. A hole appeared in the mud-brick wall and widened, and there came through it the dusty, anxious face of my servant Sthan.

"Master, I feared I could not dig to you in time!"

"You have done well, Sthan. Now we leave this hole."

"To seek out Karnath and Etain, master?"

"They are too well guarded now. We go first from this city to get new bodies, and then we will come back."

We stole out of Babylon by devious ways and made our way to the bleak plains to the north. There amid the fierce, nomadic peoples of the Medes and the Persians we acquired new bodies. I saw that these people were war-like and numerous, and I got the ear of their ruler, a powerful barbarian named Cyrus.

By dint of repeated narrations of the richness and weakness of Babylon, I so inspired him that in a short time he and all his horsemen and bowmen were pushing south toward Babylon. Sthan and I rode in the van of the Persian horse, and oh, it was sweet to be sweeping south with them toward my long-delayed vengeance on Karnath and Etain. It was sweet for us to crash through the smoking streets of terrified Babylon with the conquerors, amid whizz of arrows and death-cries of men and shrieks of fear-mad maidens, right up into the mighty, dusky throne-room of Nabonidus himself.

There Sthan and I burst in, red swords in our hands, and there we found Nabonidus and Tocris lying dead on biers.

I ran forward. My worst fears were realized. Their bodies lacked brains—they had escaped me again!

A terrified eunuch gasped, "When

your forces came near Babylon, the great king and his queen shut themselves up and called for a young warrior and a young maiden. Later the warrior and the maiden came out and went, we know not where. But we found the king and queen thus, dead."

I shook my fist amid the thunderous uproar of falling Babylon. "I will find you, Karnath and Etain! Ulios and the vengeance of Ulios still will search you out!"

STHAN and I walked the streets of another city.

"Sthan, this is Rome, Mistress of the World and Light of the Universe. What think you of it?"

"It seems a poor huddle of a place beside Atlantis, master."

"Aye, but unless I am wrong we shall find Karnath and Etain somewhere in this place."

We two, now wearing the bodies of Greek sailors, were pushing through the motley, noisy throngs in the Suburra. Hard, brutal-looking legionaries, ill-fed, scrawny paupers, oily Syrian merchants and snaky Egyptian dancing-women crowded us in the narrow way. From the squalid booths along the street came the smells of sour wine and onions and fish frying in oil. Cobblers bawled the excellence of their wares, and two soldiers staged a drunken fight a little ahead, while from the windows over our head, women brown and black and white leaned down and entreated us to enter.

"Let us get out of this madhouse, Sthan. We shall not find Karnath and Etain in this part of the city."

Six centuries had passed since Sthan and I had crashed into Babylon with Cyrus, and found our prey escaped. A dozen or more bodies had we occupied since then, as we pushed over nearer

Asia and Europe in pursuit of Karnath and Etain. Through the city-states of Greece and the isles of the Egean we had sought them, with remorseless thoroughness, but always they seemed warned of our coming in time to escape. The growing greatness of this city Rome had brought us here, since it seemed to me the traitor and traitress would have come here.

Sthan and I were struggling out of the squalid Suburra when a hand tapped my shoulder. I turned and looked into the hard brown face of a helmeted captain who led a squad of legionaries.

"You are arrested by order of Tiberius Cæsar," he said, and the clanking soldiers seized us.

"We have done no wrong—we landed only this morning," I said.

"You can explain your innocence to Cæsar," he said shortly. "I am to take you before him."

AN HOUR later we were marched under heavy guard into the presence of the lord of Rome in his great house on the Palatine. Tiberius stared at us with bulging, glassy eyes. He had a bony, gray, twitching face and a vein in his forehead throbbed continually. He was an old man made older by debauchery. Beside him stood a sleek, smooth, dandified Roman with deep and subtle eyes, and a woman of superb, indolent beauty.

Her beauty gave me the clue, and I said quietly to her: "So you and Karnath were waiting for me this time, Etain?"

"Aye, Ulios, we grow weary of your stupid chase," she said, with merciless mirth that veiled in it a hint of her dread.

Karnath was telling Tiberius Cæsar, "This is the man, Cæsar. A sorcerer who has come here to Rome to poison you."

Tiberius stared at me with his glassy

eyes and said menacingly, "What have you to answer to the accusation of Maximus?"

"Cæsar, I came to Rome to kill, but not you," I told him. "It is Maximus himself whom I came here to take vengeance on. If you are wise, you will deliver him to me. For otherwise you will find that he is a snake who will soon sting you."

"It is a lie!"

Tiberius told me, "Maximus has taught me modes of pleasure I did not know before. He stands next to me in Rome, and the word of no prowling poisoner like yourself can harm him."

I understood the situation now. Karnath had secured his hold upon this old debauchee of an emperor by imparting to him some of the lore of evil pleasures he had picked up during the ages.

I smiled. "Cæsar, it is true that I am a sorcerer, but I came not to Rome to kill you," I said. "I came to give you new life."

He frowned. "What do you mean?"

I told him, "I can transfer you from that old, worn-out body of yours into another body, a young, strong one."

Tiberius' glassy eyes widened with vicious eagerness. "By my ancestors, if you could do that——" he whispered.

"But he cannot!" cried Maximus hurriedly. "Listen not to his blandishments, Cæsar!"

"I swear that I can do it," I told the emperor. "And for my pay I ask only—this man and woman to be given me!"

I saw Karnath and Etain pale at that, but Tiberius waved impatiently aside their outburst of denial and remonstrance.

His bulging eyes fixed on mine, Tiberius told me, "There is a virtuous young relative of mine who is to succeed me as emperor. All Rome is waiting for

me to die so they can have him for an upright sovereign. Could you transfer me into *his* body?"

I bowed. "As easily as into any other body, Cæsar."

Tiberius burst into wild laughter. "What a joke on the people of Rome it would be, that!"

He rose. "Sorcerer, you will come to Capri with me and effect this transference. If you succeed, this man and woman are yours."

"But they will escape—I want them now!" I said.

"You will get your reward only when your work is done," he snapped. "They will be well guarded while we are gone."

I went to Capri with the old debauchee, though I misdoubted much leaving Karnath and Etain, even under guard.

The body into which I transferred Tiberius' brain was that of a young kinsman named Caligula. All Rome loved him for his modesty and virtue, and was waiting for him to succeed the evil Tiberius.

Once I had transferred the old emperor's brain into Caligula's skull, we allowed the dead body of Tiberius to be found. It was reviled by all, and Caligula was joyfully acclaimed emperor.

The new Caligula laughed and laughed. "They will soon find out what kind of emperor their virtuous pet will make."

In fact, Caligula's infamies and nameless vices began almost at once to astound the people who had hailed his accession.

"Cæsar, remember now your promise," I reminded him impatiently. "Maximus and the woman are to be mine."

But when I returned to Rome with him, I found my worst forebodings realized. Karnath and Etain had escaped. It had not been hard for them, with their craft of many ages, to outwit their

guards, and none knew whither they had fled.

"Forget them," Caligula told me. "You shall stay here and give me new bodies when I need them. You shall be second to myself."

I pretended to accede, but Sthan and I left Rome that very night. Again we sought vainly for the trail of Karnath and Etain.

"Sthan, do you grow weary of this long search?"

"No, master. Wherever you lead, I shall follow."

WE MARCHED through a thick beech wood growing dark in the sad northern twilight. Snow was sifting from the dusky sky. Sthan and I, two blond Germans wearing helmets and hauberks of chain-armor on our tall bodies, led a hard-bitten crew of a hundred of the worst desperadoes that existed in Tenth Century Saxony.

Sthan pointed up through a break in the trees to a square gray castle with turrets at its four corners and a high surrounding wall, standing out boldly on a projecting cliff against the darkening sky.

"That must be the castle of Count Otto, master! They told us he and his lady ruled all this region."

"Aye, and this Count Otto and his lady are the two we have sought so long," I said, feasting my eyes on the castle.

I turned then to our hard-bitten followers.

"We halt here," I ordered. "Sthan, bring the minstrel garbs."

Before many minutes I and my servant had shed our armor and were attired like wandering minstrels, in brown cloaks and leggings, and carrying small lutes.

Then I asked the leader of our scoundrelly crew, a battered murderer named

Eckhard, "Is it clear to you what you must do?"

He nodded his surly head. "I and my men are to creep up to the castle after dark and wait for your servant to open the postern gate inside. But all the loot of the castle is to be ours!"

"The loot shall be yours," I promised. "Sthan and I want none of it."

We two left them in the snowy beechen forest and pushed up a rude track through the gathering darkness toward the castle. Once more my heart beat high with expectation. For once more I had come within reach of the vengeance that must be mine. Thirty generations had passed since Karnath and Etain had escaped me in imperial Rome. Rome had crashed beneath barbarian assaults as for century after century Sthan and I followed those two.

Twice had I almost had them in my power: once in Byzantium when Jovian ruled, and once in Cordoba where I found Karnath in the body of a Moorish emir. Both times they had given me the slip. But Sthan and I had always taken their trail again, assuming and discarding bodies every twenty or thirty years, and now we were close again to the two false ones. I swore they would not escape this time, as we climbed through the dusk and falling snow to the castle.

Count Otto's men-at-arms permitted us two wandering minstrels to enter before they closed the great gates for the night. We sat that night amid the servants in the great, gloomy stone dining-hall and devoured big shins of half-cooked beef, flinging the bones down into the rushes for the dogs to fight over.

Up at a raised table at the hall's end sat Count Otto and the lady Garda. Flushed with insolence of power was his handsome face and very fair and beautiful was the lady Garda—always Etain

had chosen the fairest bodies. But I sensed dim undertones of dread in their pride, the haunting fear of the pursuer that had accompanied them these thousands of years. And I hugged to myself the thought of the dagger in my breast which I, Ulios, would soon bury in Karnath's brain.

As the meal drew to an end I made a slight signal to Sthan and he stole out of the hall. Then, as I had expected, Count Otto called for music from the minstrels who had come to the castle that night. I stepped forward until I stood just below their dais, my lute in my arms. Looking squarely up into their faces, I plucked the lute's strings and sang.

"Far away and long ago was a land in the western sea," I sang, and saw them look up, startled.

Count Otto's face became strange, and doubt gathered and gathered in the lady Garda's eyes as I sang on.

"Sin destroyed that land, and they that sinned had fled," I sang, and then Count Otto leaped to his feet.

"Ulios!" he cried, and his men-at-arms ran to him.

"Yes, Ulios at last!" I exclaimed, flinging down my lute and snatching out my dagger.

"Seize him!" he yelled to his men, but there smote across his order a gurgling death-cry from elsewhere in the castle, and with rush of clanking feet my hundred scoundrels poured into the hall.

Sthan was at their head, and he and that loot-lusting wolfish crew swept down the men-at-arms like chaff.

With my dagger gleaming, I sprang up onto the dais at Count Otto. One moment more and my five thousand years' search for vengeance would have ended, but I forgot his lady—I forgot Etain. She darted behind me as I sprang at Karnath, and then the shouting hall rocked

in light as her own jeweled little knife drove into the back of my neck.

I sank, choking blood. With failing sight I saw Karnath and Etain leap through a hidden door at the back of the dais. My wolfish followers were too intent on looting to notice.

Sthan's frenzied face bent over me. "Master!"

I pointed a quaking finger at the hidden door and choked, "Follow them—follow——"

"No, master," he cried. "You are dying—I must get your brain into another body instantly or you perish."

I pointed again at the door, then all darkened.

When I awoke, Sthan was still bending anxiously over me, but I was lying now on a couch in the castle.

I looked down at myself. A big-boned body, in chain-armor. In the mirror Sthan handed me I saw the battered face of Eckhard.

"Master, I was not one moment too soon," Sthan told me. "I stunned Eckhard and put your brain in his skull just before you died."

"And Karnath and Etain?" I asked, sitting up.

"They got away by a secret passage that no doubt they had ready for such an emergency. But we will find them again, master!"

"We will find them, Sthan."

THE Duc d'Harcourt politely offered me a silver box that contained but a few last grains of snuff. Then he sat down beside us on one of the few benches that were permitted us in this big general room of the prison.

"It is one of the worst features of this Reign of Terror that we are not even permitted to die decently. Madame la

Duchesse and I are not even given any snuff for these last days remaining to us."

Then his handsome, high-bred face smiled at me. "But I suppose we must not complain. We have long lorded this rabble that now rules France, and it is no doubt only fair that they should have a turn."

I told him, "I can understand their sending you aristocrats to the guillotine. But why should they condemn myself and my valet, two wholly innocent foreigners just arrived in France?"

The Duc looked at me and Sthan with interest. I was in the dress of a Swedish physician.

"Paris is a dangerous place for foreigners these days," he said. "More than yourselves have been condemned without reason. No doubt some enemy of yours in Paris has accused you to the Revolutionary Committee of being a reactionary."

"It may be so," I said slowly. "I have an enemy who is in Paris, I know, though I do not know just where he is."

It was true, that, for Karnath and Etain, I was sure, were somewhere in the city. I did not know what identities were theirs now, what names they had, but their trail had led Sthan and me here. It might be that Karnath was the one who had had us condemned to the guillotine, though I had been sure he could not know us in our latest guise. Or maybe only idle rumor had been the cause. In any case, I cursed the fate that had brought us to die here with my vengeance unsatisfied. Would it ever be satisfied? Would those two ever elude me, mocking phantoms I could not grasp?

Since the night eight hundred years before, when they had fled from Count Otto's castle, we had followed them through generation after generation, body after body. In Italy, Spain, across

Europe and nearer Asia we had pursued but had never again been so close to them. Now in this year 1793, this red summer when France was blazing with the Terror, it seemed our search was to end for ever.

The Duc d'Harcourt rose to his feet, interrupting my dark revery.

"I must return to Madame la Duchesse. I trust that your wait for the tumbrils will not be too torturingly long, *monsieur*."

"While we wait, we live," I reminded him.

He bowed smilingly. "And while we live, we hope, even though we know hope is quite useless. *Adieu, monsieur*."

When he had gone I turned to my servant: "Do you too think that hope is useless, Sthan?"

"You will get us out of here, master," Sthan replied with the calm confidence of the past six thousand years.

On the very next morning a stir ran through the prison and there was a shouting and running of guards. An excited fellow prisoner told me, "The Duc and Duchesse d'Harcourt were murdered horribly during the night. A turnkey and his wife are missing and it is believed that they did it."

The bodies were brought through the general prison room at that moment. My eyes fixed on them, dilating. The skulls of the Duc and Duchesse were opened, their brains missing!

I cried in crazy rage to Sthan, "The Duc and Duchesse d'Harcourt were Karnath and Etain! They did not know us, nor we them! And they have transferred their brains into the bodies of the turnkey and his woman and have escaped us!"

"If I had only known!" said Sthan. "He sat here beside me!"

When my first wild rage cooled, I said, "They must have had instruments and

materials they needed smuggled in to them by some of the guards. If they did it, we can do it, Sthan."

We did it, and one night we walked out in the bodies of two of the guards. Feverishly we searched Paris, but Karnath and Etain were gone.

THE crash of exploding bombs rocked London in the darkness, drowning out ever and again the warning, wailing sirens and frantic bells that urged the hurrying people about us into underground shelters. In the distance great fingers of light searched the sky, sweeping back and forward. Then they held steady on a long, fish-like gray shape high in the sky above, a steadily moving Zeppelin from which high explosives continued to rain downward on the great city.

"Sthan, they are learning how to fight more efficiently as time goes by. What think you of these warriors?"

"We have seen many wars, master, but this one is the most terrible of all."

"Aye, but let them fight to their heart's content," I said. "Our business is not with their childish wars. Only I hope that none of these bombs kill Karnath and Etain. They must not die that way."

"Are you sure they are here in London, master?"

"Almost sure. We shall know in another half-hour whether this trail is false or true."

Sthan and I, two inoffensive Spaniards in appearance, walked steadily along that darkened street of London's West End, paying no attention to the crash of bombs still moving south across the city.

The sirens continued to wail, and airplanes droned by overhead in hot haste to attack the monster above. No lights

showed in the whole metropolis, and no one seemed abroad on the street but us.

For a century and a quarter Sthan and I had hung grimly to our search for the two whose track we had last lost in revolutionary Paris. In all that time we had not come up to them. The far-spread tumults of the Napoleonic wars had confused our hunt for years, and then all through the Nineteenth Century the guilty two had continued to elude us. Once in the Russia of the Czars we had almost had them, but adroitly they had escaped. For a dozen years we had lost their trail utterly; then it seemed to lead us toward a British politician, whose fashionable home I and my servant were pressing now.

"Sthan, somehow I feel that our long pursuit is approaching its end," I said.

"I too feel something of that, master—a feeling I have not had before."

We rounded a corner of the dark street. The noise of bombs was now receding but no one had yet ventured abroad. Then suddenly, as we passed the mouth of a black alley, I glimpsed in it the glint of two pistols pointing straight at my head.

I could not save myself by any movement of my own, I knew. I had a lightning-instant of agonized knowledge that here my pursuit ended indeed, with lost Atlantis unavenged, my sin unatoned.

The pistols spat fire and lead. But Sthan had glimpsed them in the moment I did, and had sprung in front of me.

"Master, beware!" he yelled as he sprang, and then the roar of the pistols came and he sank to the ground.

"Sthan!" I cried, and tore the pistol from my own pocket and poured a stream of shots across my servant's prone form.

The two in the black alley who had fired at us fell as my shots struck them. I bent over Sthan's limp form.

One look was enough. Both bullets had torn through his skull and into his brain. I had lost my companion for ever.

Dazedly, I looked at the two dead men in the alley. They were of a familiar type, burly, brutal London criminals.

I knew then that Karnath and Etain had become aware of our approach and had set these men to kill me. There was no use hunting now for Karnath and Etain in London. They would have fled, I knew.

So it proved, for when I came to look for them I found that the British politician and his mistress had disappeared.

Before I started on their track, I had my loyal, steadfast companion of sixty centuries buried in an English churchyard. Over his grave I placed a stone in which was cut the legend, "STHAN OF ATLANTIS—A FAITHFUL SERVANT."

I started once more on the trail, and now with the terrible knowledge that I must find those I sought soon, or not at all. For I had now no Sthan to transfer my brain into a new body when my present one grew old. Nor could I teach anyone else how to do that, since only an Atlantean had the mind and skill to comprehend and execute that operation. None of these people could ever do it.

My present body was over forty years old. Unless I found Karnath and Etain in the next twenty or thirty years, I would die without finding them.

Alone—alone, now, for ever—I started on the last of my age-old quest for vengeance.

JOHAN HARDWICK is the most powerful man on earth!"

I turned a little toward the speaker, one of two young men sitting at the little table next mine on that Paris boulevard.

It was spring dusk and the chestnut trees above us were white with blossoms.

"Kings and princes are puppets to John Hardwick! And twenty years ago he was nobody."

I walked over to the table of my two neighbors, and said, "Your pardon for intruding, gentlemen. But I would like to learn something of this man Hardwick."

They looked up, two doubtful young men who saw in me an elderly Spaniard with graying hair and a lined, yellow face.

One of them said, "I thought everyone in the world knew of John Hardwick."

"I have been traveling a great deal during the last few years," I explained. "I have not read the daily journals."

"Well, Hardwick is an American who is the world's richest man," he said. "His fortune runs into billions, they say, and he lives in New York as though it was the capital of an invisible empire. Twenty years ago, at the time of the World War, he was just an obscure young clerk in an American city. Suddenly he began to show amazing far-sightedness and wizardry in finance, and rapidly vaulted up in power until today he is real ruler of half the world."

"And furthermore," the other added, "the husband of just about the most beautiful woman in the world."

I caught my breath. "The wife of John Hardwick is beautiful?"

"Stunningly so," he told me. "He married her shortly after he began his rise to power."

When they had gone I sat at my café table, thinking rapidly. Could this John Hardwick and his wife be Karnath and Etain?

It seemed more than possible. For the last twenty years, since I had lost my faithful Sthan in war-time London, I had found no trace of either of the treacherous twain. I had searched fiercely through

Europe for them, while my body grew older and older, my strength slipping from me. Agony of soul was mine as I saw the inexorable approach of death, whom I had cheated for so long, robbing me of my rightful revenge.

It could well be that Karnath and Etain had fled to America and there, with their millennium-gathered wisdom, had risen to power and wealth while I searched vainly for them in the Old World. Yet if I went and found them not there, the time lost might be fatal.

I stood up suddenly. I had decided to go, to gamble my vengeance on the chance that John Hardwick was Karnath.

Two days later I was aboard a huge liner bound from Marseilles to New York, heading for my last hope of finding revenge and atonement before I died.

On the broad forward decks were twinkling lanterns and an orchestra's throbbing music, and happy young men and women dancing. Back in the darkness of the stern I stood at the rail, looking down with aching heart into the black, rushing waters. Far down there in the dimness and ooze and slime lay the wrecked marbles of the land of which I, Ulios, had been Guardian. In all the slow-revolving years they had rested there in silence and darkness, their only tenant the crawling squid.

A young man and a girl, flushed with dancing, came and leaned over the rail in the darkness near me.

"Do you know, the legended Atlantis is said to lie under these very seas we're sailing," I heard him tell her.

"A city down there—how wonderful!" she exclaimed. "Is there any truth to the legend?"

"Of course not, it's just a pretty fairy-story," he said indulgently. "People used to believe it, but they know now such a city could never have existed."

Atlantis, Atlantis, shall the world ever see your like again, city of stainless white beauty beside the dark blue sea? Shall proud men and beautiful women ever again walk earth such as walked your green streets in the days of your glory?

The man and girl turned away to dance again, but I remained looking down at the rushing black waters.

The faithless twain who had cast my loved land down to doom beneath those waters still lived, still gloried in their evil. I prayed that I might be granted this last chance of vengeance and atonement.

WHEN I reached New York, my hopes withered. For this John Hardwick and his wife who I hoped were Karnath and Etain were well-nigh utterly inaccessible. Their home was a great castle-like penthouse set on the top of a colossal skyscraper. When they were in it, armed guards watched every possible entrance. Even airplanes were forbidden over it. When John Hardwick or his wife went out of it, their car was guarded by other cars and by a dozen disguised bodyguards. The offices of the billionaire in lower New York were as heavily guarded.

For weeks I found it impossible even to see their faces. Yet I did not despair, for all this convinced me that they were so guarded because they feared something or someone greatly. And if they were Karnath and Etain, it was I, Ulios, whom they feared!

At last I had a momentary glimpse of them as they emerged one day from their great limousine. I knew at the first sight of John Hardwick's square, hard face and brilliant eyes, at the first glimpse of the woman's faultless features and secret gaze, that they were Karnath and Etain.

My heart shouted thanksgiving within

me. But still I was as far as ever from vengeance. How could I, a single, weak, aging man, hope even to gain access to this all-powerful pair?

Plan after plan I made, and had to discard. There seemed no way past the guards that always protected them. Then a plan came finally to me, one that was a slender reed indeed, but I decided to risk all upon it.

It was impossible to penetrate John Hardwick's penthouse castle when he or his wife was there. But I found it possible to enter the place during their absence. In the billionaire's study, I swiftly and secretly did that which I had planned. Then I left without anyone seeing me.

That night I went up to the door of that high stronghold again. John Hardwick and his wife were there now, and the place was ringed with guards who stopped me at once. In answer to their questions, I wrote the single word "Ulios" on a card and sent it in to the billionaire.

In a few minutes he who had taken the card in came quickly back. John Hardwick had ordered me brought in. They searched me first for weapons, so thoroughly that no tiniest one could have been concealed on me. Then they took me in.

John Hardwick sat with the woman in the study whose windows looked out across the blinking lights of New York. He took a heavy pistol from his desk and, pointing it calmly at my head, ordered the guards all to leave.

When they had gone I stood, a gray, thin old man, looking at this man and woman I had pursued across the ages.

"Well, Ulios," said Karnath to me, "what have you to say to me before I slay you?"

"Slay him now, at once!" cried Etain,

her eyes wide with hate and fear as they watched me. "I trust him not!"

"Fear not, Etain—he cannot harm us now," Karnath reassured her, and said again to me, "Why do you come openly like this, Ulios?"

My voice was cracked and quivering as I answered desperately, "I came because I wish to call truce to this world-old feud of ours. Why should we hate each other for ever, Karnath? It is long ago since Atlantis sank and died, and was forgotten. Why should not we forget our hate and live in amity through time to come?"

He laughed, and the silver, scornful laughter of Etain chimed with his. And their eyes were glad with triumph now.

"Ulios, you do not deceive me," he said. "Twenty years ago we had your servant Sthan killed, and now you have no one to help you to a new body, nor can you teach any of these barbarians how to transfer your brain to another body, and you know that soon you must die for ever in that body unless one of us takes pity on you. Well, I will take pity on you, Ulios! I will end your life here and now without further waiting, and we shall be rid of your pursuit for ever, and Etain and I shall live on and on while the world lasts. Think of that, Ulios, and die!"

His finger pressed the trigger as he spat the words. But there was only an empty click from the pistol. His face suddenly fearful, Karnath pressed the trigger again and again, but no shots came forth.

It was my turn then to laugh, and laugh I did as sickly fear spread across the faces of the two.

"The bullets in that pistol will never fire, Karnath," I said. "I saw to that when I entered this room secretly today."

"Guards! Guards!" yelled Karnath, but again I only laughed.

"You sent them away yourself, so that they might not hear you kill me. Now they will not hear me kill you."

Etain darted to the door but I was ahead of her and flung her back and locked the door swiftly. Then I turned.

Karnath came out from behind his desk, raising a heavy lamp wildly to dash down upon my head.

I caught his wrist and forced him to drop it. We struggled there, and though he was the younger by many years, he was a child in my grasp. I was no longer a trembling old man. The strength of every arm in doomed Atlantis seemed in my arm.

My thin hands held his throat with a steely grip he could not break. The woman watched in frozen, paralyzed horror as I stalked steadily, remorselessly, with struggling Karnath to the windows. I forced his head back down over the ledge of the open window, his protruding eyes staring wildly up at me.

"Gods of Atlantis, look down on a sacrifice and an atonement!" I thundered, and flung Karnath clear of the window.

I saw his body go whirling downward through the darkness, and then I turned.

Etain was flattened against the wall, her eyes dilated with awful fear, her beauty all lost in horror. But she came forward, glided fearfully closer to me, her eyes pleading.

"Do not slay me, Ulios!" she begged in frantic fear. "You loved me once!"

She came closer, breathlessly wheedling and insinuating.

"Only you and I are left now, Ulios—but we two can still live on immortally. We can still transfer each other's brains to new bodies at need. I will love you, as no woman has loved before. You will do it, Ulios? You will spare me and live on with me?"

I looked at her, and smiled. I took from my pocket a tiny black tablet which I put into my mouth and swallowed.

"What are you doing?" cried Etain.

I told her, "I have just swallowed a subtle poison. In an hour I will be dead, for my vengeance and atonement are finished. You are part of that atonement, Etain. You are not going to die, you are going to live on by yourself in that body, and grow old in it. Yes, you shall experience that thing you feared most of all in the world, that to prevent which you betrayed Atlantis. *You shall grow old!*"

I walked to the door and unlocked it. "I go now to complete the record of my sin and my atonement which I have written, and then to die. Farewell, Etain."

"Ulios!" she cried, and as I went out of the door and closed it behind me I heard her hoarse scream again.

"Ulios!"

