

The Dead Man's Hand.

HENRY A. HERING, IN TEMPLE BAR.

WEST was a brilliant short-story writer and a novelist with a future. Although he made a good income from his pen he had some relatives on his hand; so he kept less than half his earnings for himself and lived in second-rate lodgings, sharing his sitting room with another man—Tolson West.

He seated himself opposite on the sofa, and when he spoke he toyed aimlessly with the rugs and blankets. "Now West," I said, "tell me about it. No humbug, you know." He glanced fearfully around. "Do you think we are alone?" he asked. "I'd stake my last dollar on it," I replied.

"There, West," I said. "It's all pure imagination on your part. Come and try it yourself." "No, no!" he almost shrieked. "I tell you he is there. He is there to me if to no one else. I haven't got it in that coffin-chair for heaven itself. Kelsall's in it."

"I shrugged my shoulders and resumed my former seat." "Yes, Bethell," West went on, "Kelsall sits there and writes, and with an ever-increasing demand upon me—and what he now writes isn't fit for print. Read that."

"I read a page, and that was enough. It simply made my flesh creep. It might have been written by a soul in purgatory, for of all the fiendish horrors the brain of man ever conceived this was surely the most terrible. To think such things was awful; but to read them impossible. I let the paper fall from my hands in sheer terror."

"I cannot, I haven't the strength for the struggle. I'm dead beat. I haven't slept two hours at a stretch for a week. I feel better now, though, after this talk with you and I think I could sleep."

"Right you are, West. I'll come as soon as I can tomorrow. I would not leave you now, but for the office work, but I'll not go till you've had a good square meal. You'll let me ring for Mrs. Harper, won't you?"

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A HAT OF SPUN GLASS. A guest at one of the leading New Orleans hotels put in an appearance in the office wearing a very peculiar-looking hat. At first glance it seemed to be made of finely woven brown straw, but closer scrutiny showed that the material was evidently something else.

The Boy's Wishes. Boys haven't always a great imagination, but most of them have a good deal of tenacity. A man wishing to make himself pleasant to the little brother of his betrothed, told him to wish for something and he would give it to him.