

# Weird Tales

REGISTERED IN U.S. PATENT OFFICE



VOLUME X

NUMBER 4

Published monthly by the Popular Fiction Publishing Company, 2457 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; \$3.00 a year in Canada. English office: Charles Lavell, 13, 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 450 East Ohio Street, Chicago, Ill. FARNSWORTH WRIGHT, Editor.  
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# The Ride of Falume

By ROBERT E. HOWARD

Falume of Spain rode forth amain when twilight's crimson fell  
 To drink a toast with Bahram's ghost in the scarlet land of Hell.  
 His rowels clashed as swift he dashed along the flaming skies;  
 The sunset rade at his bridle braid and the moon was in his eyes.  
 The waves were green with an eery sheen over the hills of Thule  
 And the ripples beat to his horses' feet like a serpent in a pool.  
 On vampire wings the shadow things wheeled round and round his head,  
 Till he came at last to a kingdom vast in the Land of the Restless Dead.

They thronged about in a grisly rout, they caught at his silver rein;  
 "Avaunt, foul host! Tell Bahram's ghost Falume has come to Spain!"  
 Then flame-arrayed rose Bahram's shade: "What would ye have, Falume?"  
 "Ho, Bahram who on Earth I slew where Tagus' waters boom,  
 Now though I shore your life of yore amid the burning West,  
 I ride to Hell to bid ye tell where I may ride to rest.  
 My beard is white and dim my sight and I would fain be gone.  
 Speak without guile: where lies the isle of mystic Avalon?"

"A league behind the western wind, a mile beyond the moon,  
 Where the dim seas roar on an unknown shore and the drifting stars lie  
 strewn:  
 The lotus buds there scent the woods where the quiet rivers gleam,  
 And king and knight in the mystic light the ages drowse and dream."  
 With sudden bound Falume wheeled round, he fled through the flying wrack  
 Till he came again to the land of Spain with the sunset at his back.  
 "No dreams for me, but living free, red wine and battle's roar;  
 I breast the gales and I ride the trails until I ride no more."