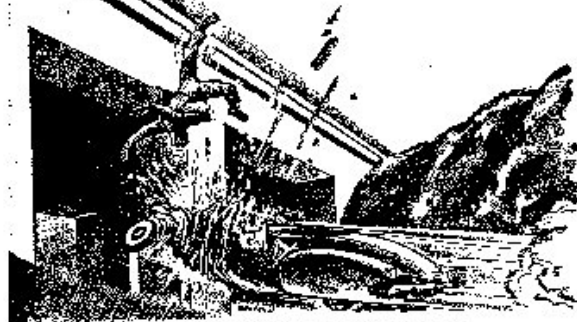




Who Sups With the Devil

by S. M. Tenneshaw

The devil granted a thousand
years of life to George Ballata—
ten centuries of hell, that is . . .



There was a wet coat of armor, and a hissing, hissing sheet of water . . .

VERY carefully he inserted a .38 cartridge into the cylinder of the revolver. Then with as great care he snapped the cylinder shut and stared down at the weapon.

His hand wasn't shaking. He was glad to see that. But then, he thought, why should it? Wasn't this what he wanted? Wasn't this the way out—the final release? ... All he had to do was raise it to his head and pull the trigger. Then the pain and pounding would stop. He could feel it now, that pressure in his head, and the dull, steady, monotonous pounding of pain that never left him. Yes, it would stop—and he would be free.

Free.

He smiled a little at that. After nearly three hundred years he would be free. And there was nothing the devil could do to stop

him. He had made up his mind.

Slowly he raised the gun. What was that game that had come out of the last world war? Oh, yes, they called it *Russian Roulette*. He smiled again. Maybe even the devil would wince at the game.

He twirled the cylinder.

The muzzle felt cool against his temple. It almost seemed to soothe the ache and pressure that throbbed within his head. Very slowly his finger tightened on the trigger.

There was a sharp click.

He smiled to himself. He had hit an empty cylinder. Then, once more his finger tightened. Another sharp click.

Slowly he lowered his hand. He stared at the gun with a sort of curious interest. The smile was still on his thin dark lips. Two gone,

and four to go.

He put the muzzle at his forehead this time. He could see his finger tightening, see the whiteness of the flesh around his knuckle as the hammer of the gun was forced back. Another click.

He pulled the trigger again. A click. Two more. One out of two.

He pulled the trigger. Click.

One . . . The smile was broad on his face now. And then a stab of pain shot through his head. A merciless pounding, a throb and a roar of agony.

He pulled the trigger for the last time.

Click.

His hand was shaking. He knew it.

He lowered the gun from his head and stared at it, and for an instant felt a fear sweep through him. Was it possible—

He snapped open the cylinder and looked at the single cartridge in the gun. In the center of the cap was a neat puncture. A puncture that only a firing pin could make.

His breath came faster as he stared at it. It couldn't be true ...

His hand reached across the desk to a box of cartridges. Swiftly he loaded the gun with five more shells. Then he snapped back the cylinder and raised the gun to his head again. This time the muzzle felt hot against his skin. And it didn't soothe the ache and roaring pain that swept through his head.

He pulled the trigger. Click. Again. Click. Again, again, and again. *Click—click—click.*

"No!" His voice was hoarse and tinged with fear. "No! I won't let you! *You can't stop me!*"

His hand shook as he pointed the gun at the baseboards in the far wall of the room. He pulled the trigger.

There was a dull, flat roar. The gun jumped in his hand, and across the room, splinters of wood flew as the bullet imbedded itself into the wall molding.

He pulled the trigger again. Another roar.

He put the gun to his head. He pulled the trigger.

Click.

THE gun slipped from his fingers and fell with a clatter on the top of the desk. Dimly he heard a pounding at the door. Then he saw the door open and a small, wizened man stare into the room with fearful blinking eyes.

"Boss! What's wrong? I heard shooting—"

He didn't say anything. He sat, unmoving in his chair.

"Boss—are you hurt?"

Slowly his breath seemed to come back. And from somewhere, deep within his head, deep amid the roar and stab of the pain, he thought he heard a single soulless peal of laughter. Then he shook his head.

"Nothing's the matter, Blinky. I was just testing my gun . . ."

Blinky looked down at the gun on the desk top, and his eyes twitched rapidly as he looked around the room and finally saw the bullet holes in the wall baseboard.

"Gosh, boss, you oughtn't to shoot the place up like this. Look what you done to the wall—"

"Shut up!"

Blinky took a step backward and then stopped. He stared at the man behind the desk, saw the sudden twisting of pained features, and then hurried around the desk.

"It's your head again, ain't it, boss? You got the pains again—maybe I should call the doc!"

He laughed loudly. "You fool! What good can he do me! What good can any of them do me!"

"But Boss," Blinky protested, "the doc knows what to give you for that tumor! And you can't be sick for the job tonight!"

Slowly he turned in his chair behind the desk. He looked at the twitching eyes of the little man before him. Then he smiled. “No, you’re right, Blinky, I can’t be sick for the job . . . Get my car for me.”

Blinky frowned. “You going out, boss? You want I should come along?”

He shook his head. “No, Blinky, I want to take a drive, alone. Get the car.”

The little man hesitated. “How long you gonna be gone, boss? The boys always get nervous before a job, and—”

“I won’t be gone long, Blinky. Get the car!”

“Yes, boss.”

With a shrugging of his small shoulders, Blinky sidled quickly out of the room.

Behind the desk, the man sat and looked down at the gun. Then his eyes traveled across the room to the baseboards. He looked at the holes in the wood. A tremor swept through him as his voice whispered hoarsely: “*Long may you live, George Bollata. For a thousand years with the compliments of Satan. A thousand years . . .*”

He laughed then, a short, hysterical laughter. A thousand years of hell. A thousand years of pain and misery. Oh, yes, the devil had been very shrewd. He had made the bargain, knowing all along what would happen. The devil had been very smart.

He straightened in his chair. But was the devil so smart? Could he force him to hold the pact? He looked at the gun on the desk, and again, amid the roaring in his head he seemed to hear that evil laughter.

He shook his head, again. It always seemed to help. It drove away the laughter, anyway.

Well, he would see. The gun had failed. But there were other ways. He smiled again as he thought about that. And the pain eased a little . . .

The door opened and the little man

came back into the room. “I got the car outside, boss. Are you sure you don’t want me to drive you? If you’re sick—”

“I’ll drive myself, Blinky. I’ll be back in a little while. Take care of things while I’m gone.”

Blinky nodded, his eyes twitching. “Sure, boss, sure. Everything’s set. The bank will be a pushover.”

George Bollata didn’t say anything. He just walked past Blinky and out of the room.

HIS hands gripped the wheel of the car and his eyes switched from the speedometer back to the road. Sixty-five, and the needle was crawling higher.

He saw the scattered buildings at the outskirts of the city flash past. They were nothing but a dim blur to his eyes. And far ahead, he saw the underpass of the railroad crossing. He gripped the wheel tighter and pressed his foot to the floorboards.

The roar of the motor grew louder as the car spurted ahead. He watched the distance shorten between the car and the concrete pillared underpass ahead. He glanced down at the speedometer. Ninety, and going higher.

This was it. The moment he had been waiting for. The gun had failed. But this! It would be impossible to live through it. Ninety-five. . . . Three hundred years. Three hundred years of hell. But it would end. It would end.

The underpass shot closer, closer. One hundred miles an hour.

He held grimly to the wheel. His eyes stared in fascination at the solid pillar of concrete looming in front of him. Closer—closer—closer—

There was a roar of sound too vast for his ears. There was a twisting, tearing, shrieking impact of metal too loud to be heard. There was what seemed to be an instant of blinding, shocking pain. And then . . .

THE round fat face was smiling at him. Seated behind a large teak-wood desk, the face seemed to sit quite at ease upon the round, lumpy body beneath it.

“Well, George Bollata. We meet again.”

Slowly, he focused his eyes on the fat, smiling face. Slowly then, slower still, he glanced from the fat face to the room around him.

“I still have the same offices, Bollata, as you can see.”

Yes, he saw. He saw the old-fashioned furniture, the deep rug with the woven serpent in it staring up at him with red-threaded eyes. The same block of wood in the center of the desk with the burnt letters: *A. Mephisto, Counsellor.*

Yes, he saw. He saw them all too clearly. Just as he had seen them that day three hundred years previous when he had walked into these very same premises in the heart of London.

“How—how did I get here?” his voice came hoarsely. “I was in Chicago, and—”

He remembered the car, the concrete underpass, the crash! An exultant shout leaped to his lips but was stilled before it could be uttered as the fat face laughed at him.

“Don’t jump to any conclusions, Bollata. Yes, I know you are thinking about the automobile accident. That is why I brought you here.”

“You brought me?” Bollata asked hoarsely.

“Exactly. It would seem that you are trying to break your part of the bargain we made. I’ve had my eye on you for quite some time.”

“Bargain!” Bollata got to his feet and leaned across the desk. “What kind of a bargain do you think I got? A thousand years of life in exchange for my soul. A thousand years of hell with a brain tumor that’s driving me mad!”

The fat face smiled. “Sit down, Bollata. . . . There, that’s better. And what may I ask have I done to back down on my part of the bargain? Nothing. I took your case when you were in the shadow of the hangman. I offered you one wish in exchange for your soul, there being some doubt of its fate at the time. You agreed to my terms and asked for a thousand years of life, I granted it and saw that you were set free.”

The fat man picked up a sheaf of papers from the desk and looked at them. “Your life has been a full one, Bollata. You’ve taken advantage of your pact with me to commit every crime known to man—and I must say, with a great deal of success. The law has never caught up with you. You went to America a hundred years ago and set yourself up as the Caesar of the underworld. You’ve profited very well. You’ve also taken your own freedom in your hands many times, but that has been your own risk. I’ve saved you from death times too numerous to count. My part of the bargain has been kept. But now you are trying to back out of your end.”

Bollata gripped the sides of the chair he was sitting in and stared hatefully at the fat smiling face across from him.

“You haven’t kept your part of the bargain! This brain tumor—for over a hundred years I’ve suffered with it—”

“Yes, I know,” the fat man shrugged. “And I’ve seen that you came through six brain operations successfully.”

“But it always comes back! And each time it gets worse! I can’t stand it!”

The fat face hardened and the eyes set deep within it grew cold. “That is quite lamentable, I’m sure, but is no part of our bargain. You had your chance to wish for long health, but you chose long life. My duty is only to your life. And must I remind you that your duty is to protect it for me?”

Bollata glared at the fat man. Then suddenly a crafty smile spread over his thin

lips. "If I'm still alive, how did I get here? I hit that underpass at a hundred miles an hour!"

Mephisto laughed, "You cannot die by your own hand, George Bollata. Just as your gun failed, so did your automobile wreck. I only brought you here to straighten out the matter. I want no more of these attempts. They will avail you nothing. You will live for the thousand years you requested, and then . . ."

The voice of the fat smiling man seemed to grow dimmer, as did the room around him. The light wavered, the room started to whirl, and it seemed as if he were speeding into a Stygian well.

"Farewell, George Bollata. And remember, you cannot die by your own hand. I will see you at the completion of our bargain."

The darkness whirled faster around him, and the voice faded into a booming peal of laughter. Then, nothing . . .

HE WAS aware of hands pulling at him.
"Boss! My God, boss!"

Slowly his eyes opened. He was laying on a sloping stretch of grass. Kneeling beside him, Blinky was anxiously pulling at his arms. Slowly he sat up. He stared dumbly at the wizened little man for a moment. Then his eyes glanced at the concrete underpass a short distance away. He saw a twisted mass of metal wrapped around one of the huge pillars, a twisted mass of metal that was all that remained of the car he had smashed into it.

"I saw the whole thing, boss! I followed you because I knew you was feeling bad! I saw you hit that concrete, and boss, it was a miracle! Just as the car smashed into it you was thrown clear and up here on the grass. My God, boss, what happened?"

George Bollata ran a hand wearily across his forehead. If it hadn't been so tragic he would have laughed in Blinky's face. What had happened ... Could he tell him that the devil had thrown him clear of the car just as it hit? Could he tell him that he had been taken

across time to a small law office in a cheap, rundown section of old London? Could he tell him that he had sat there and talked to the devil himself?

"It was an accident, Blinky. I got a pain and couldn't see where I was driving."

"Gosh, boss, you sure had a narrow one that time. It's like I said, it was a miracle. Look at the car, why there ain't a nut or bolt left of it!"

Bollata nodded. "Yes, Blinky, it must have been a miracle."

Blinky nodded, his eyes twitching. "We better get out of here, boss. The cops'll be along any minute and we don't want to have to answer a lot of questions. . . . Are you sure you're O.K.? Maybe we better head for Doc Gorson's."

Bollata shook his head, getting to his feet. "I don't need the doc. Let's get out of here."

Blinky shrugged and led the way to his car.

HE SAT behind his desk again. He stared at the top of it and ran his finger along the smooth surface. He had been sitting there for over an hour, staring at the top of the desk, and not seeing it. His mind was on other things. On the pains in his head. On the pressure that made him want to scream. On the interview he had had a few hours ago with the devil. Especially on that. He had been doing a lot of thinking about that interview. There was something about it that he wanted desperately to remember. Something that had been said. Something that he knew he should remember. But he couldn't. Maybe it was because of the pain in his head.

He leaned forward and held his temples in his hands. He tried to push the pain away but he couldn't. And over and over in his mind went the past three hundred years. Murders, robberies, kidnappings, and a score of other crimes. And every one of them he had

successfully manipulated. He was too smart for the police. He had always been. He had three hundred years experience at it. And he would have seven hundred more.

Seven hundred more years. Seven hundred years of power. Seven hundred years of pain. More operations. There would be more. There would have to be. Dr. Gorson had already operated twice in the past twenty years. And soon he would have to get another doctor. It was always that way. People grew old around him. Things changed. New buildings, new faces, new life. But he never changed. He looked like a man of thirty-eight, and he would look that way until a thousand years were up.

And after that? ... He thought grimly about his soul. Soul. A four lettered word. Was there such a thing? He had seen many men in his three hundred years. He had killed many men. But he had never seen a soul. He didn't care very much. What difference did it make? You lived, and you died. But so few men ever really lived. A few short years and then death. But he had a thousand. And a malignant brain tumor that made it seem like a million. Would it ever end? Could he stand it that long? Was there no way to beat the devil at his own game?

The door opened and Blinky came into the room.

"Everything's set, boss. The boys are waiting. We've got a half hour yet before the bank examiners leave. Boy, what a haul this is gonna be. And what a casing we gave that place! I sure gotta hand it to you, boss, knowing just how long them examiners stay every month. We oughta get a half million out of this!"

George Bollata nodded. "Yes, Blinky, I know all that. We'll leave in a few minutes."

Blinky nodded, his eyes twitching.

"Right, boss, and if you're still feelin' bad I'll do the driving. You don't want to take your life in your hands that way."

Bollata had started to get up. Suddenly he sat back in the chair. He stared at the little man in front of the desk. "What was that you said?"

"Huh, boss? I didn't say nothin' except you shouldn't take your life in your hands that way."

Bollata felt a tremor sweep through him. Something clicked in his mind. Something that he had been trying to remember.

"What's the matter, boss, ain't you set to go?"

Bollata waved his hand toward the door. "I'll be along in a few minutes. Get down to the cars. See that everything is all set."

Blinky shrugged his shoulders. "O. K. boss. But we better get going—"

"Do as I say!" Bollata snapped.

Blinky hurried from the room, closing the door behind him.

A slow smile spread over Bollata's face. "So I shouldn't take my life in my hands," he said. And then he remembered what the devil had said: "*Remember, you cannot die by your own hand...*"

Yes, that was it. He had found it, the one thing he had been trying to remember. The one thing that the devil had said. The one thing that would enable him to break the pact. To release him from the bond he had made.

"You cannot die by your own hand." He repeated the words aloud. And the smile grew on his face. *But he could die by somebody else's hand!* He could die if he were smart enough to arrange it!

His thoughts flew to the bank job that was all set. It was fool-proof. Nothing could go wrong. He had planned it that way for months. It would go like clockwork. Once the bank doors were opened to let out the examiners, his men would rush inside. It would only take a few minutes to loot the vault, forcing one of the examiners to open it.

He had even made sure with inside help that the automatic clock lock on the vault needed repairing. It would be opened manually. Of course there would be a chance of having to kill some of the bank men, but that didn't matter.

Not until now. For as he sat there his mind turned over a plan. A way to end the bargain he had made with the devil. A way to die. A way to die by someone else's hand.

Slowly his hand reached out for the phone. He lifted the receiver to his ear and after a moment said: "Operator, give me police headquarters..."

HE SAT in his car a half block from the bank entrance. A nervous tension swept through him as the minutes sped by. It was almost time.

He could see, spaced at intervals along the block, the other two cars. His men would be waiting in them, waiting for the moment the bank doors opened. Beside him in the front seat, Blinky carefully fingered a forty-five automatic.

"Nearly time, boss."

Bollata nodded, pulling the thirty-eight revolver from his shoulder holster. Yes, it was nearly time. His head throbbed as he thought. Throbbled and grew larger, swelling with pain. Yes, it was time.

And then, slowly the bank doors started to open. He could see a small group of men in the opening. It was time.

"Let's go, boss!" Blinky said sharply and opened the car door.

Bollata jumped from the car and saw men leaving the other two cars a short distance away. He saw the short barrels of sawed-off shotguns, and the snub, ugly muzzles of machine guns. His men were ready.

They were traveling swiftly across the street now. Bollata raced ahead of Blinky. He wanted to be there first.

He had a reason. His lips were thin and tight as he thought about it. He had the best reason any man ever had.

Somewhere down the street came a long sharp blast of a police whistle. It was repeated from the opposite end of the street. At the same moment, police cars pulled around the corners at either end of the block and uniformed men started to pile out.

"Boss! The Cops! It's a trap—let's get outta here!" Blinky screamed.

And at the same moment a series of explosions shattered the air in front of the bank as men with guns fired from the open doors at Bollata and his men.

Bollata gave a quick glance around him. His men were racing back to their cars. At the same time, the police opened fire from both ends of the street. He saw some of his men fall in their tracks as bullets smashed into them.

A shout of triumph welled from Bollata's lips as Blinky screeched in terror behind him.

"Boss! Run for it, boss! Bo—"

Blinky's voice was cut off by the sharp chatter of a police machine gun. He crumpled on the pavement a few feet away from Bollata.

A grim smile formed on Bollata's face as he turned to face the oncoming police. He raised his gun in his hand and took careful aim.

His gun blasted. Again and again. And he saw two policemen fall to the street. He screamed in glee at the top of his lungs: "Come and get me! I've got a bullet waiting for you! Come and get me!"

He fired again. Another policeman fell. Savage triumph swept through him. It couldn't be much longer now. They had seen him kill at least three men. And he was standing in the middle of the street, taunting them, waiting for the final barrage of fire that would cut him to pieces, that would smash the last vestige of life from his body.

A machine-gun chattered. Rocks and splinters of rocks flew up from the street in front of him. He felt a sharp pain across his face as some of them cut into his flesh. He felt a gush of blood from a cut on his forehead that obscured his vision. Blindly, he pointed his gun and fired until it was empty.

And then he saw, vaguely, the uniformed figure rushing up beside him.

“Shoot me!” he screamed.

But suddenly the firing stopped. He saw an arm raise, and the glint of a gun barrel coming down at his head.

Then consciousness left him in a blinding flash of light and pain...

“GEORGE BOLLATA, you are accused of the murder of three police officers. Before I ask you how you plead, whether guilty or not guilty, I must ask you if you are represented by your own attorney.”

He heard the dull, flat voice of the judge. But he couldn't see him. His head was swathed in bandages. He didn't care. For nearly a week he had lain in the Bridewell hospital, awaiting his trial. At first he had lain amid the darkness of his bandages in frustrated fear. He had failed again. He had wanted to be shot. He had wanted to die. But they had taken him alive. And then, he knew that it really didn't matter. He had killed. There had been many witnesses to his murders. And that meant one thing to him: Death in the electric chair. Death.

“I want no attorney, your honor,” he said quietly.

Behind him he could hear the rustling of feet from spectators in the courtroom. He could also hear the dull echoing of the stenograph machine, taking down every word. He heard the judge clear his throat.

“Then it is the duty of the court to appoint a public defender for you. Counsellor, are you ready to proceed for the defense?”

He heard a man walk close beside him,

and then heard a voice say: “Your honor, I haven't had time to talk to the defendant before entering a plea. I—”

Bollata's voice cut in sharply: “Judge, I don't want to waste your time or anybody else's. I plead guilty and waive a jury trial.”

Beside him, Bollata heard his attorney clear his throat. “If it please your honor, the defense has no objection to this entry of a guilty plea, but—”

“Do I understand you correctly, Counsellor?” the judge cut in. “You realize this makes the death penalty as requested by the state, mandatory.”

Bollata smiled under his bandages at the judge's words. That's what he had been waiting to hear. There was no way out. And even the attorney appointed by the court knew it was hopeless. It was funny about that attorney, he thought. His voice. He was sure he had heard it somewhere.

“As I was about to say, your honor, the defense does not object to a plea of guilty, but does so on the grounds of insanity at the time of the crime. And the defense requests a psychiatric examination before the court passes sentence. The defense also has in court the defendant's own physician, Dr. Hugo Gorson, to present evidence in the case. We request examination in chambers, if the court pleases.”

Bollata clenched his teeth harshly. Then he shouted: “I don't need any examination, Judge! I've pleaded guilty as charged! I demand to be sentenced in accordance with the law!”

The judge rapped his gavel. “The defendant will refrain from these outbursts. And the court sees no reason to object to the defense's request. We will adjourn to my chambers... Bailiff, instruct the court psychiatrist at once.”

Bollata was aware of a general murmuring around him as the court adjourned. But he was unaware of most of the clamor. He

was thinking about the attorney. His attorney. That voice...

He was seated in a comfortable chair. It was quiet in the room. But he knew there were others sitting around him even though he couldn't see them. Then he heard the voice of the judge.

"You may proceed with the examination Counsellor."

The voice of Bollata's attorney came smoothly, evenly, with assurance.

"Your honor, the defendant is afflicted with a malignant brain tumor. He has had two brain surgeries performed in the past twenty years by Dr. Hugo Gorson, who is present now to substantiate the defendant's case. Dr. Gorson, will you explain to the court what effect this tumor has had upon the defendant?"

Bollata felt a cold chill run through him as the voice of his attorney came to him. And worse, he suddenly felt a foreboding. Deep amid the pressure inside his skull he seemed to hear a laugh. A deep, abysmal laughter.

"What the Counsellor has said is correct, your honor. The defendant is afflicted with a malignant brain tumor. A tumor of this type, where it is located, very often leads to dementia."

The voice of the judge cut in. "What sort of dementia, doctor?"

Gorson's voice came again. "It may take many forms. In the case of George Bollata, I would say the dementia was homicidal in character."

Bollata knew he had to stop this. If this kept up he would beat the murder charge. And he couldn't let that happen. He had to die. He had to!

HE TRIED to speak. But somehow, his voice wouldn't come. The words were there. But his voice would not say them. It was as if some evil hand had closed around his throat. His head roared. The pressure grew and

grew. And along with it, the laughter.

"If it please your honor," Bollata heard his attorney say, "I will turn the defendant over to the court psychiatrist now to substantiate the claim of the defense."

Bollata tried again to speak but he couldn't. Then he heard another voice. This time the court doctor.

"What is your name?"

Bollata gripped the sides of his chair. Now was the time. Now was his chance. He would show them.

"My name is George Bollata," he said.

"Where were you born?" This was it. He could lie his way through. They weren't so smart. "I was born in Chi—" His voice stopped. And then words formed in his throat. Words that he didn't want to say. Words that were the truth. It was as if some evil force were guiding him, compelling him. "—in *London!*"

"When were you born?"

"In 19—" Again his voice stopped. Again the words slipped away and others took their place. "—in 1647."

He could hear a murmur of voices around him. Sweat broke out on his forehead. Deep within his head came the laughter again.

"*How old are you?*"

He ran his tongue over his lips. "I am thirty—" Again his voice stopped. Then words slipped out in a harsh rapidity. "I am three hundred years old."

Then he screamed. He screamed at the top of his lungs. "No! You fiend! You can't force me to say the truth! I won't! I pleaded guilty I demand the death penalty!"

He felt arms grab him. And he heard the Judge's voice over the turmoil of others. "If the State and the Defense are in agreement, I believe sentence can now be passed. Court will reconvene."

* * *

His arms were held as he stood before the bar. Behind the bandages his head swelled

and throbbed. Over and over in his mind he thought: *“They’ll have to electrocute me! They can’t release me on the grounds of a brain tumor! I won’t live a thousand years! I’ve beaten the devil! He can’t win! I’ll die I’ll die—I’ll die!”*

“George Bollata,” the voice of the Judge came dully. “You have pleaded guilty to murder in the first degree. I wish it were within my power to sentence you to the electric chair, but because of the evidence presented by your defense attorney, and substantiated by the court physician, I cannot exact the death penalty. But I hereby sentence you to the solitary confinement of a psychopathic institution for the rest of your life.”

He heard the sentence and he trembled.

Then he wrenched his arms from the men holding him and tore the bandages from his face.

Light flooded into his eyes. He saw the courtroom, the judge, the police officers standing beside him.

And he saw something else. He saw a fat smiling man bowing to the Judge. And then the fat man turned to him and he gazed into a pair of deep-set cold eyes.

His mind screamed. *A thousand years!*

And the fat face smiled at him and the deep-set eyes glared coldly.

And George Bollata shouted at the fat man.

“Mephisto! It was your voice! You were my attorney! You did this to me!”

And the devil...