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## The Unusual Diary of Dr. M

**Sumitra Mukherjee**
AuthorHouse UK (Oct 8, 2012)
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"In a few pages of my diary, I copied down some of those experiences as others told them to me … Then again, going back to my childhood, I had quite a few experiences which, as yet, have no rational explanation. When I heard strange stories from my patients, I was amazed to find some similarities between their experiences and mine." Sumitra Mukherjee encountered people in his medical practice in Great Britain whose inexplicable, possibly paranormal ideations seemed so real to them (and at times to him), that he felt moved to record them.

Each chapter of the book recounts such an occurrence, generally beginning with a patient who shows symptoms of a mysterious illness or who has a harrowing personal history. Often the stories involve an evil presence: "a man with a cruel and blazing stare," "I heard ghastly laughter, which resounded again and again," "I saw those pair of dazzling eyes and fainted." There is a story of a family that believes someone in the house will die because of a white stone rose that is gradually turning blood red; a medical colleague who unaccountably becomes a degraded drug addict; a patient who believes he has an evil double that commits crimes while he is "in a fog"; a woman who was kidnapped by Satanists and given the power to make men truly happy before destroying them.

*The Unusual Diary of Dr. M* suffers from two significant and distracting flaws. First, setting aside the implausible nature of the tales (since this is, after all, a book of "unusual" recollections), most of the stories follow the same progression: There are weird happenings told to or witnessed by Dr. M followed by an explanation of the mystery, often either by the device of a letter written to Dr. M. by the patient, or a later encounter with a heretofore unknown third party who wraps up the loose ends neatly. Had Dr M. (assuming this name refers to the author since the book is categorized as "autobiography/memoir") chosen to present these stories as fiction, the reader could perhaps enjoy their bizarre content without questioning their pat conclusions. Presented as fact, such repetitious plot progressions and tidy wrap-ups strain the reader's credulity.

Secondly, the book is laden with typos, poor syntax, and other errors. For example, the author writes, "ofcourse I washarbouring in the kingdom of darkness," and later, "I was not at all sure the patient whom I had? seen was the same patient and worst than that was that I was not sure wheather I actually saw the patient!" But perhaps most egregious is the cover blurb which states, "Many cases they discover the true nature of patients characters that make them simply amazed. They are most ordinary peoples but they show so much compassions so much loves for fellow human beings." The book's introduction is similarly challenged: "The author stated he wanted to believe in God which he has expressed many a times … lastly you readers are the persons to judge whether the author is right person to get your appreciations."

These notable weaknesses peppered throughout the book unfortunately detract so much from the undoubtedly sincere intentions of the author that *The Unusual Diary of Dr. M* is not likely to reach a broad readership.
BARBARA BAMBERGER SCOTT (January 17, 2013)

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