

# 10¢ DIME MYSTERY MAGAZINE



Volume Seventeen

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Number Four

THIS SEAL PROTECTS YOU  AGAINST REPRINT-FICTION!

All stories in magazines bearing this seal are written especially for this publisher and have never before been printed in any form!

## A FEATURE-LENGTH MYSTERY-TERROR NOVEL

**Maids for the Dust-Devils**.....Donald Dale 4  
*As the black wall of dust swept over the little terror-ridden town, I thought I saw lurking in its depths the monstrous, evil shadow that had already seized seven lovely girls, leaving no trace but a pitiful huddle of feminine garments lying on the streets—and lovely Kay was next in line!*

## FOUR PULSE-JOLTING NOVELETTES OF EERIE MENACE

**The Town the Dead Things Claimed**.....Paul Ernst 34  
*The jagged lightning flashes revealed a scene of nightmare horror, and young John Crayton's blood froze as helplessly he watched that weird white shape hover over Stella—summoning her soul to join the dead things that pillaged Boganville. . . .*

**Terror Has no Face**.....Raymond Whetstone 50  
*Deep in the jungle four men left a companion to die. But the dead returned—and four men covered in abject terror, for a faceless corpse had promised that they should die as it had—a hideous, faceless horror!*

**Goddess of the Half-World Brood**.....Henry Treat Sperry 74  
*Would Sicily, that gloriously alluring woman whom I held crushed in my arms, call forth that hovering pack of beast-like things to rend me limb from limb—if I repelled her weirdly sinister caress?*

**The Werewolf of Wall Street**.....Edith and Ejler Jacobson 90  
*Long after night had fallen I prowled those darkly empty city streets, seeking the lair of those fearful ghouls who even then were preparing the girl I loved for their gruesome midnight feast of blood. I had to save her—or die myself!*

## SHORT STORIES OF WEIRD MYSTERY

**Help Me to Die!**.....Leon Byrne 27  
*It was a soul that had no body; a voice that had no sound, that cried its eternal agony in the little room where so recently Death had come for the old man and the young lovers. . . .*

**Love Me—and Perish!**.....Lyle D. Gunn 66  
*How could I know that beautiful Mary Boyne's erotic Dance of Doom was the signal for my adored sweetheart to fling herself before a nameless monster who served as procurer for the Devil's Torture Mart? . . .*

AND

**The River Styx**.....A Department 105

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SIX years ago we awoke to the sudden realization that there was a definite place for a new type of fiction. So we brought out DIME MYSTERY Magazine; and though we are frank to admit that it was at first an experiment, we have since proven that we made no mistake. As a matter of fact, most publishing ventures are risky at best. But we felt the two principal factors that inspired us were basically sound; and both were founded on human nature.

Has your mind ever flashed back to hair-raising moments of your youth, when you were reading "forbidden" literature up in your room, with your lamp shaded so that pop and mom would think you were fast asleep? Perhaps you were reading Bram Stoker's immortal *Dracula*, or a blood-chilling tale by Ambrose Bierce, Poe, or Wilkie Collins. Whatever it was, the chances are that your pulse was pounding like mad, and every little creaking sound—which might have been caused only by the wind in the shutters—made your heart leap up into your throat to choke you. Well do we remember nights like that, and every one we know can hark back to a similar era—it's human nature. Perhaps, too, you remember that you couldn't find *enough* of that vivid, spine-tingling fare. We never could; and that's one reason we thought there was a definite place for a new magazine.

Later on we spent a few months traveling abroad, and once again we ran across evidence of man's desire to be stimulated by the bizarre, the macabre, the eerie! In Paris there is a theater known as *Le*

*Grand Guignol*, and each week a new play is presented. In itself, there isn't anything unusual about that—but these plays are like none offered anywhere in the world. They are designed especially for the benefit of those who seek an emotional outlet in pulse-tingling drama; dramas of the walking dead, vampires, and succubuses—creatures who prey upon the innocent in the dark of night. And, we noted each night we attended—every seat in the house was filled! . . . In London we found a form of entertainment equally popular, though running along slightly different lines: *Madame Tussaud's Wax Works*. This attraction, once a part of one of the empire exhibitions, became so celebrated that its owners set it up as a separate museum. The attraction is comprised of all the most terrifying, blood-curdling murders of history, enacted by figures of wax which are perfect images of the originals. *Madame Tussaud's Wax Works* was not designed for those with low blood pressure and weak hearts; yet it has a definite place in the annals of entertainment; and the fact that there is a

place for it, as well as *Le Grand Guignol*, added to our conviction that we should publish a magazine devoted to the cream of mystery-terror ideas.

Don't get the impression that we were planning a magazine to be gruesome—shockingly stark. Our plan was to consider the audience reaction we noted abroad, and combine it with the thrills we remembered as “stolen reading” in our youth. If we (and all our friends) were exhilarated by Poe and Bram Stoker, and if thousands of Europeans can be entertained yearly by the institutions named above, then there must be a market for the type of fiction we planned to offer. We would be catering to a human need as much in demand in certain fields as Western stories or detective yarns are in other fields. We felt certain of that.

However—that was only the beginning. When we set about buying manuscripts we found that there was a marked shortage of authors who could supply what we wanted, for we sought certain combinations of eeriness, terror and scalp-raising material that actually were *not being written!* We received any number of gory yarns that offered nothing but gore; we received stories of the supernatural that were too far-fetched to be convincing; we received plenty of the general run of “ghost” story, the haunted house variety, without any punch, or plot. There was nothing to do but hash over every idea submitted by our best-known writers, and request them to deliver the goods, literally, on order. (This does not mean we don't welcome material from newcomers!)

Here are a few of the “rules” we laid down to authors: the stories must be modern and American. That is to say, the characters must be everyday people who might be you, your neighbors . . . your associates—not people on foreign soil, in ages long gone by. There must be a quality of genuine mystery; there must

be a menace almost unbearable, threatening the people in the story in such a way that the reader really feels the fear that they feel. And this menace must be logically motivated by some character who has a reason for it, and in such a way that it could happen—without too great a stretch of the imagination—in your own home town. . . .

Man will never cease speculating upon the hereafter. So we find our readers request a certain number of stories dealing with creatures that are—or seem to be—from the mysterious limbo beyond the grave. . . . There are other types of mystery-terror yarns, too: tales of human vampires, sirens, and modern witch-doctors; stories of the weird influence one person's mind may exert on another's. Oh, there is ample room for variety in this field—and now, there is always a constant supply. Good mystery-terror yarns are not as scarce as they were when we were young.

Glance back through this issue with us, and note the various styles of mystery fiction you have just read. Donald Dale's lead novel, *Maids for the Dust-Devils*, is the story of a nameless menace that rides under cover of a natural phenomena, striking swiftly and surely. The fear is caused by a combination of nature's wrath—and some evil influence, enhanced perhaps, by the fact that the characters in this novel know in their hearts that the crimes are actually being committed by some horrible, *human* agency. . . . *In Help Me To Die!* by Leon Byrne, there is no explanation attempted. Rarely do we find a story like this. . . . In *The Town the Dead Things Claimed*, Paul Ernst's novelette, young John Crayton, all unknowing, comes close to mingling with creatures from beyond the grave—and his sweetheart, apparently dead, leads him there! *Terror Has No Face* is Raymond Whetstone's contribution to those readers who can take their terror neat—and still go to sleep without a bright light burning! . . . Henry Treat Sperry gives you a novelette of a modern Circe-like woman who wields a weird, compelling influence over strong men, and at whose beck and call snarls a pack of—well, what WERE those creatures in *Goddess of the Half-World Brood?* . . . You tell us!

And tell us what you like in mystery-terror fiction. Don't hesitate to write us your ideas on how we can offer you the pulse-speeding, spine-tingling type of story that packs the wallop you want! Criticisms are welcome, too!

THE EDITORS