

Weird Tales

REGISTERED IN U.S. PATENT OFFICE

A MAGAZINE of the



BIZARRE and UNUSUAL

VOLUME XIX

NUMBER 2

Published monthly by the Popular Fiction Publishing Company, 2467 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, \$4.00 a year in Canada. English office: Charles Lavell, 18, 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 840 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Ill.

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DREAM JUSTICE

By E. W. MAYO

THE strange circumstances surrounding the death of Edward Martin were never fully revealed to the public. It was thought by most people that he died of causes unknown, even to the doctors.

But the following I found in his diary; and although there is no way of proving the truth or untruth of it, I nevertheless am inclined to think it explains his death more satisfactorily than any other reason given:

Feb. 7—Last night I had a dream—a dream that was only too true. I dreamed that a murder I had committed three years ago, which I thought had been successfully covered up, had been brought to light. The evidence against me was so forceful that I confessed. I was then taken to the county jail, where I was charged with murder in the first degree. At this point I awoke and found myself wet with perspiration. Why, although the facts concerning the murder are true, I should have a dream of this sort, I can't explain.

Feb. 8—My dream was continued last night. This time it seemed to cover a period of some weeks. I was convicted and sentenced to die in the electric chair August 20. After my sentence was passed I again awoke to find myself in a cold sweat. I was extremely nervous today and am hoping I won't have another of these foolish dreams. The murder is completely covered up, I'm sure, and I was never suspected, so there is no need to be afraid or worried even if I do dream of it. But still I would like an explanation for it.

Feb. 9—It was awful last night. Time passed quickly and it was only three days before the day set for my electrocution when I awoke. It really seemed as if I had spent those long weeks in my cell, waiting and waiting. Today I was really worried, and my friends wanted to know what was wrong with me.

Feb. 10—Two more days—and then—? I can't get away from it, I dream and dream—it is terrible. I even plotted an escape from prison last night—but failed. The thing preys on my mind all the time now—day and night. I can't eat, I can't do anything—I look and act insane; my friends demand to know what the trouble is—but I don't dare tell them—they couldn't help me. No one can help me—if only I could get away from those cursed, those infernal dreams!

Feb. 11—One more day. Last night
(Continued on next page)

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was a repetition of the one before. I didn't go out today—I was afraid my friends might hear me talking and muttering to myself. I seem to be out of my head—I feel weak and can hardly think at all. I only dread what tonight will bring.

Feb. 12—Tonight at 12—I'm doomed to go then. But I think I have a way to fool them—I won't go to sleep—I'll stay up and awake until after 12—maybe that will end it all—maybe the spell will be broken then and I shall be saved. I'll drink coffee—black coffee—lots of it—that will keep me awake.

10 p. m.—So far I've been able to keep awake—but I'm getting a little drowsy—I guess I need more black coffee.

11 p. m.—I'm so tired and sleepy I can hardly hold my head up—maybe I need a little fresh air—going to open a window. Just another hour or more and then—if I can only hold out till then!

11:55 p. m.—I can barely write—I almost went under that time—a few more minutes—I can't—I can't—my eyes—I can't hold them open—I'm going—I'm going—

* * * * *

Such were the contents of the late Edward Martin's diary.

And what was found when his bedroom door was forced?

His dead body, slumped down in a big armchair, with peculiar marks on his wrists and ankles—marks that weren't explained at that time—or ever.