

MONDAY MORNING CURSE

by

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The ringing tones of a distant bell shattered the peaceful silence of my slumber, and I reached out slowly to stop my alarm clock issuing its inhuman call.

My mind finally focuses and I realise that Monday morning has arrived once again with its monotonous efficiency. The weekend seeming to have only lasted a few hours. Next my eyes open, first to peer into a sea of shifting haze, then to grasp and solidify on the stark reality of early morning. It is now that I pause and think. The decision whether to rise, or return to my restful sleep is finally balanced and I ponder the problem like a philosopher ponders the meaning of life.

The bright morning light streams into my bedroom and beckons me to rise and meet the challenge and excitement of a new week. The enticement grows, and I hear voices in my head calling me to make the final effort and force myself out of bed. Outside my window I hear the musical songs of many birds perched exotically on my window ledge urging me to follow.

But behind me something stirs. Slowly, stealthily it emerges from between my pillows and spreads itself like a broadening black mist. Within, I sense the corrupt presence of decay, and feel its evil touch beginning to envelope me. A shudder ascends my spine and I feel the hairs prick on the nape of my neck. Then the voice calls. That same enticing voice which haunts me day after day when I t r y t o wake up. "Return to sleep" it says, "Return to your well-earned rest" it suggests, and I stiffen as the darkness enfolds me.

Suddenly, my vision becomes cloudy and the solidity of reality begins to drift away, washed on a tide of blackness. I struggle to cling to the fading reality, defying the voice and forcing my eyelids to remain open. Yet the voice persists.

Slowly I find myself falling backwards, towards the softness and warmth of the pillows, yet I know that if I touch them I will fall victim to the voices' curse, and fall asleep.

In a last effort I urge my heavy eyelids to remain open, and force my pupils to focus on something, anything! I know I must not give in t o this evil power.....

And then I see it, a shining jewel suspended mystically in the distant darkness. Instinctively, I reach out and try t o grasp the blazing point of bright hope, knowing that only its guidance can save me. Suddenly the surrounding darkness becomes saturated with the twisting chaos of storm clouds, trying to deflect the approaching jewel.

Ebon lightning spits forth, passing between the light and myself, trying to deter us from meeting. But the jewel draws nearer. It is then that horrific shadowy shapes leap from behind me, trying to disturb my concentration. Never have I seen such disgusting travesties and distortions of the human form as those which now snarl and dribble around me, foul things which belong in the deepest regions of the 'underworld'. But I will myself not to give in. More and more of the hideous creatures swarm around me, fluttering and crawling as no normal creature born on earth could do. Roars and cries fill my ears, adding to the rising tension as more of the contorted shambling monsters slither into

view. And then I see the eyes. Thousands of tiny rodent-like slits gathering like insects preparing for attack.

Now my true fear begins as I feel the hot fetid breath of some larger more powerful creature on my back. The darkness seems closer still. The voice even more persistent, the urge to sleep far greater.

As a last effort, I will myself to lean forward and clasp the shining jewel in my trembling grasp. Suddenly there is an intense flare of light as the jewel seems to expand, forcing the darkness back. Before I can draw breath, I find myself rushing through the dark clouds, the jewel still in my hands pulling me along until I emerge into the bright blue sky beyond.

The evil voice fades, the vile creatures vanish and the call of morning birds welcomes me as I land once again. Finally my eyes focus again, and I find myself back in my bedroom. Now instead of sitting up in bed, I find myself standing by the door, ready to go down to breakfast.

I have won the battle.

I have defeated the curse of sleep, and woken THIS Monday morning.

But NEXT time it may not be so easy.....