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Weird Tales

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WEIRD TALES ISSUED 1st OF EACH MONTH

Vespers

By EDGAR DANIEL KRAMER

Slowly we circle the prison yard,
Dull-eyed men whom the world has broken;
Our bones are weary, the stones are hard;
There is no laughter, no word is spoken.

Shuffling feet and the ghosts of sighing,
As the guards stare down from the high gray walls;
The heavens are flames, for the sun is dying,
And hark, through the stillness a robin calls!

There comes the stroke of a tyrant bell—
Dull-eyed men and a robin calling!
Shuffle of feet to each iron-walled cell,
Clods of clay on the steel cots falling.

Smothered curses and bitter weeping,
But in the shadows a dream has stirred;
Over my cell floor the rats go creeping,
But my child-like heart is the singing bird.