

"Where are you going now?"

"How should we know? No matter where. There are many forests."

#### THE DEAD POOL

By M. BEZA

We seemed to be between Mount Gramos and Mount Deniscu. I guessed it to be so from the peaks, which showed like some fancies of the night, keeping steadfast watch in the moonlight; the moon we could not see, we could only feel her floating over us. The pale light shone only in the ether above, and gradually diminished till it was lost to the eyes in a mass of shadows; they fell like curtains, enveloping us, dense, black. The silence extended indefinitely; it was as though the world here had remained unchanged since its creation. Hardly a breath of wind reached us. It always carried with it at this spot the same odour of dank weeds, of plants with poisonous juices; everything told of the neighbourhood of water--not fresh water, but water asleep for centuries.

"Can you see the pool?" questioned my companion, Ghicu Sina; and then he added: "It is hidden, certainly, but look with attention."

I looked, and after a time, getting accustomed to the darkness, I, too, got the impression of something shining and smooth.

"The pool----"

"Only the pool? Some lights too?"

"That is so," I whispered with a shudder.

There on the surface of the water were flickering points of fire. They could not come from above, they were not glow-worms, or sparks such as one sees passing over graves.

Ghicu Sina spoke:

"They are reflections, the lights are burning in the pool."

With the fear that seizes us in the presence of the supernatural, I asked:

"What induced us to stay here?"

"Where else could we stop? There are no sheep-folds in these parts, formerly there were such, but since the death of the Spirit who guarded the mountains, none of them remain."

After a pause he said slowly:

"You have heard of dead pools?" He stood immersed in thought. "This is a dead pool. I will tell you about it.

"Once upon a time, when the trees were bursting into leaf, this district was full of sheep. Flock after flock passed through, handled by sturdy shepherds, well known in their own neighbourhood. Then one spring-tide a stranger showed his face, beautiful as a god, wearing upon his shoulders a cloak as white as snow. Every one wondered, 'who may he be, and whence does he come?' Many tales passed round until the mystery began to unravel itself. In the valley of the Tempe, so runs