

Weird Tales



ALL STORIES NEW — NO REPRINTS

JULY, 1943

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Return of the Undead

By OTIS ADELBERT KLINE and FRANK BELKNAP LONG

The Grave Robbers

TERENCE O'ROURKE was frightened. There was a strained horror in his gaze as he stood staring

down at old Simeon Hodges lying still and pale in his coffin.

The tall young man beside him was grinning derisively. "What's the matter, Terry? Scared of your own shadow?"



*It takes some sense of humor to laugh
off a dead man who's come all the
way from the cemetery just to see you.*

O'Rourke drew in his breath sharply. I can't understand it," he muttered. "He's been dead nearly a month, but he—he still looks *spruced up!*"

Marvin Cummings shifted his spade and spat down into the empty grave. "Pull yourself together, Terry," he gibed. "He's been shot full of arsenic. You ought to know that a well-preserved corpse can take it."

Harsh laughter came from both sides of him. O'Rourke's three companions were trying hard to be hard. Tall, blue-eyed M. T. (Empty) Cummings, his straw-colored hair blowing in the night wind. Little John Slater, his shoulders hunched and his hands thrust deep into his pockets—to hide their trembling. Lanky, freckled-faced Clarence Limerick, looking even younger than his nineteen years.

ONLY O'Rourke wasn't pretending. "All right," he muttered. "Laugh your heads off. Digging that poor old fellow up and robbing him of the peace he's entitled to isn't *my* idea of a joke."

"The joke won't be on him," said Cummings, ghoulishly. "His sense of humor has atrophied—along with his heart, lungs and liver."

"That's right," said little Slater. "The joke will be on Freddy. He'll hit the ceiling when he sees a corpse in his bed."

"It's a mean, malicious trick," said O'Rourke. "I'm ashamed of myself. We're grave robbers. We're worse than—"

"Aw, stow it, Terry," rapped Limerick. "You weren't so thin-skinned this morning. You agreed with us that Freddy needed hardening. He's so damned nervous and excitable that a dead fly on his undershirt would scare the pants off him."

"Yeah; something has got to be done about Freddy," agreed Cummings. "If he wants to be a sawbones he'll have to stop yelling for his mama every time he sees a calvaria chiseled off, and a nice, juicy

brain exposed. It's a wonder Nancy has any respect for him."

"That's what gets me down," grunted Limerick. "He faints in the dissecting room and what happens? She goes out with him on a date. With nail-hard material to choose from why did she have to go soft on a weak-kneed Freshman squirt?"

"Oh, Freddy's all right," grunted Cummings, charitably. "All he needs is a jolt. We're doing everything possible for the lad. Digging up Hodges is no crime because the old fellow was a nonentity plus."

"We couldn't have picked a lonelier corpse," chimed in Slater. "He lived like an animal, alone in the woods. There'll be no mourners coming to *his* grave."

"Yeah, that's the beauty of it," agreed Limerick. "When we put him back no one will be the wiser—except Freddy."

O'Rourke scarcely heard him. He was staring at Cummings as though unable to believe his eyes. Cummings had ceased to grin. The revulsion in his mind had at last undermined his bravado. His face was twitching and he was staring down at the dead man as though transfixed.

It wasn't to be wondered at, really. The yawning grave, the smell of tainted, moldy earth, and the shadowy outlines of tombstones had alone sufficed to terrify O'Rourke. Cummings was made of sterner stuff, but the pinched and sallow face of old Hodges would have struck terror to the heart of a ghoul.

IN HIS cheap, pineboard coffin under the moon he commanded more respect than he had ever commanded in life. His claw-like hands, folded limply on his chest, the charity clothes in which he had been buried and the rough stubble on his cheeks seemed somehow pathetic, horrible—dragging him forth to meet the light worse than a desecration.

Cummings took a cigarette out of his pocket and stuck it in his pale, twitching

mouth. "We've got to work fast," he muttered. "Nancy has to be in by ten. Freddy will waste maybe fifteen minutes billing and cooing with her in the vestibule of the femme dorm, but we can't count on it."

He lit the cigarette with trembling fingers. "Terry, you and Limerick take hold of his shoulders. Slats and I will lift his legs."

It was a gruesome undertaking. O'Rourke was shaking like a leaf when they rolled the corpse into a tarpaulin, and loaded it on a carry-cot from the college supply room.

The cadaver was limp, flaccid, but remarkably well-preserved. Simeon Hodges had looked cadaverous in life and death had not changed him.

"Well, well," rapped Cummings. "What are we waiting for?"

"My legs," croaked O'Rourke.

"Damn your legs. Get going."

Out of the moonlit cemetery they plodded, four frightened medical students carrying a gruesome burden. Down a narrow dirt road to Miller's junction, and then east between lonely farmhouses to the dormitories, halls and grounds of Carlton Medical School.

Frederick Simpson was a fresh-air fiend. He had gone off with Nancy Summers and left the window of his room on the ground floor of the men's dormitory open to the Warm September night. Removing the wing fasteners on the outside of the screen and passing Simeon Hodges across the sill was a simple matter.

Slater and Cummings climbed into the room while O'Rourke and Limerick remained on the lawn with the carry-cot, hoisting the body up and sighing with relief when it was seized from above and dragged into blackness.

Slater and Cummings gripped the corpse in a sort of half-Nelson and staggered with it to Freddy's bed. It took them scarcely five minutes to accomplish their grisly

task. They descended breathlessly, their faces wan in the moonlight.

"Did you tuck him in for the night," whispered Limerick, hoarsely.

"You bet we did. We propped him right up in Freddy's bed, and put a book in his hands. Babcock's Post-Mortem Appearances."

A gruesome smile creased Limerick's thin, bloodless lips. "A living case book, eh?"

"We shouldn't be standing here chinning," interposed O'Rourke. "Freddy'll be back any minute now."

Cummings nodded, rotated the wing fastener till it overlapped the screen and screwed it into place.

"You'd better return that cot to the supply room, Slats," he said. "Keep out of the moonlight and tiptoe when you hit the corridor. You'll find us in Terry's room."

Terry's room was three windows further along, at the southern extremity of the dormitory. Terry was not a fresh air fanatic, but he had left his window open on purpose to the warm autumn night.

The three conspirators climbed in hastily, leaving the screen fastener ajar. They sank into chairs by the window in darkness, and mopped sweat from their brows. O'Rourke had set four wicker chairs in a semi-circle close to the window in preparation for just such an event.

The session of watchful waiting which ensued dragged like a dead eternity. Every once in a while O'Rourke peered out, craning his thin neck and humming to keep his courage up.

FINALLY he saw it. A wide swath of radiance on the trampled lawn immediately beneath Freddy's window. He withdrew his head with a jerk.

"Freddy's back," he whispered, hoarsely.

There was a scraping of chair legs, followed by a muffled oath and Cummings

and Limerick collided a foot from the sill. Ruthlessly Cummings elbowed the younger student aside.

"Yeah, he's standing right by the window," he confirmed. "I can see his shadow on the lawn."

"You can see! How about me?"

"Pipe down, Limerick. Keep back. We don't want him to hear us."

"He'll yell out in a second," O'Rourke murmured. "He hasn't seen it yet."

Breathlessly the three students waited for a blood-curdling scream to echo across the campus. They *hoped* it would be blood-curdling. What was the good of frightening Freddy if he didn't go all to pieces and cry out in abject terror.

FOR five full minutes they waited, cursing Freddy inwardly. Finally Cummings jumped up, and started pacing the room like a caged orang-outang.

"Something's wrong," he muttered. "He's either drunk, or we've underestimated him. A lad who can—"

His speech congealed. From beyond the window there had come an unutterably terrifying sound—a metallic screeching and rasping which wrenched a cry from Limerick and jelled the blood in O'Rourke's veins.

This time Cummings and Limerick reached the window simultaneously. Together they stared out, their view-hogging impulses forgotten.

The sound was not repeated. But streaking across the campus in the moonlight was a tall and quaking figure, its arms crooked sharply at the elbows, and its coat-tails flying.

"Freddy!" gasped Cummings. "Just look at him go!"

"As though the Devil were after him," chuckled Limerick. "That sound we heard must have been the screen ripping. He frightens slow, but boy, does it take!"

Cummings sighed with relief. "So that's

what it was. I thought for a minute it was a banshee on a tear."

The three students sank down in their chairs and exchanged significant glances. They had put it over. Freddy had had the scare of his life.

They were having a quiet laugh together when there came a knock at the door.

Cummings's grin vanished. "That you, Slats?" he called.

Through the thin panel came the rasping voice of Dr. Amos Harlow, the professor in charge of the men's dormitory. "Your door is bolted on the inside, Mr. O'Rourke. Open it immediately."

Cummings jumped up, swung his chair into the middle of the room and grabbed a book.

Limerick threw himself down on O'Rourke's bed and whipped out a pipe.

"O'Rourke crossed swiftly to the door and threw it open. "Sorry, sir," he apologized.

DR. HARLOW was a wiry little man with snow-white hair and a skin as smooth as a baby's. He fairly stormed into the room, his eyes blazing.

"You know damn well it's an infraction to keep your door bolted after ten-thirty," he rapped.

"Baloney," Cummings murmured.

Dr. Harlow swung on him. "What was that?"

Cummings grimaced. "I said it was *only* an accident, sir. Mr. O'Rourke snapped the bolt absent-mindedly, without thinking."

"Well, all right. But think next time—all of you. You'll turn the dormitory into a fire-trap."

He cleared his throat. "A moment ago I heard a very strange noise on your side of the hall—a sort of tearing sound. It seemed to come from this room. Did you gentlemen—"

"We heard it," said Limerick.

"You did? Then perhaps you can tell me what caused it."

"I—I think it came from outside," stammered O'Rourke. "We heard it through the window."

"Nonsense," snapped Harlow. "How could I hear an outside noise from my side of the hall. Gentlemen, I intend to find out where that sound came from."

He wheeled and walked out of the room. Fearfully, their hearts in their throats, O'Rourke, Cummings and Limerick followed him. "Play innocent and dumb," cautioned Cummings.

Harlow tapped on a dozen doors up and down the corridor before he came to Freddy's room. At Freddy's room he tapped again and again.

"Mr. Simpson," he called. "I wish to speak to you. Are you awake, Simpson?"

There was no reply.

"Better open it, sir," whispered O'Rourke. He knew that Harlow intended to do that very thing, so what was the use of stalling? Harlow would step into the room and run smack into the horror.

It couldn't be avoided now. Harlow had questioned every student on the ground floor with the exception of Freddy and Freddy didn't answer. Harlow would get a jolt too. But he wouldn't plunge shrieking through what was left of the screen. He'd swing around and start asking questions.

It would mean expulsion, but it had to be faced. They would have to take their medicine like men.

Harlow's face was purpling when he pushed into the room. "No student could sleep *that* soundly," he muttered.

Tremulously the guilty three piled in after him.

The light was still on in Freddy's room. It flooded over the crumpled bed and the still, white form lying there. Not sitting with a book gruesomely propped up before

it, but lying with its head dangling over the foot of the bed and its arms rigidly outflung.

For an instant they thought that Simeon Hodges had simply toppled over. Passing from the darkness of the corridor into the brightly lighted room and seeing what looked like a corpse such a first impression was unavoidable.

For a merciful instant their minds envisaged simply expulsion, disgrace and the difficulty of explaining it to the home folks. Then real horror gripped them, shook them and left them as limp as rags.

Hideously the truth dawned. It wasn't old Hodges lying there. It was Freddy Simpson and he looked—ghastly. Freddy had red hair and a fresh, boyish complexion, but now his face was corpse pale and the blood on his throat was such a bright, glaring red that his hair seemed drab by contrast.

The blood had come from two tiny cuts immediately above Freddy's Adam's Apple. One on each side of his throat—two tiny punctures oozing bright blood.

The reactions of O'Rourke, Limerick and Cummings were as divergent as their personalities.

Cummings said: "My God!" and turned as white as a sheet.

Limerick swore lustily.

O'Rourke said nothing at all. He didn't even cry out. All he did was reel back against the wall and slump to the floor in a dead faint.

Let's Bury Him

IT WAS past midnight when they re-assembled in O'Rourke's room to talk it over in hushed whispers. Slater had rejoined them and was adding his voice to the discussions, his hands in his pockets, his shoulders hunched.

"We ought to be thankful he's rallying," he muttered. "I was afraid his overtaxed

heart couldn't stand anything but a saline infusion."

"I'd have given him the hemorrhage emergency treatment," agreed Cummings. "Fifty grains of sodium chloride and sodium sulphate in boiling water by hypodermoclysis. Pumping all that blood into him was risky as hell. But I suppose heroic measures are sometimes justified.

"Stockwell says he was almost *drained*—and Stockwell ought to know. He's stained more leukocytes than any bloodhound in America."

"Stow the shop talk," interjected Limerick. "We're facing a grim situation. I don't believe Simeon Hodges came to life and broke through that screen. I don't believe it was him we saw streaking it across the campus. O'Rourke thinks it was. Okay, O'Rourke believes in vampires. If we want to grovel we couldn't ask for a better explanation."

"Old Simeon was a vampire. We dug up a vampire. He attacked Freddy, bit into his neck and sucked him dry. You saw the teeth marks on Freddy's throat. Blood all over poor Freddy, and we're to blame. We dug up a limp, blood-hungry vampire."

Limerick's lips were twisting in a sneer. "Okay, if you want it that way. We'll put our brains in hock and throw away the loan ticket."

"Limerick," said O'Rourke, his voice strained. "You've got to listen. I'm appealing to you not as a student of medicine, remember. I'm just a run-of-the-mill guy who has done a lot of reading on his own."

"I've read books you've never heard about, by writers with a lot of sound scholarship behind them. Plenty of educated people believe in vampires today. There's an English scholar named Summers who cites hundreds of cases of vampirism in the twentieth century. A few of them have come under his own personal observation.

"He believes in vampires, ghouls, werewolves, and incubi. You can't laugh away the findings of a man like that. He's got more on the ball than any prof in this college. When I read his six-hundred page books for the first time it was as though a hundred ton weight had descended on my brain."

"Yeah, and crushed it," sneered Limerick. "What do you take us for? It's easy to understand why that sort of tripe was taken seriously in the Middle Ages—people had nothing better to do than sit around and wait for something to happen."

"Perhaps someone was spying on us when we dug Simeon up," hazarded Cummings. "Perhaps he tried to scare hell out of us by stealing the corpse, and turning our little joke against us. I wouldn't put it past a couple of seniors I know."

"That wouldn't account for Freddy's loss of blood or the cuts in his throat," objected Slater.

"Stockwell says that Freddy was anaemic," buttressed Limerick. "He was treating Freddy for a mild oligocythemia. How do we know he lost so much blood? Maybe he cut himself while shaving, or something."

Cummings was pacing the room. "All this is getting us nowhere," he muttered. "It isn't far to the cemetery. I move we adjourn to Simeon Hodges' grave."

There was a chorus of assents.

"Maybe Simeon has come home to roost."

"Yeah. Whoever snatched him may have put him back."

"We'd better take our spades along—just in case."

RETURNING to the cemetery was a nightmare ordeal to O'Rourke. His companions seemed to share his forebodings, for they approached Simeon Hodges' grave in complete silence.

Their heavy brogues made a crunching

sound as they plodded over the black, mouldy earth. Between the wind-stirred branches of tall, thick-boled trees they caught occasional glimpses of a moon that seemed to be swimming in a sea of blood.

The illusion chilled O'Rourke more than the huge, misshapen shadows which crouched at the base of the tombstones and slumbered on the neglected graves. He knew that it wasn't the redness of approaching dawn which glimmered between the branches but that mysterious, inexplicable ruddiness which the sky sometimes assumes in the small hours when the moon is gibbous and the night wanes.

THEIR thoughts were sloping down into terror-haunted depths when they arrived at the grave and halted before Simeon Hodges' coffin. The coffin was still standing beside the grave where they had left it, but it was no longer open, and it was no longer empty!

Protruding from one corner of the stained, pine-board casket was a pale, claw-like hand.

"God!" shrieked O'Rourke, his neck-hairs rising in terror.

Limerick dropped his spade and took a swift step backwards. Slater and Cummings stood rooted, their eyes wide and staring.

The coffin was unevenly sprinkled with fresh earth. A crude mound had been built up on one side of it, and part of the heaped earth had spilled over on the closed lid.

O'Rourke was ghastly pale. "He—he must have crawled back himself," he moaned.

Cummings' hands had gone to his face as though to shut out the sight. Now they dropped to reveal a countenance of haggard concern.

"What in hell do you mean?"

"It's as plain as the nose on your face. He clawed up all that earth and climbed

back inside before he let the lid fall. He knew that the jar would scatter dirt on the coffin."

It was an ingenious explanation, but Limerick didn't like it. "Why should he do that," he sneered.

"For protection after sunrise," said O'Rourke. "An unburied vampire endures the most horrible torments. He's buried now—symbolically."

"It looks like a one-man job, all right," muttered Slater, awe and terror in his voice.

Limerick wheeled on him.

"Don't be a fool, Slats. This could have been the work of a dozen persons."

"I'll soon find out whether he's a vampire or not," muttered Cummings. "If he has blood-stains on his mouth—"

He was reaching for the coffin lid when O'Rourke grabbed his wrist. "Don't raise that lid, Empty."

Cummings straightened, his lips twitching. "Why—why not?"

"It's dangerous to look at a vampire right after it has feasted. We've got to drive a wooden stake through the coffin, Empty. We've got to destroy him tonight. Summers says—"

"To hell with your bogey books," rasped Limerick. "We'll look at him and then we'll bury him."

"All right," said O'Rourke. "Raise the lid then, Limerick. Go on, raise it."

Limerick hesitated, bit his lips.

"Maybe we better just bury him," Cummings said.

Limerick and O'Rourke grasped one end of the coffin and Cummings and Slater the other. They lowered it into the grave and covered it swiftly with earth. O'Rourke shuddered when a spadeful of dirt descended on the protruding hand, but he went right on shoveling.

The grave looked very well when they had finished with it. Not so O'Rourke. He stood for a moment leaning on his spade,

his eyes closed and a terrified expression on his face.

Suddenly he shuddered and stared across the grave at Cummings. "We're standing on the grave of a sated vampire," he said. "I can feel it tugging at my heart. There is a coldness under my heart and—"

"Oh, nuts," sneered Limerick. "I'm going to hit the hay. I'm not afraid of little boy things that go boop in the night."

"We should have driven a stake through the coffin," said O'Rourke grimly. "We'll be sorry we didn't. We'll be sorry, Limerick."

..... *Attack on the Campus*

IT DIDN'T seem as though he could be right. Freddy Simpson was sitting up in bed, and Nancy Summers was holding his hand, and because it was another day entirely and the sunlight was flooding into the hospital room old Simeon Hodges' corpse seemed unreal, remote.

The four students had trooped in to see Freddy, but Nancy was getting most of the attention. Nancy was a very intelligent, red-headed girl with a willowy figure and a face which was just right. The four students were badly smitten.

They tried to hide their real feelings from one another, but Nancy was aware of how they felt. "You boys have been swell," she said. "Freddy seems to have a gift for friendship."

"You bet he has," agreed Cummings. "We think a lot of Freddy. I guess he knows that."

Freddy smiled wanly. His thin, freckled face was still abnormally pale.

"I can't understand it," he said. "I had a dizzy spell. Naw, I didn't see anything. As soon as I stepped into the room things began to swim and I went out like a light."

"You didn't cut yourself while shaving, Freddy?" asked O'Rourke.

Freddy shook his head. "Of course not. I use an electric razor, except when I'm in a hurry."

"Freddy, there's a big hole in your window screen. Know anything about that?"

O'Rourke was holding his breath. He hoped that Freddy was telling the truth.

"Not a thing, Terry. You say there were footsteps on the soft earth under my window. Maybe a burglar was hiding in my room. Maybe he socked me from behind with a lead pipe or something. Maybe the blow stunned me, so that I just folded without feeling it."

"Yeah," agreed Limerick. "That would account for it."

"Doctor Harlow thinks Freddy scratched his throat without 'noticing it,'" Nancy said. "He thinks he fainted when he saw the blood. Freddy says that's ridiculous, but some people do faint at the sight of blood. Perhaps Freddy saw the blood and it registered in his subconscious—"

"Now, Nancy, you know that's far-fetched," muttered Freddy, blushing slightly despite his pallor. "Blood doesn't affect me like that. If it did, would I be studying medicine?"

"You're just a little boy in some respects, Freddy," said Nancy, maternally. "If you've a psychological handicap you should own up to it."

"He fainted yesterday in the dissecting room," said Limerick, flashing a glance at Nancy which said as plain as words: "Why don't you ditch the kid and take up with a real he-guy, Nancy?"

Freddy glared at him. "It was just biliousness," he said. "I've been studying too hard and I allowed myself to get run down."

"It occurred at a funny time," gibed Limerick, mercilessly.

"Maybe he had another bilious attack last night," prompted Cummings.

"That could be," admitted Freddy. "I'm subject to them."

When the four students left the hospital building they exchanged meaningful glances.

"We're in the clear," said Limerick. "He didn't even catch a glimpse of Simeon."

"And where does that leave us," retorted Cummings. "Someone knows, someone is in on it. Who returned Simeon to the cemetery? It's blackmail I'm worrying about."

"Who would want to blackmail us?"

"I don't know. But someone pulled off a complicated body-snatching stunt. Did he do it for his health?"

"I've warned you," said O'Rourke. "Simeon Hodges is a vampire. He attacked Freddy, sucked his blood, and fled back to the cemetery."

Three scornful medical students, their skepticism restored by the sunlight, parted on the campus from one whom they considered a craven, superstitious fool, going their separate ways in silence.

Limerick and Slater had lectures to attend, and O'Rourke a gymnasium workout. Cummings headed for the school library. He wasn't *quite* as skeptical as Limerick and Slater.

THE small, dark girl at the withdrawal desk was Cummings' consolation date. Her name was Sally Sherwin and she was almost as good-looking as Nancy.

"What do you want with all these scary books, Empty?" she murmured, as she passed over the counter Merrick's *Vampirism in Europe*, Dwight's *The Vampire*, Dunn's *Superstitions of the Dark Ages*, Aldrich's *The Witch Cult*, Street's *Magic Talisman*, and Wayne's *Hungarian Legends*.

"Just amusing myself, Sally," Cummings said. "Sometimes I enjoy that sort of reading. Deep inside me there is a repressed Edgar Allan Poe."

"Well! I didn't know you had literary talents, Empty."

"I have many talents," said Cummings. He put his arm about Sally Sherwin and kissed her till she gasped. Fortunately the library was deserted.

"Now why did I do that?" he asked himself as he carried the books into a secluded alcove. "I'm not in love with her. There is supposed to be some connection between fear and amorous impulses. Perhaps I'm more frightened than I suspect. I wish to hell O'Rourke had kept his trap shut."

The books were horribly depressing. Merrick, Street and Wayne professed to disbelieve in vampires, but *something* had unquestionably scared them. Every page he turned carried shrill and hysterical admonitions. Dwight refused to commit himself. Dunn wavered between belief and skepticism.

The most reassuring sentences were in *Superstitions of the Dark Ages*:

It was commonly believed that no vampire would attack a man or woman bearing a cross and protected by a necklace of garlic. It was also believed that no vampire could leave its grave before sundown.

Ambrose Pere observes, however, that heavily overcast skies often lure vampires from the earth and that during thunderstorms they range the countryside with a hellish and illicit greediness.

It was also believed that vampires could imitate the voices of the living, and insinuate themselves with diabolical cunning into the domiciles of maidens.

Cummings was so absorbed in the Middle Ages that he scarcely noticed how dismal the library had become. Hunched and purplish shadows clustered about the deserted book racks and the sunlight which had been pouring down through the tall

windows behind him had ceased to warm the back of his neck.

He closed the book at last, stacked it with the others and returned the entire pile to the desk. "I'll call for you at eight-thirty, Sally," he said.

Sally Sherwin scowled. "You know what happened the last time we went stepping. You kept me out so late I lost my date privileges for two weeks."

"I'm sorry about that Sally," said Cummings, contritely. "It won't happen again."

"I'll say it won't. You've seen to it that I can't walk out of the dorm with you like a decent girl. I have to sneak out by the window."

"It's more romantic that way," said Cummings. "I'll be under your window at eight-thirty sharp."

Sally sighed. "All right, heart-throb. But if it rains the date is off."

"If it rains? Why should it rain? There wasn't a cloud in the sky when I—"

His speech jelled. The dismalness which had crept over the library could mean only one thing. During his researches the sun had ceased to bathe the campus in a warm and mellow glow!

TURNING from the desk he hurried along the deserted corridors of the library building, and out onto the campus. The campus was bathed in an ominous *negation* of light which struck a chill to his heart.

The ivy-draped quadrangle of dormitories and lecture halls loomed eerily through the murk, their Gothic outlines reminding him of something out of Sir Walter Scott.

He stood before the library building staring in amazement at a running figure. The figure had emerged from the Hall of Pharmacy, and was running straight toward him. A slim, pale girl running. He recognized her instantly despite the darkness.

"Nancy!" he exclaimed, and strode forward to meet her.

She swayed when she saw him and tottered forward until she was in his arms.

"Nancy, what is it?"

Sobbingly she clung to him, her whole body trembling.

"It's Slats," she moaned. "They've taken him into the pharmacy building. Oh, it's horrible, Empty. His throat is torn, *mangled*. He's drenched with blood. He's dying, Empty—there's nothing they can do for him."

Cummings turned deathly pale. He stared at her aghast, cold perspiration breaking out all over him. "When—when did this happen, Nancy?"

"They found him in Norwood Lane about ten minutes ago. You know how dark it is there, even when the sun is shining."

Cummings knew. Norwood Lane ran between the Hall of Pharmacy and the Hospital Unit. It was simply a narrow alleyway between the two buildings, a sort of lover's lane where students petted in shadows on their way to the lecture rooms. Brick-walled and ivy-festooned, it offered a seclusion for furtive embraces at high noon and for more leisurely love-making after dark.

"You mean—you were there with him, Nancy?"

Nancy Summers shook her head. "I was coming out of Doc Whitehead's classroom when they brought him into the hall. I was so sickened I—I just ran, Empty."

"I know it was cowardly, Empty, but I couldn't help it. My stomach twisted and I had to get out fast."

Cummings nodded. "I understand, Nancy. It was perfectly natural. We knew Slats, loved him. He was a great little guy. He had his faults, but there'll never be another Slats."

"I just ran, Empty. I wasn't looking

for you or anybody. I just wanted to get as far as I could away."

"Sure, sure, Nancy, I understand," Cummings soothed.

"Empty, his throat was horribly torn. Do you think it was an animal, Empty? A rabid dog?"

"There are no blood-sucking dogs, Nancy."

"A bat then? Empty, isn't there a huge, South American vampire bat which attacks men? Perhaps one of those bats was shipped north in a crate of oranges or bananas, and has escaped and crawled into a hollow tree somewhere on the campus."

Cummings' face was grim. "No, Nancy. The blood-sucking bat of South America has a wing span of scarcely three inches. It couldn't tear a man's throat or suck more than a thimbleful of blood. The big South American bats are fruit-eaters—perfectly harmless."

"But something fiendish attacked Freddy last night and now Slats. Oh, Empty, I'm frightened!"

Night Visit

CUMMINGS was frightened, too, but he kept his emotions to himself. Only Limerick and O'Rourke knew. A half hour later they were at Simeon Hodges' grave again. The sun was westerning rapidly and the sloping tombstones now seemed drenched with blood. On all sides of them were tumbled mounds of freshly upturned earth.

They were digging like mad. Sweat was streaming from them and they were wearing necklaces of garlic which O'Rourke had bought at the village Italian fruit store. They were getting down to the coffin as fast as they could.

"I can't understand it," muttered Cummings. "How did he get back in without disturbing the earth?"

"A vampire can turn into a thin mist

and filter through a screen, a keyhole, under a door or down through the earth," panted O'Rourke. "The last time we left the coffin above ground and he had to bury himself. Now the coffin's under four feet of earth. He simply seeped back."

"I don't know why I'm doing this," grumbled Limerick. "You're both as mad as March hares. There's not a dried-up old guy in that coffin named Simeon Hodges. He's been out and around, sure. But that's because we took him out and somebody with a rotten sense of humor put him back."

"You're wearing a necklace of garlic, Limerick," said O'Rourke. "Why don't you take it off?"

Limerick grunted. "When you're with fools do as fools do. Why should I make myself conspicuous?"

There was a dull, heavy thud. "Careful," warned Cummings. "We don't want to smash the coffin."

"We made our big mistake when we brought him into the dormitory," muttered O'Rourke. "Once you bring a vampire into your home or invite him in he can flow back anytime. You might as well try to keep out smoke, or running water."

"He had to break the screen to get out," said Cummings. "That proves he could not—"

"It doesn't prove a thing. He simply wanted to get out quickly. I'm telling you, Empty, he can seep in and out now by simply changing himself into a puff of vapor. By driving this stake through his heart we'll be saving three lives. Important lives, Empty—our own."

He patted the long, wooden stake which protruded from his hip pocket. "We should have destroyed him last night when he was glutted and rosy from the blood that came out of poor Freddy."

"He'll still be rosy," said Cummings, grimly.

They were breast-deep in the grave now

and rapidly uncovering the horror. Spade-fuls of dirt went flying out over the grave, to the accompaniment of hollow thumpings as their spades grazed the half-exposed coffin.

"There are three different ways of destroying a vampire," said O'Rourke. "You can pour vinegar and boiling water into the grave, you can cut off its head, or use a stake, as we are doing. In the Ukraine they—"

"Get the hell up out of there!"

The voice was harsh, menacing and came from directly above them. Cummings gasped and stared up blinking. O'Rourke and Limerick stood rooted, their spades arrested in mid-air.

STANDING at the edge of the grave was a sandy-haired little man around fifty years old, armed with a sawed-off shotgun. His eyes were frosty.

"I said, climb up out of there, the three of you."

O'Rourke and Cummings lost no time in complying. Sexton William Sharp was reputed to be a good shot and a very hot-tempered man when crossed. Limerick hesitated an instant but clambered up fast enough when the gun barrel started sloping down into the grave.

"I've heard tell of such outrages, but I never thought I'd live to—medical students, eh?"

Cummings caught O'Rourke's eye and inclined his head the fraction of an inch. "He was just a nobody, Mr. Sharp," he said. "He had no relatives or friends. We needed a subject and we thought—"

"You thought you'd rob a poor dead man of his repose. It's a burning shame. You were going to dissect him, I suppose?"

"That was our intention, Mr. Sharp," said Cummings, looking contrite.

"Well, you're going to put all that earth back," stormed Sharp. "Otherwise I'll report you and have you expelled. I ought

to report you anyway. You're just a bunch of young hyenas."

Refilling the grave under Sharp's supervision was a back-breaking task. The sexton stood over them and gave them no respite. They were still at it when the sun passed from view below the horizon and darkness settled down over the cemetery.

Limerick had started muttering to himself. "I'm getting fed up with this. Digging him up, putting him back. Of all the fool—"

He stiffened suddenly. Beneath his spade the earth was stirring, heaving. A chill of horror passed over him. His eyes went wide and his throat became as dry as death.

Simeon Hodges was pushing up through the loose, dark earth with loathsome writhings. His pale, clawlike hands emerged first; then the bulge of his shoulders, and finally, his head. The upper portion of his body shot up straight.

Like a leprous gargoyle he swayed rigid in the moonlight, his gore-caked, tattered garments flapping in the night wind, his face contorted in a malign and hideous mask.

O'Rourke and Cummings saw it simultaneously. O'Rourke let loose a wild shriek, dropped his spade and went staggering backwards. Cummings stood as though turned to stone. He stood staring with wide eyes and gaping jaw, his Adam's apple bobbing up and down.

The vampire was staring up at Sexton Sharp, its dead, white eyes fastened on his throat. Even in the midst of his terror Limerick found himself wondering whether the foul thing was not some sort of hoax.

But when it leapt soundlessly from the grave, flung itself on the cemetery's guardian and bore him to earth his last doubts were dispelled.

He turned and fled in terror from a greedily feasting vampire crouching above its victim, hideous, sucking sounds com-

ing from its mouth. Fled across country, between lonely farmhouses, stumbling in blind panic over fallen branches and bruising his shins on stone fences and ramshackle stiles.

He was halfway to the college when he became aware of footsteps pounding at his heels. Reluctantly he slowed up, allowing Cummings to overtake and pass him.

O'Rourke was out of breath from running. "The garlic worked," he panted. "It protected us. But we've got to rouse the dormitory and distribute necklaces to all the students. It's loose for the night! That ghastly thing is loose!"

"Shärp's dead," contributed Cummings, his face ghastly white. "The vampire slashed open his throat and then tried to attack us. But the garlic hurled it back. The last we saw of it it had turned into a bat. It was circling upward and heading for the college, Limerick."

Limerick muttered; "I don't see how in hell a little sprig of garlic could do that."

SALLY SHERWIN was powdering her nose when she heard the tapping. Unmistakably it was coming from just outside her window—a persistent tapping on the screen.

An irritable frown creased her attractive features. She was sitting before her dresser with her back to the screen. Her coiffure was flawless, but there were still some things she wanted to do to her face. She needed at least ten more minutes to transform herself into a really glamorous person.

It was very annoying. Why couldn't Cummings wait? He was always ahead of time.

He just didn't seem to realize that no girl likes to be rushed into keeping a date. Especially a furtive, against-the-rules date which included descending from the window into the arms of a man.

She said without turning around: "All right, Empty. Don't be impatient."

The tapping ceased abruptly. There was an instant of silence and then a faint whisper drifted into the room.

"Why can't I come in, Sally? It's chilly out here?"

Sally straightened in indignation. She was not vain or prudish, but she bridled at the thought that perhaps Cummings didn't respect her. He had kept her out late, scandalously late, and now he was urging her to risk expulsion by inviting a man into the girl's dormitory.

"No, you can't come in," she said. "You'll have to wait. Take a walk around the campus, if you're cold."

"Be reasonable, Sally. You've finished dressing. I'll climb in without making a sound."

"No, go away. You ought to be ashamed to even suggest such a thing."

"If I go away, Sally, I may not come back."

Sally Sherwin bit her lip. She was just crazy enough about the big, handsome, athletic Cummings not to want to lose him.

"All right," she said. "You can come in. But you'll have to wait a minute."

Hastily she rouged her lips, an angry flush stealing up over her face. The concessions which a girl had to make merely to hold a man were outrageous. It was a man's world entirely. A girl had no rights, no—

"It was kind of you to invite me in," said a deep, sepulchral voice behind her.

Terrified, she whirled about. The vampire was advancing toward her with bared teeth, its dead, white eyes roaming all over her. There was blood on its clawlike hands and its tattered clothes were drenched, sodden.

About its hunched shoulders swirled a grayish mist which slowly dissolved as it advanced, the last dispersing wisps of its de-materialized state.

The gray, mottled flesh of Simeon Hodges was all compact again after its brief percolation through the screen, a shambling horror that advanced soullessly upon the terrified girl and cackled in hellish mirth.

An Arrow for the Restless Dead

IN ANOTHER second the distance between the girl and the hideous thing had been bridged, and Sally Sherwin was screaming in its embrace.

Frantically she struggled to free herself. She jerked her shoulders back and beat with clenched fists upon its boardlike chest, her breath coming in heaving gasps.

The horror's breath was fetid, its squirming body reeking with the odors of the grave. Mercilessly its long, dirt-encrusted fingernails raked her flesh, inflicting deep gashes on her bared back and heaving bosom.

For five full minutes Sally fought with every ounce of her strength. So frenzied were her struggles that she did not hear the door open or see Nancy Summers advancing into the room, a look of unutterable horror on her face.

Nancy Summers was clutching a four-foot wooden bow and a gleaming bob-tailed arrow. When Nancy Summers had borrowed Sally's bow-and-arrow set to practice with on the school archery range she had never dreamed that returning it would expose her to the most ghastly peril she had ever known. She stood now white and shaken, her mouth as dry as death.

She could hear the pounding of her own heart above the vampire's harsh breathing.

"Don't touch me! No, no!" There was a strangling horror in Sally's voice. The vampire had seized her dark hair in one scrawny hand and was fastening its greedy lips on her throat.

Nancy Summers nocked her bow with automatic fingers, her gaze riveted on the

cadaver's squirming back. The room and Sally seemed to recede as she stared. She had eyes only for that ghastly twisting liche—a shape more foul and terrifying than all the sensations of nightmare.

She knew that she must kill it. Swiftly, remorselessly, or Sally would be lost. Her eyes did not waver as she raised the bow and took deliberate aim.

There was a sharp twang. Screeching, the thing that had been Simeon Hodges twisted about and tugged frantically at the long, barbed shaft which was quivering between its shoulder blades.

Nancy shrank back against the wall and stared wide-eyed at the petrifying sight of blood gushing from the horror's mouth and spattering on walls which were spinning and heaving sickeningly.

The vampire had turned and was stumbling straight toward her across the room, its gray face twisting in anguish, the arrow still vibrating in its flesh.

Its eyes were glazed, but it seemed to sense that Nancy was responsible for its plight. Nancy's head was spinning madly. She feared that she was going to faint. She saw Sally Sherwin sway, clutch at the dresser and slump with delirious babblings to her knees, her hair falling over her face. She saw the vampire's arms go out—

She could smell the taint of it now. It was very near and reaching for her and she could not move at all. She stood as though paralyzed, terror beating into her brain.

An instant of sickening unreality followed. She thought the vampire was already upon her and then she wasn't sure and then an awful coldness seemed to sweep over her.

THEN—Oh, Merciful God—came the sound of a familiar voice. "Get her out of here, Limerick. Damn it, man, take over."

Strong, muscular hands descended on her shoulders and pulled her toward the

door. She shuddered convulsively, but offered no resistance. Dimly she sensed that Limerick was too terrified to realize how cruelly he was bruising her flesh. Through the door he dragged her, his breath rattling in his throat.

"His number is up, Nancy," he wheezed. "Empty is putting the squeeze on him."

Nancy's lips twisted but no sound came from them. She had caught a brief, hideous glimpse of the vampire writhing beneath Cummings on the floor. Cummings had pinned the foul thing down with his knees and was driving the long, wooden arrow deep, *deep* into its quivering body.

For an instant through the doorway she saw its dark blood gushing out over Cummings' hands. Then the merciful dimness of the corridor enveloped her, blotting out the sight.

Briefly she saw crude wooden crosses waving in the dim corridor light and smelt the sickening odor of garlic. Then the white, terror-convulsed faces of milling students swam close to her and coalesced into an enormous gray smudge which swooped and swirled and spilled over her until she went utterly limp in Limerick's arms.

It was curious how seldom a girl fainted in just the right pair of arms. When awareness came sweeping back the first person she thought of was Freddy.

She felt very sorry for Freddy—poor kid. She had foolishly imagined that she was in love with him. It was just her maternal instinct running away with her, she realized that now.

Lying on a sofa in the reception room of the girls' dormitory, staring up into Cummings' anxious blue eyes, she realized that there was only one man for her in all the world.

"Thank God we heard you scream in time, Nancy," Cummings said. "We never thought it would try to get into the femme dorm."

Nancy smiled wanly. "I'd rather not talk about it, darling," she said. "Not just now."

"Darling!"

"I *said* darling."

For an instant she thought that Cummings was going to pass out from shock. She had to reach up and pull his head down and kiss him on the mouth to bring back even a little color to his face.

"I don't think so much of your bedside manner, darling," she said.

