

# Weird Tales

REGISTERED IN U.S. PATENT OFFICE



Published monthly by the Popular Fiction Publishing Company, 325 N. Capitol Ave., 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. The publishers are not responsible for the loss of unsolicited manuscripts, although every care will be taken of such material while in our 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. FARNSWORTH WRIGHT, Editor.  
Copyright, 1924, by the Popular Fiction Publishing Company

## Contents for November, 1924

- Teoquitla the Golden**.....**Ramón de las Cuevas** 6  
*Complete Novlette—Aztec Sacrifice*
- The Brain in the Jar**...**N. E. Hammerstrom and R. F. Searight** 31  
*Astounding Surgery—French Spy in Germany*
- Adventure of Souls**.....**Robert Lee Heiser** 36  
*Spirit Tale of the Sea*
- Well, I'll Tell You, Ma**.....**W. McKeown** 46  
*He Wanted Adventure—and Got It*
- The Desert Lich**.....**Frank Belknap Long, Jr.** 49  
*A Necrophilic Tale*
- To a Dreamer**.....**H. P. Lovecraft** 54  
*Verse*
- The Great Panjandrum**.....**Francis Hard** 55  
*African Voodoo and Chicago Spirit*

(Continued on Next Page)

(Continued from Preceding Page)

<b>The House of Dust (First Installment)</b> .....	<b>L. A. Borah</b>	<b>65</b>
<i>Two-Part Mystery Serial</i>		
<b>Six Bearded Men</b> .....	<b>Elwin J. Owens</b>	<b>88</b>
<i>Bizarre Tale of Conscience</i>		
<b>The Green and Gold Bug</b> .....	<b>J. M. Alvey</b>	<b>93</b>
<i>Storiette of Weird Chinese Revenge</i>		
<b>The Tortoise-Shell Cat</b> .....	<b>Grege La Spina</b>	<b>96</b>
<i>Witchcraft and Voodoo</i>		
<b>The Phantom Rider</b> .....	<b>Otis Adelbert Kline</b>	<b>105</b>
<i>Western Ghost Story</i>		
<b>A Soulless Resurrection</b> .....		<b>111</b>
<i>Tale of Horror</i>		
<b>A Suicide Complex</b> .....	<b>Robert Allways</b>	<b>116</b>
<i>Strange Obsession of an Artist</i>		
<b>The Purple Light</b> .....	<b>Ralph Parker Anderson</b>	<b>121</b>
<i>Insane Jealousy—and the Death Ray</i>		
<b>Weird Crimes: No. 7. The Human Hyena</b> .....	<b>Seabury Quinn</b>	<b>128</b>
<i>True Story of a Parisian Ghoul</i>		
<b>The Ghost of Liscard Manor</b> .....	<b>Walter Burns</b>	<b>134</b>
<i>Rational Ghost Yarn</i>		
<b>The Pelican</b> .....	<b>Charles L. Frederick</b>	<b>140</b>
<i>An Ill-Omened Bird—Soul Transmigration</i>		
<b>The Door</b> .....	<b>Henry S. Whitehead</b>	<b>151</b>
<i>Death—and After</i>		
<b>Thus Spake the Prophetess</b> .....	<b>Estil Critchie</b>	<b>154</b>
<i>Haitian Tale—Crimes of Guillaume San</i>		
<b>The Tower of Silence</b> .....	<b>Don Willis</b>	<b>158</b>
<i>Fanatic Parsec Priests—Place of the Dead</i>		
<b>John Caroll, Legionary of Rome</b> .....	<b>B. Wallis</b>	<b>163</b>
<i>Can a Memory be Inherited?</i>		
<b>The Eyrie</b> .....		<b>170</b>
<i>A Talk with the Readers</i>		

---

For Advertising Rates in WEIRD TALES Apply to

**W. B. ZIFF CO.**

Transportation Building  
Chicago

Architects Building  
New York

Bryant Building  
Kansas City

*Disappointment in Love Resulted Strangely in the  
Life of This American Artist in Paris*

# A Suicide Complex

By ROBERT ALLWAYS

"**H**OLY catfish!"  
A scuffle in the bar and a child's scream brought me to my feet. Through the open door a cognac glass hurtled past my face and shattered against the rows of bottles lining the wall. A machine-gun chatter of French and a heavy-artillery roar of American profanity began in the bar. The eternal Battle of Paris, still going on four years after the armistice!

I stepped cautiously in, expecting to find a drunken tourist suffering from a too thorough reacquaintance with American mixed drinks, which since their deportation by Mr. Volstead have become native of Paris, but with some surprise I discovered Hawkins. He was nursing a heavily bandaged shoulder and singing it to sleep with a lullaby of international cusswords.

After several attempts to interrupt him, it became clear that one of the *patron's* children had bumped the wounded shoulder and that he had proceeded to kick the child out of doors. Gradually, as Hawkins' vocabulary exhausted itself, his arm quieted down and he concluded a discourse on the clumsiness of Parisian barkeepers' children with an apology for the cognac glass which had so nearly hit me. That, he explained, was a mere gesture, entirely by way of emphatic punctuation.

By this time I had computed the approximate amount of money Hawkins

owed me (this was no simple matter, for he had touched me several times in two or three currencies a year or so before) and I dragged him into the other room, ordering two double Calvadoses and giving the *patron* fifty centimes for the broken glass to restore peace. I could well have used the modest sum my computations resulted in, but I was destined never to get it.

"Why the mummy clothing?" I asked when we had settled around a three-legged table. We were just off the Place St. Michel in an underground bar, known as the *Bolée de Cidre*, chiefly noted for its very hard cider and the drawings by assorted artists of all nationalities which roam the Quartier Latin. These literally covered its dingy walls. The room was half-full of barrels of wine, though the favorite drink was Calvados or apple-jack, and a pungent odor of cider and sawdust filled the air. I had fallen into the habit of dropping into this cool, quiet place after lunch, where I could write for three or four hours without interruption and later join in the discussion of the latest events and theories of the art world of Paris with the artists who usually dropped in for an hour before their rather late dinner, to sip an *aperatif* and talk.

"Overwork," replied Hawkins. "My foot slipped when I was painting on the rocks up in Brittany last week and I fell and broke my shoulder."

"*Tiens!* I heard you hadn't been working. Haven't seen anything of yours lately—nothing in the last two Salons. You've been away from Paris?"

He twirled his thin-stemmed glass a moment, frowning, and I noticed that he was thin and haggard. Then he gulped down the white, bitter liquid and ordered a whole bottle. While the waiter was bringing it, he fidgeted around the room, twice breaking into a little hacking laugh that sounded half like a sob.

"No," he said, finally sitting down, "that's all a lie about falling off the rocks in Brittany, and I haven't touched a brush for a year. At present I'm working at a psychological problem—etching, not on a copper plate but on a living soul."

He broke off nervously, then, leaning across toward me and picking at my sleeve, he continued:

"I owe you something. . . well, I'll pay you in a story, old man, a piece of human living that will make you shiver. It's what I've been doing the last nine months. Tracking a man over half of Europe, opening his mind and writing across it, spreading out his soul and biting a word into it with acid: one word, *suicide!*"

Hawkins was trembling like a leaf, his eyes starting out of their sockets. No longer conscious of me, he was talking like a drug fiend, making strange short gestures with his free hand. Then he gave that hacking, sobbing laugh again and again.

"Suicide! Ha ha ha! Suicide! Ha ha haaaa!"

To stop him from becoming completely hysterical, I offered him a cigarette and filled the glasses. He calmed down a little at the interruption, then continued:

"You never knew the man. He was my best friend. We studied together for years, shared the same studio, painted the same models, and drank the same liquors. I helped him get his start, and many a time had to do a lot of his work for him while he was out playing the society game.

"In the war he left painting and went into the infantry, while I got in the camouflage corps and kept on studying. After the armistice, when all of us went back into the schools to brush up and get back to serious painting again, what did he do but play around in society and paint silly portraits of actresses and bankers' wives!

"Still we stayed together, though he was getting so stuck up that it was pretty hard at times to live with him. Then, after all I'd done for him, what does he do but snake me—the skunk! Played me dirt on the one thing that would have made me!

"She was one he had missed in his highbrow parties, a stunning looking girl and just crazy for romance, small town beauty from somewhere in Iowa, with lots of money and tired to death of the ogling of a dozen local swains. Simply fell for art and the poor, struggling genius stuff, wanted to be priestess of the living flame, fan it into a blaze with her father's greenbacks, and so forth.

"Believe me, I was all for it, but the family was awful! Sausage factory or sewer-pipe outfit, stick-in-the-muds with a terrible zero-hour sense of morality. You know the kind. They come over here and carry a bottle of Vichy water around for fear someone will offer them a drink.

"Well, we had that all fixed. I knew of a long-winded title I could buy for nothing—Roumanian, and it doesn't mean a thing but it sounds like the angelus put to jazz and Mother-in-law

would have fallen and dragged the bank account along (you know what desperate climbers they are in Middlewestern cross-roads towns). Oh, it was spiked for fair, and we were going to run away to Vienna where you can get a fool-proof marriage in a day. Then my friend played his dirty trick!

"I brought her over to the studio one night, and as luck would have it, he was at home. He came, he saw, and he fell. simply lost his head, and believe me. I enjoyed it after his floating about snobbing with the four hundreds of all Europe. There he was at home, simply eating out of her lovely, provincial hand, and the next day we were to be off to Vienna!

"Well, that night we had *some* dinner, ate in all the French we had learned in six years and drank in assorted languages! Somehow, we must have let something drop. Anyway, he got the idea, and it didn't help his disposition. Once or twice he started to say something and nearly choked!

"Then her family burst upon us, found out where I lived and followed us! Wow! The place turned blue—with laws. Morality spouted all over us. Old Sausages started in with a new Iowa edition of the Ten Commandments that made Moses sound like a prehistoric lullaby, and long before he had run out Mother-in-law got her breath. It's a good thing we weren't using candles, for she would have blown every one at the first blast.

"They roared and growled and thundered at us. Really, it was better than the chorus in 'Aida,' and then they surrounded the girl, who was scared half to death, and dragged her back to their hotel. I'm sure they barricaded the doors when they got there and bribed the entire staff of servants not to let anyone come near that hotel for a week. At

any rate, the next day I couldn't reach her by telephone, telegraph, or radio. I tried to say it with flowers, candy, and Coty's Origan, but couldn't get a word through, and what was worse, she couldn't reach me. I hunted her all day and waited that night at the Gare de l'Est and watched the Vienna Express pull out, and then went home.

"Obviously our elopement was off until her ancestors calmed down, so I spent the next few days trying to find her—haunting the Rue de la Paix and the boulevards, shadowing half a dozen hotels (they had changed theirs) and had about decided that they had left Paris when I read of her marriage to my best friend.

"The blackguard had gone over and talked half the night with them, dug up everything I had ever done and made up a lot more, absolutely double-crossed me with the ancients and turned his oily line on the girl. He even had the nerve to give her the same stuff I'd pulled about bearing the flaming torch of genius and being priestess of the sacred fire, told her I was after her money and didn't love her and then swore his disinterested motives and eternal affection.

"The next day he rounded up half of the French and English nobility as references of his angelic character and even got a special dispensation from the prefect of police for a speedy marriage—and there I was without the girl and her money! Married to my best friend, mind you, the man I'd done everything for all his life. Ha ha ha!"

**H**AWKINS had been getting more and more excited as he ran on, and I tried to stop him, but he silenced me with a gesture that was almost a threat.

"I read the newspapers every morning now," he continued, his hands clutching spasmodically. "the suicide

column! Some day he'll be there! Some day soon. I've followed him from that day to this, through Berlin, Rome, Vienna, Florence, Munich, even to Moscow, always meeting them, always sending him something. He has a collection of the world's weirdest suicide implements—poisons, daggers, pistols, ropes, everything a man could use to kill himself. For nine months now, wherever he goes, suicide stares him in the face. It's working, too. It's getting into his soul. He's come back to Paris at last, to kill."

He broke off suddenly, his whole body twitching and his mouth open. He was staring over my head as if he had seen a ghost. For an interminable second there was utter silence, than a suave voice broke in.

"Hello, Hawkins! Any more curios for my vicarious collection?"

I turned and recognized Jefferson Southworth, whose fashionable portraits I knew well and whom I had met once or twice a year or more ago, standing in the door. He was smiling half quizzically as he watched Hawkins get up, moving painfully as if his muscles had forgotten how to function, and fade out of the room, still staring like a ghost.

"Too bad, that case," Southworth continued as he came over to the table and shook hands with me. "One of these days he'll kill himself if somebody can't help him."

He tapped his shoulder significantly, holding his arms as if in a sling.

"He tried it a couple of weeks ago but didn't have the nerve. Drove up to the American Hospital in a taxi late one night and shot, but only splintered the shoulder blade. Too bad, too bad, for he had talent."

"What's eating him, Southworth?" I asked. "He's been telling me a strange story. Said it was in payment of a debt,

and went so fast I couldn't stop him to ask for the money. And the way he went out just now! You knew him pretty well?"

"Lived with him for years before my marriage last year. Not a pleasant chap, but he showed too much promise to let him go to the dogs. He loved only two things, money and painting. But he seems to love money most lately. He has borrowed from everyone. Don't think yourself singled out by fortune. He not only borrows from his own friends, but from mine as well, which keeps me pretty constantly in scrapes. Oh, well, life's little habits."

He waved his hand as if dismissing the matter.

"He told you the story of his best friend?"

I nodded.

"Me," he said after a pause. "But you know the girl could not be sacrificed even to his pictures. It was perfectly clear that once he got her money she would never see him again."

Then he added very gently, as if speaking to himself, "Besides, we loved each other."

He looked at his watch.

"By the way, you'll meet her. She should drop in here soon to meet me—my wife, you know."

He interrupted himself to order two iced *aperitifs* and then went on, speaking slowly and with absolute sincerity.

"It set him off, losing the money after he'd lived pretty close for so long, and this 'suicide' obsession gets worse and worse. I have tried to help him, indirectly of course, because the fixed idea has fastened on me and I am the last person who could help him directly.

"The most eminent physicians merely shake their heads and refer me to the psychiatrists, who talk about the probability of his committing suicide, but

can offer no definite suggestions. It seems a fairly common case, his subconscious mind always suggesting suicide to him and his conscious always transferring the idea to some victim. I happen to be the victim, but if he ever loses his head and the subconscious gets control, they predict he will carry out its wishes: suicide. Poor devil!"

He stopped and sat a moment studying the frosted glasses. Then he looked up as the door by which he had entered the room, opened. At the same moment the peculiar sobbing laugh came from the bar. With a shudder we both recognized Hawkins' hysterical voice. I turned and caught sight of a beautiful girl standing in the door, her large eyes fixed on the passage into the bar. Her face was slightly flushed and her rapid breathing showed that she, too, recognized that laugh.

**S**OUTHWORTH laid a restraining hand on my arm, but before he could speak a weird figure stood framed in the door. The bandage was torn, and here and there spots of blood mottled its surface. Hawkins was hardly recognizable—his black hair was disheveled and hung in strands like prison bars across the dead white face. The eyes, burning like live coals, protruded from their sockets and the eyebrows were lifted high on the forehead, giving him a racking look of indecision as if his very soul was torn between two impulses. But strangest of all was the mouth, like a gash in his face, curved at the corners into the strangest of smiles, as if the knife that cut it had slipped.

It was the face of an idiot or a demon, but for a second it gave us all the im-

pression of a frightened child about to cry. Then he moved, and we all saw the automatic he held in his free hand. His eyes shifted back and forth constantly between Southworth and the beautiful girl in the doorway. Neither of them moved perceptibly, but the hand on my arm tightened like a vise.

Slowly the automatic pistol came up, wavered across me until it covered Southworth, lingered an eternal moment on him, then crossed slowly back across me until it covered the girl. Then it retraced its silent path back across me to Southworth, wavering a little. I could see the veins at Hawkins' wrist and hand swollen as if they would burst. Back and forth it traveled, and still no one moved. The only sound was the rasping cough of Hawkins' breathing.

At last he began to talk, whispering hoarsely to himself. Broken phrases reached us.

"Kill him! Pull—the—trigger. Kill her—there she is. Sui—cide!! Stop it! Hold—still. Now—pull—the—trigger. Su. . su. ."

Beads of sweat broke out upon his forehead. His eyes seemed bursting from his head, and the gun moved as if it weighed thousands of pounds. The hoarse whisper became entirely unintelligible and changed gradually into that hacking, sobbing laugh, and suddenly he bowed his head and vanished!

I tried to leap after him, but for a moment my body would not move. Southworth sent the table spinning as he strode toward the girl and then I started down the passageway, but there was a shriek of laughter and a clatter of glass, drowned by the crash of the automatic! Hawkins had paid his debts.