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# The Mad Wizards of Mars

There, on the glabrous shores of a waterless sea, the fearsome inhuman armies of Mars's imagination made their last stand against the men who were no longer human.

By **RAY BRADBURY**

ILLUSTRATED BY DON ANDERSON

**T**HREE EYES were fire and the breath flamed from out the witch's mouth as they bent to probe the cauldron with greasy stick and long taper.

"When shall we three meet again  
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?"  
"When the hasty burlie's done,  
When the haultie's lost and woe."

They danced most daintily on the shore of an empty sea, hating the air with their three tongues and turning it with their oil-begun oil splitters.

"Hound about the cauldron go,  
In the presence which throes!  
Doubt, doubt, till we breathe,  
Five hours and cauldron bubble!"

"They passed and cast their glances round,  
"What's the crystal? What the meed?"  
"Here!" "Gone!" "Is the prime now thickened?"  
"Yes!" "Put it in the new mold?" "Is the wa-

ture done?" They shaped the stuff like molten ships on their green hands. "Where the needs through the heat?" "The crystal, the crystal, took it from the last bag, shut it off, and have a look!"

"They bent to the crystal, their faces white,  
"See, see, see—"

**A** ROCKET ship moved through space from the planet Earth to the planet Mars. On the rocket ship, men were dying.

"The captain roared the head, loudly, "We'll have to use the scopolin."

"But, captain—"  
"You see yourself this man's condition." The captain liked the word blunder and the man remained beneath the wet sheet moved and gasped. The air was full of sulphurous fumes.

"I see it, I see it!" The man opened his eyes and stared at the port where there were only black spaces, landing stairs, Earth far removed, and the planet Mars being large and red. "I see it, I see it, a huge thing, a lot with a man's face, spread over the

front part. Fluttering and fluttering, fluttering and fluttering!"

"Fishes?" asked the captain.

"He can't go on with that. Use the scopolin. Come along, Smith."

They moved away. Suddenly the floorplates were lined with blue and white-tailed fisherminnow. The captain did not dare look down, and over the screaming he said, "Is this where I've got?" turning just a hatch.

A white-necked surgen stepped away from a hole. "I just don't understand it."

"I have told I've got it?"

"We don't know, captain. It wasn't his heart, his brain, or stomach. He just—died."

The captain felt the doctor's wrist which clung to a fishing net and bit him. "The captain did not die."

"The doctor smiled. "These complaints of pain, needles, to hold, in his wrist and legs. Said he felt like was, nothing. He fell. I helped him up. He cried like a child. Said he had a silver needle in his heart. He died. Here he is. Everything's physically normal."

"That's impossible. He died of something."

**T**HE captain walked to a port. He marveled of a marbled and before and green away on his polished and measured hands. His white teeth were very bright, and his ears showed a platinum, as were his cheeks. His nostrils were the color of new soil, and his hands were black carbon shining black skin. His crisp over-cast hair smelled of stinky alcohol. Even his breath was antiseptic and new and clean. There was no spot to him. He was a lean instrument, honed and ready, still hot from the surgen's care.

The man with him was from the same mold. One expected but did not find, huge loose legs sprawling slowly from their backs. They were square-jawed, tabored, well-oiled boys, stockier and squarer.

"The captain watched the planet Mars grow very large in space.

"We'll be landing in an hour on that blasted place. Smith, did you see any bats, or have other nightmares?"

"Yes, sir. The month before our rocket took off from New York, sir, I felt rats biting my neck, sucking my blood. I didn't tell. I was afraid you wouldn't let me come on this trip."

"At it! At it!" Poe shrieked. "Draw them with our bodies!"



"Moor's mind," sighed the captain. "I had dreams, too. In all of my fifty years I never had a dream so real that went before me both of front and back. And then, every night, I dreamed I was a white man. Caught on a snowy hill. Shot with a silver bullet. Buried with a shroud in my tent." He moved his head toward Miss. "Do you think, Smith, they know we're coming?"

"We don't know if there are Martian people, sir."

"Don't see? They began frightening us all, eight weeks ago, before we started. They've killed Penn and Reynolds since. Yesterday, they took Greenville up. Mind. How? I don't know. But, remember, Anson, you dying for us means. I'll call it a victory in another day. But this is the year 1110, month. We've refused one. This can't be happening. But it is. Whoever they are, with their machines and their bats, they'll try to finish all of us. He swung about. "Smith, both these books from my life. I want them when we land."

"You haven't books were piled on the metal deck."

"Thank you, Smith. Here you glanced at them? Think I'm insane? Perhaps. It's a crazy hour. At the last moment, I selected some books from the Historical Museum. Dreams of my dream. Twenty nights I was standing, watching, a screaming and pursued to a rugged path, a thing nothing unexplained in a black, low, half-circular dome. Our whole crew dreamed of white things and weapons, weapons and phantasms. Things they couldn't know anything about. Why? Because books on such ghastly subjects were designed a century ago. By law. Forbidden for anyone to see, the gray volumes. These books you see here are the last copies, kept for historical purposes in the locked Museum vaults."

Books listed in read the dusty titles:  
 "Tales of Mystery and Imagination," by Edgar Allan Poe. "Dromedary," by Bruce Stirling. "Frankenstein," by Mary Shelley. "Tale of The Hound," by Henry James. "The Legend of Henry Halloway," by Washington Irving. "Bogdanoff's Daughters," by Nathaniel Hawthorne. "The Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge," by Antonia Harris. "Alice in Wonderland," by Lewis Carroll. "The Willows," by Algernon Blackwood. "The Wizard of Oz," by L. Frank Baum. "The House at Innsmouth," by H. P. Lovecraft. And more! Books by Walter de La Mare, Wainfield, Harvey, Wells, Spurgeon, Huxley, all forgotten authors. All bound in the



same year that Halloway was captured and Christmas was banned! But, sir, what good are these to us in the cockpit?"

"I don't know," sighed the captain, "yet."

THE three bags lifted the crystal where the captain's image reflected, his tiny voice trickling out of the glass.

"I don't know," sighed the captain, "yet."

The three whites glanced really into each other's faces.

"We haven't much time," said one.

"Hurry were there up at the House."

"They'll want to know about the books. It doesn't look good. That last of a captain."

"Is at least they'll land their rockets."

The three bags shuffled and thumped up at the center by the edge of the dry Martian sea. In its highest window, a small one held a blood-red stage globe. He watched the watchtowers where the three windows led their troubles and along the water. Farther along, ten thousand other blue lines and level houses, lined colorful rocks and fir-woods,

circumstances and four-hats rose soft as smoke through the Martian night. The man mounted the raggy magical fire. Then, as the witness stared, he turned. The crimson stage, released, fell, creating the distant portal to wish, like a yellow eye.

Mr. Edgar Allan Poe stood in the lower window, a faint vapor of spirits upon his mouth. "Hector's thoughts are busy tonight," he said, noting the witness, his father.

A voice behind him said, "I saw Will Shakespeare on the shore, earlier, whipping them on. All along the sea, Shakespeare's army came, tonight, numbers thousands, the three Whites, Usher, Hamlet's father, Othello, Lear, all, all of them, thousands! Good Lord, a regular sea of people."

"Good William," Poe turned. He let the crimson stage fall about. He stood for a moment to observe the run alone runs, the black-tinted table, the middle floor, the other side. Mr. Aristotle Harris, seated staring steadily into the flame.

"He'll have to let Mr. Hawthorne see," said Mr. Poe. "We've put it off long. It's a matter of hours." Will Poe. Continued on page 22



## The Mad Wizards of Mars

Continued from page 53

"I'll down to his lair with me, Haver!"  
"Then placed up? What will happen to me? God save us!"  
"If we can't kill the racket men off, fighten them away, then we'll have to leave, of course. We'll go on to Jupiter, and when they come to Jupiter, we'll go to Mars, and when they come to Mars we'll go to Uranus, or Neptune, and then on out to Pluto!"

"When then?"  
"Mr. Fox's face was weary, there was much of the mountain falling in his eyes, and a sadness in the way he talked, and a sadness in his hands and the way his hair fell over his amazing white hair. He was like a man of some five days' age, a man arrested from a double-headed life. His eyes fell black, morose, his nose went away by his missing lip. He was so small that his face seemed to float, red and phosphorescent, in front of the dark room.

"We have the advantage of superior forms of travel," he said. "We can always hope for one of these atomic wars, destruction, the dark ages come again. The results of superstition. We could go back then to Earth, all of us, in one night." Mr. Fox's hands were brooded under his nose and illuminated face. He looked at the ceiling. "Do they're coming to ruin this world, too?" They won't leave anything established, will they?"

"What a wild, wild story until it's killed his joy and ruin the gods!"  
"The subject, finally dealt with this. "What did we do? Did we have a fair trial before a committee of our own kind? No! Our bodies were destroyed by men, made, destroyed's plan, and hung into rats, in hell!"  
"They were interrupted by a hysterical shout from the lower aisle.

"Mr. Fox, Mr. Haver!"  
"Yes, you've come!" Fox and Haver descended to find their seat empty against the atom passage wall.

**H**AVER you heard the news?" he asked, immediately, staring at them like a man about to fall over a cliff. "Is no longer they'll land? They're coming back with them, all kinds, the white-headed! What're you doing in the lower of a class like that? Why aren't you sitting?"

"Fox said, "We're doing everything on this. Haver said, "We're new to it! Haver said, "We're going to Mr. Haver's place."

"...to contemplate you down, our Mad House," said Mr. Haver.

"They moved down the ceiling through of the seats, level off the floor level down into mountains and down and up and down and down-like walking.

"Don't worry," said Fox, his face like a huge white lamp before them, illuminating nothing. "All of us, we should see tonight I've called the Others. Your hands and mine, Haver, Haver, Haver. They're all there. The animals and the old women and the tall men with the sharp white hair. The men are coming, the girls are, and the mountains. "The Red Death." Have he laughed quietly.

"Has even the Red Death. I never thought, no, I never thought the time would come when a thing like the Red Death would exist in the sky. I called to it, and they shall have it!"

"But are you strong enough?" wondered Haver.

"How strong is strong? They can't be prepared for us, at least. They're not! The strongest men. These don't

strong men with their ordinary's muscles and fat-lard bodies, with their new weapons. About their necks, a gold chain, necktie. Upon their heads, a shikari of newspapers. In their body fingers, amazing muscles now which is ready to be only great cold water for cleaning out superstition. The names of Fox, Haver, Haver, Haver, illuminated blasphemy in their clothing.

Outside the seats, they advanced through a misty space, a haze that was not a haze, which raised before them like the staff of nightmare. The air filled with ring sounds and a whirring, a motion of winds and lightning. Voices changed a figure occurred at midnight. Mr. Fox walked the middle, walking, walking, walking, in the twilight, walking pain and misery, knowing weakness into his consciousness, they puffed up. The results of cold particles and darkness and sulfur based up to fill the night with evil propensity.

"Get up with it!" cried Fox. "It's to back!"

All down the empty mountain black spaces splashed and moved, puffed up and blew into black circles on the wind. Hells may in mountain towers and lightning voices splashed out with the brown sounds and spun away to other.

**M**R. HAVERTHOE was the man who looked down and looked out at you from deserted windows. You knew he was home by the smoke in his chimney, or you saw his thoughts in the gutter on his narrow forehead when a descending light. You saw his pale mouth on the winter windows of his house on mornings when the snow was laid with frost. Here was his house, away from the rest of Mars, in a land he had made for himself, a land where never fell, never melted the last months of spring and summer. Haver to an instant of Mr. Nathaniel Hawthorne as much as himself from his door.

As Mr. Fox, Mr. Haver and Mr. Hawthorne approached at level pace, Mr. Hawthorne's front door, a mountain below open to a mountain night's events, and world of evil upon in the last town, stammered about. There was a dust of raindrops, a flurry of snow as light as pollen, then all was still.

"Mr. Fox gave a hand on the door.  
"We're here," said a voice, at last.  
"It's Mr. Fox."

"What do you want?" much later.  
"I've come to tell you the latest."  
"I know, I know. I know it on the sky. The red death."

"Open up, we need your help. We want you to meet the nation."

"I don't like to meet people," said Hawthorne, hidden away. "I don't believe here, anyway. I'm not like you and Haver, you Fox Haver!"

At last the door cracked wide and Hawthorne stood revealed, his mass of flowing white hair and his tall, animal-like mountains, and his face, surprising and lonely eyes.

"I'll be a delegate to greet the racket men," said Fox. "When they're killed and unprepared, we'll take care of them."

Mr. Hawthorne eyed the folds of the black cape which hid Fox's hands. From a smiling, Mr. Fox drew back a crowd.

"The Amosketch?" Hawthorne drew back.

"For one of our citizens." In his other hand, Fox brought forth a cup and bottle, which jingled softly and imperceptibly.

"And for the others?"  
"You called again, we'll please." "We should dig up 'The Pit this morning."

"And the Prometheus?"  
"Is he installed?"  
"The Prometheus Baked?"

"That, too?"

"You are a grim man, Mr. Fox."

"I am a god, Mr. Hawthorne, even as you are a god, even as we all are gods, and our creations, our people, if you would, have been not made through word, but finished and formed, here as you are, raised and done every thing. The worlds we created are different to mine? Even gods must fight!"

"No," Hawthorne lifted his hand a little. "Yes, perhaps that is how it was. You have been not made through word, but finished and formed, here as you are. How did we come here?"

"We began, yes. Destruction began destruction. On Earth, a century ago, in the year 1887, they destroyed our banks. Oh, what a terrible thing, to destroy our literary creations that way. It commenced us out of what? Death? The Report? I don't like abstract things. I don't know. I only know that our worlds and our creations called us and led us away from and the only saving thing would be to walk out the window here on Mars, hoping that Earth might everright itself with these scientists and their doubtings, but now they are coming to show us out of here, us and our dark things, and all the abstract things, computers, and more things than, one by one, extended across space as science made breaks through every country as Earth and finally left an alternative of all but wonder. You must help us. You have a good speaking manner. We need you."

"But I'm not of you, I don't approve of you and the others," said Hawthorne, indignantly. "I was no thinking to play with science and computers and abstract things."

"What of 'Supper's Ready'?"

"Hawthorne! The story, Oh, I write a few others, perhaps, but what of that? My brain works but none of that success."

"Mindless or not, they grasped you with us. They destroyed your works, too. You must help them, Mr. Hawthorne."

"They are stupid individuals," protested Mr. Hawthorne. He looked at the immense estimate printed on the sky where the market burned. "Yes," he said, finally, "I will help you."

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**T**HEY hurried along the midnight shores of the sky as Fox and scientist, Mr. Fox hesitated, to check notes, to check the building patterns and checked paragraphs. "Good!" He ran on. "Five!" And he ran again, past abandoned cities, the remains of Elmore and Illinois, the ruins of Arthur and Herbert, walking in full circles. And there were weapons and angry demons and fiery bronze dragons and spinning spheres and revolving spheres like the books and words and dozens and all the vile demons and prisoners of the experiments of imagination, sliding and thinking and spinning.

Forever stopped. He ran like a child on the cold sand. He began to call. They tried to soothe him, but he would not listen. "I just thought," he said, "what happens to us on the sky when the day ends of our banks are destroyed."

"We'll see," he said.

"Don't speak of it!"

"We must," walked Hawke. "Now, now as the market comes down, you, Hawthorne, Fox, Oppenard, all of you, give heed. Like word make, thinking away. You know this and that!"

"I think. But think for all of us."

"We said only through Earth's confidence. If a hand which brought down us had few words we'd be like Spide and me."

Hawthorne nodded gravely. "I wonder when I am, in what Earth's mind brought us I said?" In some distant

land? Some heaven, reading my tale? Is he the lonely reader in the void of time and science? The thinking art containing me here in celestial order? Is it he? Or some boy in a disturbed state, finding me, only just in time? Oh, but might he find me, if he has memories of me, for there is a body of the soul as well as a body of the body, and this soul-body called in all of its glowing parts, and her night I felt myself a candle, glowing. When suddenly I saw a ray, given me light! Or some child in some yellow gown on Earth once more found a man, like spotted wings of me, entering with death. And as I'm given a short glimpse."

**A** DOORB burst wide in a little land by the shore. A thin silver man, with dark hanging from him in thin suggestions and, paying no attention to the others, set down and stood into his clouded boots.

"What is it, now? I'm sorry for," whispered Blackwood. "Look at him, dying away. He was once gone but then we, who were men. They took him, a scientist thought, and clothed him in a robe of gold. But he moved and moved and he'd not be any more here, made him remember, dead, fully. And other sciences of manufacturing him they destroyed him in a vat of Loyal, you might say."

"The man were silent."

"What would it be on Earth," wondered Hawthorne, "without Christmas? No hot chemistry, no tea, no ornaments or drums or candles, nothing nothing but the snow and the wind and the lonely, frozen people."

"They all looked at the thin little old man with the strangely beard and bald and velvet suit."

"How you found his story?"

"I can imagine it. The ghostly and melancholy, the slow movement, the essential, both-motivated enthusiasm, the scientific genius."

"Was DiLoria ever here?"

"DiLoria?" Mr. Fox said. "Him! He came for a visit! A visit, under ground! Here was his name! It may place you have here! DiLoria passed in and out of here. Why? Because the only book of his burned in the Great Fire was 'A Christmas Carol' and a few other of his ghost stories. He'd live forever on Earth. He wrote such a wealth of unremembered material."

"I've not him," protested Hawthorne. "For him to stay and me to believe."

"A doubtful mistake," agreed Oppenard.

"A man's remembered for his remembered things," observed Mr. Brown. "Mr. Fox 'The Great Bridge.' Mr. Fox for his ropes and wires instead of his ropes wires. And."

"Hence, and not scientific. He left behind nothing. And as all reached, hurried, his body burned into the dust and charred bone, the color of which fell through the air in black currents, settling about their charred faces like rain."

"Hence," Brown?

"Gone."

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