

# **THE GRIP OF FEAR**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649597734

The Grip of Fear by Maurice Level

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**MAURICE LEVEL**

**THE GRIP  
OF FEAR**



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BY  
MAURICE LEVEL



NEW YORK: MITCHELL KENNERLEY  
1911

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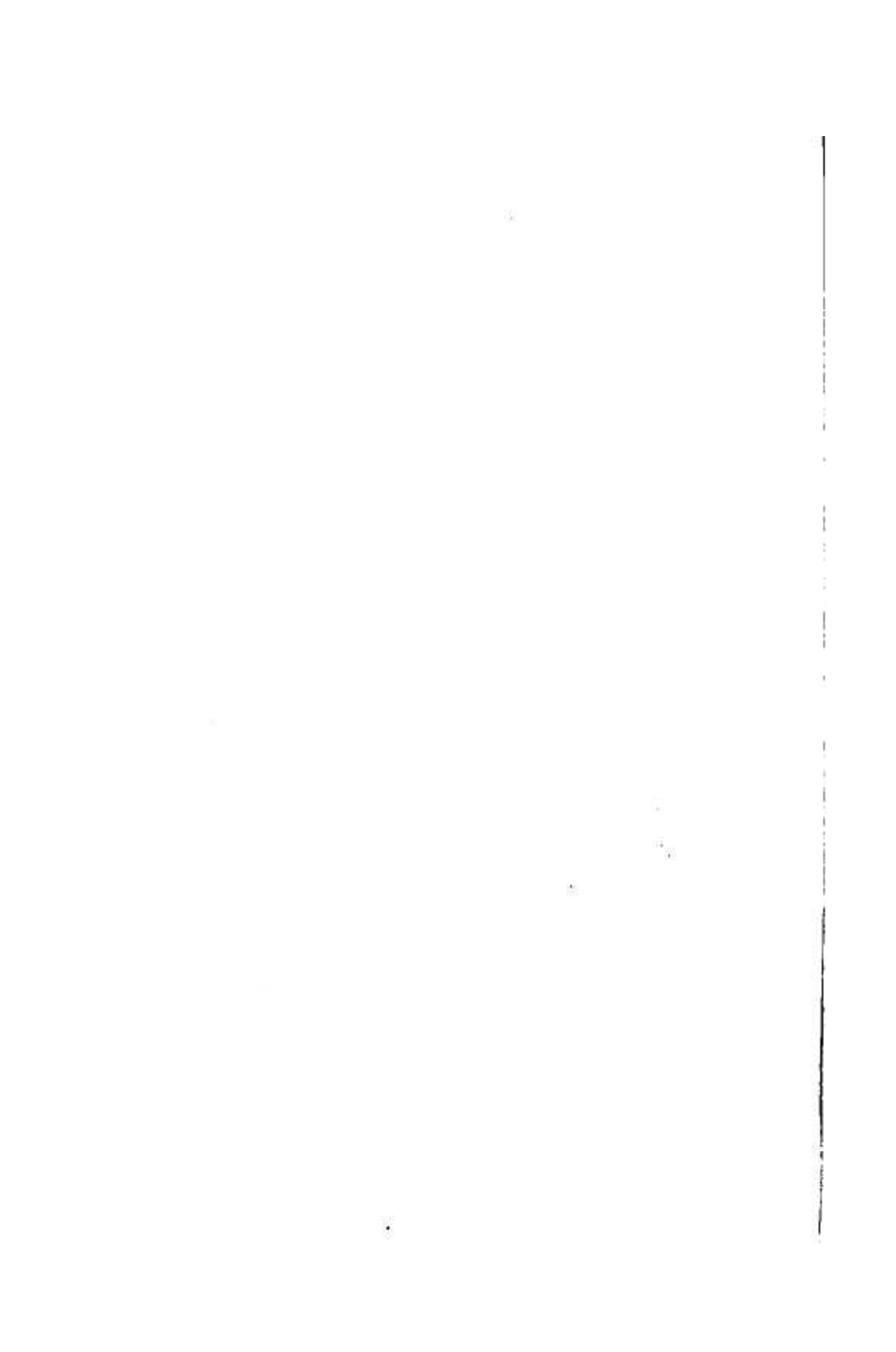
Prof. Willis A. Bunting

Sep. 18 1926

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# THE GRIP OF FEAR

## I

### THE FIRST INSPIRATION

“SO that’s settled,” said Monsieur Ledoux, still standing on the doorstep; “the first night you are disengaged, you let me know, and come and dine?”

“All right; and thank you again for the delightful evening.”

“Nonsense. The pleasure has been mine. . . . Wrap yourself up; it is quite cold to-night. You know the way? Down the Boulevard Lannes as far as the Avenue Henri-Martin. If you walk fast you may still catch the last train. . . . By the by, you ought to have a revolver. This isn’t a very safe part of the town. . . .”

“Oh! that’s all right; thank you, I have

one. You know, I'm used to Paris after dark, and a journalist has to learn how to take care of himself. Don't come any further; the moonlight is so clear I can find my way perfectly. Good-bye. . . ."

Onesimus Coche crossed the pavement and started walking briskly down the middle of the boulevard; when he reached the first turning he heard his host's voice calling out cheerfully:

"Au revoir. Don't be long before you come again."

He turned round and replied:

"Indeed I won't. Good-night."

Monsieur Ledoux was still standing on the steps and waving his hand. From the passage behind him, all hung with andrinople and lit by a bright hall-lamp, came a shaft of rosy light.

There was a sense of homely comfort in the sight of the little sleepy garden and the small house with its closed shutters, revealed in that patch of light; and after the door was shut Onesimus Coche stood for a moment quite still, gazing back. Ten years of Paris life had