“It feel like I'm falling.” I said with a vague wave of my hands.

I turned in the chair to get a better look at his response, but Dr. Howitz merely nodded, and brought his fingers into a steeple, and returned my look.

His piercing eyes, yet gentlemanly look was a forceful combination. I was now aware surely of why the others in the club had recommended this doctor for matters of the mind.

“Falling you say… Are there any other sensations that come with this falling? Any other sights or emotions?” he asked, writing something quickly down on his notebook.

My eyes drifted quickly over the tasteful dark wood room. Rows of green and red bound books lined the walls, all of some science or another. It seemed that Dr. Howitz was very well read.

“I would say, and decidedly so, that the sensation is quite terrifying. It certainly is not one which I wish to continue.” I stated, trying not to think about the dark blackness which, during the night, I so often found myself.

“Mr. Lombard, it would be instrumental to describe the sensation, if at all possible, in as much detail as you can.” He paused to adjust his glasses.

“The purpose of this activity is to discern the psychic underpinnings for your current visages. The science of the matter says thusly, that if upon recollection and study of one's experiences during the dream, and through analysis of a scientist such as myself, it will elucidate the subconscious trigger for such experiences in the first place.”

“Consider the following situation. If for instance, and begging your pardon, for I know this to not be the case, quite opposite in fact, it were true that your current state of employ was being threatened by forces out of your control, the falling might represent your mind coming to terms with this fact, projecting the falling sensation as an allegory for the helplessness of the situation.”

I nodded, not completely at ease with the current line of questioning, yet deciding to trust the tastes of the fellows at the club, I assumed that Dr. Howitz indeed was describing a new technique unknown to me in the field of the psychic science.

“I believe I understand.” I said, trying to sound more sure than I felt.

“Yet is it not peculiar to have such visions if one considers my current state of affairs? Much the opposite from your example, business is going splendidly, my health is in good condition, and I am currently looking very much forward to the wedding of my sister.”

Dr. Howitz's eyes twitched at the mention.

“Your sister you say?”

“Indeed.” I said smiling, “Why she marries the under secretary of finance in not two months time.” She had done very well for herself.

“Hmm. Well, how is your relationship with your sister?”

“Quite good I might think. I always looked after her when we were younger, and made sure she never went wanting. The under secretary is the consumate gentleman. I should not have to worry at all I think. She is safe in his hands.”

“I see.” Dr. Howitz said, somewhat distracted by his own thoughts.

“Doctor Howitz, I must say, I don't understand your techniques, but perhaps it will help to recount the experience, ghastly though it might be.”

I struggled to remember the sensation, having willfully locked it so far away in the recesses of my mind.

I was falling.

Darkness was all around me.

I knew instinctively that there was no air, yet I could feel the falling non the less.

I was wearing no clothes, yet did not feel embarrassed nor cold.

Yet I was falling.

Was there an end? Would, after some interminable time, I come to a sudden and horrific stop with some terrestrial firmament, or would I tumble forever in this non-space amid the blackness?

I knew not, and that perhaps was the worst of it. The anxiety of never know the end, yet know that one must exist.

But there was nothing but the darkness. And I fell.

I walked into Dr. Howitz's office for the second time and thanked the servant as he took my jacket. Despite the lack of any real effect of the previous week's effort, I felt like I had gained some measure of the doctor, and found his style and composure to my likeing. I had said to that effect to the chap who had suggested him at the club. I would have to return the favor the next chance I got.

“Good evening Mr. Lombard!” Dr Howitz put down a saucer of tea, and realizing the confrontation was to his advantage, offered me some as well, which I politely declined. I was here for business, yet the attention to detail was encouraging.

“Ah, straight to business then? Why don't you take a seat.”

He pulled up another chair close, but not too close to my own.

“Mr. Lombard, I will say that your case is, compared to others I have taken, not so serious as to cause alarm. I will say however, that the reoccurring nature of the dream, and the lack of variation is quite interesting. Has the dream continued to plague you?”

I nodded, realizing that I felt somewhat worse than yesterweek's visit. It seemed that despite the plentiful sleep, I was not as refreshed as usual, not doubt due to the horrid dream. I related as much to the good doctor.

“Yes. I have seen this before. As there is still no change to the dream?”

I shook my head.

“And it still occurs every night?”

“Without error, and to my grave misfortune.” I replied.

“Yes, well, we will see...”

The doctor then asked me a battery of questions. This time, they felt much more structured, as if he were attempting to tease some cuase and effect from my own life to the dream once more.

After exhausting these, he turned to more qualitative inquiries about the dream, focusing on my feelings, thoughts and emotions.

He wrote many notes as he continued.

Finally, after perhaps a good hour, he held out a hand.

“Thank you my good sir, I believe I have gathered as much information as a good scientist could hope. I will attempt to ascertain the true cause of your dreams in the week between our meetings.”

I must have looked downcast at the lack of substantial progress, since the doctor then tapped his pen on the table.

“However...” He looked up at a shelf opposite to the books. It held a variety of darkened glass phials behind a glass paneled enclosure of dark wood. Each one of them was labeled meticulously.

The doctor held up a finger.

“If a surgeon must perform an operation, this would address the cause of the ailment of the body. However, like the surgeon would administer anesthetic, we must also address the short term discomfort.”

He strode over to the cabinet and selected with great care, a dark green bottle and measured out an amount right there before my eyes. He did not use any device to aid his pouring, yet when he finished he stoppered the smaller vessel and wrote a label on it.

“This is Draught of Zepher, a potion designed to aid in the obtainment of calm sleep. I have here enough dosage for several weeks, as its effects are quite strong. I have written exact instructions on the bottle here as well, but right now suffice to say that it must be diluted with water, and only water. Take care not to mix it with alcohol of any kind.”

He offered me the vial.

“Hopefully this will give you the sleep you desire while I determine the true cause of your dreams.”

Armed with something physical, I felt much reassured, and thanked Dr. Howitz greatly as I left his office.

But the potion did not work.

The effects seemed to begin, I felt like I was floating on a cloud as I drifted to sleep, presumably the reason for the name of the draught, yet what felt like half an hour later, I suddenly became aware of the dream state which had so tormented me.

I felt the clouds slowly part beneath me, and I looked down with horror. Below me was the darkness from which it seems I could not escape.

I feverishly clawed at the clouds which had been so peaceful and helpful, yet they now cruely broke apart, evaporating into nothingness. I started falling once more.

And this time I could sense an end. Nothing so comforting as to be able to see this end; it remained as allusive as ever, yet as with most dreams, its existance was something I inherently knew to be truth.

There was an end to the falling.

Did that make it better or worse? Had my position changed at all? It had. For before I was in fear for wondering of a possible end, and now I was in fear of *when* the end would occur.

The inescapableness of this end, and the brutal wrenching crush which would accompany it as my body slammed into whatever dream ground lay beneath me was a horror which would not leave me. Every second was spent, must have been spent, for there was nothing else of which to preoccupy my mind, being so ensconced in the void in which I fell, turning my mind over the inevitable end.

I did not sleep well.