

## The Dark Thoughts of Sarah Godwin

When a mysterious skull purchased at auction reveals a hidden map, four young Londoners decide to embark on an exhilarating adventure. But their diversion becomes a living nightmare when they arrive at their destination.

INT. PARLOR - DAY

SARAH GODWIN [22- intellectual, diaphanous, with pale blue eyes] sits by a window of this well-appointed London parlor, thoroughly engrossed in a copy of Strand Magazine; The date on the cover is June, 1894. LILLIAN ASHDOWN [19- irreverent, stylish] stands at another window looking wistfully out at the street bustling with pedestrians, carriages, bicycles, and even a lone automobile. There is a knock at the door, and Lillian's face lights up.

LILLIAN

They're here. Sarah, they're here!

The door is opened by the maid, GLADYS [40s- traditional].

GLADYS

Miss Godwin, there are two *gentlemen* here who would-

GEORGE HATLEY [21- handsome, self-assured] and DOUGLAS PEMBERTON [22- boisterous, playful] let themselves into the room. George is holding a box under one arm.

GEORGE

(delivering a punchline)

-and when he trotted out that mummy of his for the third time in a month, Emily Wickes sniffed and said, "are we supposed to just keep looking at it, Arthur? When are we going to eat the damned thing?"

Gladys looks scandalized, and terrified as Sarah moves to shut the door with Gladys on the other side.

SARAH

Gladys, our reputations will survive.

Sarah shuts the door, and Lillian leaps at and embraces Douglas. They sit together on a settee and kiss. Sarah blushes and looks to George, who sits in a high-backed chair by the window and smiles rakishly at her. Sarah quickly returns to her seat.

DOUGLAS

Lord Walsingham had a mummy last May.  
Ground its teeth into the wine.

LILLIAN

Douglas Pemberton, you will not kiss me again until I have *witnessed* you wash your mouth with soap.

DOUGLAS

Your squeamishness will be the death of you, my dear.

LILLIAN

Your willingness to put absolutely Anything in your mouth will be yours.

GEORGE

I believe I will die of deprivation.

George winks at Sarah, who blushes and looks away.

DOUGLAS

What will be your end, Sarah?

SARAH

I intend to live forever, thank you. Why were you talking about mummies?

GEORGE

I almost forgot! I brought you a present.

George opens the box and pulls out a human skull, etched with strange runes. Sarah gasps and takes it from him reverently, her eyes wide with wonder.

SARAH

George, it's beautiful! Wherever did you find it?

GEORGE

At auction this morning. I'm glad you like it. The moment I saw it, I knew I had to have it for you.

LILLIAN

Sarah, how can you be such a...boy?

SARAH

There is nothing *boyish* about wanting to learn of all the wonders this world-

Lillian yawns exaggeratedly. Sarah stands and walks quickly toward Lillian, holding the skull out towards her. Lillian opens her eyes, sees the skull inches from her face, screams and swats it out of Sarah's hand. The skull falls to the floor and one of its molars pops out. Sarah screams and picks up the skull, turning it over to make sure it is intact. She notices a rolled up piece of parchment sticking up from the hole of the missing tooth.

SARAH

Wait! There's something here!

Sarah grabs the tongs from the sugar bowl and gently pulls the parchment free. George clears the food and the tea set from the table and Sarah unrolls the parchment on it.

SARAH

It's a map! This looks like coastline.

GEORGE

Sarah, do you have any maps we can check it against?

Sarah rifles through a stack of books and grabs a map. She lays it on the table and George places the parchment over it as the others gather close.

SARAH

None of the lines match any coastline. Maybe it's in another country?

DOUGLAS

Maybe the coastline has changed?

LILLIAN

Maybe it's a river.

Sarah turns the parchment and one of the lines matches up with a river on the established map.

SARAH

Lillian, you're a genius!

GEORGE

This is less than than two hours away.

SARAH

Lillian and I would never be allowed-

GEORGE

The Prince is opening the new Tower  
Bridge tonight; everyone will be there.

LILLIAN

Not everyone.

EXT. LONDON - NIGHT

Douglas, Lillian, and Sarah are riding in a carriage away  
from the Tower Bridge, which is lit up by electric lights.

EXT. LONDON OUTSKIRTS - NIGHT

The three stand under a tree by a cottage at the edge of  
the city. George rides up on a horse with three more in  
tow. Everyone looks nervous but excited as they mount  
their horses and ride into the night.

EXT. CASTLE RUINS - NIGHT

The group pulls up a short distance from the overgrown  
ruins of an ancient castle. They dismount and tether their  
horses to a large tree. The moon hangs low in the sky, and  
the inky shadows clinging to the crumbling stone walls seem  
to subtly move and shift like some large, slumbering thing.

GEORGE

(fighting his nerves)

Lucky we had a full moon tonight.  
What is this place?

SARAH

This was a Norman castle. Eleventh  
Century would be my guess.

LILLIAN

(nervous, impatient)

Now what? What are we looking for?

DOUGLAS

Perhaps *that*.

Douglas points to a pedestal that was not there before; it  
stands in the center of the floor of the largest remaining  
structure. The group looks hesitantly around before moving  
together toward it. A moment after they step onto the  
stone floor, the horses shriek and bolt into the night.

The shadows move, slithering right to the edge of the floor, ebbing and flowing like dark water all around them.

SARAH

Look.

The others turn back toward the pedestal. A black goblet and a wicked looking black dagger sit atop it, arranged in a way that suggests an item is missing. Sarah holds up the skull; its runes begin to glow, and a low, sepulchral chant echoes from shadows that reach clawed hands onto the floor.

Lillian lunges forward and grabs the dagger from the pedestal, but the blade turns into a huge shadowy centipede that crawls up her sleeve. She flails in terror, trying to remove it; not realizing that she is holding the intact dagger in her other hand, she stabs herself repeatedly.

Douglas tries to grab the dagger from her, but he suddenly coughs, spitting sand and dust into the air. Choking, he grabs the goblet from the pedestal. As he drinks from it, he shrivels as sand pours from his ears, nose, and eyes.

Sarah walks toward the pedestal with the skull, shaking violently and crying. As she sets the skull down in its place, her tears and her eyes turn black. George runs, but as he steps off the stone floor, he falls into the darkness. The world turns black around him; his screams trail off as he fades into the inky black.

INT. PALOR - DAY

Sarah blinks. Her eyes and dress are black. She looks at the rune-covered skull sitting in its box, then closes the lid, writes the name and address of an auction house on a card, and smiles a faint, wicked smile. Gladys enters.

SARAH

Gladys, call for the carriage.

GLADYS

But you're in mourning, Miss Godwin.

SARAH

(warning)

Gladys...I *am* going out.

THE END