

I amonly a plain, old fashioned womcannot explain the sad story of friend and lodger, Alexia l'Estrange. To be sure, it is in my handwriting, and I sometimes walk in my sleep.

After all, who knows how it happened? I had decided to publish it, thinkof their duties to others and how soon the time for doing those duties must end. She is better off, no doubt, but I miss her as I never thought to miss : stranger:

One evening I sat brooding over home before poverty overtook me. I er, id out passionately that I could no lozer endure this starving existence, stripped of all the pleasures that were so keenly appreciated by me in the past. I determined that Fwould escape somehow.

Suddenly I recalled a Halloween tradition that it one stood, candle in hand, before a mirror at midnight and called one's name aloud three times something womlerful would happen. Was this the way to escape from my troubles? I determined to try the experiment.

down the stairs and entered the parlor. Holding a lighted candle, I stood before the old mirror, whose tarnished gilded frame gleamed faintly in the flickering light.

As the last stroke died away I called my name aloud. The stately syllables echood in my cars with unfamiliar cadences, Alexia l'Estrange. Again I called, this time with greater effort, and the mirror reflected only a sketch of a face in tints as faint as those of a dissolving rainbow. For the third time I strove to call my name. A hoarse murmur, scarcely intelligible, passed my lips, while the face in the mirror faded to a misty shadow.

· For a moment I was unconscious, and then a silvery radiance seemed slowly to fill the room and fall on something lying prone before the mirror. Gradually I realized that I was still in the same place and that the mysterious radiance was the light of the autumn moon. But what was that prostrate woke flecting, tantalizing memories? My mind seemed to wander amid a host of vivid life pictures, and through of that lying still and cold before me. Suddenly with a sickening shock came the conviction that it was my body. "Is it 1?" was the cry wrung from my anguished heart.

No sound disturbed the sudden stillness, but in some inexplicable way I felt that I had asked that question and knew that it would be answered, though I could not tell whence the reply would come. Still the silence was unbroken. The

chill of the unwelcoming breast made stiffened into a sternness that drove me shuddering to the farthest limit of the room. At last I realized that I was dead, and a strange indifference succeeded the tumult of hope and fear What dld it matter?

Presently the door opened, and my shock that I had felt reflected in her things somehow, though my eyes and cars were forever closed.

Again I murmured in fear and sorrow, "What will become of me?" Restlessly I wandered through the house. It was night, and my good landlady had retired.

subject to attacks of sleepwalking, and the thought occurred to me that I might control her body while in that condition.

hand. In an instant I was beside her. She stirred uneasily in her sleep and murmured, "Poor girl!"

strange, sad story as a warning, for beings, from whose presence I was you live."

woman, and my will moved her unconscious body.

parlor and sat at the secretary. Mechanically she took a pen in her hand, and slowly this strange story grew beneath her touch.

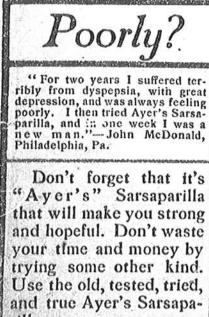
Once more I stand before the mirror, a slender, shadowy shape, and wistfully take my last look at the famillar face therein. Brown and wavy locks, scarcely more substantial than puffs of smoke, frame a pallid, oval face. The lips are faded to a faint rose tint, and the melancholy, dark blue eyes seem to hold all the life of the fading face.

and a white mist gathers over all thatis left of poor Alexia l'Estrange. Farewell, reproachful face! I mean you no harm. How could I know that my desperate experiment would end thus? And yet would I undo it if I could? I think not. I try to plerce that shrouding mist that hides the once familiar face, but my will grows weak, and I can struggle no longer. The face before me fades, fades.

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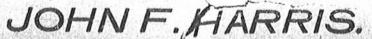
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