

The Creeping Thing

(Continued from page four)

factors in the matter of light. The slit of a transom above the door, besides being immovable, was covered with a black varnish-like substance that made it opaque to light rays. The windows, when closed, were so covered as to prevent any light gleam from escaping from within.

The tall door itself, was, on the inner side, a polished black surface like the transom. But to such a degree was the lustre of its gleaming surface polished that it made a perfect mirror. It was weird to watch the shadows chase themselves across this black mirror that gleamed like the black, still depths of some deep forest pool hidden among jungle trees.

I ran my hand over the polished surface. It was as smooth and cold as marble. My hand slipped over it as easily as the feet of dancers slip over a highly polished ballroom floor. But there was nothing more than admiration of the fantastic idea that had conceived the oddity to be gained from the examination.

Alene Hardmore stood still near the entrance watching me. I thought I detected a sinister smile on her ebony face when I looked up unexpectedly. But she did not move or offer a word of advice or criticism.

I had found nothing alarming, nothing suspicious, however weird

and fantastic they might be.

With a last circuit of the room, in which I carefully examined each article of furnishing closely only to find that they were exactly what they purported to be, I returned to the tall polished door and, with a courteous inclination of the head to the sphynx-eyed black woman standing there, stepped out into the narrow corridor whither Alec had pre-

ceded me. Old Diaron stood at the further end holding a candle high above his head to lighten the shadowy blackness of the canyon-like aisle where we stood.

"We will be within call, Madame, if you need us during the night," I said, facing the silent woman.

"I will not need you," she said. The words had a prophetic sound.

As I turned and followed Alec to where old Diaron waited with the light, I heard the slight thud of the closing door behind me.

Alene Hardmore had shut herself in that room of horror for the night

with its black shadows and the menace of the unknown terror of THE CREEPING THING.

(End of third installment.)

(Alene Hardmore, the female sleuth, exhibited credentials which placed her first in authority at the Selwyn House. Tom Frederick, the master detective, is annoyed for fear a woman will, as usual, further complicate the situation. Anyway, Miss Hardmore has no misgivings about her ability on account of sex, and proceeds to investigate the room of horror by locking herself therein overnight. What happens? Read the fourth installment next week.)

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Cannibalism Declines

(Continued from page seven)

mouth of the pagan god. The corpses were thrown to their captors to be taken home and eaten. In some years over 100,000 victims were so sacrificed and eaten. Only the advent of the Spaniards put an end to this horrible practice. While occasionally we still hear of cannibalism in famine-infested districts in China or in lost expeditions, the spread of modern civilization, with its plentiful food supply and rational religious ideas, has practically put an end to this barbaric custom. Africa was the last great stronghold. In another decade, no doubt, the custom will be completely obliterated.

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