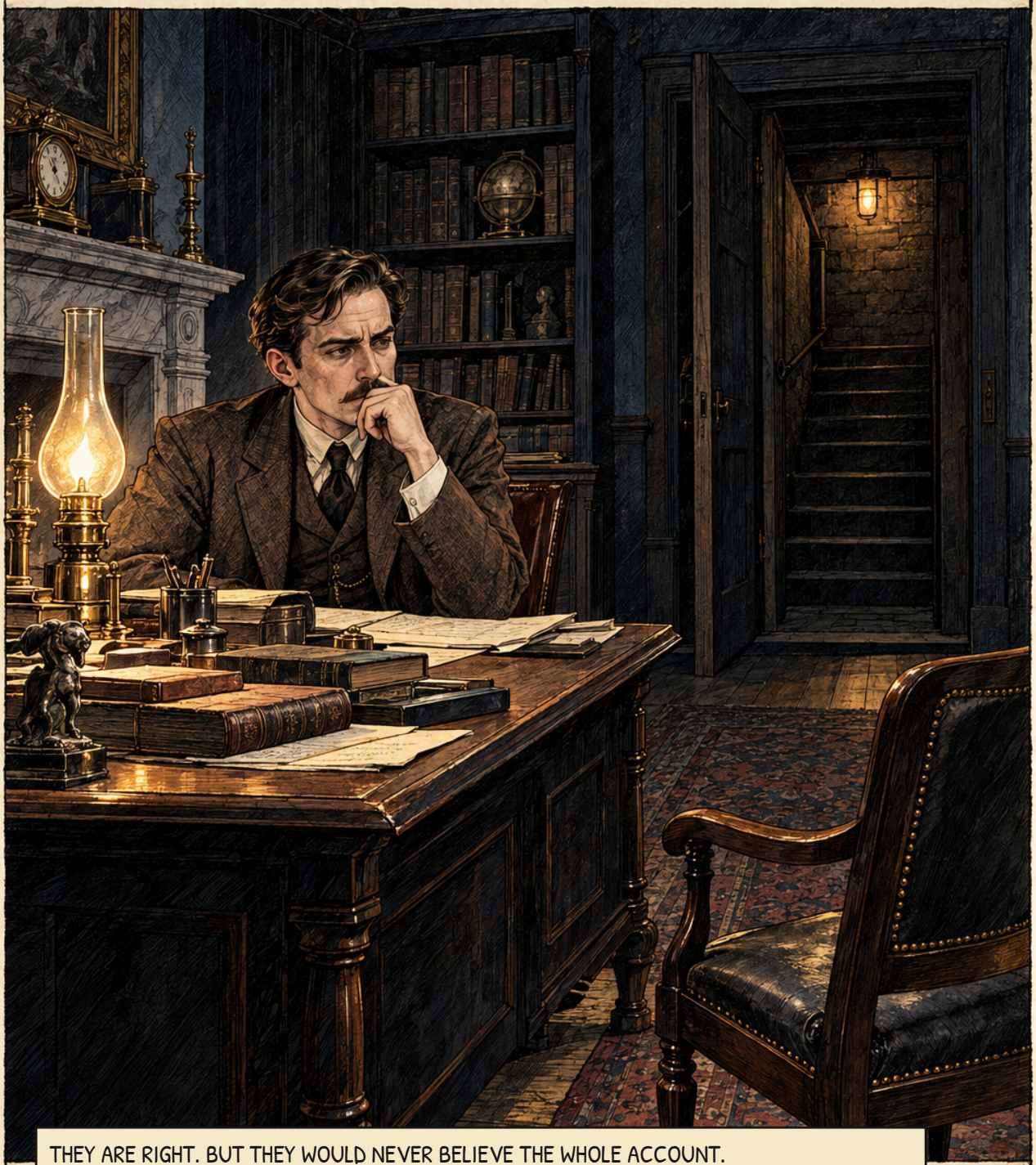
HERBERT WEST – REANIMATOR

OF HERBERT WEST, WHO WAS MY FRIEND IN COLLEGE AND IN AFTER LIFE, I CAN SPEAK ONLY WITH EXTREME TERROR.



THEY ARE RIGHT. BUT THEY WOULD NEVER BELIEVE THE WHOLE ACCOUNT.


I. FROM THE DARK. WE MET AT MEDICAL SCHOOL IN ARKHAM.
LIFE IS A PHYSICAL PROCESS. WHY SHOULD IT NOT BE STARTED AGAIN?
THERE WILL BE NO MORE OF THESE EXPERIMENTS HERE.

HIS ANIMAL TRIALS HAD SOMETIMES PRODUCED MOVEMENT. HUMAN MINDS, HE THOUGHT, REQUIRED PERFECTLY FRESH BODIES.



I HELPED HIM PREPARE THE DESERTED CHAPMAN FARMHOUSE. I WAS NOT AN INNOCENT WITNESS.



A YOUNG WORKMAN HAD DROWNED IN SUMNER'S POND. HE WAS BURIED WITHOUT EMBALMING.







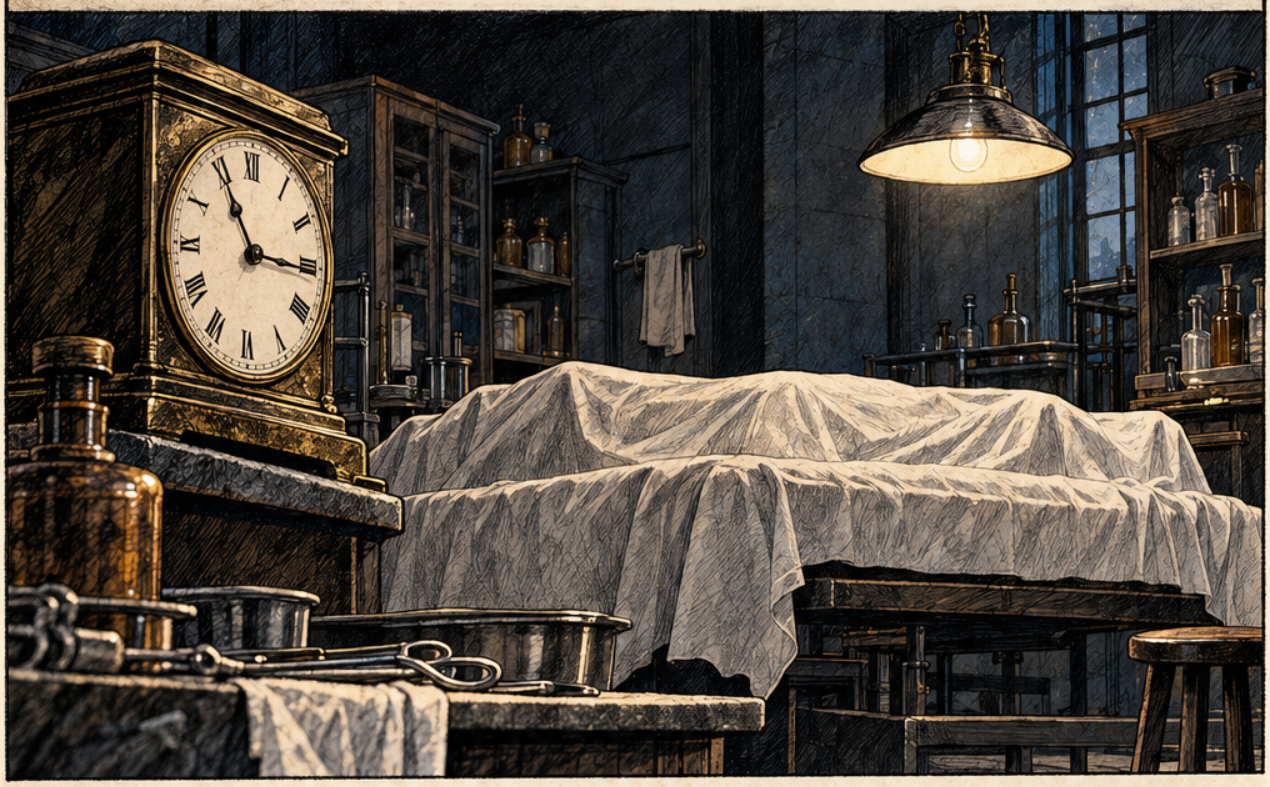
HE LOOKED ALMOST ASLEEP. WEST ASSURED ME HE WAS DEAD.



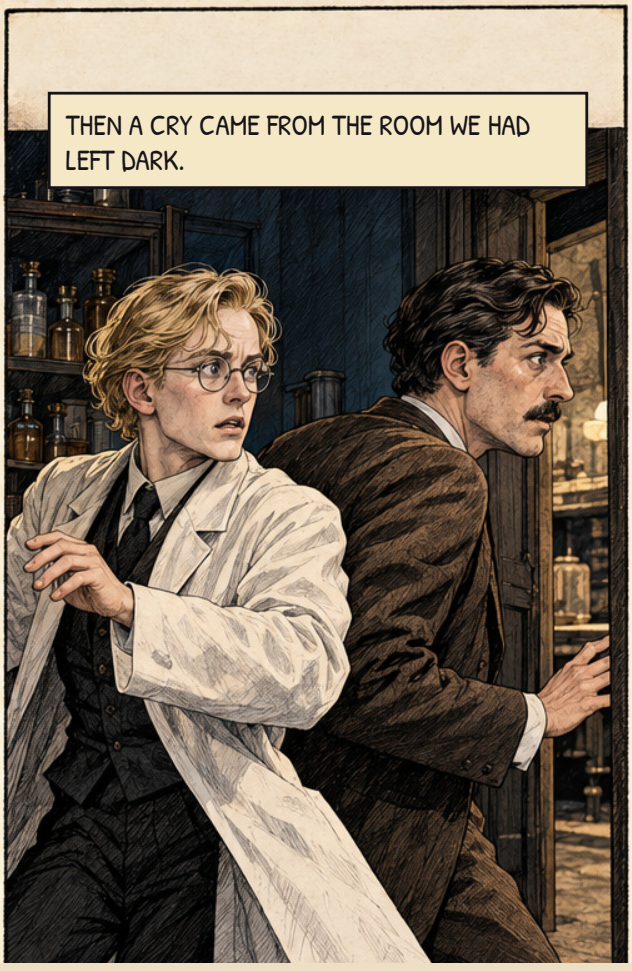
WE GAVE HIM THE SOLUTION AND WAITED.



THREE QUARTERS OF AN HOUR PASSED. NOTHING.







WE FLED WITHOUT LOOKING BACK.



BEHIND US, THE FALLEN LAMP SET THE FARMHOUSE BURNING.



THE NEWSPAPER REPORTED THE FIRE.



IT ALSO REPORTED AN ATTEMPT TO CLAW OPEN A NEW GRAVE.



AND FOR SEVENTEEN YEARS AFTER THAT WEST WOULD LOOK FREQUENTLY OVER HIS SHOULDER, AND COMPLAIN OF FANCIED FOOTSTEPS BEHIND HIM.



II. THE PLAGUE-DAEMON. THE NEXT SUMMER, TYPHOID OVERWHELMED ARKHAM.



HALSEY WORKED WITHOUT REST. WEST ADMIRED HIS COURAGE, EVEN WHILE RESENTING HIS REFUSAL.

WEST AGAIN ASKED PERMISSION TO CONTINUE.

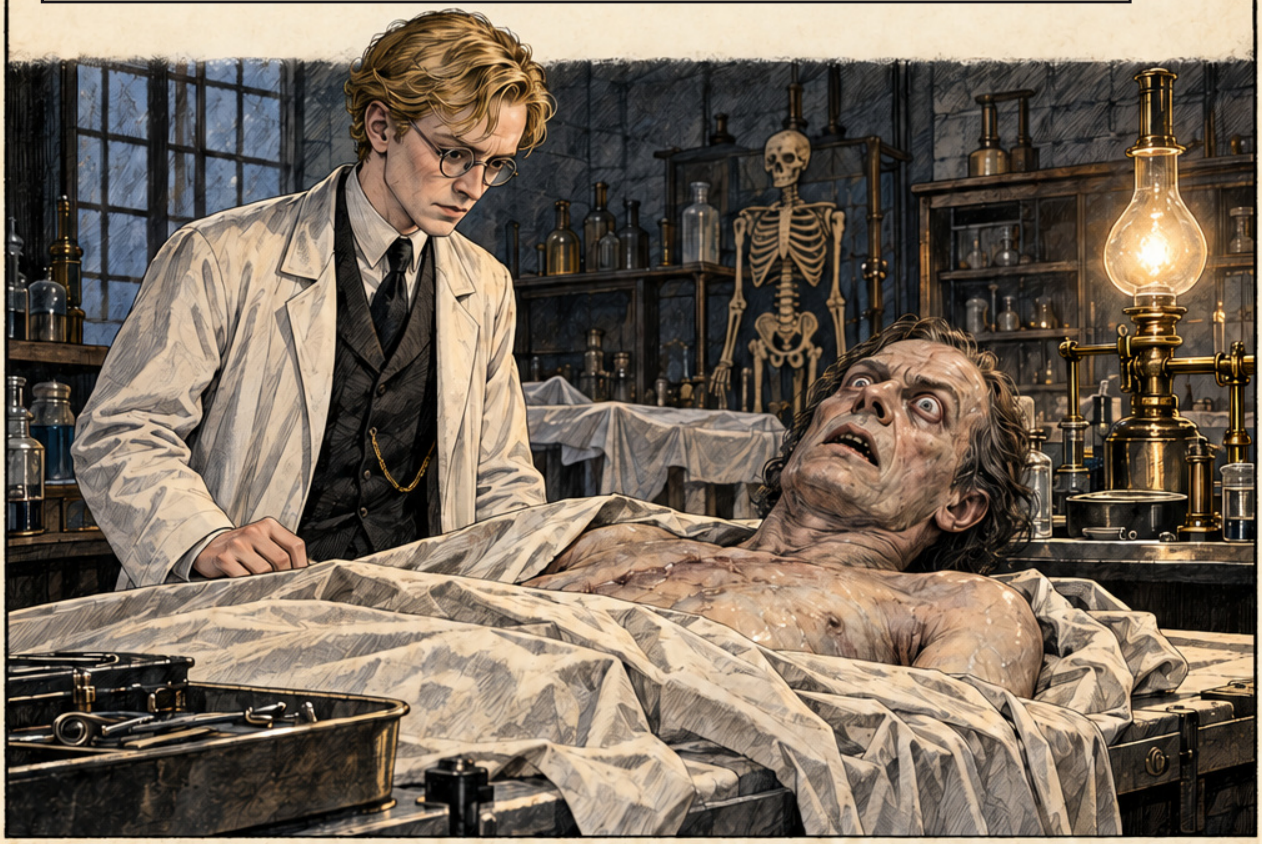




THE EMERGENCY GAVE HIM ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY.



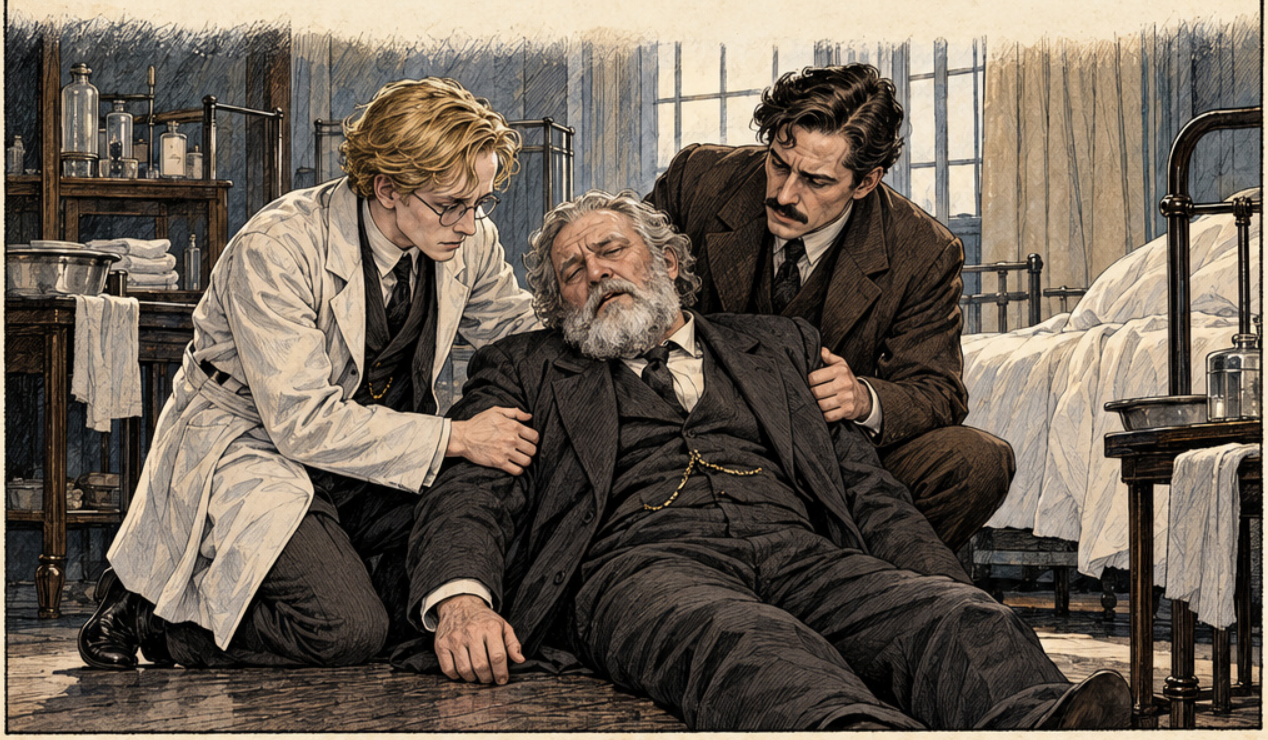
A NEW SUBJECT OPENED HIS EYES IN TERROR, THEN FELL STILL.



WE BARELY ESCAPED DISCOVERY. WEST BLAMED THE HEAT AND THE DELAY.



ON 14 AUGUST, HALSEY DIED.



ARKHAM BURIED ITS BENEFACTOR THE NEXT DAY.



STAY WITH ME TONIGHT.



AT TWO IN THE MORNING, THE LANDLADY SAW THREE MEN COME UPSTAIRS.



SHE THOUGHT WE HAD BEEN DRINKING.



AN HOUR LATER, SCREAMS WOKE THE HOUSE.

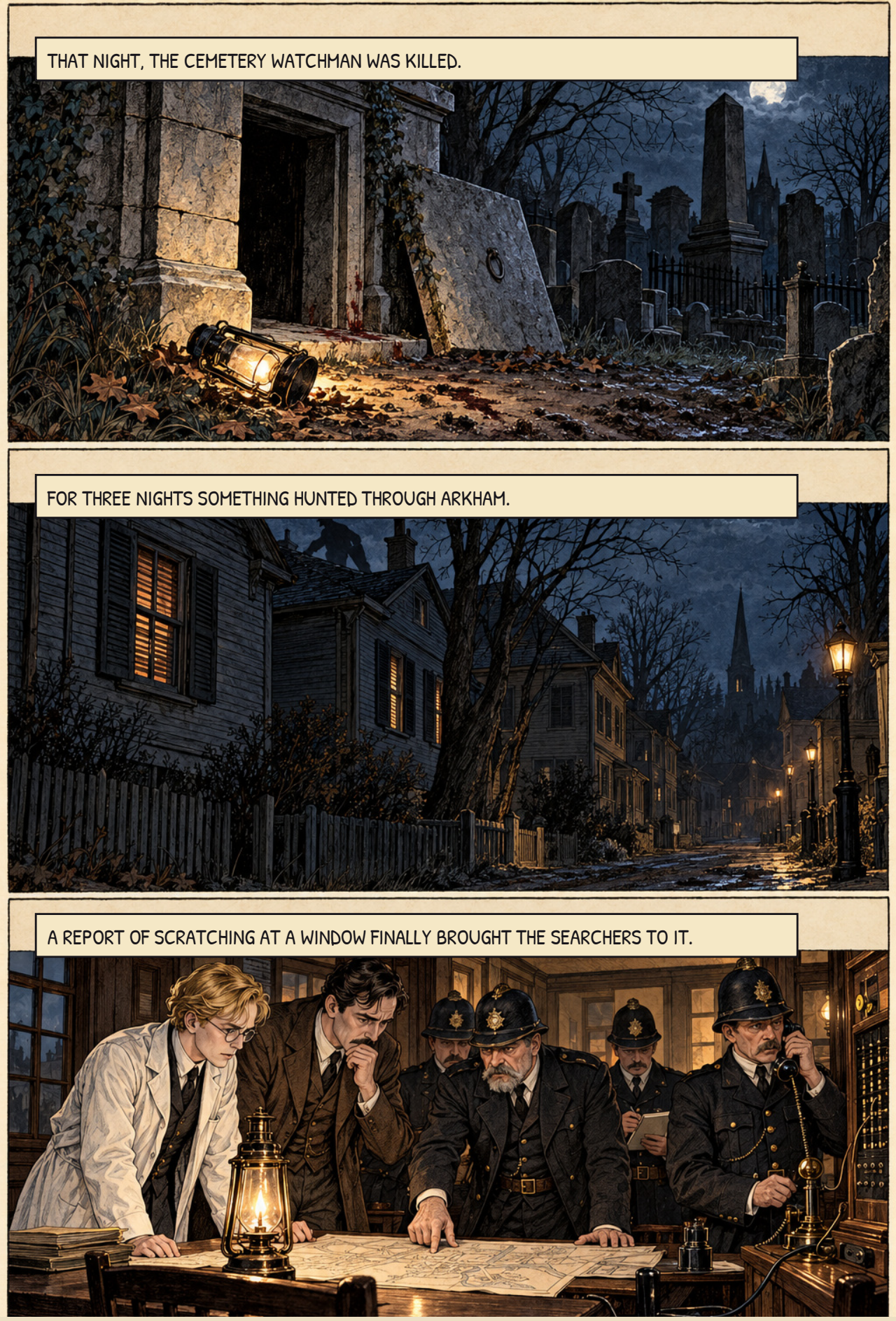


WE SAID A STRANGER FROM A BAR HAD ATTACKED US.



WEST HAD THE DISCARDED CLOTHES BURNED.




THAT NIGHT, THE CEMETERY WATCHMAN WAS KILLED.
FOR THREE NIGHTS SOMETHING HUNTED THROUGH ARKHAM.
A REPORT OF SCRATCHING AT A WINDOW FINALLY BROUGHT THE SEARCHERS TO IT.

THE CREATURE THEY SENT TO SEFTON ASYLUM HAD THE FACE OF DR. ALLAN HALSEY.





III. SIX SHOTS BY MIDNIGHT. IT IS UNCOMMON TO FIRE ALL SIX SHOTS OF A REVOLVER WITH GREAT SUDDENNESS WHEN ONE WOULD PROBABLY BE SUFFICIENT...



WE CHOSE THE COTTAGE FOR ITS DISTANCE FROM NEIGHBOURS AND ITS NEARNESS TO THE POTTER'S FIELD.

THERE WERE MORE PATIENTS THAN WE WANTED.



OUR REAL WORK CONTINUED BELOW THE HOUSE.



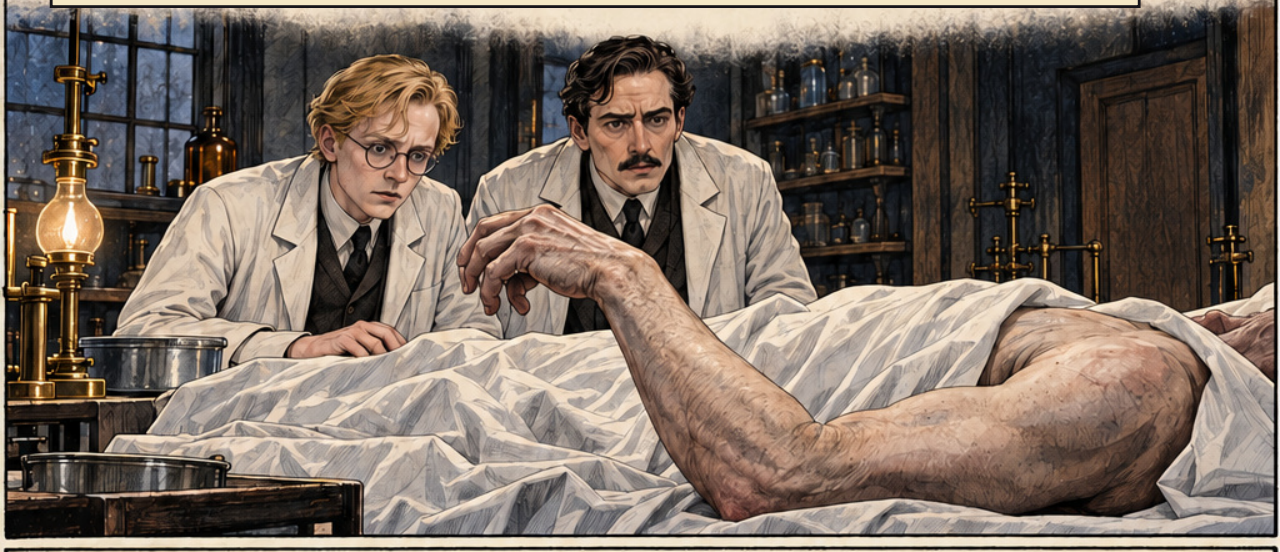
THE FIRST SUBJECT WAS STILL MISSING. HALSEY WAS STILL ALIVE IN HIS CELL.



SOME TRIALS PRODUCED MOVEMENT, ONCE AN ALMOST REASONABLE LOOK.



NONE RESTORED A WHOLE, CONSCIOUS LIFE.



THEN FRESH BODIES BECAME DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN.




ONE MARCH NIGHT, TWO MEN BROUGHT US TO A FORBIDDEN PRIZEFIGHT.
BUCK ROBINSON HAD BEEN KNOCKED DOWN.
HE WAS DEAD. THE FRIGHTENED CROWD WANTED THE AFFAIR CONCEALED.

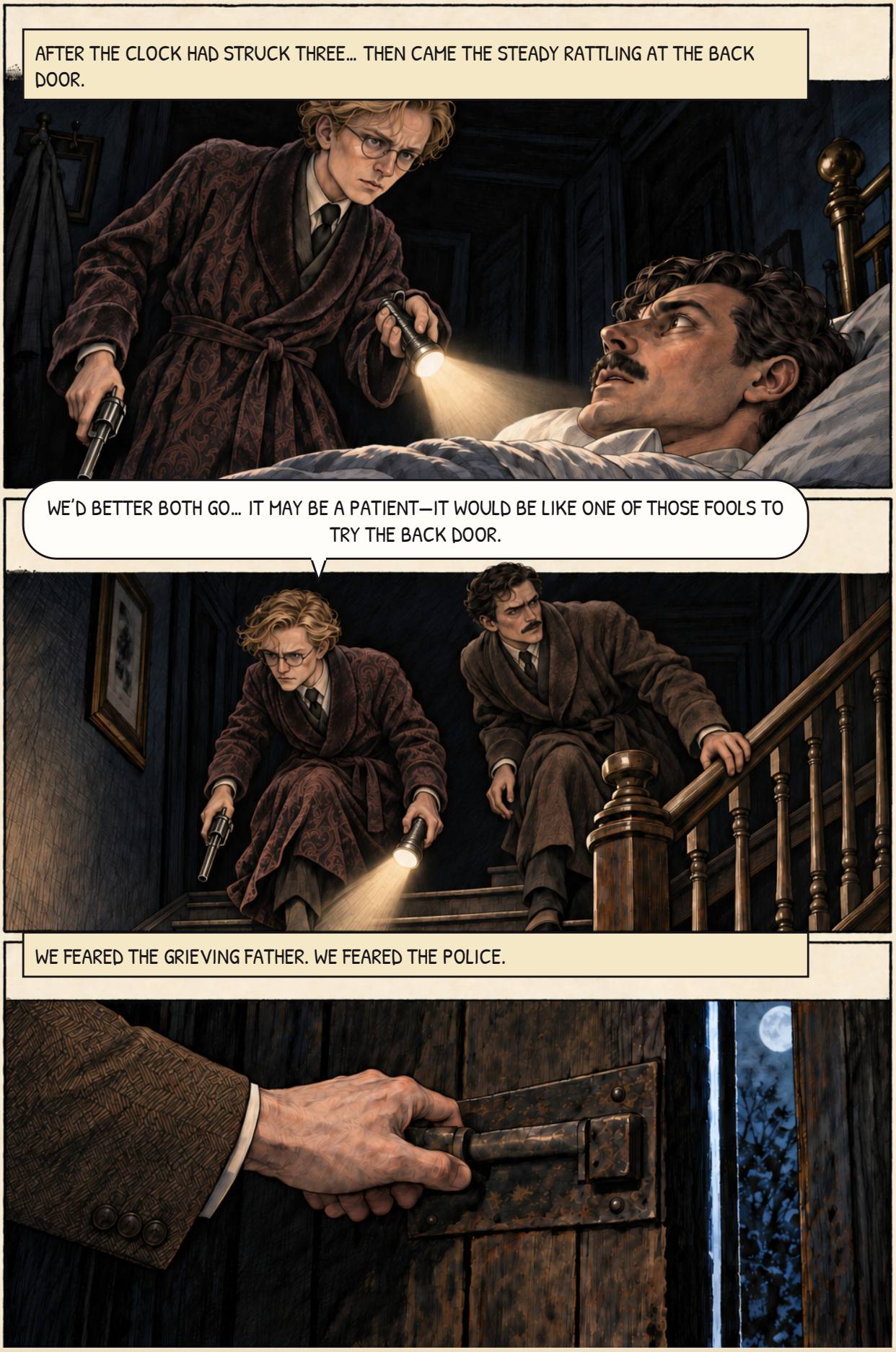
WEST OFFERED TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE BODY.



THE EXPERIMENT APPEARED TO FAIL.




BEFORE DAWN WE BURIED HIM AMONG THE TREES.
NEXT DAY A WOMAN SOUGHT HER MISSING FIVE-YEAR-OLD BOY.
HER WEAK HEART FAILED THAT EVENING. HER HUSBAND BLAMED WEST.


AFTER THE CLOCK HAD STRUCK THREE... THEN CAME THE STEADY RATTLING AT THE BACK DOOR.
WE'D BETTER BOTH GO... IT MAY BE A PATIENT—IT WOULD BE LIKE ONE OF THOSE FOOLS TO TRY THE BACK DOOR.
WE FEARED THE GRIEVING FATHER. WE FEARED THE POLICE.

IT WAS THE MAN WE HAD BURIED. WHAT WE SAW LEFT US NO HOPE FOR THE MISSING CHILD.



...MY FRIEND SUDDENLY, EXCITEDLY, AND UNNECESSARILY EMPTIED ALL SIX CHAMBERS OF HIS REVOLVER INTO THE NOCTURNAL VISITOR.



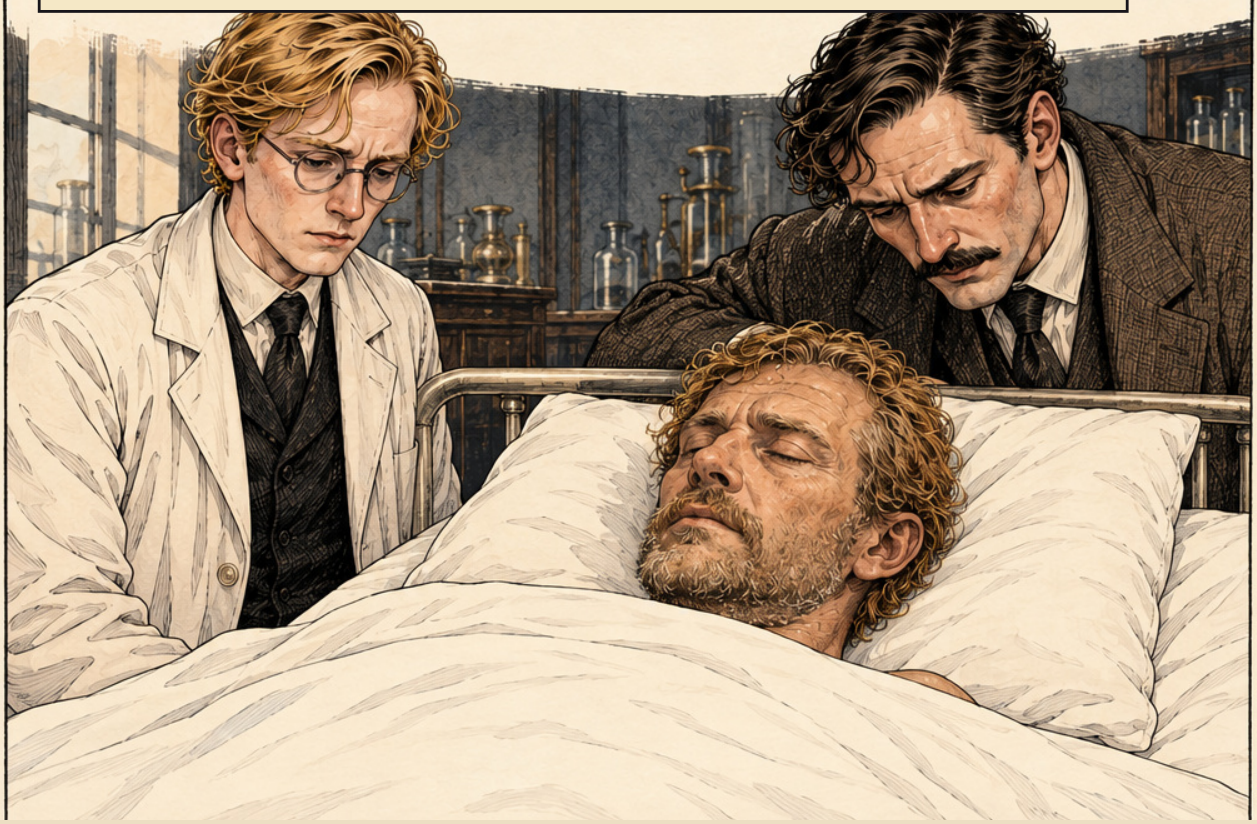

IV. THE SCREAM OF THE DEAD. JULY 1910. I RETURNED FROM A VISIT TO MY PARENTS.
WEST SAID HE HAD FINALLY SOLVED THE PROBLEM OF FRESHNESS.


HE HAD DEVELOPED A COMPOUND THAT COULD PRESERVE A BODY FOR WEEKS.
A VISITOR ASKED THE WAY TO THE MILLS. THEN HIS HEART GAVE OUT.
THAT WAS THE ACCOUNT WEST GAVE ME.

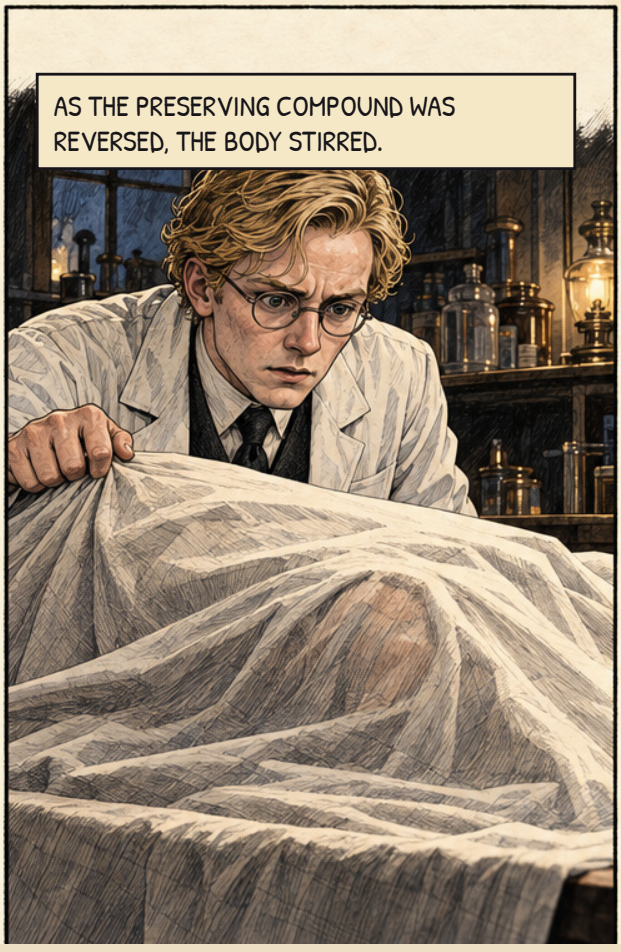
THE MAN WAS ROBERT LEAVITT OF ST. LOUIS, UNKNOWN IN BOLTON.

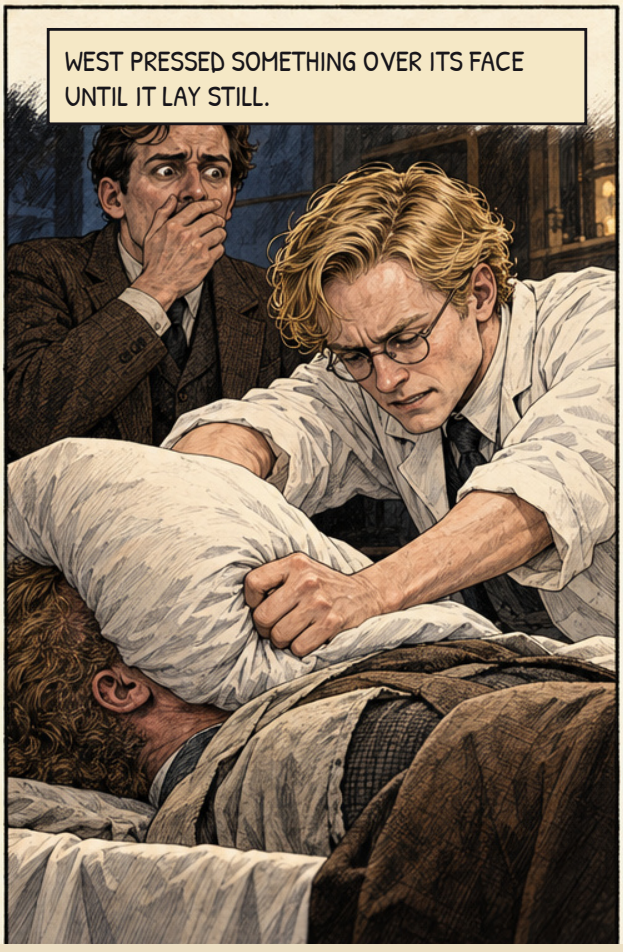


HE HAD LAIN THERE FOR TWO WEEKS WITHOUT CHANGING.

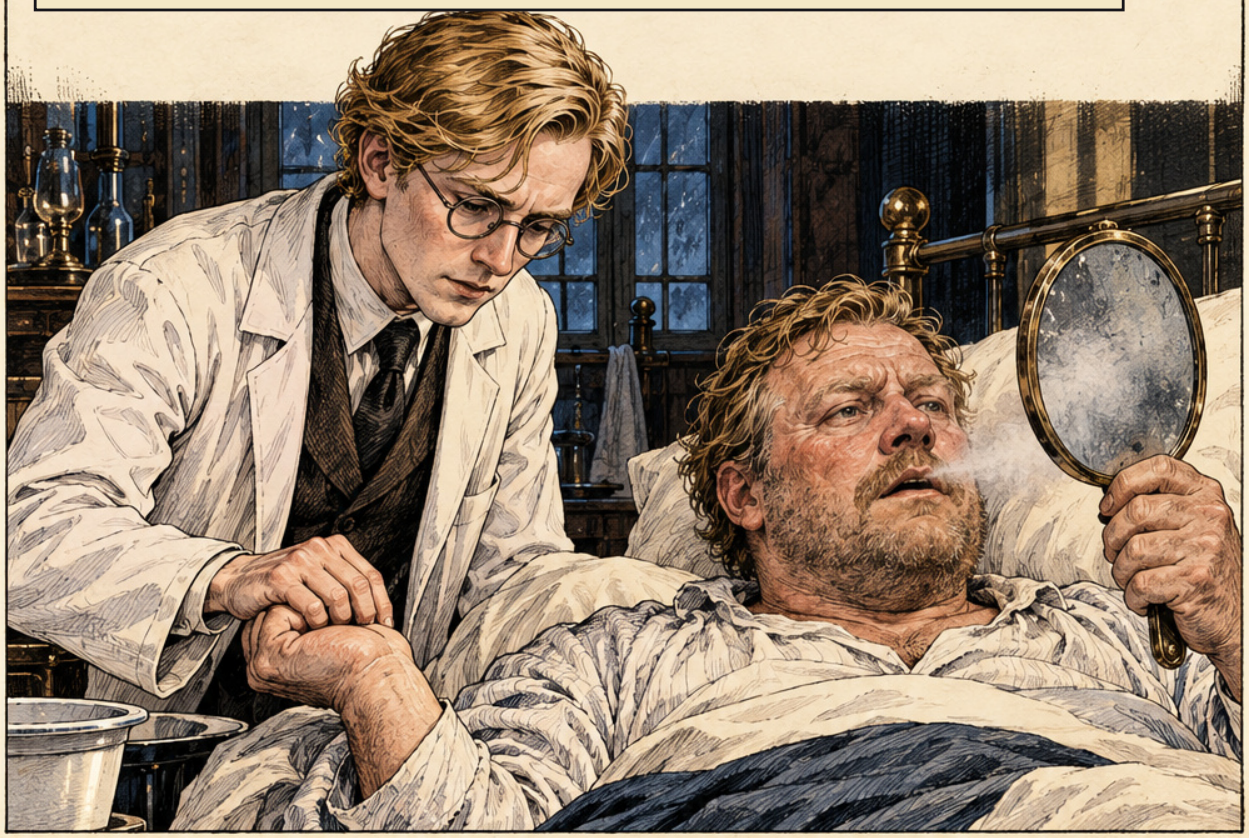



DO NOT TOUCH HIM. I MUST DO THIS MYSELF.


AS THE PRESERVING COMPOUND WAS REVERSED, THE BODY STIRRED.

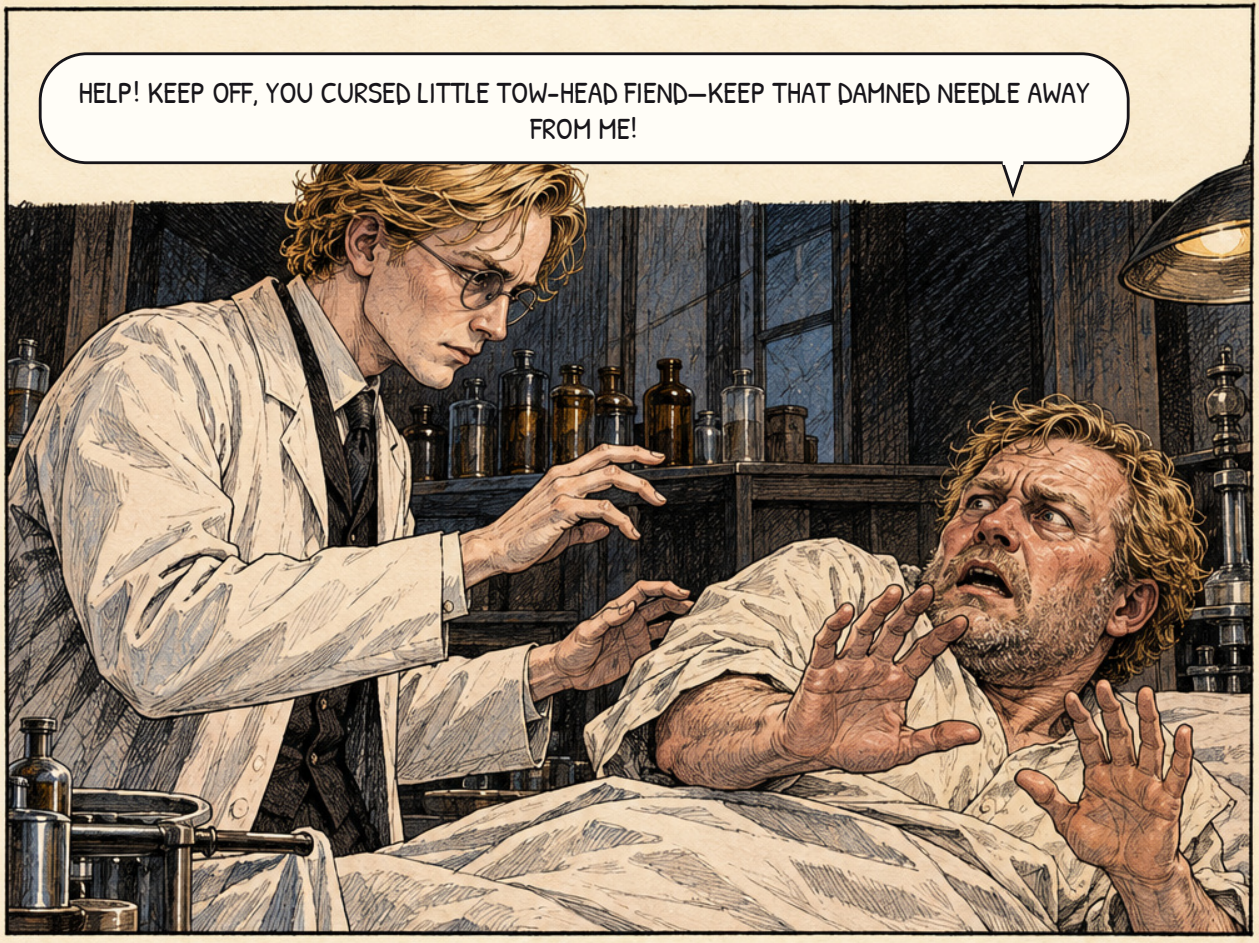

WEST PRESSED SOMETHING OVER ITS FACE UNTIL IT LAY STILL.

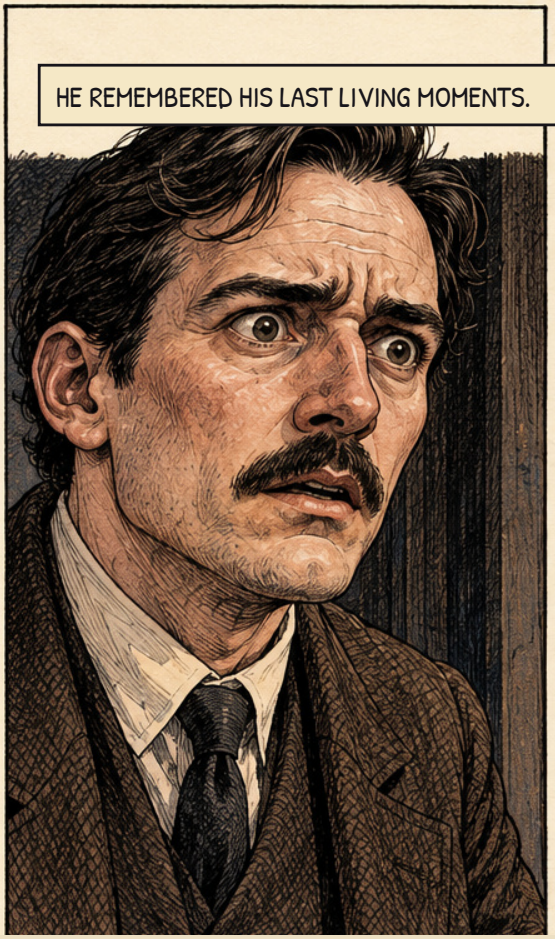
AFTER THE NEXT INJECTION, COLOUR RETURNED. THE CHEST BEGAN TO RISE.

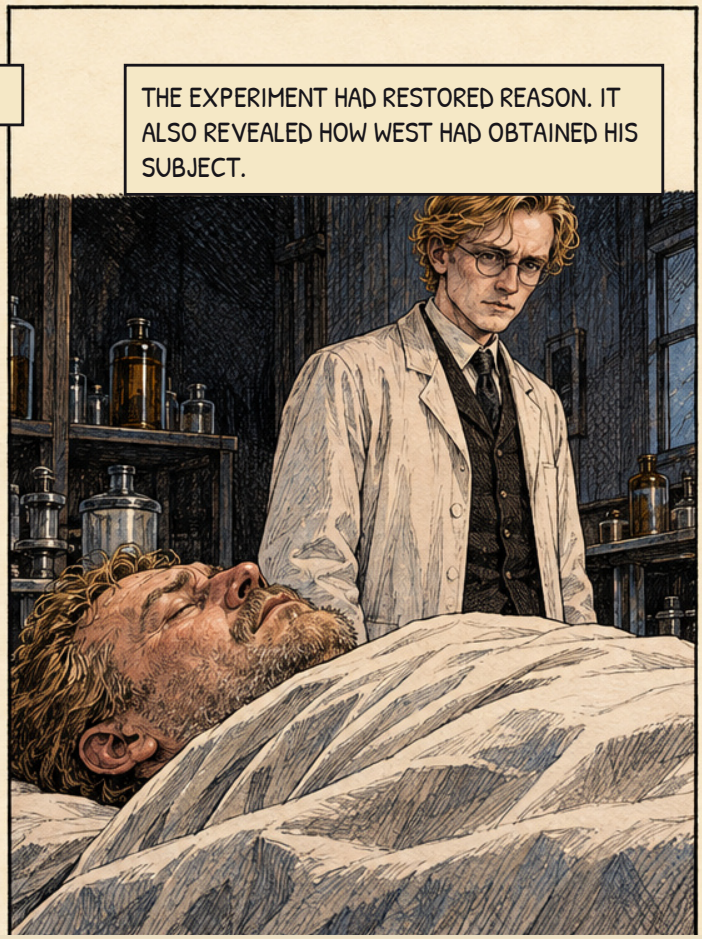


WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?




HELP! KEEP OFF, YOU CURSED LITTLE TOW-HEAD FIEND—KEEP THAT DAMNED NEEDLE AWAY FROM ME!


HE REMEMBERED HIS LAST LIVING MOMENTS.


THE EXPERIMENT HAD RESTORED REASON. IT ALSO REVEALED HOW WEST HAD OBTAINED HIS SUBJECT.

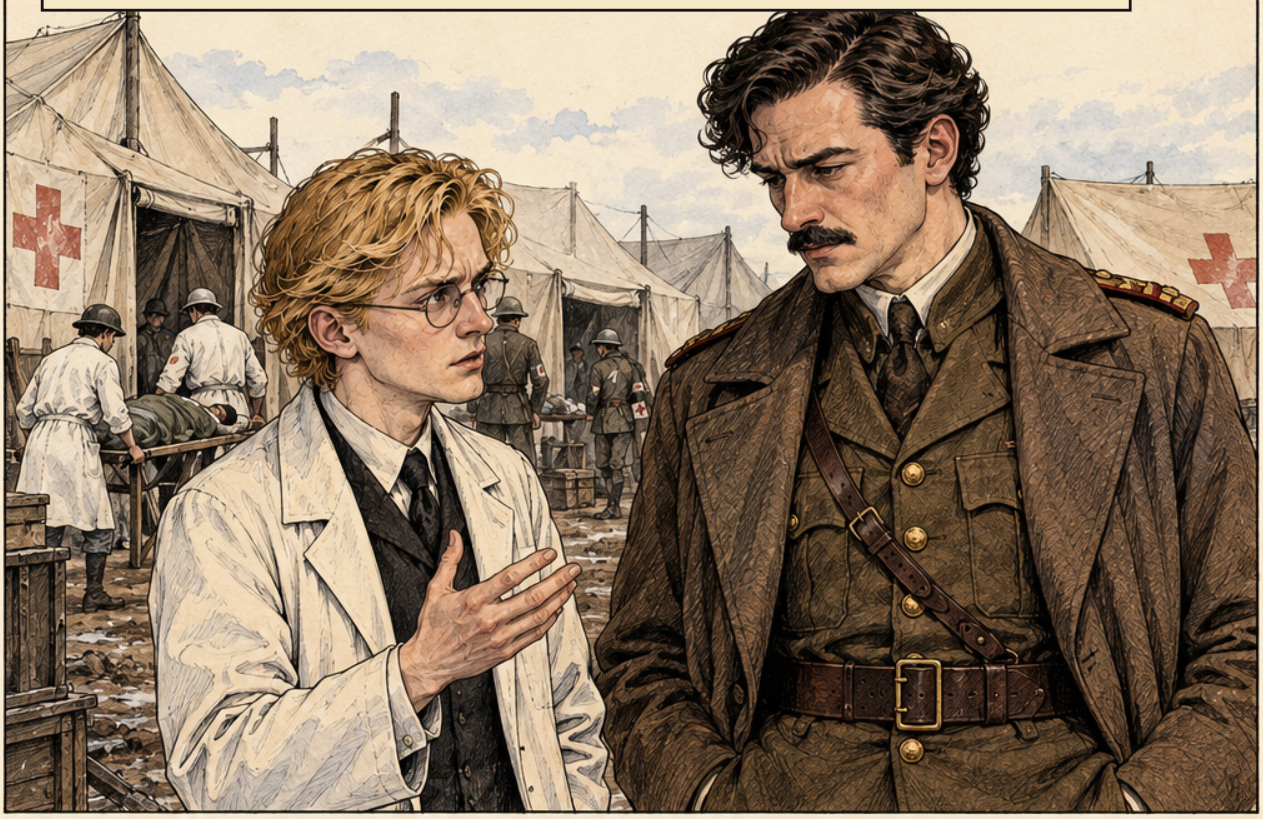
V. THE HORROR FROM THE SHADOWS. IN 1915 WE JOINED THE CANADIAN MEDICAL SERVICE.



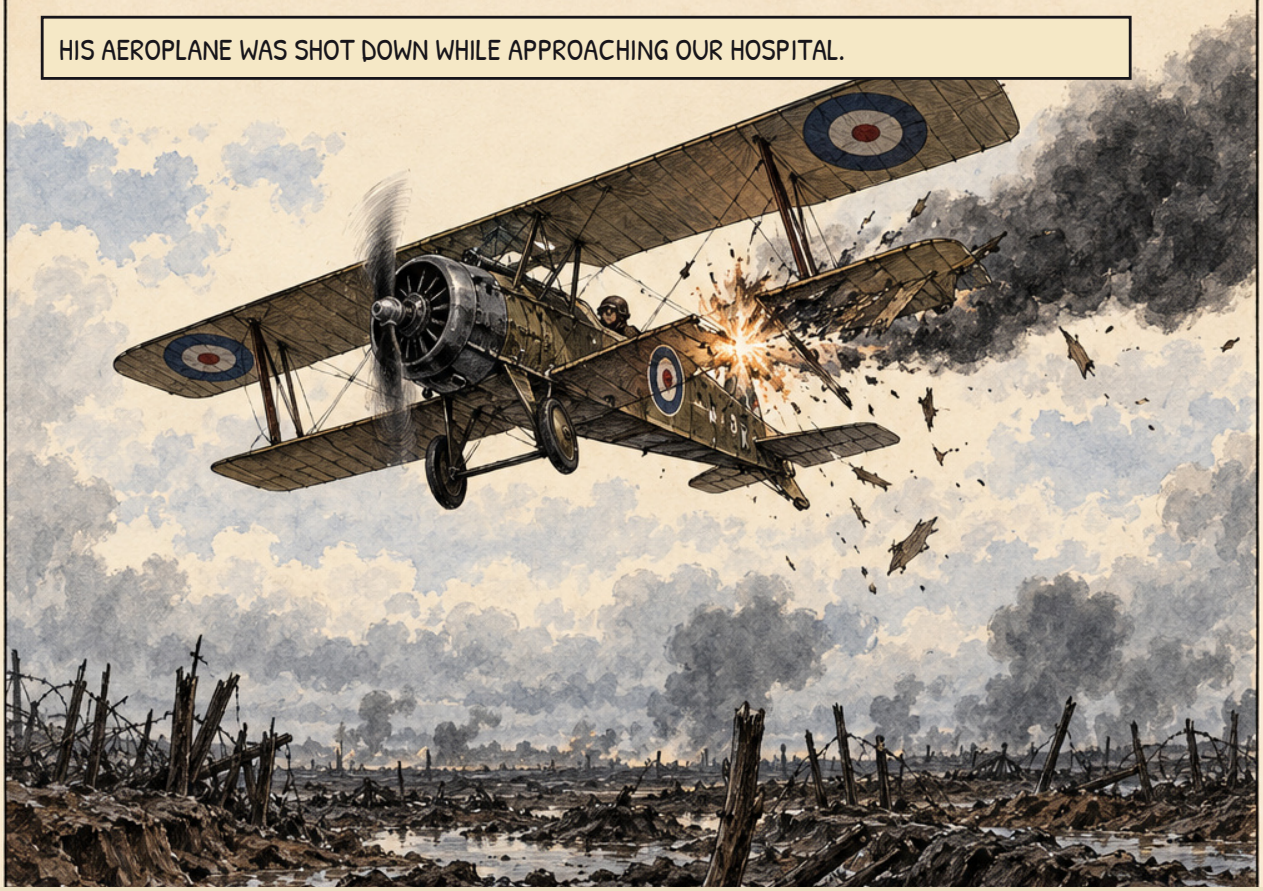
WEST WANTED THE WAR FOR WHAT IT COULD SUPPLY.


HE SOMETIMES SAVED LIVES BY EXTRAORDINARY SKILL.
IN PRIVATE HE STUDIED WHETHER SEPARATE PARTS COULD RETAIN LIFE AND THOUGHT.
A CULTURE OF REPTILE TISSUE SUSTAINED HIS MOST TERRIBLE EXPERIMENTS.

MAJOR SIR ERIC MORELAND CLAPHAM-LEE KNEW WEST'S THEORIES. HE MIGHT HAVE BECOME OUR COLLEAGUE.



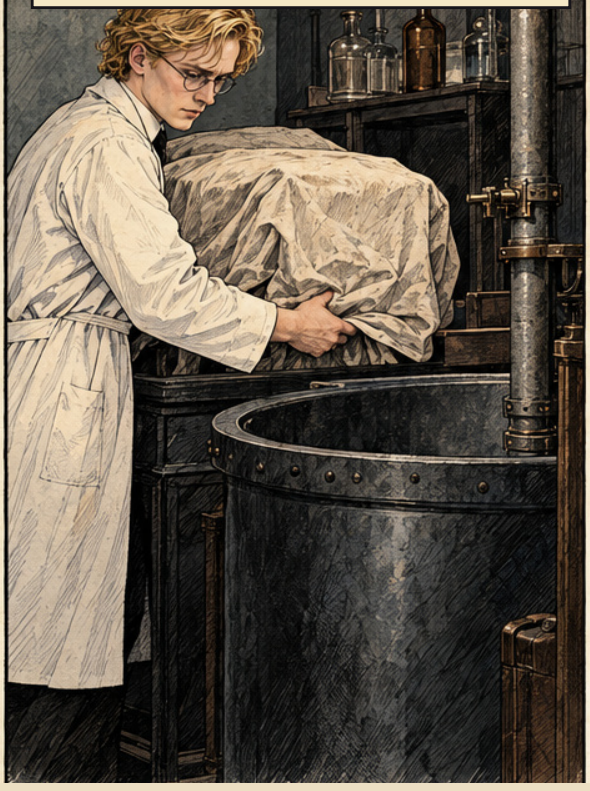
HIS AEROPLANE WAS SHOT DOWN WHILE APPROACHING OUR HOSPITAL.



CLAPHAM-LEE DIED IN THE CRASH.



WEST PRESERVED THE SEVERED HEAD SEPARATELY.



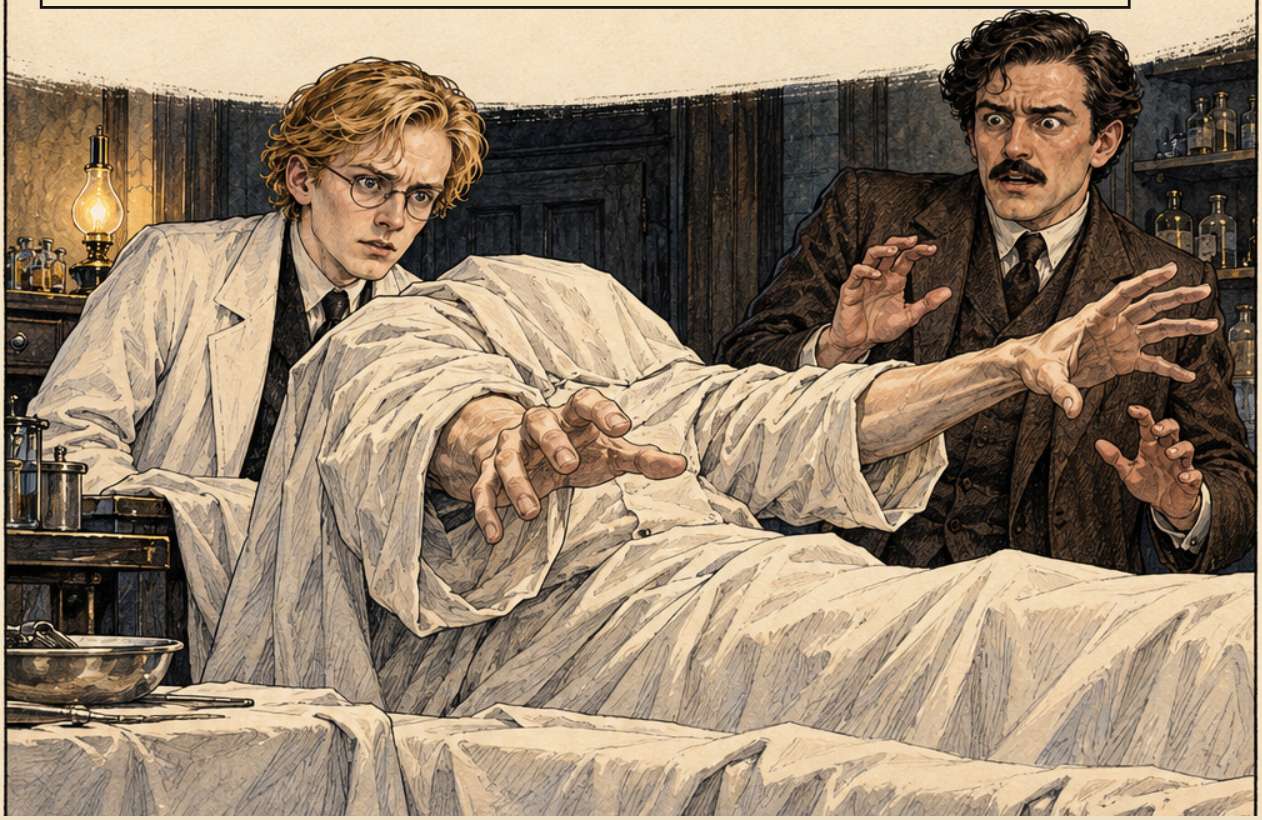
HE MEANT TO TEST WHETHER THE BODY COULD ACT WITHOUT IT.



THE LIMBS MOVED.

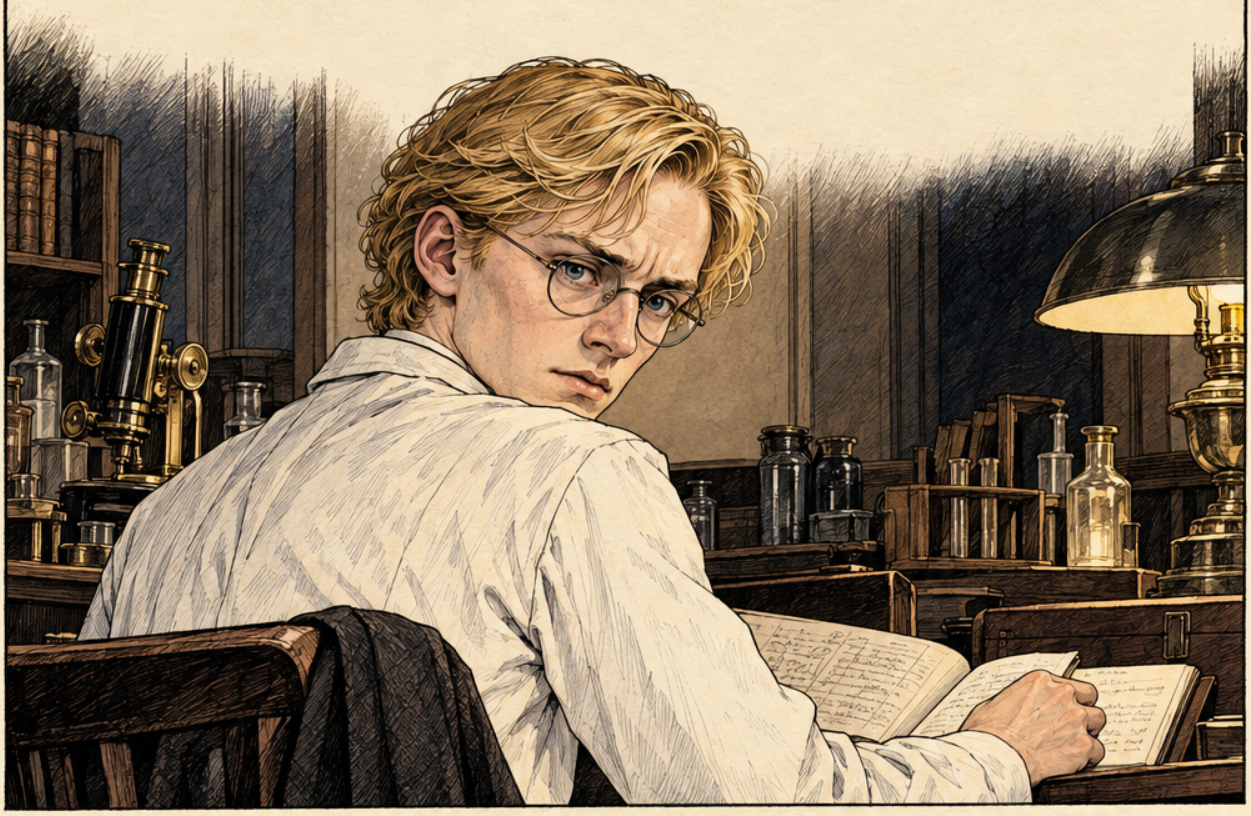


THEN THE ARMS REACHED AS IF STILL STRUGGLING TO ESCAPE THE FALLING PLANE.




JUMP, RONALD, FOR GOD'S SAKE, JUMP!
THE VOICE CAME FROM THE COVERED VAT.
A SHELL DESTROYED THE BUILDING. WE WERE THE ONLY SURVIVORS ANYONE COULD PROVE.

WEST COULD NEVER BE SURE THE OTHERS HAD DIED AGAIN.



CLAPHAM-LEE KNEW ENOUGH TO REPEAT HIS WORK.



VI. THE TOMB-LEGIONS. AFTER THE WAR, WEST CHOSE A HOUSE BESIDE AN ANCIENT BOSTON BURYING-GROUND.



BELOW IT HE BUILT A LABORATORY AND AN INCINERATOR.

THE WORKMEN REACHED MASONRY BENEATH THE OLD AVERILL TOMB.

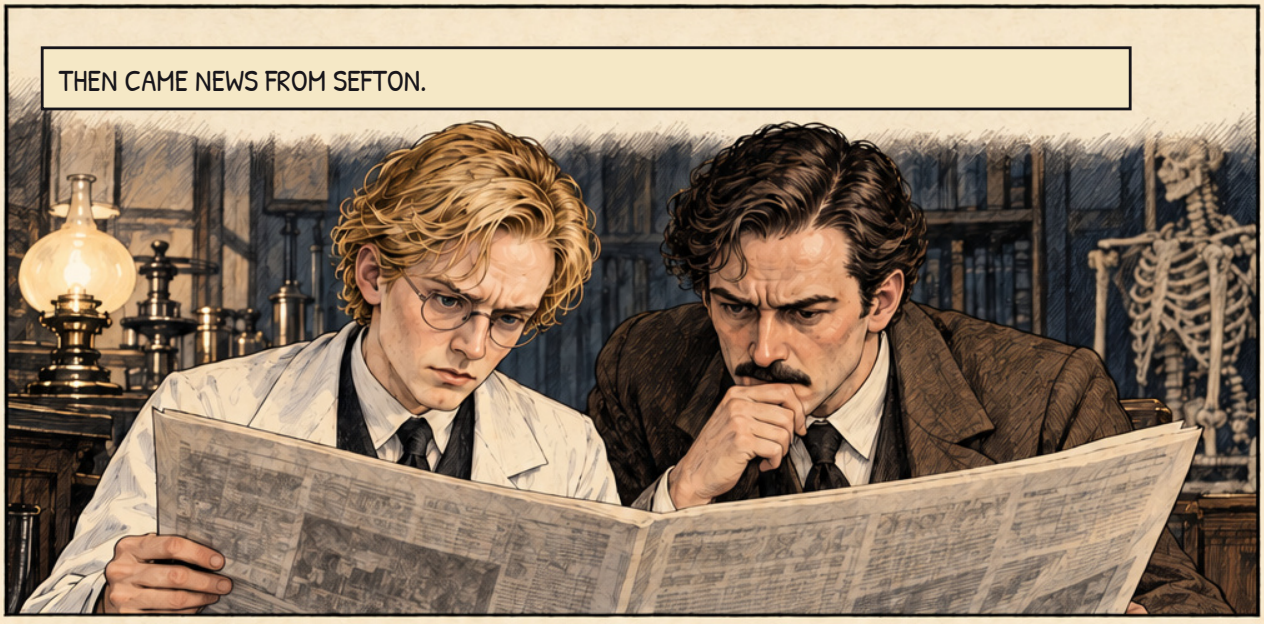


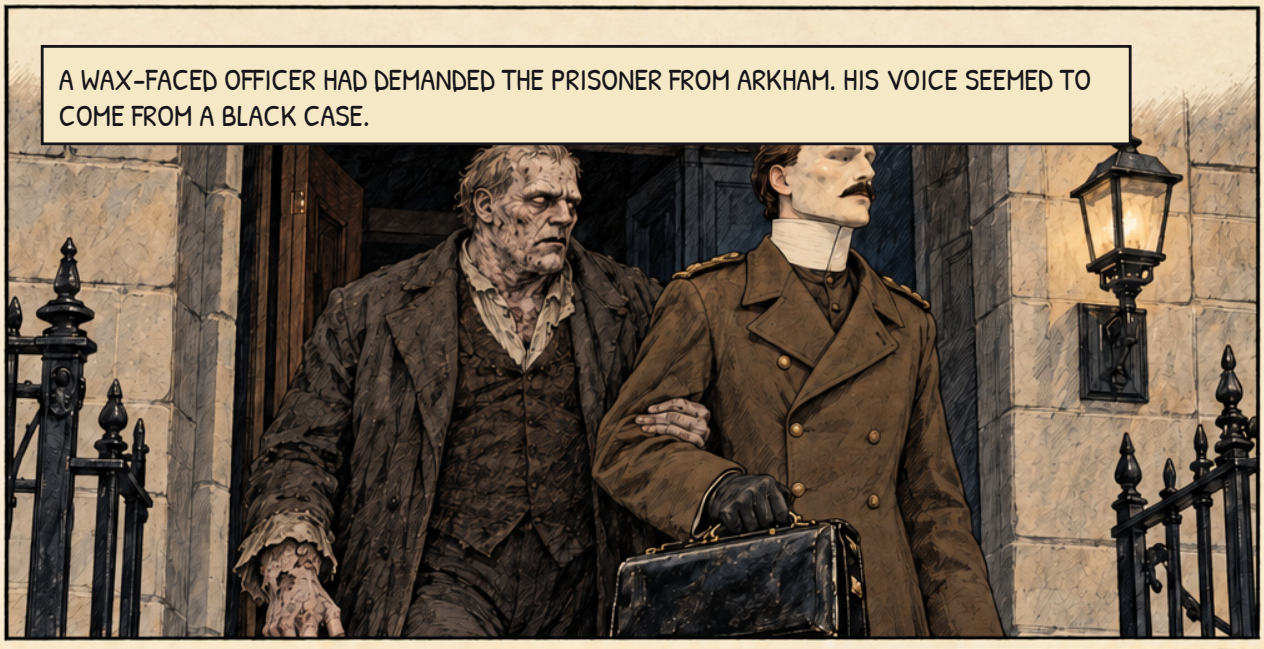
FOR ONCE, WEST REFUSED TO EXPLORE. HE HAD IT SEALED.

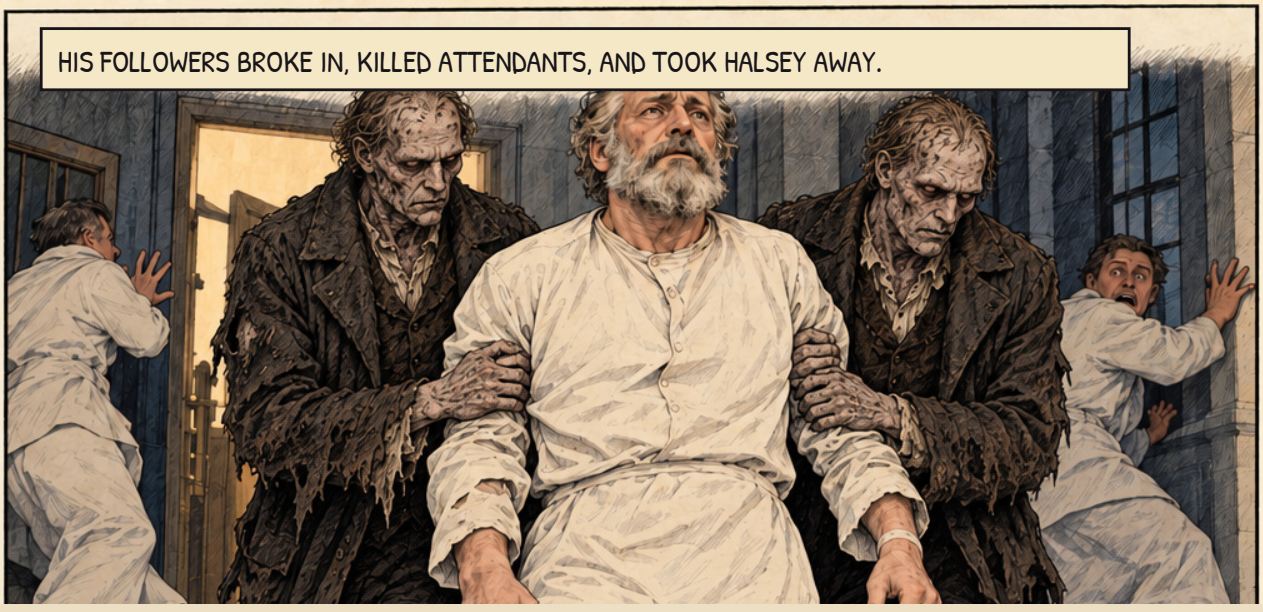


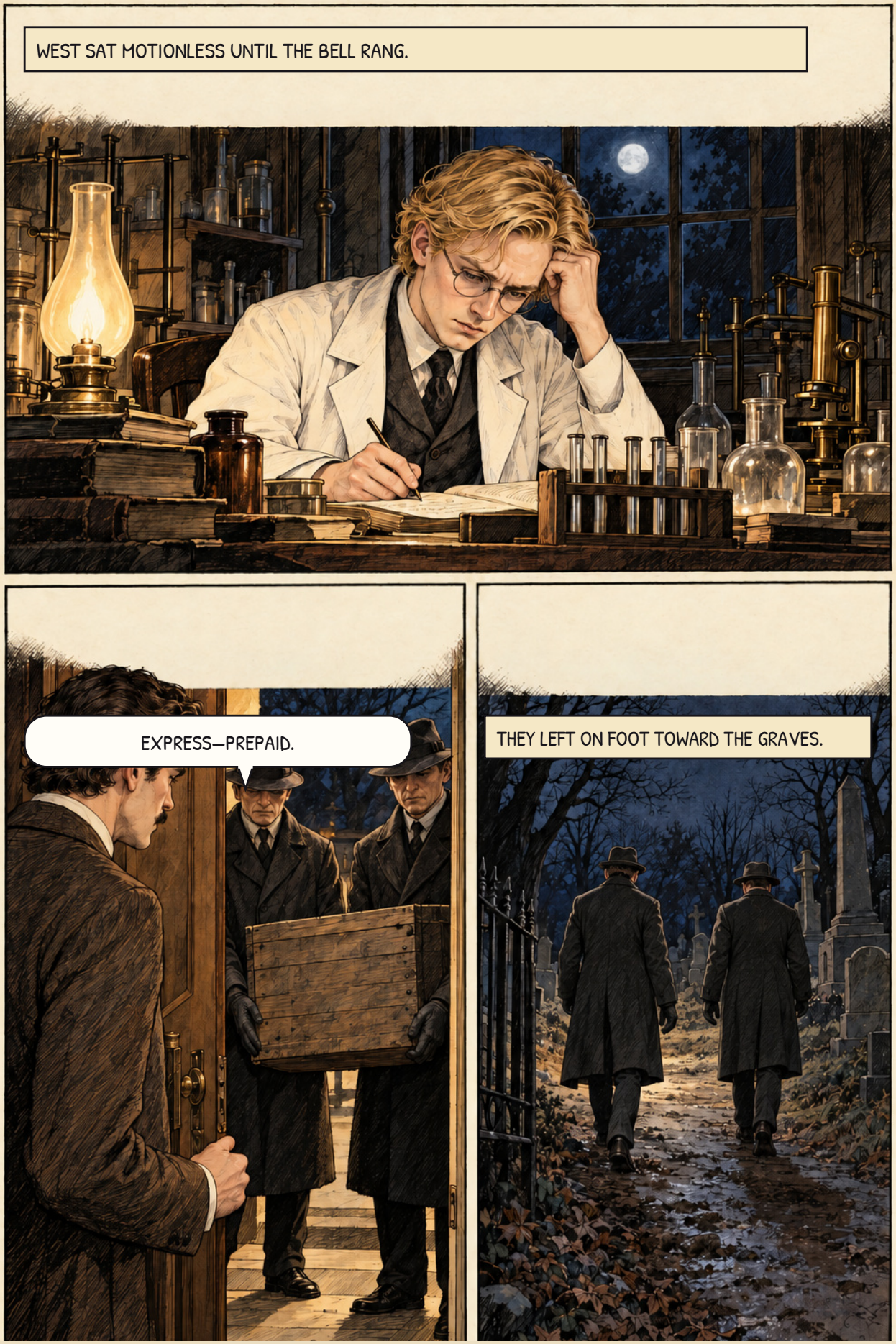
BY THEN I FEARED HIS GLANCES AS MUCH AS HIS EXPERIMENTS.




THEN CAME NEWS FROM SEFTON.


A WAX-FACED OFFICER HAD DEMANDED THE PRISONER FROM ARKHAM. HIS VOICE SEEMED TO COME FROM A BLACK CASE.


HIS FOLLOWERS BROKE IN, KILLED ATTENDANTS, AND TOOK HALSEY AWAY.


WEST SAT MOTIONLESS UNTIL THE BELL RANG.
EXPRESS—PREPAID.
THEY LEFT ON FOOT TOWARD THE GRAVES.


THE LABEL NAMED ITS SENDER: ERIC MORELAND CLAPHAM-LEE, ST. ELOI, FLANDERS.
IT'S THE FINISH—BUT LET'S INCINERATE—THIS.

WE BURNED THE BOX UNOPENED. NO SOUND CAME FROM IT.



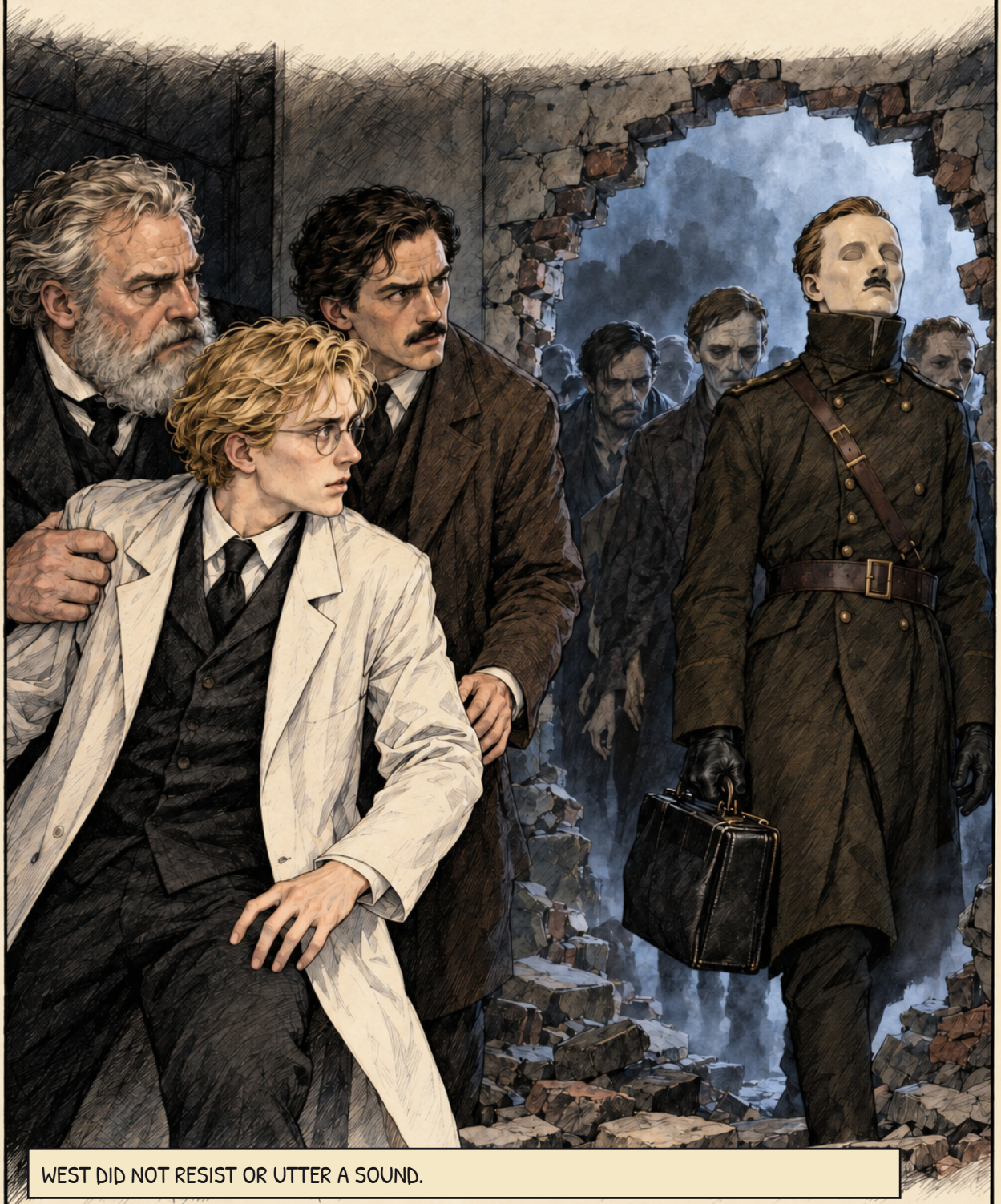
THEN PLASTER FELL FROM THE OLD WALL.



BEHIND IT, SOMETHING WAS TAKING THE STONES AWAY.



THEY CAME IN SINGLE FILE, WITHOUT A WORD.



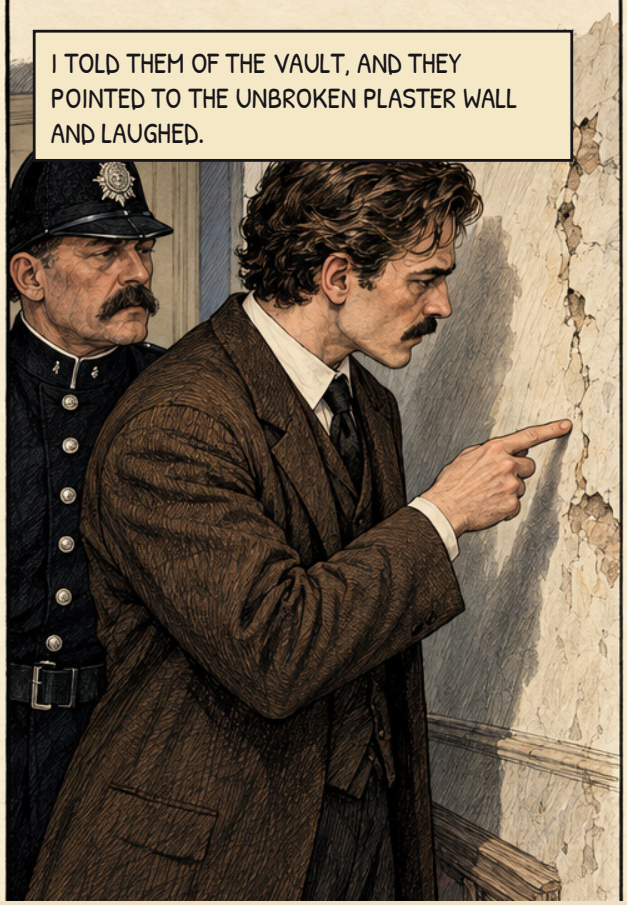
WEST DID NOT RESIST OR UTTER A SOUND.


THEY TORE HIM APART AND CARRIED HIM BACK INTO THE VAULT.
...THE BLUE EYES BEHIND THE SPECTACLES WERE HIDEOUSLY BLAZING WITH THEIR FIRST TOUCH OF FRANTIC, VISIBLE EMOTION.

SERVANTS FOUND ME UNCONSCIOUS IN THE MORNING. WEST WAS GONE. THE INCINERATOR CONTAINED ONLY UNIDENTIFIABLE ASHES.



I TOLD THEM OF THE VAULT, AND THEY POINTED TO THE UNBROKEN PLASTER WALL AND LAUGHED.



THEY IMPLY THAT I AM A MADMAN OR A MURDERER—PROBABLY I AM MAD. BUT I MIGHT NOT BE MAD IF THOSE ACCURSED TOMB-LEGIONS HAD NOT BEEN SO SILENT.

