

Warren Besart's Statement

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the twenty miles south to Meidum, and secreted myself where she advised. There in the midnight blackness I saw Carlyle and the others disport themselves in obscene ritual with a hundred madmen. The very desert came alive, crawling and undulating toward the ruins of the pyramid. To my horror, the stone ruins themselves became a skeletal, bulging-eyed thing!

"Strange creatures emerged from the sands, grasped the dancing celebrants, and, one by one, tore out their throats, killing all until only the Europeans (and one other robbed celebrant) remained.

"Something more loomed out of the sand, the size of an elephant but with five separate shaggy heads. Then I realized what it was—but it is madness to speak it! I saw it rise and in a great ravening swallow as one all the torn corpses and their hideous murderers, leaving alive only five people amidst the stench of the blood-soaked sands.

"I fainted. When I recovered, I wandered into the desert. There further horrors awaited me. Stumbling up a rise before dawn, I saw beyond hundreds of dark sphinxes, rank upon rank drawn up and waiting for the hour of madness when they will spring to devour the world! I fainted again, and this time I left the world for many months.

"A man found me; for two years he and his mother cared for me—me, a man mindless and returned, I came back to Cairo. But I began to dream! Only hashish helps now, or opium if it can be found. My supply is low again, and my life is intolerable without it. Will you gentlemen please contribute? Only strong drugs keep me from insanity. Everything, gentlemen, everything is lost. There is no hope for any of us. Everywhere they wait. Perhaps you will join me in a pipe?"

"A lawyer contacted me. I agreed to act as purchasing agent for Mr. Roger Carlyle of the United States, who was represented to me as a wealthy American. On written instructions from Mr. Carlyle, I purchased certain artifacts from Faraz Najir, an antiquities dealer, and illegally shipped them out of Egypt to Sir Aubrey Fenhew in London. I know the artifacts were ancient, but nothing more.

"When the Carlyle Expedition came to Egypt, I arranged for all their equipment and permits. Their main site was at Dhashur, in the area of the Bent Pyramid.

"One day at Dhashur, Jack Brady came to me and told me that Carlyle, Hypatia Masters, Sir Aubrey, and Dr. Huston had entered the Bent Pyramid and then vanished. Brady was excited and suspected foul play, since the diggers already had fled the site and work had come to a stand-still. We did not know what to do, so we drank.

"The next morning, Carlyle and the others reappeared. They were excited by some tremendous find, but what it was, they would not say, nor did I learn, for Sir Aubrey was a friend for secrecy. All of them had changed in some inexplicable way, and a way not for the better; I did not ask further.

"That evening, an old Egyptian woman visited me. She said that her son had been one of the diggers. She said the diggers had fled because Carlyle and the others had consorted with an ancient evil, the Messenger of the Black Wind. She said that she could recognize that the souls of all the Europeans but Brady and myself were lost. If I wanted proof, I should go to the Collapsed Pyramid at Meidum at the time when the moon is slimmest—the night before the dark of the moon. God help me, I went!

"I took one of the trucks, pretending to leave for a night in the pleasure quarter of Cairo. But instead I drove