# BEYOND THE GREAT OBLIVION

George Allan England



SIMMARY OF PRECEDING STORY,

### CHAPTER I Beginnings

THOUSAND years of darkness and decay! A thousand years of blight, brutality and atavism; of Nature overwhelming all man's work, of crumbling cities and of forgotten civilisath! A thousand years of night!

Two human beings, all alone in that vast inderness—a woman and a man.

past, irrevocable; the present, with problems, perils and alarms;

A thousand years!

yet though this thousand years had seminely smeared away all semblance of the world of men from the cosmic canvas, alsa Stern and Beatrics Kendrick thrilled with as vital a passion as though that that oblivious age lay not between them and the time that was.

And their long kiss, there in sight of their new home-to-be—alone there in that

dated world—was as natural as the somer breeze, the liquid melody of the breast on the blossomy apple-bough we their heads, the white and purple rolls of odorous lilacs along the vine-gown stone wall, the gold and purple dawn new breaking over the distant reaches of

Thus were these two betrothed, this sole serviving pair of human beings.

Thus, as the new day burned to living fame up the inverted bowl of sky, this sweak and this man pledged each other, their love and loyalty and trust.

Thus they stood together, his left arm Thus they stood together, his left arm about her warm, lithe body, clad as she as only in her tigerakin. Their eyes met am held true, there in the golden glory of the dawn. Unafraid, she read the measure in the depths of his, the invitation, the command; and they both foreknew the

Beatrice spoke first, flushing a little as a drew toward him. Allan," she said with infinite tender-a, even as a mother might speak to a

see, even as a mother might speak to a well-loved son, "Allan, come now and let us dress your wound. That's the first thing to do. Come, let me see your arm." He smiled a little, and with his broad, brown hand stroked back the spun silk of her hair, its mass transfixed by the saw gold pins he had found for her among the runs of New York.

"No, no!" he objected. "It's nothing—

it's not worth bothering about. I'll be all right in a day or two. My fiesh heals almest at once, without any care. You sent realize how healthy I am."

I know, dear, but it must hurt you

at? How could I feel any pain with year kiss on my mouth?" Tome!" she again repeated with in-stance, and pointed toward the beach where their banca lay on the sand. "Come, I'll dress your wound first. And after I find out just how badly you're

He tried to stop her mouth with kisses, it she evaded him.
"No. no!" she cried. "Not now-not

Allan had to cede. And now presently that he knelt on the fine white sand, his berskin robe opened and flung back, his will sand shoulder and sinewed arm bare and frown.

Well, is it fatal?" he jested. "How and any size me to survive it?" as with he hand and the cold limpid water of the sudson she started to lave the caked blood away from his gashed triceps.

At sight of the wound she looked grave.

ut made no comment. She had no band-ta; but with the woodland skill she had supped in the past weeks of life in close with nature, she bound the cleansed with cooling leaves and fastened

seems with cooling leaves and fastened them ascurely in place with lashings of laster though from the banca.

Presently the task was done. Stern slipped his bearskin back in place. Beatrice, and solicitous, tried to clasp the sliver reckle that held it; but he, unable to restain himself, caught her hand in both of he and crushed it to his flps.

Thus he took her perfect face between his paims, and for a long moment studied. It is leoked at her waving hair, luxuriant all glisting rich brown gleams in the sungary has thick, arched brows and hard reckled and full of mystery as wooding pools; har skin, sun-browned and sing, with abundant tides of life-blood causing vigorously in its warm flush; her life studied her, and loved and sense toward her; and in him the passes temped up like living flames. He mouth met hers again.

Hy beloved!" breathed he. he shoulder, need his neck; she held her

rainded arm, bare to the shoulder, his neck; she hid her face in his

con the white and pink flowered hough was the robin, unaffraid, gushed into a madesa of golden song. And now the higher rises, had struck the river into tread after of spun metal, over which swallows syen as in the olden days and dash of spray.

At oil, spot-white winding sheets of ware lifting larging along the nursic talkets of of yet -- not yet !" she whispered.

were lifting, lagging along the purple tiothed with inviolate furest thin its man tried to raise her head, to his kieses on her mooth. But she, led with the sternal spirit of woman, is him.

not now not yet?" she said; and he eyes he read her meaning. "You let me go now. Allan. There's so me in do; wave got to be practical, you

Fractical? When I—I love—"
In a love dear. But there's so much be some first." Her womanly homedes instinct would not be galuanid.
Les as unch work! We've got the set ampiore and the house to put in the low to explore and the house to put in the low thought and small be very ransible and very wise.

Set is boy. We've not children, you have the we've best sey hours in the constant we've best sey hours in the constant the low that we've best sey hours in

the dim remnants of what must once have been a broad driveway from the river road long the beach leading up to the bunga-

Through the encroaching forest and the tangle of the degenerate apple trees they could see the concrete walls, with here or there a bit of white atill gleaming through the enlacements of ancient vines that had enveloped the whole atructure—woodbine, lvy. wistarias and the maddest jungle of climbing roces, red and vallow that climbing roses, red and yellow, that ever made a nest for love.

"Wait, I'll go first and clear the way for you," he said cheerily. His big bulk crashed down the undergrowth. His hands held back the thorns and briers and the whipping hardhacks. Together they slowly made way toward the house.

The orchard had lost all semblance of regularity, for in the thousand years since-the hand of man had pruned or cared for it Mother Nature had planted and re-planted the trees beyond counting. Small and gnarled and crooked the trees were, as the spine-tree souls in Dante's dolorosa selva.

Here or there a pine bad rooted and Here or there a pine had rooted and grown tall, killing the lesser tribe of green things underneath.

Warm lay the sun there. A pleasant carpet of last year's leaves and pine spills covered the earth.

"It's all ready and waiting for us. all

"It's all ready and waiting for us, all embowered and carpeted for love," said Allan musingly. "I wonder what old Van Amburg would think of his estate if he could see it now? And what would he say to our having it? You know, Van was pretty ugly to me at one time about my political opinion—but that's all past and forgotten now. Only this is certainly an odd turn of fate."

In the dining room a good number of the more solid cut glass and china pleces had resisted the shock of having fallen, centu-

The engineer tapped his forehead with his finger.

his finger.

"Oh, yes, there is. I've got several models right here. You just wait till you see the workshop I'm going to install on the bank of the river with current-power, and with an electric light plant for the whole place, and with—"

Brattica laureline and with—" Beatrice laughed.

"You dear, big, dreaming boy!" she in-terrupted. Then with a khu she took his

"Come," said she. "We're home now And there's work to do."

# CHAPTER II

Settling Down Settling Down

Settling Down

Settling Down

Settling Down

Stern helped the girl, in spite of the spin string of basic back the spin silk hard frair, its mass transfixed by the w gold plus he had found for her among arisins of New York.

No, no!" he objected. "It's nothing—is not worth bothering about. I'll be all the all the all the plus and the spin silk that is a day or two. My flesh heals beginning to pain more than a little. But his lose steady as he said:

"So then, bats up here?" Well, how the was polytique. he was oblivious. His love, the fire of apring that burned in his blood, the lure of this great adventuring, banished all con-

Parting a thicket, they reached the steps. And for a while they stood there, hand in hand, silent and thrilled with vast, strange thoughts, dreaming of what must be. In their eyes lay mirrored the future of the human race. The light that glowed in them evoked the glories of the dawn of life again, after ten centuries of black

"Our home now!" he told her very "Our home now;" he told her very gently, and again he kissed her, but this time on the forehead. "Ours when we shall have reclaimed it and made it ours. See the yellow roses, dear? They symbolize our golden future. The red, red roses? Our passion and our pain !"

Our passion and our pain.

The girl made no answer, but tears gathered in her eyes—tears from the deepest wells of the soul. She brought his hand

gathered in her eyes—tears from the deepcet wells of the soul. She brought his hand
to her lips.

"Ours!" she whispered tremblingly.

They stood there together for a little
space, silent and giad. From an oak that
shaded the porch a squirrel chippered at
them. A sparrow—larger pow than the
sparrows they remembered in the time
that was—peered out at them, wondering
but unafraid from the neat under the caves;
at them, the first humans it had ever seen.

"We've got a tenant already, haven't
we?" smilled Allan. "Well, I guess we
shan't have to disturb her, unless perhaps
for a while, when I cut away this poison
iny here." He pointed at the glossy triple
leaf. "No poisonous thing, whether plant,
snake, spider or insect, is going to stay
in this Eden!" he concluded, with a laugh.

Together, with a strange sense of violating the spirit of the past, they went up
the concrete atens, untrodden now by human
feet for ten centuries.

The massive blocks were still intact for

feet for ten centuries.

The massive blocks were still intact for the most part, for old Van Amburg had builded with endless care and with no remotest regard for cost. Here a vine, there a sapling had managed to instinuate a taproot in some crack made by the frost, but the damage was triding. Except for the falling of a part of a corulee, the building was complete. But it was hidden in vines and mold. Moss, lichens and weeds grew on the steps, fourishing in the detritus that had accumulated.

Alian dug the toe of his sandal into the loose drift of dead, leaves and pine-spills that littered the broad plassa.

"It'll need more than a vacuum cleaner to put this in abapel" said he. "Well, the sooner we get at it, the better. We'd do well to take a look at the innide."

The front door, one-time built of oahan planks studded with hand-worked halls and handed with huge wroughs-tron hinges, now hung there a more shell of itself, wormeaten, crumbling disintegrated.

With no tools but his maked bands Stern tors and battsred it away. A thick, pungent hase of dust arcse, reliew in the morning sunlight that presently, for the first this in a thousand years, fell warm and bright across the obwebbed front hall-way, through the operature.

Room by room Alian and Beatrice explored bare by time.

"Only meet and runt," sighed the girl with same stame starry every where we go. Butwell never mind. We'll seen have it looking homelike. Make me a broam, dear, and I'll awaep out the worst of it at ance."

Taking now is terms of practical detail. The massive blocks were still intact for

Patking now in terms of practical detail. with remance for the hour displaced by

luminated the wreck of all that had once been the lavish home of a billionsire.

Rugs, paintings, furniture, bibelots, treasures of all kinds now lay commingled in mournful decay. In what had evidently been the music room, everlooking the grounds to southward, the grand plane now was only a mass of rusted frame, twisted

grounds to southward, the grand piano how was only a mass of rusted frame, twisted and broken fragments of wire and a considerable heap of wood detritus, with a couple of corroded pedals buried in the pile.

And this was the famous hundred-thousand-dollar harp of Sara, his daughter that the process used in talk so much ter, that the papers used to talk so much about, you remember?" asked the girl, stirring with her foot a few mournful bits of

rubbish that lay near the piane. "Sio transit gioria mundi!" growled Stern, shaking his head. "You and she were the same age, almost. And now—"
Silent and full of strange thoughts they
went on into what had been the kitchen.
The stove, though heavily bedded in rust,
retained its form, for the solid steel had resisted even the fearful lapse of vanished

"After I scour that with sand and water," said Stern, "and polish up these aluminum utensils and reset that broken pane with a piece of glass from upstairs where it isn't needed, you won't know this place. Yes, and I'll have running water in here, too— and electricity from the power plant, and-

He helped the girl over a fallen log. rotted with moss and lichens. "It's one awful mess, sure as you're born. But as quick as my arm gets back into shape we'll have order out of chaos before you know it. Some fine day you and I will drive our sixty-horsepower car up an asphalt road here, and——" extreme age—piatters, dishes, beakers. But of the table and chairs nothing remained save dust. resisted the shock of having fallen, centu-ries ago, to the floor, when the shelves and cupboards of teak and managany had rotted "A car? Why, what do you mean? There's not such a thing left in the whole world as a car!"

The main war and chairs nothing remained save dust.

Like curious children, they poked and pried.

till you can't rest But how about some-thing to put on the dishes? We haven't had a bite since yesterday noon, and I'm about starved. Now that the fighting's all over, I begin to remember my healthy appetite."

Stern smiled. "You'll have some breakfast, girlle," promised he. "There'll be the wherewithal to garnish our eighteen-carat, never fear, Just let's have a look upstairs, and then I'll go after something for the larder."

They left the downstairs rooms, silent save for a fly buzzing in a spider's web, and together ascended the dusty stairs. The railing was entirely gone; but the concrete steep remained.

crete steps remained. Stern helped the girl, in spite of the

deuce do they get in and out? Ah. That broken window, where the elm branch has knocked out the glass—I see! That's got

to be fixed at once!"
He brushed webs and dust from the remaining panes, and together they peared out over the orchard, out across the river now a broad sheet of molten gold. His arm went about her; he drew her head against his heart, fast beating; and silence

against his heart, fast beating; and stience fell.

"Come, Alian," said the girl at length, calmer than he. "Let's see what we've get here to do with. Oh, I tell you to begin with," and she smiled up frankly at him. "I'm a tremendously practical sort of woman. You may be an engineer, and know how to build wireless telegraphs and bridges and—and things; but when—it comes to home-building—"I admit it. Well, lead on "he answered;

comes to home-building—"
"I admit it. Weil, lead on," he answered;
and together they explored the upper rooms.
The sense of intimacy now lay strong upon
them, of unity and indissoluble love and
comradeship. This was quite another venture than the exploration of the tower,
for now they were choosing a home, their
home, and in them the mating instinct had
begun to thrill, to burn.

The boom despite its ruin and decay:

begun to thrill, to burn.

Fach room, despite its ruin and decay; took on a special charm, a dignity, the foreshadowing of what must be. Yet intrinsically the place was mournful, even after Stern had let the sunshine in.

For all was dark desolation. The rosewood and mahogany furniture, pictures, rugs, brass beds, all alike lay reduced to dust and ashes. A gold clock, the porcelain minings of the hathroom, and some fine clay and meerschaum pipes in what had evidently been Van Amburg's den—these constituted all that had escaped the tooth of time.

stituted all that had escaped time.

In a front room that probably had been Sara's, a mud-swallow had built its nest in the far corner. It flew out, frightened, when Stern thrust his hand into the aperture to see if the nest was tenanted fluttered about with scared cries, then vanished up the broad fireplace.

"Eggs—warm" announced Stern "Well, this room will have to be shut up and left We've got more than enough, anyhow, Less work for you, dear," he added, with a smile. "We might use only the lower floer, if you like. I don't want you killing yourself with housework, you inderstand."

She laughed cheerily.

"You make me a broom and get all the

She laughed cheerily.

"You make me a broom and get all the dishes and things together," she answered, "and then leave the rest to me. In a week from now you won't know this place. Once we clear out a little footbold here we can go back to the tower and fetch up a few loads of tools and supplies."

"Come on, come on!" he interrupted, taking her by the hand and leading her away. "All such planning will do after breakfast, but I'm starving! How about a five-pound base on the coals, ch? Come on, let's go fishing."

# CHAPTER III

The Muskellunge

rishing."

The Muskellunge.

With characteristic resourcefulness Stern manufactured adequate fackie with a well-trimmed alder pole, a line of leather thouse and a hook of about planouries, properly bent to make a barb and rubbed to a fine point on a stone. He caught a dozen young froze among the sadges in the marshy stretch at the morth and of the leading beach and confined them in the early available receptacle, the

great current.
"I'll paddle," she volunteered. "You mustn't, with your arm in the condition it is. Which way?"

mustn't, with your arm in the condition it is. Which way?"

""Up-over there into that cove beyond the point," he answered, baiting up his hook with a frog that kicked as naturally as though a full thousand years hadn't passed since any of its progenitors had been handled thus. "This certainly is far from being the kind of tackle that Bob Davis or any of that gang used to swear by, but it's the best we can do for now. When I get to making lines and hooks and things in earnest, there'll be some sport in this vicinity. Imagine water untouched by the angler for ten hundred years or more!"

He swung his clumsy line as he spoke, and east. Far across the shining water the circles splead, silver in the morning light; then the trailing line cut a long series of V's as the girl paddled slowly toward the cove. Behind the banca a rippling wake flashed metallic; the cold, clear water careased the primitive hull, murmuring with soft cadences, in the old, familiar music of the time when there were men on earth. The witchery of it stirred Heatrice; she smilled, looked up with joy and wonder at the beauty of that perfect morning, and in her clear voice began to sing, very low, very softly to herself, a song whereof—save in her brain—no memory now remained in the whole world—

Stark wie der Fels. Stark wie der Fels. Tiof wie das Meer,

Muss deine Liebe, muss deine Liebe sein "Ah!" cried the man, interrupting her.

The alder pole was jerking, quivering in his hands; the leather line was taut. "A strike, so help me! A big one!" He sprang to his feet, and, unmindful o he swaying of the banca, began to play the Beatrice, her eyes a sparkle, turned to

watch; the paddie lay forgotten in her ands.
"Here he comes! O damn!" shouted term. "If I only had a reel now..."
"Pull him right in, can't you?" the girl

"Pull him right in, can't you?" the girl suggested.

He groaned, between clenched teeth—for the strain on his arm was torture.

"Yes, and have him break the line!" he cried. "There he goes, under the boat, now! Paddle! Go ahead—paddle!"

She seized the oar, and while Stern fought the monster she set the banca in motion again. Now the fish was leaping wildly from side to side, sig-zagging, shaking at the hook as a building shakes an old boot. The leather zord hummed through the water, ripping and vibrating, taut as a fiddle string. A long, slivery line of bubbles followed the vibrant cord.

blea followed the vibrant cord.

Plash:

High in air, lithe and graceful and very swift, a spuri of green and white—a long, sidn curve of glistening power—a splash; and again the cord drew hard.

"Muskeilonges." Stern crisd. "Oh, we've got to land him—got to! Fifteen pounds if he's an ounce!"

Beatrice, flushed and cager, watched the fight with fascination.

"If I can bring him close, you strike—his hard!" the man directed. "Give it to him! He's our breaktist!"

Even in the syntament of the battle misra realized how very beautiful this wooman was like color was adorable—rose leaves and cream. Her some were sleet full of light and life and the lot of living; har tooseyed bair, wayy and rish and brown.

glided smoothly out on the breast of the at the woman's feet as his tribute and his and somewhat resembled breadfruit;

wild asparagus sprouts, and on the few bquirrels that Stern was able to "pot" with his revolver from the shelter of the leafy little camping place they had arranged near trophy.

He had, in the days of long ago, fished in The Adirondack wildernesses. He had fished for tarpon in the Guif; he had cast the fly along the brooks of Maine and lured the small-mouthed bass with floating bait on many a take and stream. He had even fished in a Rocky Mountain torrent, and out on the far Columbia when failure to out on the far Columbia, when failure to succeed meant hunger.

But this experience was unique. Never had he fished all alone in the world with a loved woman who depended on his skill for her food, her life, her everything.
Forgotten now the wounded arm, the crude and absurd implements; forgotten everything but just that sole, indomitable thought: "I've got to win."

Came now a full for the struggles of the

Came now a full in the struggles of the nonster. Stern hauled in. Another rush, net by a paying-out, a gradual tautening of the line, a strong and steady pull.

"He's tiring," exulted Stern. "Be ready when I bring him close!" Again the fish broke cover; again it dived, but now its strength was lessening

Allan hauled in. Now, far down in the clear depths, they ould both see the darting, flickering shift of white and green. "Up he comes now! Give it to him

As Stern brought him to the surface, Beatrice struck with the paddle - once, twice, with magnificent strength and judg-ment.

ment.

Over the gunwale of the banca, in a sparkle of flying upray, silvery in the morning the muskellungs gleamed.

Excited and happy as a child, Beatrice clapped her hands. Storn seized the puddle as she left it fall. A moment later the huge fish, stunned and dying, lay in the bottom of the boat, its gills rising, falling in convubive gasps, its body quivering, scales shining in the sunlight—a thing of wondrous beauty, a promise of the feast for two strong, healthy humans.

Stern dried his brow on the back of his hand and drew a deep heath, for the morning was already warm and the labor had been hard.

Now," said he, and united, "now a nice little pile of dead wood on the beach, a curl of birch bark and a handful of pine punk and grass—a touch of the filmt and stee! Then this," and he pointed at the muskellunge, "broiled on a pointed stick, with a handful of checksreterries for desert, and I think you and I will be about ready to begin work in carness to the white did with the 100 of contradaship, they draw their lance once more to the white

stars and lustrous moun of that deserted world.

Beatrice showed both skill and ingenuity in her freatment. With a class shell she occaped and saved the rich fat from under the skins of the squirrels, and this she 'tried out' in a goiden dish over the fire. The oil thus got she used to anoth his he 'tried out' in a goiden dish over the fire. The oil thus got she used a dressing of clay and leaves; and when the fever flushed him she made him comfortable on his bed of spruce tips, hathed his forehead and checks, and gave him cold water from a spring that trickied down over the mass some fifty feet to westward of the camp.

Anny a long talk they had, too-he prone on the spruce, she sitting beside him, tending the fire, holding his hand or letting his head lie to her lay, the while she stroked his hair. Ferna, flowers in profusion-diace and clover and climbing roses and some new, strange scaried blossome bowered their ness. And through the pain and fever, the delay and disappointment, they both were glad and cheerful. No word of impatience or histo or repinling recaped them. For they had life: they had seen and the cheerful was also as a later they becked back upon them, were accepted their task installed to the most papely hand titled, the seen the of their whole ware returned and then, alowly, happily and filled with the joy of comradeship, they drove their bancs once more to the white and gleaming beach.

### CHAPTER IV The Golden Age

STERN'S plans of hard work for the immediate present had to be a deferred a
little, for in upile of his perfect health,
the spear throat in his armi-lacking the
proper treatment and irritated by his labor
in catching the big fish-developed swelling
and surveness. A little favor even set in the
second day. And though he was carer to
go not fishing again, Beatrice appointed
hermit his surve and guardian and withhaid negations.

her bath in the river, he could hear her splashing and singing and laughing happily in the cold water.

It was the Golden Age come back to earth again—the age of natural simplicity, truth, trust, bonor, faith and joy, unspoiled by malice or deceit, by lies, conventions, sor-did ambitions, or the lust of wealth or power. Arcady, at last—in truth! Beatrice struck with the paddle-once, twice, with magnificent strength and judgment.

> Though Beatrice worked many hours all alone in the bungalow, sweeping it with a broom made of twigs lashed to a pole, and trying to bring the place into order, it was still no fit habitation.

would-such as survived-give them

"And in any event," Stern summed it

trees, where in a pinch, we could go sloft."
Thus his convalescence progressed in the open air, under the clouds and sun and stars and lustrous moun of that descrid

wide berth.

power. Arcady, at last—in truth!

Their conversation was of many things.
They talked of their awakening in the tower and their adventures there; of the possible cause of the world-catastrophe that had wiped out the human race, save for their own survival; the Horde and the great battle; their escape, their present condition, and their probable future; the possibility of their ever finding any other isolated human beings, and of reconstituting the human beings, and of reconstituting the fragments of the world or of renewing the

sclous of the other's presence. The con

tinuity of love, care and sympathy was never broken. Even when, at daybreak, site went away around the wooded point for her bath in the river, he could hear her

And as they spoke of this, sometimes the girl would grow strangely silent, and a look abnost of inspiration—the universal mother-look of the race—would fill her wondrous eyes. Her hand would trembis in-his; but he would hold it tight, for he,

still no fit habitation.

She would not even let the man try to help her, but insisted on his keeping quiet in their camp. This lay under the shelter of a thick-foliaged oak at the southern end

in his; but he would hold it tight, for he, too understood.

"Afraid, little girl?" he asked her once.

"No, not afraid." she answered; and their eyes met. "Only so much depends on us—on you, on me! What strength we two must have, what courage, what endurance! The future of the human race lies in our hands!"

He made no answer! he, too, grew stient. And for a long while they sat and watched the embers of the fire; and the day waned. Slowly the sun set in its glory over the virgin hills; the far eastern spaces of the sky grew bathed in tender lavenders and purples. Haze drew its veils across the world, and the air grew brown with evenfail.

Presently the girl arose, to throw more wood on the fire. Clad only in her loose

in their camp. This lay under the shelter of a thick-foliaged oak at the southern end of the beach. The perfect weather and the presence of a three-quarter moon at night invited them to sleep out under the sky.

"There'il be pienty of time for the bungalow," she said, "when it rains. As long as we have fair June weather like this no roof shall cover me."

Singularly enough, there were no mosquitoes. In the thousand years that had elapsed, they might either have shifted their habitat from eastern America, or else some obscure evolutionary process might have wiped them out entirely. At any rate, none existed, for which the two adventurers gave thanks.

Wild beasts they feared not. Though now and then they heard the yell of a wild cat far back in the woods, or the tramping of an occasional bulk through the forest, and though once a cinnamon hear polech ham usele out into the clearing, suiffed and departed with a grunt of disapproval, they could not bring themselves to any realization of animals as a real peril. Their camp-fire burned high all night, heaped with driftwood and windfalls; and beyond this protection. Stern had his automatic and a belt nearly full of cartridges. They discussed the question of a possible attack by some remnants of the Horde; but common sense assured them that these creatures would—such as survived—give them a wide borth.

Presently the girl arose, to throw more wood on the fire. Clad only in her loose tiger-akin, clasped with gold, ahe moved like a primeval goddess. Stern marked the supple play of her muscles, the unspalled grace and strength of that young body, the evelling warmth of her bosom. And as he looked he loved; he pressed a hand to his eyes; for a while he thought—it was as though he prayed.

Evening came on—the warm, dark mysterious night. Off there in the shallows gradually arose the million-voiced cherus of froze, shrill and monotonous, plaintive, appealing—the cry of new life to the overarching, implecable mystery of the universe. The first faint slivery powder of the stars came spanging out along the horizon. Unsteady bals began to real across the sky. The selema beauty of the scans awad the woman and the man to alleges. But Stern, leaning his back against the hole of the great oak, encircled Heatrice with his arm.

Her beautiful, dear head rested in the hollow of his throat; her warm, gragnant had caread his cheek; he fell the wholesome strength and awestness of this woman by her—texts welled and gisamed in the firetight.

Heatrice watched, like a contended child.

up, "if anything happens, we have the hungalow to retrest into. Though in its present state, without any doors or shut-ters. I think we're safer out among the

whom he loved; and in his eyes—quases by her-tears welled and gleamed in the firelight.

Boatrice watched, like a contended child, the dancing showers of sparks that rose, wavering and whirflux to complex zarabands—sparks red as pansion, golden as the unknown future of their dreams. From the river they heard the gentle lar-lap-laping of the mayes along the shore. All was rest and peace and beauty; this was Eden purce again—and there was no surport to enter to.

Freactity Silven spoke.

"Tean," said he, "do you know, I'm a bit pussied in some ways, about—smill shour night and day, and temperature and gravitation, and a minuter of little these like that you don't realine fully as yet."

Problems? What problems, earupt to make our home, and—smill live."

CONTINUED IN MONDAYS

Eurning and Reduce