

THE

ACOLYTE

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DREAMS OF YITH

by Duane W. Rimel

I

In distant Yith past crested, ragged peaks,
On far-flung islands lost to worldly eyes,
A shadow from the ancient star-wild seeks
Some being which in caverns shrilly cries
A challenge; and the hairy dweller speaks
From that deep hole where slimy Sotho lies
But when those night-winds crept about the place,
They fled---for Sotho had no human face.

II

Beyond the valleys of the sun which lie
In misty chaos past the reach of time
And brood beneath the ice as aeons fly,
Long waiting for some brighter, warmer clime;
There is a vision, as I vainly try
To glimpse the madness that must some day climb
From age-old tombs in dim dimensions hid,
And push all angles back---unseal the lid;

III

Beside the city that once lived there wound
A stream of putrefaction writhing black;
Reflecting crumbling spires stuck in the ground
That glow through hovering mist whence no stray track
Can lead to those dead gates, where once was found
The secret that would bring the dwellers back.
And still that pitch-black current eddies by
Those silver gates of Yith to sea-beds dry.

IV

On rounded turrets rising through the vises
Of cloud-veiled aeons that the Old Ones knew
On tablets deeply worn and fingered clean
By tentacles that dreamers seldom view;
In space-hung Yith, on clammy walls obscene
That writhe and crumble and are built anew;
There is a figure carved; but God? those eyes,
That sway on fungoid stems at leaden skies

V

Around the place of ancient, waiting flight;
On walls of sheerest opal rearing high,
That move as planets beckon in the night
To faded realms where nothing sane can lie;
A deathless guard traps by in feeble light
Emitting to the stars a sobbing cry.
But on that path where footsteps should have led
There rolled an eyeless, huge articulated head.

VI

Amid dim hills that poison mosses blast,
Far from the lands and seas of our clean earth,
Dread nightmare shadows dance---obscenely cast
By twisted talons of archaen birth
On rows of slimy pillars stretching past
A daemon-fane that echoes with mad mirth.
And in that realm sane eyes may never see---
For black light streams from skies of ebony.

VII

On those queer mountains which hold back the hords
That lie in waiting in their mouldy graves,
Who groan and mumble to a hidden lord
Still waiting for the time-worn key that saves;
There dwells a watcher which can ill afford
To let invaders by those hoary caves.
But some day then may dreamers find the way
That leads down elfin-painted paths of gray.

VIII

And past those unclean spires that ever lean
Above the windings of unpeopled streets;
And far beyond the walls and silver screen
That veils the secrets of those dim retreats,
A scarlet pathway leads that some have seen
In wildest visions that no mortal greets.
And down that dimming path in fearful flight
Queer beings squirm and hasten in the night.

IX

High in the ebon skies on scaly wings
Dread batlike beasts soar past those towers gray
To peer in greedy longing at the things
Which sprawl in every twisted passageway.
And when their gruesome flight a shadow brings
The dwellers lift dim eyes above the clay.
But lidded bulbs close heavily once more;
They wait---for Sotho to unlatch the door!

X

Now, though the veil of troubled visions deep
Is draped to blind me to the secret ways
Leading through blackness to the realm of sleep
That haunts me all my jumbled nights and days,
I feel the dim path that will let me keep
That rendezvous in Yith where Sotho plays.
At last I see a glowing turret shine,
And I am coming, for the key is mine!