

# Weird Tales

REGISTERED IN U.S. PATENT OFFICE

A MAGAZINE of the



BIZARRE and UNUSUAL

VOLUME VI

NUMBER 1

Published monthly by the Popular Fiction Publishing Company, 408 Holliday Building, Indianapolis, Ind. Entered as second-class matter March 30, 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 July, 1925

- Cover Design ----- Andrew Brosnatch
- The Werewolf of Ponkert.....H. Warner Munn 11  
*They Flayed Him Alive and Wrote His Story on His Tanned Skin*
- The Death Cure.....Paul S. Powers 31  
*He Restored Life to the Body, But Could Not Bring Back the Soul*
- Farthingale's Poppy -----Eli Colter 37  
*Four Men Make a Tremendous Effort to Revive the Dead*
- The Sudden Death of Luke A. Lucas...Harold E. Somerville 47  
*The Rumor of Luke's Demise Spread Like a Prairie Fire*
- The White Queen of the Corolans.....Arthur Thatcher 49  
*Two-Part Serial of Strange Adventures in Africa—Part One*

(Continued on Next Page)

(Continued from Preceding Page)

<b>The Plant-Thing</b> .....	<b>R. G. Macready</b>	<b>67</b>
<i>Tale of a Carnivorous Tree</i>		
<b>The Red Lily</b> .....	<b>John Lee Mahin, Jr.</b>	<b>71</b>
<i>The White Lily Turned Red at Last—and Terrible Was Its Turning</i>		
<b>The Unnamable</b> .....	<b>H. P. Lovecraft</b>	<b>78</b>
<i>An Indescribable Monstrosity With a Thousand Shapes of Horror</i>		
<b>The Wonderful Thing</b> .....	<b>Henry S. Whitehead</b>	<b>83</b>
<i>In the Time of Zachary Taylor, Even as it Is Today</i>		
<b>Fidal Bassin</b> .....	<b>W. J. Stamper</b>	<b>90</b>
<i>A Gruesome Tale of the Black Republic</i>		
<b>The Stranger From Kurdistan</b> .....	<b>E. Hoffmann Price</b>	<b>95</b>
<i>Blasphemies of the Devil-Worshippers Receive a Strange Rebuke</i>		
<b>Hurled Into the Infinite (Conclusion)</b> .....	<b>J. Schlossel</b>	<b>99</b>
<i>Two-Part Serial of Life on Another Planet</i>		
<b>Spear and Fang</b> .....	<b>Robert E. Howard</b>	<b>111</b>
<i>Tale of the Cavemen—Neanderthals and Cro-Magnons</i>		
<b>Weird Story Reprints</b>		
<b>No. 1. The Three Low Masses</b> .....	<b>Alphonse Daudet</b>	<b>116</b>
<i>A Ghost-Tale of Old Provence</i>		
<b>Servants of Satan</b> .....	<b>Seabury Quinn</b>	<b>121</b>
<b>No. 5. The End of the Horror.</b> <i>True Tale of New England Witchcraft</i>		
<b>The Dream of Death</b> .....	<b>Elwood F. Pierce</b>	<b>125</b>
<i>The Mind of the Scientist Controlled That of the Half-Wit</i>		
<b>The Conqueror</b> .....	<b>Adrian Pordelorrar</b>	<b>128</b>
<i>Sonnet</i>		
<b>Olay-Covered Justice</b> .....	<b>Jan Dirk</b>	<b>129</b>
<i>A Strange East Indian Judgment Was Passed on Bull Orhcutt</i>		
<b>The Eyrie</b> .....		<b>135</b>
<i>A Chat With the Readers</i>		

---

For Advertising Rates in WEIRD TALES Apply Direct to

**WEIRD TALES**

408 Holiday Building

Indianapolis, Ind.

*A Strange Psychological Story of the  
Power of the Human Mind*

# The Dream of Death

By ELWOOD F. PIERCE

THE queer figure of a man sat deep in the chair in full repose. His eyes, usually sharp, were now listless and just a little sleepy as he watched the crackling fire. He felt a chilly draft at his back, and immediately there was the click of a door closing softly, after which feet shuffled across the floor. Unconsciously Anderson Brenton, psychologist, sucked at his empty pipe. The intruder moved to the log fire, holding his shaking hands to the blaze, and shiveringly seated himself on a stool Professor Brenton had been using as a foot-rest.

The man who thus for a moment had startled Brenton was the half-witted brother of his landlady. Two nights before, the little psychologist had rented the room on the third floor front, and as he bargained with Mrs. Thompson he noticed the actions of the demented one. The landlady had said her brother was harmless, and Brenton did not give him thought.

"What are you doing here?" the lodger asked sharply, now that the brief sensation of fright had passed. "I thought it was understood that I was not to be disturbed. What do you want?"

The psychologist's brows were shaggy, and so was his beard. He was a shaggy person, and being small, impressed one as a weakling physically. But his eyes were penetrating, combative, and he eyed his visitor fiercely. There was something utterly repulsive about the man who trembled in front of the fire.

"Cold," the half-wit murmured. He shivered and turned anew to the blaze. "Cold!" His body was shaking.

Professor Brenton, contributor to the cause of science, might have found it hard to explain why he was occupying the third floor front room. Perhaps it was because once in a while he liked to get away from Daly College and to pursue certain of his studies uninterrupted. The room on the third floor had been advertised for rent and he had taken it—that was all. Almost immediately he recognized in Gus Acre an interesting subject, but until the moment the old man shuffled into his room and complained of the cold it had not occurred to the psychologist to attempt a mental investigation. But this was the beginning.

Brenton noted the apparent harmlessness of the man and was interested. Then, casting into the half-wit's mind with questions that served as primary experiments, he became fascinated. Later, his tests were tedious and delicate and afforded him an opportunity of determining the worth of certain theories he recently had developed, theories which were disputed by his scientific associates. Perhaps from a humane standpoint Brenton was a bit cruel, but his examinations at least were in the spirit of the botanist who studies a rare flower.

The psychologist learned that the man's intellect, unable to hold anything of itself, was keenly awake to the workings of the minds of others.

He found that virtually without effort he could transfer his thoughts to the witless creature and the man would respond in a manner all but normal and as if the thought were his own. But no thought was retained. Gus Acre's mind reached out and fed on the intelligence of others, but the moment the thought had been transformed into action, he again became an imbecile, with blankness of mind equal to that of a cleanly wiped slate.

Of one thing Professor Brenton was certain: this was not hypnotism. Nor did his power over the half-wit have any relation to hypnotism.

For many nights Acre was subjected to examination and new tests. Brenton dug deep and without mercy, in the hope that he might unearth the reason for the hidden phenomena.

At first there was no explanation. But he found out much during his hours of research, and finally came to the most important discovery of all.

IT WAS a cold night in December, and Professor Brenton was seated in his easy chair. That was two weeks after Gus Acre first appeared in his room. Suddenly Brenton perceived that his fire was out, all that remained in the grate being some dying embers. Grumbling, he arose and slipped on his great coat, reflecting, almost unconsciously: "*I wish Gus Acre would bring up some wood!*"

Shivering, he resumed his reading. A few minutes later there was a scraping outside his door and Acre entered with an armload of fuel. He dropped the sticks by the fireplace and stared vacantly at the little professor. There was the usual look of dumb terror, after which his eyes grew listless and he seemed to wonder at his surroundings.

"Who told you to bring up the wood?" Brenton asked.

Acre mumbled, rolled his eyes and left the room without attempting reply. Apparently he did not under-

stand the question. Brenton listened to the man's retreating steps, shrugged his shoulders, and kneeling, built a new fire. He was disturbed by this new and uncanny power, but it opened a curiously marvelous field for him. He might, after all, be able to prove his theory that the mind is never a free agent.

An hour later, still deep in thought, he turned to his window overlooking a plot of ground that in summer was a rose garden. Now there was snow on the ground, the bushes that abounded being slightly tintured with white. The professor noticed a shifty figure emerge from the shadow of the house and move aimlessly among the sleeping bushes with their ghostly shrouds. It was Gus Acre—poor, hopeless, demented Gus Acre.

Curious to give his power farther trial, the psychologist permitted himself to wish for the presence of Gus Acre in the room with him. Almost instantly the figure below straightened and a startled face was raised to the window before which Brenton stood. Then the man went indoors.

He did not move hastily, but in his slow shuffling manner, as if he had finished his walk in the garden and was returning to the house under a natural impulse. Brenton still stood at the window marveling. Then the door opened, and he knew what that meant. The imbecile would do whatever the professor willed that he should do. Without the practise of hypnotism the psychologist was able to unite his mind with the mind of Gus Acre and control his actions. All that was necessary to bring this about was the barest thought.

"Why don't you knock when you come in?" Brenton demanded.

Acre did not reply but shuffled his weight from one foot to the other, then turned and left the room. But the professor had done no more than wish for his presence, and any desire that he may have had for the man to

remain was only negative in value. The reaction of Gus Acre was merely positive, and very naturally so.

After that Brenton was to experience a sensation of fear. He wanted to halt the experiments, and indeed did make an attempt to do so, but found, just as he had feared, that he rapidly was coming under the influence of a mind that, one almost could say, did not exist. Yet it weakened him, sapped his energy day by day, did this mental intercourse with a vacant brain. There even were times when Brenton found it difficult to breathe. And thinking was not always easy.

He began, when it was too late, to realize that he was to be penalized for his unnatural experiments. The little professor was suffering from "nerves". Perhaps it was old age creeping on, he told himself, casting about for an excuse.

Could it be that the imbecile was making demands upon him—eating into his brain? And then there was his vitality, now at ebb. His capacity for work had decreased, and it was difficult for him to concentrate even on his reading.

"It's time I was ending this vacation," Brenton decided. "I must get back to the old routine. Enough of this foolishness."

But he could not leave. Very rapidly indeed his own mind and the mind of Gus Acre were merging, and his own mind slowly was being sucked away.

All but helpless, Brenton began to be concerned for his own sanity.

At last he came to fear Acre, to dread the sight of him, and yet a dozen times a day he found it necessary to call the imbecile to his room, much to the discomfort of the landlady, who was unable to understand anything that would suggest a friendship between the queer little scientist in the front room on the third floor

and her witless brother. It wasn't reasonable, she interpreted.

**T**HE end came at last. Brenton, suddenly aroused, sat up in the old-fashioned bed that formed no mean part of the furnishings of the room. His body was clammy and he was gripped by a fear of the unknown. Brenton, a brave man as shown by his experiments covering many years, seemed to sense that mighty fingers were at his throat.

He had been dreaming. And what a dream!

He had seen Gus Acre creeping up the stairs, a long kitchen knife in his hand. The half-witted creature had stood over him, and then—

It had been at this point that the psychologist awoke—just as the knife was descending.

A few minutes later he was calmer and did succeed, to a degree, in putting aside his fears. He pulled the covers over his shoulders, for it was cold and the log fire was now only so much ashes.

Footsteps outside his room. Boards creaking. A hand fumbling at the door. The door swinging open. A shaft of moonlight penetrating the room and falling upon the figure that crouched in the doorway just as it had been seen to do in the dream a few minutes before.

Brenton screamed.

The thought whirled through his mind that he was helpless. The action of his dream was such that the witless man would carry it out. He was trembling, too, and his eyes burned into his head like torches that flamed in white heat.

The figure crossed the floor, still crouching. There was the glitter of the long kitchen knife.

Brenton's effort to gain control of the mind of Gus Acre was futile. He knew what he must do to save himself, but the mental effort that would control the man was impossible of ac-

complishment. He struggled like one seeking to arouse himself from a nightmare.

The figure crept upon him, slowly and with a great show of stealth. The scientist could hear the man's short breathing, see the very gleam of his eyes as the moonbeams shot into his face. The boards of the floor creaked and creaked, and the sound was not like anything Brenton had ever heard before. It made him think of a bat beating its wings against the walls of a tomb.

A single thought, a moment of mental action, would change the course of the half-wit's movements. But the psychologist knew that his mind had been sucked dry and that the man creeping upon him was the

one who now held the scepter of power.

Anderson Brenton was as one paralyzed. And he could only watch Gus Acre approach with the long knife in his hand, the moonbeams falling upon his purple face. Just as in the dream.

One last scream!

**T**HE next morning the witless man was found by his sister, asleep on the floor of the front room on the third floor. There was a kitchen knife in his hand, a long knife stained with blood.

And Brenton, who had not been able to will that Gus Acre should not carry out his unfortunate dream, was dead.

