

THE 1974 NIGHTMARE YEARBOOK



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68 PAGES OF TWISTED TALES OF TERROR!
NIGHTMARE



WHEN
THE
DAWN
GODS
WALK
...THE HORROR MOOD IMMERS WITHIN... THE WICKERS ON THE FIRE...

NIGHTMARE



NIGHTMARE



NIGHTMARE



THE DEAD THING IN THE CORPSE

THE BEST TALES OF
VAMPIRES WEREWOLVES AND GHOULS
IN ILLUSTRATED HORROR!

A SKYWALK HORROR-MOOD PUBLICATION

ARCHAIC

THE
TALES OF HORROR
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NIGHTMARE SCREAM PSYCHO

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A SKYWALD HORROR-MOOD MAGAZINE
MACABRE COLLECTOR'S ISSUE
NIGHTMARE
YEARBOOK

- edited by ALAN HEWETSON -

1974

cover artist: SÉGRELLES
contributors:

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DENNIS FUJITAKE CARLOS GARZON BRUCE JONES

BOB MARTIN DOUG MOENCH RALPH REESE

JERRY SEIGEL TOM SUTTON DOUG WILDEY

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WRITTEN BY ALAN HEWETSON
ILLUSTRATED BY BOB MARTIN





WHEN THOSE
MORONS BURNED-
OUT THIS CASTLE
THEY KILLED A
NOBLE STRUCTURE...

...THEY KILLED
CULTURE AND
HERITAGE --
SOMETHING THEY
DON'T
UNDERSTAND...

...BETTER EVERY
SINGLE MAN AND
WOMAN AND CHILD
DIE THAN A
MANSION SUCH
AS THIS...



PROUD AND NOBLE
HOME -- I WILL
REVENGE YOU...

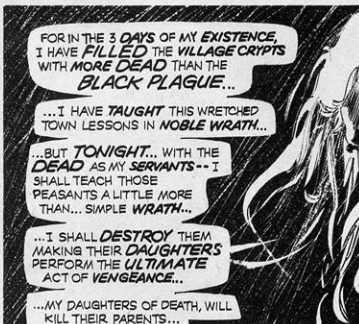
...I WILL *KILL*
THEM *ALL* ... FOR
YOU ALONE!



I HAVE BEEN ALIVE
BUT 4 DAYS, A
VAMPIRE BUT 3 DAYS...

...THE *FIRST* MALE
VAMPIRE OF ALL
EARTH OF ALL TIME...

...AND I SHALL *USE*
MY POWERS TO
DESTROY MY
ENEMIES...



FOR IN THE 3 DAYS OF MY EXISTENCE,
I HAVE *FILLED* THE VILLAGE CRYPTS
WITH MORE DEAD THAN THE
BLACK PLAGUE...

...I HAVE *TAUGHT* THIS WRETCHED
TOWN LESSONS IN *NOBLE WRATH*...

...BUT *TONIGHT*... WITH THE
DEAD AS MY *SERVANTS*-- I
SHALL TEACH THOSE
PEASANTS A LITTLE MORE
THAN... SIMPLE *WRATH*...

...I SHALL *DESTROY* THEM
MAKING THEIR *DAUGHTERS*
PERFORM THE *ULTIMATE*
ACT OF *VENGEANCE*...

...MY DAUGHTERS OF DEATH, WILL
KILL THEIR PARENTS...

THE GOD OF THE DEAD

HEINZ SCHULZ



THESE GRAVES
ONLY **DAYS** AGO DID
NOT EVEN **EXIST**...

... RATHER
REMARKABLE
AND **PROFOUND**
WHEN I THINK
OF IT...

RISE UP MY
DEAD THINGS...

... **RISE UP** AND
OUT YOUR
MAUSOLEUMS...
YOUR **MASTER**
DEMANDS IT...

TO THINK THAT
I, LIKE A HUMAN
SEED, CAN SPREAD
MYSELF OVER ALL THE
EARTH, AND CAN
POTENTIALLY ENSLAVE
3 MILLION WOMEN,
MORE OR LESS...

... **REMARKABLE**
AND **PROFOUND**...





WHY SHOULD I CALM MYSELF WHEN YOU MEAN TO MURDER MY VILLAGE-- WHEN YOU HAVE ALREADY KILLED BRUTALLY, ALL OUR CHILDREN!!



WHAT SORT OF MONSTER ARE YOU? YOU TAKE THE LIVES OF OUR CHILDREN, OUR MOST IMPORTANT REASON FOR BEING, AND WHEN WE BURY THEM YOU DIG THEM OUT OF THEIR GRAVES AND ENSLAVE THEM TO YOUR WRETCHED WILL...



THAT WAS QUITE A PRETTY LITTLE SPEECH BURGERMASTER...



CALM YOURSELF BURGERMASTER...

SO... IT IS ME YOU TRY TO IMPRESS-- WELL, YOU DON'T IMPRESS ME, YOU DON'T DENT MY ARMOUR IN ANY WAY...

...YOU DON'T EVEN AMUSE ME...

...BUT... YOU WILL AMUSE ME... YOU WILL CERTAINLY SERVE AT LEAST ONE PURPOSE!



...WHO ARE YOU TRYING TO IMPRESS? ME? OR YOUR 'FELLOW VILLAGERS'? FOR THEY, IT IS OBVIOUS, ARE NOT IMPRESSED BY YOUR MELODRAMATIC PLEADING...

...THEY... IT IS OBVIOUS, ARE READY TO LIE DOWN AND DIE, OR AT THE VERY LEAST, SUBJUGATE THEMSELVES COMPLETELY TO ME...



THIS, I TAKE IT BURGERMASTER
IS YOUR FAMILY SURROUNDING
YOU...

...AND IS IT NOT ALSO TRUE THAT THIS
GIRL ON MY ARM, WHOM YOU ONCE CALLED
MAGDELINE, WHO IS NOW AN UNDEAD
SLAVE TO ME, WHO IS NOW NO MORE A PART
OF YOU OR AN OFFSPRING OF YOU THAN--
THAN I AM... IS IT NOT TRUE YOU
FEAR HER?

...FEAR HER?...
WHY SHOULD I
FEAR MY OWN
DAUGHTER...

YOU STILL CLAIM
HER AS YOUR DAUGHTER?
WELL, YOU SHOULD FEAR HER
FOR THE SAME REASON THE
OTHER VILLAGERS NOW FEAR
THEIR DEAD DAUGHTERS...

...BECAUSE-- SHE IS MORE DEAD
THAN NOT... MORE EVIL THAN NOT...
MORE GROTESQUE IN HER
HEART NOW THAN YOU IN YOUR LIFE
HAVE EVER IMAGINED...

MAGDELINE--
DO YOU KNOW
WHO THIS MAN
IS?

...NO... I
KNOW ONLY
YOU!

...KILL HIM GIRL...
THEN THIS WHOLE
FAMILY... DRAIN THEIR
VEINS DRY... DO NOT
LET THEM CONTINUE
TO BREATHE... EVEN
AS UNDEADS...

DAUGHTER!

...OHO YOU OLD FOOL--
YOU WILL ACCOMPLISH NOTHING
BY DEMEANING YOURSELF
THIS...

MAGGY...
I'M YOUR
FATHER... DON'T
YOU KNOW
ME, LITTLE
ONE...

...KILL THEM...

...NO...







...SUCH A
LITTLE CROSS... I...
DON'T SEE HOW IT
CAN HAVE AN EFFECT
SUCH AS THIS?... I...
DON'T UNDERSTAND...

...**DRACULA DIES** AS ABRUPTLY AS HE WAS BORN, IN AN INSTANT.
... IN AN INSTANT OF EVIL HE WAS BORN...
... IN AN INSTANT OF GOOD HE DIED...

...IN AN ABRUPT, CHAOTIC INSTANT THE FORCES OF GOOD
SLIPPED THROUGH DRACULA'S EVIL DEFENCES, BUT THO
THE FORCES OF GOOD WERE PHYSICALLY SMALL
THEY WERE PHILOSOPHICALLY GREAT AND POWERFUL...

...SO, WHAT NOW CAN BE SAID OF THE GOD OF ALL THE DEAD...
HIS SUCCESSORS, ALL THOSE WHO CALL THEMSELVES
DRACULA BUT WHO, OF COURSE, ARE NOT DRACULA, WILL
NEVER LIVE UP TO THE CARNAGE AND DEATH THE TRUE
PRINCE OF DARKNESS PERFORMED WITHIN A MERE FOUR
DAYS...

...SO, WITHOUT BEING FACETIOUS, DON'T BELIEVE ALL YOU READ,
DEAR READER... THE DRACULAS YOU READ ARE NOT MERELY
PHONIES, THEY ARE INSIGNIFICANT PHONIES --FOR THEIR
'ADVENTURES' ARE DULL-WITTED, AND THEIR 'POWERS'
ARE LIMITED...

... THERE WAS ONLY ONE DRACULA, ONLY ONE PRINCE OF
DARKNESS, A CORRUPT SAD MONARCH NAMED VLAD THE
IMPALER, WHO ROSE OUT OF HIS GRAVE TO BECOME THE
FATHER OF ALL VAMPIRES, WHO LIVED A MISERABLE FOUR
DAYS BEFORE HE WAS CONQUERED BY A CHILD...

A CHILD WHO DIDN'T EVEN KNOW WHAT HE WAS DOING...





THE SAGA OF THE HUMAN GARGOYLES

THE ILLUSTRATED
HORROR MASTERPIECE
BY

ARCHAIC **ALAN HEWETSON**

MACABRE **MAELO CINTRON**

Returning to the HORROR-MOOD pages after an absence of a few issues, due to sickness (the artist Cintron, was in an Asylum!) THE HUMAN GARGOYLES is again capturing the hearts of readers and critics alike! Often hailed as the single most important character - series in the entire HORROR-MOOD, THE HUMAN GARGOYLES are here to stay.

This month (on sale now) they appear in

PSYCHO

(due to NIGHTMARE being a SPECIAL YEARBOOK this month) next month, THE HUMAN GARGOYLES return to

NIGHTMARE

August - on sale June 27 - miss 'em not —

— and eagerly await the special cover story coming up soon —

DRACULA is alive(?) AND Evil in THIS 1974 NIGHTMARE YEAR BOOK

This is the NIGHTMARE YEAR BOOK, featuring oddly gathered goodies from the first 6 issues of PSYCHO and NIGHTMARE, plus an all-new, all-original tale of horror by brand-new Horror-Mood-team artist Bob Martin — DRACULA — GOD OF THE DEAD!

Emotionally-disturbed ED FEDORY is presently working on some of the most bizarre tales of his career — like WHO ARE THEY? THE BREEDERS, to be illustrated by LUIS COLLADO, and THE CLAWS OF DEATH, to be illustrated by new, weird Spanish — CABRERIZO — both will appear soon in the HORROR-MOOD pages!

Mr. awkward AUGUSTINE FUNNELL, meanwhile, is busy on his terror-tales: WHEN I WAS A BOY I WATCHED THE BLOOD WOLVES, and DUNGEON OF THE DAMNED; both to be illustrated by popular HORROR-MOOD illustrator, LURID LUIS COLLADO. Funnell's tale: DOWN TO HADES TO DIE! will be illustrated by another new Mood-team artist PUIGAGUT, an artist as interesting as his lurid name!

ARCHAIC AL, besides archaic editorial duties, is drafting a few tales of suspense for your horror-entertainment — like: KILL, KILL, KILL AND KILL AGAIN, to be illustrated by FERRAN SOSTRES, and THE MUMMY KHAFFRE, a brand new character planned for the first issue of TOMB OF HORROR, and to be illustrated by CESAR LOPEZ, the artist for our now-regular FRANKENSTEIN'S MONSTER saga!

... strange correspondence from beyond the grave (it would seem), sent to us by GARY ANDERSON of Tulsa, Oklahoma — "I recently read Nightmare #18 and I found that one of my descendants, Chris Roose wrote a letter to your magazine. Yes,

I did say one of MY descendants. You see my life didn't actually end in 1849, in fact it was my birth into a new life. In reality, to put it in a word, I was reincarnated! But not as a dog, cat, horse, or another lowly beast. In a way I was lucky, I was reincarnated as a person, so I can do further writings. With my second life I'm going to try to do everything I couldn't in my first, and I wish to thank you people at Skywald Publishing for making me feel that my first life wasn't a total waste after all by printing some of my writings, even if you do change them a bit. I already had one of my first works of my second life printed in one of your magazines — it appeared in the 1973 Nightmare Winter Special — I was winner number 8 of your gargoyle egg contest; I signed it Gary W. Anderson, which is the name

people call my second embodiment. I'll be writing to you again sometime but for now my thanks for your great work on my behalf.

EDGAR ALLAN POE

Writing under the hand of
GARY W. ANDERSON

Drop us a line and let us know how you enjoyed this NIGHTMARE YEARBOOK — fill in the little coupon so we know which is your favorite story — so we can aim to please you in the future! And (lest we forget) don't forget to check the HORROR — MOOD newstands for

my favorite story this issue is:

comment:

name:

age:

address:

city n' other:

mail to: SKYWALD BEST STORY
Skywald Publishing Corporation
18 East 41st Street Rm 1501
New York City, N.Y. 10017

PSYCHO #20 and SOREAM
#7 now on sale.

R.I.P.

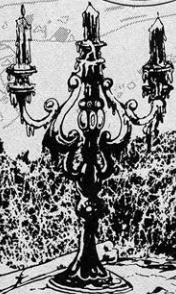
ARCHAICAL

THE
HUMAN
GARGOYLES

appear in

PSYCHO

now on sale!
— miss it not!



...SHE HAD BEEN SEIZED BY EPILEPSY
AND HAD FAINTED-DEAD IN THE SIGHT
OF THE SERVANT-GIRL...

...WE BURIED BERENICE
IN THE FAMILY PLOT IN
THE CASTLE GROUNDS
THE FOLLOWING DAY...

...I THEN WENT
TO THE LIBRARY--
AND DID NOT LEAVE
FOR SEVERAL DAYS...
ALL THE TIME I
MERELY THOUGHT OF
HER...AND OF HER TEETH...
OF HER TEETH THAT
POSSESSED ME...

BERENICE

is in

SCREAM

The masterpiece of Horror by ED-
GAR ALLAN POE
is now on sale at your horror-mood
newsstand — the tale of a man
driven mad by his passion and love
for a girl — even after the grave! —
illustrated by
rancid RICARDO VILLAMONTE!





DEAL

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY
BRUCE JONES



THE BROILING DESERT SUN BEAT DOWN RELENTLESSLY ON THE SMALL ENCAMPMENT TENT NESTLED SECURELY BESIDE THE SHIMMERING OASIS. WITHIN ITS CANVAS CONFINES THE OLD MAN'S VOICE BROKE THE HEAVY SILENCE OF THE WASTELANDS.

FELIX TOWNSEND PULLED THE HEAVY DESERT BOOTS ON WITH A GROAN AND ADDRESSED HIS YOUNG NEPHEW PETER WITH AN AGED SMILE...

ACCORDING TO THE MAP THAT OLD PROSPECTOR SOLD ME, THE MINE IS ABOUT FIVE DAYS JOURNEY FROM HERE!



YOU SENILE OLD GOAT. ANY FOOL KNOWS THAT "LOST MINE" ROUTINE IS THE OLDEST CON GAME IN THE WORLD...AND YOU PAID FIFTY BUCKS FOR THE MAP...

THE AGING UNCLE'S WRINKLED HAND OPENED HIS FIELD JACKET AND PATTED THE SHEATH OF PAPERS IN ITS LINING. HE NODDED AT PETER...

YOU'VE BEEN GOOD COMPANY TO AN OLD MAN THESE LAST FEW YEARS, PETER. I'M SHOWING MY APPRECIATION BY REMEMBERING YOU IN MY WILL!

MAD OF REGION

PETER STARED HUNGRILY AT THE PAPERS. HE'D WAITED MONTHS JUST TO HEAR THOSE WORDS. THE LONG HOURS OF BOREDOM WITH HIS UNCLE HAD PAID OFF...

OUR JOURNEY WILL BE MADE ON **FOOT**, PETER. THE TERRAIN IS TOO **ROUGH** FOR ANY VEHICLE.

THE WATER HOLES ARE **SPACED** ALMOST EXACTLY A **DAY** APART! WE HAVE **ONE** CANTEN APIECE. BE SURE TO **RATION** YOUR WATER ACCORDINGLY...


I'M **DYING**! HAVEN'T HAD A DRINK IN **THREE HOURS**... C-CAN'T MAKE IT!

GET UP, BOY! WE CAN'T STOP NOW! I TOLD YOU TO CONSERVE YOUR WATER...


THERE...UP AHEAD! IT'S THE FIRST OASIS!



SO IT WENT. AT THE END OF EACH SCORCHING DAY A SHIMMERING POOL OF LIFE-GIVING WATER LAY WAITING FOR THEIR THIRSTY BELLIES AND EMPTY CANTEENS. BY THE TIME THEY REACHED THE THIRD OASIS, PETER'S PATIENCE AND STRENGTH WERE WEARING THIN...



WHY SHOULD I WAIT?
I'LL BE AN OLD MAN
MYSELF BY THE TIME HE
KICKS THE BUCKET. IF
I PLANNED IT **RIGHT**
IT WOULD LOOK LIKE
AN ACCIDENT!



IS THAT
YOU, NEPHEW--
UHHH!

WHO
ELSE YOU
STUPID OLD
FOOL!




PETER!
WHY?...

BECAUSE
I'M **TIRED**
OF WAITING,
UNCLE
FELIX!



HIS CANTEEN!

PETER STRUCK THEN, AGAIN
AND AGAIN WITH THE JAGGED
ROCK, UNTIL THE CLEAR DESERT
POOL MUDDIED CRIMSON AND
THE OLD MAN'S LIFE EBBED
AWAY IN A FEEBLE TRAIL OF
BUBBLES. A BRIGHT GLINT OF
METAL WINKED AT PETER FROM
BENEATH THE RIPPLING SURFACE.



PETER REACHED DOWN AND LIFTED THE
SHINY RECEPTACLE FROM THE QUIET FORM...

YOU WON'T **NEED** THIS NOW,
UNCLE, AND IT'LL MAKE THE
RETURN TRIP **TWICE** AS
EASY ON ME!



BY MID-AFTERNOON OF THE NEXT DAY PETER WAS GREEDILY EMPTYING HIS OWN CANTEEN INTO HIS DUSTY GULLET. IT SEEMED TWICE AS HOT NOW AS THE DAY BEFORE...

BLASTED
HEAT! GOOD
I'VE GOT
PLENTY OF
WATER!



THERE
SHE IS! AND
IT'S ABOUT
TIME!



THE COOLING WATER HAD ALMOST TOUCHED HIS LIPS WHEN SOMETHING CAUGHT HIS ATTENTION FROM THE CENTER OF THE OASIS. THE BLOATED PULPY FIGURE BOBBED TO THE SURFACE AND STARED HIDEOUSLY AT HIM WITH SIGHTLESS EYES...PETER SCREAMED...

UNCLE FELIX!
MY GOD! HOW IN
THE NAME OF HADES
DID HE GET HERE?



COYOTES MUST HAVE
DRAGGED HIM HERE
LAST NIGHT! LORD HE
STINKS! I CAN'T DRINK
THE WATER NOW...HIS
CORPSE HAS POL-
LUTED IT!



I'VE STILL GOT HIS
CANTEEN! I CAN MAKE
IT ON THAT!...TRAVEL BY
NIGHT! YOU OLD VULTURE
I'M NOT LIKED YET!



SO HE WALKED INTO THE FREEZING DESERT NIGHT, HIS UNCLE'S CANTEEN SWINGING BESIDE HIM. BY SUNRISE THE LAST OF THE PRECIOUS WATER HAD PASSED OVER HIS PARCHED LIPS...HE SEARCHED THE HORIZON DESPERATELY!



THAT'S IT!
I'D BETTER BE
ON THE RIGHT
TRAIL!



THE OASIS!
THERE IT IS!



THE REEKING SLIME-COVERED HEAD FLOATED LAZILY IN THE WATER, ITS ROTTED FLESH FILLING THE DESERT AIR WITH STOMACH-CHURNING ODOR, TAINTING THE COOL LIQUID AROUND IT WITH PUTRESCENCE. PETER SHUDDERED, CHOKING BACK HIS VOMIT...

HIS HEAD BEGAN TO SWIM AS THE GROTESQUE FACE DANCED BEFORE HIM, GRINNING IDIOTICALLY...



THIS CAN'T
BE HAPPENING! I'M
GOING MAD FROM
THIRST! THAT'S IT!
HE'S A MIRAGE!

BUT INSIDE, HE KNEW THE HIDEOUS THING IN THE OASIS WAS AS REAL AS THE DUST ON HIS SWOLLEN TONGUE. HE WIPED THE SWEAT FROM HIS FOREHEAD WITH A SHAKING HAND AND TURNED BACK TOWARD THE DESERT...



GOT TO MAKE
IT TO THE LAST
WATER HOLE BEFORE
HE GETS THERE...
GOT TO BEAT HIM!

WEAK WITH THIRST AND EXPOSURE, PETER STRUGGLED DESPERATELY FOR THE ENCAMPMENT TENT MILES AWAY AND THE FINAL OASIS BESIDE IT. MERCIFULLY THE SKY DARKENED, BLOTTING OUT THE SUN. THEN TO HIS HORROR HE REALIZED IT WAS A...



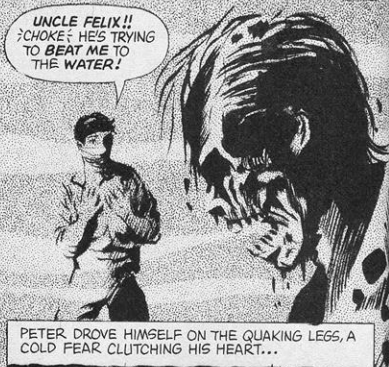
PETER FASTENED HIS BANDANA ABOUT HIS FACE AND PUSHED INTO THE BLINDING, WHIRLING SAND. IT WAS THEN HE NOTICED THE DIM SILHOUETTE MOVING ALONG BESIDE HIM...



HE SQUINTED INTO THE HOWLING GALE AND DREW CLOSER TO THE STUMBLING FIGURE. FROM OUT OF THE SWIRLING STORM LOOMED THE HORRID MUTILATED FACE...



THE ROTTED TEETERING THING WAS KEEPING PACE WITH HIM, CHUNKS OF DECAYING FLESH AND MAGGOTY BONE FALLING FROM ITS STUMBLING HULK, LEAVING A TRAIL OF RANCID GORE BEHIND IT...



PETER DROVE HIMSELF ON THE QUAKING LEGS, A COLD FEAR CLUTCHING HIS HEART...



SEEMINGLY YEARS LATER THE STORM ABATED. PETER, CRAWLING ON BLOODED HANDS AND KNEES, GAZED ABOUT HIMSELF DELIRIOUSLY...

WAS IT AN HALLUCINATION?
DID I JUST IMAGINE--
WHAT'S THIS? TRACKS!
GOD, IT'S AHEAD
OF ME!

WITH A STRENGTH BORN OF MADNESS, PETER PUSHED UP AND HOBBLING AFTER THE GRISLY TRAIL LEFT BY THE THING. MILES LATER HE FOUND IT, TRUDGING RELENTLESSLY ON, FILLING THE ACRID AIR WITH ITS STENCH...

IT HASN'T REACHED
THE OASIS YET!

THE LAST OF HIS
WILL FADING, PETER
SCRAMBLED CRAZILY
ACROSS THE BURNING
SAND, PASSED THE
GRINNING HORROR,
AND FELL HEADLONG
INTO THE RELIEF-
GIVING POOL...

SCOOPING FRANTICALLY WITH TORN FINGERS HE FILLED HIS ACHING STOMACH WITH THE COOLING LIQUID UNTIL HIS GUTS BURNED AND LUNGS BEGGED FOR AIR...THEN HE LAY GIGGLING QUIETLY...

HEH-HEH-HEH!

THERE WAS A NOISE BEHIND HIM, SHUFFLING OF DRY DECAYED FEET. PETER TURNED IN TIME TO SEE THE CORPSE OF HIS UNCLE TOPPLE INTO THE OASIS...

HA-HA! I WON,
YOU BLOATED HORROR!
I'VE HAD MY DRINK
ALREADY...HEH-HEH...
I BEAT YOU!

REVIVED NOW, FLUSHED WITH VICTORY, PETER WALKED ON UNSTEADY LEGS TO THE SHADE OF THE TENT AND THREW OPEN THE FLAP. IT TOOK A MOMENT FOR HIS EYES TO ADJUST THEMSELVES TO THE DARKNESS WITHIN, THEN HE ENTERED...

WITH SHAKING FINGERS HE WITHDREW THE SHEATH OF PAPERS FROM THE OLD MAN'S JACKET AND OPENED IT...

AT LAST...
ALL MINE!!!

WHA...THIS
ISN'T A WILL...
IT'S A MEDICAL
REPORT!

LAVERNE RESEARCH

MR. FELIX TOWNSEND
428 CHIPAWA LANE
PHOENIX, ARIZONA

DEAR MR. TOWNSEND:

THIS IS TO CONFIRM EARLIER PROGNOSIS OF
YOUR CONDITION. AFTER EXTENSIVE TESTS
OUR FINDING INDICATE MARKED EVIDENCE
HANSSEN'S DISEASE WHICH YOU CONTRA
SOME MONTHS AGO

LEPROSY!
HIS CANTEEN!
I...I DRANK
FROM HIS--

-- C... CANTEEN...

AGGH-H-HH!

ACM
LOTION

The END

Let the Dreamer Beware



SOME PEOPLE ARE CURSED
WITH LEPROSY...

HE IS PAYING
BITTERLY FOR
THE SINS OF
A HUNDRED
REINCARNATIONS!

I BEG
YOU...
ALMS...

KEEP
AWAY!

IT IS WHISPERED THAT A
CERTAIN UNFORTUNATE MAN
EXISTS WHO IS CURSED BY
HAVING BEEN BORN WITH
HORNS...

DO YOU STILL
LOVE ME, NOW
THAT YOU KNOW
MY SECRET?

GET OUT
OF MY SIGHT
FOREVER, YOU--YOU
SPAWN OF SATAN!

NOW MEET ALEX NIMBO WHO IS
AFFLICTED WITH ONE OF THE MOST
LOATHSOME MALADIES THAT EVER
BESET MORTAL MAN--A LAZY,
NAGGING WIFE...

IF YOU THINK I'M
GOING TO DO HOUSE-
WORK FOR A NOBODY
LIKE YOU, YOU'RE CRAZY!
SCRAPE THAT FLOOR
AND GIVE IT **THREE**
COATS OF VARNISH!

VILE, SOUR-
MOLTHED
SLAVE-
DRIVER!

OFTEN WHEN ALEX CAME HOME LATE FROM
HIS STRENUOUS JOB AT THE PAPER MILL...

YOU MEAN, I'M
NOT GOING TO HAVE
A **HOT** MEAL?

YOU CAN HEAT
THAT CAN OF
SARDINES FOR
ALL I CARE!

YOU GOT HANDS!
OPEN THE CAN!
YOU GOT TEETH?
EAT WHAT'S IN IT!

AND WHEN ALEX SWALLOWS HIS PRIDE AND SEEKS EVEN
A CRUMB OF AFFECTION...

I'M A MAN WITH NORMAL
PHYSIOLOGICAL URGES, AND
I WANT...UH...

THIS IS WHAT
YOU'LL GET...

FLORENCE, I CAN'T
GO ON LIKE THIS
MUCH LONGER!

MAYBE IT WOULD
BE BETTER FOR
BOTH OF US TO
GET A DIVORCE!

YOU AIN'T GETTIN'
NO DIVORCE
OUTTA ME, MISTER!
YOU EARN TOO
LITTLE TO PAY
MUCH ALIMONY!

AND IF YOU
THINK I'M
GONNA WORK
TO SUPPORT
MYSELF WHEN
I GOT YOU
WHERE I WANT
YOU, YOU'RE CRAZY!

SPIT!

IF YOU DARE MENTION **DIVORCE** TO ME AGAIN, I'LL HAVE ONE OF MY BROTHERS BREAK EVERY BONE IN YOUR STUPID BODY!

AND YOU KNOW WHICH BROTHER I MEAN--PHIL, WHO JUST GOT OUT OF THE ASYLUM!

PHIL LIKES... **HURTING PEOPLE!**... I--CAN'T--STAND--PAIN...

SLEEP IS SLOW IN COMING TO THE TRAPPED, EMBITTERED HUMAN BEING KNOWN AS ALEX NIMBO...

NO WAY OUT! I'M THE LEGAL PRISONER OF A **LEECH!**

FLORENCE IS SUCKING AWAY ANY CHANCE FOR HAPPINESS I MIGHT HAVE HAD!

I'M HUMAN! I HAVE A RIGHT TO **REAL LOVE**...

IF ONLY I COULD FIND IT...

SOMEWHERE... ANYWHERE... I'D...

I'D SACRIFICE ANYTHING...

TO...GET IT...

AS BODILY WEARINESS FORCES HIS RESENTMENTS TO DWINDLE, ONLY ALEX'S INTENSE ROMANTIC YEARNINGS REMAIN, AS SLEEP...TAKES...OVER...

A MINI-INSTANT LATER, ALEX IS AFLOAT AMIDST AN EPHEMERAL WORLD OF SENSE-DAZZLING BEAUTY...

EVERYWHERE... ABOUT ME--LOVELINESS THAT THRILLS AND INSPIRES...

PERMEATING ALL... A SUBTLE, SUBLINE FRAGRANCE THAT ENCHANTS AND EXPANDS THE SENSES! SOOTHING AWAY ALL PSYCHO-NEUROTIC SYMPTOMS...

MY HEART--MY SOUL--ARE EXPERIENCING AN ALMOST **EXPLOSIVE JOY!**

BORN ALONG BY A MYSTICALLY VIBRANT CURRENT, ALEX RAPTLY OBSERVES MORE DELIGHTS...

EVERYONE IS **RADIANTLY ATTRACTIVE!** I SENSE THESE BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE **WANT** ME HERE WITH **THEM!**

AND AS THE STRANGE CURRENT WHISKS ALEX ALONG EVER-MORE-SWIFTLY...

I SENSE I'M BEING TRANSPORTED SOMEWHERE FOR SOME VERY SPECIAL PURPOSE!

EVEN IF THIS IS ONLY A DREAM... I LOVE EVERY MARVELOUS INSTANT OF IT! BUT WHERE AM I GOING? AND FOR WHAT PURPOSE?

ABRUPTLY, ALEX'S FORM HALTS HOVERING BEFORE A GIANTIC, EXOTIC BEAUTY...

I WHO AM KNOWN AS **DILEETH** HAVE BEEN WAITING LONG FOR YOU, ALEX NIMBO! I KNOW THE FULL POWER AND MAGNIFICENCE WHICH HAS BEEN REPPRESSED WITHIN YOU TOO LONG!

AND AS THE EXPANDED ALEX SOON EQUALS THE GIANTNESS IN STATURE... I HAVE HUNGRED... YEARNED... FOR YOU FOR UNTOLD ETERNITIES!

I LOVE YOU, ALEX! SUPREMELY! TOTALLY!

NO MORE QUESTIONS! HERE IN THIS EXTRA-DIMENSIONAL PLANE... YOU AND I SHARE A CHARISMATIC LOVE SO RARE... SO INFINITE... THAT WE WILL BE THE ENVY OF THE DIMENSIONAL DEITIES THEMSELVES!

YES, **DILEETH**... YES!!

I'M... ENLARGING!

BUT WHY ME? THERE ARE SO MANY MEN IN THIS... ER... DREAM WORLD HANDSOMER THAN ME!

THEN THE VIBRATORY CURRENT WHICH HAD BRIEFLY DWINDLED, RESUMES ITS INTENSITY AND SNATCHES ALEX AWAY...

HELP ME REMAIN HERE! I BEG YOU, **DILEETH**!

NAME THE PRICE...

BUT, IF I MURDER HER, THE LAW OF MEN WILL EXECUTE ME FOR THE CRIME!

NO! NO! I'M BEING TAKEN AWAY FROM YOU! I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE YOU EVER!

YOU CAN RETURN, FOR TIME WITHOUT END, IF YOU DARE PAY THE PRICE...

THE PRICE IS ABSURDLY SMALL! KILL THE FOUL-MOUTHED HARRIDAN, YOUR WIFE, FLORENCE!

NOT SO, BE-LOVED! ONCE THE DEED IS DONE... JUST DOZE OFF... AND YOU SHALL BE TRANSPORTED BACK TO THIS DO-MAIN TO THE WAITING ARMS OF **DILEETH**!

I'LL DO IT!!

A SPIT-INSTANT AFTERWARD, ALEX OPENS HIS EYES TO THE ACCOMPANIMENT OF A HATEFULLY SHRIEKING VOICE...

SERVE ME BREAKFAST IN BED YOU DUMBHEAD YOU!

AND USE THAT DEODORANT I MADE YOU BUY! YOU STINK!

FOR ONCE, ALEX ENJOYS OBEYING ONE OF FLORENCE'S COMMANDS...

UGH! WHAT MAKES THIS GARBAGE TASTE SO AWFUL!

QUITE POSSIBLY, THE RAT-POISON I ADDED...

!GASP! I'LL TELL THE POLICE EVERYTHING--ON THE PHONE! YOU'LL BURN FOR THIS, YOU LOUSY ROTTEN... MURDERER... AAARGHH...

SHE'LL BE DEAD QUICKLY!

NO FUSS, NO WORRY, ABOUT WHAT THE LAW WOULD DO TO ME! AFTER I SWALLOW A FEW OF THESE SLEEPING PILLS...

I'LL BE IN THAT GLORIOUS DREAM-WORLD... REUNITED WITH DEAR LILEETH FOREVER AND EVER AND EVER...

THE PILLS DOWNED, NIMBO'S TRANSITION TO THE SLUMBER-DIMENSION OCCURS WITH STARTLING ABRUPTNESS...

WHY ARE THEY SMILING AT ME SO PECULIARLY? LIKE CATS-- AT A MOUSE?!

THUDD!

S--SUDDENLY EVERYTHING IS CHANGING! THE ATTRACTIVE STRUCTURES ARE DEGENERATING INTO DECAYING, MOULDY, SLIME-DRENCHED RUINS! THE INCREDIBLY HANDSOME PEOPLE...

ARE BEING ALTERED INTO UNHOLY MONSTROSITIES!

AND DILEETH! SHE'S B-BEING TRANSFORMED INTO A REPUSIVELY GHASTLY OLD CRONE!

COME CLOSER, LOVERBOY! KISS MY DECAYING LIPS BEFORE I TASTE HEE-HEE--YOUR JUGULAR VEIN!

GREEE-YAAH! THEY'RE DEMONS WHO DISGUISED THEMSELVES INTO LOOKING BEAUTIFUL...

...TO TRICK ME INTO DOING THEIR EVIL WILL!

I-I-V'E GOT TO GET OUT OF THIS DREAM-WORLD OF HORROR, BACK TO THE NORMAL WORLD OF THE LIVING!



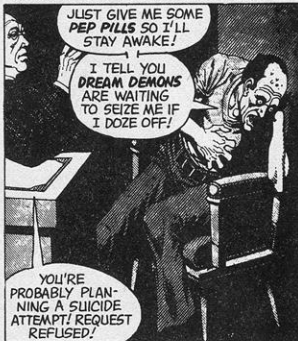
ALEX'S AWAKENING WAS ACCOMPANIED BY AN EQUALLY RAPID IMPRISONMENT!



BUT WITH THE ARRIVAL OF NIGHTFALL, ALEX'S COMPOSURE CRACKS...



ALEX'S CONTINUED CLAMOR EARNS HIM A SESSION WITH THE PRISON DOCTOR...



PRESENTLY
LOCKED UP
AGAIN...

THERE ARE
INDESCRIBABLE
HORRORS LURK-
ING IN THE
DREAM DIMENSION,
YOU DAMNED
SWINE!

I NEED
COFFEE
TO STAY
AWAKE!

THEY'RE
IGNORING
ME! THE
RATS!

NIMBO'S FRENZIED EFFORT TO REMAIN
AWAKE IS A LOSING BATTLE! HIS BLOOD-
SHOT, WEARIED EYELIDS KEEP DROOP-
ING LOWER...AND LOWER YET...

RESISTANCE...
DWINDLING--SLEEP
--CREEPING IN--
WHILE DEMONS
WAIT...

ABRUPTLY, ALEX IS AGAIN
IN THE REALM OF THE
ABOMINABLE NIGHTMARE...

TH-THE NAUSEATING
EXCRESCENCES...
SLITHERING YAMMER-
INGLY IN AT ME!

HE IS
OURS!

LOVER BOY DOES
NOT SEEM PLEASED
TO SEE HIS
ADORED...HEE-HEE-
HEE...**DILEETH!**

INTO THE **POOL**
WITH THE FOOL!

SONS OF
CORRUPTION!
YOU **TRICKED**
ME INTO THIS
FATE!

HUR HUR
LISTEN TO THE
WHINING MURDERER!
A TYPICAL HOMO
SAPIENS
RETROGRADE!

INTO THE **ACID**
POOL WITH THE
CARRION!

ACID?

NEXT MORNING, IN THE CELL OF
PRISONER ALEX NIMBO...

THIS IS NUTS!
THERE'S NOTHING
HERE BUT THAT
SKELETON! IT'S
GOT NO CLOTHING
...NO FLESH...

AND THAT EVIL,
ACRID ODOR FROM
THE SKELETON
SMELLS EXACTLY
LIKE...

ACID!

YUUUUURCH!

END



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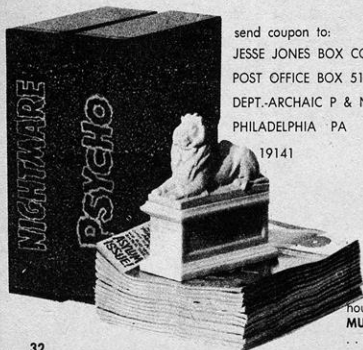
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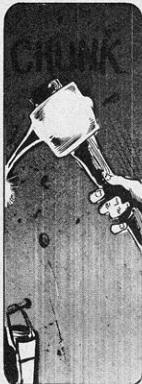
THE STEEL GATE SLAMS SHUT AND THE TINKLING LAUGHTER OF THE KEYS FADES WITH THE RECEPING LIGHT! YET, THERE IS NO FEAR OR REMORSE ON THE SILENT, MIRTHLESSLY SMILING COUNTENANCE OF THE INFAMOUS BARON! YOU SEE, HE HAS INSURED HIS SAFETY WITH AN UNEXPECTEDLY IRONIC MEANS OF...

ESCAPE

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY DENNIS FUJITAKE



THERE ARE STILL THOSE WHO CAN BE HAD FOR GOLD AND IT IS WITH THEM I WILL ESCAPE! AND...



A METHODICAL CHUNK, CHUNK, CHUNK.
REVERBERATES IN THE MUSTY DUNGEON
THRU THE NIGHT UNTIL ...

CHUNK CHUNK CHUNK

MMPH! DIRT... THEY'RE NEARLY
THROUGH! HAH! *VENGEANCE*
WILL SOON BE *MINE!*

HURRY, YOU
FOOLS, *HURRY!*
HA, HA, HA, HA!

WHAT JUSTICE!
THEY NEVER EVEN
SUSPECTED! HA,
HA, HA, CHORTLE!
JUSTICE!

SHOOK

HA, HA, HA!
MY REVENGE
WILL BE TRULY
SWEET
JUSTICE! *MY*
JUSTICE
WILL BE MET!

HA, HA, HA, AND
NOW... NO... GOD,
NO... URK!

CHUNK

ME, LORD?
ME, LORD?

WHENCE STALKED THE WEREWOLF

WRITTEN BY LEN BROWN ILLUSTRATED BY CARLOS GARZON

THE SHRILL SCREAM OF AN ANGRY WOMAN
PIERCED THE CHILLY LONDON AIR! SURVIVAL OF
THE FITTEST WAS THE LAW ON THE SEAMY SIDE
OF THE CITY AND WITH THE THE WOMEN OF THE
NIGHT WERE AT ODDS!



THERE'S NO RESPONSE FROM THE
RIDER. NOT WISHING TO LOSE A
POTENTIAL CUSTOMER, THE YOUNG
WOMAN LEANS INTO THE CARRIAGE,
DISPLAYING MORE THAN A CASUAL
CHARM.





THE FRIGHTENED GIRL FLEES, HER PANIC DRIVES HER INTO A BLIND ALLEY!

NO! NO!
PLEASE! HAVE MERCY,
PLEASE! YAAA-AAHH!



1971! THE OFFICE OF DR. ALLAN BUND, WHOSE STARTLING NEW TECHNIQUES IN PSYCHO-THERAPY HAVE MADE HIM A MOST CONTROVERSIAL FIGURE.

AND I WATCHED TRIUMPHANTLY FROM INSIDE THE CARRIAGE, AS THE HORSE'S **HOOF**S MADE FAST WORK OF THE TRAMP!

INCREDIBLE STORY, DR. BUND! BUT SURELY IT'S SOME SORT OF **FABRICATION**!

FABRICATION? UNDER HYPNOSIS, DR. TRACY? WHAT YOU HEARD WAS A **TRUE** EVENT IN MY PATIENT'S LIFE!

...ONLY IT TOOK PLACE DURING A **PREVIOUS** LIFETIME...ONE IN WHICH HE LIVED IN ENGLAND ALMOST **100 YEARS** AGO!

HMM...IF ALL OF THIS **WERE** TRUE, YOU'VE GOT TO REALIZE THE **DANGER** TO HIM! IF HIS CONSCIOUS MIND WERE TO KNOW OF HIS PAST MONSTROUS EXISTENCE...



DANGER, TRACY? HOW INSIGNIFICANT THAT **DANGER** BECOMES WHEN YOU REALIZE THE WEALTH OF KNOWLEDGE THAT CAN BE GAINED BY THE PSYCHIATRIC COMMUNITY!



TRUE, BUT YOU **CAN'T FORGET** THIS POOR SOUL!



YOU USED TO TELL ME THAT THE INDIVIDUAL BEING WAS OF THE GREATEST IMPORTANCE IN THIS WORLD. NOW, YOU JUST **SCOFF** AT IT!

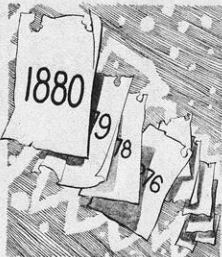
TRACY, MODERN SCIENCE STANDS WHERE IT IS IN 1971 BECAUSE OF SACRIFICES. THERE IS STILL ANOTHER SOUL TO SACRIFICE... SO WHAT!

ALONE WITH HIS SUBJECT, THE DOCTOR TRANSPORTS THE PATIENT BACK TO THE 19TH CENTURY AND LONDON...

...AND ONCE MORE THE SECRETS OF THE PAST ARE UNLOCKED!



EXCUSE ME, TRACY, I MUST GET BACK TO MY WORK. THERE IS SO MUCH TO DO!



VILLAGERS! THEY'VE TRACED THAT SLUT'S DEATH TO ME!

FIEND! OPEN THESE DOORS! WE'VE GOT A SCORE TO SETTLE UP!



EASY, JONATHAN! WE JUST CAME HERE TO TALK TO THE BLOKE. WE KNOW NOT FOR SURE THAT HE'S RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MURDERS!...ONLY THE HEARSAY OF SOME TRAMP!



THAT DEVIL IS OF NO MIND TO SHOW ANY HOSPITALITY!

FETCH SOME LARGE TIMBERS! WE'VE GOT TO GET THROUGH THESE DOORS, 'FORE HE DOES US IN!

THE ATTACK BY THE CREATURE THROWS THE CITIZENS INTO A RAGE AND INCREASES THEIR DETERMINATION.



HURRY, MAN, 'FORE HE TRIES SOME NEW TRICKS!

WE'LL TEAR DOWN THIS PLACE, BUT WE'LL GET HIM!

AYE, AND SEND HIS SOUL STRAIGHT TO HELL!

AS THE PATIENT RELATES HIS AGONIZING STORY, RELIVING THE NIGHTMARE STARTLES HIM OUT OF HIS TRANCE.



NO--NO!

EASY! A LITTLE OF THIS SHOULD RELAX YOU!



I--I DON'T KNOW
IF I CAN GO **ON**,
DOCTOR. B--BEEN
HAVING DREAMS...
**TERRIBLE
DREAMS!**

**NONSENSE!
YOU'VE BEEN
DOING SPLENDID!
LIE STILL... AND
RELAX...RELAX...**


THE UNWILLING SUBJECT STARTS TO FALL
BACK INTO A RESTLESS SLEEP WHEN...



**BUND, YOU
MUST STOP
THIS MAD-
NESS!**


**I AM CONDUCTING
A HIGHLY SENSITIVE
EXPERIMENT. YOU
MUST LEAVE AT
ONCE!**

**I HAVE NO CHOICE...
BUT, I'LL BE BACK
AND SEE TO IT THAT
THIS IS STOPPED...**



**THAT MEDDLING
FOOL! I'LL HAVE
TO COMPLETE MY
WORK EVEN
FASTER NOW!**

**HE STANDS
TO RUIN EVERY-
THING!**



**GO BACK IN TIME!
WATCH FOR YOUR
CASTLE...IT HAS BEEN
INVADED BY AN ANGRY
MOB!...TELL ME!**

THOUGH HE TRIES TO RESIST THE
SUGGESTION, THE SUBJECT LOSES HIS
FIGHT AND ONCE MORE LOOKS BACK
UPON HIS TORTURED PAST.



**HE KILLED
MY POOR
DAUGHTER!
SHE WAS AN
ANGEL!**

**AYE, MA'AM!
OLD BLAKE WILL
FIX IT. THERE'S A
BULLET OF SILVER
IN THIS RIFLE. THAT'S
THE ONLY THING WHICH
WILL STOP THE LIKES
OF HIM!**



I'LL FEEL **FOOLISH** IF IT'S A FALSE ALARM, OFFICER! BUT DR. BUND HASN'T ANSWERED HIS TELEPHONE FOR THE PAST THREE DAYS!

WELL, HE COULD HAVE LEFT TOWN!

NO, NOT HIM. HE WAS TOO INVOLVED IN A PROJECT TO GO AT THIS TIME!

PSYCHO

THAT **SCRATCHING** SOUND...IT SOUNDS LIKE AN ANIMAL! WHAT DO YOU THINK IT *IS*?

I'M ONLY AFRAID TO GUESS!

THE TWO MEN ENTER DR. BUND'S PRIVATE OFFICE, UNPREPARED FOR THE SCENE OF HORROR THAT MEETS THEIR EYES...

GOOD LORD!

GULP!...BUND'S EXPERIMENTS!...I WARNED HIM!...HE PRESSED ON AND ON AND LOOK...LOOK WHAT HE HAS DONE...AND LOOK AT THAT POOR MAD FOOL!

AND THEN...

MAD! OH, NO, I'M NOT MAD, MY FRIENDS! JUST A LITTLE **HUNGRY!**

The
END

VITAL INFORMATION SECURED, UNDERCOVER AGENT GEORGE MARSH STALKED DOWN THE RAIN-SLICK PAVEMENTS OF THE CITY JUNGLE, INTENT ON COMPLETING THE LAST STEP OF HIS ASSIGNMENT...

AS MARSH BEGAN TO CROSS THE WET STREET, A PARKED CAR OMINOUSLY FLASHED ON ITS HEADLIGHTS--UNNOTICED BY THE PREOCCUPIED AGENT...

THE CAR ROARED TO METALLIC LIFE, AND LURCHED FROM THE CURB...

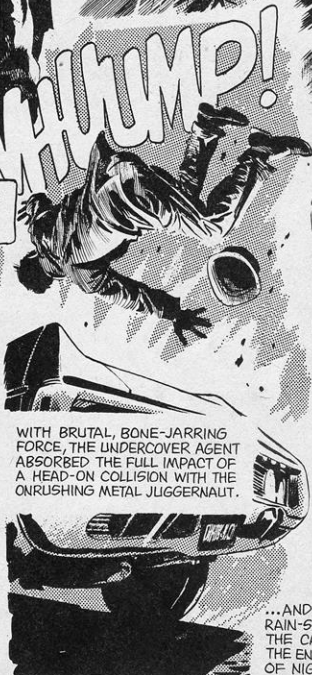
NOW THAT I KNOW A LARGE SHIPMENT OF DANGEROUS NARCOTICS IS DUE TO ARRIVE TOMORROW, THE ONLY PIECE REMAINING TO THE PUZZLE IS TO FIND OUT **WHERE...** AND MY ANONYMOUS CONFIDANT SHOULD BE ABLE TO TELL ME **THAT!**

I TOLD HIM TO MEET ME ABOUT THREE BLOCKS AWAY! STILL GOT FIFTEEN MINUTES--PLENTY OF TIME. I JUST HOPE HE **SHOWS UP** SO THIS DOPE RING CAN BE **SMASHED** ONCE AND FOR ALL!



...STRAIGHT FOR THE HUMAN TARGET PINPOINTED BY THE GLARING BEAMS OF ITS HEADLIGHTS!

GOOD LORD! THAT CAR...



WITH BRUTAL, BONE-JARRING FORCE, THE UNDERCOVER AGENT ABSORBED THE FULL IMPACT OF A HEAD-ON COLLISION WITH THE ONRUSHING METAL JUGGERNAUT.



...AND CRUMPLED TO THE RAIN-SWEPT PAVEMENT AS THE CAR SPED OFF INTO THE ENVELOPING BLACKNESS OF NIGHT.

END OF CHAPTER THREE, EH, MR. DENNING? WELL, I LIKE IT! WHY NOT FINISH IT AND IF THE REST IS AS GOOD AS THE FIRST THREE CHAPTERS, I THINK WE CAN USE IT--FLAT RATE OF THREE THOUSAND PLUS STANDARD ROYALTIES. VERY VIVID STUFF SO FAR, MR. DENNING! AMAZING WHAT YOU CAN DO WITH WORDS--I GUESS IT'S THE...

POWER of the PEN!

THANK YOU, MR. CROWLEY! GLAD YOU LIKED IT. I'LL START WORK ON THE REST TOMORROW-- SHOULD BE DONE IN THREE OR FOUR MONTHS, FOLLOWING THE OUTLINE I GAVE YOU ALONG WITH THOSE THREE-SAMPLE CHAPTERS!



TERRIFIC! IF ONLY IT WAS THIS EASY TO SELL A BOOK EVERY TIME! I'M GOING TO GO STRAIGHT HOME AND PHONE GEORGE ABOUT THE GOOD NEWS!

THAT'LL BE FINE! YOU'LL BE RECEIVING AN ADVANCE IN THE MAIL NEXT WEEK OR SO!

THANK YOU, SIR. GOOD AFTERNOON.



A HECTIC CAB RIDE THROUGH THE CITY'S LATE AFTERNOON TRAFFIC SNARL FINALLY BRINGS JEFF DENNING TO HIS MODEST APARTMENT...

WAIT'LL GEORGE HEARS I USED HIS NAME FOR THE MAIN CHARACTER IN A CRIME NOVEL WHICH HAS JUST BEEN SOLD!

I THINK HALF THE FUN OF WRITING IS INJECTING ALL THE "IN" JOKES AND USING FRIENDS AS CHARACTERS IN BIZARRE SITUATIONS!

BRING!
BRING!

HMMM... GUESS GEORGE ISN'T HOME. IT'S ODD THAT HE ISN'T--HIS WIFE USUALLY HAS DINNER PREPARED BY THIS TIME. OH WELL, I THINK I'LL GET TO WORK ON THE NEXT CHAPTER...

LET'S SEE...CHAPTER FOUR--"DEATH'S DOORWAY. GEORGE MARSH GRADUALLY AWOKE THROUGH A MISTY HAZE OF DULLED PAIN TO FIND HIMSELF HELPLESSLY CONFINED TO A HOSPITAL BED."

"ELUSIVE IMAGES DANCED BEFORE HIS UNFOCUSED VISION--THE IMAGES OF HIS WIFE AND TWO GRIM DOCTORS."

HE'S IN BAD SHAPE, MRS. MARSH. I'M AFRAID I MUST BE FRANK--HE MAY NOT PULL THROUGH!

H-HE CAN'T...D-DIE! SOB! YOU MUST DO SOMETHING! SOMETHING TO MAKE HIM LIVE...

WE'VE DONE ALL WE CAN, MRS. MARSH. IT'S NOT UP TO US ANY MORE.

CLACK!
ACK! CLACK!

THROUGH THE CRIPPLING PAIN, MARSH THOUGHT DOGGEDLY OF ONLY ONE THING...

I'M SWORN TO SECRECY! IF ONLY I COULD TELL THEM-- TELL THEM I'M AN UNDERCOVER AGENT! IF I DIE, MY ENTIRE ASSIGNMENT WILL FAIL! IT'S BEING JEOPARDIZED FURTHER WITH EVERY MOMENT I REMAIN IN THIS BED...

OH, GEORGE, YOU CAN'T DIE! Y-YOU JUST CAN'T...

GUESS I'LL TRY TO GET GEORGE AGAIN--TELL HIM HE'S NEXT TO DEATH IN MY NOVEL! HA, HA! IT'S REALLY HARD TO IMAGINE GEORGE BEING AN UNDERCOVER AGENT, THOUGH!



YOU SAY HE'S DOWN AT MARTHA WASHINGTON HOSPITAL? I'LL GET RIGHT DOWN THERE, BONNIE! YOU JUST SIT TIGHT! I'M SURE EVERYTHING WILL TURN OUT OKAY.



H-HELLO? OH, HELLO, JEFF. NO, GEORGE ISN'T HERE--SOB!--JEFF, SOMETHING **TERRIBLE** HAS HAPPENED! GEORGE WAS STRUCK BY A HIT-AND-RUN DRIVER LAST NIGHT! I JUST GOT BACK FROM THE HOSPITAL-- THEY DON'T THINK HE'LL LIVE!



THIS IS **INCREDIBLE!** GEORGE MARSH, MY FRIEND, STRUCK DOWN BY A CAR ON THE SAME NIGHT I WROTE ABOUT GEORGE MARSH, THE CHARACTER IN MY STORY, BEING HIT! IT'S ALMOST **TOO MUCH** TO BE **COINCIDENCE!**

HASTILY, THE DISTRAUGHT WRITER TAXIS TO THE HOSPITAL...



AFTER
SECURING
PERMISSION
FROM THE
DOCTORS
TO SEE HIS
STRICKEN
FRIEND, JEFF
DENNING
STANDS AT
THE BEDSIDE,
WITNESS TO
AN UNCANNY
CONFESSION...

J-JEFF! THANK GOD YOU'RE HERE!
I-I MUST T-TELL YOU SOMETHING
BEFORE I GO... THEY SAY I'M GONNA
DIE--AND IF I DO, A DANGEROUS
NARCOTICS RING WILL CONTINUE TO
THRIVE OFF THE MONEY OF
DESPERATELY HOPELESS PEOPLE!

WHAT??! GEORGE,
WHAT ARE YOU
SAYING? ARE YOU
DELIRIOUS?

NO, JEFF! I KNOW WHAT
I'M SAYING! I-I'M AN
UNDERCOVER AGENT...
YOU'VE GOT TO CONTACT
MY SUPERIORS--HAVE
THEM COME HERE--OR
MY DEATH WILL BE
IN VAIN!

THIS IS UNBELIEVABLE! EVERYTHING
I'VE WRITTEN ABOUT MY CHARACTER
WITH GEORGE'S NAME HAS ACTUALLY
HAPPENED TO GEORGE! GOTTA GET
HOME FAST!

ALL RIGHT, GEORGE,
I'LL DO IT. DON'T
YOU WORRY.

THE LIFE
OF HIS BEST
FRIEND
HANGING IN
THE BALANCE,
JEFF DENNING
RETURNS TO
HIS DEPART-
MENT AND
THE ONLY
APPARENT
MEANS OF
SALVATION
FOR GEORGE
MARSH...

IF MY WRITING SOMEHOW GOT
GEORGE INTO THIS FIX, PERHAPS
IT'S THE ONLY WAY TO GET HIM
OUT! EVEN THOUGH I DON'T
SEE HOW IT CAN POSSIBLY
WORK, I'VE GOT TO TRY IT!

FEVERISHLY, THE FRANTIC WRITER RESUMES HIS NOVEL
WITH AN EFFORT NEVER BEFORE EXPENDED ON ANY OF
HIS OTHER WORKS...

I LEFT OFF WITH THE SCENE
IN THE HOSPITAL ROOM...SO, HERE GOES--AND
IT'D BETTER WORK! WHO CAN SAY WHAT IT WAS?
THE SHEER DETERMINATION OF THE TOUGH AGENT
--THE STUBBORN WILL TO LIVE--OR A MIRACLE?
BUT, WHATEVER, GEORGE MARSH FELT THE
ROILING MAELSTROM OF CONFUSION LIFT FROM
HIS MIND AS A FOG ROLLS OFF THE OCEAN...

...HIS PAIN SUBSIDED, AND HE
KNEW HE WOULD **LIVE...**



NOW, IF MY HUNCH IS RIGHT, I CAN
END THIS WHOLE BUSINESS WITH ONE
SENTENCE! LET'S SEE...HOWEVER,
THE INJURIES SUSTAINED IN MARSH'S
NEAR-FATAL ACCIDENT RESULTED IN
A CASE OF PARTIAL AMNESIA, PRE-
VENTING HIM FROM REMEMBERING
ANYTHING ABOUT HIS ROLE AS AN
UNDERCOVER AGENT!



THAT SHOULD DO IT--I
HOPE! I STILL CAN'T
BRING MYSELF TO BELIEVE
THAT ALL THIS IS REALLY
...**THE PHONE!**



NOW TO GET DOWN
TO THE HOSPITAL AND
SEE IF THAT WORKED
ALSO!



JEFF? THIS IS
BONNIE! THE HOSPITAL
JUST PHONED WITH
THE MOST **WONDERFUL**
NEWS! THE DOCTORS
CAN'T UNDERSTAND
HOW OR WHY, BUT
GEORGE IS GOING
TO **LIVE!**



OH BONNIE, WHAT
MARVELOUS **UNEXPECTED**
NEWS! I TOLD YOU EVERY-
THING WAS GOING TO
BE ALL RIGHT!

WELL, GEORGE, GLAD
TO SEE YOU'RE
FEELING BETTER! I...
UH...**CONTACTED**
THEM AS YOU ASKED
ME TO.

CONTACTED
THEM?
CONTACTED **WHO,**
JEFF? WHAT ARE
YOU TALKING
ABOUT?



GOOD! HE DOESN'T REMEMBER A THING ABOUT HIS "OTHER" LIFE! NOW ALL I HAVE TO DO IS CHANGE THE NAME OF MY CHARACTER TO A FICTITIOUS ONE AND I CAN FINISH THE BOOK!

UH, OUR FRIENDS, GEORGE! YOU ASKED ME TO CONTACT OUR FRIENDS AND TELL THEM ABOUT YOUR ACCIDENT!

OH, I *DID*? MUST'VE BEEN DELIRIOUS, JEFF. I DON'T SEEM TO REMEMBER--BUT THAT DOESN'T MATTER! THE IMPORTANT THING IS THAT THE DOCTORS SAY I CAN LEAVE TOMORROW!



AS A RELIEVED JEFF DENNING RETURNS TO HIS APARTMENT...

WELL, I SURE AM GLAD THAT'S OVER WITH! THE ONLY WAY I CAN FIGURE IT IS THAT THIS WHOLE BUSINESS HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE TYPEWRITER!

...AND JUST SO NOTHING ELSE LIKE THIS EVER HAPPENS AGAIN--



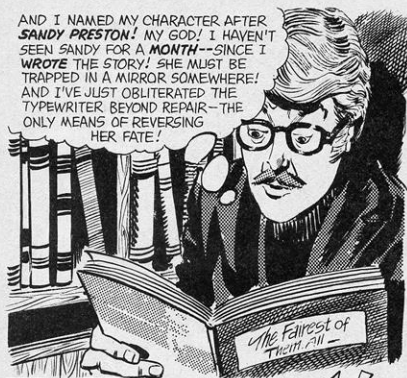
THAT OUGHT TO DO IT! THIS IS ONE TYPEWRITER THAT'LL NEVER WORK AGAIN!



GOOD LORD! I JUST REMEMBERED A FANTASY STORY I WROTE ABOUT A MONTH AGO CALLED "THE FAIREST IN THEM ALL" IN WHICH A BEAUTIFUL GIRL IS IMPRISONED IN A MIRROR THROUGHOUT ETERNITY!



AND I NAMED MY CHARACTER AFTER **SANDY PRESTON!** MY GOD! I HAVEN'T SEEN SANDY FOR A MONTH--SINCE I **WROTE** THE STORY! SHE MUST BE TRAPPED IN A MIRROR SOMEWHERE! AND I'VE JUST OBLITERATED THE TYPEWRITER BEYOND REPAIR--THE ONLY MEANS OF REVERSING HER FATE!



DAWNING REALIZATION SERVES TO FIRE THE WRITER INTO IMMEDIATE ACTION, AND ADDS HASTY IMPETUS TO HIS RESOLVE...



REACHING THE GIRL'S EAST SIDE APARTMENT, DENNING FINDS...

NO ANSWER! JUST AS I THOUGHT! WELL, THERE'S ONLY ONE TO **DO--**



THU-WAGKK



A MONTH OF ACCUMULATED DUST COATS THE APARTMENT WITH STALE MUSTINESS, AN ATMOSPHERE WHICH COLDLY ATTESTS TO THE UTTER DESERTION OF THE PLACE...

SANDY? SANDY! ARE YOU HERE, SANDY?



THAT MIRROR! NO, IT CAN'T BE! BUT...BUT IT'S TRUE! SANDY IS...

...A DESERTION WHICH EXTENDS TO EVERY CORNER OF THE APARTMENT ... SAVE ONE!



...IMPRISONED IN THIS MIRROR! GOOD LORD! WHY DID I SMASH THAT TYPE-WRITER BEYOND REPAIR?!



EVEN AS THE SHOCKED WRITER LAMENTS HIS EARLIER ACTION, A STRANGE INEXPLICABLE FORCE SEIZES HIM AND DRAWS HIM INEXORABLY, TOWARDS THE POSSESSIVE MIRROR...

SEEMINGLY WITH SENTIMENTAL MALICE, THE MYSTERIOUS MAGNETIC POWER SUCKS HIM CLOSER AND STILL CLOSER ...UNTIL THE SUPERNATURAL LOOKING GLASS BEGINS TO ENVELOPE HIM...

W-WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME? I'M BEING FORCED TO MOVE TOWARDS THE MIRROR--CAN'T CONTROL MYSELF ...CAN'T STOP!



OH, NO! I FORGOT ABOUT THE ENDING TO THAT STORY I WROTE! THE ENDING THAT SAYS...

... anyone who should attempt to rescue the cursed girl shall join her similarly in her fate of eternal imprisonment within the mirror.

The End

AND ELSEWHERE, FIVE MONTHS LATER...

WHERE IS THAT DENNING? HE'S A MONTH OVERDUE ALREADY! WHY CAN'T I EVER FIND A WRITER WHO ISN'T TOO BUSY PARTYYING ALL THE TIME TO MEET A DEADLINE!



End

WRITTEN BY ALAN HEWETSON

ILLUSTRATED BY TOM SUTTON

DEEP IN THE BOWELS OF THE EARTH IS THE FIENDISH
INFERNAL ABYSS KNOWN AS... **HELL!** ETERNALLY MAN
HAS LIVED IN FEAR OF DAMNATION... THAT HIS SOUL MAY
BE CAST INTO EVERLASTING TORMENT... AND ODOUS
PANDEMONIUM! OUR TALE TAKES YOU ON A
PERSONALLY GUIDED TOUR OF GROTTO OF **HELL**
ITSELF... FROM WHICH NONE HAVE EVER RETURNED...
SAVE FOR ONE... THE--

HAG OF THE BLOOD BASKET!

FRANCE, THE YEAR 1793...IN THE MIDST OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION...ONE OF THE GAUDEST BLOODBATHS IN HISTORY. A REVOLUTION OF THE "PEOPLE" WHERE PREJUDICE HAS ITS REVENGE IN KIND...WHERE MEN, WOMEN AND EVEN CHILDREN OF NOBLE BIRTH, ARE DRAGGED IN RICKETY, LUMBERING CARTS AFTER A MOCK TRIAL, TO THEIR DEATHS AT THE BLACK HAND OF THE MERCILESS...**GUILLOTINE!**

THE GUILLOTINE...GLEAMING IN THE BLOOD DRENCHED STREETS OF PARIS,CUTS THE WRITHING HEADS OF ITS OFT-INNOCENT VICTIMS. MINDLESS, HEADLESS BUT ONLY FOR A FEW SECONDS... THEN THE GHASTLY DISFIGURED HEADS ROLL INTO A CRIMSON RECEPTACLE...THE BLOODY HEAD-BASKET!





IN THAT TIME OF
PERSONAL VENDETTA...
WHEN MEN USED THE
REVOLUTION TO KILL
THEIR PERSONAL
ENEMIES, STARTS OUR
TALE...AN OLD WOMAN
IS FALSELY ACCUSED
OF BEING A ROYALIST...
IN REALITY SHE WAS
BUT A SIMPLE
PEASANT...THE
WOMAN WHO HELD
THE BLOOD BASKET!



WHY?

WHY AM I
HERE IN COURT? I
AM AN OLD WOMAN...
I HAVE DONE NOTHING
...I PLAY MY PART IN
THE REVOLUTION WELL
...TELL ME WHY?

REVOLTING OLD
HAG...YOUR
PRESENCE IS
AN INSULT!

THIS COURT
HAS NO PTY
ON YOU OR
YOUR VILE
KIND!

KIND?
...KIND OF
WHAT?

WHY DO
YOU INSULT
ME?

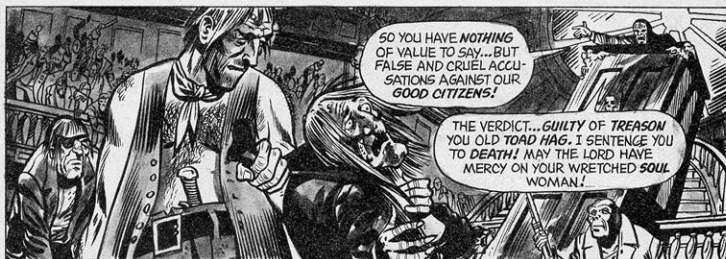
WHAT
HAVE
I EVER
DONE
WRONG?

SILENCE HAG!
DO NOT AFFRONT
JUSTICE AGAIN
WITH YOUR VILE
MOUTH...YOU HAVE
BEEN CHARGED
BY BROTHER BENET
OF CONSORTING
WITH THE ACCURSED
ARISTOCRACY...
SAY YOUR
DEFENSE!

...AND MAKE
IT BRIEF!

THAT'S INSANITY!
BROTHER BENET
HAS TRUMPED UP
HIS CHARGE...
MERELY TO GET
RID OF ME!

HE OWES ME
MUCH MONEY...
IF I'M DEAD HE
WON'T HAVE TO
PAY ME...I
SWEAR IT!

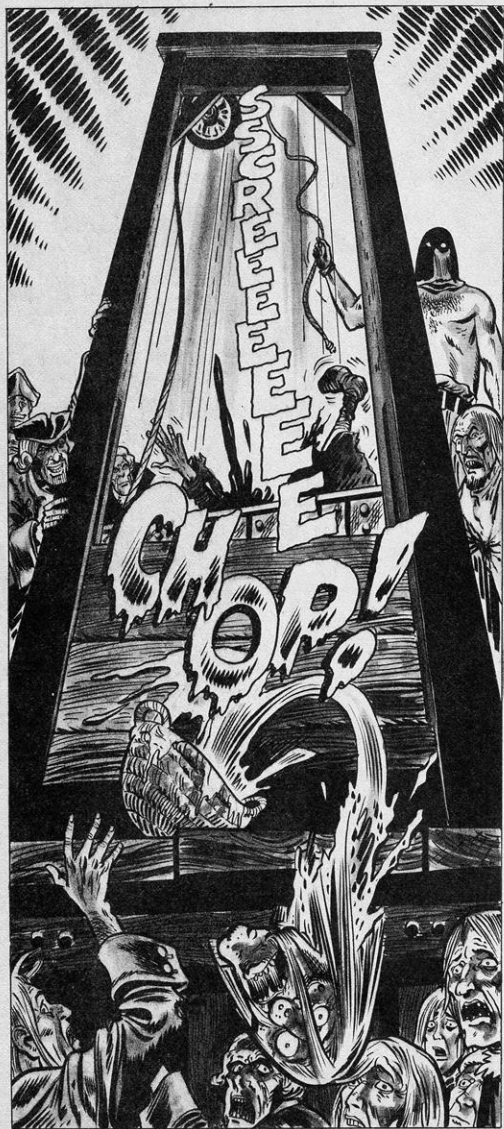


CERTAINLY NO MERCY FROM A COURT WITH POWER DEVOID OF SANITY...AND SHE IS CONDEMNED TO BE TAKEN THE FOLLOWING DAY TO THE WAITING CLUTCHES OF THE GUILLOTINE...MERCILESS AND CRUEL, UNHEARING AND UNCARING...A HIDEOUS LAMPOONER OF JUSTICE!

THE EXECUTIONER STANDS BEFORE THE CROWDS OF JEERING PEASANTS, HAND GRASPING TAUGHT THE ROPE THAT HOLDS READY THE BLADE...THE CONQUERING STEEL SHAFT THAT SEVERS ANY MAN'S LIFE!

THE CROWDS LEAR AT THE CONVICTED WHO LUMBER TO THE PLATFORM FROM BLOOD-DRENCHED CARTS... CRY SHOUTS OF INSULT AND SING SONGS OF FREEDOM... DELIRIOUS IN ANTICIPATION OF THE MACABRE SLAUGHTER THAT AWAITS THEM!





THE BLADE DROPS SUDDENLY... CUTTING THE EAR-PIERCING SCREAMS OF THE WRETCHED OLD WOMAN SPITTING HORRIBLE OBSCENITIES AT THOSE JEERING MANY WHO CONDEMNED HER TO DEATH! IN BUT A MOMENT THE UNCANNY FRENZY IS OVER, THE HEAD ROLLS, EYES POPPING FROM THEIR SOCKETS...AND THE GUTTER WELCOMES THE GROTESQUE CADAVER WITH BLOOD-SODDEN COBBLESTONES! THE TOAD HAG LIES DEAD AND DECAPITATED! THE CROWD IS HUSHED IN A MOMENT OF PRECLIMACTIC REFLECTION...



BUT DEATH COMES NOT EASILY. HER EYES REMAIN OPEN EVEN AS SHE LIES HELPLESS, IN PASSIVE AGONY AS THE FEET OF HER MURDERERS PASS HER BY...

SHE WATCHES IN TORTURE AS HER NOW LIMP AND LIFELESS FORM IS TOSSED LIKE GARBAGE FROM THE THRONE OF DEATH...AND WONDERS... PONDERS *WHY* THERE IS NOT THE NOTHINGNESS OF DEATH SHE EXPECTED...BUT A *LIFE* AFTER DEATH...THAT PERMITS HER TO SEE, TO HEAR, TO WONDER!

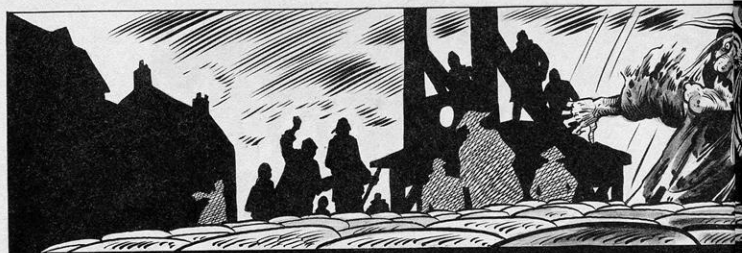


MISERY AND SHOCK MUDGLE TOGETHER IN THE TOAD HAG'S MIND...THE BODY (THAT WAS ONCE HER) SHUDDERS AND GROPEs FORWARD SEARCHING...SEARCHING FOR A HEAD. A MIND THAT THINKS, EYES THAT CAN SEE! THE HANDS FIND THEIR TARGET...AND PULL THE TEAR-PULSING HEAD BACK...BACK TO THE SHOULDERS WHERE IT RIVETS ITSELF MIRACULOUSLY...AND THE MESS THAT WAS LIVING DEATH NOW BECOMES...*AS ONE IN FORM...AND IN LIFE!*



WHAT GRIM IMPOSSIBILITY IS *THIS*... I AM ALIVE YET NO ONE SEES ME...NO ONE PAYS ANY ATTENTION THEY LOOK TO THE GUILLOTINE FOR THE NEXT *DEATH!*

IS THIS WHAT THEY CALL *AFTERLIFE?* I FEEL NO PAIN—NO AGONY—EXCEPT IN MY MIND!





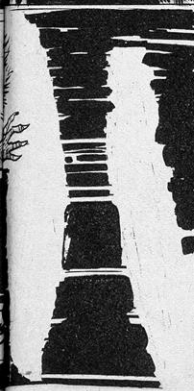
AND SOON YOU **SHALL** KNOW
WRETCHED OLD HAG, AS
YOU BEGIN YOUR **DESCENT...**
YOU **SINK** INTO THE VERY
GROUND ITSELF. YOU **GRASP**
FOR SUPPORT CLUTCHING
NOTHING BUT **AIR...** MEANING-
LESS **AIR...** AND STILL YOU
SINK...DOWN...DOWN... INTO
THE VERY **BOWELS** OF THE
EARTH!



THE EARTH **WELCOMES** YOU...
CUSHIONS YOUR **DESCENT**
AND CARESSES YOUR DECAY-
ING BODY IN **MOCKERY.**
YOU ARE CHOKING...AND
SUFFER...AND CLUTCH
YOUR THROAT **PLEADING**
FOR **AIR...** FOR YOU CANNOT
BREATHE...AND YET YOU
CANNOT DIE!



AND WHERE THE GROUND--
AND EARTH **END...** DEEP WITH-
IN THE WORLD'S VERY **CORE...**
YOU FALL THROUGH THE
NOTHINGNESS THAT SURROUNDS
YOU. GREAT MONSTROUS **BATS**
HOVER ABOUT AND, RUDELY
AWAKENED FROM THEIR
SLEEP OF AGES, CRASH BLINDLY
ABOUT YOUR HELPLESS FORM
NOW BATTERED AND BRUISED...



TARTARUS **WELCOMES**
YOU...MADAM! I
TRUST YOUR TRIP HAS
BEEN AS UNCOM-
FORTABLE AS WE
INTENDED IT BE!
I AM **VOGT...**
EXECUTIVE
ASSISTANT
TO HIS
MAJESTY
SATHANAS!
THIS, MADAME
...AS YOU MAY
HAVE
PRESUMED...
IS **HELL!**



AND WHEN YOU **DO** STOP
FALLING...YOU ARE SUR-
ROUNDED BY **NOTHING!**
YOU SCREAM...AND NO
ONE HEARS YOU...SAVE
THE INCREDIBLE NIGHT-
BIRDS OF DEATH WHO
STIFLE THE VERY AIR YOU
NOW BREATHE...UNTIL
THERE APPEARS BEFORE
YOU A VILE HUNCHED
DWARF...CURIOUS AND
OBSCENE...WHO SILENCES
THE LOUD CLATTERING OF
WINGS AND YOUR CRIES...
AND YOU LISTEN!





THE GROTTO OF HELL!
GROTESQUE--HORRID--UNCANNY BEYOND MORTAL IMAGINATION...WHERE THE DEAD DWELL IN AN ETERNITY OF TORTURE AND ANGUISH... WHERE FREEDOM IS BANISHED...WHERE THE INDIVIDUAL IS BUT LITERALLY A NUMBER ON A CAGE... WHERE SATAN RULES WITH AN IRON FIST!



THE GROTTO OF HELL! WHERE TIME STANDS STILL AND YET REACHES OUT IN ALL DIRECTIONS...INTO THE DEEP AND MISTY AGES OF YESTERDAY...AND FAR INTO THE WAR RIDDEN UNKNOWN OF TOMORROW! IT IS UNBEARABLE FOR A WOMAN SO OLD, SO FRAIL...SHE FEELS AGONY IN THE LIFELESS HEART IN THE LIFELESS SPIRITUAL BODY! YET SHE CAN SAY NOTHING...**DO** NOTHING HERE...LESS IT BE SANCTIONED BY THE DEVIL HIMSELF!



BUT WAIT...THERE ARE NO PEOPLE...**NO PEOPLE!** WHERE CAN THEY BE? IS THIS NOT A CITY...OR IS IT EXACTLY WHAT IT APPEARS TO BE...SOME KIND OF INCREDIBLE CRYPT OF THE FORGOTTEN DEAD!

IN THE GRIME AND CAKED DUST OF HELL ITSELF SATAN HIMSELF IS UNSEEN...YET HE IS ALWAYS PRESENT...ALWAYS ON THE LIPS OF EVERY DESPERATE SOUL WHO INHABITS THIS ISLE OF DAMNATION! HE IS SERVED BY MANY ASSISTANTS WHO, CONTEMPTABLE EVEN TO THEIR OWN KIND ARE HIDEOUSLY DEFORMED DEVILISH ASSISTANTS WHO HAVE SWORN THEIR ALLEGIANCE TO HATE...TERROR... DESPOTISM AND FEAR. THE TOAD HAG HAS ALREADY MET ONE SUCH GAUNT EXCUSE FOR HUMANITY...HE WHO IS CALLED... **VOGT**...NOW SHE MEETS ANOTHER... THE HAGGARD **DRAKKOS!**



I'LL FOLLOW YOU **NOWHERE** UNTIL I FIND OUT MORE...UNTIL I HAVE AN **EXPLANATION!** WHAT IS THIS PLACE? ...WHERE ARE ALL THE PEOPLE...**TELL ME...PLEASE TELL ME!**



DRAKKOS... DENIZEN OF THE DEATH WORLD, EPITOME OF ABSOLUTE EVIL...LEADS THE BEWILDERED HAG TO HER **CAGE**...ONE IN THE MIDST OF **THOUSANDS** STACKED MILE HIGH LIKE SO MANY CARTONS IN A WAREHOUSE! THE EAR-PIERCING SHRIEKS AND CRIES OF HER FELLOWS DEAFENS HER... AND HER MISERY OVERTAKES THE NOW SUDDEN REALIZATION OF THE REALITY OF **DEATH**!



LIKE THE INFAMOUS INSTRUMENT OF MEDIEVAL TORTURE THIS UPDATED **SPIKE BOX** SERVES ITS MASTER FAR BETTER THAN ITS PREDECESSOR...FOR THIS COFFIN--CUSHIONED FROM EVERY ANGLE BY DEEP AND BITING FOUR INCH SPIKES--IS DESIGNED TO TORTURE THE **LIVING DEAD**...THOSE WHO CANNOT PRAY FOR DEATH... THOSE WHO CAN ONLY WAIT...AND ENDURE...THE **ETERNAL AGONY**!

TIME PASSES...SLOWLY...TEARS NOW FESTER SORES IN THE OPEN CUTS IN HER FLESH... TIME HAS NO MEANING, NO SUBSTANCE...THEN SHE IS PAID A VISIT...



WELL, WOMAN...THE TIME HAS FINALLY COME FOR YOUR...AUDIENCE!



SO CONFINED HAS SHE BEEN, SO RESTRICTED IN MOVEMENT TO ONLY AN INCH HERE...AN INCH THERE...THAT SHE CAN SCARCELY MOVE! HER BONES HAVE MOLDED INTO A FIXED POSITION, HER LEGS WILL HARDLY MOVE...AND SO HER NEW FOUND FREEDOM IS NOT A BLESSING... BUT A NIGHTMARE!



COME QUICKLY...DON'T STUMBLE! THE MASTER AWAITS...AND HIS TIME IS VALUABLE! IF WE ARE NOT PROMPT WE WILL BOTH SUFFER HIS WRATH!



HERE SHE IS...MASTER! THE NEWEST ACQUISITION! HER NAME IS MADAM DU SADE!

WELCOME...WELCOME! HAS DRAKKOS SHOWN YOU OUR CHAMBER YET...HAVE YOU DECIDED WHAT YOU WANT?

I'VE BEEN SHOWN NOTHING...I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT A...CHAMBER...

AH WELL THEN...YOU HAVE A SURPRISE IN STORE FOR YOU...NOT A PLEASANT ONE I REGRET...BUT NEVERTHELESS A GENUINE FIRST RATE SURPRISE!

EVERY RESIDENT HAS A PRIVATE HELL! THE THING ONE FEARS MOST...

WITH MANY IT IS QUITE COMMON... RATS, SNAKES, EVEN SPIKES... THINGS OF THAT SORT! BUT WITH SOME...THE BRAND OF PUNISHMENT IS UNIQUE!

COME... I'LL SHOW YOU...





SORRY FOR ALL THESE
DRAMATICS...THE CASTLE
WALLS, THE OLD
OAKEN DOOR...

BUT OUR...RESIDENTS
LIKE THIS ATMOSPHERE
...MAKES DEATH AND
HELL SEEM QUITE
COMPLETE!



THIS MAN IN LIFE
WAS AN ARSONIST! HE
WENT AROUND SETTING
FIRE TO BUILDINGS,
ANIMALS, EVEN PEOPLE
--NOW HE'S GETTING
HIS JUST REWARDS
HERE IN HELL FROM
THESE FLAME-TONGUED
INSECTS WHO GOBBLE
HIS FLESH!



EVERY SO OFTEN THE **RATS** GNAWING
ON **THAT** ROPE BREAK THROUGH
AND THAT WRETCHED WOMAN
SUDDENLY HAS STABBING PAINS
IN THE HEART...

...BUT IT HEALS UP QUICKLY
...SPIRITUAL BODIES **ALL**
HEAL QUICKLY...READY FOR
THE **NEXT** ROUND OF
TORTURES!



IN LIFE THAT FELLOW WAS
A **PRACTICAL JOKER**...
HE WENT AROUND PLAYING
FIENDISH PRANKS ON HIS
FRIENDS...ONE BACKFIRED
AND HIS BEST FRIEND
DIED!

HIS PUNISHMENT DOESN'T END WITH THE **HANGMAN'S**
NOOSE FOR HERE HE THINKS ALL THOSE WRITHING
HANDS AND TWITCHING FINGERS ARE HIS
FRIENDS SEEKING THEIR **REVENGE!**



HORRIBLE IS IT? HA! HA!
WOULDN'T YOU LIKE
TO JOIN HIM?

**NO! NO! PLEASE...IN
HEAVEN'S NAME NO...
PLEASE!!**

YOU'LL PAY
THE SUPREME
PUNISHMENT...
FOR EVEN
MENTIONING
THAT OTHER
PLACE!



YOU'LL *ROT*, WOMAN...ROT
IN *ETERNITY* TILL YOUR
MISERABLE CARCASS
SMELLS LIKE
MANURE!

BUT I'M INNOCENT...
I'M INNOCENT...I'VE DONE
NOTHING TO DESERVE
THIS...NOTHING...

YOU'LL PAY THE *SUPREME*
PUNISHMENT ALL RIGHT...
ETERNAL LONELINESS...



HE WOULDN'T
LISTEN TO ME...
NO ONE *LISTENS*
TO ME HERE...

AND SO SHE IS LEFT *ALONE...* BUT TO ENDURE THE MOST *INHUMAN*
PUNISHMENT OF ALL...*LONELINESS* AND THE BURDEN OF THE MIND!



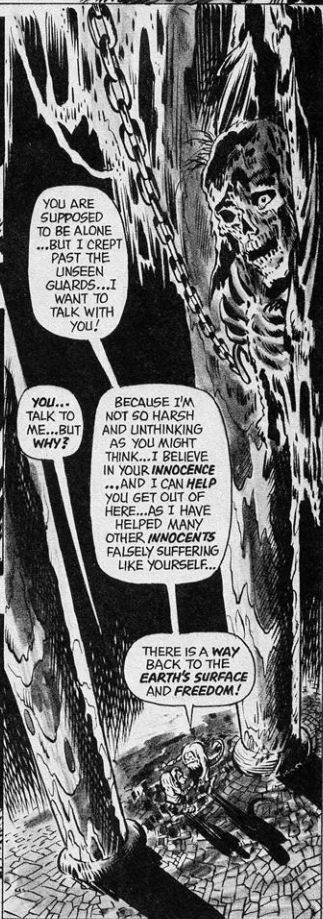
LEFT TO ROT, HE SAYS...
IN THIS MISERABLE
HOLE IN THE GROUND
SPAWNED OF THE
DAMNATION OF
SOLITUDE...I'LL
GO *INSANE!*

SHE DOES NOT SEE THE *EYES* WATCHING LIKE A SILENT DEMON IN
THE *DARKNESS!* EYES THAT ARE *CRUEL* AND WITHOUT A HUMAN
SHRED OF *EMOTION.*



WILL YOU NOW...SUCH
A SHAME...BUT PERHAPS
I CAN *AID* YOU...

VOGT... WHERE
DID YOU COME
FROM...I THOUGHT
I WAS *ALONE!*



YOU ARE
SUPPOSED
TO BE *ALONE*
...BUT I CREEPT
PAST THE
UNSEEN
GUARDS...I
WANT TO
TALK WITH
YOU!

YOU...
TALK TO
ME...BUT
WHY?

BECAUSE I'M
NOT SO HARSH
AND UNTHINKING
AS YOU MIGHT
THINK...I BELIEVE
IN YOUR *INNOCENCE*
...AND I CAN *HELP*
YOU GET OUT OF
HERE...AS I HAVE
HELPED MANY
OTHER *INNOCENTS*
FALSELY SUFFERING
LIKE YOURSELF...

THERE IS A WAY
BACK TO THE
EARTH'S SURFACE
AND *FREEDOM!*

CAN IT REALLY BE THAT THE *DEVIL* HIMSELF CAN BE *THWARTED?*
THAT *SATAN* IS A FOOL?...THAT HIS EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT IS IN
LIAISON WITH THE FORCES OF...*GOOD?*

AT LAKE AVERNUS, IN ITALY IS A CRATER LAKE, JOINED TO THE UNDERGROUND STYGIAN CREEK, AN INSURMOUNTABLE BARRIER TO THOSE WHO WOULD ENTER...BUT NOT TO THOSE WHO WOULD LEAVE.



I WILL GIVE YOU DIRECTIONS TO REACH IT FROM HERE...BUT TO BE RE-UNITED WITH YOUR EARTH BODY...TO BECOME AS ONE AGAIN IN THE WORLD OF PHYSICAL BEINGS...YOU MUST KNOW THE UNHOLY INCANTATION!



ON THE SURFACE YOU MUST STAY 'SATAN...MASTER OF NONE...SCOURGE TO NO ONE BUT HIMSELF...I HAVE BECOME FREED IN SOUL AND SPIRIT...I DEMAND THE RESTITUTION OF LIFE, THEN YOU WILL BECOME ONE!



VOGT WAS ACCURATE IN HIS MAPPING OF HER ROUTE...IT WOULD TAKE HER DAYS OF TIRING TRAVEL...OF ENDLESS JOURNEY! BUT IT WAS WORTH IT...IT WAS FREEDOM!



THE SPIRITUAL BODY NEEDS NO NOURISHMENT...NO FOOD OR DRINK TO KEEP IT ALIVE...BUT EVEN SO THERE IS MORTAL SUFFERING IN THE AGONIZING ENDLESS STRUGGLE FOR THE SURVIVAL OF SANITY...THE TOAD HAG RUNS INTO THE MONSTROUS BATS AGAIN WHO SEEK AFTER RAW FLESH AND COLD UNLIVING BLOOD...

AT LAST...THE LAST BARRIER...THE RIVER STYX...IF I CAN MAKE IT ACROSS WITHOUT BEING TRAPPED IN THE EVER ENCIRCLING MAELSTROM I'LL REACH THE SURFACE...





WHIRLPOOL MAELSTROM...
ALMOST DRAGGING ME IN
...MUST KEEP FIGHTING!



AN OPENING...
IN THE ROCK...
MUST BE...
EARTH'S
SURFACE...IF
I CAN KEEP
FIGHTING TOWARD
IT!



EARTH!...
LIGHT...
THE SUN
STREAMING
DOWN...IT
FEELS GOOD
TO BE ALIVE
AGAIN!

AND SO IT APPEARS THAT SATAN IS A FOOL...TO BE TRICKED SO EASILY BY ONE OF HIS CHARGES! THE TOAD HAG HAS REACHED THE EARTH'S SURFACE...HAS ESCAPED FROM THE VERY CORE OF THE EARTH ITSELF...AND FROM THE NOW SCOWLING SATAN AS SHE UTTERS THE WORDS THAT FORCES THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS TO FREE HER FROM HIS HOLD ON HER...



NOW FOR THE
INCANTATION...
TO BECOME A
HUMAN BEING
AGAIN...

SATAN, MASTER
OF NONE...SCOURGE
OF NO ONE BUT HIS
CONTEMPTABLE SELF...
I HAVE FOUGHT AND
FREED MYSELF IN
SOUL AND SPIRIT...
NOW I DEMAND MY
FREEDOM...RELEASE
MY SOUL AND GIVE
ME LIFE!!

AND SATAN GRINS A GHASTLY SMILE, FOR HIS WORK IS DONE...HIS EVIL HAS TAKEN ROOT AND FORMED INTO THE GROTESQUE SEMI-LIFE THAT ROTS IN THE EARTH-BOUND MENTAL ASYLUM KNOWN AS **BEDLAM!**



"I WARNED HER, HER CARCASS WOULD ROT UNTIL IT SMELLED LIKE **MANURE!**" SATAN DREW DEEP A BREATH OF SATISFACTION, SHE DIDN'T BELIEVE ME, DID SHE VOGT... THAT **EVERYONE** HAS THEIR OWN PECULIAR BRAND OF **PRIVATE HELL!**"



"THEY NEVER BELIEVE ME!" "AYE MASTER", SPAT THE HIDEOUS DWARF TRAITOR, AND **VOGT** HAS AGAIN SERVED YOU WELL... LETTING HER THINK SHE WAS **ESCAPING** TO FREEDOM AND UNITY WITH HER **BODY!**"



"SHE THINKS SHE IS **INNOCENT!** HAH... **INNOCENT...NO ONE** IS **INNOCENT**, VOGT... **NO ONE!** AND SO SHE SHALL SUFFER IN HER OWN **HELL...** THE HELL ON EARTH SHE CHOSE HERSELF... FOR HAD SHE NOT BEEN SO INCREDIBLY **STUPID** SHE WOULD HAVE **REMEMBERED** THAT HER BODY COULD NOT HAVE BEEN RE-UNITED WITH HER HEAD... THAT THE **GUILLOTINED** HEADS ARE **CHOPPED UP...** AND USED AS **DOG MEAT!**"



THE END

AND SATAN, BOWING LOW HIS GRAY DISSIMULATION, DISAPPEARED! THE TOAD HAG **LIVES...** FOR EVEN AS SATAN HAS HIS VILE BEDLAM AFTER THE GRAVE...WE ON EARTH-SIDE HAVE OUR **OWN** BEDLAM...THE ASYLUM FOR THE INCURABLY **INSANE!** AND IS THERE MAN ALIVE WHO WOULD DARE TO QUESTION THAT THE NOTORIOUS TOAD HAG OF **PARIS DU COMITÉ REFORME** IS CURABLE?...FOR THE WRITHING IDIOT CHAINED TO BEDLAM IS HEADLESS...AND DECAPITATION IS INCURABLE!

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...WITH
CROSSES!

YAAAAAAHAAAA

LORD...
LOOK AT
HIM!

...FLESH
AND BONE IS
GROWING ON HIM...
NATURE IS TWISTING
EVERYTHING INTO
REVERSE.

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