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# Weird Tales

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WEIRD TALES ISSUED 1st OF EACH MONTH

# The Last Archer

By EARL PEIRCE, JR.

*One of the strangest stories ever written—a tale that begins in the time of Richard the Lion-Hearted and the Crusades, and ends in our own day*

"Oh, many a shaft at random sent  
Finds mark the archer little meant!"  
—Scott.

**F**FIFTH DAY (At sea). It has been five days since I made the acquaintance of William Farquhar. Five days! It seems like more than a lifetime. I am richer now than ever before in my career, for he pays me generously. But what a strange business! Who is this man? Where is he taking me?

He tells me nothing, and yet in his glance there is a wisdom to answer all questions of all ages, if it could but speak. There is a sadness about him, a hopelessness foreign to other men. He talks to me of poetry, of battles, and the history of great crusades; but of himself, never a word. Perhaps I should be afraid of him; perhaps I should resign from his weird employ. Yet I am curious.

When he first came to my room on that black night, as if he had emerged from the very shadows about me, he laid ten thousand dollars on my desk and told me it was his retainer. His retainer! His word is true, for he has since doubled the sum, and promised me more when my task is finished. But this task of mine? I feel I am cheating him.

It is not really a task, for any engineer could do it better than I. He desires me to install an electric generator in his island home, a generator which he bade me purchase, and for which he paid a small fortune. He told me to buy all accessories, for I must install the machine by myself, without help of any kind. At

this very moment the generator is in the hold below deck, and with it those many queer boxes which Farquhar himself directed over from the wharf.

We have been at sea for three days, and it is now early evening of the third. My stateroom is comfortable to the point of luxury. I have no wants, save the answers to countless questions. But I must wait for the answers.

We are now cruising in the Gulf Stream, and the weather is mildly warm, although it is midwinter. The boat makes good headway, the service is exceptional, the passengers interesting and cordial. Today I met several people, and all of them questioned me about Farquhar. So it seems that I am not alone in my curiosity about this strange man.

Nor has the captain himself overlooked my companion's eccentricities. At dinner this evening he engaged me in discreet conversation, and asked several blunt questions. "Why," he said, "does your friend, Mr. Farquhar, never come for his meals? Why does he lock himself in his room all day long, leaving it only after sundown?"

Why indeed? Five days ago I met him, and during all of that time I have never once seen him taste a morsel of food, nor have I obtained a glimpse of him during the hours of sunlight. Why this erratic behavior? What does he hide behind the locked doors of his stateroom?

Of Farquhar's business I know nothing. I even doubt if he has one, for he

possesses the careless air of a wealthy sportsman. Yes, Farquhar must certainly be a sportsman, for his body is lean and agile, and he is muscular, with a decided swiftness of line. His face too—he has a weather-beaten face of tough leather, and his eyes are permanently narrowed, as of a man who has spent long hours facing winds and rain. Sportsman? I might better suggest, *hunter*.

Where is he taking me? The question pounds incessantly at my ear-drums. To some island, he once told me. But *what* island? I have questioned the captain and found that our route is dotted with small islands, inhabited and uninhabited, civi-

lized and barbarous. And only this evening I learned that the ship was steaming off her main course, headed into sparsely charted seas.

"Farquhar's millions," said the purser with a smile. "The orders have come direct from the New York office."

So it appears that Farquhar has changed the course of this great ship to suit his ends. It becomes stranger with each passing hour. . . .

**I** HAVE just this moment received word from the captain. We are at last approaching our destination, for Farquhar has laid his maps on the chart table and



"The toll of death mounted with each night."

given his instructions. Our speed has been cut in half, passengers line the rail and peer vainly into the darkness of the surrounding water.

I have been requested to pack my luggage and prepare to assist in the disembarkation. A voltaic tension seems to have come over the entire boat; the night air is hushed by it.

Ah! Captain Lionel sent word again. Farquhar has ordered the ship to a position three miles due north. There is a solitary island there, as indicated on the map: *Durance Island*. A mere speck of ink in the whole ocean! We shall disembark at Durance Island. . . .

I must hurry and record these final impressions. My steward is packing for me, and the crane on deck is flooded with light. They have already begun to lift our luggage from the hold. Through the open window I can hear the seamen's voices, oddly strained. Above them I can hear Farquhar, softly decisive. The screws are throbbing gently, like the whispered comment of hundreds of passengers.

Well, I have learned that four boats are to be lowered. Four! It appears that Farquhar has no servants on Durance Island, for it is a black mass out there, almost swallowed by the sky and sea.

My bags have been taken out on deck. I can hear the squeak of pulleys as the boats are lowered. It is almost time to depart. I am here in my stateroom, alone with my diary—a diary which some strange impulse caused me to prepare on the night I first met this man and learned his uncanny request.

What can I say? What parting words can I write? What impressions?

The steward has just knocked at my door. I must hurry.

Hurry! They tell me to hurry, for Farquhar has commanded that the complete disembarkation take place before an hour of dawn.

What will I find on Durance Island? What does Farquhar want with the generator? These, and other questions, shoot through my head. I must ask myself: Who is Farquhar? I must repeat the question: *What* is Farquhar?

**S**IXTH DAY (A continuation from last night). If I should live to be a thousand I could never forget the things I have seen in the past twenty-four hours. They are bizarre and weird beyond all comparison. In ways they frighten me; yet still I am intrigued and curious.

To describe in detail all I have seen would exhaust my ability. It exhausts my tired mind even to think of them. Yet, however fatigued, I dare not lie down tonight until I have recorded, in some manner, the chronology of these strange events.

The *S. S. Celtic* dropped anchor at ten o'clock last night within several hundred yards of Durance Island. There was no moon, and it was slightly foggy, and heavy billows rolled the sea, although not large enough to endanger the four boats which transported us to the shore. By midnight all of our luggage had been removed from the *Celtic*, and we had made our salutations to the captain.

Even before I stepped foot on the beach, I felt the impregnability of this place. In that darkness I could discern no landmarks save the towering blackness of the cliffs, and could hear but the lapping of the waves upon its shore; yet I sensed its presence more than I saw or heard it. The seamen who manned our boats experienced the same eery sensation, for I could not help but notice the half-sluggish reluctance with which they pulled on the oars.

Farquhar was standing in the bow of the farthest boat, his arms crossed on his massive chest. He issued terse commands

to the men, and as we neared the island I saw his head go higher and higher as he gazed at the cliff-top. Strangely enough, his attitude seemed that of brave defiance. Defiance of what? Of whom? It was impossible for me to say.

When Farquhar's boat scraped the beach he leaped out and gave immediate aid in hauling it aground. He fairly jerked the craft from the water onto the sand, then waded in to his waist and assisted the others.

Not many minutes after my foot first touched the soil, I became alarmingly aware of Durance Island's unnatural silence. Disregarding the grunts of the men, and Farquhar's commands, and the wash of the sea, Durance Island was a place of uncanny silence. There was not a single chirping of an insect, not a creaking bough, not a noise from its darkness. It was absolutely and hauntingly *soundless*.

But I had no time to linger over these things. The boats had been unloaded, and the various odd crates and boxes were lined up under flash-lanterns so that Farquhar might examine them.

I walked over by the group of men who stood anxiously awaiting further orders, and caught the glance of one grizzled sailor whom I recognized as a lesser officer. There was a look of mingled wonder and fear in his eyes, which seemed to pop them from his head. He looked squarely back at me for several seconds, then turned his head toward the sea. I saw his lips tremble as they choked back the words which had risen uncontrollably to his mouth.

I was about to speak to him, when suddenly I saw the same thing that he had seen. It struck me with a quick panic, and my knees weakened as if their tendons had been severed. For lying on the ground by a cluster of other boxes was a long black box with two metal handles

on each side by which it might be lifted. It was oblong in shape, slightly over six feet long, and obviously quite ancient. In the glow of the lanterns I perceived the metallic glint of hinges on one side of the upper surface.

Perhaps all of the men had noticed this singularly coffin-shaped crate, and when the time came to transport the luggage to the top of the cliff they shunned it as they would shun Pandora's box. Farquhar himself lifted that crate to his shoulders and with comparative ease led the men up the mountainous path.

It was a tricky, dangerous climb. Alternate men held lanterns to light the way and warn us of its countless cracks and fissures. In fifteen minutes the ten of us emerged from the overhanging rock arbors to the summit of the bluff, and stopped there, exhausted, while the sea-breeze played over our sweating faces.

**A**FTER a few minutes' rest Farquhar shouldered his box and led the men farther on, climbing still upward. I was just behind him with my personal luggage, and was the first of the men to see our destination. I stopped so short in surprize that the man behind me collided into my back with a grunt.

Before us, on top of an incline, rose the black cheerless wall of a stone castle, humped with parapets and crowned with a single lofty tower. It was a bulky castle of thick stone, compact to such a degree that it appeared solid. There was not a single light shining from it, and no sign of inhabitation or activity.

Farquhar, almost at the castle's wall, stopped and turned around. He jerked his head for us to follow, then lowered his crate to the ground with tender care. I saw his face in the feeble glow of the lamplight, and cannot well enough describe the exalted defiance that seemed written there.

I shall not take the pains to relate of the long and torturous vigil as the eight men, Farquhar and I traced up and down the path, hauling strange boxes to the castle, and of the one man who slipped and fell, dashing his head to pulp on the rocks below. Nor need I say how eagerly the seamen finally shoved their boats back into the water and rowed to the *Celtic*. For all of these things lose their importance from what I am yet to relate, of that second stone castle which stood on an identical cliff on the opposite side of the island.

When the last boat had pulled away from our shore, and when we saw the lights of the steamship as it moved through the water, a hitherto unnoticeable sensation of familiarity came between Farquhar and me. He discarded his cloak of remote sovereignty and grasped my shoulders in a brotherly gesture.

"You are not to be afraid," he said. "This is a queer place, but hospitable and quiet. Your work on the generator should not take you more than three or four days, and within a week the *Celtic* will pick you up on her return voyage. I regret that you can have no manual assistance in your task, but you and I are the sole inhabitants of this castle—which I have named Camelot. You are my welcome guest; I shall do everything to make your stay pleasant."

He led me up the time-worn steps to the upper hall, to my bedroom which had doubtless been prepared in advance of my coming. At this time it was almost three o'clock, pitch black outside, and deathly silent.

I went immediately to the luxurious bed and dropped on it with a sigh of utter exhaustion. Farquhar was most sympathetic and considerate, having brought to my room a decanter of excellent brandy and a box of cigarettes.

"Following my usual custom," he said, "I shall be unapproachable during the hours of sunlight, and so tomorrow you will be quite alone in Camelot; yet have no fear. I have left instructions on the table in the library concerning the generator, and you will find, in the morning, a well-stocked kitchen. Please adapt yourself to these irregularities of etiquette, and make yourself as comfortable as you may."

He bade me good-night and left the room. I heard his footsteps as he went back downstairs; then I swallowed a glass of cognac and prepared for bed. But once beneath the silken coverlet I could not sleep, and had no wish to do so. I lay with my head upon my folded hands staring up at the blackness of the room. My brain raced ahead of itself trying to piece together these things which I had done and seen.

NOT more than an hour later I heard Farquhar's tread on the stone floor outside. Aroused from the lethargy into which I had fallen, I slipped out of bed and tiptoed to the door. I drew back the bolt quietly, and opened the door scarcely an inch.

Coming up the steps from below, illuminated by a lantern in one hand, was Farquhar. His huge body was draped in a black cape, and his head and face were hidden by a cowl. In his spare hand he held an enormous longbow and a sheaf of arrows. He passed unsuspecting across my door and vanished into the gloom of the hallway adjacent.

A pang of sudden fear shot through me at this moment, for Farquhar's tread had been so stealthy, so determined, that I sensed something *vicious* in his actions. I locked the door and went fumbling toward my suitcase, wherein was my sole defense against this man—an automatic Luger.

I was at the foot of my bed when suddenly I stopped. I looked incredulously through the open window; then I raced to the sill and stood staring into the blackness of the island.

There was a lighted lantern out there—a solitary lantern hanging in the darkness. I peered closer, and as my eyes widened, I saw the vague, mist-enshrouded outline of a castle. I saw that the lantern was hanging from the castle wall.

How far away this dwelling was I could not determine because of the darkness. It seemed to stand on the prominence of a cliff, just as Farquhar's castle stood. On the top was a tall machicolated tower, as there was on Camelot. A sort of fog hung over the castle, twisting and warping its bulky walls as a nightmare twists and warps a vision. But clearly I saw its lantern glowing brighter, and dimming suddenly as wreaths of fog closed over it.

I stood looking at this uncanny dwelling for only a few seconds, when I saw a shadowy figure appear on its balcony, dim, hazy, minute, yet the black figure of a man standing on the parapeted balcony.

At that moment I heard the scraping of Farquhar's feet on the stone near by. I leaned out of the window and glanced along the side of the castle. There he was, not ten feet away from me, standing on an identical parapeted balcony. He was like a cowed phantom, his sharp eyes staring intently at the castle opposite. Then he, too, must have seen that hazy figure, for he stood motionless for several horrible seconds, then leaned forward and drew an arrow from the quiver by his feet. He notched it in his bow-string.

I was scarcely able to credit my senses as I watched this weird spectacle. My gaze was torn between Farquhar and that man across the way, and the powerful longbow in Farquhar's hands.

My host moved closer to the parapet

and leaned out. He was slightly inclined as he sought out that man's position; then suddenly he straightened upright and raised the bow to his shoulder. His Herculean arms drew it out and back, bent it in a huge arc. He raised his pointed chin and took careful aim.

I moved back as the arrow shot like a bullet from his bow. Upward and out it went, a hissing, wicked shaft of unerring death for whomever it might strike. And I waited in breathless terror to hear the shriek of its victim.

But not Farquhar's arrow alone shot into that night, for less than a second afterward I heard the faint twang of a second bow-string, and the head of a second arrow thudded into the stone wall below my window.

I jumped back in alarm, my pistol raised in my hands. I cowered beside the window, listening, fearing at any moment to see an arrow—from whose bow I cannot say—fly like death past my shoulders.

After two minutes of silence I became less cautious and ventured to look through the window. The figure on the opposite castle was standing upright, and I could discern his movements as he selected a second arrow for his bow. I then turned to Farquhar, and saw that he, too, was notching another deadly missile, and stepping closer to the parapet.

In dull amazement I drew back from the window and dropped on the bed. Two archers! Two nightly archers fighting each other to the death from two opposing castles on a deserted isle! What a nightmarish thing! What a bizarre thing!

I dropped the Luger onto the bed and took my head in my hands. My mind was shaking with disbelief, it throbbed from fatigue. But I could not force out the sounds of Farquhar's slashing bow-strings, nor the repeated thuds of his

enemy's arrows as they shot back into the walls of Camelot.

WHEN I awoke from a deep sleep late this morning, I had almost forgotten the strange battle which Farquhar and this nameless man waged silently across the island. It was nearly midday, the sunlight streamed in warm rays through the window, and the ocean breeze came pleasantly to my nostrils. My head was clear, but I felt insufferably hungry.

As I bathed and dressed I was annoyed by this place's unearthly silence. I felt that there was no other human being on this whole island save myself. And most of all I regretted the strange lack of servants.

Before I left my room, I glanced out on the balcony beside my window. I saw that its floor was cracked and crumbly, and that it was nicked where arrows had struck. Buried in the walls, above and below, were splintered arrows. But of Farquhar there was no trace.

I spent several minutes staring at the castle outside. It was small and compact, perhaps not five hundred yards' distance from Camelot. Between the two castles was a swampy forest of strange vegetation. There were no sounds down there. The sickening miasma of stagnation drifted to my window.

I went to the kitchen and made my breakfast.

After having washed and dried the dishes, I was aware that the kitchen of Camelot was a place equipped to serve but one—myself. All of the food and cooking-utensils were new; they had just recently been unpacked by Farquhar himself. His empty pantry was cobwebbed and dusty from disuse.

Could I any longer doubt that this man never ate a meal?

I went directly to the library and read

the instructions which he had left there for me. In a handwriting swift and scratched, on vellum parchment, he told me of the manner in which he desired that I install the generator. And from his wording, I suspected that he knew far more of technical electricity than even I did.

He also wished me a good-morning, and repeated his hospitable request that I make myself at home among his possessions. As a final point, reminding me of the death of the *Celtic's* seaman last night, he advised me not to leave the castle. He would, he said, meet me again after sundown.

Almost at once I felt a surging wonder. Where was Farquhar? Where and *how* did he keep himself during the daytime? And the answer to my questions came to me as I remembered the stories told of vampires. . . .

I searched the basement floor of Camelot and found neither hide nor hair of the man. I went to the dungeons where shattered wooden slats and excelsior littered the floor, and still no trace. I smelled the stench of damp earth, and was sent up again by driving fears. I then went to the balcony where he had stood firing his arrows, and saw only the *other's* arrows chinked in the walls. Finally I climbed the steps to the tower and saw Farquhar lying fast asleep in the black wooden coffin—the same coffin which he himself had carried up the rocky path.

I looked closely at his body, a great long body wrapped in a black mantle. His face was grim and peaceful, a sharp, large-boned face with a wolfish jaw. There was a greenish tint to his skin, and his thin lips were almost black. But I did not feel fear.

Farquhar's kindness needed no further demonstration. Although aloof, he had been generous and cordial. Yet as I



turned my back to descend the stairs, I thought: Perhaps I am an unforgivable fool for not tearing his heart out as he lies here at my mercy!

I had no wish to disregard Farquhar's warning that I do not leave the castle, but as I stepped out of the front door and surveyed the scene before me, I had a desperate urge to pocket my Luger and explore the place.

I was surprized at first to see how small Durance Island was. From where I stood I could see the ocean in every direction. Directly ahead of me, even closer than I had imagined from my window, the second castle reared its battle-scarred tower into the sky like a deformed finger pointing. I could see that this castle was worn and ancient, just as Farquhar's was. I wondered what type of man it was who held domination there—alone or with others, I knew not which—but who lived as Farquhar lived and fired his arrows as Farquhar did.

There was no sign of life or habitation in the dwelling; it was as lifeless as Camelot behind me. Between these mediæval places the jungle of trees grew like a solid barrier.

I then turned my observation back to Camelot and walked slowly about its base, wondering how inconceivably ancient it was. In the ground outside were arrows, half-way buried in the earth, others stuck in the walls, others lay splintered as they had bounded from the battlements. I saw huge stone buttresses, like massive oaks, sprawled against the tower. Some little grass and a few brown shrubs grew close by, but no flowers. In the rear the cliff dropped a jagged three hundred feet to the sea.

I shaded my eyes against the sun. Out on this water, for countless miles in every direction, white breakers rose and fell like snarling lips. No other land was vis-

ible save Durance Island, upon which I stood. No sign of the *Celtic*.

It was after three o'clock before I went back to the castle and prepared a light luncheon. I then re-read Farquhar's instructions about the generator, and went below to refer to my notes and blueprints. Farquhar himself came down a little after six o'clock, and expressed his good wishes at finding me all ready to install the machine.

While I ate supper, which he helped me prepare, I could hardly resist the urge to ask him outright of the castle opposite, and of its uncanny archer-lord. But something about him, as he studied my lowered lids, frightened me off.

**T**ONIGHT the silent battle raged violently between these two men. I sat for hours watching Farquhar train his bow across the marsh and let his arrows fly with deadly swiftmess. He seemed unaware of my scrutiny—oblivious of everyone and everything excepting that dim figure across the way. Arrow after arrow he fired into the night, and arrow after arrow shot back deep-headed around him. What ghastly miracle, I wondered, is it that prevents Farquhar from being stabbed a thousand times!

I trained my observation upon the man in the castle opposite, but it was too dark to distinguish his features. I saw only a blurred dark figure, cloaked as Farquhar was cloaked, bending his bow and letting his arrows fly, time after time.

There was hardly a sound as these men worked their mad game. The sea crashed distantly below us, the bow-strings played their own shrill sonata, but from Farquhar himself there was no noise—no despair exhibited in his actions, no malice and no impatience. Each time he drew on his bow, his chin was raised high and a curious light invaded his sunken eyes. And when his shaft fell short he simply

lowered his head as he reached for another.

Once, after midnight, an arrow flew straight to Farquhar's arm and pierced it through, so that half was sticking in and half was out. He stopped and grimaced, not from apparent pain but from annoyance, and grasping the shaft by its head, he pulled it all the way through his arm and flung it over the parapet. Without again glancing at the hole thus torn in his flesh, he notched an arrow in his bow-string, drew it back to his shoulder and let it spring like a panther into the night.

All of these things I saw; then I sickened and turned away from the window. I am still sick from the sight of it, and hardly able to hold the pen in my hand. . . .

It is late, and I have been sitting here for hours. Tonight I have written far more than I had planned; yet I do not feel that I have written enough. Even at this moment I can hear Farquhar outside, and hear the other arrows as they shoot back from across the island. Perhaps one will fly through the window and strike me dead.

Ah, I am so fatigued! It is all like a fabulous dream, but I know it is not. Farquhar no longer frightens me, but it is that weird being across the marsh—what manner of man is he? Tomorrow I must cross the island and see that man for myself.

Yes, tomorrow. . . .

**S**EVENTH DAY. I am lost in an endless maze, and my brain is sore from trying to think my way out. A horrid fear is coming over me—I feel it plainly; a symptomatic weakness of the soul, a dread. I have seen and heard things today which shake my innermost being. This creature, Farquhar—in God's name—*what is he?*

This morning I awoke late in a bed drenched with sweat. The horrible dreams I cannot recall, save that my second night in Camelot was the most fearful of all my life. 'What will it be tomorrow night? Can I bear to live through the morrow?

I am getting out of hand. My thoughts wander, my pen scratches esoteric thoughts. I must collect myself and think this through. I must be coherent! . . .

I awoke after eleven o'clock and ate a hasty breakfast. I climbed to the tower and saw Farquhar silent in his coffin. I examined closely the wound in his arm. Of course! There was no blood, no inflammation! God in Heaven! Why had I never noticed this before? Farquhar's flesh is no ordinary flesh! It is a bloodless flesh, like moist and kneady clay.

Today his skeletal countenance was the same as yesterday. His eyelids appeared stiff, as in death, and his cheeks were sunken. I noticed, too, that his face was scratched and furrowed with long, jagged lines—like the slashing cuts of battle long healed over.

I worked a little with the generator, but I was shaking with impatience to commence my exploration. At one o'clock I slipped the Luger under my belt and stepped out of the front door.

The sky was cloudless, and the ocean smooth as glass. There were no sounds at all, and there was no breeze. The tower of the castle opposite stood up clearly in the sky; the fog had lifted from it, and I could see its crumbled stone in greater detail. And yet I could not dispel that transparency of mist that hovered before my vision.

I walked slowly down the decline that led to the edge of the forest. There was not an insect to be seen—not a bird—not an animal of any nature.

The ground was clay-like at first, but grew soggy as I proceeded. The trees

grew denser, like living things that seemed to force me back with every step I took. Ferns grew enormous from the ground, fungi cluttered the scabrous bark of fallen trees, and the stench of swamp stagnation became heavier in my nostrils. Soon the sunlight was blackened out by the matted shrubbery above.

I climbed over and under uprooted trees; up, sometimes, into their very branches and down the other side. I hacked away thick shrubs, and trampled down branches and weeds that choked my legs. It seemed a work of hours, and the forest was so dense and solid that I could hear my echo resounding far ahead. I was scratched and bleeding in a dozen stinging wounds.

At one point I stopped long enough to examine my position. I had reached a clearing in the trees—a sort of grassy hillock—and stood upon it turning my gaze in all directions. The forest was black around me; black and hot and silent. I could see only the very top of Camelot behind me, and on the other side just the tower of the farther castle. I was just half-way there. I redoubled my efforts and pushed ahead.

It took me another hour or more before I felt myself climbing upward. Slowly and torturously at first, then easier as the foliage thinned, I drew closer to the castle. Finally I shook the marsh soil from my shoes and tramped up the grassy embankment.

A silence more awesome than before came upon me. That haze of illusion seemed more dominant. I stood shaking, staring upward.

How alike these dwellings were! As if they had been made at the same time from identical plans—and with the same stone blocks and wooden beams! A squat castle, compact almost to solidity, crowned by a single lofty tower, and bruised with the same water-yellowed fis-

tures. I felt an unhealthy fear that these castles were too much alike!

I walked cautiously up the incline to the very door. It was half-way open, and the fear grew stronger in the pit of my stomach. I entered the hallway, and stood agape. These castles were the same. They had the same aged furniture, the same fireplace and mantel, the same tarnished candelabra. And that same dread silence!

I stood breathless, wondering what move to make next—to run from this place, or to seek out its host. I steadied my nerve. There was nothing yet to fear. I had met no obstacle, no sign of this man's presence.

Perhaps, I thought, he, too, sleeps during the hours of sunlight. Perhaps, like Farquhar, this archer also has a coffin for his bedroom high in the tower. With soundless steps I climbed the winding stairs.

I reached the upper floor, and was more and more amazed by its resemblance to Camelot. I found the door to the tower without difficulty, and moved up quickly. The room above had the same brownstone circular walls, it had the same narrow slotted windows cut into them like firing-holes. On a stone bench rested an identical black coffin, and lying within it—

I stepped closer and bent over. I was staring into the face of William Farquhar!

**W**HEN I had firmly convinced myself that this was no hallucination, when I had studied those tragic features, when I had seen the wound in that clay-like arm—when these things happened, I tore back down the steps and fell crashing on the stone floor below.

I went directly, numbed, and shaken, to the room beside the balcony. I stood at the threshold for several seconds, then

I felt surging laughter rising in my throat. This was my *own* room. This was the room which Farquhar had shown me on that first night in Camelot. This *was* Camelot!

When I had sobered from splitting laughter, I walked to the window and looked out. I stared down at the jungle of trees—that impenetrable jungle—and up at the castle beyond. It was the same, all the same. Somehow, in that maze of shrubbery, I had lost my bearings and come back to my exact starting-point. Perhaps some monstrous thing down there had driven me back! At the thought of it, at the thought of my anxiety as I had climbed the stairs, I broke out with increased laughter—and spent the remainder of the afternoon trying to shake the daze from my mind.

**I** SAID nothing of all this to Farquhar when he came down a little after six. I told him that a splitting headache had kept me from the generator, and that tomorrow I would be back at work. He took no offense, and appeared quite as cordial and considerate as always. I suppose it was this very cordiality which prompted me to do as I did, but I finally broke the bounds of my patience and asked him some direct questions.

"Who is that man across the marsh?" I asked. "And why do you and he wage battle every night? Why don't you bleed when an arrow strikes you? And why—in God's name—if you want to kill that man, don't you take a rifle and get it over with?"

I supposed it was Farquhar's turn to laugh, but he didn't. He only smiled—a hopeless and forgiving smile—and poured me a glass of wine and offered a cigarette.

"You would not understand," he said. "You would not understand any more than people understand why a Jew has

been wandering the earth for over nineteen hundred years."

"Are you wandering the earth? And for how long?"

Farquhar sighed deeply and pointed at a plaque that hung over the mantel.

"Those arms," he said, "depict the forgotten herald of Sir Guillaume de Farquhar, once knight-envoy to Richard, whom we call the Lion-Hearted. Centuries ago those same arms were carried across Moslem sands to the very gates of Jerusalem, where they marked the presence of Guillaume de Farquhar—a man whose hatred of the Saracens wrought terrible fear throughout the land, a man who, in three days' battle, killed three score of the enemy with his own hands.

"To inform you of what occurred on that fateful day will be to break a silence five centuries old. But what matter? What man would believe?"

"Sir Guillaume de Farquhar, however respected in the eyes of his Prince, was a boastful and cruel man. He went, not like others in the Crusades, for the love of the Cross, but for the glory of battle and war. He would slash his way through ranks of Saracens like a double-bladed plow; hacking and hewing his way to the blood-spattered walls of the city, there only to be repulsed by outnumbering enemies.

"He made many captives, and had immense loot of jeweled daggers and precious stones—spoils of war for which he would sacrifice no end of human lives. It was Farquhar's habit to go out alone across the near-by sand dunes to seek his quarry—single or multiple it mattered not—so that his thirst for blood might be sated. Vain! Cruel!

"That one day—that one day for ever set aside! See how it shakes my breath to say these things! See how I pale to the very eyes at the vision of it! It was on the Sabbath, and the Holy Armies knelt in

prayer; knights, emperors, and yeomen alike. The defending wall at a short distance was bristling with spears, the sun gleamed like molten gold upon the helmets of the heathens. A curious silence had fallen, undisturbed except by the groans of the wounded who lay like split logs half smothered in the sand. It was on this day that Guillaume de Farquhar set out alone.

"Why did he go? Or where? These questions are unanswered. He bore a great broadsword at his side, and in his hands—accursed man!—he carried his longbow, notched with a cloth-yard arrow.

"He walked toward the sun over small hillocks of sand, his keen eyes alert for a hapless foe. Ah! There, not a hundred yards' distance, he saw three of them ministering to the dying. They were garbed in the robes of black priesthood, and from their lips droned the deistical rites of heathen sorcery.

"What folly raced through Farquhar's mind! Scarcely had he seen these exorcists when he let fly an arrow to pierce one through the throat. Scarcely had these other two known their fate, when a second arrow laid one dead. The third, whose ornamental hood marked him as the superior monk, fell forward on his face and cried aloud for mercy.

"Farquhar's arrow twitched in his fingers. An impulse goaded him to slay this one on the spot, and yet the gloat of victory stayed his hand. He strove forward, and kicked the whining heathen in his head, and laughed aloud at his cowering protestations.

"The captive—such an aged and patriarchal man! His face was a yellowed parchment traced with lines of age-long sacrifice. He was clean-shaven both upon the face and head, and a blackened wound upon his forehead gave evidence of his initiation into the Black Priory of

his clan. He was small and thin, but his skull was enormous in proportion. His eyes were faded gray—nay! almost white with age, and he was toothless and black-lipped. He carried no weapons save the wooden staff that lay by his feet, and there were no jewels or amulets upon him except for the curious metal ring which encircled one scrawny finger.

"THE ring widened Farquhar's eyes when he saw it, for it was unusually thick and wide, and occupied nearly a third of the man's finger. On top was a polished red stone that seemed to shine out rays of light. On the sides were carved writings, doubtless religious scriptures of some eastern icon. But it was the jeweled light of the red stone which caught Farquhar's glance. He bent down to rip it from the captive's finger.

"The man shrieked damnation, and jerked his hand away. He squirmed and twisted at Farquhar's feet. A fury seemed to rise in him, unheeding and cautionless. He pushed Farquhar away as he scrambled upright.

"So suddenly had he risen that the Christian was taken aback by sheer astonishment, and the Moslem broke away and ran toward the walls of the city.

"How foolhardy of him! Farquhar waited until he had covered a hundred feet, then he raised his bow and fired an arrow through the man's back. He drew out his broadsword and walked slowly to his side.

"The shaft had pierced the Moslem's lungs and pinned them together like a rivet. His back and spine were twisted as he fell, and a thin runnel of blood drained from his chest and stained the sand beside him. He lay there thrashing his arms and kicking his feet. He bent up to arch his back, then fell down again, and his chest rose and fell to the accompaniment of the moans which came al-

most breathless from his sand-choked throat.

"Farquhar grimaced at the sight of him, but kept his gaze fixed gloatingly upon the graven ring. A tide of anger had engulfed his mind at the Moslem's daring rebuke to his power, and he resolved to let him die in the fullest agony of his wound, and to strip him of the talismanic ring only when his fading intellect alone could protest.

"The dying Saracen turned his eyes to Farquhar. His lips opened and closed; hushed words of pity came out. He begged—nay! he implored and pleaded that Farquhar send a second arrow into his heart to end his torture. But the Christian stood irresolute; this man must run his course.

"Vain! Cruel! Blasphemous! God curse the day this was done before his city! And God forgive the day! The Moslem's outstretched hands touched Farquhar's feet. He raised himself to his elbows so that his whispered voice might reach his conqueror's ears. His body trembled as he moved, but he had not the strength, and he fell face-downward again, driving the arrow still deeper through his lungs.

"He twisted and groaned. His voice was cracked with driving pain as he begged for Farquhar's mercy. 'An arrow through my heart!' he moaned. '*An arrow through my heart!*' But Farquhar stood irresolute.

"The dying man's eyes bulged out until Farquhar thought they would fly from his skull. There was blood and sand sticking to his lips as he twisted them into words of imploration. But Farquhar shook his head and leaned on the hilt of his sword, because it might be a long while before this man died. . . .

"Slowly, slowly death came upon the Moslem. He turned the shade of the plague-stricken, and shook from alternate

fever and chills. He coughed from his bleeding lungs.

"Slowly, slowly he sank toward death, and with a last desperate energy he drew his hands together and twisted the ring upon his finger.

"What was this? What strange words did he mutter? Why did his dying eyes brighten with lurid fires even as a darkened cloud crossed the sun? He stared up past Farquhar's head—up to something far away. His voice rose higher with the shrill frenzy of some incantation, his fingers twisted and turned at the ring upon his finger.

"What ring was it? From whom? I know not. Perhaps it was the lost ring of Solomon. Perhaps it was the very ring with which that ancient king of Palestine conjured his familiar djinn and afrits. The strange tales told of Solomon are not too strange indeed for what occurred on those Moslem sands before Jerusalem. For djinn and afrits were many!

"The Saracen then spoke words to Farquhar aloud in French, of which he understood. His eyes were burning faggots in his skull, a new and terrible energy went through his frame, and he uttered these words of sovereign power:

"Thou shalt never again into the burning sun turn thy gaze. Thou shalt never again eat food nor drink, nor shalt thou lie with women. Never again, throughout eternity, shalt thou ever know solemn peace and contentment until an arrow from thine own bow and arm shall pierce through the living heart of the greatest archer of all the land—an archer nameless to you for evermore!"

"The malediction fell from the Moslem's lips like drops of venom from a viper's fangs, and each dripping word scorched into Farquhar's brain. He stood stark, unable to command either his senses or his muscles.

"The Saracen's last word was still on

his lips when a wind swept over the two men and blew a dust of sand through the air. The wind grew stronger, seeming to come from nowhere save directly overhead. It whirled around and around in slow circles, and grew faster with each second until it picked the sand up with it like a monstrous vacuum.

"Inside of this cone of sand and wind lay the Moslem, all but his eyes stricken dead; and outside stood Farquhar, agape and trembling from a chill he did not comprehend. The sword had fallen from his hand and he had covered his eyes from the rays of the sun.

"The whirlwind of sand grew faster, a geyser erupting from the earth. Crashes of thunder sounded from above, and inside there was a shrill whispering that was neither animal nor human. A fiercely cold wind swept across the desert and kicked the sand before it as if it bore a tortured soul of its own. The sky was blackened from view.

"Farquhar fell to his knees before the gale, his eyes still blinded by the filtered sunlight that fell upon him. He could no longer see the Moslem, but his ears were ringing with the unearthly noises that came from within the cone. Then a red light dazzled—a penetrating red light that shone through his lowered eyelids. It came like an explosion from behind the wall of driving sand; the air was turned red by it, the very sand itself brightened like crimson beads. For a whole minute the light flashed like a burning pyre, and then it was suddenly extinguished, and the frenzied whispering died into silence.

"**H**ow long Farquhar knelt with shaded eyes, he never knew. At the least it was many hours, for when he was first able to draw his hands away he saw that the sun had already set. The horizon about him was drawing closer and closer,

and long purple shadows were sketched across the land.

"He saw immediately that he was alone. The Moslem had vanished, and only his crusted blood on the sand gave evidence of where he had lain. The wind had vanished too, and the air was calm and unnaturally silent.

"Farquhar rubbed his aching eyes. He looked searchingly in all directions, but the Moslem was nowhere to be seen. A hundred feet away were the stiffened bodies of the two slain priests and the bodies of fallen warriors. Still farther was the solid black mass of the city and the lights of torches.

"The sand at Farquhar's feet was ruffled by the imprint of his boots, and his naked sword lay as it had fallen from his hands. Near by the Moslem's blood had hardened like a horrible escutcheon painted on the sand. The whirlwind had touched none of these things; it had come and gone and left no trace, except for the disappearance of the priest!

*"But was it a whirlwind?"*

"It had come suddenly from directly overhead and swept down on the Moslem like a huge bird. It had engulfed him, and its shrill voice had cursed or blessed him, and it had blazed like an inferno just before it vanished, and it had carried the priest off with it.

"Farquhar's ears were still ringing with the words of the dying Moslem. A heavy dread was on his mind, a compelling horror and desperation that shackled him to the sand at his feet. He turned slowly and headed toward the Christian camp, but each step he took was sweating drudgery. And every step he's taken since has been the same.

"From that very hour the curse of the Moslem began to work. His words had shaken Farquhar to his soul; a malignancy of spirit had invaded him and drove him relentlessly onward. On that

very night he tried to die on his own sword, but his strength deserted him. He has tried it since then, and he knows now that the words of the Moslem must be carried out to the letter.

"Late on that same night he wandered into his own tent, past his own sentries, who drew back aghast at his appearance. He tried to eat, but the food choked in his throat. He tried to sleep, but he tossed the whole night through, and the next morning he was blind.

"All day he was blind, and only at night did his brain find relaxation. But he could not sleep with other men, and that compelling force within his soul led him to the Christian burial ground. Each day he went there and slept in hallowed earth.

"Men loathed and feared him. Richard himself drew back with a feeling of awe and crossed himself, then pointed his sword at Farquhar in a gesture of banishment. He was driven from the camp, and the name of Farquhar was forbidden mention on the lips of men.

"Thuswise Guillaume de Farquhar commenced to endure the curse of the Moslem. In vain he searched for the greatest archer, and he slew not only Seljuk Turks, but Englishmen and Frenchmen alike. The toll of death mounted with each night, until when the months and years rolled by he became a legend of horror.

"He roamed only at night, and during the day he sought the dark shelters of subterranean vaults and tombs. He prayed until he was hoarse for the Moslem's forgiveness, and he cursed him with the vilest curses of his imagination—and then prayed again.

"Years followed years, and great changes came over Europe. The Crusades were ended, and new codes came into being, and new empires were formed on the crumbled ruins of the old. Fire-

arms, swift and utter in their destruction, replaced the bow and arrow; but still this unhappy marksman wandered over Europe seeking the greatest archer. He killed countless more men, until the day came when there were no longer men with arrows, and the hopeless, tiring search seemed destined to endure throughout eternity.

"Perhaps the Moslem's gloating pre-science grew kinder after many centuries, for Farquhar's steps were directed to a mystic isle in the sea. Upon this isle he found the archer who had eluded him through the centuries.

"Who is this archer? Is he a living, mortal man, or a demon sent by the Moslem's mockery? I do not know. Many are the nights that Farquhar has stood watching, hoping, praying. Many are the hours spent in trying to pierce the veil of mist that hovers between them. Is this other archer, like himself, accursed and set aside to battle throughout endless time? Did he, too, once meet a Moslem priest?

"The vigil of these men has never ended. They fight on and on, and only when the arrow of one has transfixed the heart of the other can the battle end. There is a weird, unexplainable kinship between them which unites their souls as one. They appear to meet each other during the sleeping hours in their coffins, like two phantoms in a rendezvous with death; for once these men met a common horror, and must share a common fate. They will never know each other, and their curiosity will never cease, until one arrow—from whom it does not matter—has reached its destined mark."

It is after midnight, and I am sitting in my room with these pages out before me. The horrible story of the Moslem priest has been unfolded in my diary as if Farquhar himself wrote it there. Each



word I can remember, and each word is here inscribed to testify to the soul-shaking things which happen. And even as I write I can feel that awful presence—a prescient evil that lurks within my room. Somehow, shaking as I write, I can sense the Moslem's watching eyes.

My hands are trembling, and I do not feel that I can write much longer. Even now I can hear Farquhar on the balcony outside as he slings his arrows across the island. And I can hear the other arrows as *he* shoots them back from across the way. These men have redoubled their efforts tonight; the air is singing with the twang of bow-strings.

I questioned Farquhar on many points tonight, but he will not commit himself. I questioned him of the history of Camelot Castle, and of this island, and of the man across the way. But he claims no knowledge of these things.

"Why am I here?" I asked him. "Why did you leave the island to buy an electric generator?"

It is better, he told me, to use powerful modern searchlights than mere lanterns in hunting down his foe. With lights glaring on the castle his aim would be truer, the flight of his arrows more certain.

And if he killed the other man, what then? But he did not know. Who—*who* is the other man? He did not know. Nor did he profess any desire to know.

But I shall know! Moslem or no Moslem! Be he madman, saint, or demon, tomorrow I shall know!"

**E**IGHTH DAY. It is ended, and I write these words from the light of a campfire on the beach. I dare not go back to Camelot; it is alone up there, alone and black and silent. The waves lap at the sand by my feet, the breeze of the sea is refreshing and soporific. I wait only for the lights of the *Celtic*.

To go back? To go back, in memory, to those hours? The very memory shakes me with a deathly fever. I would tear it from my brain if I knew how. I no longer ask myself who Farquhar is. But it is that Moslem—who—*what* is he? How can he do these things? What horror has he mastered?

I have been to that other castle—or *have I?* I have seen, close by, that shadowed archer on the balcony—or *have I?* I have crossed the tangled marsh and climbed the tower steps, I have dragged that archer from his lair, I have brought him to the very face of William Farquhar—or *have I?*

Oh merciful God, what things I have done this day!

I must go back to my awakening, that late hour of morning when I wrestled myself away from my dream and looked again at the sky and sea, so vast about me. I stared long and eagerly at the castle across the island, and it stood like a challenging thing, mocking me to approach it. The jungle below was lifeless and silent. There were no clouds in the sky and the air was clear. The air was so clear that I seemed to see these things in greater detail. The castle was like the very reflection of Camelot. I saw the same window beside the balcony in which I myself was standing.

I seemed to see a face there peering back at me with the same silent mockery. And I felt the premonitory horror of what was yet to come.

I ran swiftly down the stairs and stopped at the open door. From here I could see only the tower of the castle, for the gnarled trees grew like a wall before me. I stood hesitating, my muscles twitching with impatience.

Was it the fear of the priest which stopped me? Or did I fear that I would lose myself in the jungle again as I did yesterday? I wanted to run screaming

from the sight of it, yet a grim determination to reach that dwelling throbbed like a pulse in my conscience.

I went back to my room and got my pistol and a hatchet; then I forced myself to walk down the grassy slope to the edge of the forest. I went slowly, measuring my position from the door of Camelot. I kept my eyes reverting to the tower of the farther castle until the trees blinded it from view. And then it grew suddenly dark.

I hacked my way through in cold fury. I chopped a path and trampled down the debris that cluttered it. Straight as an arrow flies, I proceeded, straight to the dwelling beyond.

I seemed to catch glimpses of the same logs I had encountered yesterday. There was the same stinking bog, the same vines and gnarled creepers. And it took me the same weary hours to push my way through.

As I neared the center of the jungle I heard my echo again, resounding far ahead of me. It grew louder as I proceeded, until it seemed to be pounding not twenty feet ahead of me. But it was so dark that I could scarcely see my hand before my face. I went on blindly, slashing and cutting like a man gone mad. Then I stopped and stared ahead.

There was a clearing in the trees, for a ray of sunlight poured down from above. It was the same clearing which I had found yesterday, a grassy hillock in the earth. I strove forward and walked swiftly to its summit. It stood there like a jewel set in the very center of the island. The very center! How uncannily I sensed it! There was nothing but trees on every side, and the cloudless patch of sky above.

I dared not to linger long, for I must reach the castle and return before sundown. I looked behind me and examined

my position. Surely I could not miss my objective if I went straight ahead!

I took three steps from the edge of the knoll, then whirled around. It was dark again, and I could see no light save the filtered sunlight from above. But distinctly I had heard it; the sound of my footsteps in the underbrush behind me!

The echo again, I told myself, but I pushed my way ahead as if the Moslem himself were at my heels. For another hour I slashed through the forest. I seemed to climb the same trees which I had climbed just a moment before. I smelled the same swollen fungi. Once my outstretched hands touched an arrow stuck in a tree. I jerked it out and peered closely. It was old and rusty-headed, and was aimed in the direction in which I moved.

I grew more amazed as I proceeded. A sort of path was hacked through this side of the forest—a crude trail that someone had recently cut through. It was easier to move; yet I moved with caution. Who had carved this trail? Who?—and when?

At last I reached the opening of the marsh. I ran ahead breathlessly, across a soft bog and up the embankment of the castle. The sunlight streamed into my eyes, and for a moment I was blinded. But as my eyes narrowed for this light, I could see the place standing like a solid wall before me.

The door of the castle was hanging open, like the mouth of some animal compelling me to enter. It was in dread silence. The tower rose incumbently above my head. Every nook and cranny seemed the same as in Camelot—the narrow windows, the creaking gibbet chains hanging from its walls.

I went swiftly up the steps and moved inside. My eyes were blurred by what I saw. I ran up the stairway to the room beside the balcony. I stopped in sheer

horror; for this was my room—and this was Camelot.

ONCE again, before nightfall, I followed that eery trail back through the marshland. As I neared the center I heard that echo sounding before me—as of someone drawing nearer—someone not quite myself. When I reached the grassy hillock the sounds ceased, and when I went down the other side, they came again from behind me, growing softer.

I ran swiftly through the trees over a trail well trampled down. Breathlessly I reached the clearing, and then I stood sickened by what I saw: Camelot, shadowed in the dusk before me.

I raced through the door and to my room. I climbed the tower and saw Farquhar silent in his coffin. I came down again and dropped sobbing on my bed.

It was almost six o'clock before I felt the strength to arouse myself. I lighted a lantern and carried it to the window.

The darkness had descended swiftly, so that the castle was scarcely visible. I could see the tower and the balcony. A yellow fog hung over them, like a phantom seeking to hide them from my view. A fog like a dust storm—a whirlwind of mist and sand. But distinctly I saw a lighted lantern shining from the window beside the balcony.

Farquhar came down a few minutes later, none the more refreshed for his long sleep. He greeted me, then went directly to the balcony. He stared long and intently at the castle until he saw the black figure appear on the balcony; then he notched an arrow and drew it to his shoulder.

I stood at the balcony door, unnoticed and unminded. With aching dread I saw him fire the arrow into the darkness, and saw the other archer fire one back at the same instant. How long I stood watching

these reflected marksmen, I cannot recall, but it seemed like many hours. Finally my horror overcame me, and I cried out in anguish. I ran to his side and grabbed his arm.

"In the name of God," I cried, "*do you know whom you are fighting?*"

Scarcely had the shaft shot from his bow, when he turned to me. In a voice as low as a whisper, he said, "I shall never know."

And then it happened.

The last word was still on his lips when he jerked upright. I saw the sudden wincing of the muscles in his face; then I saw his chest. It was pierced through and through by an arrow—directly into and through his heart, so that its head was sticking through his back.

Farquhar raised himself to his toes, one hand grasped the arrow where it entered his chest. I saw the light of fire in his eyes, and heard strange foreign words fall from his dark lips. I heard words which were meant for no ears on earth; then I saw Farquhar shake and crash face-downward on the floor.

He had fallen on top of his bow, which cracked beneath him. The bloodless tip of the arrow stuck upright from his spine—up more than fifteen inches where it had been pounded through him when he fell!

I stood above him, cold with dread. Even as I watched, his body seemed to shrink. That long body of sleek muscle fell away swiftly, and the cloak drooped over him as if it hung upon only the branches of his former being. A sort of dust rose from beneath it, evil-smelling and ancient, like the dust of fallen pylons. A sedimental clay was on the floor.

I left the castle as fast as my legs would carry me, and for two hours I pounded my way back through the jungle. Exhausted and numbed I reached

the far side and saw the jagged mass of the castle rising before me. There was a lantern shining from the window beside the balcony, but there were no sounds. I raced swiftly to the open door and up the steps. At the balcony door I stopped.

I saw a sheaf of arrows, and a black-caped figure lying on the floor. From beneath the figure I saw the shattered ends of a longbow, held together by only a string. I ran forward and jerked away the cape.

A rotting skeleton was lying there, with an arrow stuck between its ribs.

**L**AST DAY. (At sea) I am in stateroom LA-3, the room which Farquhar occupied on the voyage to Durance Island. It is cold in here, and I have but to move a finger to feel his presence here about me. It is well into the night, it is dreamy, and music drifts from the rooms below, and I can hear people on the promenade laughing lightly among themselves.

And I can hear other sounds—the churning of the propellers as they push the *Celtic* farther and farther away. But how far can the mightiest propellers push me from this island?

I must sit here and write the last words.

Yes, I have buried William Farquhar. How or why? With whose strength of body and soul, I cannot say. Surely not my own! I buried him in the grassy hillock in the center of the island, with an arrow for his tombstone.

On that night I wandered back and forth along my path like an automaton

drawn and driven by unseen forces. From Camelot I carried Farquhar's bones to the hillock and laid them down. I then went — how unutterably mad! — back through the jungle to the other castle, and found only his cape and broken bow . . . and that dust which wafted on the floor. His bones were gone—gone as I had taken them but an hour before.

From Camelot to Camelot I traveled that night, and from balcony to balcony searching for the bones of the other. But there were only Farquhar's bones, which I had laid on the knoll. There was only Camelot Castle, which I went running out of—only to run back into it.

The night is growing younger, and the dawn of tomorrow breaks on the horizon. Tomorrow we shall be far from this place, and soon I shall be home again—home in that little room where Farquhar first came to me less than two weeks ago.

But can I ever cease to wonder? Can I ever cease to take my soul back to Durance Island, and let it dwell in futility between those ancient places? Shall I ever be able to forget just one word of the Moslem priest? I think not; I think the archer's words will haunt me all the days of my life. Over and over I have pondered on these things; I have weighed one castle against the other, one archer against his foe. My task is a hopeless one, and I had best look back upon this voyage with clouded eyes.

For I can never cease but wonder why there are not two graves, instead of one, to mark the final resting-place of William Farquhar.

