

sky. Gazing...touching the brick...to the fence snared in periphery... He starts, then turns, and to the street, and theatre front: **DISCOVER FOR YOURSELF THE BIZARRE** walls obscuring remains. Unanswered beginnings and pale cannisters of refuse lie overturned within doorway. HE LOOKED BACK. A bird...suddenly to his startled sight, falls from perch and cleft, and lies convulsing in oil pools. A box of bleached wood nearby, overturned. He listens. Footsteps. And bends, lifts the twisting feathermass, moulded flesh soft to touch with dying sound afaint to sense. A faceless child runs off alleywise, slingshot trailing in hand. The child's laughter lost in distant screech of tire. Feathertips stained of tar, stiffen.

"Hey, boy," a sudden hollow rasping voice calls out behind second floor stained shade. "Why don't you toss 'im up here!"
Who? Blind window shade.

"We could split 'im down the middle an' have sum lunch!"

"Pigeon?"

"Boy! Where you been? That's a pignon! The thing to eat such nowadays!"

"We never ate no pignons..."

"You want facts?"

"Ain't got the time," parched lips strain, mutter.

"Then git! And what you here for anyhow?"

"Just on my way to Rosebloom's..." to explain.

"Haw! You want facts? Just down that street!"

Voice withdraws 'neath shade, guffawing...silence falls upon stained brick, the clefted perche, upturned a box; memory abounds and echoes still...caught, held, within this throbbing alleycage of exoskeleton-key, within a box that beat of hear that squeaked and tapped small feet...a wing tied down, and secret attic loft filled feathers and the living, breadcrumbs fed, yet off again until such time that falls these secrets yet...Freak! A serpent mocks within his