

# Weird Tales

REGISTERED IN U.S. PATENT OFFICE



A MAGAZINE of the

BIZARRE and UNUSUAL

NUMBER 4

Published monthly by the Popular Fiction Publishing Company, 317 Baldwin Building, Indianapolis, Ind. Entered as second-class matter March 20, 1923, at the postoffice 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 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. FARNSWORTH WRIGHT, Editor. Copyright, 1925, by the Popular Fiction Publishing Company

## Contents for April, 1925

Cover Design.....	Andrew Brosnatch	
When the Green Star Waned.....	Nietzin Dyalhis	3
<i>Evil Beings From the Dark Side of the Moon Attack Aerth</i>		
Bloody Moon.....	Harry Harrison Kroll	13
<i>A Thrilling Tale of the Kentucky Caves</i>		
The Lure of Atlantis.....	Joel Martin Nichols, Jr.	17
<i>Beneath the Sargasso Sea, in the Grave of Missing Ships</i>		
Deaf, Dumb and Blind.....	C. M. Eddy, Jr.	25
<i>A Grisly Story of the Obscene Legions of Evil</i>		
The Soul-Catching Cord.....	J. W. Bennett and K. L. Soong	31
<i>A Chinese Occultist—and an Evil Apparition</i>		
The Grim Passenger.....	Donald Edward Keyhoe	37
<i>Was the Steamship Titanic Destroyed by an Egyptian Curse?</i>		
Little Island.....	H. Thompson Rich	42
<i>A Pacific Hurricane Hurlled It Into the Ocean One Night</i>		
Servants of Satan.....	Seabury Quinn	49
No. 2. Giles and Martha Corey.		
<i>True Tale of Salem Witchcraft</i>		

(Continued on Next Page)

(Continued from Preceding Page)

<b>The Dark Interval</b> .....	<b>J. B. Powell</b>	<b>55</b>
<i>His Spirit Was Tied to Earth Until He Made Amends</i>		
<b>Sleigh Bells</b> .....	<b>Hasan Vokine</b>	<b>59</b>
<i>Snow-bound, Besieged by Wolves in a Russian Winter</i>		
<b>Invaders From the Dark (First Installment)</b> .....	<b>Greya La Spina</b>	<b>61</b>
<i>A Novel of Werewolves and Occult Evil</i>		
<b>The Wind That Tramps the World</b> .....	<b>Frank Owen</b>	<b>99</b>
<i>A Tale of Sweetness and Light and Exquisite Music</i>		
<b>Treasure</b> .....	<b>Alexander Snyder</b>	<b>107</b>
<i>A Thug—a Physician—and a Mistake</i>		
<b>Back From Dust</b> .....	<b>Frank K. Shaw</b>	<b>109</b>
<i>The Shadow of the Guillotine Hung Over an American Courtroom</i>		
<b>Strange Tales From Santo Domingo</b> .....	<b>Arthur J. Burks</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>No. 3. Daylight Shadows.</b> <i>Desert Heat and Madness</i>		
<b>The Dark Pool</b> .....	<b>Francis Hard</b>	<b>118</b>
<i>Verse</i>		
<b>The Haunting Eyes</b> .....	<b>Eudora Ramsay Richardson</b>	<b>119</b>
<i>They Came Back From the Grave to Torture and Save Him</i>		
<b>The Headless Horror</b> .....	<b>Robert Eugene Ulmer</b>	<b>127</b>
<i>A Tale of Thrills—and the Severed Head of a Murderer</i>		
<b>Through the Horn Gate</b> .....	<b>Walter G. Detrick</b>	<b>131</b>
<i>McIvor Meets Peggy Odel in the Golden Horn</i>		
<b>The Electronic Plague</b> .....	<b>Edward Hades</b>	<b>136</b>
<i>A Scientist's Mad Brain Looses a Radio Horror Upon the World</i>		
<b>The Last of the Teeheemen (Conclusion)</b> .....	<b>Arthur Thatcher</b>	<b>141</b>
<i>Two-part Serial—Weird Adventures Among Dog-faced Savages</i>		
<b>The White Scar</b> .....	<b>Nellie Cravey Gillmore</b>	<b>158</b>
<i>A Dream Showed Him His Wife's Murderer</i>		
<b>Grisley's Reception</b> .....	<b>William Sanford</b>	<b>162</b>
<i>Fate Took a Hand in the Convict's Attempt to Escape</i>		
<b>The Eyrie</b> .....		<b>164</b>
<i>A Chat With the Readers</i>		

For Advertising Rates in WEIRD TALES Apply to

**W. B. ZIFF CO.**

Transportation Building  
Chicago

Architects Building  
New York

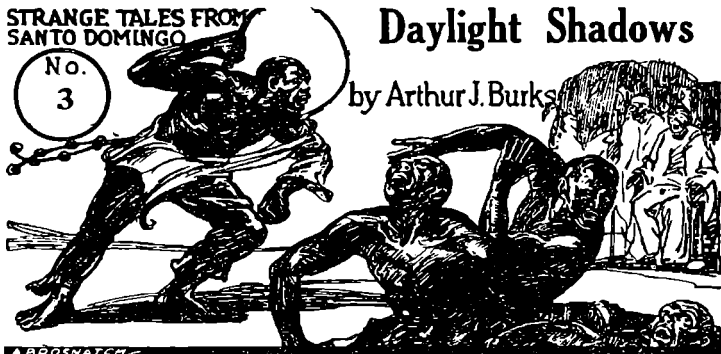
Bryant Building  
Kansas City

STRANGE TALES FROM  
SANTO DOMINGO

No.  
3

## Daylight Shadows

by Arthur J. Burks



*Author of "Luismá's Return," "Thus Spake the Prophets," etc.*

I HAD been told by a more experienced officer than myself that only a fool would attempt the passage of Neiba Desert after 10 o'clock in the morning. No white man, afoot, could bear up under the terrible heat, and there are few Dominican mules that can carry with ease a bulk as great as mine. Neiba Desert, in the heart of the tropics, is a hundred feet below the level of the sea.

But what youngster ever listened to the advice of his elders? I never had, and because I did not in this instance, I qualified for the first rank among fools.

We, a tenderfoot pharmacist's mate and myself, left Barahona at 5 o'clock in the morning, intent on reaching Las Salinas in time to make the crossing in the cool of the morning. We rode a pair of Dominican mules that were too small for us. But, even so, we should have made it, had we not tarried overlong in Cabral to listen to the raucous cries of the natives in the marketplace—until it was 8 o'clock by the sun.

We pulled out finally, after breakfasting on Dominican coffee, which is nectar fit for the gods after one has acquired the taste for it. We reached

the branching of the road at about 9, and it was 10 o'clock exactly when we gave the mules their last chance at water just Neibaward from Las Salinas. We filled our canteens there, after which we gave our mounts a breathing space ere we struck out through the thorn-tree studded waste of sand.

I shall never forget that momentous first glance toward Neiba. Just behind us to the south were the broad reaches of the Bahoruco mountains, while away ahead we could see the blue outline of the distant Cordilleras. We could not see the town of Neiba because of the fringe of palm-trees which hide her from view, even as they disclose her whereabouts. Even at that distance, which must have been very great, we could see that the palm-trees bowed and beckoned to us, as if they urged us ahead with promises of hospitality upon arrival.

We started blithely on our way. My companion was a pharmacist's mate in Uncle Sam's navy, and we talked of some of his queer experiences in hospital wards during the war, I remember. This was during the first hour, only, of the crossing. There was a dim trail through the sand, and the dust came up in clouds, filling our

eyes and nostrils with fine layers of the stuff. The heat was almost unbearable. It must have been 104 degrees Fahrenheit even then. And we had just started. The palm-trees looked no nearer. The Cordilleras were just as blue as at first. Our talking died away to oppressive silence. We drank often from our canteens, and we did not try to spare the water. Those palm-trees looked much closer than they really were, although we had been warned that their beckoning was treacherous—like that of *Die Lorelei*. Our water was gone before we had half completed the passage.

Two hours more.

Half an hour after the water gave out we were slumped low in our saddles, our shirts pulled up about our necks to keep the heat from frying our brains, and our mules were creeping along with their heads hanging almost into the trail. They were very tired, and the dust had built gray coats on their sweat-drenched hides.

My companion, who had been but a few weeks out of the states, rode along without a glance to right or left. He was feeling the heat more than I was. It was tough on him. Another hour passed, with the palm-trees seemingly no nearer. I saw that his gaze was fixed steadfastly upon them. Once when their fringed heads bowed and beckoned to us, he raised his hand and waved, as if he answered their silent greeting. He listened. Then he laughed—a laugh that was as dry as footfalls in the leaves of autumn. I knew without looking that his lips had begun to crack and that his tongue was swelling in his mouth.

I BEGAN to see queer things. A lizard scrambled from beneath a thorn-tree and stopped in the trail ahead, his yellow throat moving in the heat like a bellows. Before my eyes, as we approached, he swelled in size until he was not a lizard, but an iguana—not an iguana, but a dino-

saur—a monster. He did not move as my mule approached, but ducked his serpentine head as if, like the ostrich, he would hide it in the sand. He kept on swelling until, just as the mule's hoof must strike him, he covered the entire road, and his body stretched away in the desert on either side. But the mule never noticed. Nor did my companion. The mule's foot struck without a jar. In a flash the monster vanished. I looked back after we had passed. There was only a greenish smear in the footprint, which was rapidly filling with dust. I laughed, loud and long, but my companion did not turn around.

When I had looked back I had lowered my head so that my gaze was upon the ground beneath. I noticed a strange thing. Neither myself, my companion, nor the mules, cast a sign of a shadow upon the sand beneath us! I pinched myself and it hurt. I struck spurs to the mule and he grunted dismally. Real enough. But why were there no shadows? I bent over to look beneath the animal I rode. Still no shadow! The pharmacist's mate looked at me then. We laughed in each other's faces and neither knew why the other laughed.

My mule stopped. His sides were moving rapidly out and in—out and in, as if he could not stop them. His breath came groaning from drooling lips; slobbers made cakes of sand and dried at once, leaving little hills like the workings of certain kinds of yellow-jackets. I knew at once that the mule could proceed no farther. I alighted and attempted to pull the creature along. Not to be done.

My lips were cracked and bleeding. My tongue protruded from between sand-gritted teeth. I addressed the pharmacist's mate in a weird kind of croak:

"Go on to Neiba, and tell the *guardia* to come back out for me. Your mule can make it. You never could do it afoot if I took your mule.

I don't know that I can do it myself, but my chances are better than yours. Beat it!"

"Just so, sir. Certainly! It was to me that they beckoned, anyway. They have no welcome for you in Neiba. The greeting was for me."

What was the fool talking about? And why did he laugh like a croaking raven as he set spurs to his mule and moved on up the trail? I stood and watched him until he mingled with the heat waves, vanishing into the shimmering stuff like a creature from the pit.

ONCE more I tried to pull the mule along. It was no use, but my knees were knocking together and I was as weak as a cat before I gave it up and tied my mule in the dubious shade of a thorn-tree, where it was hotter even than out in the sunlight.

I started on afoot. I came to myself at the end of a hundred yards or so, to see that I was heading back toward Las Salinas. That would never do! Two hundred yards of needless walking when I needed every ounce of my strength!

The mate would never reach Neiba, I felt sure. He was already crazy from the heat. He'd be bound to try a short cut and leave his bones to bleach in the sun. I had to make it on in. I need not look for the arrival of *guardia* soldiers. The pharmacist's mate would never get in to tell them. He was too crazy.

I had to laugh when I thought about it. Then I looked down and turned clear around once, looking for my shadow. Not a shade of a shadow! Pretty good, that, I thought. Shade of a shadow! Ha! ha! Carefully, solemnly, I raised one foot at a time, looking under each one. No shadow.

I started on again, saying "Eeny, meeny, miny, mo" to be sure I got started in the right direction this time. Queer how I had gotten turned around while turning around looking

for the shade of my shadow! Ha! ha! ha!

I stumbled along, cursing to myself because my scuffing feet stirred up dust which flew into my nostrils. I didn't hear myself curse. My tongue was so big now that no sound could get out. But I should be all right in a brace of minutes. There was a sparkling stream crossing the trail right up there ahead of me. Queer, too, that—the officer who had given me that crazy advice had told me that there were no streams between Las Salinas and Neiba. But I could see it, couldn't I? Sure! I stumbled along until I reached its very edge, flung myself down and pressed my lips to its cooling surface. They came away coated with burning sand, some of which worked past my lips, past my swollen tongue, and into my mouth. I tried to expel the grains, but there wasn't enough moisture in my mouth. I had to stumble on with the gritty grains scratching me terribly. Somebody had placed the stream there as a kind of funny joke; but whoever had done it had hauled it away just when I would have slaked my thirst! Very poor joke.

I looked back at the mule. He brayed at me with the note of a croaking raven. I turned and looked at the palm-trees that beckoned me on to Neiba. I could almost hear the whispering of the fronds. But the Cordilleras were as blue as ever. Where was that dratted pharmacist's mate? Damn him!

I looked once more for my shadow. No shadow. Then I knew that I was nearing the end. The thought brought me back to a semblance of reason for a few minutes. I was suffering the torments of the utterly damned. How many a poor fool had left his bones to bleach in this desert in days gone by? There must have been many of them, surely. But not if they remained on the road. Someone would surely come along and find them. Only the poor

fool who wandered off the trail left his bones to bleach. I had better sense. I would stick to the trail.

But where was the trail? I saw trails now which led to every point of the compass. Follow the beckoning of the palm-trees? There were palm-trees all around me. But some of them were thorn-trees! I couldn't for the life of me tell the difference. Eeny, meeny, miny, mo! Straight ahead. I looked for my shadow again and could not find it.

But all at once there were shadows all around me! But where were the bodies that caused the shadows? The substance which was the father of the shadows? I saw not a single upright creature. Only those shadows, flat on the ground, that danced and eddied around me. The shadows of human beings! But where were the human beings? I looked more closely at the shadows. Arms, legs, heads, bodies—all were there. But the substance which caused them? None to be seen. No solid bodies. The shadows were whole and perfectly formed. But stay! They weren't entirely whole. In each and every shadow there were three bright spots, marking two eyes and a gash of a mouth to each shadow, where the sun shone through the substance I could not see!

**I** STOPPED dead in my tracks as an idea came to me. The shadows, which were increasing at an alarming rate, paused, radiating out from me like the spokes of a wheel, and thumbed shadow noses at me with shadow thumbs. My idea was this: I, who was human and alive, cast no shadow. Therefore these shadows must be the shadows of those who had ceased to exist. It was perfectly reasonable, like a proposition in geometry. The living cast no shadow, therefore that which cast a shadow must be dead and gone! It followed, as a corollary, that I should cast a shadow only after I had died!

Queer about this desert. Lizards that were iguanas; iguanas that were dinosaurs; streams that did not exist: shadows of the desert dead! Why did the shadows gather about me? Were they inviting me to join the ranks of those who were able to cast shadows? Were the dead who had died in Neiba asking me to join them? Or were they taunting me because they knew I must join them whether I willed it or no?

"But you haven't got me yet!" I croaked to the shadows. "I am still of those who cast no shadows! See? Look about me and see if there be even the sign of a shadow!"

And I looked down to satisfy myself that I spoke truth.

My God! I didn't cast a shadow, no; but right where my shadow would have been had there been a shadow was a thin pencil mark of darkness, as if someone had drawn a black line about my shadow's outline and then jerked the shadow away! Like that practical joker who had jerked the stream away when I would have slaked my thirst.

I paused for a moment, studying that weird outline, while the real shadows kept thumbing their noses at me. There was a heavier shadow among those real shadows—the shadow of a fat man who had died. Fat men are said to be jolly. I looked at the fat man as I recalled this. The spot where the right eye would have been, had it been a person instead of a shadow, closed slowly and strangely, in a terrible and horrifying wink! The bright eye opened again and the bright gash of a mouth widened into a terrible, ghastly, silent grin!

I screamed and ran, closing my eyes to shut out the shadows. I fell to my knees and slumped forward on my stomach, crawling slowly ahead through the scorching sand. It burned my hands and body. Hellfire rushed into my nostrils from the desert floor. I dragged myself to my feet, then fell

and lay still for a long time. I opened my eyes to see that the shadows were dancing in hellish glee upon my chest! All thumbed their noses except the fat man. He winked, and grinned with that bright gash of a mouth.

I arose and looked at my own shadow. I could call it that now, for there was only the bright outline of a miniature of myself, within that other outline of black. I was almost a shadow. I closed my eyes again and stumbled ahead.

**S**UDDENLY I met three Dominican women riding toward me on three burros piled high with gourds. Filled with water, I knew, for the gourds were dripping precious moisture upon the gray coats of the burros. I raised a hand beseechingly and pointed to my swollen tongue. The women crossed themselves and shied away from me. I tried to run toward them and the burros bolted. One of the women called back to me:

"Go back to Barahona, or on to Neiba, if you wish water! There is more than you can drink, ever, in either place!"

Surely, that was truth! Stupid of me! I would go on to Neiba. That's where I had started for, wasn't it?

I walked on, stumbling, falling, crawling forward on my stomach like a snake—rising and going forward with feet that were heavy as lead. Molten lead.

Where were the palm-trees? I could not see them. And this trail was not a trail at all. It was the snaky trace of a lizard! No, of an iguana! Or a dinosaur. I don't know. I'll follow it anyway. My shadow tells me that there isn't much time. The miniature within the outline isn't a miniature any more—just a weirdly shaped spray of blinding light, growing smaller. And there are other shadows all about me—countless numbers of them.

What is that up ahead there? Another stream? But I shan't be disappointed if it isn't; I'll have a look anyway. I'm going in that direction. I stumble into the stream. It is real! I feel its coolness creep up over my shoetops, creep into my shoes and harden the molten lead which compose my feet. I fall face downward in the stream and drink—drink—drink! The water is green because the cattle use it overmuch, but it is nectar for all that—nectar superior to the best Dominican coffee.

I crawl out on the bank and look at my shadow. There is only a spot of light in its center now. To be cheated, after I have reached water at last!

But whence come these other shadows? They are shadows of black soldiers, and they are upright instead of flat on the ground. I am not to be fooled. I'm all turned around, I know that, but I am not crazy yet. They look at me queerly, hesitantly, as they approach. One man, a sergeant, is in the lead, and he is running toward me with swift strides. He stops just before me and his shadow blots out the spray of light which is all that stands between me and the desert dead.

"Curse you! Curse you!" I cry, slashing out with my fist; "would you relegate me to the shadows after I have slaked my thirst and am able to go on! I don't want to be a shadow, I tell you!"

My fist takes him in the mouth, and I see the red blood start as total darkness closes around me, filling the world itself with shadow.

**I** CAME to myself in the *guardia* barracks at Neiba. The sergeant sat opposite me, wiping his lips with a soiled handkerchief.

"Where am I?" I asked feebly. "Did the pharmacist's mate get in all right? How did I get here?"

He smiled at me and answered in Spanish.

"You are in Neiba. Yes, he got in all right. We brought you in, after tracking you halfway to Lake Enriquillo, toward which, leaving the trail, you were wandering. You were unconscious, flat on the desert floor, and licking up sand with your swollen tongue, which, sticking through between your teeth, was so big that it wouldn't carry the sand into your mouth! It kept rolling off your

tongue and you mumbled to yourself as if cursing. I caught the words 'cattle' and 'shadows'. Then you hit me in the mouth. That's all!"

It was enough.

---

*Note.*—"The Sorrowful Sisterhood." No. 4 in this series of "Strange Tales From Santo Domingo," narrates one of the weird experiences of the Dominican bandit, José Espinosa. It will appear in next month's WEIRD TALES.