

Weird Tales

REGISTERED IN U.S. PATENT OFFICE



VOLUME X

NUMBER 4

Published monthly by the Popular Fiction Publishing Company, 2457 E. Washington Street, Indianapolis, Ind. Entered as second-class matter March 20, 1923, at the post office at Indianapolis, Ind., under the act of March 3, 1879. Single copies, 25 cents. Subscription, \$2.50 a year in the United States; \$3.00 a year in Canada. English office: Charles Lavell, 13, Serjeant's Inn, Fleet Street, E. C. 4, London. The publishers are not responsible for the loss of unsolicited manuscripts, although every care will be taken of such material while in their possession. The contents of this magazine are fully protected by copyright and must not be reproduced either wholly or in part without permission from the publishers.

NOTE—All manuscripts and communications should be addressed to the publishers' Chicago office at 450 East Ohio Street, Chicago, Ill. FARNSWORTH WRIGHT, Editor.
Copyright, 1927, by the Popular Fiction Publishing Company

Contents for October, 1927

Cover Design	C. C. Senf	
<i>Illustrating a scene in "The Dark Lore"</i>		
The Eyrie		436
<i>A chat with the readers</i>		
The Dark Lore	Nictzin Dyalhis	441
<i>A tale of the outer spaces and the lurid hells through which the soul of Lura Veyle was hurled</i>		
The Time-Raider (Part 1)	Edmond Hamilton	459
<i>A four-part serial story about an entity from far in the future, that sweeps back through time for its victims</i>		
Saladin's Throne-Rug	E. Hoffmann Price	481
<i>An eerie murder, and a descendant of Saladin—a tale that breathes the weird witchery of the Orient</i>		
The Ride of Falume	Robert E. Howard	495
<i>Verse</i>		

(Continued on Next Page)

(Continued from Preceding Page)

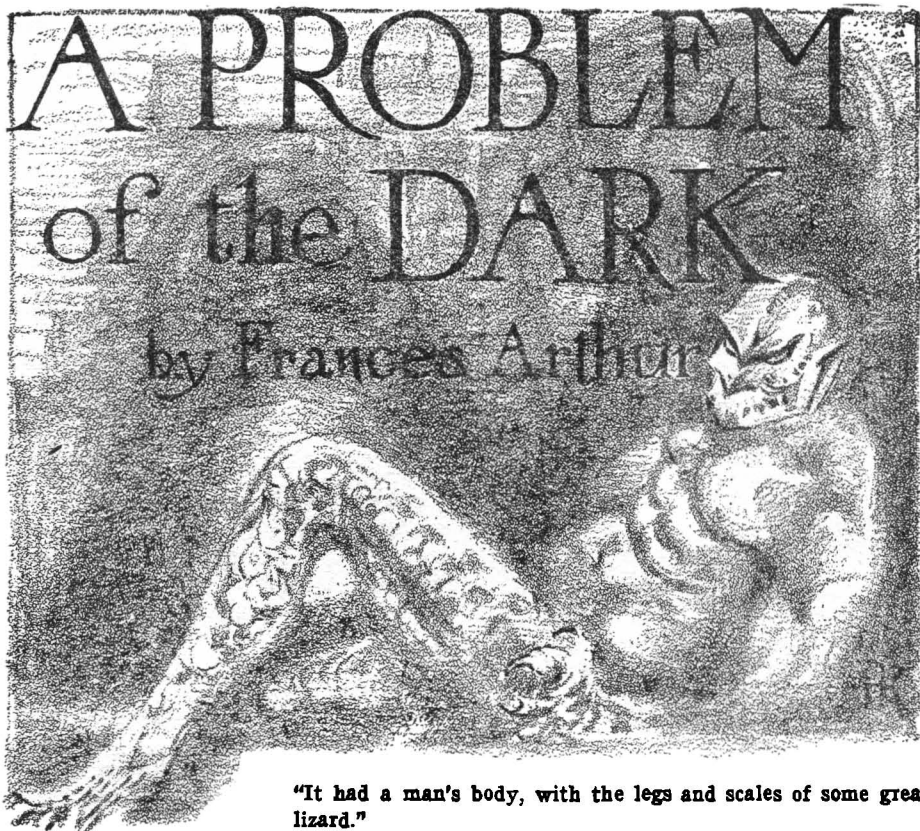
- Hunger** ----- **John D. Swain** 496
A five-minute story—a bizarre fantasy of the weird hallucinations that accompany extreme hunger
- Folks Used to Believe:
Some "Old Masters"** ----- **Alvin F. Harlow** 498
Peculiar beliefs that were held by our ancestors
- Loup-Garou** ----- **Wallace West** 499
A werewolf tale of old England—Gray Henry steals the Lady Constance and imprisons her in Castle Barnecan
- Pickman's Model** ----- **H. P. Lovecraft** 505
Unutterable monstrosities crept out from the crumbling walls of the cellars in an old New England city
- Obliteration** ----- **Samuel M. Sargent, Jr.** 514
Verse
- The Poltergeist** ----- **Seabury Quinn** 515
An occult adventure of Jules de Grandin—an old-fashioned ghost-tale, with an unusual twist
- The Red Brain** ----- **Donald Wandrei** 531
Great dust-clouds engulf the universe, and the Red Brain is created to drive back the swirling menace
- A Problem of the Dark** ----- **Frances Arthur** 537
From the shades it came, this elemental being that threatened to choke the life out of Rob Dennison
- The Bride of Osiris (Conclusion)** ----- **Otis Adelbert Kline** 542
An Egyptian serial story of Osiris, the Festival of Re, strange murders, and the dungeons of Karneter
- Weird Story Reprint**
The Old Nurse's Story ----- **Elizabeth C. Gaskell** 553
Driven from home by an unrelenting father, the daughter and her child return from beyond the grave

For Advertising Rates in WEIRD TALES Apply Direct to

WEIRD TALES

Western Advertising Office:
YOUNG & WARD, Mgrs.
360 N. Michigan Ave.
Chicago, Ill.
Phone, State 1861

Eastern Advertising Office:
GEORGE W. STEARNS, Mgr.
Flatiron Building
New York, N. Y.
Phone, Ashland 7329



"It had a man's body, with the legs and scales of some great lizard."

THE Dennison home is a quiet, roomy place, neither new nor old. It has wide, kindly spaces; the walls smile at you.

The house has many closets, but not a skeleton in any of them—and as for ghosts, no one has ever died there.

There is no luxury, and equally, no mystery—not at all the place to tempt a night-marauding visitor, from this or any other world; and Mollie Dennison, its gentle mistress, finds it strange that her husband should be so insistent, of late, about having every door and window on the first floor tightly locked every night. Only last summer, many of them were commonly left open, and even when he forgot to hook the

screens, he laughed at her for remonstrating.

What caused this change in him, she is never to know; so John Dennison has vowed to himself, to his son Robert, and to his friend Dr. Hedges.

"A woman couldn't know a thing like that!" he has told them.

At breakfast, on that day, late in the previous summer, which he is never to forget, he had asked Mollie casually, "Robert up yet?"

"Yes—or he was; he's lying on the couch in the library and he wants to see you before you go; he said wouldn't you please come in?"

"Nonsense! Why doesn't he come to the table?"

"John, dear, the boy's sick; and

you're so hard with him! You wouldn't listen yesterday——"

"Dreams again, eh?"

"Yes, but he's very hoarse, too. I'm worried."

Dennison left the breakfast table impatiently.

The summer was passing; and the boy, who had come home from college in June with shadowed eyes and a puzzled frown between them, seemed more preoccupied, more listless, every day.

He was thinner, too; not in any way like the big, rollicking chap who had left them last September. He had visited a friend over the Christmas holidays, and both parents had anxiously noted the change in him, after nine months of absence.

"Keep having nightmares—guess I'm bilious!" was the only explanation they had been able to win from him; it had not seemed a sufficient one. Dennison resented the boy's lack of interest in the business (an automobile agency), and gave him hard work to do, tersely remarking that he'd sleep better for it. The tasks were well but wearily performed, and nothing gained besides.

"Morning, sir," he said as Dennison entered. He swung his slippers feet to the floor and sat up dizzily, supporting himself with a hand at each side upon the couch.

He was "his mother's boy", tall and fair; for Dennison was shorter, darker, more muscular.

"If you won't help me, Dad, I'll have to get somebody else."

"What's the matter, anyway?"

"I tried to tell you yesterday. Listen, Dad! This thing's killing me! Look here!" He showed a swollen and discolored throat; his eyes were bloodshot, and he was hoarse, as his mother had said.

"Hurt yourself?"

"It's that thing I dream about, I tell you—if it is dreaming. He—or it——"

"You do it yourself, in your sleep—but that's bad enough; need more exercise."

"I exercise until I can hardly crawl to bed. No trouble about going to sleep; it's all I can do—but afterward——"

"Well, what can I do about it?"

"Dad" — the boy's pale face flushed—"you'll say it's babyish, because you don't know—you don't know! I—want you to stay with me tonight!"

"Babyish enough! Ever leave the light on?"

"Yes. He came just the same! I couldn't see him, but——"

"Aha! And yet you're still afraid of him?"

"It was worse than ever. I can't move, you see, or fight, or even breathe; but I get wide awake, and then he goes away, but I don't sleep any more."

"Just a regular nightmare, Bob."

"Maybe. But oh, God! How I'd like to have one night of peace—one night when Bull Bayman——"

"Bull Bayman! So that's who it is, you think?"

"I don't know; it seems like him, somehow; only of course Bull didn't have—scales all over him."

"Scales!" There was an underlying note of panic in the man's exasperation. Was it more than dreams, then? Was it insanity?

"Honest, Dad. And claws."

His father observed in a tolerably controlled tone, "Bull Bayman was the quarterback who choked you because he thought you gave away the signals to the other team?"

"Did he choke me?" the lad returned vaguely.

"Don't you remember it? He knocked you down first. Kent Taylor told me about it; said they threw water on you to bring you out of it."

"I know we had a mix-up; I didn't play any more, of course, but in the very next scrimmage Bull got

that welt on the head that sent him—where he is now.”

“And you think he comes back every night to choke you?”

“I’d forgotten he choked me,” mused the boy.

“But he comes back in a dream, Rob! Don’t you see now that it’s all a dream?”

“And don’t you see that I’ll lose my mind if this thing doesn’t let up? And will you stay with me to-night, anyway until midnight, or—say—1 o’clock?”

John Dennison rose sharply.

“I will—to keep you from calling on somebody else. Nice thing to get around—ghosts!”

“Dad! You promise?”

“I said I would, didn’t I?”

“Oh, God!” sobbed the boy hoarsely, as a flood of relief rolled over his parched nerves. “Oh, God!”

He flung himself face down on the leather couch, and his slender body shook in hysteria. His father looked down at him sadly.

“I didn’t know it was so bad, Robby,” he gruffly admitted.

“Don’t tell him, but I’m going to see Hedges about him,” he told his wife in the front hall, as he was leaving the house. “It’s nerves. Let him sleep it off, if he can.”

She had tried to believe, as John did, that the dreams would “wear off”, but she was glad and relieved to know that their good friend Dr. Hedges, whose studies of late had taken a psychopathic turn, was to be asked to help her boy.

“IT ISN’T as if Rob ever drank a drop, or smoked too much,” John told this friend, at the latter’s office, “and he was never afraid of the fellow; had forgotten, even, that he choked him!”

“Bull hadn’t forgotten, though,” muttered Hedges.

“Bull’s dead.”

“His body is. But what was he

living for, just as he got that blow on the head that finished him? To be revenged on Rob, because he thought he had queered the game. Now, if the mass of molecules, or atoms, or even electrons, that must be released at death (for something is released, John), could retain an impression, a purpose—can’t you find it possible to suppose that it could animate another body—even an elemental one?”

“But—even supposing that, Bob had the light on one night, and—he says he felt him, but couldn’t see him!”

“It is by no means probable that all the elemental forms are visible to us. You’ve seen those beautiful little sea-creatures, John, that are exactly like glass, yet have life and motion; and even that familiar thing, the eel, is transparent at one stage. You could imagine a being so perfectly transparent as to be invisible, yet alive. Now, supposing that the freed human particles enter into and animate an elemental, transparent body—”

“Where would they find such a thing? Why don’t we ever hear of them?”

“Perhaps, being invisible, it is easy for them to keep out of our way. There are hundreds of religious beliefs—but we won’t go into that. John, something living made those marks on that boy’s neck. It’s up to us to find out what it is.”

“If—if there is anything, why hasn’t it—or he—killed him?”

“That’s the Bull Bayman part of it! He repeats the choking incident; possibly he has memory without intelligence.

“I think, John,” he added after a pause, “that I’ll show you something.”

He unlocked a small safe, and paused again before he beckoned Dennison to his side. He had taken

from the safe an envelope, the seal of which he now broke.

"These are photographs — of 'dreams'," he said in a low tone; "I made them myself." He exposed them slowly, placing one behind another.

John staggered to a seat, nauseated, horror-stricken.

"I don't believe it!" he cried out suddenly.

"You wouldn't. But, John, if you want me to help Rob, you will have to do as I say. Your belief has nothing whatever to do with the ease, you see. Now, first, I want the house quiet by 11; you're to sleep with Rob; Mollie's to sneak me into a room near him, without his knowing I'm there; then I want her to go and stay with her sister; I'd rather not have her in the house at all."

"No!" shuddered John, with an involuntary glance at the safe—a sarcophagus of nightmares.

"No lights, remember, and the doors unlocked. Now, I'll stop at your office and arrange about the films. Yes, as you say, if there's anything to make a film of. A corner of your basement will do for that; and I'll give you all the final instructions. Good-bye, John."

THE daily routine calmed Dennison, though he felt rather old, rather lacking in the cocksureness of his own judgment. Had it made him cruel to the boy?

"You don't know—you don't know!" Robert had said.

"You wouldn't," Frank Hedges had told him, when he had given his friend the lie. Well, tonight—if he must—

AT 11 o'clock, all had been arranged according to Dr. Hedges' instructions, and he himself waited in the room across the hall. Robert, who had worked that day with some-

thing like his old boyish enthusiasm, now lay sound asleep beside his father. The lights were out, but there was a switch near Dennison's left hand.

The streets grew more quiet; fewer vehicles passed.

Midnight tolled.

An even deeper quiet settled upon the house.

The quarter struck. Robert was still breathing deeply, softly, like a child. His father tried to believe that he was not listening for any other sound.

Two strokes announced the half-hour. His attention was gradually relaxing. There would be nothing tonight. Rob had felt so safe, to have him near; just as he himself had felt, to have Frank near.

Nonsense! He had always felt safe enough.

Those films—someone had fooled Frank, that was all.

And yet—he remembered the doctor's habit of accuracy; his extreme nicety of perception. Tomorrow he would ask him—but now he became aware that Robert was gradually drawing away from him. He still lay relaxed, not a muscle tense, and breathing easily, yet he was moving, or being moved, slowly away. Then, with a deep sigh, he rolled over on his back.

Nothing, after all, but an involuntary change of position.

But his breathing was getting shorter, thicker—he began to struggle, to moan—his whole body labored.

"Nightmare!" thought Dennison, and had almost reached out his hand to rouse the boy, when he remembered Hedges' command, "If he chokes I shall hear him. Don't move! Don't call!"

But suppose Frank had fallen asleep?

It was growing more terrible every second!

Dennison's head and hands were wet with the effort of holding still, when the sounds ceased—Robert lay as if dead.

His father could bear no more; he threw out his hands—they encountered the thick, rough, scaly neck of something bending over the bed. This he clutched desperately, shouting, "Frank! Help! Help!" For horrible claws snatched at his face, yet he dared not loose his hold.

"I'm—right here!" grated the doctor's voice, through set teeth, and Dennison knew that he, too, was struggling with the intruder; that they had attacked it simultaneously.

Was it to elude them both after all? It was a fearful antagonist, because of its strength, its sinuous, twisting motions, the repeated attacks on their hands and faces from its hideous claws—it was like some struggle of brute forces in the primordial darkness.

"There!" panted the doctor at last, "I've—got him—handcuffed! The light, John!

"Lie still, Bull Bayman, or I'll break your elbows!" he thundered; and then John turned the switch.

Staring half-dazed in the sudden light, he beheld his friend with one knee apparently poised in the air above the bed; his face swollen and set with the effort of holding something down; something that neither of them could see!

Rob's words raced through his mind, even while he again hurled himself forward to the doctor's assistance: "He came just the same—I couldn't see him——"

And he had jcered!

"Hold his shoulders down, while I hold his legs," directed Dr. Hedges.

"Listen, you! Are you Bull Bayman?"

There was not an instant's cessation in the thing's efforts to free itself.

"Listen, Bull Bayman! You're wrong about Robert Dennison—he never gave the other team your signals!"

There was no sign of understanding; only the continued struggle. They could feel and hear the harsh rattle of its breath, the heavily beating heart. As they held him, or it, firmly, but without too great a pressure, they felt the heart-beat becoming slower, the breath fluttering strangely.

The paroxysms grew weaker, then ceased. The shape lay inert.

"I don't believe he understands you," murmured Dennison.

"Yet he may be able to both hear and see us! As for his understanding—he is trying to leave this hulk even now! . . . In other words, he's dying!

"I gave him a shot of cyanide solution before you ever called," he added, "as soon as I felt those damned scales. I knew then he wasn't human."

"Cyanide!"

"Enough to kill a horse; or an alligator. Well—he's dead."

"Frank, for God's sake, look after Rob, won't you?"

"Rob's all right; didn't even wake up, though we had this fellow right across his knees all the time. Let him sleep it off."

Only a few hours ago Dennison had used those words himself; it seemed to him that he had forged through strange worlds since then. Dr. Hedges' nonchalance as he rolled "the fellow" to the floor and reached to the table for his first-aid kit roused a sort of dull resentment in Dennison's mind.

"We'll bind up our wounds," said Dr. Hedges, "and then—say,

John, this long scratch came mighty near the jugular!"

"It felt like it," muttered John.

"I've got one that just missed my left eye. We'll have a beautiful photo of our unseen friend in a few days, though."

"Good heavens, Frank!" exploded Dennison, "what do you want of a photo?"

"Want to see how it looks, of course!"

"Well, I don't! Feeling it was bad enough; let's chop it up and burn it in the furnace—it's a cool night."

"See here, John! These things belong to the hidden side of nature—but they exist, as I've told you, and they're very dangerous!"

"Well, you've killed it."

"Yes, and I'm going to study it. There must be some clue to its iden-

tity. They're rare, I grant you, but suppose they should increase on the earth?"

"Horrible!"

"Is the paint ready to smear on? And the stuff for the flashlight?"

"It's all in the back basement."

"Let's snake him down, then."

THE doctor's safe holds another dream-photo now; Dennison refuses to look at it, and Robert does not know of its existence, though the rest of the story has been told him in detail. He was informed that the body was burned in the furnace, which was true. The photo shows a man's body, with the legs and scales of some great reptile or lizard, and with the face protected by ridges of bone. It is a truly horrific object, yet Dr. Hedges declares that it shows a decided resemblance to Bull Bayman.