



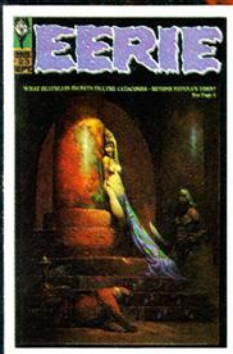
# EERIE

A WARREN MAGAZINE

PDC

60¢

# BEST STORIES EVER!



**1971  
ANNUAL**  
FEATURING FANTASTIC  
SELECTIONS OF THE  
**GREATEST**  
TERROR TALES  
FROM OUR EARLY  
MACABRE ISSUES!





## THIS IS THE WORLD OF EERIE!!

A WORLD OF WEREWOLVES, VAMPIRES, AND CREATURES THAT HAUNT THE DARKNESS... A WORLD OF SUSPENSE AND FRIGHT... A WORLD BROUGHT TO LIFE BY GREAT ARTISTS AND WRITERS... THIS IS *MY* WORLD... MAKE IT *YOURS* WITH THIS NERVE-NUMBING

**2nd ANNUAL COLLECTION OF OUR BEST!!**







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# EERIE

## 1971 ANNUAL

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PROLOGUE--  
SOMEWHERE  
IN THE CITY,  
A DOORBELL  
SOUNDS...

NEVER FAILS! WHENEVER  
I START WASHING  
MY HAIR...

WHO IS IT?

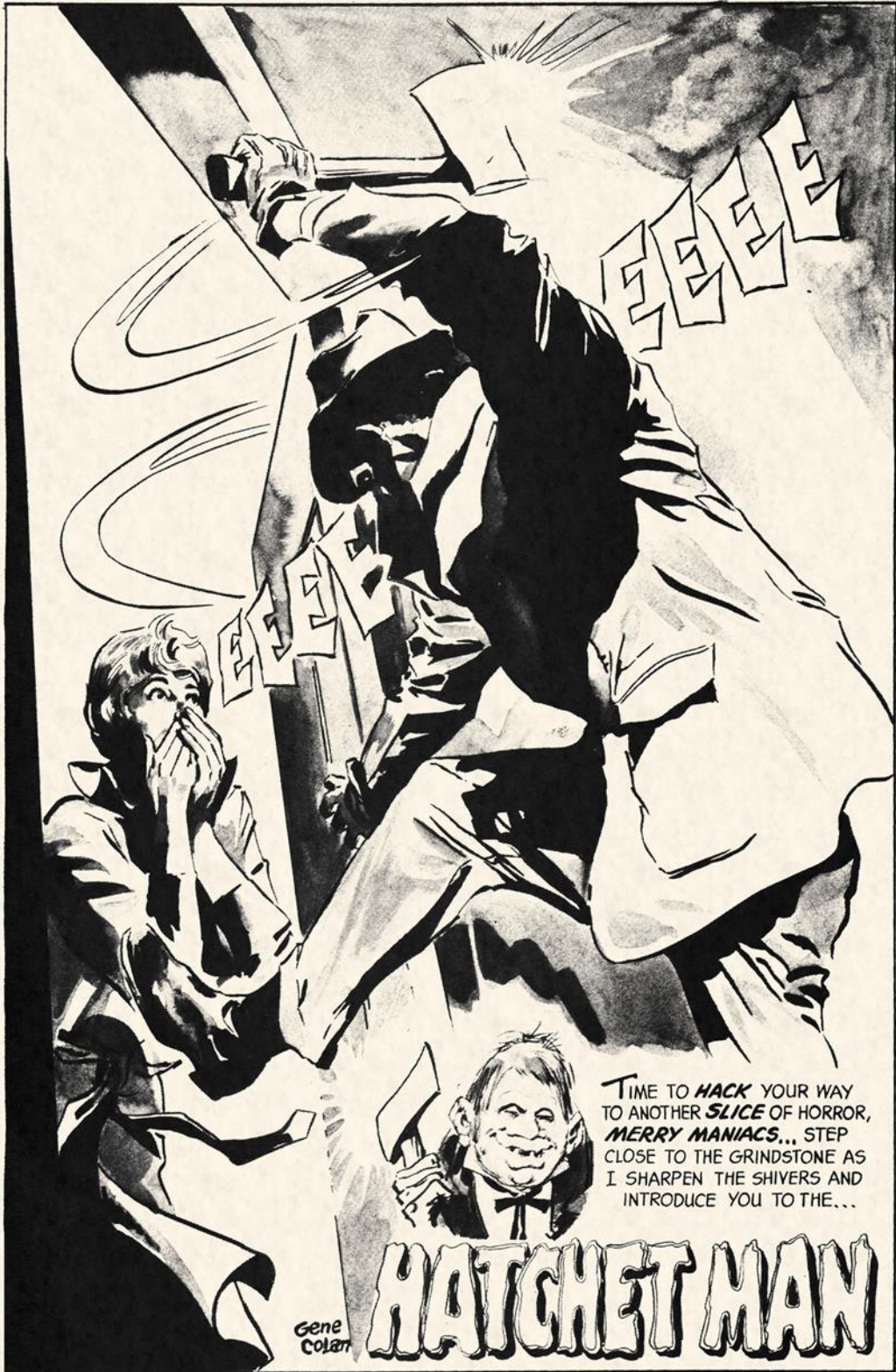
TELEGRAM!

COULDN'T  
YOU HAVE JUST  
SLID IT UNDER  
THE DOOR?

HAS TO  
BE SIGNED  
FOR...

OH, FOR  
HEAVENS SAKE!  
NOW WHERE DO  
I HAVE TO...





TIME TO **HACK** YOUR WAY  
TO ANOTHER **SLICE** OF HORROR,  
**MERRY MANIACS...** STEP  
CLOSE TO THE GRINDSTONE AS  
I SHARPEN THE SHIVERS AND  
INTRODUCE YOU TO THE...

# HATCHET MAN

Gene  
Colan







THAT **MANIAC'S**  
STILL ON THE LOOSE!  
CHOPPED A WOMAN  
TO BITS LAST  
NIGHT...ONLY A FEW  
BLOCKS FROM HERE!

THIS IS THE  
ONLY SHIRT I  
CAN WEAR TO  
WORK? I THOUGHT  
YOU WERE GOING  
TO IRON SOME!

DON'T BOTHER  
ME, HARVEY...  
POLICE THINK HE'S  
SOME KINDA SPLIT  
PERSONALITY NUT,  
ALWAYS LEAVING  
NOTES IN BLOOD  
SAYING "HARRY  
DID IT"...

DIDN'T  
SEW ANY  
BUTTONS  
ON HERE  
LIKE YOU  
SAID YOU  
WOULD...

THAT WOMAN'S  
HUSBAND  
WORKED AT  
NIGHT...LIKE  
YOU, HARVEY!  
SAME THING  
COULD HAVE  
HAPPENED  
TO ME!

FORGOT  
TO MAKE  
SANDWICHES  
AGAIN,  
PHYLLIS...  
DON'T KNOW  
WHY I BOTHER  
CARRY A  
LUNCH PAIL!



G'NIGHT,  
PHYLLIS!

WHY COULDN'T YOU  
HAVE A DECENT JOB  
LIKE YOUR BROTHER IN  
SEATTLE, INSTEAD OF BEING  
JUST A WATCHMAN? THEN  
I MIGHT BE SAFE FROM  
**MANIACS** LIKE THIS!

TEN YEARS  
OF THIS! **TEN YEARS!**  
WISH SOMEONE **WOULD**  
TAKE A HATCHET TO THAT  
WOMAN!



**WHY  
NOT? WHY SHOULDN'T  
THE MANIAC KILL HER?**  
IT WOULDN'T BE HARD  
AT ALL TO ARRANGE...  
NOT AT ALL!





NOBODY CHECKS ON ME HERE...ONCE I PUNCH IN, I COULD LEAVE WITHOUT BEING NOTICED...PEOPLE'D THINK I WAS MAKING MY ROUNDS!

"NEWSPAPERS GIVE YOU ALL THE DETAILS ABOUT HOW HE WORKS..."

JUST THE GLOVES, SIR? LIKE THEM GIFT WRAPPED?

"POLICE'LL NEVER SUSPECT IT WASN'T HIM!"

A FINE HATCHET, SIR... YOU'LL GET A LOT GOOD USE OUT OF IT!

I'LL BE RID OF PHYLLIS AND THE HATCHET KILLER'LL BE BLAMED! **PERFECT!**

HARVEY? THAT YOU? WHY AREN'T YOU AT WORK?

YES, DEAR... IT'S ONLY ME...





UGH!  
ONE  
REALLY  
DOES IT...  
BUT I BET-  
TER GIVE HER  
A FEW MORE  
JUST TO MAKE IT  
LOOK GOOD!  
NOW  
THE  
WRITING  
ON THE  
WALL...  
THEN OUT OF  
HERE BEFORE  
THE NEIGHBORS  
BREAK IN!

PART  
OF MY  
DUTIES ARE TO  
CHECK ON THE FUR-  
NACE ANYWAY... HA!  
LOOKS LIKE THE  
HATCHET MANIAC'S  
GONNA GET CREDIT  
FOR ONE HE NEVER  
DREAMED ABOUT! THEY  
CAN NEVER PIN IT ON ME!

SO  
MUCH FOR  
THIS! AS FOR  
THE GLOVES...



AH! THEY'VE FOUND HER! NOW TO PLAY THE  
BEREAVED HUSBAND...

MY GOD! WHAT'S GOING  
ON HERE?

YOU  
HARVEY  
WHITTAKER?

LAST  
NIGHT  
SOMEONE GOT  
IN HERE... CARVED  
YOUR WIFE UP  
WITH A **HATCHET!**

OH,  
LORD! IT  
MUST HAVE BEEN  
THAT **MANIAC!** THAT HATCHET  
KILLER FROM THE NEWSPAPER...

THAT'S  
HOW WE FIGURE IT, MR.  
WHITTAKER... THE MANIAC DID IT...  
SAME ONE THAT'S CHOPPED UP  
ALL THE OTHERS...

**you!** YOU'RE  
THE HATCHET KILLER,  
WHITTAKER!

Y-YOU'RE  
CRAZY... I'M NOT...



WE FOUND THESE HIDDEN IN A SUITCASE IN **YOUR** CLOSET... BLOOD-STAINS CHECK OUT WITH SEVERAL OF THE VICTIMS...

I-IMPOSSIBLE! I GOT RID OF THEM--I...**NO!**



SOMETHING YOU WANT TO TELL US, MR. WHITTAKER?

I-I KILLED... PHYLLIS! B-BUT THE OTHERS...

SOMEONE ELSE DID THAT... THE MANIAC... HATCHET KILLER... SOMEONE ELSE DID THAT...



ALL THOSE WOMEN... SOMEONE ELSE DID IT... **HARRY!** THAT'S THE ONE! **HARRY!** THE KILLER... MANIAC... **HE DID IT!**



SHOULD BE STOPPED... BEFORE HE KILLS MORE! MORE WOMEN... **HACKED... CHOPPER** LIKES TO KILL... **KILL THEM ALL!** ... NOT AFRAID...



NOT LIKE **HARVEY WHITTAKER!** AFRAID OF PHYLLIS... I'LL **KILL 'EM ALL!** SHOW THAT PIPSQUEAK HOW IT SHOULD BE DONE! ME! **HARRY! I'LL KILL 'EM ALL!**



HARVEY TRIED TO WRITE ON THE WALL... GIVE ME AWAY... BUT I SHOWED HIM... SHOWED HIM **HOW...** **KILL 'EM ALL! KILL 'EM ALL!**

AWRIGHT... TAKE HIM AWAY!



POOR HARVEY! ONE HALF HIS BRAIN DIDN'T KNOW WHAT THE OTHER WAS DOING... HIS PERSONALITY WAS MORE SPLIT UP THAN HIS VICTIMS! NOW, YOU'D BETTER **HARRY** ON TO THE NEXT SCREAM STORY!





**NO ONE DESERVES DEATH MORE THAN A FOOL... AND FOR ALL HIS EDUCATION AND FANCY DEGREES, BRUCE DARNER IS A FOOL!**

**BLUNDERING AROUND THESE WOODS WHEN HE KNOWS A WEREWOLF IS ON THE LOOSE! BUT LIKE ALL FOOLS, HE HAS TO LEARN...**

**... AND I'M THE ONE TO TEACH HIM!!**

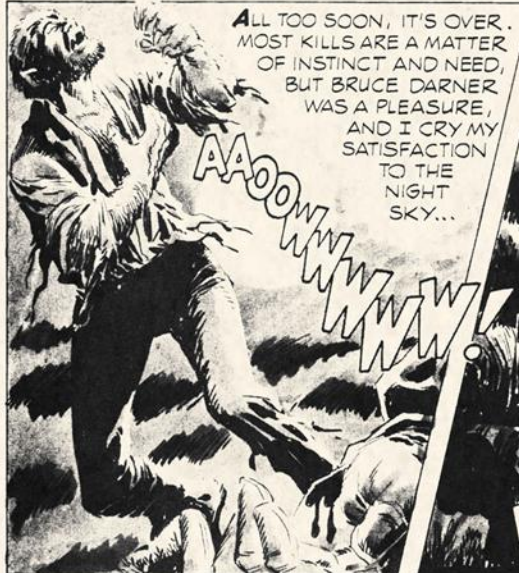


**LOOKS LIKE WE'RE OFF TO A HOWLING START, FIENDISH FANS, BUT YOU'D BEST PROCEED WITH CAUTION INTO THIS BIT OF LYCANTHROPIC LORE, OR YOU MAY WIND UP AS...**

**WOLF BAIT!**







ALL TOO SOON, IT'S OVER.  
MOST KILLS ARE A MATTER  
OF INSTINCT AND NEED,  
BUT BRUCE DARNER  
WAS A PLEASURE,  
AND I CRY MY  
SATISFACTION  
TO THE  
NIGHT  
SKY...



THE FULL MOON STILL RIDES HIGH AND MY  
BLOODLUST HASN'T WANED... AND THERE IS  
STILL ONE OTHER LIKELY VICTIM!



AS I  
SUSPECTED,  
SHE'S WAITING  
AT **HIS** PLACE...  
STUPIDLY  
WAITING FOR  
A MAN WHO'LL  
NEVER RETURN!  
TEARS STILL  
GLISTENING  
ON HER  
CHEEKS AS  
WHEN I  
LAST SAW  
HER...



YOU!  
NOT  
YOU...



THE  
SHREDDED RAG  
THAT WAS ONCE  
A SHIRT, BEFORE  
MY BEASTIAL  
PLUNGE THROUGH  
BRUSH AND  
THICKET, MAKES  
MY IDENTITY  
CLEAR TO HER,  
BUT IT NO LONGER  
MATTERS. HER  
SHRIEKING  
INCENSES ME, AND  
MOVING FOR THE  
KILL, I THINK BACK  
TO A TIME WHEN  
MY PRESENCE  
BROUGHT A FAR,  
DIFFERENT  
REACTION...



THAD, PLEASE... THIS ISN'T RIGHT! BRUCE IS COMING BACK TODAY, IT ISN'T FAIR TO HIM!

YOU DON'T NEED HIM, WILMA... A CHEMISTRY PROFESSOR! YOU NEED A REAL MAN... LIKE **ME!**

BRUCE AND I ARE **ENGAGED** THAD! I SHOULD NEVER HAVE GOTTEN INVOLVED WITH YOU... I SHOULD HAVE... I... I JUST DON'T **KNOW!**

ALL RIGHT! SEE YOUR COLLEGE BOY... MAKE UP YOUR OWN MIND! THAT BOOKWORM'LL SEND YOU RUNNING STRAIGHT BACK TO **ME!**

THINGS WERE STARTING TO FALL APART. THE FULL MOON KILLINGS HAD THE TOWN UP IN ARMS, WILMA WAS STARTING TO HAVE CONSCIENCE PROBLEMS, THEN THAT PUNK HAD TO SHOW UP...

WILMA...

OH, BRUCE, IF ONLY IT COULD'VE BEEN SOMETHING HAPPIER TO BRING YOU BACK!

I'VE ORGANIZED A CITIZENS' GUARD TO CONSTANTLY COMB THE AREA... THEY DON'T NEED SOME COLLEGE SMART ALECK GETTING IN THEIR WAY!

YOU SHOULD'VE STAYED AT THE UNIVERSITY, PROFESSOR... WITH A KILLER RAMPAGING AROUND HERE, YOU MIGHT NOT BE SAFE!

MY FATHER WAS ONE OF THE VICTIMS, SHERIFF! I INTEND TO FIND OUT WHO OR WHAT DID IT... IT SEEMS **YOU'RE** NOT HAVING MUCH LUCK!

I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT ME OR MY IDEAS, SHERIFF... I'M GOING TO **BE** IN THE WAY UNTIL SOMETHING'S DONE ABOUT THIS!



... BUT I  
COULDN'T  
BE  
BOTHERED  
ABOUT  
DARNER'S  
MEDDLING...  
**THERE  
WERE  
MORE  
IMPORTANT  
MATTERS  
AT HAND!**

YAAAAHHHHH!

THIS  
SATISFY YOU, DARNER?  
YOU WANTED TO FIND OUT FIRST  
HAND WHAT WAS GOING ON...  
NOT LIKE LIFE AT THE  
UNIVERSITY, EH?

L-LORD! I  
NEVER  
**DREAMED**  
IT WOULD BE  
THIS BAD...

WHAT KIND OF  
ANIMAL WOULD MUTILATE A  
PERSON LIKE THAT, THAD? THIS ISN'T  
BEAR COUNTRY...

I'VE HEARD  
SOME TALK THAT  
IT MIGHT BE A  
**WEREWOLF...**

THIS IS  
NO TIME TO MAKE  
JOKES, SHERIFF!  
SOMETHING **MUST**  
BE DONE! WHATEVER  
IT IS, THE BEAST  
MUST BE STOPPED!

YOU  
TALK A LOT,  
PROFESSOR! IF YOU  
WERE HALF A MAN,  
YOU'D GET A RIFLE  
AND PUT **YOUR** LIFE ON  
THE LINE TRACKING THAT  
THING LIKE SOME OF  
THE OTHERS!

WELL...?

I...I'M  
SORRY...  
IT'S NOT THE  
KIND OF THING I  
CAN DO! I'LL HAVE  
TO WORK IN MY OWN  
WAY...



AND SOON ENOUGH I FOUND OUT WHAT THAT WAY WAS...

WHAT'S ALL THIS CHEMISTRY SET FOOLISHNESS SUPPOSE TO MEAN, DARNER? WHAT GOOD'LL ALL THAT STUFF DO?

MY HOPE IS IT WON'T DO GOOD, BUT **BAD... IT'S POISON!** AS I'VE MIXED IT, DEADLY ENOUGH TO BRING DOWN **ANY** ANIMAL...

I INTEND TO POSITION THESE ALL AROUND THE AREA WHERE THE BEAST HAS STRUCK! IT'S BOUND TO GO FOR ONE OF THEM!

DARNER, I MAY NOT HAVE YOUR FANCY EDUCATION, BUT I KNOW A FOOL THING WHEN I SEE IT...



... **THIS**

IS THE ONLY WAY TO GET WHAT WE'RE AFTER! AND IF YOU WEREN'T A GUTLESS WONDER, YOU'D REALIZE IT!

MAYBE YOU'LL HAVE A LITTLE MORE RESPECT FOR WHAT I'M TRYING TO DO **AFTER** MY METHOD'S HAD A CHANCE!

I WOULDN'T COUNT ON IT, MISTER DARNER!



I REALIZE NO ONE'S DONE SO WELL WITH IT UP TILL NOW!



SURELY NO ANIMAL WOULD IGNORE THAT MEAT... UNLESS... IT REALLY WAS A... A W-WEREWOLF!

**T**HE CIVILIAN GUARD HAD WORKED OUT FINE! BY KNOWING EXACTLY WHERE AND WHEN EACH OF THEM WAS ON DUTY, FINDING A VICTIM WAS NEVER A PROBLEM... NO MORE THAN BRUCE DARNER'S FOOLISH PLAYING WITH POISON!

FOUND HIM RIGHT HERE, PROFESSOR... SMACK IN THE MIDDLE OF YOUR LITTLE TRAPS! DIDN'T EVEN TOUCH THEM!

OR MY FORMULA... PERHAPS MY FORMULA WAS WRONG...





NOW, A SMART MAN MIGHT HAVE  
JUST GIVEN UP, BUT NOT DARNER...  
NOT A FOOL LIKE HIM...

LOOKS LIKE  
YOUR  
FIANCE'S  
GIVEN YOU  
UP FOR HIS  
CHEMISTRY  
SET, WILMA...

IT'S BECOME LIKE  
AN OBSESSION TO  
HIM! HE KEEPS  
EXPERIMENTING  
WITH FORMULA  
AFTER FORMULA!  
HARDLY EVEN  
SPEAKS TO ME...  
BUT AT LEAST IT'S  
GIVEN ME TIME TO  
THINK THINGS OVER  
AND...

IT'S TIME YOU DECIDED TO  
DITCH THAT COLLEGE BOY!  
YOU WON'T CATCH ME  
NEGLECTING YOU LIKE THAT...

WAIT, THAD... YOU  
MUST'T! PLEASE!  
LET GO... LET...

...GO-OOOHH...

DARLING!  
I THINK I'VE DONE  
IT! THIS NEW  
POISON CAN...

WILMA!

BRUCE... NO!  
WAIT...

FORGET HIM,  
BABY! ALL YOU  
NEED IS ME!

**GET  
YOUR HANDS  
OFF ME! YOU'RE NOTHING  
BUT AN ANIMAL, THAD!  
AN ANIMAL!!**



**RAGE**  
BOILED  
UP  
INSIDE  
ME  
LIKE A  
WITCH'S  
CAULDRON,  
AND WITH  
IT, THE  
URGE TO  
KILL!

HAVING BRUCE BACK CONVINCED ME...  
HE'S THE ONLY ONE I EVER WANTED!  
**BRUCE IS THE ONLY ONE!**

**TWILIGHT** WAS BECOMING DARKNESS BY  
THAT TIME... PISTOL IN HAND, I SMASHED  
INTO DARNER'S LAB...

**GONE!** ONLY  
ONE OTHER PLACE  
HE COULD BE...  
OUT WITH HIS  
#0%0 POISON  
TRAPS!

**I RACED**  
TOWARD THE WOODS, AS I  
HAD SO MANY OTHER NIGHTS WHEN THE  
MOON WAS FULL... RACED WITH A CURIOUS CONTENTMENT,  
KNOWING BRUCE DARNER WOULD NOT DIE SO EASILY AS BY MY PISTOL...



... AND I  
FOUND  
HIM WITH  
NO  
TROUBLE  
AT ALL!





EVEN AS I KILLED DARNER, I FELT WILMA WOULD STILL NEVER BE MINE... NOW, AS HER EYES GROW WIDE IN HORROR AT MY CHARGING FORM, I **KNOW** THIS IS SO, THAT **THIS** IS THE ONLY WAY...



YET, I NEVER REACH HER! PAIN SUDDENLY SHOOTS THROUGH MY ENTIRE BODY, HORRIBLE, BURNING... I GASP AND CLAW FOR BREATH THAT DOES NOT COME...



GAARRGGHHH..

YOU'RE DYING, THAD... I HEARD IT ALL ON THE TAPE RECORDER BEFORE YOU CAME IN...

WHAT... WHAT'S HAPPENING... I'M CHANGING BACK...



BRUCE'S LAST FORMULA WAS A VERY SLOW ACTING POISON... WITH A STRONG BASE OF **SILVER NITRATE**... WHEN HE SAW YOU AND I TOGETHER, HE THOUGHT I'D REALLY GIVEN HIM UP...



THE PAIN IS... UNBEARABLE... EVERY-THING GROWS DARK... CAN ONLY HEAR WILMA'S ECHOING, MOCKING WORDS...

HE **INJECTED** THE FORMULA **IN HIS OWN BODY**, THAD... BECAME LIVING **WEREWOLF BAIT**... **BAIT WHICH YOU SWALLOWED!**

HMMM... I WONDER IF THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION'S HEARD ABOUT THIS... WE MAY HAVE TO GET BRUCE DARNER TAKEN OFF THE SHELVES! A LITTLE INDIGESTION'S ONE THING, BUT THIS IS RIDICULOUS!





THE UNIVERSE IS VAST... THE FAR-FLUNG GALAXIES SPRAWL ENDLESSLY. BUT THIS VASTNESS IS NOT STATIC... EACH GALAXY MOVES WITH INFINITE SLOWNESS ON A SURE COURSE. WITHIN THEM, STARS LIVE AND DIE, EXPLODING WITH NOVA FORCE, SHRIVELING TO COLD BLACK SHELLS... PLANETS ORBIT AND TURN, PERISH AND FLOURISH... LIFE, IN UNCOUNTABLE VARIETY, IS SPAWNED AND DEVELOPED... ALL MOVING STEADILY, INALTERABLY, DRAWN BY THEIR OWN NEEDS AND PURPOSE! AS WAS THE INTERSTELLAR SPACE CRUISER FROM EARTH WHEN SCANNING SCREENS FIRST GAVE THE ALARM OF THEIR APPROACH TOWARD.....

IT!



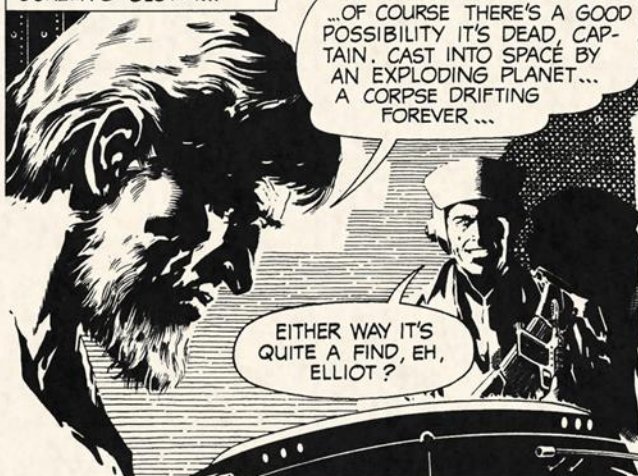
I-IT'S *FANTASTIC!*  
NOTHING COULD SURVIVE  
IN *INTERGALATIC SPACE!*

NOTHING AS  
WE KNOW IT...

DAN  
ADKINS



AS THE GIANT SHIP DREW CLOSE TO THE STRANGE FORM, CAPTAIN DURWARD AND EXPEDITION DIRECTOR ELLIOT BENT FORWARD, THEIR TENSE FACES BATHED IN THE SCANNING SCREEN'S GLOW....



...OF COURSE THERE'S A GOOD POSSIBILITY IT'S DEAD, CAPTAIN. CAST INTO SPACE BY AN EXPLODING PLANET... A CORPSE DRIFTING FOREVER...

EITHER WAY IT'S QUITE A FIND, EH, ELLIOT?

REMARKABLE! THE ODDS AGAINST AN ENCOUNTER LIKE THIS ARE... **INCALCULABLE!** IN FACT, I FIND IT DISTURBING...

THAT'S WHY THE MILITARY STILL CONTROLS THESE EXPLORATION TRIPS, ELLIOT... WHATEVER *IT* IS OUT THERE, MY BOYS CAN HANDLE IT!



LEAVING THE CONTROL ROOM, BOTH MEN CONTINUED TALKING, OVER THE STEADY POWER HUM OF THE INTER-DECK LIFT...



I RATHER HATE RISKING IT'S BEING BROUGHT INTO THE SHIP, BUT...

OUR MISSION'S TO EXPLORE AND EXAMINE... YOU CAN'T DO A COMPLETE JOB TILL THAT THING'S IN THE LABORATORY HOLD!



...UNTIL THEY REACHED THE BRIEFING ROOM WHERE A SELECTED GROUP OF MEN WAIT...

PROBABLY THE CREATURE'S DEAD, BUT PLAY IT CLOSE TO THE VEST... IF PRELIMINARY TESTS REGISTER POSITIVE, THROW AN ENERGY SHIELD AROUND IT AND GET BACK TO THE SHIP... WE'LL TAKE IT FROM THERE!



AGAINST THE DARK VELVET EMPTINESS OF INTER-GALACTIC SPACE, THE MEN WENT ABOUT THEIR TASK, SWARMING ABOUT THE STILL, FLOATING HULK...



NO SWEAT, SKIPPER! **ALL TESTS NEGATIVE!** IT'S BIG AND UGLY, BUT IT'S **DEAD!** STAND BY AT NUMBER 3 HATCH! WE'RE BRINGING IT ABOARD!



METHODICALLY, THE MONSTROUS FORM WAS MOVED INTO THE LABORATORY HOLD, ITS GREAT BULK STRETCHED LIFELESSLY ON THE GLEAMING METAL DECK...

DEAD OR NOT, THE SOONER I DON'T HAVE TO LOOK AT THIS THING, THE BETTER I'LL LIKE IT!

OUTER LOCK IS SEALED... YOU CAN REPRESSURIZE THE HOLD NOW... ALL READY FOR TESTING!

BACK IN THE CONTROL ROOM, CAPTAIN DURWARD LOOKED UP FROM THE INTRASHIP VIEWER WITH A SMILE OF SATISFACTION...

ONCE MY BOYS ARE OUT, ELLIOT, YOU AND YOUR TECHNICIANS CAN MOVE IN... FINDING THIS MONSTER'S GOING TO BE A REAL FEATHER IN OUR CAPS ON EARTH!

PERHAPS WE SHOULD HAVE CONDUCTED A FEW MORE TESTS... WE CAN'T BE CERTAIN WHAT EFFECT ATMOSPHERE MAY HAVE...

NO ADVERSE EFFECT ON CORPSE FROM REPRESSURIZING... IT'S UGLY AS EVER!

THE MAD SCIENTISTS CAN TAKE IT FROM HERE!

THE CREWMEN TURNED AWAY FROM THE HIDEOUS FORM SPRAWLED ON THE FLOOR OF THE HOLD. LAUGHING AND JOKING, THEY CLUSTERED NEAR THE FORWARD HATCH, AWAITING THEIR RELIEF...

WE SHOULDN'T KID ABOUT ITS LOOKS... THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN A VERY INTELLIGENT CREATURE!

IF YOU'RE RIGHT, IT'S A GREAT ARGUMENT FOR STUPIDITY!

GGNYAHHHHH!



VIEW SCREENS THROUGHOUT THE SHIP FLASHED A SCENE OF UNMERCIFUL DESTRUCTION AND HORRIFYING CARNAGE...

**ELLIOT!** MY GOD... **IT WAS DEAD!** HOW...

S-SOME KIND OF FANTASTIC CONTROL OVER ITS **METABOLISM!** MAINTAINING SOME TYPE OF SUSPENDED ANIMATION IN DEEP SPACE... THEN UNDER THE SHIP'S ATMOSPHERE... **IT REVIVED!**



TOO LATE TO HELP THOSE POOR DEVILS TRAPPED WITH THAT THING, BUT ONCE THE HOLD'S SEALED OFF WE'LL DEPRESSURIZE AND...

**CAPTAIN!** IT'S LOCATED THE VIEWER SYSTEM... **LOOK!**



MINUTES PASSED, THEN HOURS. THE STATE OF EMERGENCY FROZE OVER INTO STALEMATE...

IT HASN'T TRIED ANYTHING, SIR... CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHAT IT'S DOING...

**IT'LL DIE!** HATCHES ARE ENERGY-SEALED... IT CAN'T BREAK OUT AND IT CAN'T LAST IN THERE FOREVER... IT'LL **STARVE OR SUFFOCATE!**

SIR, YOU'RE FORGETTING ALL THE LAB EQUIPMENT! IF THAT THING'S INTELLIGENT ENOUGH TO SHORT-CIRCUIT OUR CONTROLS IT CAN...



CAPTAIN DURWARD'S FINGER JABBED AT THE BRIGHT RED **GENERAL ALERT** BUTTON. THE SCREAMING ALARM ECHOED THROUGH-OUT THE SHIP AS HE SEIZED THE VIEWER CONTROLS...



**SECURITY CONTROL!**  
**SECURITY CONTROL!**  
SEAL OFF THE LABORATORY HOLD... **IMMEDIATELY!**  
ALL HATCHES, AIR-CONDITIONING DUCTS...  
**SEAL IT OFF TIGHT!**

**IT'S RIPPED OUT THE SYSTEM!** WE CAN'T SEE WHAT IT'S DOING! WE...

**SECURITY CONTROL!**  
**CAPTAIN!** THE HOLD IS SEALED OFF, BUT SOMETHING'S WRONG. **WE'VE LOST CONTROL!** ALL OUR CONNECTIONS **NO LONGER RESPOND!**





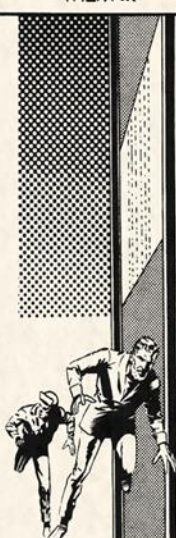


WHAT KIND OF BEAST IS IT?!

NOTHING ON EARTH COULD BREAK THROUGH AN ENERGY-SEALED DOOR!

WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE, CAPTAIN! IT'S TOO POWERFUL FOR US... THE NERVE-BLASTERS AREN'T HAVING ANY EFFECT! CAPTAIN, PLEASE...

DESPERATELY, THE EXPEDITION DIRECTOR GRABBED THE AMAZED OFFICER, DRAGGING HIM DOWN THE CORRIDOR, AWAY FROM THE ON-RUSHING HORROR, AS BEHIND THEM...



AAAAAIIIEEEEE!

RUNNING FOR THEIR LIVES, THE TWO MEN CLAMBERED UPON THE LIFT, CURSING ITS REGULAR, AUTOMATICALLY CONTROLLED RATE OF CLIMB...

EVOLUTION PLAYS STRANGE TRICKS! WHEREVER THIS THING'S FROM, BRILLIANT MIND POWER BECAME LINKED WITH ANIMAL INSTINCTS...

WE'RE LUCKY THERE'S ONLY ONE OF THEM! COLLECTIVELY, WE MAY STILL BE ABLE TO DEFEAT IT!

WE'LL DEFEAT IT ALL RIGHT! COME ON TO THE WEAPONS DECK... I'LL SHOW THAT MONSTER!!! SOME OF OUR OWN "BRUTE STRENGTH!"

I-IT TOOK TIME TO CARRY THE GUARD'S BODY INTO THE HOLD! WE'D NEVER HAVE MADE IT, IF IT HADN'T DONE THAT!

HOW CAN IT BE, ELLIOT? HOW CAN SOMETHING SO GROTESQUE, SO BESTIAL ACCOMPLISH WHAT IT HAS? IT CAN'T BE MORE INTELLIGENT THAN US... IT CAN'T BE!



THE BLAST CANNONS, CAPTAIN? THEY'RE DESIGNED FOR EXTERIOR USE! THAT MUCH ENERGY RELEASED INSIDE THE SHIP WILL DO A LOT OF DAMAGE...

IT'S WORTH THE RISK TO STOP THAT THING! IT KNOWS WE CAME THIS WAY, IT'LL BE UP HERE SOON... SWING THOSE CANNONS AROUND! I WANT A CROSSFIRE ON THAT CORRIDOR!



THE ORDERS WERE CARRIED OUT IMMEDIATELY. NERVOUS, PERSPIRING GUN CREWS TENSED BEHIND THEIR WEAPONS, PRAYING THE CAPTAIN WAS WRONG, PRAYING THE CREATURE OF HORROR MIGHT STRIKE SOMEWHERE, ANYWHERE, ELSE... THEN, A LARGE, TERRIBLE SHADOW FILLED THE CORRIDOR...

THIS IS IT!  
GET READY...  
ON MY  
COMMAND...



THE SHADOW CAME FORWARD QUICKLY, UNHESITANTLY, BECOMING ALL TOO-SOLID REALITY... MOVING FAR FASTER THAN ANY SUCH MONSTROUS BULK SHOULD...

BLAST AFTER BLAST OF RAW ENERGY SLAMMED IN-TO THE TERRIFYING JUGGERNAUT, CAUSING IT TO SHUDDER AND WINCE, BUT NOT HALTING ITS DESTRUCTIVE CHARGE...



YAHHHHHHHH!

OH, GOD! IT'S  
GOING TO  
KILL US ALL!



EVEN AS THE THOUGHT SCREAMED IN ELLIOT'S MIND, BLACKNESS ENGULFED HIM! LONG MOMENTS LATER, PERHAPS HOURS, TO HIS SURPRISE, THE DARKNESS CLEARED...

I-I'M ALIVE...! I DON'T  
BELIEVE IT... DID  
THE CANNONS...

NO! BUT THE PAIN FINALLY MADE IT RETREAT... CARRYING OFF AS MANY DEAD MEN AS IT COULD! NOW I KNOW HOW TO KILL IT!





**I WANT EVERY MAN IN THE ENGINE ROOM!** IN FULL PROTECTIVE GEAR! ENERGY BLASTS IN LARGE ENOUGH DOSES CAN HURT IT, THE CANNON PROVED THAT...IF WE CHANNEL FULL GENERATOR POWER TO JUST ONE CORRIDOR...WE'LL BLAST IT OUT OF EXISTENCE!

CAPTAIN...EVEN IF THAT WORKS, WE'LL BE WITHOUT POWER...STUCK HERE IN SPACE...**HELPLESS!**

CAPTAIN DURWARD WAS ADAMANT. THE CREW GATHERED IN THE ENGINE ROOM, THE LAST DITCH STAND AGAINST THE HORRENDOUS INVADER...

JUDGING FROM EVERY OTHER ATTACK, IT **NEEDS** VICTIMS... BUT IT CAN ONLY REACH US BY USING THE CORRIDOR. WHEN IT DOES, **WE'VE GOT IT!**

THE SUITS WILL PROTECT US FROM THE BLAST, BUT IF THIS DOESN'T WORK... **IT'S GOT US!**

ONCE AGAIN THE MEN WAITED. LONG TORTURING HOURS, SWEATY AND UNCOMFORTABLE IN THE TIGHT CONFINES OF THE PROTECTIVE SUITS... WAITED UNTIL IT SEEMED THEY WOULD SCREAM WITH WAITING... THEN, ALL TOO QUICKLY...

**SIR! IT'S IN THE CORRIDOR... COMING FAST!**

ALL GENERATORS ON FULL... **NOW!**

WITH A BANSHEE SCREAM THAT WOULD HAVE SHATTERED UNPROTECTED EARDRUMS, THE SHIP'S MIGHTY GENERATORS WHINED UNDER THE STRESS OF UNLEASHED POWER...WAVES OF CONCENTRATED ENERGY BOMBARDED THE NARROW CORRIDOR, MELTING METAL AND INSULATION...CREATING A WHIRLPOOL OF DEATH AROUND THE MONSTER FIGURE HOWLING IN ITS MIDST...

DRAINING AND ABSORBING EVERY LAST OUNCE OF POWER IN THE THROBBING ENGINES... BUT, WHEN IT WAS OVER...

**WE'VE WON!** LOOK AT IT, ELLIOT, LOOK AT IT!



THE MEN REMOVED THEIR HELMETS. DARKNESS CLOSED IN ON THE SHIP AS WITHOUT POWER THE LIGHTS FADED, LEAVING ONLY THE FLUORESCENT GLOW OF THE SPACE SUITS...

HERE'S YOUR INTELLIGENT CREATURE NOW...



**DUST! ASHES!**  
WE BEAT IT,  
ELLIOT!

COST US  
A LOT, CAPTAIN...WE WERE  
LUCKY! LET'S GET TO  
THE LABORATORY HOLD.  
IT HAD ITS OWN GENER-  
ATOR!

THE HATCH WAS OPEN. ELLIOT REACHED IT FIRST... AND WISHED HE NEVER HAD. SUDDENLY HE KNEW THE CREATURE HADN'T MET THE SHIP BY ACCIDENT... IT HAD BEEN DRAWN! DRAWN BY SOMETHING IT NEEDED... DRAWN BY THE **LIFE ABOARD!**

ELLIOT! WHAT'S THE MATTER? WHAT'S WRONG?

OH LORD! IF  
ONLY WE HAD  
TAKEN MORE TIME...  
CHECKED MORE  
CLOSELY...

CAST INTO SPACE BY A  
DYING PLANET, THE  
CREATURE HAD BEEN  
DRAWN BY INSTINCT TO  
THE NEAREST LIFE...  
LIFE THAT WOULD BE  
VITALLY IMPORTANT TO  
IT AS ... **FOOD!**

I-IT'S HORRIBLE,  
ELLIOT...BUT WHAT...  
WHAT COULD  
WE HAVE  
DONE?

I DON'T  
KNOW, CAPTAIN  
...OUR BIG MIS-  
TAKE WAS IN  
THINKING OF A  
LIVING BEING  
LIKE THAT ONLY  
AS **IT...**

THERE WAS LIGHT IN THE LABORATORY HOLD, ILLUMINATING THE FULL SCENE OF CARNAGE AND HORROR...ILLUMINATING THE TERRIFYING FIGURES THAT SHUFFLED TOWARD DURWARD AND ELLIOT... FIGURES NOT AS LARGE AS THE CREATURE JUST KILLED, YET, BUT LARGE ENOUGH TO INDICATE THEIR GROWTH RATE WAS **INCREDIBLY FAST!**

...INSTEAD OF **HER!!**



PERSONALLY I THINK THE LITTLE DEVILS ARE SORT OF CUTE, BUT I SUPPOSE DURWARD HAS RUN OUT OF **ENERGY** FOR HANDLING THAT SORT OF **THING!** THEIR MOTHER CERTAINLY LEFT THEM WELL PROVIDED FOR...AND SO YOU DON'T FEEL LEFT OUT, I'LL PROVIDE YOU WITH ANOTHER **SCREAM STORY!**







**HEE HEE!** MAY IT PLEASE THE COURT, (THAT'S YOU), AT THIS TIME I SHOULD LIKE TO CALL ATTENTION TO THE FOLLOWING STORY WHICH, ESPECIALLY ON THE STROKE OF MIDNIGHT, WILL WILFULLY AND WITH MALICE AFORETHOUGHT, RENDER FEAR AND TERROR INTO THE HEARTS OF ALL WHO READ IT!

# THE DEFENSE RESTS!



THE SMALL BUT PRETENTIOUS CIVIC HALL IS FILLED TO OVERFLOWING. LYDIA ALBRITTON, SINGING SENSATION OF THE ENGLISH THEATRE, IS ON TOUR THROUGH EUROPE AND THIS NIGHT HAS COME TO THE TINY NORTH GERMAN TOWN OF BRUDENHEIM.

MAYOR HERMAN BRUDENHEIM IS BY FAR THE MOST IMPORTANT MAN IN THE ENTIRE DISTRICT. OWNING ALMOST ALL THE LAND IN TOWN AND MUCH OF THE SURROUNDING COUNTRYSIDE, HE FANCIES HIMSELF QUITE THE DASHING LADIES-MAN... AND THE LOVELY LYDIA ALBRITTON HAS MORE THAN CAUGHT HIS FANCY.





IN TRUTH, ANY SUCCESS HE HAS HAD WITH THE DAUGHTERS OF THE TOWN'S FAMILIES IS DUE TO THE POWER HE WIELDS OVER THE GIRLS' FATHERS WHO, LACKING MORAL FIBRE, HAVE ALLOWED THEMSELVES TO BE SUBJUGATED TO WIN HIS FAVOR.



POSSESSING ALL THE REQUIREMENTS FOR A BRILLIANT CAREER, HE NONETHELESS REMAINS BUT A MODERATELY SUCCESSFUL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PEASANTS AND MIDDLE CLASSES WHO RESPECT HIM FOR HIS REFUSAL TO LICK THE BOOTSTRAPS OF THE MAYOR.



AT THE CLOSE OF HER ENCHANTING PERFORMANCE, LYDIA ALBRITTON IS INTRODUCED TO THE MAYOR WHO IN HIS FAWNING MANNER INVITES HER TO HIS HOME TO ATTEND A BALL HE IS GIVING IN HER HONOR.



IN THE SAME AUDIENCE, AND ENTRANCED TO NO LESS A DEGREE THAN THE MAYOR, BUT ONLY ABLE TO AFFORD STANDING ROOM, IS ANDREW PRESCOTT, BY CHOICE A POLITICAL ENGLISH EXILE, WHO HAS BEEN PRACTICING LAW IN THE TOWN FOR SEVERAL YEARS.



THIS REFUSAL HAS NOT ONLY EARNED HIM THE HATRED OF THE MAYOR AND HIS SOCIAL-CLIMBING FRIENDS, BUT HAS ALSO WON HIM A VERY DIFFICULT TIME IN COURT WHILE TRYING A CASE AND HIS LIST OF FAILURES FAR OUTWEIGHS HIS LIST OF TRIUMPHS, FOR IN THIS TOWN OF BRUDENHEIM, THE MAYOR IS ALSO JUDGE OF THE COURT.



GRACIOUSLY, SHE ACCEPTS THE INVITATION, AND AS THE MAYOR POMPOUSLY LEADS HER TO HIS CARRIAGE, ANDREW PRESCOTT STEPS FORTH FROM THE CROWD TO EXTEND HIS COMPLIMENTS TO THE ACTRESS.





IN THE PRESENCE OF THE TOWNSPEOPLE THE MAYOR IS TOLERANT OF THIS INTRUSION, BUT IT DEVELOPS THAT THE LAWYER AND THE ACTRESS HAD KNOWN EACH OTHER IN ENGLAND AND THIS REUNION IS A DELIGHT TO BOTH.



AT THE BALL, THE MAYOR TRIES REPEATEDLY TO INGRATIATE HIMSELF TO THE GIRL, BUT FINDS HIS INTENTIONS POLITELY SPURNED BY THE ACTRESS WHO IS ONLY CONCERNED WITH ANDREW.



CONTROLLING HIS JEALOUS FURY, THE MAYOR EXTENDS THE INVITATION TO INCLUDE ANDREW WHO ACCEPTS READILY FOR HE DOES WISH TO SPEAK FURTHER WITH HIS BEAUTIFUL FRIEND, AND, TOO, IS ALSO ENJOYING IMMENSELY, THE MAYOR'S AGITATION.



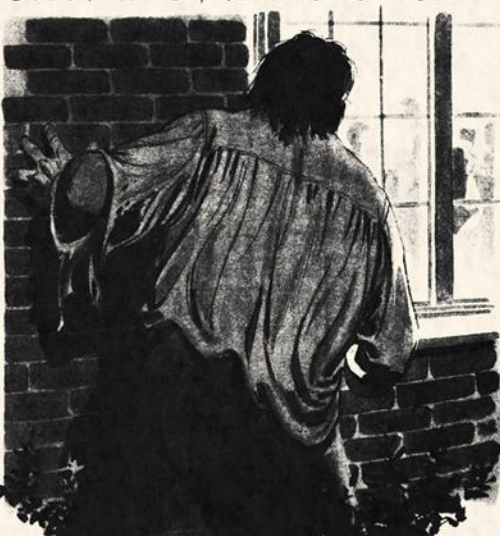
SO PLEASED IS LYDIA WITH THE MEETING, AND SO OBVIOUSLY RELUCTANT TO HAVE IT END, THAT THE MAYOR IS FORCED TO ASK PRESCOTT TO JOIN THEM. THE LAWYER AGREES.



DESPERATELY, THE MAYOR INVITES HER TO STAY THE WEEKEND AS HIS GUEST (TO ALLOW HIM TIME TO WOO HER), BUT SHE REPLIES THAT SHE HAS PROMISED TO GO RIDING AND PICKNICKING WITH ANDREW.



UNKNOWN TO THEM, THEY ARE BEING WATCHED

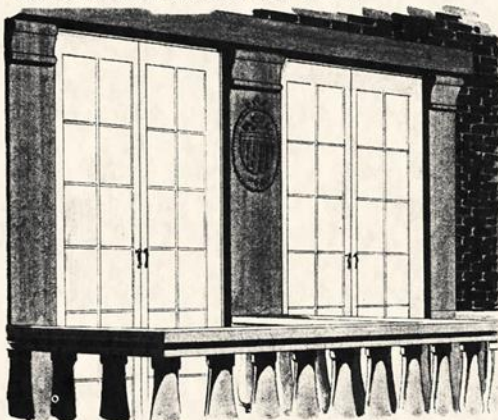




MONSTROUSLY HUGE IN SIZE, DEVOID OF FACIAL BEAUTY, UNKEMPT AND GUTTER FILTHY, GRUNTING SOFTLY TO HIMSELF NOW AND AGAIN, THE EYES OF MOLOK-THE-BRUTE MISS NOTHING OF THE MAYOR'S ATTENTION TO THE RADIANT LYDIA.



FROM THIS VANTAGE POINT HE SEES THE LAMPS ILLUMINATE THE UPSTAIRS BEDROOMS, AND THEN WATCHES AS THE MAN AND WOMAN BEGIN THEIR INDIVIDUAL PREPARATIONS FOR SLEEP.



IN HIS ROOM, ANDREW PRESCOTT IS STUNNED TO HEAR THE SCREAMS PIERCING THE NIGHT. HE HESITATES IN DISBELIEF ONLY FOR A MOMENT THEN RUSHES TO THE BALCONY WHERE HE REALIZES THE SHRIEKS ARE FROM LYDIA'S ROOM!



AS THE GUESTS BEGIN LEAVING AND THE ACTRESS AND LAWYER ARE LED UPSTAIRS TO THEIR RESPECTIVE ROOMS, THE HUGE MAN SHAMBLES AWAY FROM THE WINDOW AND HIDES IN THE NEARBY TREES.



QUIETLY, MOLOK MOVES TO THE TRELLIS LEADING TO THE BALCONY CONNECTING THE TWO BEDROOMS AND THERE HE CLIMBS UPWARD. WITH ANIMAL SILENCE HE GAINS THE BALCONY AND ENTERS THE GIRL'S BEDCHAMBER.



LEAPING THE DIVIDER BETWEEN, HE BURSTS INTO THE NOW UNLIGHTED ROOM AND DIMLY SEES THE SHADOWY MONSTER LOOMING OVER THE BROKEN AND BLOODED FORM OF THE ACTRESS!





TO ANDREW PRESCOTT, MORE THAN JUST THE CRUMPLED AND BLOOD-SPATTERED BODY OF A DEAR FRIEND LIES DEAD IN THE MOONLIGHT; A DREAM ONLY HOURS OLD HAS BEEN SHATTERED FOREVER. IN HORROR AND BLIND RAGE, HE ATTACKS THE FIEND WHO LIFTS HIM EASILY AND CASTS HIM ASIDE.



ACHING, HE STRUGGLES TO HIS FEET JUST AS THE SERVANTS BREAK DOWN THE DOOR. THE MAYOR AND OTHER GUESTS STRIDE IN, THEIR LAMPS SHOWING PRESCOTT STANDING OVER THE DEAD GIRL.



THE MAYOR CITES THE LOCKED DOOR, THE NEARNESS OF THE TWO ROOMS BY WAY OF THE BALCONY, AND EVEN IMPLIES THE ACTRESS WAS KILLED RESISTING THE LAWYER'S ADVANCES. IF PRESCOTT WISHES TO HAVE HIS FANTASTIC TALE BELIEVED, THE MAYOR CONTINUES, HE WILL HAVE TO USE MORE THAN MERE WORDS...HE WILL HAVE TO PRODUCE EVIDENCE!



ONLY SEMI-CONSCIOUS FROM THE IMPACT AGAINST A WALL, HE IS BARELY AWARE OF THE HUGE FORM ESCAPING OVER THE BALCONY, AND HARDLY HEARS THE POUNDING AND THE SHOUTING OF VOICES OUTSIDE THE LOCKED DOOR.



FOR THE MAYOR, THIS OPPORTUNITY IS TOO GOOD TO RESIST. HE ORDERS HIS SERVANTS TO SIEZE THE LAWYER WHO, STILL SOMEWHAT DAZED, TRIES HOPELESSLY TO EXPLAIN ABOUT THE REAL MURDERER. THE MAYOR ONLY LAUGHS AT HIM.



ANGRY AND STRUGGLING, ANDREW IS TAKEN FROM THE ROOM AND CAST INTO A DUNGEON BENEATH THE HOUSE WHERE HE IS KEPT UNDER GUARD FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE NIGHT. THROUGH LONG, SLEEPLESS HOURS, HIS AGONY OF FRUSTRATION AND REMORSE ALLOWS HIM NOT A MOMENT'S PEACE.





IN THE PALE LIGHT OF EARLY MORNING HE IS ROUSED AND BROUGHT TO THE COURTHOUSE TO STAND TRIAL. NONE OF THE VILLAGERS ARE THERE AND WITH SINKING HEART HE IS SUDDENLY AWARE THAT PROBABLY NO ONE KNOWS OF HIS PLIGHT WHICH, FROM THE MAYOR'S POINT OF VIEW, IS VERY FORTUNATE INDEED.



GLANCING AROUND THE NEARLY EMPTY COURTROOM, THE LAWYER RECOGNIZES THE SIX-MAN JURY AS BEING THE MAYOR'S CLOSEST CRONIES, A GROUP HE HAD ENCOUNTERED IN COURT MANY TIMES IN THE PAST, A GROUP WHO UNFAILINGLY RENDERED A VERDICT AGAINST HIM AND WHO WERE ONLY ON THE JURY WHEN THE MAYOR HIMSELF HAD A STAKE IN THE CASE.



AT EVERY POINT WHERE PRESCOTT, CONSUMED WITH FURY AND DEJECTION, RISES TO OBJECT OR DEFEND HIMSELF, THE MAYOR ASKS FOR EVIDENCE! EVIDENCE OF PERJURY, EVIDENCE OF HIS INNOCENCE, EVIDENCE OF ANOTHER'S GUILT! EVIDENCE! EVIDENCE!



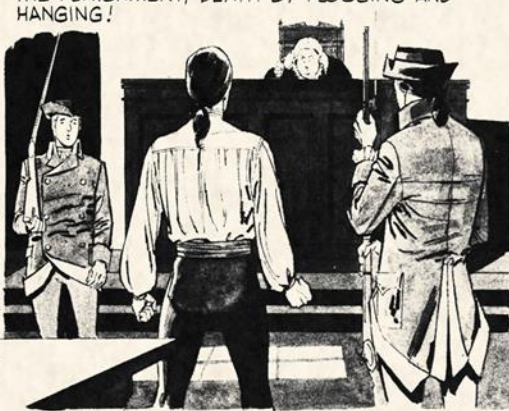
SEATED IN THE JUDGE'S CHAIR, THE MAYOR SMUGLY PERMITS ANDREW THE PRIVILEGE OF DEFENDING HIMSELF, YET PRESCOTT'S PLEAS TO BE GIVEN TIME TO PREPARE HIS DEFENSE FALL ON DEAF EARS. THE TRIAL PROCEEDS.



CALLED BY THE MAYOR, WITNESS AFTER WITNESS COMES FORTH, TESTIFYING IN OUTRAGEOUS LIES HOW THEY SAW PRESCOTT MAKE IMPROPER ADVANCES AT THE BALL, HOW THEY HEARD HIM VOW TO WIN THE LADY'S AFFECTION, EVEN HEARD HIM THREATEN HER WITH VIOLENCE UNLESS SHE AGREED TO HIS WILL.



GLARING INTO THE SMIRKING EYES OF THE MAYOR, INTO THE TWITTERING, DISINTERESTED FACES OF THE JURY, PRESCOTT KNOWS HIS POSITION IS HOPELESS. THE VERDICT IS SWIFT... GUILTY! AND THE PUNISHMENT, DEATH BY FLOGGING AND HANGING!





PRESCOTT KNOWS FROM PAST EXPERIENCE THAT NO TIME WILL BE WASTED IN CARRYING OUT THE SENTENCE. AS HE IS BEING LED AWAY TO THE EXECUTION DOCKET, THE TWISTED LAUGHTER FROM INSIDE THE COURTROOM MADDENS HIM TO THE POINT OF FRENZY! WITH BLUDGEONING FISTS HE OVERPOWERS THE DULL-WITTED GUARDS AND ESCAPES INTO THE WOODS!



SEVERAL NIGHTS PASS BEFORE PRESCOTT RETURNS FROM THE SAFETY OF THE FOREST AND CROSSES THE LAWN TO THE REAR OF THE MAYOR'S HOUSE.



KNEELING BY THE TRELLIS BENEATH THE BEDROOM WINDOWS, HE FINDS SEVERAL CLEAR AND UNMISTAKABLY HUGE FOOTPRINTS. MUTTERED CURSES RUMBLE IN HIS BREAST FOR HE NOW KNOWS THAT IF THE MAYOR HAD TAKEN BUT A MOMENT TO INVESTIGATE HE, PRESCOTT, WOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN BROUGHT TO TRIAL.



ENRAGED, HE STEALTHILY GAINS ENTRANCE TO THE HOUSE AND FINDS THE MAYOR IN HIS STUDY.



AT PISTOL-POINT, HE FORCES THE QUIVERING MAYOR TO ACCOMPANY HIM TO THE COURTHOUSE. UPON ENTERING, THE MAYOR ALL BUT COLLAPSES, FOR IN THE JURY BOX, BOUND AND GAGGED, ARE HIS SIX COHORTS!



TREMBLING VIOLENTLY, STAMMERING APOLOGIES, WITH BEADS OF SWEAT DANCING ON HIS BROW, THE PANICKY MAYOR IS THRUST HEAVILY INTO HIS SEAT ON THE BENCH AND SECURELY TIED AND GAGGED.





IN PROPER LAWYER FASHION, PRESCOTT THEN BEGINS HIS ADDRESS. HE ASSAILS THEM FOR THE MOCKERY THEY MAKE OF JUSTICE, AND THEIR PARASITIC WAY OF LIFE, AND HE ENUMERATES THE SOCIAL CRIMES THEY HAVE COMMITTED AGAINST THEIR FELLOW TOWNSMEN IN THEIR GREED FOR POWER AND POSITION.



MOLOK-THE-BRUTE THEY HAD CALLED HIM THEN. NOW, AFTER MANY YEARS IN A NIGHTMARISH PRISON FROM WHICH HE HAD RECENTLY ESCAPED, THEY MIGHT BETTER CALL HIM MOLOK-THE-MADMAN, WHO LIVES ONLY FOR REVENGE! THINKING THE ACTRESS IMPORTANT TO THE MAYOR, MOLOK HAD KILLED HER!



WITH A GRIM SIGH OF FINALITY, THE LAWYER STEPS FROM THE ROOM, CLOSSES AND LOCKS THE DOOR AND THROWS AWAY THE KEY. CROSSING THE MOONLIT FIELD BEHIND THE COURTHOUSE, HE DOESN'T EVEN TURN HIS HEAD AT THE SOUNDS OF VIOLENT SCREAMS AND THUNDEROUS CARNAGE AS HE MAKES HIS WAY TO THE SEA AND A WAITING BOAT.



HE REMINDS THEM OF ONE INJUSTICE IN PARTICULAR, ONE OF PRESCOTT'S FIRST CASES IN BRUDENHEIM, A CASE HE HAD ALMOST FORGOTTEN CONCERNING A MAN CALLED MOLOK WHO THIS SAME GROUP HAD FOUND GUILTY OF MURDERING A YOUNG GIRL. AND MOLOK'S ONLY DEFENSE WAS THAT HE WAS INNOCENT AND ONLY GUILTY OF SEEING THE MAYOR HIMSELF COMMIT THE DEED.



FOR PRESCOTT TO REST HIS CASE AND TO ESTABLISH HIS OWN INNOCENCE, THE COURT MUST NOW AT LONG LAST "PERMIT" HIM TO PRESENT HIS EVIDENCE! SO SAYING, HE OPENS THE DOOR AND USHERS THE LUSTING, EAGER MOLOK INTO THEIR PRESENCE! STIFLED MOANS, CRYING AND MUFFLED SHRIEKS OF TERROR FROM THE SEVEN CAPTIVES ONLY INCITE THE MONSTER AS HE LUMBERS TOWARD THEM.



HEEHEE!  
OH, REVENGE CAN  
BE SO **SWEET!**  
PRESCOTT'S WORDS  
MAY HAVE MADE THEM  
FEEL SORRY FOR THEIR  
MISDEEDS, BUT I CAN  
**GUARANTEE** THAT WHEN  
MOLOK FINISHED WITH  
THEM, THEY **REALLY**  
FELT BAD! IN FACT, THEY  
WERE ALL **BROKE-UP**  
ABOUT IT! LIKE THEY  
SAY, FIENDS, ACTIONS  
SPEAK LOUDER  
THAN WORDS!  
HEEHEEHEEHEE!



The End





SEARCHING FOR ANOTHER **GORY-STORY**, FEAR FANS? LET ME BE YOUR **GHOUL**  
**GUIDE** INTO THE UNCHARTED WATERS OF THE WEIRD AS WE GO EXPLORING FOR  
EXCITEMENT AND END UP ON THE ...

# ISLAND AT WORLD'S END!



## "LOG OF THE 'CELTIC'...."

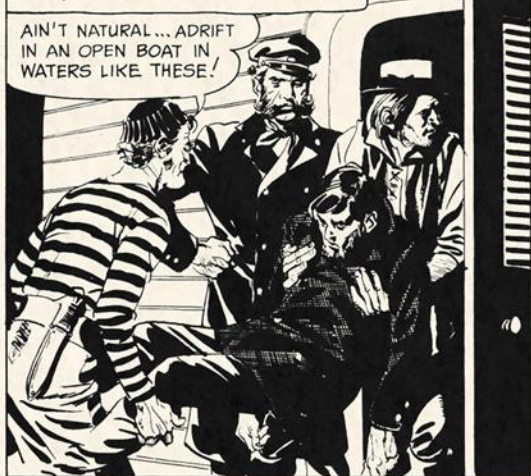
### WHALER OUT OF NEW BEDFORD: March 3, 1841....

Driven hundreds of miles  
south of shipping lanes  
by storm while rounding  
cape... Uncharted waters  
desolate and ice-bound...  
We've encountered someone  
whose fate's been far  
worse....



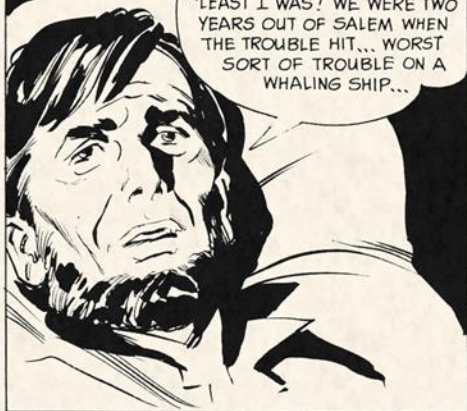
"HE WAS A LARGE MAN, AND STRONG... TO HAVE BEEN LESS, HE WOULD HAVE BEEN DEAD..."

AIN'T NATURAL... ADRIFT IN AN OPEN BOAT IN WATERS LIKE THESE!



"MARCH 6--OUR PASSENGER IS RECOVERING... TODAY FOR THE FIRST TIME, HE COULD ANSWER QUESTIONS..."

NAME'S STURGIS, SIR! FIRST MATE OF THE "PRODIGAL"... 'LEAST I WAS! WE WERE TWO YEARS OUT OF SALEM WHEN THE TROUBLE HIT... WORST SORT OF TROUBLE ON A WHALING SHIP...



"...MUTINY!"



"THE CAPTAIN WAS KILLED AND WE THREE REMAINING OFFICERS SET ADRIFT WITH A FEW SUPPLIES... I MANAGED TO SNEAK OFF MY PISTOL..."



"IN TIME WE BECAME ANIMALS... RAGING FOR SURVIVAL, THE OPEN BOAT OUR JUNGLE! FOR THE OTHERS, REASON FAILED... FOR ME, THE PISTOL DIDN'T..."





"THEN BEGAN THE AWFUL DRIFTING... SLOWLY, STEADILY... **SOUTH!** SOUTH TOWARD UNKNOWN WATERS... SOUTH TOWARD ICE AND SILENCE... SOUTH TOWARD THE BOTTOM OF THE WORLD!"



"BUNDLED IN THE CLOTHING OF DEAD MEN... LIVING MEAGERLY ON THEIR FOOD SHARES... I DRIFTED! BUT EVEN DRIFTING THINGS CAN REACH A DESTINATION... AND SO I REACHED THE ISLAND!"



"COLD, DESOLATE, LONELY... LIKE A LAST STOP BEFORE ETERNITY! NOT MUCH, BUT ALL THAT WAS LEFT ME... I BEGAN TO EXPLORE..."



"MY SEARCH FOR SIGNS OF LIFE LED ME TO OTHER SIGNS... **OF DEATH!**"







"I'VE SEEN THE WILDEST SAVAGES OF OUR WESTERN PLAINS AND THE GREAT APES OF AFRICA'S JUNGLES... THIS WAS NEITHER... AND IT WAS BOTH! BUT THERE WAS NO TIME FOR CURIOSITY..."



"AND NO CHANCE TO USE THE PISTOL AGAIN... SHRIEKING AND SCREAMING WITH BEAST-LIKE FEROCITY, THEY CHARGED!"



"A HAIRY, OBSCENE TIDE SWEEPED OVER... MY LAST THOUGHT WAS OF THE GNAWED WHITE BONES BENEATH MY FEET!"





"FUMES OF SULPHUR AND PRICKLES OF HEAT FORCED MY SWIRLING MIND TO CONSCIOUSNESS..."

I'M INSIDE THE MOUNTAIN...  
OR IS IT A VOLCANO? THOSE  
THINGS I WAS FIGHTING  
MUST HAVE LEFT ME  
HERE... *WHY?*



"MY PISTOL WAS THROWN IN WITH ME, YET I DREW LITTLE COMFORT FROM IT..."

DON'T LIKE THESE  
IDOLS! MAKE THE  
LEDGE LOOK  
LIKE ...

A PLACE OF  
SACRIFICE!



DOWN BELOW!  
SOMETHING'S  
STIRRING ...



IMPOSSIBLE!  
HOW CAN SHE ...



YAAAAAAA!



"WHAT THE MIND CANNOT COMPREHEND, IT SOMETIMES SHUTS OUT... ONLY A MELODIC SOFT VOICE PULLED ME FROM THE BLACK BARRIER IT HAD THROWN UP..."

I WENT FORTH FOR A SACRIFICE, BUT FIND INSTEAD A PRINCE!



I AM CTHYLLA. LAST OF THE GREAT ELDER RACE... HIGH PRIESTESS OF DREAD SHOGGATH!



RUINS OF AN OLD CITY... HIDDEN AWAY IN THIS MOUNTAIN ...

IT WAS NOT ALWAYS SO! THE GREAT WARS... THE MIGHTY SNOWS... WE WERE DRIVEN UNDERGROUND! SOME REMAINED... DEGENERATED INTO BEASTS... THE HAIRY ONES ABOVE!



THEY ADAPTED WHILE YOUR PEOPLE DIED OUT DOWN HERE...

WHILE I LIVE, THE ELDERS MAY LIVE... LONG HAVE I PRAYED TO SHOGGATH FOR ONE TO SHARE MY DESTINY... MY THRONE ... MY LIFE!



'HER EYES LOCKED WITH MINE, PEERING DEEP... SUDDENLY I COULD NO LONGER SEE ANYTHING BUT HER... CTHYLLA!'

... THE ELDER RACE SHALL THRIVE AGAIN!





"BUT SOMETHING DARK CLOUDED MY FEELINGS... MADE ME UNEASY..."

DEEP... COULD REACH STRAIGHT INTO HELL...

YOUR DREAD IS OF SHOGGATH, AND HEREIN HE DWELLS... FEARFUL AND MIGHTY! THE HAIRY ONES STILL SACRIFICE TO HIM...



... BUT SHOGGATH KNOWS THE CHOSEN ONES! THIS YOU MUST LEARN!

CTHYLLA! THE WELL!



"SHE DID NOT FALL... HOW COULD SHE NESTLED IN THE PALM OF THAT OBSCENITY AS WHEN FIRST I SAW HER?"

JOIN ME! DO NOT BE AFRAID... SHOW GREAT SHOGGATH HIS PRIESTESS NOW HAS A PRIEST! COME... NOW!



"AGAIN OUR EYES LOCKED, AND AGAIN--GOD FORBID-- I OBEYED!"



"NOW WE TRAVELED UP... UP! IN THE GRIP OF THAT NEBULOUS MONSTROSITY... BUT MY THOUGHTS WERE ONLY OF THE SOFT FIGURE AT MY SIDE... MY QUEEN... MY CTHYLLA!"

SHOGGATH WAS DENIED WHEN I FOUND YOU... HE ACHES FOR FULFILLMENT...



AH! THE HAIRY ONES HAVE ANTICIPATED... THEY KNOW BETTER THAN TO DISAPPOINT HIM!









"I DID NOT HEAR HER SCREAM, NOR DID I LOOK BACK IN MY FRANTIC SCRAMBLE FOR FREEDOM. BEHIND ME A MOURNFUL WAIL ROSE IN PITCH TO A DREADFUL RUMBLE ..."



"FEAR DROVE MY LEGS DOWN THAT SLOPE OF ROCK AND ICE... NOTHING BROKE MY FLIGHT!"

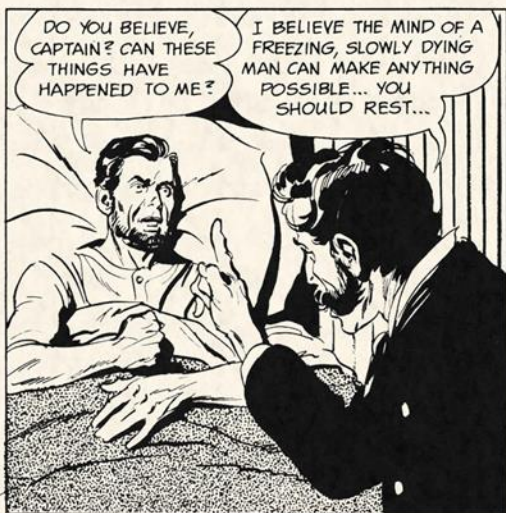


"WHAT HAD BEEN A RUMBLE SPLIT THROUGH THE AIR NOW LIKE AN EXPLOSION! IN HIS GRIEF AND RAGE WAS SHOGGATH BREAKING FREE OF THE CRATER? AS I REACHED THE BOAT, NO DESIRE MOVED ME TO SEE... I PUSHED OFF PREFERING THE SLOW FREEZING DEATH AHEAD TO THE MONSTROUS INSANITY THAT STORMED BEHIND!"



DO YOU BELIEVE, CAPTAIN? CAN THESE THINGS HAVE HAPPENED TO ME?

I BELIEVE THE MIND OF A FREEZING, SLOWLY DYING MAN CAN MAKE ANYTHING POSSIBLE... YOU SHOULD REST...



AFTER DAYS ADrift, I THOUGHT THAT TOO, BUT I KEEP SEEING HER EYES... LOCKED DEEP IN MINE... PROMISING A WORLD... CTHYLLA...





"MARCH 10--STURGIS HAS RECOVERED, YET HE PROWLs THE DECKs MOODY AND QUIET, STARING AT THE SEA AS THOUGH LOOKING FOR SOMETHING..."

MAN, YOU'VE GOT TO GET HOLD OF YOURSELF...YOU--

**SHE BLOWS!  
SHE BLOWS!**

THAT'S NO WHALE'S SPOUT! IT'S STEAM...MIST! GETTING CLOSER!



HE'S COME  
... I KNEW  
HE MUST!



**CTHYLLA!**

**STURGIS... YOU  
FOOL! NO!**

DESPITE THE HORROR, HE DIED SILENTLY. LATER, THE CREW LIKED TO THINK HE DID IT TO SAVE THE SHIP... NO MATTER... BUT IN THE ONLY WAY LEFT HIM, STURGIS HAD GONE BACK... BACK TO CTHYLLA!



WHAT HAPPENED TO GOOD OL' SHOGGATH? NO ONE KNOWS, HE WAS NEVER CAUGHT... BUT IF HE IS, YOU CAN REST ASSURED IT WILL BE **RED-HANDED!** AND YOU'LL BE RED-FACED IF YOU MISS MY NEXT ISSUE!





GRAB YOUR RIFLES, RABID READERS, WE'RE GOING ON A **HAUNTING** EXPEDITION INTO TREACHEROUS **TERROR**-ITY TO SEEK OUT SOME REALLY BIG GAME! YOU'LL NEED ALL YOUR NERVE AS WE PLUNGE INTO THE LAIR OF...



# THE SWAMP GOD!

CROFT, THIS IS CRAZY! CHASING AROUND AFTER SOME INDIAN LEGEND!

YOU CAN'T BE SURE WHAT WE'LL FIND, DOUGLAS. NOBODY'S BEEN THIS DEEP INTO THE SWAMP BEFORE... RIGHT, JOHNNY?

SOMEWHERE IN THE DISTANCE CAME THE LOW RUMBLE OF APPROACHING THUNDER; FLASHES OF HEAT LIGHTNING BRIGHTENED THE NIGHT SKY... JOHN KIMA EASED UP ON THE POLE AND LET THE DUGOUT DRIFT IN A BRIEF STRETCH OF CLEAR WATER...ALREADY, HE WAS HAVING REGRETS ABOUT THE EXPEDITION...

NO WHITE MAN, MR. CROFT... FOR CENTURIES MY PEOPLE HAVE MADE THIS AREA THEIR HOME... ISOLATED AND PRIMITIVE!

BUT YOU'RE AN EDUCATED MAN, KIMA... YOU BELIEVE THIS "SWAMP GOD" STUFF?





A HERON SCREECHED AND WINGED SKYWARD THROUGH THE DARKNESS, THEN ONLY THE MEN'S VOICES BROKE THE LAYER OF SILENCE THAT HUNG OVER THE SWAMP... THE SILENCE OF ANTICIPATION... PERHAPS OF THE APPROACHING STORM...

I BELIEVE ANY LEGEND HAS SOME ROOTS IN FACT! SOMETHING VERY REAL AND VERY TERRIBLE, STALKS IN THIS SWAMP!

AND JOHNNY'S FIXED IT SO YOU AND I GET FIRST CRACK AT IT, DOUGLAS!

EAGLES TO ELEPHANTS, I'VE BAGGED THEM ALL, KIMA...NOTHING IN HERE CAN BE *THAT* UNUSUAL!

UNUSUAL ENOUGH TO LEVEL ENTIRE VILLAGES! UNUSUAL ENOUGH THAT GENERATIONS OF MY TRIBE HAVE MADE SACRIFICES TO APPEASE IT! *HUMAN SACRIFICES!*

H-HUMAN SACRIFI--COME OFF IT, KIMA! THIS DAY AND AGE? IF THERE'S MORE THAN AN OVERSIZED ALLIGATOR AROUND, I'LL EAT IT!

THIS SWAMP IS OLD...DEEP... UNTOUCHED BY TIME! PAST AND PRESENT MEAN LITTLE HERE...

I'M OF A PRIMITIVE AND DYING PEOPLE... I'VE TRIED TO CHANGE THEIR WAYS... IT WAS MY HOPE THE TWO OF YOU COULD HELP!

DON'T GET SORE, JOHNNY! DOUGLAS AND I ARE TOP HUNTERS ...IF ANYONE CAN NAIL YOUR "SWAMP GOD," WE CAN!

THUNDER RESOUNDED OVERHEAD AND DROPS OF RAIN BEGAN PELTING THE THREE MEN IN THE DUGOUT...

WHAT'S UP? WHY ARE WE STOPPING?

WE CAN GO NO FURTHER ...THIS IS THE PLACE OF SACRIFICE, THE KILLING GROUND OF THE SWAMP GOD!





HATE TO  
HAVE COME ALL  
THIS WAY FOR  
NOTHI--  
WHAT'S THAT,  
JOHNNY?

IT COMES  
FROM THERE...  
BEYOND THE  
TREES!

LOOKS  
PEACEFUL  
NOW...THIS  
RAIN WON'T MAKE  
WAITING EASY...



WHEN THE  
SWAMP GOD'S  
SACRIFICE WAS  
PREPARED, A  
BLAST FROM  
THIS HORN WAS  
SAID TO  
SUMMON  
HIM FORTH...



MOMENTARILY, ONLY THE SOUND OF THE  
RAIN WAS AUDIBLE IN THE SWAMP, THEN  
THE INDIAN GUIDE'S LIPS TOUCHED THE  
OLD HORN, FILLING THE NIGHT WITH A LONG  
WAIL, ECHOING LIKE THE CRIES OF A WOUNDED  
ANIMAL...TORTURED AND UNEARTHLY!




DOUGLAS!  
T-THERE IN THE  
BOGS...



...S-SOMETHING'S  
STIRRING!





THE SWAMP'S STIFLING AIR  
WAS RENT BY A HUGE THUNDER-  
CLAP, QUICKLY FOLLOWED BY  
THE CRACKLING BRILLIANCE  
OF LIGHTNING, ETCHING THE  
AREA IN AN EERIE GLOW!

TYRANNOSAURUS!  
KIMA WAS RIGHT...  
IT'S SURVIVED TIME!  
NURTURED ON  
H-HUMAN  
SACRIFICE...

OH, MY GOD!





DOUGLAS! IT'S  
T-TREMENDOUS...  
WE CAN'T--

THESE RIFLES  
ARE HI-POWERED  
ENOUGH TO STOP  
ANYTHING! FIRE,  
YOU FOOL!  
FIRE!



THE GUNS!  
THEY'RE NOT  
FIRING! THEY'RE  
NOT FIRI---



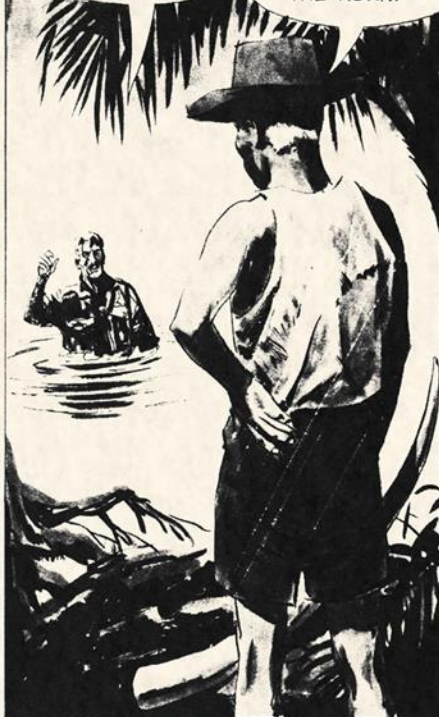
GNYAHHHHHHH!!!

CROFT'S HIDEOUS DYING SCREAMS  
MINGLED WITH THE SAVAGE SOUNDS  
OF THE RAMPAGING BEHEMOTH, SENT  
DOUGLAS THRASHING THROUGH THE  
MURKY WATER...MUD AND SLIME BE-  
LOW CAUGHT AND GRABBED AT HIM,  
REDUCING HIS MOTION TO THAT OF A  
MAN IN A DREAM...

KIMA! I THOUGHT  
THAT T-THING GOT  
YOU WITH THE  
DUGOUT!

NO, MR. DOUGLAS,  
... I GOT AWAY  
AFTER SOUNDING  
THE HORN.

OH, LORD...  
IT'S D-DEVOURING  
CROFT!





GOOD THING TOO! YOU MIGHT HAVE ENDED UP LIKE CROFT! BLASTED RIFLES... FINE WEAPONS FOR YEARS! HOW COULD THEY GO WRONG NOW?

NO BULLETS, MR. DOUGLAS... I REMOVED THEM WHEN I LOADED THE DUGOUT!



YOU DID WHAT? I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY--KIMA! WHAT'RE YOU DOING?! NO!



AGAIN THE HIDEOUS SOUND OF THE SACRIFICIAL HORN ROSE THROUGH THE SWAMP...

KIMA! WHY? THE THING'LL HEAR IT... GIVE ME A HAND! HELP ME OUT OF HERE! THAT MONSTER'S COMING... PLEASE!!

HOPELESSLY, DOUGLAS CLAWED AND SCRAPED AT THE MUD AND GRASS OF THE BANK ONLY TO FIND THE MIRE OF THE BOTTOM SLIPPING BENEATH HIS SCRAMBLING FEET... EVEN AS HOT REPTILIAN BREATH SPRAYED OVER HIM, ABOVE HIS OWN SCREAMS, HE COULD HEAR JOHN KIMA'S FADING WORDS...

...SINCE FROM NOW ON, I'M USING OUTSIDERS ONLY!!



IT'S AS I SAID, MR. DOUGLAS... WITH YOUR HELP I'M CHANGING THE WAYS OF MY PEOPLE! THEY'LL CEASE DYING OUT FROM SACRIFICES...



HMMMMMMM... IT APPEARS DOUGLAS IS MORE SELF-SACRIFICING THAN I THOUGHT! NOW, BEFORE THE SWAMP GOD PUTS THE BITE ON HIM, WHY DON'T YOU NIBBLE AT MY NEXT GOODIE?





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READY FOR A CHANGE OF PACE, FELLOW-FIENDSTERS?  
LET'S SEE IF I CAN'T ARRANGE FOR YOU TO FACE  
THE BROODING MENACE OF...



Eugene Colan

# THE CHANGELING!

IT WAS LATE AFTERNOON, BUT DARKNESS HAD ALREADY OVERTAKEN MUCH OF THE AGING MANSION'S INTERIOR, ADDING TO THE SINISTER EFFECT OF ITS RAMBLING ARCHITECTURE. FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE LEAVING BOSTON, RACHEL MEREDITH WAS HAVING REGRETS...

THE BUTLER USHERED RACHEL INTO THE LIBRARY SHADOWS CAST BY THE FLICKERING FLAMES OF THE FIREPLACE. ADDED ONE MORE MACABRE TOUCH TO THE OLD BUILDING'S GLOOM, COLD EYES PEERED BAFFFULLY AT HER FROM UNDER THE DARK BROW OF THE MAN FACING HER...

THIS WAY, MISS MR. HAZELTINE'S BEEN WAITING...

ALL THOSE STARES FROM THE TOWNSPEOPLE WHEN I SAID I WAS COMING HERE ...SMALL WONDER I'M NERVOUS!

I'M EMMETT HAZELTINE, MISS MEREDITH. WELCOME TO MY HOUSE. MY LAWYER GAVE YOU A GLOWING RECOMMENDATION ... I'M SURE YOU'LL BE A FINE GOVERN-  
ESS FOR THE BOY.

T-THANK YOU, MR. HAZELTINE... I HOPE YOUR WIFE AND SON THINK SO TOO. I CERTAINLY WILL TR---





EMMETT HAZELTINE'S FACE GREW DARKER...

NO ONE TOLD YOU? MY WIFE'S BEEN IN AN ASYLUM SINCE JUST AFTER GIVING BIRTH... INCURABLY INSANE! WHAT THE BOY THINKS DOESN'T MATTER!

I'M SORRY... I-I DIDN'T KNOW... BUT IT'S IMPOR-

TANT THAT THE CHILD AND I GET ALONG, OR ELSE...

THAT'S BETWEEN YOU AND HIM! MY WORK HERE IN THE LIBRARY DEMANDS ALL MY TIME... IT'S ESSENTIAL! HANDLE THE BOY AS YOU WILL!

THIS TIME OF DAY, HE'S USUALLY IN THE GARDEN... BY THE POND. LATHROP WILL SHOW YOU THE WAY!

HAZELTINE FACED HIS BOOKSHELVES SHUTTING RACHEL OUT WITHOUT CHANCE OF REPLY. THE BUTLER APPEARED AND LEAD HER TO THE BACK OF THE HOUSE, OUTSIDE INTO THE FADING SUNLIGHT...

MASTER DONALD! MASTER DONALD, I'VE BROUGHT MISS MEREDITH, YOUR NEW GOVERNESS...

WHAT'S BEHIND YOUR BACK? WHAT ARE YOU HIDING?

NOTHING, LATHROP...

RACHEL FELT HERSELF AT ONCE IMPRESSED AND REPELLED BY THE BOY. NEAT AND HANDSOME, YET SOMEHOW DISTANT AND REMOVED, HIS DELICATE FEATURED FACE AN IMMOBILE MASK. AS THEY APPROACHED, DONALD BROUGHT HIS HAND OUT FROM BEHIND HIS BACK...

...NOTHING BUT THIS!

DEAR LORD! IT SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN KILLED BY SOME KIND OF... A-ANIMAL!



FLUSHED WITH ANGER, THE BUTLER SPRANG FORWARD SENDING THE MUTILATED CARCASS FLYING FROM THE CHILD'S GRIP...

**YOU LITTLE MONSTER!**

I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF YOUR TRICKS! TIME YOU LEARNED A LESSON...

**NO, MR. LATHROP!**

AS LONG AS I'M GOVERNESS, YOU'RE **NEVER** TO LAY A HAND TO THIS BOY! ANY CHILD'S NATURALLY CURIOUS ABOUT DEATH... THAT'S WHY HE HAD IT!



VERY WELL, MISS, WE'LL SEE... SEE HOW YOU FEEL WHEN YOU HEAR ABOUT THE **FIRST** GOVERNESS!

RACHEL TOOK THE BOY TO HIS ROOM, THEN BURST INTO THE LIBRARY OUTRAGED AND ANNOYED, REPEATING THE INCIDENT TO THE BROODING MASTER OF HAZELTINE HOUSE...

IT'S NOTHING TO ME, MISS MEREDITH! WHERE THE BOY'S CONCERNED LATHROP WILL OBEY YOUR WISHES! NOW IF YOU'RE

DONE DISTURBING MY RESEARCH...

JUST ONE MORE THING, MR.

HAZELTINE... ANOTHER WOMAN HAD MY JOB. WHAT HAPPENED TO HER?



HAZELTINE'S LARGE, STRONG HANDS BROUGHT HIS BOOK SHUT WITH A LOUD SNAP. RACHEL COULD NOT BE SURE IF IT WERE THE MAN'S WORDS OR THE BOOK'S TITLE THAT SENT A SHIVER THROUGH HER...

**SHE WAS KILLED, MISS MEREDITH!**

BY SOME MANNER OF WILD ANIMAL THE AUTHORITIES SEEMED TO THINK...



THE CHILL OF FORBODING STAYED WITH HER THROUGH THE EVENING, UNTIL BEDTIME...

I'M NOT SORRY ABOUT THE CAT, IT SCRATCHED ME ONCE. I'M GLAD IT WAS KILLED, BUT HAVING SOMEONE TAKE MY PART WAS NICE... NO ONE EVER DID IT BEFORE!

DON'T WORRY, DONALD. I'M HERE TO HELP WHENEVER I CAN... NOW YOU SHOULD BE GOING TO SLEEP...





RACHEL PAUSED AT THE WINDOW. THE GARDEN BELOW WAS A DARK MASS OF SHRUBBERY AND SHADOWS. THE FINE HAIR ON THE BACK OF HER NECK SUDDENLY TINGLED. FOR AN INSTANT, ONE OF THE SHADOWS SEEMED TO MOVE, THEN MELT INTO THE DARKNESS...

I-I MUST BE TIRED...THE STRAIN OF THE FIRST DAY...

THE NIGHT'S STRANGENESS FADED INTO MORNING AND THE FIRST OF HER TUTORING WITH DONALD...

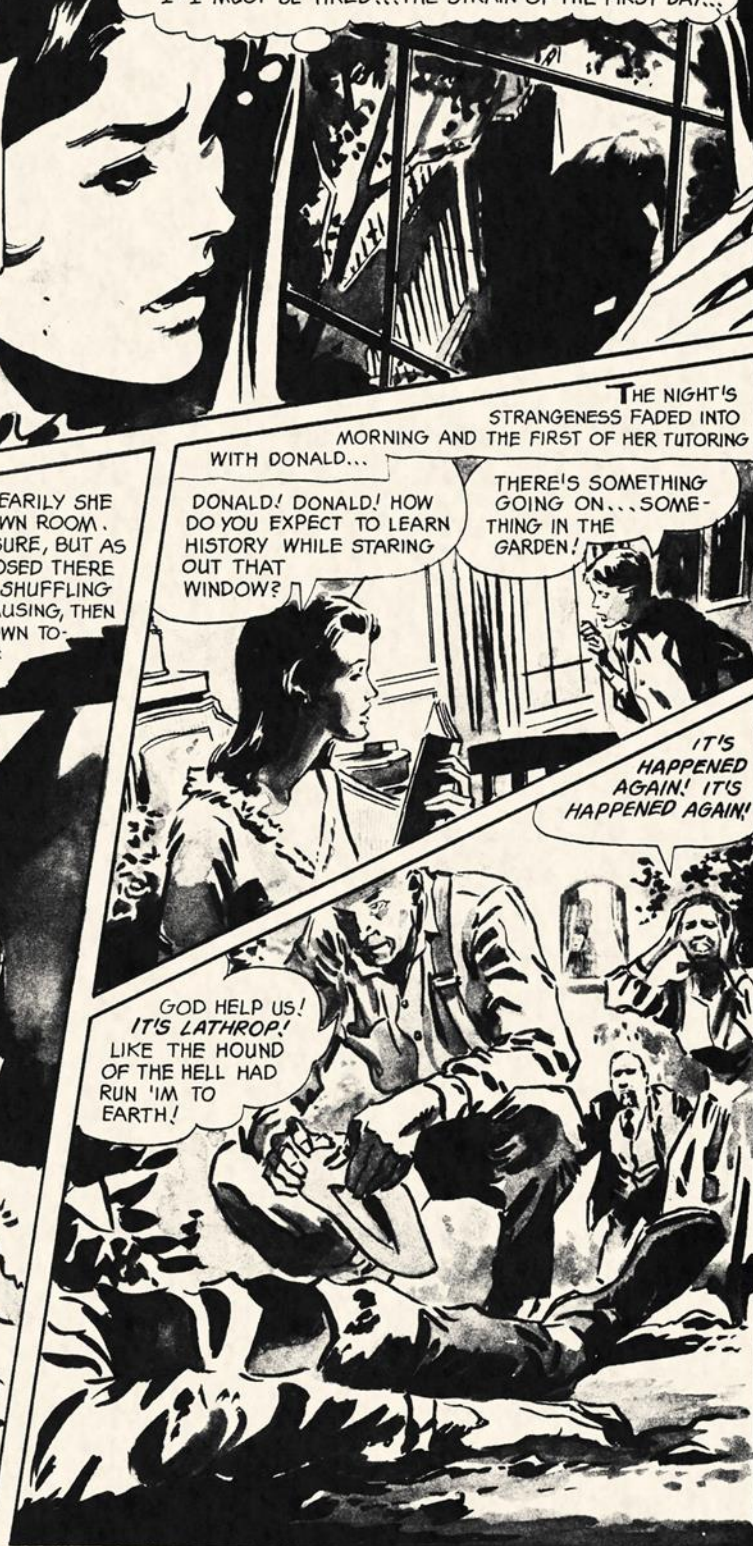
WEARILY SHE RETURNED TO HER OWN ROOM. RACHEL COULD NOT BE SURE, BUT AS HER HEAVY EYELIDS CLOSED THERE SEEMED TO BE A FAINT SHUFFLING SOUND IN THE HALL, PAUSING, THEN MOVING ALONG PAST, DOWN TOWARD THE ROOMS OF THE OTHER SERVANTS...

DONALD! DONALD! HOW DO YOU EXPECT TO LEARN HISTORY WHILE STARING OUT THAT WINDOW?

THERE'S SOMETHING GOING ON...SOMETHING IN THE GARDEN!

IT'S HAPPENED AGAIN! IT'S HAPPENED AGAIN!

GOD HELP US!  
IT'S LATHROP!  
LIKE THE HOUND OF THE HELL HAD RUN 'IM TO EARTH!





RACHEL STARED, TRANSFIXED WITH HORROR, THEN SLOWLY NOTICED A CHILLING SOUND... A SOFT CHILDISH SNICKER...

**DONALD!**  
WHAT ARE YOU DOING? STOP IT! A MAN'S DIED OUT THERE...

ONLY LATHROP, NASTY OLD LATHROP! I HATED HIM AND HE HATED ME... EVERYONE HATES ME...

THAT'S A **TERRIBLE** THING TO SAY... IT'S NOT TRUE! WHAT ABOUT ME? WHAT ABOUT YOUR FATHER?

HE'S **WORSE** THAN LATHROP! WORSE THAN ANYONE... YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO DOESN'T, MISS MEREDITH... THE ONLY ONE!

RACHEL WANTED TO CONTRADICT THE TERRIBLE ACCUSATION OF THE SMALL SOLEMN FACE, BUT THERE WAS NO WAY. DONALD'S WORDS WEIGHED HEAVILY ON HER UNTIL EVENING WHEN SHE COULD STAND IT NO MORE...

MR. HAZELTINE, I'VE GOT TO SPEAK TO YOU ABOUT DONALD... **NOW!**

THERE'S NO NEED. AFTER WHAT'S HAPPENED TO LATHROP, EVERY OTHER SERVANT'S QUIT... I SEE NO REASON FOR YOU TO STAY ON!

I HAD HOPED TO HAVE A SOLUTION BEFORE NOW, BEFORE ANOTHER DEATH... BUT IT'S NOT EASY... SO MANY BOOKS, SO LITTLE TIME...

NO REASON? WHAT ABOUT YOUR SON? YOUR OWN SON!

**BOOKS?!**

YOU SPEND YOUR DAYS LOOKING FOR ANSWERS AMID THIS JUMBLE OF WITCHCRAFT AND SORCERY? FOR THAT YOU NEGLECT YOUR OWN SON?

**STOP CALLING HIM MY SON!**  
I KNOW THAT LITTLE HORROR FOR WHAT HE IS!



A CHANGELING, MISS MEREDITH! DO YOU KNOW OF THEM? SPAWN OF THE DEVIL'S CREATURES, LEFT IN THE CRADLE IN EXCHANGE FOR HUMAN INFANTS... MY CHILD WAS STOLEN, AND THIS... LEFT IN HIS PLACE!

WHY ELSE DO YOU THINK MY WIFE WENT MAD?!

THE PURE FURY OF THE EMMETT HAZELTINE'S WORDS HIT RACHEL LIKE MALLET STROKES. SHE BACKED SLOWLY FROM THE ROOM...

BUT SOME-DAY I'LL FIND IT... THE SPELL, THE CURSE, THE MEANS TO DESTROY HIM... TO SEND HIM BACK TO THE PIT FROM WHICH HE CAME!

DEAR LORD! HE'S INSANE... COMPLETELY INSANE!

SHE FLED THE LIBRARY, RACING UP FLIGHTS OF THE DARK CREAKING STAIRS...

DONALD! WHAT ARE YOU DOING UP?

NOISE WOKE ME... I HEARD VOICES... SHOUTING!

DONALD, DEAR, LISTEN TO ME... IT ISN'T SAFE HERE ANY LONGER! YOUR FATHER'S NOT WELL... I'VE GOT TO GET YOU AWAY...

YES... I THINK I'M READY TO LEAVE NOW!

NO! DEAR GOD, NO! THIS TIME IT'S NOT NERVES...

DONALD... LET'S GO BACK TO YOUR ROOM...

THE MOON-LIGHT OUTSIDE THE OPEN LANDING WINDOW SOMEHOW PULLED RACHEL'S EYES. A DEATHLY QUIET HUNG OVER THE MANSION AND DARKENED GARDEN... THEN RACHEL HEARD THE SOUND...



THIS WAS NO SLEEP-FOGGED DELUSION. NOW SHE COULD HEAR THE DOOR FROM THE GARDEN, THEN AGAIN THE SHUFFLING... SLITHERING... NOW INSIDE!

D-DONALD, I DON'T THINK WE SHOULD BE OUT HERE... LET'S...

COME ON, MISS MEREDITH, THIS WAY...

COME ON, WE WANT TO SEE WHAT'S GOING ON... COME ON, MISS MEREDITH!

FROM THE YAWNING BLACK DEPTHS OF THE STAIRWAY, MORE SOUNDS DRIFTED UP... WOOD SPLINTERING AND CRACKING AS THE LIBRARY DOOR GAVE WAY!

DONALD! DON'T GO DOWN THERE! GET BACK! DONALD...

THE GLOW OF THE KEROSENE LAMP CREPT SURELY DOWN THE WINDING FLIGHTS AND DISAPPEARED IN THE VICINITY OF THE LIBRARY. SECONDS LATER, THE DARKNESS WAS SPLIT BY SHRIEKING HORROR!

DONALD! OH, MY GOD... DONALD!

HALF-RUNNING, HALF-FALLING, RACHEL DESCENDED THE STAIRS ONLY TO FREEZE IN MADDENING TERROR AT THE MACABRE TABLEAU BEFORE HER, AS SOUNDS AND ODORS OF UNEARTHLY CARNAGE STUNNED HER REMAINING SENSES.





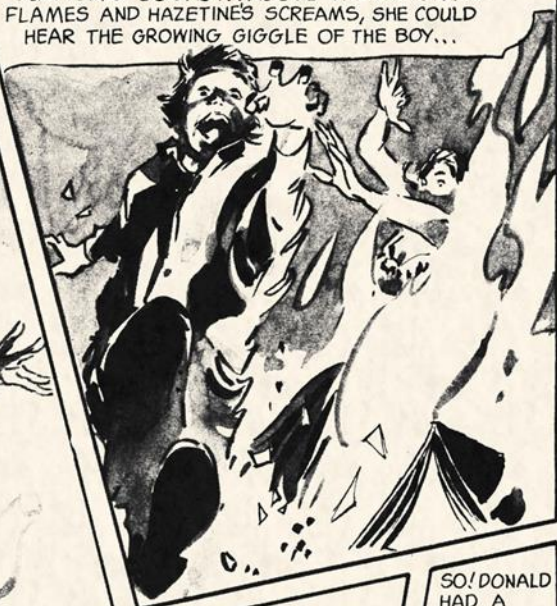
THEN, AS THOUGH ONLY A NIGHTMARE INSTEAD OF THIS PHANTASMAGORIC REALITY, SHE RACED FORWARD FOR THE BOY, HOPING STILL TO SAVE HIM...

DONALD! LISTEN TO ME! COME BACK! COME BA---

THE LAMP!  
YOU'VE DROPPED  
THE LAMP!



HE SHRUGGED FREE SENDING RACHEL REELING BACKWARD AS THE LAMP HIT THE CARPETING AND SCATTERED BOOKS... ABOVE THE CRACKLING FLAMES AND HAZETINE'S SCREAMS, SHE COULD HEAR THE GROWING GIGGLE OF THE BOY...



THE LIBRARY BECAME AN INFERNO WHICH WOULD SOON SPREAD TO THE ENTIRE HOUSE, AND THE DANCING SHADOWS OF ITS FLAMES ALL BUT DROVE RACHEL MAD. AS SHE SANK INTO OBLIVION, DONALD'S LAUGHTER GREW TO A WORD SHOUTED OVER AND OVER... THE NAME OF THE LOATHSOME THING CLAWING AND DESTROYING HAZELTINE...



MEN FROM THE VILLAGE FOUND HER THE NEXT MORNING SPRAWLED ON THE LAWN OF WHAT ONCE HAD BEEN HAZETINE HOUSE... INSIDE, THEY FOUND THE CHARRED REMAINS OF EMMETT HAZELTINE, NOTHING MORE.

SHE'S GONNA BE OKAY... LITTLE DELIRIOUS NOW, BUT SHE'LL BE OKAY...

...THAT'S WHAT HE CALLED IT... THAT THING... HE CALLED IT... **MOTHER!**



SO! DONALD HAD A PRETTY HOT TIME AT HIS FAMILY REUNION... LIKE ALL MOTHERS, HIS TENDED TO BE OVERPROTECTIVE... AS MR. HAZELTINE FOUND OUT! AND YOU'LL FIND OUT THERE'S MORE MONSTROUS MAYHEM AWAITING YOU WHEN YOU PICK UP ISSUE NUMBER 7 OF **EERIE!**





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