

The Somnambulist



Rudy was many things: director of an oyster choir; Teaneck's premier beanie collector; the figment of the imagination of seven people; approximately 61 percent water; late (by twenty-nine years) for an appointment with a mimeograph distributor. He was also a somnambulist. Not by choice, certainly, for he would occasionally sleepwalk far from his bedroom and wind up in some pretty awkward situations. Like the time he awoke astride Carlos Castrado's catafalque during a raucous memorial service for the famed former funambulist. Or when he found himself glued to a bedpost in the display window of Dr. Jekyll and Naugahyde's Furniture Factory, a good eighteen miles *by boat* from his home! But for sure Rudy's *strangest* experience was when he woke up upside down and twirling rings around his ankles and wrist balanced atop a wooden cane that was *itself* balanced on a soccer ball as an unfamiliar woman in an alluringly spangly costume whispered words of encouragement to him in Esperanto. All things considered, he was doing pretty well. But then an unseen audience began to applaud, Rudy lost whatever concentration he had, and he fell solidly onto the woman. Next thing he knew, he was back in his bed, a ring still wrapped around one ankle. Would these freak nocturnal missions never end?! (Answer: over.)