

Atavism

By A. LESLIE

Your eyes are wide, and darkly green,
Liquidly lustrous like the sheen
Of star-glint on a tree-fringed pool,
Cool, as fire in ice is cool!

But in their depths a *something* crouches,
As a paw-fast panther couches;
A prisoned thing that strains and strains,
But never an inch of freedom gains.

And sometimes when the lights are low,
And stealthy shadows come and go,
I gaze between the prisoning lashes:
The *thing* leaps up, and a vision flashes—

Cliffs of red and a forest dank;
A trail that crawls up the river bank;
On the trail a twisted thing lies stark
And cringes in the gathering dark,

While at its throat a lithe shape crouches,
As a paw-fast panther couches!
Eyes green as the sea of a sun-drenched day—
"Stop, woman! *Take your lips away!*"