

Weird Tales

REGISTERED IN U.S. PATENT OFFICE



VOLUME 20

NUMBER 1

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, \$4.00 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 840 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Ill.

FARNSWORTH WRIGHT, Editor.

Copyright 1932, by the Popular Fiction Publishing Company.

Contents for July, 1932

Cover Design C. C. Senf
Illustrating a scene in "The Phantom Hand"

The Eyrie 4
A chat with the readers

The Phantom Hand (Part 1) Victor Rousseau 8
An astounding novel of Black Magic, eerie murders, and the kingdom of shadows

Echidna Mary Elizabeth Counselman 24
Verses

The Man Who Never Came Back Pearl Norton Swet 25
A strange thrill-tale of the leopard-men of Africa—a shuddery story of a weird horror in the jungle

[CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE]

- Wings in the Night** ----- **Robert E. Howard** 33
A story of Darkest Africa and nightmare realities with slaving fangs and talons steeped in shudderome evil
- The Planet of Peace** ----- **Arlton Eadie** 53
The amazing story of a man from Earth on a planet that was inhabited solely by beautiful women
- The City of Crawling Death** ----- **Hugh B. Cave** 72
Ants—droves of them—as big as panthers—ants that made slaves of men and threatened civilization with destruction
- The Thought-Devil** ----- **A. W. Calder** 86
The story of a writer of gangster tales whose villainous creation loosed a dreadful horror upon the world
- Night Specters** ----- **Kirke Mechem** 95
Versé
- The Devil's Bride (Conclusion)** ----- **Seabury Quinn** 96
A novel of devil-worship, that contains horror, thrills, shudders, suspense, breath-taking interest, and vivid action
- The Little Gods Wait** ----- **Donald Wandrei** 116
Versé
- The Splendid Lie** ----- **S. B. H. Hurst** 117
A brief weird story of the World War, and two old men who sought to bring comfort to grieving humanity
- Dust** ----- **Edna Goit Brintnall** 119
A short weird tale about a girl who lay in bed and experienced real rest for the first time in her troubled life
- House of the Lizard** ----- **Harold Ward** 122
The story of a newspaper reporter's ghastly experience in that strange house built on the quicksands of a swamp
- Weird Story Reprint:**
- Frankenstein (Part 3)** ----- **Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley** 127
A famous novel that for more than one hundred years has been acclaimed a masterpiece of weird horror

For Advertising Rates in WEIRD TALES Apply Direct to

WEIRD TALES

Western Advertising Office:
NORMAN C. NOURSE
 1331 S. Broadway
 Los Angeles, Calif.

Central Advertising Office:
HARLEY L. WARD, INC.
 390 N. Michigan Ave.
 Chicago, Ill.
 Phone, Central 6200

Eastern Advertising Office:
D. P. RIKER, Mgr.
 303 Fourth Ave.
 New York, N. Y.
 Phone, Gramercy 5300

Dust

By EDNA GOIT BRINTNALL

A brief story of a girl who lay in bed and rested for the first time in her life

AT FIRST, Nellie thought it was all only a dream. There had been no stinging summons from the rusty little alarm clock, no petulant call from her mother's room down the long flight of stairs. Yet she could hear her mother moving about in the kitchen and her father's low answers. Miraculously enough, they were not quarreling.

She lay very still and tried to readjust herself. She was very tired and it was pleasant, unbelievably pleasant, to just lie quietly and pretend she was asleep.

It was high time she was getting father's breakfast, and a rather pathetic breakfast it would be. Just the two of them always. Mother usually had a headache and Nellie took breakfast up to her on a tray. Not a tray with a rose clinging lovingly to the curl of a long crystal vase, but roses were expensive and not to be thought of even in midsummer. Mother usually ate her breakfast and turned over discontentedly and went back to sleep. Then Nellie hurried downstairs and dusted the living-room. Mother was most particular about the living-room. Beyond the living-room nothing much mattered.

Nellie sensed that she was lying on the couch in the alcove off the living-room. It was stuffy; she could smell the dust on the "porteurs" and the heavy odor of the afghan couch cover. There were six strips to the couch cover, two tan, two rust-red and two faded blue, alternating and strung together loosely with coarse tan twine.

Sometimes she and Wilbur sat there

at night and Wilbur held her hand and kissed her (she skipped over the thought hurriedly), but she had never before lain quietly on its spongy softness. Mother spoke of the alcove as the cozy corner.

It was nice.

Even the sheet was over her face, just as she always put it (even in her own hard little bed up under the roof) to keep off the wind that sucked down through the flue in the chimney.

She liked her room, though it had nothing in it besides a very old marble-top dresser shabbily painted white, and an old mirror of her grandmother's, that once had been resplendent with shining gold leaf. It was nothing much to look at now, after she had painted the clusters of grapes along the sides. Blobs of paint made pimples on the sides of the grapes, unpleasant even to think about. The bed was thin and white and iron. It was cold in winter—like the rest of the room, and hot in summer.

In the winter there was no heat. The tiny sheet-iron stove in the corner was not good to look at, but no one bothered to take it down. It was painfully inadequate against the winter winds that threw themselves off the lake and beat frantically against the eight tiny windows.

Only half of the woodwork was white. Nellie had intended it all to be white, but one can hardly judge the limits of a quart of paint. Even the white part was not all white—just a muddy gray where the deep brown of the old woodwork showed through—and now only two of

the windows would open. The paint held them quite securely, making the room like a furnace during the hot summer nights.

Even at that Nellie liked the room.

There were eight more of such rooms strung along the row toward the street corner. Nellie often wondered what they looked like—if they were as warm and as cold as hers, and if the wallpapers were as pretty as hers. Nellie loved the wallpaper. She had selected it herself. It was pale green with broad silver trelises fairly bursting with pink roses, roses that hung over her bed in joyous profusion. So low was the ceiling that she could fancy herself lying in bed and merely reaching out one slim arm and gathering handfuls to her thin young breasts.

Looking at the flowers, she forgot the paint, and the lack of curtains at the windows didn't bother her any more. She had wanted Swiss curtains with pink dots and frilled tie-backs, but as her mother convinced her—curtains were not necessary up so high from the street. No one saw.

AS THE door opened softly, she lay very still. It was too nice for just a little longer.

She wondered why her father hadn't gone to work, wrenching himself into his coat, pulling his hat down viciously over his bespectacled eyes and slamming the door until the colored glass fairly rattled in its casing.

From the kitchen she could hear the mother's voice as a general directing his army.

"Be careful now, with that dust-rag. Wipe off the window-sills and the top of the piano and the rungs of the chairs!"

So Father was dusting!

She would have loved to peek out from

under the sheet, just to have seen him, but it was all too delicious.

Mother getting breakfast! Father dusting!

Too delicious just to lie all warm and comfortable and let some one else do something.

Her mother came through the dining-room and stood in the doorway.

"We can put those roses in the green vase," she was saying to her father, "two whole dozen roses—from the Goodmans' around the corner!"

Two dozen roses—it was beyond comprehension!

Soon she would stir herself and get up and wash the vase—'way down at the bottom so that no brown line would show—but not now—no, not now!

She thought about the house—stiff with red, dark red brick and a jutting porch that went up stiffly as if making a long nose at the shabby cellar beneath. It had cutwork and balls and scrolls all painted red, dark red like the brick.

The living-room was nice. Mother always spoke of it that way. There was the onyx table with a bronze statue on it, by the front window—the bronze lamp with the big red shade on the glass-top table by the morris chair. There were green over-curtains—scant, very scant, it was true, and not quite covering the coarse lace edgings of the scrim curtains underneath, but Mother had made them in a hurry and her sense of measurement was not always accurate. Still they looked nice.

The piano was rosewood. Even Father was proud of the piano, though there had been weeks of wrangling and bitter biting argument over it, but Mother won. Mother always did.

Just as she had about the house. Father had wanted a house in the country. A

house that stood by itself and didn't have to be propped up by seven others, all alike in a row like alphabet blocks. A house that had sides to it that one could see and not only just one stern high front. Windows that looked wide to the sun and not into a gray court that grew darker and darker as it neared the dining-room windows.

Perhaps that was why the dining-room was rarely dusted. No one could see dust in the dining-room, even in midday—that is, no one but Father. Father could see and sometimes he wrote the word *Dust* in a big scrawling hand across the shelf of the high golden-oak sideboard. It always made Mother angry—which he knew it would. Often Nellie saw it before Mother did, though she was not so tall; and that saved a row.

Nellie hated rows, but Father and Mother seemed to enjoy them. Father always telling about his mother's house-keeping and Mother flinging back about never having a dime to call her own.

Often Nellie could hear them below her—tense bitter voices snarling at each other in the darkness.

But when callers came Mother and Father took on, in some mysterious fashion, the niceness of the living-room. Mother was proud of the Oriental rugs and Father even praised the piano.

Nellie didn't stir. She heard Mother's steps close beside her—very close beside her. She was speaking.

"I think the roses look nicest here, don't you? We can put the rest of the flowers here—but the roses *are* lovely!"

"She liked roses," said the father.

"I like roses too, but with never a dime——" She stopped, suddenly; her father said nothing.

"Her graduating-dress was a bit too small, but I split it down the back. Looks

real nice against——" her mother continued.

"She has real pretty hair." Her father seemed very close to her. He was praising her. Tears flooded to her eyes, but she kept her lips closed tight. She wanted to hear more—just a very little more.

"I had real pretty hair, too, once—you used to say so yourself—but what with scrimping and washing and ironing and standing over a hot stove and raising a——" Her mother hesitated.

"She wasn't exactly thankless," her father said, slowly, as if supplying the word. "Maybe we shouldn't have said she had to marry Wilbur. Wilbur is a nice fellow, but maybe she didn't just fancy him—girls are sometimes that way. Maybe, if we hadn't just forced her too far, she woulda got used to the idea slow-like and not run out into the street like a wild thing and get runned over by a fire engine."

Nellie felt her mother's breath freeze against her lips.

"Don't you ever let me hear you say those words again—not to anybody, any time," she said firmly. "After all, she was running out to see where the fire was and that's how it all happened."

"I guess you're right," said the father.

"Well, I've got all the food ready and most of the flowers set up and you better go up and get a fresh collar on and your black gloves ready. The man ought to be here now any minute and you can help lift her."

Her mother came close to her and lifted the sheet. Nellie kept her eyes tightly closed and waited.

"She looks real nice," she said almost defiantly, "just like she was sleeping."

"Yes," said her father, "just like she was sleeping."

Her mother laid the sheet back over her face. They tiptoed away.

THE heavy scent of roses came back to Nellie pleasantly. She wished the "porters" didn't smell like dust.

So close the roses seemed, as if she could reach out one slender arm and gather them to her thin young bosom.

She was very tired. She wondered about the alarm clock. Perhaps there had never been any alarm clock. Perhaps she had only been dreaming.

It was nice of the Goodmans to send roses to her mother. They were nice people—even her mother and father were nice. A nice living-room it was. A nice couch, comfortable, restful. . . .

Even Wilbur was nice. . . .

She gave a thin, peaceful little sigh—the room was dusted—somewhere Father was putting on a clean collar and some black gloves—somewhere Mother, well—it was just all—too—nice. . . .

Nellie slept.