

everything agrees and coincides. we know now exactly how it will all happen. by the day after to-morrow there will be no more earth, no more sky; and i will tell you this, child: if, when serapis falls, the universe does not crumble to pieces like a ruinous hotel, then the wisdom of the magians is a lie, the course of the stars has nothing to do with the destinies of the earth and its inhabitants, the planets are mere lamps, the sun is no more than a luminous furnace, the old gods are marsh fires, emanations from the dark bog of mens minds and the great serapis. but why be angry with him there is no doubt no if nor but. give me the diptychon and i will show you our doom. there just here my sight is so dazzled, i cannot make it out. and if i could, what matter who can alter here below what has been decided above leave me to sleep now, and i will explain it all to you to-morrow if there is still time. poor child, when i think how we have tormented you to learn what you know, and how industrious you have been and now to what end i ask you, to what end the great gulf will swallow up one and all. so be it, so be it cried gorgo interrupting her. then, at any rate, nothing that i love on earth will be lost to me before i die and the enemy will perish in the same ruin continued damia, her eyes sparkling with revived fire. but where shall we go to where the soul is divine by nature and cannot be destroyed. it must return say, am i right or wrong it will return to its first fount and cause; for like attracts and absorbs like, and thus our deification, our union with the god will be accomplished. i believe it i am sure of it replied gorgo with conviction. you are sure of it retorted the old woman. but i am not. for our clearest knowledge is but guesswork when it is not based on numbers. nothing is peerishly. i say, how would it do to keep on pitching great pieces of stone in amongst them, or handfuls of small bits that would scatter and make a noise only make em savage, im afraid. i should have most faith in putting a pound of powder and laying a train ready, so that one could light a bit of touch tinder and get away to a safe distance. when that went off with a good explosion, i should think the rattlers would scuttle away. oh, nonsense, nonsense, griggo cried chris. whos to go and lay the train and place the powder ready ah, that would be awkward, said the american thoughtfully. besides, if you had such an explosion youd burst the barrels. hah so we should. i say, couldnt lasso the barrels, could we i can throw a noose pretty well. youd catch serpent as well as the barrels. yes, and that would be nice, to have a savage rattler thrashing and striking about, trying to get his fangs into you somewhere. say, chris lee, lad, were got in a tangle. hallo i thought as much; heres the doctor. the gentleman in question rode slowly up. well, he said, have you found the barrels chris answered him mutely by pointing to the objects of their search. very well, said the doctor. why dont you oh, i see, youre just dismounted to sling them across your saddle. we were beginning to think you very long. but i dont see any snakes. where are they, chris yonder, twining all about the water kegs, father. its alive with them. the doctor shaded his eyes with his hand and looked across at the barrels, his face contracting with horror at the sight which met his eyes. no wonder you were so long, he said bitterly. what do you propose to do nothing, father. we cant think of a way, said chris sadly. can you tell us there seems to be no way save one. wait till the snakes have gone back to their holes, father yes, after dark; and then it will not be a pleasant task to get the kegs away. worse and worse. oh, laid open to them. chapter xxxv. threatened invasion by hongji. we had passed some months here, and were beginning to look out for the return of our brig, to take us again into civilised society, when we were once more thrown into alarm by a threatened invasion. a rumour was circulated in the village that hongji, who now lay at the point of death, had declared that he would make one last glorious effort before he expired. he was resolved it was reported to collect his warriors, overcome george and his followers, possess himself of kororarika, and die upon the conquered territory of his enemy; and i had no doubt that in his moment of delirium such had been his exclamations, as it had always been one of his favourite projects. when this was reported to george, he immediately came to us, and with a most doleful countenance told us we must take care of ourselves; for, if the report proved true, he was much too weak to protect us. this certainly caused us some alarm, but, fortunately for us, a good sized