**CHAPTER 17x Dr Kemp's Veesitor**

Dr. Kemp hid cairried on screivin in his study till the shots gart him steer. Crack, crack, crack, they cam ane efter the ither.

"Loshty!" quo Dr. Kemp, pittin his pen intae his moo again an lippenin. "Fa's lettin aff revolvers in Burdock? Fit are the gypes up tae noo?"

He gaed tae the sooth windae, rugged it up, an raxxin oot glowered doon on the netwirk o windaes, beaded gas-lichts an shoppiess, wi its blaik crossins o reef an yaird that wis the toon at nicht. "Luiks like a heeze o fowk doon the knowe," quo he, "bi 'The Cricketers,'" an bedd watchin. Syne his een wanneret ower the toon tae far awa far the ships' lichts glentit, an the pier glimmered--a thochtie lichtit up, sided pavilion like a gem o yalla licht. The meen in its first quarter hung ower the westwird knowe, an the starnies wir clear an near tropically bricht.

Efter five meenits, in which his harns hid traivelled intae a far-aff jelousin on social sett oot o the future, an tint itsel at last ower the time aspeck, Dr. Kemp steered himsel wi a maen, pued doon the windae again, an gaed back tae his screivin brod.

It maun hae bin aboot an oor efter this that the front-yett bell rang. He’d bin screivin slaw, an wi brakks o thochtfuness, since the shots. He sat lippenin. He heard the maidie lowse the yett, an wyted fur her feet on the staircase, bit she didnae cam"Winner fit thon wis," quo Dr. Kemp.

He ettled tae restert his wirk, cudnae, got up, gaed doonstairs frae his study tae the lobby, rang, an cried ower the banister tae the hoosemaid as she appeared in the haa aneth. "Wis thon a letter?" he speired.

"Anely a rinawa ring, sir," she reponed.

"I'm jittery the-nicht," quo he tae himsel. He gaed back tae his study, an this time attackit his wirk weel. In a wee while he wis hard at wirk again, an the anely souns in the chaumer wir the tickin o the clock an the teenie shrillness o his quill, hashin in the verra mids o the cercle o licht his lampshade threw on his brod.

It wis twa o'clock afore Dr. Kemp hid feenished his wirk fur the nicht. He raise, yawned, an gaed doonstairs tae bed. He’d already taen aff his jaiket an sark, fin he noticed that he wis drouthy. He tuik a caunle an gaed doon tae the dinin-chaumer sikkin a syphon an fuskey.

Dr. Kemp's scientific lear hid made him a verra gleg chiel, an as he gaed again ower the haa, he tuik tent o a derk merk on the lino near the basse at the fit o the stairs. He gaed on upstairs, an syne it o suddenty cam tae him tae winner fit the merk on the lino micht be. Nae doot some subconscious ferlie wis at wirk. At ony rate, he furled wi his gaitherins, gaed back tae the haa, pit doon the syphon an fuskey, an booin doon, touched the merk. Wioot ony great begeck he fand it hid the steekiness an colour o dryin bluid.

He tuik up his gaitherins again, an gaed back upstairs, luikin about him an ettlin tae accoont fur the bluid-merk. On the lobby he saw somethin an stoppit bumbazed. The yett-haunle o his ain chaumer wis bluid-merked.

He luikit at his ain haun. It wis richt clean, an syne he myndit that the yett o his chaumer hid bin ajee fin he cam doon frae his study, sae that he hidnae touched the haunle at aa. He gaed straicht intae his chaumer, his face rael calm—mebbe a bittie stranger than ordnar. His glisk, wannerin wi ill faschence, drappit on the bed. On the coonterpane wis a soss o bluid, an the sheet hid bin rived. He hidnae taen tento this afore because he’d wauked straicht tae the dressin-brod. On the far side the bedclaes wir wrunkled as gin somebody’d bin recently sittin thonner.

Syne he hid a fey impression that he’d heard a laigh vyce say, "Loshty!--Kemp!" Bit Dr. Kemp wis nae believer in vyces.

He stude glowerin at the fummlit sheets. Wis thon really a vye? He luikit aboot again, bit saw naethin farrer than the bumshayvelt an bluid-merked bed. Syne he clearly heard a meevement ben the chaumer, near the wash-haun staun. Aa chiels, hooever heichly educatit, keep some superstitious thochts. The feelin that is caaed "eildritch" cam on him. He steekit the yett o the chaumer, cam forrit tae the dressin-brod, an pit doon his gaitherins. O a suddenty, wi a yark, he spied a furled an bluid-merked bandage o linen cloot hingin in mid-air, atween him an the wash- haun staun.

He glowed at this bumbazed. It wis a teem bandage, a bandage rowed richt bit teem. He wid hae gaen forrit tae cleuk it, bit a touch stoppit him, an a vyce spikkin unca nearhaun him.

"Kemp!" quo the Vyce.

"Fit?" speired Kemp, wi his mou open.

"Bide calm," reponed the Vyce. "I'm an Inveesible Chiel."

Kemp vrocht nae repon fur a bittie, jist glowered at the bandage.

"Inveesible Chiel," quo he.

"I’m an Inveesible Chiel," repeatit the Vyce.

The tale he’d bin keen tae lauch at anely thon mornin breenged throwe Kemp's harns. He disnae seem tae hae bin either verra frichtened or verra greatly bumbazed at the meenit. Kennin cam later.

"I thocht it wis aa a lee," quo he. The thocht uppermaist in his harns wis the repeatit argyments o the mornin. "Hae ye a bandage on?" he speired.

"Aye," quo the Inveesible Chiel.

"Och!" cried Kemp, an syne steered himsel. "Loshty!" he gaed on. "Bit this is styte. It's some plisky." He steppit forrit o a suddenty, an his haun, raxxed tae the bandage, met inveesible fingers. He lowpit back at the touch an his colour cheenged.

"Bide steidy, Kemp, fur Gweed's sake! I wint help sairly. Devaul!"

The haun grippit his airm. He strukk at it.

"Kemp!" cried the Vyce. "Kemp! Bide steidy!" an the grip tichtened.

A forcie wint tae lowse himsel tuik Kemp ower. The haun o the bandaged airm grippit his shouder, an he wis o a suddenty cowpit an haived backweys on the bed. He unsteekit his mou tae skirl, an the neuk o the sheet wis haived atween his teeth. The Inveesible Chiel hid him doon strang, bit his airms wir free an he strull an ettled tae kick it coorsely.

"Lippen tae rizzon, will ye?" quo the Inveesible Chiel, bidin wi him barrin a duntin in the ribs. "Bi Heiven! ye'll roose me in a meenit!

"Lie quaet, ye gype!" skirled the Inveesible Chiel in Kemp's lug.

Kemp warssled fur anither meenit an syne lay quaet.

"Gin ye skreich, I'll blooter yer face," spakk the Inveesible Chiel, relievin his mou.

"I'm an Inveesible Chiel. It's nae gypitness, an nae magick. I really am an Inveesible Chiel. An I wint yer help. I dinna wint tae hurt ye, bit gin ye behave like a glekit teuchter, I maun. Dae ye nae mynd me, Kemp? Griffin, o Univarsity College?"

"Lat me win up," quo Kemp. "I'll bide far I am. An lat me sit quaet fur a meenit."

He sat up an felt his thrapple.

"I’m Griffin, o Univarsity College, an I’ve made masel inveesible. I’m jist an ordnar chiel--a chiel ye hae kent—made inveesible."

"Griffin?" speired Kemp.

"Griffin," reponed the Vyce. A younger student than ye wir, near an albino, sax feet heich, an braid, wi a pink an fite face an reid een, fa won the medal fur chemistry."

"I’m dumfounert," quo Kemp. "Ma harns are in a lowe. Fit his this tae dae wi Griffin?"

"I’m Griffin."

Kemp thocht. "It's gruesome," he reponed. "Bit fit deevilry maun happen tae make a chiel inveesible?"

"It's nae deevilry. It's a method, sane an clivver eneuch--"

"It's ugsome!" quo Kemp. "Foo the deil--?"

"It's ugsome eneuch. Bit I'm hurtit an in pain, an ferfochan ... Loshty! Kemp, ye’re a chiel. Takk it steidy. Gie me some maet an drink, an lat me sit doon here."

Kemp glowered at the bandage as it meeved ben the chaumer, syne saw a basket cheer ruggit ower the fleer an cam tae reist near the bed. It craikit, an the seat wis settled doon a quarter o an inch or sae. He rubbit his een an felt his thrapple again. "Thon beats ghaists," quo he, an leuch daft-like.

"Thon's better. Thank Heiven, ye’re growin mensefu!"

"Or gyte," spakk Kemp, an knuckled his een.

"Gie me some fuskey. I'm near deid."

"It didnae feel sae. Far are ye? Gin I get up will I rin intae ye?

Thonner! aa richt. Fuskey? Here. Far will I gie it tae ye?"

The cheer skreiched an Kemp felt the glaiss drawn awa frae him. He lat gae bi a tyauve; his instinck wis aa agin it. It cam tae reist hingin twinty inches abune the front edge o the dowp o the cheer. He glowered at it in unca winnerment. "This is—this maun be--hypnotism. Ye hae suggestit ye’re inveesible."

"Styte," spakk the Voice.

"It's ayont wud."

"Lippen tae me."

"I shawed clear this mornin," stertit Kemp, "that inveesibility--"

"Niver heed fit ye've shawed!--I'm sterved," quo the Vyce, "an the nicht is jeelin tae a chiel wioot claes."

"Maet?" quo Kemp.

The tummler o fuskey cowpit itsel. "Aye," quo the Inveesible Chiel chappit it doon. "Hae ye a dressin-goun?"

Kemp mummlit some wirds in a fusper. He wauked tae a press an tuik oot a robe o mochy crammosie. "Will this dae?" he speired. It wis taen frae him. It hung fooshunless fur a meenit in mid-air, flichtered eildritch, stude fu an modest buttonin itsel, an sat doon in his cheer.

"Breeks, hose, safties wid be comfy," quo the Unseen, sherpish. "An maet."

"Onythin. Bit this is the wudest ferlie I iver wis in, in ma life!"

He turned oot his drawers fur the claes, an syne gaed doonstairs tae rype his larder. He cam back wi a puckle cauld cuts an breid, pued up a licht brod, an plunked them afore his guest. "Niver mynd knives," quo his veesitor, an a cutlet hung in mid-air, wi a soun o gnawin.

"Inveesible!" quo Kemp, an sat doon on a bedroom cheer.

"I aaye like tae get somethin aboot me afore I ett," reponed the Inveesible Chiel, wi a full mou, ettin gutsy. "Fey notion!"

"I jelouse thon wrist is aa richt," spakk Kemp.

"Trust me," quo the Inveesible Chiel.

"O aa the fremmit an winnerfu--"

"Jist say. Bit it's fey I should hyter intae yer hoose tae get ma bandagin. Ma first straik o guid chauce! Onywey I meant tae sleep in this hoose the-nicht. Ye maun staun thon! It's a dashed scunner, ma bluid shawin, is it nae? A richt clot ower there. Gets veesible as it thickens, I see. It's anely the leevin tissue I've cheenged, an anely fur as lang as I'm leevin.... I've bin in the hoose three oors."

"Bit foo's it dane?" stertit Kemp, in a tone o scunner. "Dash it! The hale maitter--it's unrizzonable frae stert tae eyn."

"Quite rizzonable," quo the Inveesible Chiel. "Perfeckly rizzonable."

He raxxed ower an grippit the fuskey bottle. Kemp glowered at the devourin dressin goun. A ray o caunle-licht gaed throw a rivven swatch in the richt shouder, vrocht a triangle o licht unner the left ribs. "Fit wir the shots?" he speired. "Foo did the sheetin stert?"

"There wis a rael gype o a chiel--a kinno fier o mine--bann him!--fa ettled tae chore ma siller. His dane sae."

"Is he inveesible as weel?"

"Na."

"Weel?"

"Can I hae some mair tae ett afore I tell ye aa thon? I'm hungeret--in pain. An ye wint me tae tell tales!"

Kemp raise up. "Ye didnae dae ony sheetin?" he speired.

"Nae me," quo his veesitor. "Some gype I'd niver seen shot at random. A rowth o them grew feart. They aa got feart o me. Ban them!--I say--I wint mair tae ett than thon, Kemp."

"I'll see fit there is tae ett doonstairs," cried Kemp. "Nae muckle, I'm feart."

Efter he’d dane ettin, an he made a wechty meal, the Inveesible Chiel socht a cigar. He bit the eyn rochly afore Kemp could finn a knife, an banned fin the ooter leaf lowsened. It wis fey tae see him smokin; his mou, an thrapple, pharynx an nares, becam veesible as a kinno furlin rikk.

"This blessed pleisur o smokin!" quo he, an puffed forcie. "I'm lucky tae hae met wi ye, Kemp. Ye maun help me. Fancy tummlin on ye eenoo! I'm in a deevilish wey-I've bin gyte, I think. The things I’ve bin throwe! Bit we’ll dae things yet. Lat me tell ye--"

He helpit himsel tae mair fuskey an soda. Kemp raise up, luikit aboot him, an fetched a glaiss frae his spare chaumer. "It's wud—bit I jelouse I micht drink."

"Ye hinna cheenged muckle, Kemp, thon dizzen years. Ye fair men dinna. Cweel an methodical--efter the first begeck. I maun tell ye. We’ll wirk thegether!"

"Bit foo wis it aa dane?" speired Kemp, "an foo did ye turn like this?"

"Losh be here, lat me smoke in quaet fur a wee whylie! An syne I’ll stert tae tell ye."

Bit the tale wisnae telt thon nicht. The Inveesible Chiel's wrist wis growin painfu; he wis feverish, ferfochan, an his thochts cam roun tae mope on his chase doon the knowe an the warssle aboot the howf. He spakk in bitticks o Mervel, he smokit faister, his vyce grew roosed. Kemp ettled tae gaither fit he could.

"He wis feart o me, I could see that he wis feart o me’ quo the Inveesible Chiel mony times ower. "He meant tae gie me the slip—he wis aywis castin aboot! Fit a gype I wis!

"The vratch!

"I should hae killt him!"

"Far did ye get the siller?" speired Kemp, sherp like.

The Inveesible Chiel wis seelent fur a whylie. "I canna tell ye the-nicht," quo he.

He maened o a suddenty an raxxed forrit, supportin his inveesible heid on inveesible hauns. "Kemp," he spakk, "I've hid nae sleep fur near three days, barrin a couple o dwaums o an oor or sae. I maun sleep soon."

"Weel, hae ma chaumer--hae this chaumer."

"Bit foo can I sleep? Gin I sleep—he’ll get awa. Fyauch! Fit dis it maitter?"

"Fi's the shot skath?" speired Kemp, sherp.

"Naethin--scart an bluid. Oh, Loshty! Foo I wint sleep!"

"Foo nae?"

The Inveesible Chiel appeared tae be regairdin Kemp. "Because I've a partic’lar wirry o bein catched bi ma fiers," quo he slaw.

Kemp jinkit.

"Gype that I am!" cried the Inveesible Chiel, strikkin the brod smert. "I've pit the thocht intae yer heid."